

SB2249



104TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

State of Illinois

2025 and 2026

SB2249

Introduced 2/7/2025, by Sen. Ram Villivalam

SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

105 ILCS 5/14-2

105 ILCS 5/14-8.02

from Ch. 122, par. 14-8.02

Amends the Children with Disabilities Article of the School Code. Provides that any student with an individualized education program or any child with a disability who has not been removed from the regular education environment shall receive educational services at the local building that the child would attend if the child did not require special education services.

LRB104 09498 LNS 19559 b

A BILL FOR

1 AN ACT concerning education.

2 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,**
3 **represented in the General Assembly:**

4 Section 5. The School Code is amended by changing Sections
5 14-2 and 14-8.02 as follows:

6 (105 ILCS 5/14-2)

7 Sec. 14-2. Definition of general education classroom for
8 special education students receiving services in the general
9 education classroom.

10 (a) With respect to any State statute or administrative
11 rule that defines a general education classroom to be composed
12 of a certain percentage of students with individualized
13 education programs (IEPs), students with individualized
14 education programs shall exclude students receiving only
15 speech services outside of the general education classroom,
16 provided that the instruction the students receive in the
17 general education classroom does not require modification.

18 (b) In every instance, a school district must ensure that
19 composition of the general education classroom does not
20 interfere with the provision of a free and appropriate public
21 education to any student.

22 (c) Any student with an individualized education program
23 shall receive services in general education classrooms in the

1 local school building that the child would attend if the child
2 did not require special educational services.

3 (Source: P.A. 97-284, eff. 8-9-11.)

4 (105 ILCS 5/14-8.02) (from Ch. 122, par. 14-8.02)

5 Sec. 14-8.02. Identification, evaluation, and placement of
6 children.

7 (a) The State Board of Education shall make rules under
8 which local school boards shall determine the eligibility of
9 children to receive special education. Such rules shall ensure
10 that a free appropriate public education be available to all
11 children with disabilities as defined in Section 14-1.02 and
12 that any child with a disability who has not been removed from
13 the regular educational environment in accordance with
14 paragraph (d) of this Section shall receive educational
15 services and special educational services at the local school
16 building that the child would attend if the child did not
17 require special educational services. The State Board of
18 Education shall require local school districts to administer
19 non-discriminatory procedures or tests to English learners
20 coming from homes in which a language other than English is
21 used to determine their eligibility to receive special
22 education. The placement of low English proficiency students
23 in special education programs and facilities shall be made in
24 accordance with the test results reflecting the student's
25 linguistic, cultural and special education needs. For purposes

1 of determining the eligibility of children the State Board of
2 Education shall include in the rules definitions of "case
3 study", "staff conference", "individualized educational
4 program", and "qualified specialist" appropriate to each
5 category of children with disabilities as defined in this
6 Article. For purposes of determining the eligibility of
7 children from homes in which a language other than English is
8 used, the State Board of Education shall include in the rules
9 definitions for "qualified bilingual specialists" and
10 "linguistically and culturally appropriate individualized
11 educational programs". For purposes of this Section, as well
12 as Sections 14-8.02a, 14-8.02b, and 14-8.02c of this Code,
13 "parent" means a parent as defined in the federal Individuals
14 with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1401(23)).

15 (b) No child shall be eligible for special education
16 facilities except with a carefully completed case study fully
17 reviewed by professional personnel in a multidisciplinary
18 staff conference and only upon the recommendation of qualified
19 specialists or a qualified bilingual specialist, if available.
20 At the conclusion of the multidisciplinary staff conference,
21 the parent of the child and, if the child is in the legal
22 custody of the Department of Children and Family Services, the
23 Department's Office of Education and Transition Services shall
24 be given a copy of the multidisciplinary conference summary
25 report and recommendations, which includes options considered,
26 and, in the case of the parent, be informed of his or her right

1 to obtain an independent educational evaluation if he or she
2 disagrees with the evaluation findings conducted or obtained
3 by the school district. If the school district's evaluation is
4 shown to be inappropriate, the school district shall reimburse
5 the parent for the cost of the independent evaluation. The
6 State Board of Education shall, with advice from the State
7 Advisory Council on Education of Children with Disabilities on
8 the inclusion of specific independent educational evaluators,
9 prepare a list of suggested independent educational
10 evaluators. The State Board of Education shall include on the
11 list clinical psychologists licensed pursuant to the Clinical
12 Psychologist Licensing Act. Such psychologists shall not be
13 paid fees in excess of the amount that would be received by a
14 school psychologist for performing the same services. The
15 State Board of Education shall supply school districts with
16 such list and make the list available to parents at their
17 request. School districts shall make the list available to
18 parents at the time they are informed of their right to obtain
19 an independent educational evaluation. However, the school
20 district may initiate an impartial due process hearing under
21 this Section within 5 days of any written parent request for an
22 independent educational evaluation to show that its evaluation
23 is appropriate. If the final decision is that the evaluation
24 is appropriate, the parent still has a right to an independent
25 educational evaluation, but not at public expense. An
26 independent educational evaluation at public expense must be

1 completed within 30 days of a parent's written request unless
2 the school district initiates an impartial due process hearing
3 or the parent or school district offers reasonable grounds to
4 show that such 30-day time period should be extended. If the
5 due process hearing decision indicates that the parent is
6 entitled to an independent educational evaluation, it must be
7 completed within 30 days of the decision unless the parent or
8 the school district offers reasonable grounds to show that
9 such 30-day period should be extended. If a parent disagrees
10 with the summary report or recommendations of the
11 multidisciplinary conference or the findings of any
12 educational evaluation which results therefrom, the school
13 district shall not proceed with a placement based upon such
14 evaluation and the child shall remain in his or her regular
15 classroom setting. No child shall be eligible for admission to
16 a special class for children with a mental disability who are
17 educable or for children with a mental disability who are
18 trainable except with a psychological evaluation and
19 recommendation by a school psychologist. Consent shall be
20 obtained from the parent of a child before any evaluation is
21 conducted. If consent is not given by the parent or if the
22 parent disagrees with the findings of the evaluation, then the
23 school district may initiate an impartial due process hearing
24 under this Section. The school district may evaluate the child
25 if that is the decision resulting from the impartial due
26 process hearing and the decision is not appealed or if the

1 decision is affirmed on appeal. The determination of
2 eligibility shall be made and the IEP meeting shall be
3 completed within 60 school days from the date of written
4 parental consent. In those instances when written parental
5 consent is obtained with fewer than 60 pupil attendance days
6 left in the school year, the eligibility determination shall
7 be made and the IEP meeting shall be completed prior to the
8 first day of the following school year. Special education and
9 related services must be provided in accordance with the
10 student's IEP no later than 10 school attendance days after
11 notice is provided to the parents pursuant to Section 300.503
12 of Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations and
13 implementing rules adopted by the State Board of Education.
14 The appropriate program pursuant to the individualized
15 educational program of students whose native tongue is a
16 language other than English shall reflect the special
17 education, cultural and linguistic needs. No later than
18 September 1, 1993, the State Board of Education shall
19 establish standards for the development, implementation and
20 monitoring of appropriate bilingual special individualized
21 educational programs. The State Board of Education shall
22 further incorporate appropriate monitoring procedures to
23 verify implementation of these standards. The district shall
24 indicate to the parent, the State Board of Education, and, if
25 applicable, the Department's Office of Education and
26 Transition Services the nature of the services the child will

1 receive for the regular school term while awaiting placement
2 in the appropriate special education class. At the child's
3 initial IEP meeting and at each annual review meeting, the
4 child's IEP team shall provide the child's parent or guardian
5 and, if applicable, the Department's Office of Education and
6 Transition Services with a written notification that informs
7 the parent or guardian or the Department's Office of Education
8 and Transition Services that the IEP team is required to
9 consider whether the child requires assistive technology in
10 order to receive free, appropriate public education. The
11 notification must also include a toll-free telephone number
12 and internet address for the State's assistive technology
13 program.

14 If the child is deaf, hard of hearing, blind, or visually
15 impaired or has an orthopedic impairment or physical
16 disability and he or she might be eligible to receive services
17 from the Illinois School for the Deaf, the Illinois School for
18 the Visually Impaired, or the Illinois Center for
19 Rehabilitation and Education-Roosevelt, the school district
20 shall notify the parents, in writing, of the existence of
21 these schools and the services they provide and shall make a
22 reasonable effort to inform the parents of the existence of
23 other, local schools that provide similar services and the
24 services that these other schools provide. This notification
25 shall include, without limitation, information on school
26 services, school admissions criteria, and school contact

1 information.

2 In the development of the individualized education program
3 for a student who has a disability on the autism spectrum
4 (which includes autistic disorder, Asperger's disorder,
5 pervasive developmental disorder not otherwise specified,
6 childhood disintegrative disorder, and Rett Syndrome, as
7 defined in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental
8 Disorders, fourth edition (DSM-IV, 2000)), the IEP team shall
9 consider all of the following factors:

10 (1) The verbal and nonverbal communication needs of
11 the child.

12 (2) The need to develop social interaction skills and
13 proficiencies.

14 (3) The needs resulting from the child's unusual
15 responses to sensory experiences.

16 (4) The needs resulting from resistance to
17 environmental change or change in daily routines.

18 (5) The needs resulting from engagement in repetitive
19 activities and stereotyped movements.

20 (6) The need for any positive behavioral
21 interventions, strategies, and supports to address any
22 behavioral difficulties resulting from autism spectrum
23 disorder.

24 (7) Other needs resulting from the child's disability
25 that impact progress in the general curriculum, including
26 social and emotional development.

1 Public Act 95-257 does not create any new entitlement to a
2 service, program, or benefit, but must not affect any
3 entitlement to a service, program, or benefit created by any
4 other law.

5 If the student may be eligible to participate in the
6 Home-Based Support Services Program for Adults with Mental
7 Disabilities authorized under the Developmental Disability and
8 Mental Disability Services Act upon becoming an adult, the
9 student's individualized education program shall include plans
10 for (i) determining the student's eligibility for those
11 home-based services, (ii) enrolling the student in the program
12 of home-based services, and (iii) developing a plan for the
13 student's most effective use of the home-based services after
14 the student becomes an adult and no longer receives special
15 educational services under this Article. The plans developed
16 under this paragraph shall include specific actions to be
17 taken by specified individuals, agencies, or officials.

18 (c) In the development of the individualized education
19 program for a student who is functionally blind, it shall be
20 presumed that proficiency in Braille reading and writing is
21 essential for the student's satisfactory educational progress.
22 For purposes of this subsection, the State Board of Education
23 shall determine the criteria for a student to be classified as
24 functionally blind. Students who are not currently identified
25 as functionally blind who are also entitled to Braille
26 instruction include: (i) those whose vision loss is so severe

1 that they are unable to read and write at a level comparable to
2 their peers solely through the use of vision, and (ii) those
3 who show evidence of progressive vision loss that may result
4 in functional blindness. Each student who is functionally
5 blind shall be entitled to Braille reading and writing
6 instruction that is sufficient to enable the student to
7 communicate with the same level of proficiency as other
8 students of comparable ability. Instruction should be provided
9 to the extent that the student is physically and cognitively
10 able to use Braille. Braille instruction may be used in
11 combination with other special education services appropriate
12 to the student's educational needs. The assessment of each
13 student who is functionally blind for the purpose of
14 developing the student's individualized education program
15 shall include documentation of the student's strengths and
16 weaknesses in Braille skills. Each person assisting in the
17 development of the individualized education program for a
18 student who is functionally blind shall receive information
19 describing the benefits of Braille instruction. The
20 individualized education program for each student who is
21 functionally blind shall specify the appropriate learning
22 medium or media based on the assessment report.

23 (d) To the maximum extent appropriate, the placement shall
24 provide the child with the opportunity to be educated with
25 children who do not have a disability; provided that children
26 with disabilities who are recommended to be placed into

1 regular education classrooms are provided with supplementary
2 services to assist the children with disabilities to benefit
3 from the regular classroom instruction and are included on the
4 teacher's regular education class register. Subject to the
5 limitation of the preceding sentence, placement in special
6 classes, separate schools or other removal of the child with a
7 disability from the regular educational environment shall
8 occur only when the nature of the severity of the disability is
9 such that education in the regular classes with the use of
10 supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved
11 satisfactorily. The placement of English learners with
12 disabilities shall be in non-restrictive environments which
13 provide for integration with peers who do not have
14 disabilities in bilingual classrooms. Annually, each January,
15 school districts shall report data on students from
16 non-English speaking backgrounds receiving special education
17 and related services in public and private facilities as
18 prescribed in Section 2-3.30. If there is a disagreement
19 between parties involved regarding the special education
20 placement of any child, either in-state or out-of-state, the
21 placement is subject to impartial due process procedures
22 described in Article 10 of the Rules and Regulations to Govern
23 the Administration and Operation of Special Education.

24 (e) No child who comes from a home in which a language
25 other than English is the principal language used may be
26 assigned to any class or program under this Article until he

1 has been given, in the principal language used by the child and
2 used in his home, tests reasonably related to his cultural
3 environment. All testing and evaluation materials and
4 procedures utilized for evaluation and placement shall not be
5 linguistically, racially or culturally discriminatory.

6 (f) Nothing in this Article shall be construed to require
7 any child to undergo any physical examination or medical
8 treatment whose parents object thereto on the grounds that
9 such examination or treatment conflicts with his religious
10 beliefs.

11 (g) School boards or their designee shall provide to the
12 parents of a child or, if applicable, the Department of
13 Children and Family Services' Office of Education and
14 Transition Services prior written notice of any decision (a)
15 proposing to initiate or change, or (b) refusing to initiate
16 or change, the identification, evaluation, or educational
17 placement of the child or the provision of a free appropriate
18 public education to their child, and the reasons therefor. For
19 a parent, such written notification shall also inform the
20 parent of the opportunity to present complaints with respect
21 to any matter relating to the educational placement of the
22 student, or the provision of a free appropriate public
23 education and to have an impartial due process hearing on the
24 complaint. The notice shall inform the parents in the parents'
25 native language, unless it is clearly not feasible to do so, of
26 their rights and all procedures available pursuant to this Act

1 and the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education
2 Improvement Act of 2004 (Public Law 108-446); it shall be the
3 responsibility of the State Superintendent to develop uniform
4 notices setting forth the procedures available under this Act
5 and the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education
6 Improvement Act of 2004 (Public Law 108-446) to be used by all
7 school boards. The notice shall also inform the parents of the
8 availability upon request of a list of free or low-cost legal
9 and other relevant services available locally to assist
10 parents in initiating an impartial due process hearing. The
11 State Superintendent shall revise the uniform notices required
12 by this subsection (g) to reflect current law and procedures
13 at least once every 2 years. Any parent who is deaf or does not
14 normally communicate using spoken English and who participates
15 in a meeting with a representative of a local educational
16 agency for the purposes of developing an individualized
17 educational program or attends a multidisciplinary conference
18 shall be entitled to the services of an interpreter. The State
19 Board of Education must adopt rules to establish the criteria,
20 standards, and competencies for a bilingual language
21 interpreter who attends an individualized education program
22 meeting under this subsection to assist a parent who has
23 limited English proficiency.

24 (g-5) For purposes of this subsection (g-5), "qualified
25 professional" means an individual who holds credentials to
26 evaluate the child in the domain or domains for which an

1 evaluation is sought or an intern working under the direct
2 supervision of a qualified professional, including a master's
3 or doctoral degree candidate.

4 To ensure that a parent can participate fully and
5 effectively with school personnel in the development of
6 appropriate educational and related services for his or her
7 child, the parent, an independent educational evaluator, or a
8 qualified professional retained by or on behalf of a parent or
9 child must be afforded reasonable access to educational
10 facilities, personnel, classrooms, and buildings and to the
11 child as provided in this subsection (g-5). The requirements
12 of this subsection (g-5) apply to any public school facility,
13 building, or program and to any facility, building, or program
14 supported in whole or in part by public funds. Prior to
15 visiting a school, school building, or school facility, the
16 parent, independent educational evaluator, or qualified
17 professional may be required by the school district to inform
18 the building principal or supervisor in writing of the
19 proposed visit, the purpose of the visit, and the approximate
20 duration of the visit. The visitor and the school district
21 shall arrange the visit or visits at times that are mutually
22 agreeable. Visitors shall comply with school safety, security,
23 and visitation policies at all times. School district
24 visitation policies must not conflict with this subsection
25 (g-5). Visitors shall be required to comply with the
26 requirements of applicable privacy laws, including those laws

1 protecting the confidentiality of education records such as
2 the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and the
3 Illinois School Student Records Act. The visitor shall not
4 disrupt the educational process.

5 (1) A parent must be afforded reasonable access of
6 sufficient duration and scope for the purpose of observing
7 his or her child in the child's current educational
8 placement, services, or program or for the purpose of
9 visiting an educational placement or program proposed for
10 the child.

11 (2) An independent educational evaluator or a
12 qualified professional retained by or on behalf of a
13 parent or child must be afforded reasonable access of
14 sufficient duration and scope for the purpose of
15 conducting an evaluation of the child, the child's
16 performance, the child's current educational program,
17 placement, services, or environment, or any educational
18 program, placement, services, or environment proposed for
19 the child, including interviews of educational personnel,
20 child observations, assessments, tests or assessments of
21 the child's educational program, services, or placement or
22 of any proposed educational program, services, or
23 placement. If one or more interviews of school personnel
24 are part of the evaluation, the interviews must be
25 conducted at a mutually agreed-upon time, date, and place
26 that do not interfere with the school employee's school

1 duties. The school district may limit interviews to
2 personnel having information relevant to the child's
3 current educational services, program, or placement or to
4 a proposed educational service, program, or placement.

5 (h) In the development of the individualized education
6 program or federal Section 504 plan for a student, if the
7 student needs extra accommodation during emergencies,
8 including natural disasters or an active shooter situation,
9 then that accommodation shall be taken into account when
10 developing the student's individualized education program or
11 federal Section 504 plan.

12 (Source: P.A. 102-199, eff. 7-1-22; 102-264, eff. 8-6-21;
13 102-558, eff. 8-20-21; 102-813, eff. 5-13-22; 102-1072, eff.
14 6-10-22; 103-197, eff. 1-1-24; 103-605, eff. 7-1-24.)