Child Find

What is it?

Child Find is a legal requirement for schools to identify children who have disabilities and need services. Child Find is part of a federal law called the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). This law protects the rights of students with disabilities.

What the law says...

The State must have in effect policies and procedures to ensure that:

All children with disabilities residing in the State, including children with disabilities who are homeless children or are wards of the State, and children with disabilities attending private schools, regardless of the severity of their disability, and who are in need of special education and related services, are identified, located, and evaluated;

Child find also must include children who are suspected of being a child with a disability under Sec. 300.8 and in need of special education, even though they are advancing from grade to grade; and highly mobile children, including migrant children.

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1401(3); 1412(a)(3) )

What the law means...

Child Find requires all school districts to have a process for identifying and evaluating children who may need special education services. All children ages 0 to 21 are included in this requirement, even those who are homeschooled or attend private school. Parents can request that a school district evaluate their child if they suspect their child has a disability. If a school district refuses a parent’s request to evaluate their child, parents can request a due process hearing.