



# Special Education Funding and Outplacement Costs

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The topic of special education funding and outplacement costs is a complicated one. The funding of special education costs is largely the district's responsibility and will be described in this article. The funding of special education has been mandated since 1975 with the Education for All

Handicapped Children Act, later changed to the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA).

A team of professionals, in addition to parents, determine what services are required for the student to receive a free appropriate public education. These services are in a continuum. The preference of the team is to plan supports and services in the student's classroom. At times, however, this is not appropriate for the student due to the nature of the disability. We, as a team, would then look at the appropriateness of providing portions of time in an alternate classroom for the students to receive the types of teaching that they require. For some students, they require an entire day in a special education teacher's classroom to ensure that they are learning.

Seymour has created multiple programs within our district to support students with a variety of special education disabilities, with ages that range from 3 to 21-years-old; when this is feasible, it is the opinion of many that this is best for our students, as they are with their peers from their community. However, there are instances in which a student requires more supports than the district can provide. In those cases, it is the district's responsibility to place a student in a specialized school, sometimes referred to as an outplacement. From a funding perspective, the responsibility of the district is to fund both the cost of tuition, as well as the transportation costs.

As stated before, funding for special education services and supports is largely a district's responsibility. However, the federal government does provide funds through grants and Medicaid. Each district receives a percentage of their special education costs through these grants. When the IDEA was first passed, Congress authorized the federal funding of 40% of the costs of education to districts. However, this has never been the case. The federal government has historically funded between 10% and 20%. In addition, in December, 2017, Connecticut mandated all public school districts to bill certain services provided to students with disabilities through Medicaid; billable services include supports such as speech-language therapy and counseling

All of our students deserve to receive a free appropriate public education. Students with disabilities have a unique set of talents, as well as areas of significant weakness. It is the district's responsibility to ensure an appropriate education for all students, including every student with a disability. For questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to Dr. Boyle at [KBoyle@seymourschools.org](mailto:KBoyle@seymourschools.org) or (203) 888-7232.