An Introduction to the Role of the Licensed School Nurse in the Special Education Process

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Objectives

Participants will be able to:

- Describe the big picture role of the Licensed School Nurse (LSN) in the Special Education (SpEd) process.
- Describe Time and Effort requirements.
- Understand the role of the LSN in the steps of the SpEd process.
- Apply information gained to collaborate with other school team members.
- Understand best practices and realize the variability among district processes.

Licensing and Regulations for the LSN

- All persons using the title of LSN meet the following licensing and credentialing requirements:
  - MN Rule 8710.6100 SCHOOL NURSE
  - MN Board of Nursing
  - Nurse Practice Act, Statute and Rules
  - Professional Educator Licensing Board (PELSB)

- The LSN follows the professional and practice parameters set in the School Nursing Scope and Standards of Practice, 4th edition. (National Association of School Nurses, NASN)

- The LSN follows the principles of professional school nursing practice in the The Framework for 21st Century School Nursing Practice. (NASN)

Licensure: MN Licensed School Nurse

Baccalaureate degree in nursing from a regionally accredited college or university

+

Licensed as a Registered Nurse (RN) by the MN Board of Nursing

+

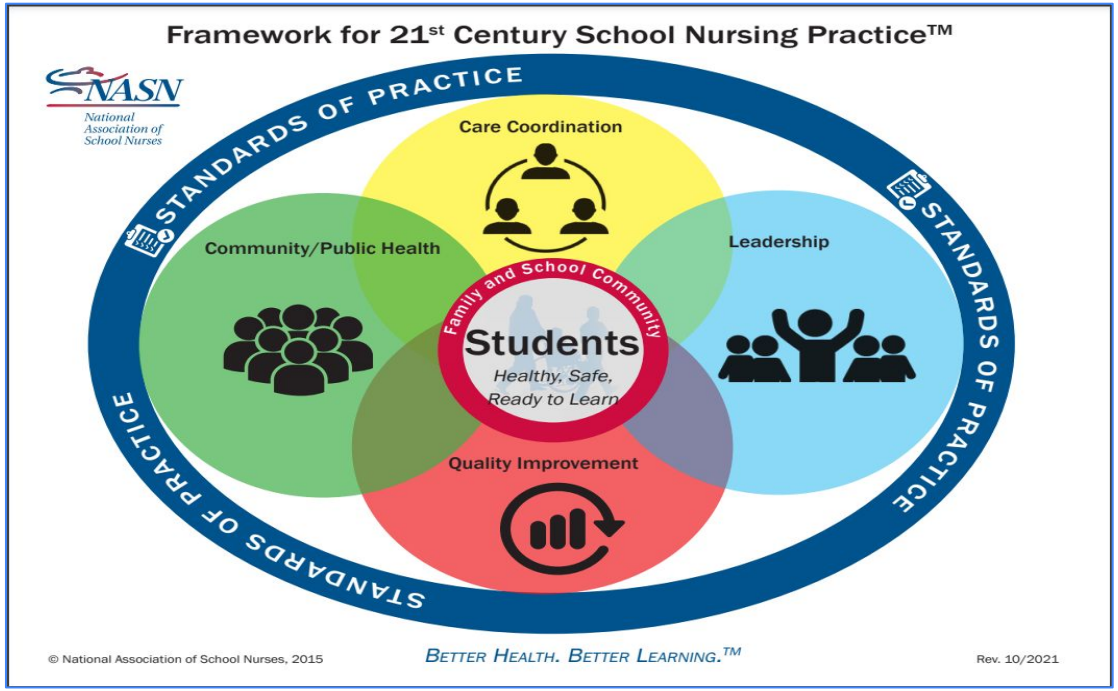
Certification as a public health nurse (PHN) by the MN Board of Nursing

=

School Nurse license issued by MN Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board (PELSB)

Adapted from MN Board of Nursing, MN Administrative Rules (8710.6100), PELSB

Framework of School Nursing Practice

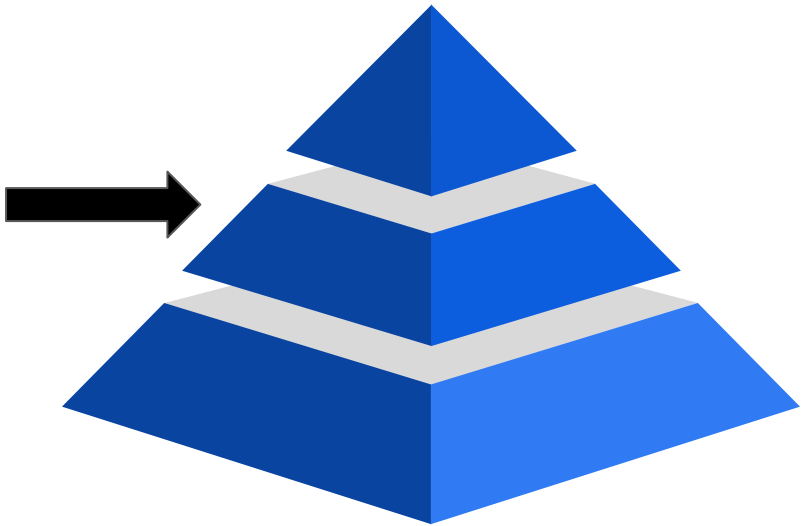


SpEd Due Process: Legal Rights of Students

Federal Rules and Regulations
(34 C.F.R. 300.111)

SpEd Due Process: Legal Rights of Students

State of MN Rules and Regulations
(Minn. R. 3523.0750, Minn. R. 3525.1100)

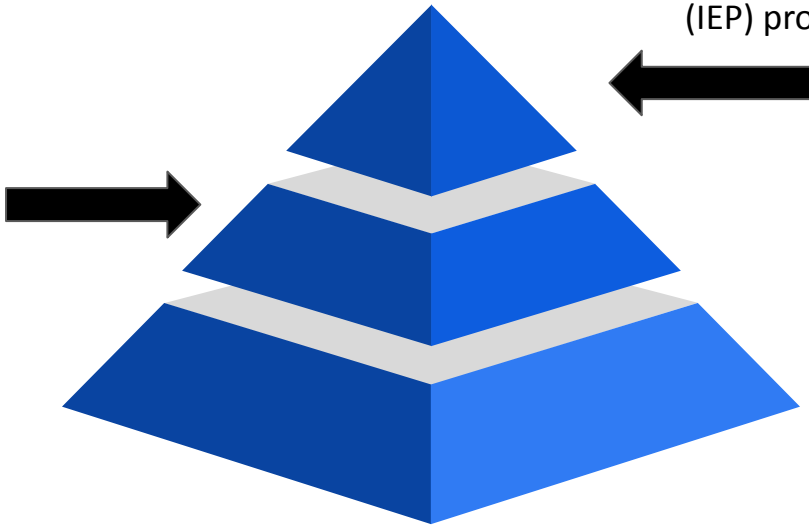


Federal Rules and Regulations
(34 C.F.R. 300.111)

SpEd Due Process: Legal Rights of Students

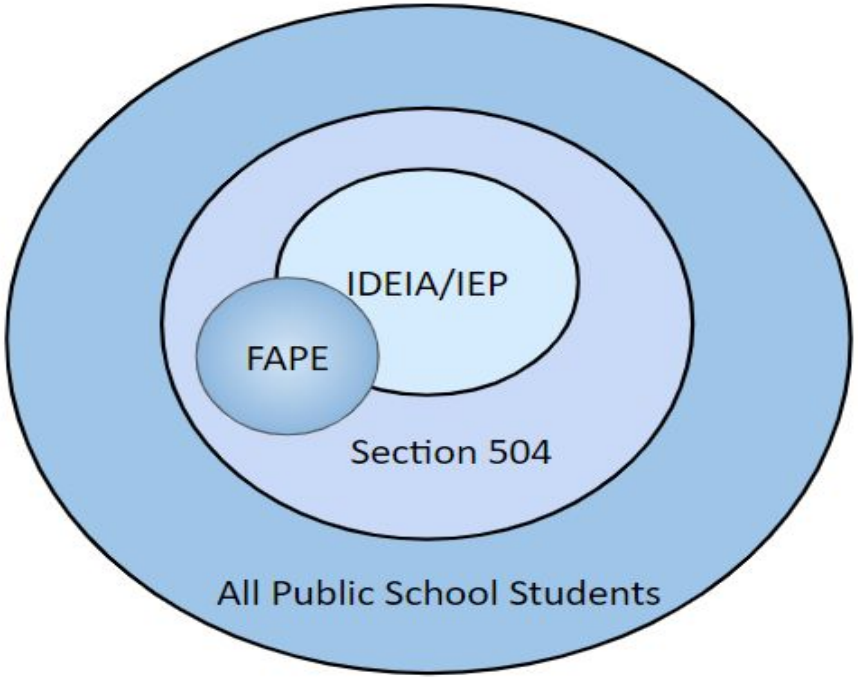
School District Policy may influence how to implement the Individual Education Plan (IEP) process.

State of MN Rules and Regulations
(Minn. R. 3523.0750, Minn. R. 3525.1100)



Federal Rules and Regulations
(34 C.F.R. 300.111)

Meeting the Needs of All Students

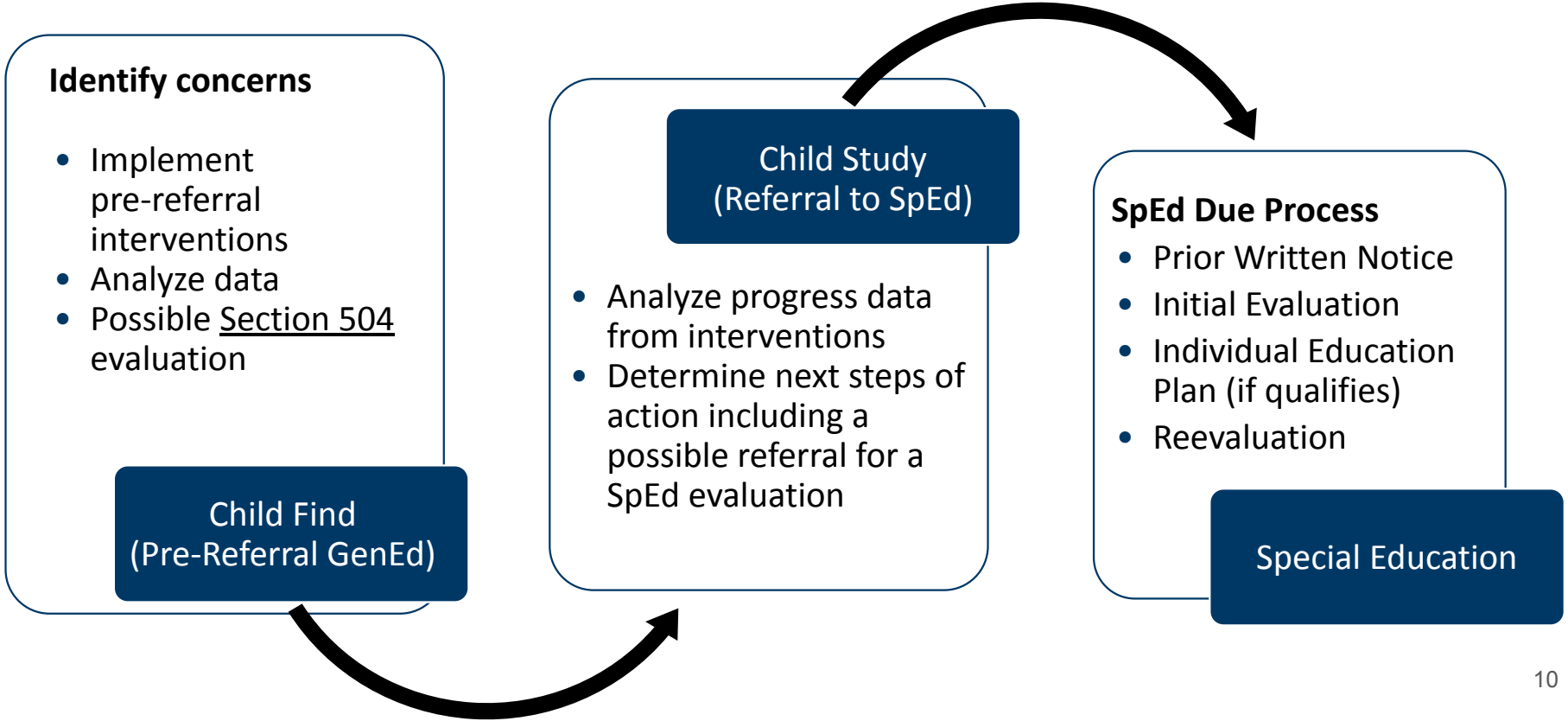


Section 504 - Federal statute that assures individuals will not be discriminated against based on their disability.

IDEIA* - Law that makes available FAPE to *eligible* students (special education) with disabilities in the LRE.
*Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act
*Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

FAPE - Free And Appropriate Education must be available to all children ages 3 through 21 for students with disabilities.

Identification of Student Needs



Why Include the School Nurse in the IEP Process

Code of Federal Regulations

A point in time eCFR system

Title 34

§ 300.34 Related services.

(a) *General.* ***Related services*** means transportation and such developmental, corrective, and other supportive services as are required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from special education, and includes speech-language pathology and audiology services, interpreting services, psychological services, physical and occupational therapy, recreation, including therapeutic recreation, early identification and assessment of disabilities in children, counseling services, including rehabilitation counseling, orientation and mobility services, and medical services for diagnostic or evaluation purposes. Related services also include school health services and school nurse services, social work services in schools, and parent counseling and training.

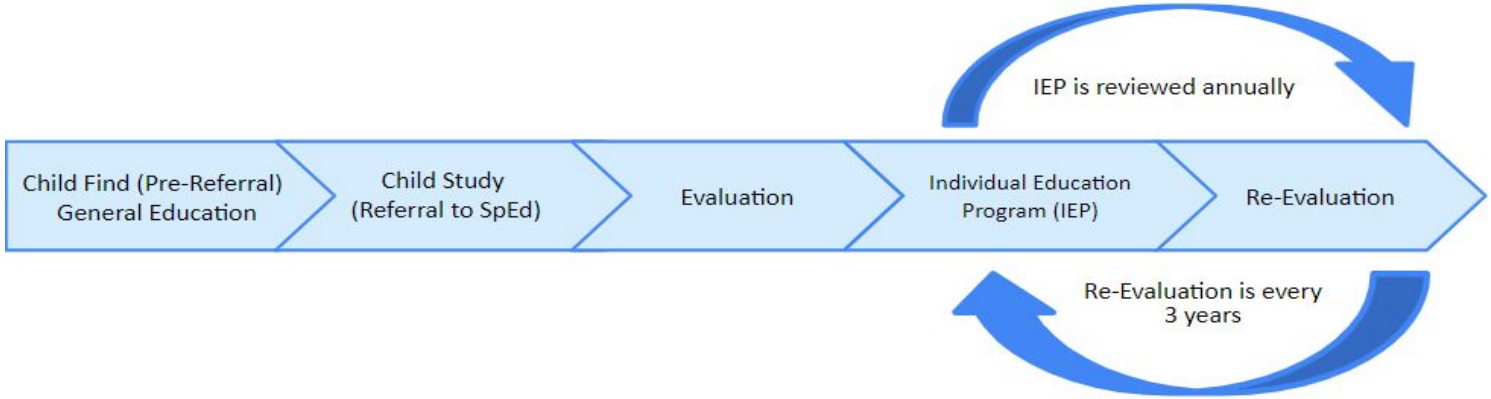
(13) ***School health services and school nurse services*** means health services that are designed to enable a child with a disability to receive FAPE as described in the child's IEP. School nurse services are services provided by a qualified school nurse. School health services are services that may be provided by either a qualified school nurse or other qualified person.

Why Include the School Nurse in the IEP Process

- State guidance / Rule: MN Dept of Education - Special Education
  - MN Rule 3525.0210 Special education means any specially designed instruction and **related services** to meet the unique needs of a pupil as stated in the IEP.
  - MN Rule 3525.2710 Determination of disability by a team of qualified professionals. Comprehensive evaluation to identify all special education and **related services** needs.
  - MN Rule 3525.2810 IEP Team must include those with knowledge and expertise, including **related services** personnel.

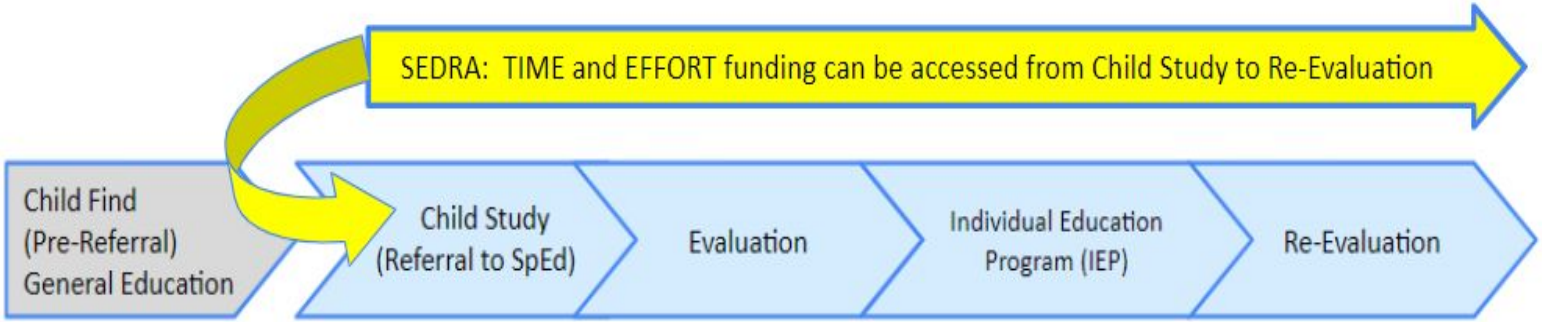
- NASN
  - The LSN is uniquely qualified with the clinical expertise to identify and interpret how a medical condition will impact learning (School Nursing Scope and Standards of Practice).
  - Individual with Disabilities Education Act and 504 Teams - The School Nurse is an Essential Team Member (NASN Position Statement).

Steps of the SpEd Process



- A parent/ guardian may request a 504 or a SpEd evaluation at any point and the school must consider the request.
- This process may stop at any point in time. For example, a parent/guardian may refuse an evaluation or a student may not meet eligibility requirements.
- Re-evaluation occurs every 3 years unless the parent and district agree that it is unnecessary.

Time and Effort



SEDRA (Special Education Data Reporting Application) is the **MDE system** to report special education expenditures.

- Based on SEDRA data, districts are reimbursed for a portion of staff salaries and benefits.
- MDE requires that staff who are paid from two different funding sources must complete a **daily time and effort** breakdown.
  - Example, when a nurse's salary is funded out of GenEd and SpEd, time and effort is required.

- Find out the source(s) of your salary and ask if time and effort must be completed.
- Questions regarding Time and Effort should be directed to MDE Finance.

Daily Time and Effort Documentation

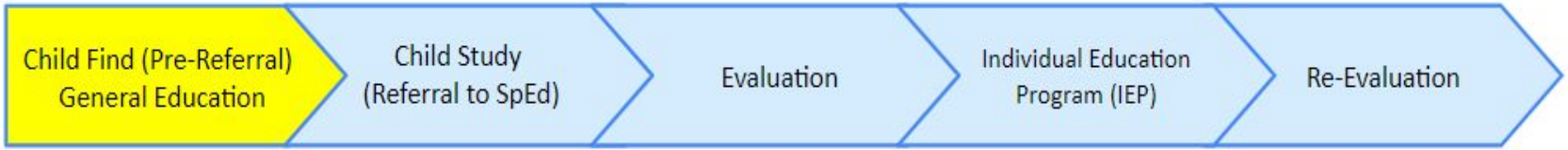
School	Name of School																							
Employee Name	First and Last Name																							
Employee Title:	School Nurse, RN																							
Time Period (Month/Year):	23-Sep																							
		Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mo	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun		
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	Total Hour	%
SPED	IEP Nursing Services	2	2	2	2	2			2	2	2	2	2			2	2	2	2	2			30	
	SPED Meetings			2	1												1						4	
	SPED Assessments	1								1	1	1							1				5	
	SPED Paperwork					1							1							1			3	
Gen ED	GenEd Nursing Services	5	6	4	5	5			6	5	5	5	5			6	5	6	5	5			78	65.0%
	Total SPED hours	3	2	4	3	3			2	3	3	3	3			2	3	2	3	3			42	35.0%
	Total hours	8	8	8	8	8			8	8	8	8	8			8	8	8	8	8			120	

SAMPLE	**Description of Activities**
Date	Time, Activity, Student Intials
9/1/2023	8-10am IEP Svcs HT, LP, NB, SW, DR, BT
Mon, 1st	10:00 - 11:00 SPED Health/ Physical Assessment

- Percentage estimates of SpEd time or short term time studies **Do Not Qualify** as Time and Effort.
- Time and Effort and Personnel Activity Record (PAR) might be used interchangeably.
- Time and Effort is not required if working in 100% GenEd or 100% SpEd.

Time and Effort - sample

Child Find



Ensures that **all** students with academic, physical and mental health concerns are:

- Identified
- Evaluated

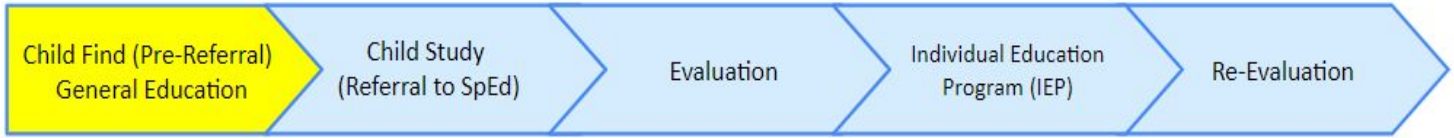
to determine needed accommodations.

Child Find Team meetings are called by different names, such as:

- Student Assistance Team (SAT)
- Teacher Assistance Team (TAT)
- Problem Solving Team (PST)
- Student Support Team (SST)

- Find out the name of your child find team, introduce yourself, get the schedule of meetings and plan your attendance.

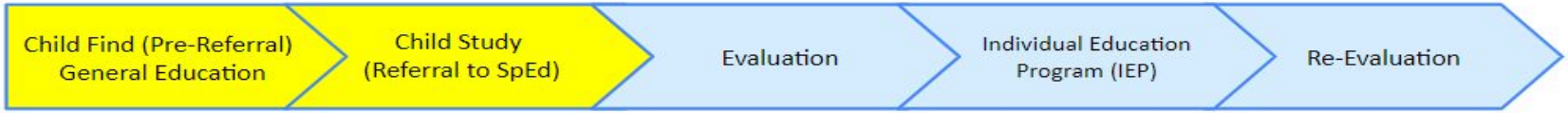
Child Find



- The Child Find Team with input from the parent/guardian will determine pre-referral interventions to assist the student.
- Assess/evaluate for actual and potential health concerns that are impacting learning and/or attendance.
    - Mental or physical condition that may or may not require a Health Plan and/or Section 504 Evaluation.

- Share the health information with the team lead if unable to attend a meeting.
- Ideally, vision and hearing screening will be completed at this step (follow district procedure).

Child Study: LSN Role



If the GenEd interventions and/or 504 accommodations are not working, a referral will be made to the SpEd Child Study Team (CST) to consider a SpEd evaluation.

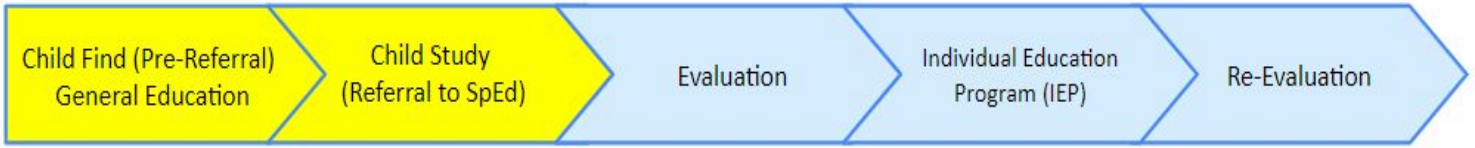
Purpose of attending: The LSN has the unique expertise to interpret the health condition(s) and how it impacts learning.

LSN Role:

- Prioritize your attendance at the meeting to share educationally relevant mental and/or physical health information.
- When unable to attend, review and share health information with the child study lead prior to the meeting.

- Identify the child study team lead, introduce yourself and locate the meeting schedule.
- Keep a log of your evaluations and the due dates.

Child Study: LSN Role



The LSN will interpret health data and determine if a nursing evaluation will be required.

- LPNs, RNs or unlicensed health personnel can assist the LSN in *gathering* health information.
- Health Information Worksheet - sample The worksheet includes areas such as screening results, attendance and visits to the health office.

- Additional sample forms can be found on MDE's Sharepoint. For access email, mde.special-ed@state.mn.us.

Evaluation: LSN Role

The LSN will collaborate with the evaluation team to determine the areas of mental and/or physical health to be evaluated that may impact learning.

- Prior Written Notice (PWN) is required to begin the evaluation process.
- Only information included on the PWN can be evaluated.

A comprehensive nursing evaluation *should* include the following and be listed on the PWN:

- Obtain and review medical records.
- Review current health status and any relevant health history.
- Parent / guardian interview.
- Student observation (and interview if appropriate).
- Hearing and vision screening.

- Collaborate with the case manager to determine due dates and timelines.

Evaluation Report: LSN Role

- The LSN interprets data and documents findings from the nursing evaluation in the evaluation report (ER).
- Information must be current and educationally relevant.
- Include a summary statement that indicates if the student's health needs impact learning and if the need requires nursing services. This summary statement will also be placed in the Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP) in the IEP.

IEP Nursing Case Studies - sample

- Reach out to the staff member that provides access to the district SpEd software.
- Ask if there is a professional development module on how to use the SpEd software.

Evaluation Report: Diabetes Sample

Health record review was completed by (insert name and credential) on MM-DD-YY. Medical records note the diagnosis of Type 1 Diabetes at age 5. (Student) is followed by (insert name of endocrinologist or provider) and medical orders were received on MM-DD-YY. Parent reports (student) requires assistance with checking blood sugars, counting carbs for snacks and meals, administering insulin multiple times each day. Blood sugars have been recently fluctuating and insulin dosage has been changed frequently.

Passed hearing and vision screening on MM-DD-YY. Other than for diabetes, has no visits to the health office. Visits the health office 5-7 times each day for management of diabetes. 5 days absent from school due to clinic appointments.

In summary, nursing services are required to provide chronic disease management related to diabetes. Services include monitoring blood glucose levels, providing medication and treatments as ordered and facilitating communication between the licensed providers, parents and school staff to include training regarding the plan of care and emergency response for hypoglycemia.

- The summary statement describes the story or ‘why’ the student needs nursing services.
- When writing IEP reports, use full sentences, avoid abbreviations, health care and education jargon.

Other Health Disabilities (OHD)

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OTHER HEALTH DISABILITIES

A. Health Condition Documentation

☐ Written and signed documentation of a medically diagnosed chronic or acute health condition by a physician or licensed health care provider acting within the scope of their practice. For initial evaluations, all documentation must be dated within the previous 12 months.
List Health Condition here: _____

OR

☐ In the case of a diagnosis of Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (AD/HD), written and signed documentation of a medical diagnosis by a licensed physician, an advanced practice registered nurse, a physician assistant, or licensed psychologist is required for purposes of identifying a child with a disability.(Minn. Stat. 125A.02 Subd.1.)

For an initial evaluation, documents must be dated within the past 12 months. The documentation must show the student meets DSM criteria in items A-E. DSM criteria documentation must be provided by a licensed physician, mental health or medical professional licensed to diagnose the condition.

- Medical documentation is required at the initial evaluation, it does not need to be updated except if the condition changes.

What is an Individual Education Program (IEP)

- An IEP is a written legal document that describes the child's educational needs and details the special education and related services the district will provide to address those needs.
- Based on the evaluation report, when the student has a health need that impacts learning and requires nursing services, the services must be documented on the IEP.

IEP: Service Grid

All required nursing services can be documented on the IEP in two areas:

- Service Grid
- Accommodations

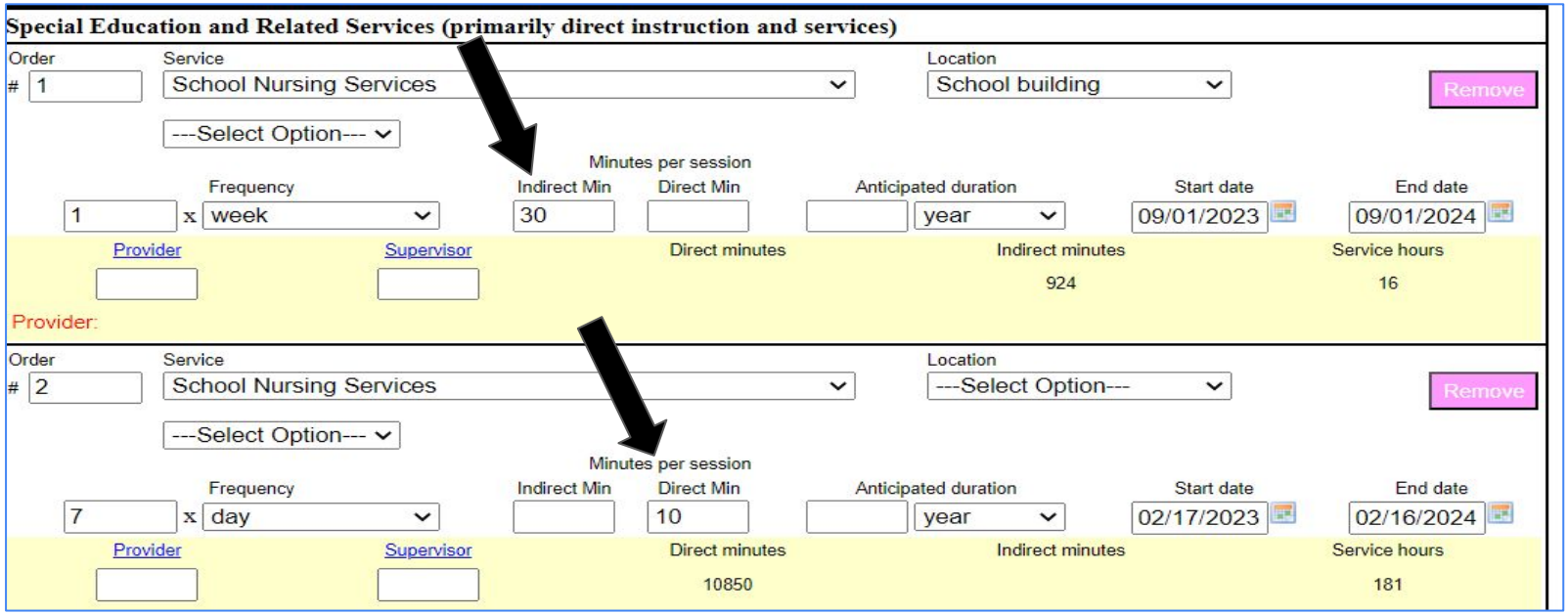
Service Grid: Organizes and approximates the time needed to provide services.
Direct and Indirect Nursing minutes on the Service Grid.

- Direct Nursing: face to face services with the student
- Indirect Nursing: non face to face services provided such as planning, consultation, training, delegation and supervision and management of medication and chronic disease.

- Some districts do not document nursing time on the service grid.
- If time on grid deviates consistently, contact the case manager.

IEP: Service Grid

Child Find (Pre-Referral) General Education → Child Study (Referral to SpEd) → Evaluation → Individual Education Program (IEP) → Re-Evaluation



IEP: Accommodations Section

Accommodations Section:

- Describes the nursing services that will be provided.

IEP Nursing Case Studies - sample

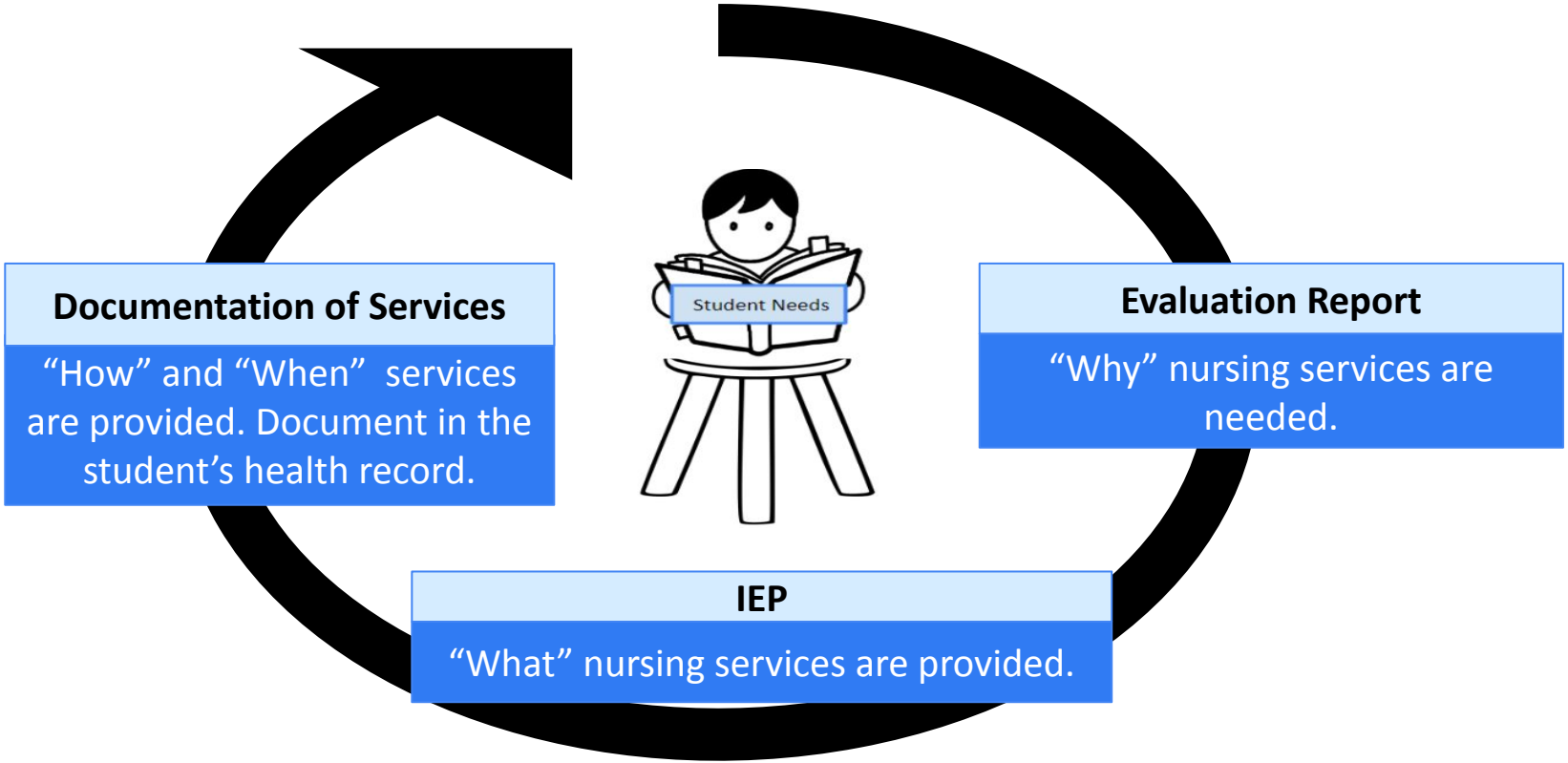
- Services on the grid must be described in the accommodation section.
- Districts are responsible for providing the services needed, regardless of where they are documented on the IEP.
- A goal statement is not required for nursing services.

Sample Accommodation Statement

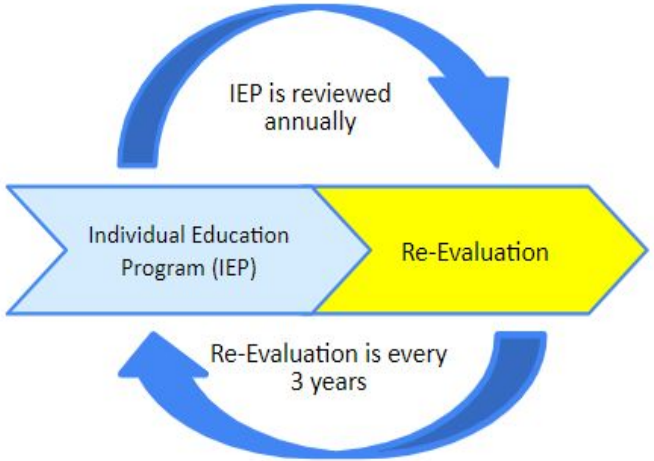
Due to diagnosis of diabetes, (name of student) will receive nursing services to provide chronic disease management. The Licensed School Nurse (LSN) will provide medication management to monitor blood glucose levels, administer daily medication, count and monitor carbohydrate intake, administer emergency medication following medical orders, communicate with parents, staff, and health care providers. The nurse will provide training and supervision of delegated tasks, including monitoring for symptoms of high/low blood sugar, counting and monitoring carbohydrate intake, administering daily and emergency medication. A health assessment will be completed annually and when changes of health status occur.

- The accommodation statement is the broad statement of the nursing services that will be provided.

Summary of Supporting Documentation



Annual IEP and Re-evaluation: LSN Role



Annual IEP

- PWN
- Review to determine if student's needs and nursing services are accurate on the IEP.
- If changes are needed, contact the student's case manager and update the services on the IEP.

Re-evaluation

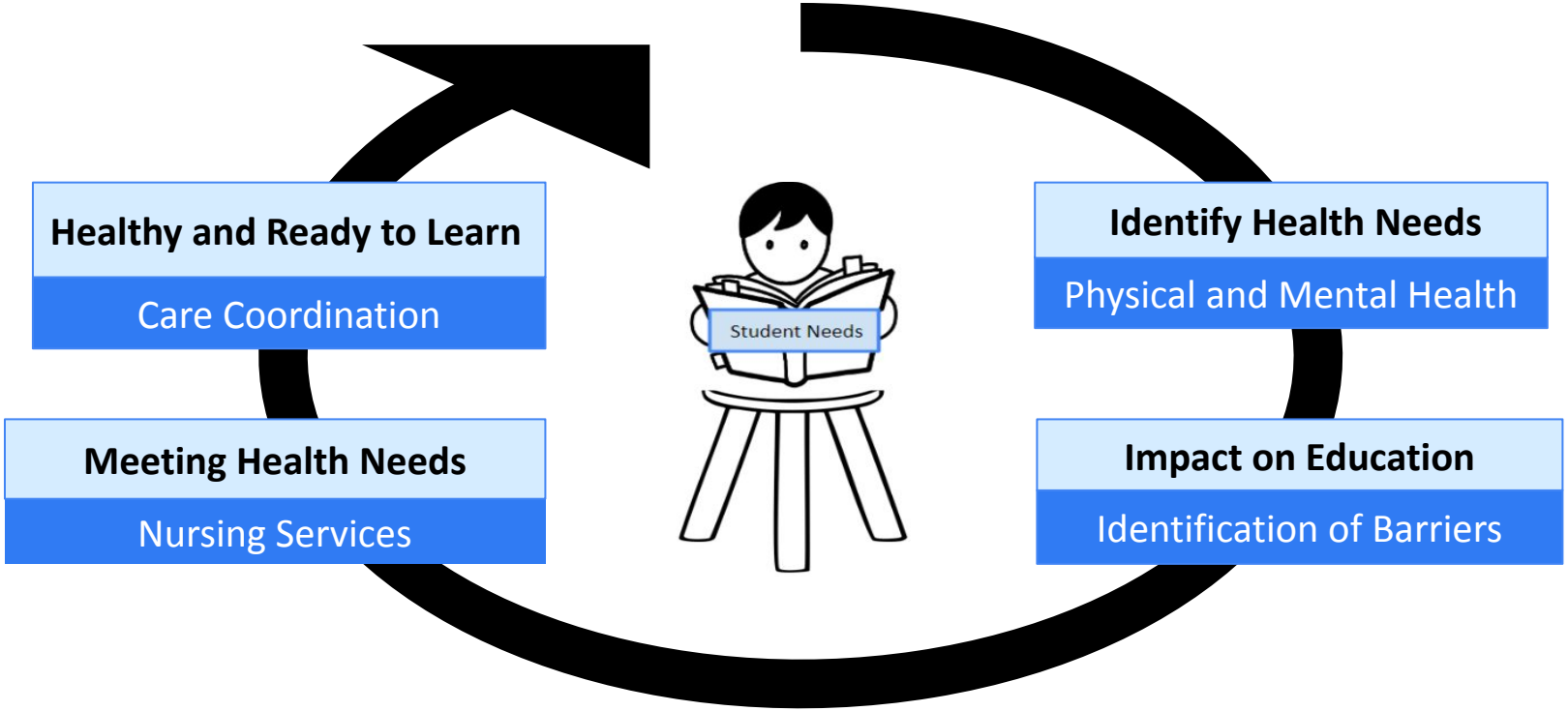
- PWN
- Comprehensive nursing evaluation must be completed.

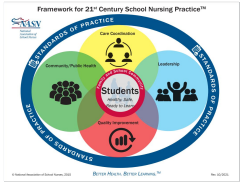
- The Annual IEP and re-evaluation determine the need for continuing specialized instruction.
- Nursing assessment is an ongoing process throughout the school year.
- If changes are required to the IEP outside of the annual or Re-evaluation, it is called a significant change and is handled by the case manager.
- Re-evaluation may not occur more than once/year unless the parent and district agree.

Considerations

- LSN should document their own assessment on the evaluation, PLAAFP and services on the IEP.
- Student health plans are an essential component of chronic disease management and should be referenced in the accommodation section.
- Consider a health plan and/or a Section 504 evaluation to meet the needs of the student if they did not meet eligibility requirements for an IEP.

Scope: Integration of Health Care in the Education Setting





Summary of Key "Lightbulb'" Tips

	Child Find GenEd	Child Study	Evaluation	IEP	Re-Evaluation
Care Coordination/ Collaboration/ Interdisciplinary	Introduce yourself to the Child Find team.		Collaborate with the case manager and related services staff.	Communicate with the case manager when student needs vary from what's documented.	
Leadership	Locate the Child Find meeting calendar.	Locate the meeting calendar and due dates/timelines.			
Quality Improvement: Documentation and Data	Review physical and mental health data to identify and evaluate needs.		Summarize health needs that impact learning and if nursing services are needed.	Determine district SpEd documentation practices.	Determine if student's needs and nursing services are accurate on the IEP.
Scope and Standard of Practice			Enter health / physical data in your districts SpEd software.	Document services provided in student health record.	

The Bottom Line

The LSN is uniquely qualified with the clinical expertise to identify and interpret how a medical condition will impact the student's learning and how to best meet their health needs.

Resources

Code of Federal Regulations Related Services, (https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-34/subtitle-B/chapter-III/part-300/subpart-A/subject-group-ECFR0ec59c730ac278e/section-300.34)

Code of Federal Regulations Child Find, (https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-34/subtitle-B/chapter-III/part-300/subpart-B/subject-group-ECFRf27988d69cd5d3a/section-300.111)

FAPE (https://sites.ed.gov/idea/regs/b/b/300.101)

Individuals with Education Act Home (IDEIA) (https://sites.ed.gov/idea/)

MN Department of Education

- Special Education (https://education.mn.gov/MDE/dse/sped/)
- Direct and Indirect Services (https://www.revisor.mn.gov/rules/3525.0210/)
- Section 504 (https://education.mn.gov/mde/dse/504/)
- Special Education Funding Guide (https://education.mn.gov/MDE/dse/schfin/sped/guide/)
- Sharepoint (mde.special-ed@state.mn.us)

Pacer Center (https://www.pacer.org/parent/)

LSN Practice Resources

LSN licensing and credentialing requirements:

- MN Rule 8710.6100 SCHOOL NURSE, (https://www.revisor.mn.gov/rules/8710.6100/)
- MN Board of Nursing, (https://mn.gov/boards/nursing/practice/nursing-practice-topics/obtain-school-nurse-license.jsp)
- Nurse Practice Act, (https://mn.gov/boards/nursing/laws-and-rules/nurse-practice-act/)
- Statute, (https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/148.171)
- Rules, (https://www.revisor.mn.gov/rules/6301.0100/)
- Professional Educator Licensing Board (https://mn.gov/pelsb/assets/School%20Nurse%20Licensure%20Information%20POST_tcm1113-520349.pdf)

NASN (https://www.nasn.org/home) IDEIA and Section 504 (https://www.nasn.org/nasn-resources/professional-practice-documents/position-statements/ps-ideia)

School Nursing Scope and Standards of Practice, 4th edition. (National Association of School Nurses, NASN), (https://www.nasn.org/blogs/nasn-inc/2022/07/28/school-nursing-scope-and-standards-of-practice-4th)

The Framework for 21st Century School Nursing Practice. (https://www.nasn.org/nasn-resources/framework)

Thank you!