



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING

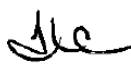
RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

BRIAN J. WHISTON
STATE SUPERINTENDENT

MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 31, 2017

TO: Intermediate School District Superintendents

FROM: Teri Chapman, Ed. S., Director
Office of Special Education 

SUBJECT: *Family Matters* Resources and Information

The Michigan Department of Education (MDE), Office of Special Education (OSE) is pleased to announce the creation of *Family Matters* resources and information. The MDE OSE is requesting your ISD's assistance in sharing this information with families in your communities.

Letters have been sent to all ISD Special Education Directors seeking their support as well. The letter explains the need for *Family Matters* and includes directions for how they can assist in the use and distribution of this information to families of children with disabilities.

The MDE OSE developed *Family Matters* resources in response to recommendations from the Governor's Special Education Reform Task Force. The final report from the task force advised the MDE to improve access to resources for families with children who receive special education programs and services. The recommendation specifically calls for the MDE to promote the resources, and for local and intermediate school districts to "use this information to proactively contact the families of students regarding procedural safeguards and the resources available to them."

The goal of the MDE OSE is that during the initial Individualized Education Program (IEP) team meeting, districts will distribute information on behalf of the MDE OSE to families. This information includes a *Family Matters* flyer, a letter to parents from the MDE OSE Director, and a Procedural Safeguards fact sheet. The fact sheet does not replace the Procedural Safeguards document provided to parents by the ISD, but supplements it as a brief overview about the topic.

Sharing this information is an opportunity for ISDs, districts, and the MDE OSE to further collaborate in supporting families. In an effort to assist families in their ability

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to meaningfully participate in the educational program development for their child, please use this information as a way to further support families of children receiving special education services.

Thank you for your attention and support of this effort.