

Section 504



What rights do parents or guardians have under Section 504?

- Request a hearing with respect to the school's actions regarding the identification, evaluation, or placement of their child
- File a grievance complaint with the school's Section 504 Coordinator or with the Office for Civil Rights online or by calling the regional office
- Receive notice about the identification, evaluation and/or placement of their child
- Examine their child's educational records
- A 504 plan that is periodically reviewed





What does a 504 plan include?

It includes the accommodations and services that the individual student needs and provides equal access to the same educational programs and activities available to non-disabled peers.

Office for Civil Rights (OCR)

In Texas, if you have a question or would like to file a complaint about Section 504, contact the Office for Civil Rights (OCR).

 OCR.Dallas@ed.gov

 214.661.9600

Section 504 Parent and Educator Resource Guide

 direc.to/dUkU

Fact Sheet for Families



What is Section 504?

Section 504 is part of a long-standing federal civil rights law that guarantees certain protections to people with disabilities.



Who does Section 504 protect?

Section 504 protects people with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity, such as caring for one's self, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, working, performing manual tasks, and learning.



Section 504 and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) both...

- Provide protections for students with disabilities. However, while all students in special education are protected under Section 504, not all students covered by Section 504 are eligible for special education.
- Require schools to provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to students with disabilities. Section 504 and IDEA define FAPE differently.



Individuals with Disabilities Education Act



Who is eligible for special education?

To be eligible for special education services, a student must:


1. have a disability as defined by one or more of the 13 IDEA disability categories; and
2. because of the disability, require special education services

Students who have disabilities not covered by the IDEA or students with disabilities who do not require special education services are not eligible. However, a student with a disability may be eligible for supports and services under Section 504.



Schools are required to reach out to the community and spread the word about Child Find.

Additional resources and information for parents can be found on the SPEDTex website.

 SpEdTex.org

 1.855.773.3839

Fact Sheet for Families



What is IDEA?

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is a federal law that has been in effect since 1975. IDEA requires public schools to provide a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) to eligible students ages 3-21 with disabilities. IDEA also provides legal protections for these students and their parents.



IDEA requires public schools to...

- Find and evaluate students who have or are suspected of having a disability and need special education services (Child Find).
- Develop and implement an individualized education program (IEP) for eligible students with a disability.



What is Special Education?

Special education means instruction that is specially designed to meet the unique needs of a student with a disability. It includes any related services needed for the student to benefit from his or her special education services. Special education is not a place, but a set of services and supports that can be provided in many ways and in many different settings. What special education looks like for an individual student is outlined in his or her IEP. The IEP is developed by a team referred to in Texas as the admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee. The parent is a member of the ARD committee.



Child Find also includes...

- Any child suspected of having a disability and need for special education despite passing from grade to grade.
- Homeless, under the care of the state, attending private school, or highly mobile
- May not be attending public school



Dyslexia





Risk factors and signs of dyslexia:

- Family history of dyslexia or reading difficulty
- Early language difficulties such as delayed speech or trouble pronouncing words
- Difficulty identifying and manipulating individual sounds within words
- Challenges learning letter names
- Difficulty recalling the names of letters, numbers, and familiar objects
- Avoidance of reading and writing tasks
- Inaccurate or slow reading
- Difficulty with note taking and producing written work
- Over use of pictures to guess at words

Early intervention is critical, and parents or guardians should talk to their child's teacher if they have concerns.

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What is dyslexia?

Dyslexia is a brain-based learning disability that makes learning to read, write, and/or spell difficult despite adequate instruction and intelligence.

Students with dysgraphia, a related learning disorder, demonstrate academic challenges in handwriting, spelling, and written expression.



Characteristics of dyslexia:

Primary characteristics include difficulties:

- Learning the sounds letters make
- Reading words in isolation or reading unknown words
- Reading smoothly with enough speed and accuracy to comprehend
- Spelling

Secondary characteristics may include difficulty:

- Expressing ideas or concepts in writing
- Understanding what is read

Students with dyslexia may also present with additional difficulties and/or disorders, including attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), speech and language disorders, and/or other academic needs.



Procedures for evaluation and identification:

Your children are legally entitled to receive individualized services and supports. State and federal law require schools to have specific procedures in place to identify, locate, and evaluate students with, or suspected of having, dyslexia. Dyslexia is a learning disability that may require special education services.

Parents may request a special education evaluation through their child's campus or district.



Multi-Tiered Systems of Support



Texas public schools must...


Notify a parent of each child who receives assistance from the school district for learning difficulties every year. This includes supports through an MTSS program that are above the level of intervention used with all children. This notice does not apply to parents of children receiving special education.



Parents or guardians may request a special education evaluation for their child at any time.

Additional resources and information for parents can be found on the SPEDTex website.

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What is Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)?

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) is a framework that focuses on intervention best practices within the areas of academics, behavior, and social/emotional supports for the whole child. Tiers are based on student need and increase the level of support provided as a student moves from classroom-wide, to targeted and intensive interventions.



MTSS Tiers



How does MTSS help students?

The goal of MTSS is to find struggling students early and quickly provide intervention. The systems use interventions proven by research to meet a student's needs. Progress monitoring data is used to make decisions about movement between the tiers.



What type of support is available?

There are typically three tiers of support in an MTSS model.

- Tier 1 includes high quality classroom-wide instruction and support for all students.
- Tier 2 provides targeted support to address a student's gaps in skills.
- Tier 3 involves intensive support usually provided more often and in smaller groups.



Schools may NOT...

- Use MTSS to delay or deny access to special education or other supports for students.
- Require a student to go through all MTSS tiers or spend a certain amount of time in MTSS before they are referred for a special education evaluation.

