

OAK PARK SCHOOL DISTRICT



31a HANDBOOK

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Oak Park School District is to provide quality education in which we respect students' individual and cultural differences, educate all students to meet or exceed the district's academic standards, and ensure that they possess the life skills necessary to become lifelong learners and productive citizens.

OUR VISION

The mission of Oak Park School District, in partnership with all stakeholders, will education today's students for tomorrow's worlds.

OUR BELIEF STATEMENTS

Student learning is our core business and every child in the Oak Park School District can and will learn.

Children learn best when our staff maintains high expectations for student achievement in student-centered, standards-based, results-driven classrooms.

Effective leaders listen carefully; anticipate future needs and work constantly to engage others in leadership initiatives to shape necessary changes.

A quality education is a life-long process that fosters academic and cultural understanding.

Continuous improvement demands that all of the Oak Park School District staff regularly use data to guide change and improvement.

A safe, orderly and comfortable environment is essential to learning.

Section 31a At-Risk Handbook

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SECTION 2: ELIGIBLE PUPILS.....

SECTION 3: ALLOWABLE USES OF FUNDS

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Resources obtained from the Michigan Department of Education.

SECTION 1: OVERVIEW

Section 31a of the State School Aid Act provides funding to eligible districts for supplementary instructional and pupil support services for pupils who meet the at-risk criteria specified in the legislation. These criteria include low achievement on MEAP tests in mathematics, reading or science; failure to meet core academic curricular objectives in English language arts or mathematics (applies to grade K-3 pupils only); or the presence of two or more identified at-risk factors. The funds may also be used for class size reductions in grades 1-6 in schools above the district's poverty percentage. Section 31a funds are limited to direct services to pupils and may not be used for administrative or other related costs.

It is the expectation of the State of Michigan that Section 31a funds be used as supplementary funds, not to supplant other funds. To supplant another program means to take the place of a previously existing instructional program or direct non-instructional services funded from a funding source other than funding under this section.

SECTION 2: ELIGIBLE PUPILS

Pupils must meet at least 2 of the following criteria in order to receive Direct Non-Instructional Services:

- Victim of child abuse or neglect.
- Below grade level in English/Language Arts (ELA) and Communication Skills or Mathematics.
- Pregnant teenager or teenage parent.
- Eligible for free or reduced-price lunch.
- Atypical behavior or attendance patterns.
- Family history of school failure, incarceration, or substance abuse.

Direct Instructional Services may be provided to,

- Pupils who did not achieve at least a score of Level 2 on the most recent Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) or Michigan Merit Exam on English/language arts, mathematics, social studies or science test for which results for the pupil have been received.
- Pupils in grades K-3 who are at risk of not meeting the district's core academic curricular objectives in English/language arts or mathematics.
- Children Birth–Age 5 who meets the at-risk criteria used to determine eligibility of children for the Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP) for four-year-olds.

The attached eligibility worksheets must be completed and returned to the Office of Curriculum and Instruction no later than September 30 of each school year.

SECTION 3: ALLOWABLE USES OF FUNDS

All services provided under Section 31a must be

- Supplemental.
- Supporting a comprehensive program that is based on the needs identified using the Student Eligibility Worksheets.
- Focused on the overall goal of improving student academic achievement.

Supplemental is defined as services that are in addition to services provided to all students. Supplemental services cannot replace services required by state or federal legislation, local Collective Bargaining Agreement, or services that have been provided with general funds in the previous year.

Costs that may be paid with Section 31a funds are limited to only that portion of the following that provides supplemental, instructional or support services to eligible students:

- Salaries and benefits for instructional staff;
- Salaries and benefits to staff providing direct non- instructional services;
- Purchased services, supplies and materials for instructional and direct non- instructional services; operation, maintenance, and pupil transportation costs for programs provided outside of the regular school day or year;
- Costs for school breakfast programs.

The following activities are NOT ALLOWABLE for funding with Section 31a At-Risk dollars:

- Professional development
- Parental involvement
- Administration
- Developmental kindergarten
- Transitional first grade

The following instructional services are ALLOWABLE uses of Section 31a At-Risk funding:

- **Tutorial Services:** A tutorial method may be conducted with paraprofessionals working under the supervision of a certificated teacher. The ratio of pupils to paraprofessionals shall be between 10:1 or 15:1. Only one certificated teacher is required to supervise instruction using a tutorial method. Tutorial services can be provided for general education core areas of mathematics, ELA, social studies and science. Tutorial services can also be provided for bilingual instruction supervised by a bilingually-certified/endorsed teacher after the alternative layer of English and Language Acquisition services have been provided through the use of general funds. Section 31a funds may not be used to meet any requirements outlined in a special education student's Individual Educational Plan (IEP) nor can Section 31a funds be used to provide 1:1 aide services.

Tutorial services may be offered using the following methods:

- **Traditional School Day:** Instruction within the classroom or using a pull-out method during the traditional school day. These services may not be provided in lieu of the student attending a core academic class with the teacher of record.
- **Extended School Day:** Instruction before or after regular school hours.
- **Extended School Year:** Instruction provided by the addition of extra school days to the school year.
- **Summer Programs:** Instruction conducted during the summer months.

NOTE: Teachers and Paraprofessionals funded under Section 31a can only provide services to Section 31a eligible students.

- **Early Childhood Programs:** All early childhood students must first be referred to the local Head Start and/or GSRP before the district can use any Section 31a funds to support early childhood programs. Districts that are underserved by Head Start or GSRP may use Section 31a funds to supplement Instructional Programs provided in 2 types of existing early childhood programs for at-risk pupils age 0–5:
 - A GSRP classroom (a district may not use Section 31a funds to replace GSRP or district level funds that are currently required for a GSRP or a district level early childhood program and all Section 31a funded early childhood programs must meet the initial GSRP requirements).
 - A district level early childhood program that is underfunded.
 - A district may also use Section 31a funds to develop a new district level Instructional Program for at-risk children age 0–5 in those districts that do not have access to other early childhood programs.

- **Reduced Class Size:** A district may use up to 100% of their Section 31a funds to reduce class size in grades K-12 or any combination of these grades. Schools are only eligible for class size reduction if the percentage of pupils eligible for free breakfast, lunch or milk exceeds the district's percentage of eligible students. A school within the district that does not exceed the district average may be funded for class size reduction if a waiver is submitted to and granted by the Michigan Department of Education (MDE). This waiver can only be approved if the school's eligible free breakfast, lunch or milk percentage is at least thirty percent (30%), and is sixty percent (60%) or more of the district's percentage of eligibility. In order to use Section 31a funds to reduce class size a district is required to obtain prior approval from an Office of Field Services (OFS) education consultant. Consideration for approval will be based upon the district providing evidence of having met the pupil/teacher ratio according to either the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) or historical class size average over the last three (3) years.

It is recommended that the use of Section 31a-funds to reduce class size meets the criteria established by the MDE for Title II, Part A class size reduction. When reducing class sizes, districts may utilize the following exceptions:

- Reduce class sizes Grade K-12 (Title II, Part A K-3).
- Maintain a pupil/teacher ratio in the reduced class/es of up to 19:1 (Title II, Part A 17:1).
- A two year cohort is not required but recommended as a best practice (Title II, Part A requires a cohort for at least two years).
- **Adult Education:** A district or public school academy may use funds received under this section for adult high school completion, general educational development (G.E.D.) test preparation, adult English as a second language, or adult basic education programs described in Section 107.
- **K-3 Early Intervening Programs:** A district or public school academy that receives funds under this section may use funds it receives under this section to implement and operate an early intervening program for pupils in grades K to 3 that meets either or both of the following:
 - Monitors individual pupil learning and provides specific support or learning strategies to pupils as early as possible in order to reduce the need for special education placement. The program shall include literacy and numeracy supports, sensory motor skill development, behavior supports, instructional consultation for teachers, and the development of a parent/school learning plan. Specific support or learning strategies may include support in or out of the general classroom in areas including reading, writing, math, visual memory, motor skill development, behavior, or language development. These

- would be provided based on an understanding of the individual child's learning needs.
- Provides early intervening strategies using school-wide systems of academic and behavioral supports and is scientifically research-based. The strategies to be provided shall include at least pupil performance indicators based upon response to intervention, instructional consultation for teachers, and ongoing progress monitoring. A school-wide system of academic and behavioral support should be based on a support team available to the classroom teachers. The members of this team could include the principal, special education staff, reading teachers, and other appropriate personnel who would be available to systematically study the needs of the individual child and work with the teacher to match instruction to the needs of the individual child.
- Allowable Section 31a K-3 Intervening Program Costs include all direct supplemental services outlined above, and stipends to staff or substitutes to allow staff working with students in grades K-3 to participate in team meetings as identified above.
- Unallowable Section 31a K-3 Intervening Program Costs include parent involvement, professional development, or any meetings required by the special education student identification process or the Individualized Educational Program (IEP) process.
- Reading Programs: As described in former Section 32f as in effect for 2001-02, amended to be included in Section 31a, reading programs under this section include: reading improvement programs for pupils in grades K-4, reading disorders and reading methods programs, mentoring programs, language and literacy outreach programs, and/or cognitive development programs. These programs may be conducted outside of regular school hours or outside the regular school calendar.

A proposed reading improvement program must meet all of the following:

- The program shall include assessment of reading skills of pupils in grades K- 4 to identify those pupils who are reading below grade level and must provide special reading assistance for these pupils.
- The program shall be a research-based, validated, and structured reading program.
- The program shall include continuous assessment of pupils and Individualized Educational Plans for pupils.
- The program shall serve at least 25% of pupils who are identified as at- risk, as determined by the Michigan Literacy Progress Profile (MLPP) of reading failure or other research based progress monitoring tools.
- The program shall align learning resources to state standards.

A proposed reading disorders and reading methods program allows local adoption of one or more research-based programs for the remediation of reading disorders.

A proposed mentoring program must be a research-based, validated program or a statewide 1-on-1 mentoring program to enhance the independence and life quality of pupils who are mentally impaired by providing opportunities for mentoring and integrated employment.

A proposed cognitive development program must be a research-based, validated educational service program, focused on assessing, and building essential cognitive and perceptual learning abilities to strengthen pupil concentration and learning.

A proposed structured mentoring-tutorial reading program for preschool to grade 4 pupils must be a research-based, validated program that develops individualized instructional plans based on each pupil's age, assessed needs, reading level, interests, and learning style. An additional provision under the mentoring option allows service to students who are mentally impaired to enhance their independence and quality of life.

- **Credit Recovery:** Utilization of Section 31a funds for credit recovery is appropriate only when a student has failed a core academic class in math, ELA, social studies or science and is attempting to obtain credit necessary for high school completion. If the district uses general funds to provide credit recovery services for any student, the district is responsible for providing them for all students. Section 31a funds may not be used to supplant district-funded programs. Credit recovery programs must occur during a student's non-academic class periods, after school, or summer school.

Section 31a funds may not be used to:

- Supplant district-funded programs.
- Take the place of a previously-existing credit recovery program funded by the district.
- Provide services to allow a student to maintain credits.

Section 31a funds may be used to fund credit recovery programs for Section 31a eligible students in the following manner:

- Salary or stipend for a highly qualified teacher to provide direct instruction.
- Salary or stipend for a certified teacher to monitor and provide instructional support to students using an online program.
- Course fees/licenses for an online program monitored by a highly qualified teacher.

- **Alternative Education:** An Alternative Education program, by definition, is not a supplemental program. The purpose of an Alternative Education program is to deliver the core academic program using alternative instructional strategies. Therefore, an Alternative Education program may not be funded in its entirety using Section 31a funds. However, Section 31a may be used to supplement an established district- funded Alternative Education program.

The exceptions to this rule are any Alternative Education programs established prior to the 1993 amendment of The State School Aid Act of 1979 which included Section 31a legislation (PA 336). Districts that had existing Alternative Education programs prior to 1993 were allowed to grandfather the entire cost of these programs as an allowable expenditure in the original Section 31a application and overcome the presumption of supplanting. All Alternative Education programs not grandfathered in through the original application are subject to supplement, not supplant rules. Alternative Education services and activities funded by Section 31a must be supplemental to district-funded Alternative Education programs. The district must maintain valid documentation of a preexisting 1993 Alternative Education program that was grandfathered into Section 31a through the original Section 31a application. The district must also document that the currently operating (grandfathered) program has not deviated from the program description in the originally approved Section 31a application.

The following non-instructional services are ALLOWABLE uses of Section 31a At-Risk funding:

- **Medical and Counseling Services:** All medical, counseling, and/or behavioral intervention programs/services provided under Section 31a must be supplemental, support a comprehensive program that is based on the needs identified using the Student Eligibility Worksheets and focused on the overall goal of improving student academic achievement. Supplemental is defined as services that are in addition to services provided to all students. Supplemental services cannot replace services required by state or federal legislation, local Collective Bargaining Agreement, or services that have been provided with general funds in the previous year.

Counselors and Social Workers that are funded with Section 31a may provide assistance during time of crisis. However, a Section 31a funded Crisis Intervention specific position is not an allowed use of funds.

- **Anti-Bullying:** Section 31a funds may be used to enhance a district or school level anti-bullying program. Services or programs must be supplemental to the board of education adopted anti-bullying policy.
- **School Health Clinics:** School health clinics, focused on meeting specific medical needs of students in order to increase attendance and academic achievement, may be established using funds under this Section. Before using funds in this manner prior approval must be obtained from the Section 31a consultant. Funds under this Section may not be used for routine medical processing required by the school, such as reviewing immunization records,

providing shots or diabetic monitoring, administering head lice checks or to augment the curriculum for the whole school (providing sex education for all students).

Funds under this Section may include the following types of services:

- Community Medical Referrals.
- Dental Care.
- Substance Abuse Counseling.
- Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD) Education.
- Mental Health Services.
- Prenatal Care.
- Immunizations.
- Obesity.

Individuals authorized to administer services also can include:

- Licensed Physician
 - Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN)
 - Registered Nurse (RN)
 - Licensed Physicians Assistant working under the supervision of a physician during all hours of clinic operation
 - Health Educator
 - Registered Dietician
 - Psychologist
 - Dentist or Dental Hygienist
- Security: A school district of the first class under the revised school code, or a district or public school academy in which at least 50% of the pupils in membership met the income eligibility criteria for free breakfast, lunch, or milk in the immediately preceding state fiscal year may use no more than 20% of the funds it receives under this section for school security.

- School Breakfast Programs: Except as otherwise provided in subsection (12), a district or public school academy that receives funds under this section and that operates a school breakfast program under Section 1272a of the year revised school code, MCL 380.1272a, shall use from the funds received under this section an amount, not to exceed \$10.00 per pupil for whom the district or public school academy receives funds under this section, necessary to operate the school breakfast program.

Appendix A

K-3 Eligibility Worksheet



Office of Field Services
Identification of Eligible Section 31a Students
Grades K-3 Worksheet

Note: Confidentiality requirements must be observed in providing access to individual student records.

School _____ Teacher: _____ Grade: _____ Year: _____

List students and check all areas that apply to determine eligibility for Section 31a services.

Name of Student	Core Academic Objectives Not Met (1 Area)		or	Risk Factors (2 Areas)					
	English Language / Communication Skills (English Language Arts)	Math Skills		Victim of Child Abuse or Neglect	Below Grade Level English Language Communication or Math	Pregnant Teen or Teen Parent	Eligible for Free Reduced Lunch	Atypical Behavior or Attendance	Family History School Failure, Incarceration or Substance Abuse
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Appendix B

4-12 Eligibility Worksheet

Grades 4-12 Worksheet

School _____ Teacher: _____ Grade: _____ Year: _____

List students and check all areas that apply to determine eligibility for Section 31a services.

Name of Student	MEAP (1 Area)				or	Risk Factors (2 Areas)					
	Level 3 or 4 English Language Arts (ELA)	Level 3 or 4 Math	Level 3 or 4 Science	Level 3 or 4 Social Studies	Victim of Child Abuse or Neglect	Below Grade Level English Language Communication or Math	Pregnant Teen or Teen Parent	Eligible for Free Reduced Lunch	Atypical Behavior or Attendance	Family History School Failure, Incarceration or Substance Abuse	
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Appendix C

Birth-Age 5 Worksheet

Office of Field Services Identification of
Eligible Students
For a District-Designed
Birth – Age 5 Section 31a Program

Note: Confidentiality requirements must be observed in providing access to individual student records.

School: _____

Teacher: _____

Year: _____

List students and check all areas that apply to determine eligibility for a district- designed Birth – Age 5 Program funded by Section 31a.

Name of Student	Risk Factors							
<p>* A student from a family with Extremely Low Family Income needs no other risk factors to qualify. ** A student from a family with Low Family Income must have at least one additional risk factor to qualify. *** A student not from a family with Low Family Income must have at least two additional risk factors to qualify.</p>	Extremely Low Family Income * (below 200% of Federal Poverty Level)	Low Family Income ** (between 200% and 300% of Federal Poverty Level)	Diagnosed disability or identified developmental delay	Severe or challenging behavior (child has been expelled from preschool or child care center)	Primary home language other than English	Parent/guardian with low educational attainment (has not graduated or is illiterate)	Abuse/neglect of child or parent (domestic, sexual, or physical abuse of child/parent; neglect)	Environmental Risk (loss of parent, teen parent, homeless, resident of high-risk neighborhood, exposure to toxic substances)
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