

SUBJECT: IMPARTIAL DUE PROCESS HEARINGS/SELECTION OF IMPARTIAL HEARING OFFICERS

Due Process Complaints

The District will make every effort to amicably resolve disputes regarding the educational programs for students with disabilities. If these disputes cannot be resolved, either a parent, person in parental relation, or the District may file a due process complaint challenging the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of a student with a disability, or a student suspected of having a disability, or the provision of a free appropriate public education to the student. The complainant may not receive an impartial due process hearing until the complainant, or the complainant's attorney, files a due process complaint notice that meets the requirements set forth in law for the notice. All due process hearings will be conducted in a manner consistent with the timelines and procedures set forth in law and regulation.

Except as otherwise provided by law, all requests for impartial due process hearings must be submitted within two years of the date the parent/guardian or the District knew or should have known about the alleged action forming the basis of the complaint. Upon receipt or filing of the due process complaint notice, the District will provide the most current version of the procedural safeguards notice to the parents/guardian. The District will also inform parents/guardian in writing of the availability of mediation and any free or low-cost legal and other relevant services available in the area.

An impartial due process hearing will be conducted at a time and location reasonable and convenient to the parent/guardian and student involved. The hearing will be closed to the public unless the parent/guardian requests otherwise. The impartial hearing officer (IHO) may conduct the hearing by videoconference or teleconference with parental/guardian consent which may be obtained at a pre-hearing conference, or at a minimum of ten days before the scheduled hearing date, provided that all personally identifiable data, information, or records pertaining to the student during the hearing is kept confidential in accordance with law and regulation.

A student whose education is the subject of a due process complaint will remain in their current placement during the pendency of the impartial due process hearing unless both parties agree or as otherwise permitted by law.

Resolution Process

Prior to the opportunity for an impartial due process hearing, the District will convene a meeting with the parents/guardian and the relevant member or members of the Committee on Special Education or Committee on Preschool Special Education who have specific knowledge of the facts identified in the complaint. This meeting will provide the parents/guardian with an opportunity to discuss their complaint and the facts that form the basis of the complaint, and an opportunity to resolve the complaint with the District. The District will take steps to ensure that one or both of the parents/guardian of the student with a disability are present at the resolution meeting, and will notify parents/guardian of the meeting early enough to ensure that they have the opportunity to attend. The resolution meeting will be at a mutually agreed upon time and place, and in a location that is physically accessible to the parents/guardian. The parents/guardian and District may agree to use alternative means of meeting participation, such as videoconferences and conference calls. The District will ensure that all resolution meetings conform to the requirements set forth in the Commissioner's regulations.

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The parents/guardian and the District may agree, in writing, to waive the resolution process or agree to use the mediation process to resolve the dispute.

Selection and Board Appointment of Impartial Hearing Officers

When a due process complaint notice is properly filed, the Board or its designee will arrange for an impartial due process hearing to be conducted. In these instances, the Board will immediately, but not later than two business days after receipt of the due process complaint notice or mailing of the due process complaint notice to the parent/guardian, initiate the process to select IHO through a rotational selection process. To expedite this process, the Board may designate one or more of its members to appoint the IHO on its behalf.

The District will utilize the New York State Education Department's (NYSED) Impartial Hearing Reporting System to access the alphabetical list of the names of each IHO certified in New York State and available to serve in the District. The appointment of an IHO will be made only from this list and in accordance with the alphabetical rotation selection process and the timelines and procedures established by the Commissioner of Education. The District will record and report required information relating to the selection of IHOs and the conduct of impartial due process hearings according to the manner and schedule specified by NYSED.

The District will be responsible for compensating the IHO for prehearing, hearing, and post-hearing activities at the rate agreed upon at the time of the IHO's appointment. The District will also reimburse the IHO for certain travel and other hearing-related expenses in accordance with an annually determined schedule.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA),
20 USC §1400 et seq.
34 CFR Part 300
Education Law Sections 4404 and 4410(7)
8 NYCRR §§ 200.2 and 200.5

NOTE: Refer also to Policies #7313 -- Suspension of Students
#7660 -- Parent Involvement for Children with Disabilities
#7690 -- Special Education Mediation

Adopted: 8/10/2004

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