

COMPLIANCE WITH 504 REGULATIONS

It is the policy of Regional School District No. 7 to comply with all aspects of the Section 504 regulations of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Section 504 prevents discrimination on the basis of handicap in programs and activities operated by the school system.

No otherwise qualified individual with handicaps shall, solely by reason of her or his handicap, as defined in Section 706(8) of the Rehabilitation Act, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity conducted by Regional School District No. 7.

The District has a responsibility to follow the procedural requirements of Section 504 to afford each student a free, appropriate education, which includes procedures for preplacement evaluation, placement procedures and procedural safeguards. Additionally, Section 504 addresses placement in the LRE for both academic and nonacademic settings. The District also recognizes that there may be some impaired students who are not eligible for Special Education services under IDEA but who are still defined as handicapped and eligible for services and protection from discrimination under the Section 504 definitions and regulations.

In order to ensure that Regional School District No. 7 does not discriminate in providing equal access to programs and services on the basis of handicap, the following definitions, requirements and procedures are provided.

Definitions:

Handicapped Person means any person who has (i) a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activity, (ii) has a record of such an impairment, (iii) is regarded as having such an impairment.

Physical or Mental Impairment means (i) any physiological disorder or condition, cosmetic disfigurement or anatomical loss affecting one or more body system, (ii) any mental or psychological disorder such as mental retardation, organic brain syndrome, emotional or mental illness and specific remaining disabilities.

Major Life Activity means functions such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning and working.

Appropriate Education means the provision of regular or special education and related aids and services that are designed to meet the individual educational needs of handicapped persons as adequately as the needs of non-handicapped persons. Implementation of an individualized education plan developed in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Act is one means of meeting this standard.

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Committee of Knowledgeable People means persons knowledgeable about the handicapped persons, the means of evaluation data, and programming options. (A properly constituted Planning and Placement Team of Student Assistance Team would meet this definition.)

Requirements:

1. That Regional School District No. 7 annually locate and identify qualified persons with handicaps residing in the District who are not receiving public education.
2. Notification of the school system's legal requirements is provided to handicapped persons and their parents or guardians.
3. Provision of educational services in a setting with persons who are not handicapped, to the maximum extent appropriate to the needs of the handicapped person. The school system shall make reasonable accommodations to allow a handicapped person place in the regular education environment unless it is demonstrated that the education of the person in the regular environment with the use of supplementary aids and services, cannot be achieved satisfactorily.
4. Provide preplacement evaluation consistent with that required under IDEA.
5. Ensure that placement decisions are carefully considered by a group of persons knowledgeable about the handicapped person, the meaning of the evaluation data and program options.
6. Provide periodic reevaluation of students found eligible for services.
7. Develop procedural safeguards consistent with that required under IDEA.
8. Ensure access to non-academic and extracurricular services and activities in such a manner as to afford handicapped students an opportunity for participation in such services and activities. The "Committee of Knowledgeable People", e.g. PPT shall consider the impact of any modifications on other non-handicapped classmates.
9. Ensure the availability of procedures for filing a grievance with the school district over an alleged violation of Section 504 regulations.
10. Identify at least one person to coordinate compliance and identification procedures.

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1. **Identification and Notification:** The Office of Special Services annually conducts child find activities to identify any person between the ages of 0-21 who is, more may be in need of special services. Notification is accomplished by communication through the media, direct mailing to social service agencies and dissemination to staff. (See Appendix #1 for Notification Form)
2. **Least Restrictive Environment:** Each committee of knowledgeable people (Student Assistance Team, Planning and Placement Team or other appropriate group) is aware of the district practice to ensure students are educated with their non-handicapped peers as often as possible and in the most appropriate way. All programs are developed with this requirement in mind.
3. **Evaluation:** Referrals for evaluation are made by the Planning and Placement Team (PPT). All statutory requirements for evaluation are adhered to closely. The evaluation period will be the same as for referrals under IDEA (45 days).
4. **Placement/Program Development:** Each PPT will reconvene at the conclusion of the evaluation to consider evaluation results, determine eligibility and develop appropriate programming. A written service plan is developed and maintained by the primary service provider. The plan is reviewed and/or updated throughout the school year as the handicapped person's needs warrant. All students who have undergone special education evaluations are automatically considered eligible under Section 504, i.e. for students who are not eligible for Special Education under IDEA, the PPT may consider eligibility under Section 504. Discussions of eligibility must be included in the record of the PPT meeting, including clearly delineated recommendations. (See Appendix #2 for Section 504 Service Plan.)
5. **Periodic Reevaluation:** All students receiving students under Section 504 are reevaluated at least every three years following procedures promulgated under IDEA and covered in the manual Special Services.
6. The Director of Special Services will be identified as the 504 Coordinator for Regional School District No. 7. This individual will convene a Committee of Knowledgeable People (PPT) to address 504 referrals.
7. **Grievance Procedures:** Students, parents or other individuals in the school district may register complaints regarding accessibility and other 504 regulations through the grievance procedures noted in Appendix #3.

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(cf. – 0521 – Equal Opportunity Plan)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

10-15c Discrimination in public schools prohibited

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. 1681 et. seq.

Section 504, U.S. Rehabilitation Act, 1973, 29 U.S.C. 791

NOTE: Forms relative to this policy are available at:

1. Superintendent's Office
2. Principal's Office
3. Special Services Office