



McKay Scholarship – What Is The Matrix

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The Matrix of Services is the document used to determine the cost factor for children in special education who have an IEP. It is a funding document used to calculate the extra money a school receives for a child who receives exceptional student education services. Although the exact amount can vary slightly from county to county, a McKay Scholarship can range from about \$5,000 at the lowest level to approximately \$19,000 at the highest level.

There are five domains in the matrix used to group the types of services a child may receive as reflected on the IEP. The five domains are: Curriculum and Learning, Social/Emotional Behavior, Independent Functioning, Healthcare and Communication. Within each of these domains there are five levels used to describe the nature and intensity of services within each domain. Each of the five levels is assigned a point value.

The total number of points, determined by adding together the scores for each domain and applicable special considerations points, results in a rating of a Support Level. The Support Levels are either 251, 252, 253, 254 or 255. The numbers in and of themselves mean nothing except that they are each tied to a funding level. A 251 is the lowest funding level and a 255 is the highest funding level.

Once the IEP team has written the IEP and the meeting is finished, a Matrix of Services document is completed using information found in the student's IEP. An individual, or group of individuals from the school, familiar with the student, scores the matrix. It should reflect the special services to be provided to the student as documented by the IEP committee.

It is important to note that school districts are not required to complete a matrix for all ESE students. They are required to complete a matrix for all ESE students who are at a 254 or 255 level and they are required to complete a matrix for all McKay Scholarship students. If not already prepared in advance, a matrix for a McKay Scholarship student must be completed when the parent goes online to register their intent to use the McKay Scholarship.

The school district then has 30 days within which to respond to the parent and to the McKay office in Tallahassee. At that time, if a matrix is not already completed, they must complete a matrix and send the information to the McKay office. Parents can ask the school district for a copy of the full matrix document if they want to know how their child's IEP was scored.

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