

Mt. Diablo Unified School District

Administrative Regulation

Identification and Education Under Section 504

AR 6164.6 Instruction

Eligibility

A ~~disabled~~ student eligible for services under Section 504 is one who (a) has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, including learning, (b) has a record of such an impairment, or (c) is regarded as having such an impairment. (34 CFR 104.3)

Major life activities are functions such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning and working. Examples of students with such impairments include, but are not limited to:

1. Students with a normal ability to learn but who have a mobility impairment
2. Students with a normal ability to learn academically but who require occupational or physical therapy in order to function physically
3. Students with emotional disabilities manifested by behavior problems which result in exclusion from classes or school

Indications of a possible disability that significantly interferes with learning include, but are not limited to: physical or mental impairments that may constitute disabling conditions under Section 504 if they substantially limit a major life activity may include, but not be limited to, diabetes; communicable diseases such as HIV/AIDS or asymptomatic carriers of the AIDS virus; tuberculosis; attention deficit disorder (ADD or ADHD); chronic asthma and severe allergies; physical disabilities such as spina bifida or hemophilia; and temporary disabilities depending on the anticipated length of disability, the seriousness of the illness/injury, and the needs of the student (e.g., students injured in accidents or suffering short-term illnesses).

1. Medical conditions such as severe asthma or heart disease
2. Temporary medical condition due to illness or accident
3. Poor or failing grades over a lengthy period of time

Physical or mental impairment means any of the following: (34 CFR 104.3)

1. Any physiological disorder or condition, cosmetic disfigurement, or anatomical loss affecting one or more of the following body systems: neurological; musculoskeletal, special sense organs;

respiratory, including speech organs; cardiovascular; reproductive, digestive, genito-urinary; hemic and lymphatic; skin; and endocrine

2. Any mental or psychological disorder, such as mental retardation, organic brain syndrome, emotional or mental illness, and specific learning disabilities

Referral and Identification Procedures

1. Any student may be referred by a parent/guardian, teacher, other certificated school employee or community agency for consideration of eligibility as a disabled student under Section 504. This referral should be made to the school site principal or 504 coordinator,

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~~2. The school site committee shall promptly consider the referral and determine whether an evaluation under this procedure is appropriate. This determination shall be based on a review of the student's school records (including academic, social and behavioral records) and the student's needs. Students requiring evaluation shall be referred to appropriate evaluation specialists.~~

~~3. If a request for evaluation is denied, the school site committee shall inform the parents/guardians of this decision and of their procedural rights as described below.~~

2. Upon receipt of a referral for eligibility, the principal or 504 Coordinator shall consider the referral and determine whether an evaluation is appropriate. This determination shall be based on a review of the student's school records, including academic and nonacademic areas of the school program; consultation with the student's teacher(s), other professionals, and the parent/guardian, as appropriate; and analysis of the student's needs.

If it is determined that an evaluation is unnecessary, the principal or 504 Coordinator shall inform the parents/guardians in writing of this decision and of the procedural safeguards, as described in the "Procedural Safeguards" section below.

3. If it is determined that a student needs or is believed to need special education or related services under Section 504, the district shall conduct an evaluation of the student prior to initial placement and before any significant change in placement. (34 CFR 104.35)

Prior to conducting an initial evaluation of a student for eligibility under Section 504, the district shall obtain written parent/guardian consent.

The district's evaluation procedures shall ensure that tests and other evaluation materials: (34 CFR 104.35)

a. Have been validated and are administered by trained personnel in conformance with the instruction provided by the test publishers

b. Are tailored to assess specific areas of educational need and are not based solely on a single IQ score

c. Reflect aptitude or achievement or whatever else the tests purport to measure and do not reflect the student's impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills unless the test is designed to measure these particular deficits

Section 504 Services Plan and Placement

1. A multi-disciplinary 504 team shall be convened to review the evaluation data in order to make placement decisions.

The 504 team shall consist of a group of persons knowledgeable about the student, the meaning of the evaluation data, and the placement options. (34 CFR 104.35)

In interpreting evaluation data and making placement decisions, the team shall draw upon information from a variety of sources, including aptitude and achievement tests, teacher recommendations, physical condition, social or cultural background, and adaptive behavior. The team shall also ensure that information obtained from all such sources is documented and carefully considered and that the placement decision is made in conformity with 34 CFR 104.34. (34 CFR 104.35)

Accommodation Plan

1. When a student is identified as disabled within the meaning of Section 504, the school site committee shall determine what services are necessary to ensure that the student's individual education needs are met as adequately as the needs of nondisabled students.

2. In making this determination, ~~the school site committee~~ the Section 504 team shall consider all significant factors relating to the learning process for the student, including his/her adaptive behavior and cultural and language background. The evaluation may include, but is not limited to, classroom and playground observation, performance-based testing, academic assessment information, and data offered by the parent/guardian.

3. The parents/guardians shall be invited to participate in the ~~school site committee~~ Section 504 meeting where services for the student will be determined and shall be given an opportunity to examine all relevant records.

4. ~~The school site committee~~ The Section 504 team shall develop a written plan describing the disability and specifying the services needed by the student. A copy of ~~this plan~~ the student's Section 504 Service Plan shall be kept in the student's cumulative file. The student's teacher and any other staff who provide services to the student shall be informed of the services necessary for the student, to the extent that they need to be informed in order to provide for the student in the school setting.

5. ~~If the school site committee~~ The Section 504 team determines that no services are necessary for the student, the record of the committee's meeting shall reflect the identification of the student as a disabled person under Section 504 and shall state the basis for the decision that no special services are presently needed. If a student transfers to another school within the district, the principal or designee at the school from which the student is transferring shall ensure that the principal or designee at the new school receives a copy of the plan prior to the student's enrollment in the new school.

6. The ~~disabled~~ student shall be placed in the regular educational environment unless the district demonstrates that a more restrictive placement is required in order to meet the student's needs. The disabled student shall be educated with those who are not disabled to the maximum extent appropriate to his/her individual needs. (34 CFR 104.34)

7. The parents/guardians shall be notified in writing of the final decision concerning services to be provided, if any, and of the Section 504 procedural safeguards, including the right to an impartial hearing to challenge the decision.

8. The district shall complete the identification, evaluation and placement process within a reasonable time frame.

9. The student's plan shall include a schedule for periodic review of the student's needs and indicate that this review may occur sooner at the request of the parent/guardian or school staff.

Review of the Student's Progress

1. ~~The school site committee~~ The 504 team shall monitor the progress of the ~~disabled~~ student and the effectiveness of the student's Section 504 plan. ~~The committee~~ 504 team shall periodically determine whether the services are appropriate and necessary and whether the ~~disabled~~ student's needs are being met as adequately as the needs of nondisabled students. The team shall review the student's plan annually. In addition, the student's eligibility under Section 504 shall be reevaluated at least once every three years.

2. A reevaluation of the student's needs will be conducted before any subsequent significant change in placement. (34 CRF 104.35)

(cf. 5144.1 - Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process)

(cf. 5144.2 - Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process (Students with Disabilities))

Procedural Safeguards

Parents/guardians shall be notified in writing of all district decisions regarding the identification, evaluation or educational placement of students with disabilities or suspected disabilities. Notifications shall include a statement of their rights to: (34 CFR 104.36)

1. Examine relevant records

2. Have an impartial hearing with an opportunity for participation by the parents/guardians and their counsel

3. Have a review procedure

(cf. 5145.6 - Parental Notifications)

~~Notifications shall also set forth the procedures for requesting a hearing, the name, address and telephone number of the person with whom the request should be made, and the fact that reimbursement for attorney's fees is available only as authorized by law.~~

Notifications shall also detail the parent/guardian's right to file a grievance with the district over an alleged violation of Section 504; have an evaluation that draws on information from a variety of sources; be informed of any proposed actions related to eligibility and plan for services; receive all information in the parent/guardian's native language and primary mode of communication; periodic reevaluations and an evaluation before any significant change in program/service modifications; an impartial hearing if there is a disagreement with the district's proposed action; be represented by counsel in the impartial hearing process; and appeal the impartial hearing officer's decision.

The Superintendent or designee shall maintain a list of impartial hearing officers who are qualified and willing to conduct Section 504 hearings. To ensure impartiality, such officers shall not be employed by or under contract with the district in any capacity other than that of hearing officer and shall not have any professional or personal involvement that would affect their impartiality or objectivity in the matter.

~~If a parent/guardian disagrees with the identification, evaluation or educational placement of a student with disabilities under Section 504, he/she may initiate the following procedures:~~

~~1. Within 30 days of receiving the student's accommodation plan, set forth in writing his/her disagreement and request that the school principal and school site committee review the plan in an attempt to resolve the disagreement. This review shall be held within 14 days of receiving the parent/guardian's request, and the parent/guardian shall be invited to attend the meeting at which the review is conducted.~~

~~2. If disagreement continues, request in writing that the Superintendent or designee review the plan. This review shall be held within 14 days of receiving the parent/guardian's request, and the parent/guardian shall be invited to meet with the Superintendent or designee to discuss the review.~~

~~3. If disagreement continues, request in writing a Section 504 due process hearing. The request shall include:~~

~~a. The specific nature of the decision with which the parent/guardian disagrees~~

~~b. The specific relief the parent/guardian seeks~~

~~e. Any other information the parent/guardian believes pertinent~~

~~Within 20 days of receiving the parent/guardian's request, the Superintendent or designee shall select an impartial hearing officer. This 20 days may be extended for good cause or by mutual agreement of the parties.~~

~~Within 45 days of the selection of the hearing officer, the Section 504 due process hearing shall be conducted and a written decision mailed to all parties. This 45 days may be extended for good cause or by mutual agreement of the parties. The Superintendent or designee shall represent the district at this hearing.~~

~~Any party to the hearing shall be afforded the right to:~~

- ~~1. Be accompanied and advised by counsel and by individuals with special knowledge or training related to the problems of students who are qualified as disabled under Section 504~~
- ~~2. Present written and oral evidence~~
- ~~3. Question and cross-examine witnesses~~
- ~~4. Receive written findings by the hearing officer~~

~~If desired, either party may seek a review of the hearing officer's decision by a federal court of competent jurisdiction.~~

~~Regulation MT. DIABLO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT~~

~~approved: December 10, 2002 Concord, California~~

If a parent/guardian disagrees with decisions regarding the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of his/her child under Section 504, he/she may request a Section 504 due process hearing in accordance with the following procedures:

1. Within 30 days after receipt of the district's decision with which the parent/guardian disagrees, the parent/guardian may request an administrative review of the decision.

The 504 Coordinator shall designate an appropriate administrator to meet with the parent/guardian to attempt to resolve the issue. This review shall be held within 14 days of receiving the parent/guardian's request.

2. If the parent/guardian chooses not to request an administrative review or if the review does not resolve the issue, the parent/guardian may request in writing a Section 504 due process hearing. The parent/guardian's request for a hearing shall be made within 30 days of receiving the district's decision or within 14 days of completion of the administrative review. The request shall include:

a. The specific nature of the decision with which the parent/guardian disagrees

b. The specific relief the parent/guardian seeks

c. Any other information the parent/guardian believes pertinent

Within 30 days of receiving the parent/guardian's request, the Superintendent or designee and 504 Coordinator shall select an impartial hearing officer. This 30-day deadline may be extended for good cause or by mutual agreement of the parties.

The 504 Coordinator shall maintain a list of impartial hearing officers who are qualified and willing to conduct Section 504 hearings. To ensure impartiality, such officers shall not be employed by or under contract with the district in any capacity other than that of hearing officer and shall not have any professional or personal involvement that would affect their impartiality or objectivity in the matter.

Within 45 days of the selection of the hearing officer, the Section 504 due process hearing shall be conducted and a written decision mailed to all parties. This 45-day deadline may be extended for good cause or by mutual agreement of the parties.

Any party to the hearing shall be afforded the right to:

1. Be accompanied and advised by counsel and by individuals with special knowledge or training related to the problems of students who are qualified as disabled under Section 504

2. Present written and oral evidence

3. Question and cross-examine witnesses

4. Receive written findings by the hearing officer

If desired, either party may seek a review of the hearing officer's decision by a federal court of competent jurisdiction.

Notifications

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that the district has taken appropriate steps to notify students and parents/guardians of the district's duty under Section 504. (34 CFR 104.32)

(cf. 5145.6 - Parental Notifications)

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