

Special Education in Gower

Gower School District 62 works to ensure that every student's individual learning needs are being met and attempts to identify all students in the district who have disabilities that significantly impact academic achievement and functional performance. When a concern is expressed either by school staff, student, or a parent, the student's academic and social/emotional status is reviewed through a problem-solving process. Teachers and support staff, along with the student and parents, may develop and implement interventions and strategies to address needs. When interventions/strategies adequately meet the needs of a student, no further action is necessary.

When strategies and intervention plans are not successful in appropriately supporting a student, an individual assessment, referred to as a case study evaluation, is initiated to determine eligibility for Special Education services.

A case study evaluation is conducted with written parent/guardian consent and includes a series of assessments and data collection procedures that provide information about the student and the nature of the difficulties that affect educational success. The educational team, including the parents, decides what assessments and data are needed in order to complete a comprehensive review. Assessments may include, but not be limited to, psychological, achievement, adaptive behavior, speech and language, occupational/physical therapy, vision and hearing screenings, health history and a social developmental study. The assessment must be completed within 60 school days from the date of written parental consent. When the case study evaluation is completed, results are shared and eligibility for Special Education services is determined by the educational team.

Any private evaluations, provided by parents, are considered by the educational team and are compared to the district's special education evaluative results. Within 14 days of receiving a private evaluation or other request for assessment, the educational team determines whether additional assessment or other steps are warranted.

To receive special education services, students must be determined to have one of the following exceptionalities as defined by the Illinois State Board of Education:

- Autism (includes, but is not limited to, any Autism Spectrum Disorder)
- Deaf-blindness
- Deafness
- Emotional disability
- Hearing impairment
- Intellectual disability
- Multiple disabilities

- Orthopedic impairment
- Other health impairment
- Specific learning disability
- Speech or language impairment
- Traumatic brain injury
- Visual impairment

If the student is determined to be eligible for special education support, an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is developed and reviewed annually. Eligibility for special education services is reevaluated every three years.