

Contact

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Our Approach and Beliefs

At KDIA, we believe that students with disabilities have the right to access and inclusion in all aspects of the educational environment and experience. Our approach to student support services include:

- Understanding disability as a natural part of human diversity, and not something "special" or stigmatized;
- Celebrating all of our different strengths, interests, and ways of being human;
- Writing strengths-based goals, focused on self-advocacy skills over social skills and compliance;
- Neurodiversity-affirming interactions, lessons, and social-emotional approaches;
- Understanding the intersectionality of access in our communities and school environments;
- Respecting student and family autonomy and agency in all interactions;
- "We all need each other". Interdependence is vital to being in community with each other, not a barrier.

Child Find

Child Find is part of the federal special education law known as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), that requires schools identify, locate, and evaluate all children, aged birth through 21 years, who have disabilities and may be entitled to special education and related services.

When a parent, educator, doctor, or other individual suspects a child may have a disability, a written request for a special education evaluation can be made to the student's teacher or administrator in the district.

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support

KDIA utilizes a Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) framework to identify individual student strengths and support needs based on data. The purpose of MTSS is to **meet the individual assets and needs of the whole child** and to **interconnect the education, health, and human service systems in support of successful learners**.

Essential components of our MTSS framework include:

- **Universal Screening and Assessments** - all students are screened, assessed, and monitored annually in the following areas: development (kindergarten and all new students), reading, dyslexia, math, vision, hearing, and social-emotional learning.
- **Universal Design for Learning** - KDIA's selected curriculum considers the whole child, with embedded opportunities for in-class support and intervention.
- **Continuous Data-Based Decision Making** - Staff utilizes ongoing informal and formal student data to guide all support decisions.
- **Tiered Student Support** - Students receive interventions and support in varying tiers, which are designed to meet the individual strengths and support needs of the whole child (cognitive, physical, social, emotional, behavioral).

Specific Learning Disability

KDIA currently uses a **pattern of strengths and weaknesses process** to determine whether a student meets criteria for having a Specific Learning Disability (SLD). Based on formal evaluations, the following would be true for a student meeting criteria for SLD:

- The student does not achieve adequately for the student's age or meet state-approved grade-level standards when provided with appropriate learning experiences and instruction, *and*
- The student exhibits a pattern of strengths and weaknesses in performance, achievement, or both, relative to age, state-approved grade-level standards, or intellectual development.

Resources

- KDIA Diverse Learning Handbook (*coming soon*)
- [Family Matters Fact Sheet: Child Find](#)
- [Family Matters Fact Sheet: MTSS](#)
- [Family Matters Fact Sheet: Individuals with Disabilities Education Act](#)
- [Family Matters Fact Sheet: Free Appropriate Public Education](#)
- [Family Matters Fact Sheet: Special Education Process](#)
- [Parent Request for Evaluation template](#)
- [Michigan Alliance for Families](#)