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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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MICHAEL F. RICE, Ph.D.
STATE SUPERINTENDENT

MEMORANDUM

DATE: April 18, 2024

TO: ISD Directors of Special Education

FROM: Teri L. Rink, Ed.S., Director 
MDE Office of Special Education

Jonnie Taton, S.Psy.S., NCSP., Director 
MiLEAP Early Childhood Development & Family Education

SUBJECT: Guidance for the Determination of Eligibility for Michigan Mandatory Special Education for Infants and Toddlers, Birth to Age Three, Visual Impairment Including Blindness

The guidance document for the Determination of Eligibility for Michigan Mandatory Special Education (MMSE) for Infants and Toddlers, Birth to Age Three, Visual Impairment Including Blindness is now available. This document was made possible through a joint effort of the Michigan Department of Education Office of Special Education (MDE OSE); Michigan Department of Lifelong Education, Advancement, and Potential Office of Early Childhood Development and Family Education (MiLEAP ECD & FE); and MDE Low Incidence Outreach (MDE-LIO). The purpose of the guidance document is to promote the appropriate identification and qualification of infants and toddlers, birth to age three, who are eligible for MMSE, in addition to being eligible for *Early On*[®] services.

In addition to the Visual Impairment Including Blindness document, previously released guidance for MMSE eligibility categories includes:

- Deaf or Hard of Hearing (DHH)
- Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
- Early Childhood Developmental Delay (ECDD)
- Other Health Impairment (OHI)
- Speech Language Impairment (SLI)

These guidance documents are intended to inform key stakeholders and, to provide awareness, guidance, professional development, training, and additional supports regarding the appropriate identification of infants and toddlers under MMSE.

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The process for creating guidance for the application of [Michigan Administrative Rules for Special Education \(MARSE\)](#) categories for infants and toddlers, birth to age three, includes convening stakeholder groups, creating broad and expert developer and reviewer workgroups, and final approval from MDE OSE and MiLEAP ECD & FE.

Visit the [MDE Office of Special Education Evaluations and Eligibility page](#) to access the visual impairment including blindness guidance and guidance documents for other eligibility categories.

Thank you to those who were involved in the creation of these documents. Guidance regarding the remaining eligibility categories is under evaluation.

Contact Janet Timbs, MiLEAP ECD & FE, at timbsj@michigan.gov or Jessica Brady, MDE OSE, at bradyj@michigan.gov with questions or comments.

cc: Roxanne Balfour, Director, MDE-LIO