



Sonoma County Charter SELPA

Policies and Administrative Regulations

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Sonoma County Charter SELPA Policies

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COMPREHENSIVE LOCAL PLAN FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION

The Charter LEA Governing Board desires to provide a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) to all school aged K-12 individuals with disabilities, who are enrolled in the Charter LEA, including children who have been suspended or expelled or placed by the Charter LEA in a nonpublic school or agency services. The Governing Board for each LEA Charter and the County Board of Education approves the Agreement for Participation, Representations and Warranties and the Local Plan.

Students shall be referred for special education instruction and services only after the resources of the regular education program have been considered, and where appropriate, utilized.
(Education Code 56303)

In order to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities and employ staff with adequate expertise for this purpose, the Charter LEA participates as a member of the Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA).

The Charter Chief Executive Officer or designee of the Charter LEA shall extend the Charter LEA's full cooperation to the SELPA. The policies and procedures of the SELPA shall be applied as policies and regulations to all participating Charter LEAs. Per the Local Plan, the Charter CEO Executive Committee approves policies and makes recommendations to the CEO Council. The CEO Council currently acts as the Council and Executive Committee.

The special education local plan area shall administer a local plan and administer the allocation of funds. (Education Code 56195)

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

56000-56001 Education for individuals with exceptional needs
56020-56035 Definitions
56040-56046 General provisions
56048-56050 Surrogate parents
56055 Foster parents
56060-56063 Substitute teachers
56170-56177 Children enrolled in private schools
56190-56194 Community advisory committees
56195-56195.10 Local plans
56205-56208 Local plan requirements
56213 Special education local plan areas with small or sparse populations
56240-56245 Staff development

56300-56385 Identification and referral, assessment, instructional planning, implementation, and review

56440-56449 Programs for individuals between the ages of three and five years

56500-56508 Procedural safeguards, including due process rights

56520-56524 Behavioral interventions

56600-56606 Evaluation, audits and information

56836-56836.05 Administration of local plan

GOVERNMENT CODE

95000-95029 California Early Intervention Services Act

CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 5

3000-3089 Regulations governing special education

UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 20

1400-1485 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 29

794 Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504

UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 42

12101-12213 Americans with Disabilities Act

CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS, TITLE 34

99.10-99.22 Inspection, review and procedures for amending education records

104.1-104.39 Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

300.500-300.514 Due process procedures for parents and children

303.1-303.654 Early intervention program for infants and toddlers with disabilities

Management Resources:

WEB SITES

CDE, Special Education Division: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/spbranch/sed>

U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs:

<http://www.ed.gov/offices/OSERS/OSEP>

COMPREHENSIVE LOCAL PLAN FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION

Definitions

Free and appropriate education (FAPE) means special education and related services that are provided at public expense, under public supervision and direction, and without charge; meet the standards of the California Department of Education including the requirements of 34 CFR 300.1-300.818; include appropriate services for school-aged children K-12; and are provided in conformity with the student's individualized education program (IEP) that meets the requirement of 34 CFR 300.320-300.324. (34 CFR 300.17, 300.101, 300.104)

The right to FAPE extends to students who are suspended or expelled or placed by the Charter LEA in nonpublic school or agency services. (34 CFR 300.101, 300.104)

Full educational opportunities means that students with disabilities have the right to full educational opportunities to meet their unique needs, including access to a variety of educational programs and services available to non-disabled students. (34 CFR 300.504, 300.505; Education Code 56368) “New citing is 300.109 The State must have in effect policies and procedures to demonstrate that the State has established a goal of providing full educational opportunity to all children with disabilities, aged birth through 21, and a detailed timetable for accomplishing that goal.”

Least restrictive environment means that to an appropriate extent, students with disabilities, including children in public or private institutions, shall be educated with children who are not disabled, including in nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities. (34 CFR 300.107, 300.114, 300.117).

Special education means specially designed instruction, at no cost to the parent/guardians, to meet the unique needs of individuals with disabilities, whose educational needs cannot be met with modification of the regular instruction program. It also includes related services, provided at no cost to the parent/guardian that may be needed to assist these individuals to benefit from specially designed instruction. Special education provides a full continuum of program options, including instruction conducted in the classroom, in the home, in hospitals and institutions, and in other settings; and instruction in physical education, to meet the educational and service needs of individuals with exceptional needs in the least restrictive environment. (Education Code 56031)

Specially designed instruction means adapting, as appropriate to the needs of an eligible child, the content, methodology or delivery of instruction to address the unique needs of the student that result from the student's disability and to ensure access of the student to the general curriculum, so that the student can meet the educational standards within the district that apply to all students. (34 CFR 300.39)

Note: Pursuant to Government Code 7579.5, when a student is a ward of the court, the Charter

LEA would appoint a surrogate parent only when the court has limited the right of the parent/guardian to make educational decisions for his/her child and the student has no responsible adult, such as a foster parent, to represent him or her. Since Welfare and Institutions Code 361 and 726 require the juvenile court to appoint a responsible adult when the court limits parental rights, it will rarely be necessary for the Charter LEA to appoint a surrogate because that appointment would be superseded by the court's appointment of a responsible adult or foster parent.

Surrogate parent means an individual assigned to act as a surrogate for the parents/guardians. The surrogate may represent an individual with exceptional needs in matters relating to identification, assessment, instructional planning and development, educational placement, reviewing and revising the IEP, and in other matters relating to the provision of FAPE to the individual with disability. (34 CFR 300.519; Education Code 56050)

Elements of the Local Plan

Note: Education Code 56205 details the elements that must be included in the local plan, including a requirement that the plan contain assurances of general compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 USC 794), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 USC 1400-1485), and the Americans with Disabilities Act (42 USC 12101-12213).

The special education local plan shall include, but not be limited to the following:

1. Assurances that policies, procedures and programs, consistent with state law, regulation, and policy, are in effect as specified in Education Code 56205(a)(1-22) and in conformity with 20 USC 1412(a) and 20 USC 1413(a)(1). (Education Code 56205)
2. An annual budget plan and annual service plan adopted at a public hearing held by the special education local plan area. (Education Code 56205)
3. A description of the process being utilized to oversee and evaluate placements in nonpublic, nonsectarian schools and the method for ensuring that all requirements of each student's IEP are being met. (Education Code 56205)
4. A description of how specialized equipment and services will be distributed within the local plan area in a manner that minimizes the necessity to serve students in isolated sites and maximizes the opportunities to serve students in the least restrictive environment. (Education Code 56206)
5. A description of a dispute resolution process. (Education Code 56205)
6. Verification that the plan has been reviewed by the community advisory committee in accordance with Education Code 56205 (Education Code 56205)
7. A description of the process being utilized to refer students for special education instruction pursuant to Education Code 56303. (Education Code 56205)
8. A description of the process being utilized to oversee and evaluate placements in nonpublic, nonsectarian schools and the method for ensuring that all requirements of each student's IEP are being met. (Education Code 56205)

9. A description of how specialized equipment and services will be distributed within the local plan area in a manner that minimizes the necessity to serve students in isolated sites and maximizes the opportunities to serve students in the least restrictive environment. (Education Code 56206)

The local plan, annual budget plan and annual service plan shall be written in language that is understandable to the general public. (Education Code 56205)

Each special education local plan area shall develop written agreements to be entered into by Charter LEAs participating in the plan. (Education Code 56195.7)

Each entity providing special education shall adopt policies for the programs and services it operates, consistent with agreements adopted pursuant to Education Code 56195.1 and 56195.7. (Education Code 56195.8)

IDENTIFICATION AND EVALUATION OF INDIVIDUALS FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION

Note: Identification, evaluation, assessment, and instructional planning procedures for children younger than age three must conform with Education Code 56425-56432 and the California Early Intervention Services Act (Government Code 95000-95029). The California Department of Education and local education agencies are responsible for providing early intervention services to infants and toddlers who have visual, hearing, or severe orthopedic impairment; the Department of Developmental Services and its regional centers must provide services to all other eligible children in this age group. The law also requires regional centers and local education agencies to coordinate family service plans for infants and toddlers and their families. Education Code 56441.11 sets forth eligibility criteria for preschool children ages three to five.

The Charter LEA Governing Board recognizes the need to actively seek out and evaluate school age Charter LEA residents who have disabilities in order to provide them with appropriate educational opportunities in accordance with state and federal law.

Charter schools are currently authorized to serve school-aged students (grades k-12). If at any time the authorization changes, the Charter schools would follow all state and federal laws regarding children from age 0-2 and Child Find. Charter schools will assist families and make appropriate referrals for any students they find who would be outside the age or area of responsibility of the Charter schools.

The Charter Chief Executive Officer or designee shall implement the designated SELPA process to determine when an individual is eligible for special education services and shall implement the SELPA procedures for special education program identification, screening, referral, assessment, planning, implementation, review, and triennial assessment. (Education Code 56301) The Charter LEAs' process shall prevent the inappropriate disproportionate representation by race and ethnicity of students with disabilities.

Note: The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), 20 USC 1412(a)(3), requires that the Charter LEA's "child find" identification system include identification of students with disabilities resident in the Charter LEA as well as highly mobile children with disabilities, such as migrant and homeless children.

Note: Services for a private school student, in accordance with an individualized education program (IEP), must be provided by the Charter LEA at no cost to the parent/guardian, unless the Charter LEA makes a free appropriate public education available to the student and the parent/guardian chooses to enroll the student in that private school. If the public school is providing services to the student, these services may be provided on the premises of the private school, including a parochial school, to the extent consistent with other provisions of law. 34 CFR 300.451 requires the Charter LEA to consult with appropriate representatives for private school students on how to carry out the "child find" requirement.

The Charter Chief Executive Officer or designee shall implement the designated SELPA's method whereby parents/guardians, teachers, appropriate professionals, and others may refer an individual for assessment for special education services. Identification procedures shall be coordinated with school site procedures for referral of students with needs that cannot be met with modifications to the regular instructional program. (Education Code 56302)

For assessment purposes, staff shall use appropriate tests to identify specific information about the individual's abilities in accordance with Education Code 56320.

The Charter Chief Executive Officer or designee shall notify parents/guardians in writing of their rights related to identification, referral, assessment, instructional planning, implementation, and review, including the SELPA's procedures for initiating a referral for assessment to identify individuals who need special education services. (Education Code 56301)

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

44265.5 Professional preparation for teachers of impaired students
56000-56885 Special education programs, especially:
56026 Individuals with disabilities
56170-56177 Children in private schools
56195.8 Adoption of policies
56300-56304 Identification of individuals with disabilities
56320-56331 Assessment
56340-56347 Instructional planning and individualized education program
56381 Reassessment of students
56425-56432 Early education for individuals with disabilities
56441.11 Eligibility criteria, children 3 to 5 years old
56445 Transition to grade school; reassessment
56500-56509 Procedural safeguards

GOVERNMENT CODE

95000-95029.5 California Early Intervention Services Act

CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 5

3021-3029 Identification, referral and assessment
3030-3031 Eligibility criteria

UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 20

1232g Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974

1412 State eligibility

1415 Procedural safeguards

CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS, TITLE 34

104.35 Evaluation and placement

104.36 Procedural safeguards

300.1-300.756 Assistance to states for the education of students with disabilities

COURT DECISIONS

Agostini v. Felton, (1997) 521 U.S. 203, 117 S.Ct. 1997

Management Resources:

FEDERAL REGISTER

34 CFR 300.a Appendix A to Part 300 - Questions and Answers

34 CFR 300a1 Attachment 1: Analysis of Comments and Changes

WEB SITES

California Department of Education: <http://www.cde.ca.gov>

U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs:

<http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osep>

IDENTIFICATION AND EVALUATION OF INDIVIDUALS FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION

A student shall be referred for special educational instruction and services only after the resources of the regular education program have been considered and used where appropriate. (Education Code 56303)

Note: Education Code 56329, as amended by AB 1662 (Ch. 653, Statutes of 2005), provides that, when making a determination of eligibility for special education and related services, the Charter LEAs shall not determine that a student is disabled if the primary factor for such determination is a lack of appropriate instruction in reading, including the essential components of reading instruction pursuant to 20 USC 6368 of the No Child Left Behind Act, lack of instruction in math, or limited English proficiency.

All referrals for special education and related services from school staff shall include a brief reason for the referral and description of the regular program resources that were considered and/or modified for use with the student, and their effect. (5 CCR 3021)

Within 15 days of a referral for initial assessment, unless the parent/guardian agrees in writing to an extension, the student's parent/guardian shall receive a notice of parental rights and a written proposed assessment plan. The 15-day period does not include days between the student's regular school session or term or days of school vacation in excess of five school days from the date of receipt of the referral.

However, an individualized education program required as a result of an assessment of a pupil shall be developed within 30 days after the commencement of the subsequent regular school year as determined by each Charter LEA's school calendar for each pupil for whom a referral has been made 30 days or less prior to the end of the regular school year. In the case of pupil school vacations, the 60-day time shall recommence on the date that pupil schooldays reconvene. A meeting to develop an initial individualized education program for the pupil shall be conducted within 30 days of a determination that the pupil needs special education and related services pursuant to paragraph (2) of subsection (b) of Section 300.343 of Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations. (Education Code 56344)

The proposed assessment plan shall meet all of the following requirements: (Education Code 56321)

1. Be in a language easily understood by the general public
2. Be provided in the native language of the parent/guardian or other mode of communication used by the parent/guardian unless it is clearly not feasible
3. Explain the types of assessment to be conducted
4. State that no individualized education program (IEP) will result from the assessment without parent/guardian consent

Upon receiving the proposed assessment plan, the parent/guardian shall have at least 15 days to decide whether or not to consent to the initial assessment. The assessment may begin as soon as

informed parental consent is received by the respective Charter LEAs. The Charter LEAs shall not interpret parent/guardian consent for initial assessment as consent for initial placement or initial provision of special education services. (Education Code 56321; 34 CFR 300.505)

Note: Education Code 56321, as amended by AB 1662 (Ch. 653, Statutes of 2005), and 20 USC 1414(a)(1) provide that, if a parent/guardian refuses to consent to the initial evaluation, the Charter LEAs may pursue an evaluation by utilizing the mediation and due process procedures pursuant to 20 USC 1415; see BP/AR 6159.1 - Procedural Safeguards and Complaints for Special Education. In the event that an evaluation is not authorized, 20 USC 1414(a)(1) specifies that the Charter LEAs shall not provide special education services and shall not be considered in violation of the requirement to provide a free appropriate public education for failure to provide such services. In addition, the Charter LEAs is not required to convene an IEP team meeting or to develop an IEP for that child.

Informed parental consent means that the parent/guardian: (34 CFR 300.500)

1. Has been fully informed of all information relevant to the activity for which consent is sought, in his/her native language or other mode of communication
2. Understands and agrees, in writing, to the assessment
3. Understands that the granting of consent is voluntary on his/her part and may be revoked at any time

If the student is a ward of the state and is not residing with his/her parents/guardians, the Charter LEAs shall make reasonable efforts to obtain informed consent from the parent/guardian as defined in 20 USC 1401 for an initial evaluation to determine whether the student is a student with a disability. (20 USC 1414(a)(1))

The Charter LEAs shall not be required to obtain informed consent from the parent/guardian of a student for an initial evaluation to determine whether the student is a student with a disability if any of the following situations exists: (Education Code 56301; 20 USC 1414(a)(1))

1. Despite reasonable efforts to do so, the Charter LEAs cannot discover the whereabouts of the parent/guardian of the student.
2. The rights of the parent/guardian of the student have been terminated in accordance with California law.
3. The rights of the parent/guardian to make educational decisions have been subrogated by a judge in accordance with California law and consent for an initial evaluation has been given by an individual appointed by the judge to represent the student.

As part of the assessment plan, the parent/guardian shall receive written notice that: (Education Code 56329; 34 CFR 300.502)

1. Upon completion of the administration of tests and other assessment materials, an IEP team meeting that includes the parent/guardian or his/her representative shall be scheduled pursuant to Education Code 56341. At this meeting, the team shall

determine whether or not the student is a student with disabilities as defined in Education Code 56026 and shall discuss the assessment, the educational recommendations, and the reasons for these recommendations. A copy of the assessment report and the documentation of determination of eligibility shall be given to the parent/guardian.

2. If the parent/guardian disagrees with an assessment obtained by the Charter LEAs, the parent/guardian has the right to obtain, at public expense, an independent educational assessment of the student from qualified specialists, in accordance with 34 CFR 300.502.

If the Charter LEAs observed the student in conducting its assessment, or if its assessment procedures make it permissible to have in-class observation of a student, an equivalent opportunity shall apply to the independent educational assessment. This equivalent opportunity shall apply to the student's current placement and setting as well as observation of the Charter LEA's proposed placement and setting, regardless of whether the independent educational assessment is initiated before or after the filing of a due process hearing proceeding.

3. The Charter LEAs may initiate a due process hearing pursuant to Education Code 56500-56508 to show that its assessment is appropriate. If the final decision resulting from the due process hearing is that the assessment is appropriate, the parent/guardian maintains the right for an independent educational assessment but not at public expense.

If the parent/guardian obtains an independent educational assessment at private expense, the results of the assessment shall be considered by the Charter LEAs with respect to the provision of a free appropriate public education to the student, and may be presented as evidence at a due process hearing regarding the student. If the Charter LEAs observed the student in conducting its assessment, or if its assessment procedures make it permissible to have in-class observation of a student, an equivalent opportunity shall apply to an independent educational assessment of the student in the student's current educational placement and setting, if any, proposed by the Charter LEAs, regardless of whether the independent educational assessment is initiated before or after the filing of a due process hearing.

4. If a parent/guardian proposes a publicly financed placement of the student in a nonpublic school, the Charter LEAs shall have an opportunity to observe the proposed placement and, if the student has already been unilaterally placed in the nonpublic school by the parent/guardian, the student in the proposed placement. Any such observation shall only be of the student who is the subject of the observation and may not include the observation or assessment of any other student in the proposed placement unless that student's parent/guardian consents to the observation or assessment. The results of any observation or assessment of

another student in violation of Education Code 56329(d) shall be inadmissible in any due process or judicial proceeding regarding the free appropriate public education of that other student.

An IEP required as a result of an assessment shall be developed within a total time not to exceed 60 days, not counting days between the student's regular school sessions, terms, or days of school vacation in excess of five school days, from the date of the receipt of the parent/guardian's consent for assessment, unless the parent/guardian agrees, in writing, to an extension. (Education Code 56043)

Before entering kindergarten or first grade, children with disabilities who are in a preschool program shall be reassessed to determine if they still need special education and services. IEP teams shall identify a means of monitoring the continued success of children who are determined to be eligible for less intensive special education programs to ensure that gains made are not lost by a rapid removal of individualized programs and supports for these individuals. (Education Code 56445)

INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM

The Charter LEA Governing Board desires to provide educational alternatives that afford students with disabilities full educational opportunities. Students with disabilities shall receive a free appropriate public education and be placed in the least restrictive environment which meets their needs to the extent provided by law.

The Charter Chief Executive Officer or designee shall implement the SELPA-approved procedural guide that outlines the appointment of the individualized education program (IEP) team, the contents of the IEP, and the development, review, and revision of the IEP.

Note: Education Code 56055 provides that a foster parent, to the extent permitted by federal law, shall have the same rights relative to his/her foster child's education as a parent/guardian. Education Code 56055 clarifies that this right applies only when the juvenile court has limited the right of a parent/guardian to make educational decisions on behalf of his/her child and the child has been placed in a planned permanent living arrangement. Education Code 56055 defines "foster parent" as a licensed person, relative caretaker, or non-relative extended family member.

To the extent permitted by federal law, a foster parent shall have the same rights relative to his/her foster child's IEP as a parent/guardian. (Education Code 56055)

Legal Reference:**EDUCATION CODE**

51225.3 Requirements for high school graduation and diploma
56055 Rights of foster parents pertaining to foster child's education
56136 Guidelines for low incidence disabilities areas
56195.8 Adoption of policies
56321 Development or revision of IEP
56321.5 Notice to include right to electronically record
56340.1-56347 Instructional planning and individualized education program
56350-56352 IEP for visually impaired students
56380 IEP reviews; notice of right to request
56390-56392 Certificate of completion, special education
56500-56509 Procedural safeguards
60640-60649 Standardized Testing and Reporting Program
60850 High school exit examination, students with disabilities
60852.3 High school exit examination, exemption for the class of 2006

FAMILY CODE

6500-6502 Age of majority

GOVERNMENT CODE

7572.5 Seriously emotionally disturbed child, expanded IEP team

WELFARE AND INSTITUTIONS CODE

300 Children subject to jurisdiction

601 Minors habitually disobedient

602 Minors violating law defined as crime

CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 5

853-853.5 Standardized Testing and Reporting Program, accommodations

1215.5-1218 High School Exit Examination, accommodations for students with disabilities

3021-3029 Identification, referral and assessment

3040-3043 Instructional planning and the individualized education program

UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 20

1232g Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974

1400-1482 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS, TITLE 34

300.1-300.756 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

ATTORNEY GENERAL OPINIONS

85 Ops.Cal.Atty.Gen. 157 (2002)

COURT DECISIONS

Schaffer v. Weast (2005) 125 S. Ct. 528

Shapiro v. Paradise Valley Unified School District, No. 69 (9th Circuit, 2003) 317 F.3d 1072

Sacramento City School District v. Rachel H. (9th Cir. 1994) 14 F.3d 1398

Management Resources:

FEDERAL REGISTER

34 CFR 300.a Appendix A to Part 300 - Questions and Answers

34 CFR 300.a1 Attachment 1: Analysis of Comments and Changes

WEB SITES

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U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services:

<http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osep>

INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM

Members of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) Team

The Charter LEA shall ensure that the individualized education program team for any student with a disability includes the following members: (20 USC 1414(d)(1); 34 CFR 300.321; Education Code 56341, 56341.2, 56341.5)

1. One or both of the student's parents/guardians, and/or a representative selected by the parent/guardian
2. If the student is or may be participating in the regular education program, at least one regular education teacher

If more than one regular education teacher is providing instructional services to the student, the Charter LEA may designate one such teacher to represent the others.

3. At least one special education teacher or, where appropriate, at least one special education provider for the student

Note: The Analysis of Comments to the federal regulations, 71 Fed. Reg. 156, pg. 46670, recommend that the person selected as the Charter LEA representative, pursuant to item #4 below, have the authority to commit Charter LEA resources and be able to ensure that whatever services are set out in the IEP will be provided.

4. A representative of the Charter LEA who is:
 - a. Qualified to provide or supervise the provision of specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of students with disabilities
 - b. Knowledgeable about the general education curriculum
 - c. Knowledgeable about the availability of Charter LEA and/or special education local plan area (SELPA) resources
5. An individual who can interpret the instructional implications of assessment results

This individual may already be a member of the team as described in items #2-4 above or in item #6 below.

Note: Pursuant to Education Code 56341 and 34 CFR 300.321, the determination as to whether an individual identified in item #6 below has "knowledge or special expertise" must be made by the party (either the Charter LEA or parent) who invited the individual to the IEP team meeting.

Note: The Analysis of Comments to the federal regulations, 71 Fed. Reg. 156, pg. 46670, explain that a person who does not have knowledge and special expertise regarding the student, and who is not requested to be present at the IEP team meeting by the parent/guardian or Charter LEA, would not be permitted to be a member of the team or attend the meeting as observer. This comment is consistent with an Attorney General opinion (85 Ops.Cal.Atty.Gen. 157 (2002)), which stated that members of the media may not attend an IEP team meeting as observers even though the parents/guardians have consented to such attendance. The Attorney General based this decision on the fact that the media would be "observers," not a "person with knowledge or expertise," as detailed below.

6. At the discretion of the parent/guardian or Charter LEA, other individuals who have knowledge or special expertise regarding the student, including related services personnel, as appropriate

The determination of whether the individual has knowledge or special expertise regarding the student shall be made by the party who invites the individual to be a member of the IEP team. (Education Code 56341)

7. Whenever appropriate, the student with a disability

8. For transition service participants:

- a. The student, of any age, with a disability if the purpose of the meeting is the consideration of the student's postsecondary goals and the transition services needed to assist the student in reaching those goals pursuant to 34 CFR 300.320(b)
If the student does not attend the IEP team meeting, the Charter LEA shall take other steps to ensure that the student's preferences and interests are considered.
- b. To the extent appropriate, and with the consent of the parent/guardian, a representative of any other agency that is likely to be responsible for providing or paying for transition services.
- c. If a representative of such other local agency has been invited but does not attend the meeting, the Charter LEA shall take other steps to obtain participation of the agency in the planning of any transition services. (Education Code 56341)

9. For students suspected of having a specific learning disability in accordance with 34 CFR 300.308 (formerly 300.540) and 34 CFR 300.310 (formerly 300.542), at least one individual who is qualified to conduct individual diagnostic examinations of the student, such as a school psychologist, speech language pathologist, or remedial reading teacher (Education Code 56341)

In accordance with 34 CFR 300.310 (formerly 300.542), at least one team member other than the student's regular education teacher shall observe the student's academic

performance in the regular classroom setting. If the child is younger than five years or not enrolled in school, a team member shall observe the child in an environment appropriate for a child of that age. (Education Code 56341)

10. For students who have been placed in a group home by the juvenile court, a representative of the group home

If a student with a disability is identified as potentially requiring mental health services, the Charter LEA shall request the participation of the county mental health program in the IEP team meeting. (Education Code 56331)

A member of the IEP team shall not be required to attend an IEP team meeting, in whole or in part, if the parent/guardian consents and the Charter LEA agrees, in writing, that the attendance of the member is not necessary because the member's area of the curriculum or related services is not being modified or discussed at the meeting. If the meeting involves a discussion of the member's area of the curriculum or related service, the IEP team member may be excused from the meeting if the parent/guardian consents in writing to the excusal and the member submits to the parent/guardian and team written input into the development of the IEP prior to the meeting. (20 USC 1414(d)(1)(C); 34 CFR 300.321; Education Code 56341)

Parent/Guardian Participation and Other Rights

The Charter CEO or designee shall take steps to ensure that one or both of the parents/guardians of the student with a disability are present at each IEP team meeting or are afforded the opportunity to participate. These steps shall include notifying the parents/guardians of the meeting early enough to ensure that they will have the opportunity to attend and scheduling the meeting at a mutually agreed upon time and place. (34 CFR 300.322; Education Code 56341.5)

The Charter CEO or designee shall send parents/guardians notices of IEP team meetings that: (34 CFR 300.322; Education Code 56341.5)

1. Indicate the purpose, time, and location of the meeting
2. Indicate who will be in attendance at the meeting

Note: As amended by AB 1662 (Ch. 653, Statutes of 2005), Education Code 56341.5 conforms state law with federal law by requiring that the IEP team meeting notice contain a statement of transition services beginning at age 16 rather than age 14.

3. For students beginning at age 16 (or younger than 16 if deemed appropriate by the IEP team):
 - a. Indicate that the purpose of the meeting will be the consideration of postsecondary goals and transition services for the student pursuant to 20 USC

1414(d)(1)(A)(i)(VIII), 34 CFR 300.320(b), and Education Code 56345.1

- b. Indicate that the Charter LEA will invite the student to the IEP team meeting
- c. Identify any other agency that will be invited to send a representative

At each IEP team meeting convened by the Charter LEA, the Charter LEA administrator or specialist on the team shall inform the parent/guardian and student of the federal and state procedural safeguards included in the notice of parental rights provided pursuant to Education Code 56321. (Education Code 56500.1)

The parent/guardian shall have the right and opportunity to examine all of his/her child's school records upon request and before any IEP meeting. Upon receipt of an oral or written request, the Charter LEA shall provide complete copies of the records within five business days. (Education Code 56043)

If neither parent/guardian can attend the meeting, the Charter CEO or designee shall use other methods to ensure parent/guardian participation, including video conferences or individual or conference telephone calls. (20 USC 1414(f); 34 CFR 300.322; Education Code 56341.5)

An IEP team meeting may be conducted without a parent/guardian in attendance if the Charter LEA is unable to convince the parent/guardian that he/she should attend. In such a case, the Charter LEA shall maintain a record of its attempts to arrange a mutually agreed upon time and place for the meeting, including: (34 CFR 300.322; Education Code 56341.5)

- 1. Detailed records of telephone calls made or attempted and the results of those calls
- 2. Copies of correspondence sent to the parent/guardian and any responses received
- 3. Detailed records of visits made to the parent/guardian's home or place of employment and the results of those visits

Note: Education Code 56341.1 grants the parent/guardian, Charter LEA, SELPA, or county office the right to electronically record the proceedings of IEP team meetings. Audiotape recordings made by a Charter LEA, SELPA, or county office are subject to the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (20 USC 1232g).

Parents/guardians and the Charter LEA shall have the right to audiotape the proceedings of IEP team meetings, provided members of the IEP team are notified of this intent at least 24 hours before the meeting. If the Charter LEA gives notice of intent to audiotape a meeting and the parent/guardian objects or refuses to attend because the meeting would be audiotaped, the meeting shall not be audiotaped. Parents/guardians also have the right to: (Education Code 56341.1)

1. Inspect and review the audiotapes
2. Request that the audiotapes be amended if the parents/guardians believe they contain information that is inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the student's privacy rights or other rights
3. Challenge, in a hearing, information that the parents/guardians believe is inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the student's privacy rights or other rights

The Charter LEA shall take any action necessary to ensure that the parents/guardians understand the proceedings of the meeting, including arranging for an interpreter for parents/guardians with deafness or whose native language is not English. (34 CFR 300.322; Education Code 56345.1)
The Charter LEA shall give the parents/guardians of a student with disabilities a copy of his/her child's IEP at no cost. (34 CFR 300.322)

Contents of the IEP

The IEP shall be a written statement determined in a meeting of the IEP team. It shall include, but not be limited to, all of the following: (20 USC 1414(d)(1)(A); 34 CFR 300.320; Education Code 56043, 56345, 56345.1)

1. A statement of the present levels of the student's academic achievement and functional performance, including:
 - a. The manner in which the student's disability affects his/her involvement and progress in the general education curriculum (i.e., the same curriculum as for nondisabled students)
 - b. For a preschool child, as appropriate, the manner in which the disability affects his/her participation in appropriate activities

Note: AB 1662 (Ch. 653, Statutes of 2005) amended Education Code 56345 to require a statement of a student's academic and functional goals, as specified below. Education Code 56345 expresses the legislative recognition that, although some students may not meet or exceed the growth projected in the annual goals and objectives, Charter LEAs must make a good faith effort to assist the students in achieving the goals in their IEP.

2. A statement of measurable annual goals, including academic and functional goals, designed to do the following:
 - a. Meet the student's needs that result from his/her disability in order to enable the student to be involved in and progress in the general education curriculum
 - b. Meet each of the student's other educational needs that result from the his/her disability

Note: 34 CFR 300.320, as amended by 71 Fed. Reg. 156, and Education Code 56345 require the following statement in the IEP.

- c. For students with disabilities who take alternate assessments aligned to alternate achievement standards, a description of benchmarks or short-term objectives
- 3. A description of the manner in which the progress of the student toward meeting the annual goals described in item #2 above will be measured and when the Charter LEA will provide periodic reports on the progress the student is making toward meeting the annual goals, such as through the use of quarterly or other periodic reports, concurrent with the issuance of report cards
- 4. A statement of the specific special educational instruction and related services and supplementary aids and services, based on peer-reviewed research, to the extent practicable, to be provided to the student, or on behalf of the student, and a statement of the program modifications or supports for school personnel that will be provided to enable the student to:
 - a. Advance appropriately toward attaining the annual goals
 - b. Be involved and make progress in the general education curriculum in accordance with item #1 above and to participate in extracurricular and other nonacademic activities
 - c. Be educated and participate with other students with disabilities and nondisabled students in the activities described in Education Code 56345(a)
- 5. An explanation of the extent, if any, to which the student will not participate with nondisabled students in the regular class and in extracurricular and other nonacademic activities described in item #4 above

Note: Pursuant to 20 USC 1412(a), students with disabilities must be included in state and Charter LEA assessments, with appropriate accommodations, such as the Standardized Testing and Reporting Program (Education Code 60640-60649) and the high school exit examination (Education Code 60850-60859). See AR 6162.51 - Standardized Testing and Reporting Program and AR 6162.52 - High School Exit Examination for details regarding permitted accommodations.

Note: 34 CFR 300.320, as amended by 71 Fed. Reg. 156, and Education Code 56345 require a description of the individual accommodations that will be used by the student and, if the student will not participate in the regular assessment, a statement as to the reason that determination was made and what alternate assessment will be provided.

6. A statement of any appropriate individual accommodations necessary to measure the academic achievement and functional performance of the student on state and Charter LEA-wide assessments

If the IEP team determines that the student shall take an alternate assessment instead of a particular regular state or Charter LEA-wide assessment, a statement of all of the following:

- a. The reason that the student cannot participate in the regular assessment
 - b. The reason that the particular alternate assessment selected is appropriate for the student
7. The projected date for the beginning of the services and modifications described in item #4 above and the anticipated frequency, location, and duration of those services and modifications

Note: As amended by AB 1662 (Ch. 653, Statutes of 2005), Education Code 56345 now conforms state law with federal law to require that the IEP contain a statement of transition services beginning at age 16 rather than age 14.

8. Beginning not later than the first IEP to be in effect when the student is 16 years of age, or younger if determined appropriate by the IEP team, and updated annually thereafter, the following:
 - a. Appropriate measurable postsecondary goals based upon age-appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment, and where appropriate, independent living skills
 - b. The transition services, including courses of study, needed to assist the student in reaching those goals
9. Beginning at least one year before the student reaches age 18, a statement that the student has been informed of his/her rights, if any, pursuant to Education Code 56041.5 that will transfer to the student upon reaching age 18

Where appropriate, the IEP shall also include: (Education Code 56345)

1. For students in grades 7-12, any alternative means and modes necessary for the student to complete the Charter LEA's prescribed course of study and to meet or exceed proficiency standards required for graduation
2. Linguistically appropriate goals, objectives, programs, and services for students whose

native language is not English

Note: AB 1662 (Ch. 653, Statutes of 2005) amended Education Code 56345 to require the following determination by the IEP team regarding extended school year services.

3. Extended school year services when the IEP team determines, on an individual basis, that the services are necessary for the provision of a free appropriate public education (FAPE)
4. Provision for transition into the regular education program if the student is to be transferred from a special class or center or nonpublic, nonsectarian school into a regular education program in a public school for any part of the school day

The IEP shall include descriptions of activities intended to:

- a. Integrate the student into the regular education program, including indications of the nature of each activity and the time spent on the activity each day or week
 - b. Support the transition of the student from the special education program into the regular education program
5. Specialized services, materials, and equipment for students with low incidence disabilities, consistent with the guidelines pursuant to Education Code 56136

Development, Review, and Revision of the IEP

In developing the IEP, the IEP team shall consider all of the following: (20 USC 1414(d)(3)(A); 34 CFR 300.324; Education Code 56341.1, 56345)

1. The strengths of the student
2. The concerns of the parents/guardians for enhancing the education of their child
3. The results of the initial assessment or most recent assessment of the student
4. The academic, developmental, and functional needs of the student
5. In the case of a student whose behavior impedes his/her learning or that of others, the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports and other strategies to address that behavior
6. In the case of a student with limited English proficiency, the language needs of the student as such needs relate to the student's IEP

7. In the case of a student who is blind or visually impaired, the need to provide for instruction in Braille and instruction in the use of Braille

However, such instruction need not be included in the IEP if the IEP team determines that instruction in Braille or the use of Braille is not appropriate for the student. This determination shall be based upon an assessment of the student's reading and writing skills, his/her future needs for instruction in Braille or the use of Braille, and other appropriate reading and writing media.

8. The communication needs of the student, and in the case of a student who is deaf or hard of hearing, the student's language and communication needs, opportunities for direct communications with peers and professional personnel in the student's language and communication mode, academic level, and full range of needs, including opportunities for direct instruction in the student's language and communication mode.

The team shall also consider the related services and program options that provide the student with an equal opportunity for communication access, including the following: (Education Code 56345)

- a. The student's primary language mode and language, which may include the use of spoken language, with or without visual cues, and/or the use of sign language
 - b. The availability of a sufficient number of age, cognitive, and language peers of similar abilities which may be met by consolidating services into a local plan area-wide program or providing placement pursuant to Education Code 56361
 - c. Appropriate, direct, and ongoing language access to special education teachers and other specialists who are proficient in the student's primary language mode and language consistent with existing law regarding teacher training requirements
 - d. Services necessary to ensure communication-accessible academic instructions, school services, and extracurricular activities consistent with the federal Vocational Rehabilitation Act and the federal Americans with Disabilities Act
9. Whether the student requires assistive technology devices and services.

If, in considering the special factors in items #1-9 above, the IEP team determines that a student needs a particular device or service, including an intervention, accommodation, or other program modification, in order to receive FAPE, the IEP team must include a statement to that effect in the student's IEP. (Education Code 56341.1)

The Charter CEO or designee shall ensure that the IEP team: (20 USC 1414(d)(4); 34 CFR 300.324; Education Code 56043, 56341.1, 56380)

1. Reviews the IEP periodically, but at least annually, to determine whether the annual goals for the student are being achieved and the appropriateness of placement
2. Revises the IEP, as appropriate, to address:
 - a. Any lack of expected progress toward the annual goals and in the general curriculum, where appropriate
 - b. The results of any reassessment conducted pursuant to Education Code 56381
 - c. Information about the student provided to or by the parents/guardians regarding review of evaluation data pursuant to 34 CFR 305(a)(2) and Education Code 56381(b)
 - d. The student's anticipated needs
 - e. Other matters

Note: As amended by 71 Fed. Reg. 156, 34 CFR 300.324 requires that, when conducting a review of the IEP, the IEP team consider the special factors for students with additional behavior or communication needs as listed in items #5-9 above.

3. Considers the special factors listed in items #5-9 above when reviewing the IEP. The IEP team shall also meet: (Education Code 56343)
 - a. Whenever the student has received an initial formal assessment and, when desired, when the student receives any subsequent formal assessment
 - b. Upon request by the student's parent/guardian or teacher to develop, review, or revise the IEP

If a participating agency other than the Charter LEA fails to provide the transition services described in the student's IEP, the team shall reconvene to identify alternative strategies to meet the transition service objectives set out for the student in the IEP. (20 USC 1414(d); 34 CFR 300.324; Education Code 56345.1)

As a member of the IEP team, the regular education teacher shall, to the extent appropriate, participate in the development, review, and revision of the student's IEP, including assisting in the determination of: (20 USC 1414(d)(3)(C); 34 CFR 300.324; Education Code 56341)

1. Appropriate positive behavioral interventions and supports and other strategies for the student.
2. Supplementary aids and services, program modifications, and supports for school

personnel that will be provided for the student, consistent with 34 CFR 300.320

To the extent possible, the Charter LEA shall encourage the consolidation of reassessment meetings and other IEP team meetings for a student. (20 USC 1414(d)(3)(A); 34 CFR 300.324)

The student shall be allowed to provide confidential input to any representative of his/her IEP team. (Education Code 56341.5)

Note: As amended by 71 Fed. Reg. 156, 34 CFR 300.324 requires that the IEP team be informed when the IEP is amended under the circumstances described below.

When a change is necessary to a student's IEP after the annual IEP team meeting for the school year has been held, the parent/guardian and the Charter LEA may agree not to convene an IEP team meeting for the purpose of making the change and instead may develop a written document to amend or modify the student's current IEP. The IEP team shall be informed of any such changes. Upon request, the Charter LEA shall provide the parent/guardian with a revised copy of the IEP with the incorporated amendments. (20 USC 1414(d)(3)(D); 34 CFR 300.324)

Note: Education Code 56157 specifies that when the Charter LEA has placed a foster student in a nonpublic, nonsectarian school, the Charter LEA must conduct an annual evaluation, as specified below. In addition, Education Code 56157 requires the nonpublic, nonsectarian school to report to the Charter LEA regarding the educational progress made by the student.

If a student with disabilities residing in a licensed children's institution or foster family home has been placed by the Charter LEA in a nonpublic, nonsectarian school, the Charter LEA shall conduct an annual evaluation as part of the IEP process of whether the placement is the least restrictive environment that is appropriate to meet the student's needs. (Education Code 56157)

Note: As amended by AB 1662 (Ch. 653, Statutes of 2005), Education Code 56043 specifies that if an IEP calls for a residential placement, the IEP must be reviewed every six months.

When an IEP calls for a residential placement as a result of a review by an expanded IEP team, the IEP shall include a provision for a review, at least every six months, by the full IEP team of all of the following: (Education Code 56043)

1. The case progress
2. The continuing need for out-of-home placement
3. The extent of compliance with the IEP
4. Progress toward alleviating the need for out-of-home care

Timelines for the IEP and for the Provision of Services

At the beginning of each school year, the Charter LEA shall have an IEP in effect for each student with a disability within Charter LEA jurisdiction. (34 CFR 300.323; Education Code 56344)

The Charter LEA shall ensure that a meeting to develop an initial IEP is conducted within 30 days of a determination that a student needs special education and related services. The Charter LEA shall also ensure that, as soon as possible following development of the IEP, special education services and related services are made available to the student in accordance with his/her IEP. (34 CFR 300.323; Education Code 56344)

An IEP required as a result of an assessment of the student shall be developed within 60 days (not counting days between the student's regular school sessions, terms or days of school vacation in excess of five school days) from the date of receipt of the parent/guardian's written consent for assessment, unless the parent/guardian agrees, in writing, to an extension. (Education Code 56344)

However, an IEP required as a result of an assessment of a student shall be developed within 30 days after the commencement of the subsequent regular school year for a student for whom a referral has been made 30 days or less prior to the end of the regular school year. In the case of school vacations, the 60-day time limit shall recommence on the date that student's school days reconvene. (Education Code 56344)

When a parent/guardian requests an IEP team meeting to review the IEP, the team shall meet within 30 days of receiving the parent/guardian's written request, not counting days between the student's regular school sessions, terms, or days of school vacation in excess of five school days. If a parent/guardian makes an oral request, the Charter LEA shall notify the parent/guardian of the need for a written request and the procedure for filing such a request. (Education Code 56043, 56343.5)

Note: Education Code 56195.8 mandates that the Charter LEA's policy sets forth procedures and timelines for the review of a classroom assignment of an individual with exceptional needs when so requested by that student's regular or special education teacher. Education Code 56195.8 does not state a specific deadline for the review. The Charter LEA shall develop procedures and timelines for such reviews, including procedures which will designate which personnel are responsible for the reviews.

The Charter LEA shall ensure that the student's IEP is accessible to each regular education teacher, special education teacher, related service provider, and any other service provider who is responsible for its implementation. The Charter LEA shall also ensure that such teachers and providers are informed of their specific responsibilities related to implementing the IEP and the specific accommodations, modifications, and supports that must be provided to the student in accordance with the IEP. (34 CFR 300.323)

Before providing special education and related services, the Charter LEA shall seek to obtain informed consent pursuant to 20 USC 1414(a)(1). If the parent/guardian refuses to consent to the initiation of services, the Charter LEA shall not provide the services by utilizing the due process hearing procedures pursuant to 20 USC 1415(f). If the parent/guardian does not consent to all of the components of the IEP, then those components to which the parent/guardian has consented shall be implemented so as not to delay providing instruction and services to the student. (Education Code 56346)

If the parent/guardian refuses all services in the IEP after having consented to those services in the past, the Charter LEA shall file a request for a due process hearing. If the Charter LEA determines that a part of the proposed IEP to which the parent/guardian does not consent is necessary in order to provide the student FAPE, a due process hearing shall be initiated in accordance with 20 USC 1415(f). While the due process hearing is pending, the student shall remain in the current placement unless the parent/guardian and the Charter LEA agree otherwise. (Education Code 56346)

Transfer Students

To facilitate a transfer student's transition, this Charter LEA shall take reasonable steps to promptly obtain the records of a student with disabilities transferring into this Charter LEA, including his/her IEP and the supporting documents related to the provision of special education services. (34 CFR 300.323; Education Code 56325)

If a student with disabilities transfers to this Charter LEA during the school year from a Charter LEA within this same SELPA, this Charter LEA shall continue, without delay, to provide services comparable to those described in the existing IEP, unless the student's parent/guardian and Charter LEA agree to develop, adopt, and implement a new IEP that is consistent with state and federal law. (34 CFR 300.323; Education Code 56325)

If a student with disabilities transfers to this Charter LEA during the school year from a California LEA outside of this Charter LEA's SELPA, this Charter LEA shall provide the student with FAPE, including services comparable to those described in the previous LEA's IEP. Within 30 days, this Charter LEA shall, in consultation with the parents/guardians, adopt the other LEA's IEP or shall develop, adopt, and implement a new IEP that is consistent with state and federal law. (34 CFR 300.323; Education Code 56325)

If a student with disabilities transfers to this Charter LEA during the school year from an out-of-state LEA, this Charter LEA shall provide the student with FAPE, including services comparable to the out-of-state LEA's IEP, in consultation with the parent/guardian, until such time as this Charter LEA conducts an assessment, if this Charter LEA determines that such an assessment is necessary, and develops, adopts, and implements a new IEP, if appropriate. (34 CFR 300.323; Education Code 56325)

PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS

In order to protect the rights of students with disabilities, the Charter LEA shall follow all procedural safeguards as set forth in law. Parents/guardians shall receive written notice of their rights in accordance with law, Board policy, and administrative regulation.

Note: Education Code 56195.8 authorizes the policy to include provisions for involving Charter LEA Board members in any due process hearing procedure activities.

The Charter CEO or designee shall represent the district in any due process hearing conducted with regard to Charter LEA students and shall inform their governing board about the result of the hearing.

Complaints for Special Education

Note: A complaint, which can be made by anyone, is an allegation of a violation of state or federal law. These complaints are different than the due process complaint, as detailed in the accompanying administrative regulation, which is a legal document that must be filed to initiate a due process hearing.

Complaints concerning compliance with state or federal law regarding special education shall be addressed in accordance with the Charter LEA's uniform complaint procedures.

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

56000 Education for individuals with exceptional needs

56001 Provision of the special education programs

56020-56035 Definitions

56195.7 Written agreements

56195.8 Adoption of policies for programs and services

56300-56385 Identification and referral, assessment

56440-56447.1 Programs for individuals between the ages of three and five years

56500-56509 Procedural safeguards, including due process rights

56600-56606 Evaluation, audits and information

CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 5

3000-3100 Regulations governing special education

4600-4671 Uniform complaint procedures

UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 20

1232g Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

1400-1482 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 29

794 Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act

UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 42

11434 Homeless assistance

CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS, TITLE 34

99.10-99.22 Inspection, review and procedures for amending education records

104.36 Procedural safeguards

300.1-300.818 Assistance to states for the education of students with disabilities, especially:

300.500-300.520 Procedural safeguards and due process for parents and students

Management Resources:

FEDERAL REGISTER

Rules and Regulations, August 14, 2006, Vol. 71, Number 156, pages 46539-46845

WEB SITES

California Department of Education, Special Education: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/se>

U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs:

<http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osep>

PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS AND COMPLAINTS FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION

Note: In California, due process hearings required by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) (20 USC 1400-1482) are held only at the state level. Related rights and procedures are set forth in Education Code 56501-56506 and 5 CCR 3080-3089. Note that in cases where state law provides greater protections, state law supersedes federal law.

Note: Pursuant to Education Code 56501, due process hearing rights extend to the student only if he/she is an emancipated student or a ward or dependent of the court with no available parent or surrogate parent. See AR 6159.3 - Appointment of Surrogate Parent for Special Education Students.

Informal Process/Pre-Hearing Mediation Conference

Before requesting a due process hearing, the Charter Chief Executive Officer or designee of the Charter LEA and a parent/guardian may agree to meet informally to resolve any issue(s) relating to the identification, assessment or education and placement of a student with disabilities. The Charter Chief Executive Officer or designee shall have the authority to resolve the issue(s). (Education Code 56502)

In addition, either party may file a request with the Superintendent of Public Instruction for a mediation conference to be conducted by a person under contract with the California Department of Education. Based on the mediation conference, the Charter Chief Executive Officer or designee may resolve the issue(s) in a manner that is consistent with state and federal law and is to the satisfaction of both parties. (Education Code 56500.3)

Attorneys may attend or otherwise participate only in those mediation conferences that are scheduled after the filing of a request for due process hearing. (Education Code 56500.3, 56501)

If either of these processes fails to resolve the issue(s), either party may file for a state-level due process hearing.

Due Process Complaint Notice and Hearing Procedures

A parent/guardian, the Charter LEA, and/or a student who is emancipated or a ward or dependent of the court may initiate due process hearing procedures whenever: (20 USC 1415(b); Education Code 56501)

1. There is a proposal to initiate or change the identification, assessment or educational placement of the student or the provision of a free, appropriate public education to the student
2. There is a refusal to initiate or change the identification, assessment or

educational placement of the student or the provision of a free, appropriate public education to the student

3. The parent/guardian refuses to consent to an assessment of his/her child
4. There is a disagreement between a parent/guardian and the Charter LEA regarding the availability of a program appropriate for the student, including the question of financial responsibility, as specified in 34 CFR 300.403(b)

Note: Pursuant to 20 USC 1415(b), as amended by P.L. 108-446, effective July 1, 2005, and 34 CFR 300.507, the Charter LEA is mandated to adopt procedures (1) requiring either party (the Charter LEA or the parent/guardian) or their attorney to provide notice of the request for a due process hearing to the other party and (2) containing the requirement that the party may not have a due process hearing until the notice specified in items #1-5 below has been filed. The CDE is required to develop a model form to assist parents in filing a complaint and due process complaint notice.

Prior to having a due process hearing, the party requesting the hearing, or the party's attorney, shall provide the opposing party a due process complaint notice, which shall remain confidential, specifying: (20 USC 1415(b); 34 CFR 300.507

1. The student's name
2. The student's address or, in the case of a student identified as homeless pursuant to 42 USC 11434, available contact information for that student
3. The name of the school the student attends
4. A description of the nature of the student's problem relating to the proposed or refused initiation or change, including facts relating to the problem
5. A proposed resolution to the problem to the extent known and available to the complaining party at the time

Note: The IDEA 2004 Reauthorization made significant changes to the (1) timelines for filing a due process complaint, (2) procedures for amending the complaints, and (3) rules regarding the sufficiency of the complaint notice; see 20 USC 1415(b) and (f). 20 USC 1415(f)(3)(C), as amended, specifies that a due process complaint must be filed within two years of the date that the parent/guardian or Charter LEA knew or should have known about the situation that forms the basis of the complaint. However, federal regulations 34 CFR 300.662, set a different timeline and require a one year statute of limitations for filing a complaint. As amended by AB 1662 (Ch. 653, Statutes of 2005), Education Code 56500.2 reflects the federal regulations and states that a complaint must be filed within one year of the alleged violation. It is likely that federal regulations will be amended to clarify the inconsistency. In the meantime, Charter LEAs should consult with legal counsel as to the appropriate timeline.

Note: 20 USC 1415(c)(1) requires the Charter LEA to provide the following notice upon receipt of the due process complaint.

If the Charter LEA has not sent a prior written notice to the parent/guardian regarding the subject

matter contained in the parent/guardian's due process complaint notice, the Charter LEA shall send a response to the parent/guardian within 10 days of receipt of the complaint specifying: (20 USC 1415(c)(1))

1. An explanation of why the Charter LEA proposed or refused to take the action raised in the complaint
2. A description of other options that the individualized education program (IEP) team considered and the reasons that those options were rejected
3. A description of each evaluation procedure, assessment, record, or report the Charter LEA used as the basis for the proposed or refused action
4. A description of the factors that are relevant to the Charter LEA's proposal or refusal

If the Charter LEA has sent prior written notice to the parent/guardian regarding the subject matter of the parent/guardian's due process complaint, the Charter LEA shall, within 10 days of receipt, send a response specifically addressing the issues in the complaint. (20 USC 1415(c)(1))

Parties requesting a due process hearing shall file their request with the Superintendent of Public Instruction or designated contracted agency and give a copy of the request, at the same time, to the other party. (Education Code 56502)

Prior Written Notice

The Charter Chief Executive Officer or designee shall send to parents/guardians of any student with a disability a prior written notice within a reasonable time before: (Education Code 56500.4, 56500.5; 20 USC 1415(c); 34 CFR 300.503)

1. The Charter LEA initially refers the student for assessment
2. The Charter LEA proposes to initiate or change the student's identification, evaluation, educational placement or the provision of a free, appropriate public education
3. The Charter LEA refuses to initiate or change the identification, evaluation or educational placement of the student or the provision of a free and appropriate public education
4. The student graduates from high school with a regular diploma

This notice shall include: (20 USC 1415(c); 34 CFR 300.503)

1. A description of the action proposed or refused by the Charter LEA
2. An explanation as to why the Charter LEA proposes or refuses to take the action
3. A description of any other options that the IEP team considered and why those options were rejected
4. A description of each evaluation procedure, test, record or report the Charter LEA

- used as a basis for the proposed or refused action
5. A description of any other factors relevant to the Charter LEA's proposal or refusal
 6. A statement that the parents/guardians of the student have protection under procedural safeguards and, if this notice is not an initial referral for evaluation, the means by which a copy of the description of procedural safeguards can be obtained
 7. Sources for parents/guardians to obtain assistance in understanding these provisions

Students with disabilities and their parents/guardians shall be provided written notice of their rights in language easily understood by the general public and in the primary language of the parent/guardian or other mode of communication used by the parent/guardian, unless to do so is clearly not feasible. The notice shall include, but not be limited to, those rights prescribed by Education Code 56341. (Education Code 56341, 56506; 34 CFR 300.503)

If the native language or other mode of communication of the parent/guardian is not a written language, the Charter LEA shall take steps to ensure that: (34 CFR 300.503)

1. The notice is translated orally or by other means to the parent/guardian in his/her native language or other mode of communication
2. The parent/guardian understands the contents of the notice
3. There is written evidence that items #1 and #2 have been satisfied

Procedural Safeguards Notice

A procedural safeguards notice shall be made available to parents/guardians of students with a disability once a year and upon: (Education Code 56301; 20 USC 1415(d)(1))

1. Initial referral for evaluation
2. Each notification of an IEP meeting
3. Reevaluation of the student
4. Registration of a complaint
5. Filing for a pre-hearing mediation conference or a due process hearing

This notice shall include information on the procedures for requesting an informal meeting, pre-hearing mediation conference, mediation conference, or due process hearing; the timelines for completing each process; whether the process is optional; the type of representative who may be invited to participate; and the right of the parent/guardian and/or the Charter LEA to electronically record the proceedings of IEP meetings in accordance with Education Code 56341. A copy of this notice shall be attached to the student's assessment plan and referred to at each IEP meeting. (20 USC 1415(d)(2); Education Code 56321, 56321.5)

In addition, this notice shall include a full explanation of the procedural safeguards relating to independent educational evaluation; prior written notice; parental consent; access to educational records; opportunity to present complaints to initiate due process hearings; the student's placement while due process proceedings are pending; procedures for students who are subject to placement in an interim alternative educational setting; requirements for unilateral placement by parent/guardians of students in private schools at public expense; mediation; due process hearings; state-level appeals; civil action; attorney's fees, and the state's complaint procedure. (20 USC 1415(d)(2); 34 CFR 300.504)

CONFIDENTIALITY OF STUDENT RECORDS

The Charter LEA Governing Board recognizes the importance of keeping accurate, comprehensive student records as required by law. Procedures for maintaining the confidentiality of student records shall be consistent with state and federal law.

The Charter CEO or designee shall establish regulations governing the identification, description and security of student records, as well as timely access for authorized persons. These regulations shall ensure parental rights to review, inspect and copy student records and shall protect the student and the student's family from invasion of privacy.

The Charter CEO or designee shall designate a certificated employee to serve as custodian of records, with responsibility for student records at the Charter LEA level. At each school, the principal or a certificated designee shall act as custodian of records for students enrolled at that school. The custodian of records shall be responsible for implementing Board policy and administrative regulation regarding student records. (5 CCR 431) Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

48201 Student records for transfer students who have been suspended/expelled

48904-48904.3 Withholding grades, diplomas, or transcripts of pupils causing property damage or injury; transfer of pupils to new school Charter LEAs; notice to rescind decision to withhold

48918 Rules governing expulsion procedures

49060-49079 Pupil records

49091.14 Parental review of curriculum

CODE OF CIVIL PROCEDURE

1985.3 Subpoena duces tecum

FAMILY CODE

3025 Access to records by non-custodial parents

GOVERNMENT CODE

6252-6260 Inspection of public records

HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE

120440 Immunizations; disclosure of information

WELFARE AND INSTITUTIONS CODE

681 Truancy petitions

16010 Health and education records of a minor

CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 5

430-438 Individual pupil records

16020-16027 Destruction of records

UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 20

1232g Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS, TITLE 34

99.1-99.67 Family Educational Rights and Privacy

300.500 Definition of "personally identifiable"

300.501 Opportunity to examine records for parents of student with disability

300.573 Destruction of information

COURT DECISIONS

Falvo v. Owasso Independent School District, 220 F.3d. 1200 (10th Cir. 2000)

Management Resources:

WEB SITES

U.S. Department of Education, Family Policy Compliance Office: <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OM/fpc/>

CONFIDENTIALITY OF STUDENT RECORDS

Charter LEAs shall establish, maintain and destroy pupil records according to regulations adopted by the State Board of Education. The following guidelines apply to confidential special education records.

Access:

Special education records are subject to the same privacy and access right as other Mandatory Interim pupil records. In addition, parents have the right to examine all school records of their child that relate to the identification, assessment, and educational placement of the child. Even though records may be stamped “confidential” or contain sensitive information, the parent or eligible student has full rights of access. Parents have the right to receive copies within five business days of making the request, either orally or in writing. A public educational agency may charge no more than the actual cost of reproducing the records, but if this cost prevents the parent from exercising their right to receive the copies, the copies shall be reproduced at no cost to the parents.

The LEA will not permit access to any child’s records without written parental permission except as follows:

- a. Charter LEA officials and employees who have a legitimate educational interest including a school system where the child intends to enroll
- b. Certain state and federal officials for audit purposes
- c. Certain law enforcement agencies for purposes listed in Education Code and Federal Law
- d. A pupil 16 years of age or older, having completed the 10th grade who requests access
- e. Students who are married even if younger than 18 years of age.
- f. Charter SELPA Employees

The LEA may release information from the student’s records for the following:

- a. In cases of emergency when the knowledge of such information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the child and/or others
- b. To determine the child’s eligibility for financial aid
- c. To accrediting organizations to the extent necessary to their function
- d. In cooperation with organizations conducting studies and research that does not permit the personal identification of children or their parents by persons not connected with the research and provided that their personally identifiable information is destroyed when no longer needed
- e. To officials and employees of private schools or school systems in which the child is enrolled or intends to enroll.

Test Protocols are considered to be a part of a pupil’s confidential file. Protocols must be maintained in a pupil’s confidential file and copies provided to the parent upon request.

Confidentiality of Records:

All procedural safeguards of the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act shall be established and maintained. A custodian of records must be appointed by each LEA to ensure the confidentiality of any personally identifiable student information. This is usually the case manager, but may be another person who has been trained in confidentiality procedures.

The custodian of records is responsible for ensuring that files are not easily accessible to the public. Records of access are maintained for individual files, which include the name of party, date, and purpose of access.

Transfer of Records:

When a student moves from one school to another, records should be transferred in accordance with state and federal law. Federal law requires the LEA from which the student moves to notify the parent of the transfer of records along with the parent's right to review, challenge and/or receive a copy of the transferred record. California law specifies that the LEA which receives the student shall be responsible for the notification. Procedurally, both requirements can be met if the Charter LEA provides an annual notification to the parents of every student which specifies that records will be transferred and outlines the other rights cited above. This notice should be provided to all parents each fall and to the parents of every new student upon enrollment.

CALIFORNIA SCHOOLS ARE NOT REQUIRED TO OBTAIN PARENT PERMISSION TO FORWARD RECORDS - IN FACT, THEY ARE REQUIRED TO FORWARD RECORDS TO ANY CALIFORNIA SCHOOL OF NEW OR INTENDED ENROLLMENT "WITHIN FIVE (5) DAYS. * Records cannot be withheld for nonpayment of fees or fines. (Education Code §49068)

Mandatory Permanent Pupil records must be forwarded to all schools. (The original, or a copy, also must be retained by the sending LEA.) Mandatory Interim Pupil records must be forwarded to California public schools and may be forwarded to any other schools. Permitted pupil records may be forwarded at the discretion of the custodian of the records. Private schools in California are required to forward Mandatory Permanent Pupil Records.

If an agency or person provides a written report for the school's information, it becomes a part of the pupil's record and, as such, is available to the parent even though it may be marked "confidential." (Technically, it becomes a part of the record only when it is filed or maintained. The custodian of the records should give serious consideration to the educational value of sensitive information before routinely including it as a pupil record. As alternatives, the report may be summarized in a more useful form, it may be returned for revision, or it may be rejected and destroyed before it becomes a record.)

Correction or Removal of Information:

Parents have the right, on request, to receive a list of the types and locations of education records collected, maintained and used by the educational agency. Parents may challenge the content of the student's record if they believe the information in education records collected, maintained or used is inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the privacy or other rights of the child. This right to challenge becomes the sole right of the student when the student turns 18 or attends a post-secondary institution. The request to remove or amend the content of the student record must be made in writing.

Within 30 days of receiving the request, the Charter CEO or designee shall meet with the parent/student and with the employee (if still employed) who recorded the information in question. The Charter CEO shall then decide whether to sustain the allegations and amend the records as requested or deny the allegations. If the allegations are sustained, the Charter CEO shall order the correction or removal and destruction of the information.

When a student grade is involved, the teacher who gave the grade shall be given an opportunity to state orally, in writing, or both, the reasons why the grade was given before the grade is changed either by the Charter CEO or at the decision of the LEA board. Insofar as practical, the teacher shall be included in all discussions relating to the changing of the grade.

If the Charter CEO disagrees with the request to amend the records, the parent/student may write within 30 days to appeal this decision to the LEA board. Within 30 days of receiving the written appeal, the LEA board shall meet in closed session with the parent and the employee (if still employed) who recorded the information in question. The Charter LEA governing board shall then decide whether or not to sustain or deny the allegations. If the Charter LEA governing board sustains any or all of the allegations, it shall order the Charter CEO to immediately correct or remove and destroy the information in question. The decision of the Charter LEA governing board is final. The records of the Charter LEA governing board proceedings shall be maintained in a confidential manner for one year, after which they will be destroyed, unless the parent initiates legal proceedings within the prescribed period relative to the disputed information.

If the final decision of the Charter LEA governing board is unfavorable to the parent or if the parent accepts an unfavorable decision by the Charter LEA, the parent shall have the right to submit a written statement commenting on the record or explaining any reasons the parent disagrees with the decision of the Charter CEO or the Charter LEA governing board. This explanation shall be included in the records of the child for as long as the record or contested portion is maintained by local educational agency. If the records of the child, or contested portion, is given by the agency to any party, the explanation must also be given to the party.

At the beginning of each school year, parents shall be notified of the availability of the above procedures for challenging student records.

In order to avoid potential challenges, it is recommended that Charter LEA staff receive training which alerts them to the requirements of privacy and access laws. To the degree that a statement describes a student's behavior, the statement can withstand challenges. Ambiguous terms should be avoided, and staff members should restrict their comments to areas of training. In addition, only those observations which have educational relevancy should be recorded. Statements describing unrelated family incidents or unsubstantiated claims are inappropriate for a student's record.

Record Classification and Destruction:

Pupil records—In fact, all school public records—are classified as continuing records until such time as their usefulness ceases. While they are continuing records, their destruction is governed by a rather complicated set of guidelines. Certain items are specifically excluded from destruction restrictions. CCR Title 5, §16020 indicates that copies of originals, pupil passes, tardy slips, admit slips, notes from home, including verification of illness and individual memorandum between employees of the Charter LEA are not records and may be destroyed at any time.

Other pupil-related records are defined within the three categories: mandatory permanent, mandatory interim, and permitted. (See below for a full explanation of each category.)

Mandatory Permanent pupil records become Class 1 permanent records when their usefulness ceases, and thus are never destroyed. *Caveat:* These records or a copy, are retained for every pupil who was ever enrolled in the Charter LEA. A copy of the mandatory permanent records is forwarded for students who transfer.

Mandatory Interim pupil records can be classified as Class 1 permanent or Class III disposable when their usefulness ceases. The Charter LEA is responsible for the classification subject to Charter LEA governing board approval. If mandatory interim records are classified as disposable, they are to be destroyed in accordance with CCR Title 5, §16027. This requires that they be retained for three years beyond the date of origination.

The third category of pupil records – Permitted - may be destroyed whenever their usefulness ceases without the waiting period. However, if a student transfers, graduates or otherwise terminates attendance, such records shall be held six months and then destroyed.

As Mandatory Permanent pupil records, special education records may be classified as Class III, disposable, when they are deemed as no longer useful. This could occur only after transfer or withdrawal from a special education program. Even after classified as disposable, Mandatory Interim records must be retained for at least three years beyond the date of the record's creation.

An important exception applies to those records which were used in assessment for a special education candidate who does not become a special education student. In such cases the records are Permitted pupil records and can be classified as Class III, disposable, and destroyed whenever their usefulness ceases.

PART C - TRANSITION

Charter schools in the Sonoma County Charter SELPA currently do not serve students in Part C or preschool students. If students are transitioning from preschool to a Charter LEA and are eligible for Part B services, the Charter LEA will participate to ensure a smooth and effective transition between programs.

Authority:
(CFR Title 34 §300.209(b))

**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ENROLLED BY THEIR PARENTS IN
PRIVATE SCHOOL**

It shall be the policy of this Charter LEA to assure that children with disabilities voluntarily enrolled by their parents in private school shall receive special education and related services in accordance with federal law, local procedures adopted by the student's district of residence, and the corresponding SELPA.

Legal References:

UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 20
Section 1412(a)(10)(A)

COMPLIANCE ASSURANCES

It shall be the policy of the Sonoma County Charter SELPA that the local plan shall be adopted by the appropriate governing board(s) of each Charter LEA, and is the basis for the operation and administration of special education programs; and that the agency(ies) herein represented will meet all applicable requirements of state and federal laws and regulations, including compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Section 504 of Public Law and the provisions of the California Education Code, Part 30.

Legal References:

EDUCATION CODE

56205(A)(11)

56195.7

UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 20

1412

GOVERNANCE

It shall be the policy of the LEA Charter to support and comply with the provisions of the governance structure and any necessary administrative support to implement the Local Plan.

Legal References:

EDUCATION CODE

56205(a)(12)
56001
56190-4
56195.1(b)(c)
56195.3
56205(b)(4)
56205(b)(5)
47640-47647
56195.7
56030
56200
56200(c)(2)
56140
56195
56140(b)(2)

UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 20

1412(a)
1413(a)(1)
1413(a)(5)

GOVERNANCE

ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT

Pursuant to the provisions of Education Code Section 56030 et seq., the AU shall receive and distribute regionalized service funds, provide administrative support and coordinate the implementation of the Sonoma County Local Plan for Special Education in Charter Schools participating in the Charter Consortium for Special Education. The AU shall perform such services and functions required to accomplish the goals set forth in the plan.

The development of the annual service and budget plan shall coincide with the AU budget process.

California Education code Section 56200(c)(2) requires that the Local Plan, “specify the responsibilities of each participating county office and district governing board in the policy-making process, the responsibilities of the superintendent of each participating district and county in the implementation of the plan, and the responsibilities of district and county administrators of special education in coordinating the administration of the plan.” In accordance with this provision, the Sonoma County Charter Consortium for Special Education has developed the following governance structure and policy development and approval process.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF EACH GOVERNING BOARD IN THE POLICY-MAKING PROCESS AND PROCEDURES FOR CARRYING OUT THE RESPONSIBILITY

The governing board for each LEA charter and the County Board of Education approves the Agreement for Participation, Representations and Warranties, and the Local Plan for Special Education. As described within those documents, the Boards of Education delegate the administrative policy-making process and procedures for carrying out that responsibility to the governance structure of the SELPA.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS-CHARTER EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Charter Executive Committee, which includes the SELPA Director, approves policies and makes recommendations on special education financial matters to the Charter Council. The Executive Committee shall be made up of five (5) members of the Operations Council who will be selected by the Council by majority vote. The Sonoma County Superintendent shall serve as an ex officio member of the Executive Committee.

The Charter Executive Committee is responsible for:

- A. Approval of policy for special education programs and services which relate to the Charter SELPA Consortium.
- B. Approve requests to the risk pool as appropriate.
- C. Addressing specific needs of individual LEA Charters as the need arises.

- D. Organizing the subcommittees as necessary to meet special needs of the Charter SELPA Consortium;
- E. Receiving and reviewing input from the Community Advisory Committee.

Minutes of the Executive Committee meetings shall be transmitted to the full membership of the Council. In addition, financial issues regarding special education and other issues which are felt should be considered by the Council shall be placed on the agenda for discussion and/or action of the scheduled meetings.

CHARTER COUNCIL

A Charter Council will be in operation for the SELPA consisting of the Chief Executive Officers of each LEA. Organizations that operate more than one charter school may have a single representative for all schools operated, but such representative shall have a number of votes equal to the number of schools represented. A majority of the LEAs included in the Charter SELPA shall constitute a quorum. This group would meet regularly with the County Superintendent of Schools and/or designees to direct and supervise the implementation of the Local Plan.

CHARTER STEERING COMMITTEE

This Steering Committee serves in an advisory capacity to the SELPA Director. Each Charter School is entitled to select one representative for this committee – either a teacher or an administrator. Representatives commit to a full year of service, which would include meeting regularly for the purpose of advising the SELPA Director and receiving and disseminating direct program/instructional information.

SPECIAL EDUCATION COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE- CAC

Each Charter School shall be entitled to select a parent representative to participate in the Special Education Community Advisory Committee to serve staggered terms in accordance with E.C. § 56191 for a period of at least two years. Selected parents will be the parent of a child with a disability. This group will advise the SELPA Director on the implementation of the Sonoma County Local Plan for Special Education in Charter Schools (“Local Plan”) as well as provide local parent training options in accordance with the duties, responsibilities and requirements of E.C. § 56190-56194.

Because of the geographic diversity anticipated within the Sonoma County Charter SELPA, many meetings will be conducted through the use of teleconferencing or video conferencing.

PERSONNEL QUALIFICATIONS

It shall be the policy of this Charter LEA to ensure that personnel providing special education related services meet the highly qualified requirements as defined under federal law, including that those personnel have the content knowledge and skills to serve children with disabilities. This policy shall not be construed to create a right of action on behalf of an individual student for the failure of a particular Charter LEA staff person to be highly qualified or to prevent a parent from filing a State complaint with the CDE about staff qualifications.

It shall be the policy of this Charter LEA that it will support and assist the state's efforts and activities to ensure an adequate supply of qualified special education, general education, and related services personnel. This shall include recruitment, hiring, training and efforts to retain highly qualified personnel to provide special education and related services under this part to children with disabilities.

Legal References:

EDUCATION CODE

56205(a)(13)
56058
56070

State Board Policy 6/11/98

UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 20

1412(a)(14-15)
1413(a)(3)

PERSONNEL QUALIFICATIONS

Special Education Staff

Teachers assigned to serve students with disabilities shall possess the credential that authorizes them to teach the primary disability of the students within the program placement recommended in the student's individualized education program (IEP). (5 CCR 80046.5 through 80048.6) Special education teachers who teach core academic subjects shall possess the qualifications required by the No Child Left Behind Act. (20 USC 1401, 6319, 7801; 34 CFR 200.55-200.57, 300.18; 5 CCR 6100-6126)

Note: The federal No Child Left Behind Act (20 USC 6319; 34 CFR 200.55-200.57) requires all teachers of core academic subjects, in both Title I and non-Title I programs, to be "highly qualified" as defined in 20 USC 7801 and 5 CCR 6100-6126. A teacher is defined as "new to the profession" if they have graduated from an accredited institution of higher education and received a credential, or began an approved intern program, on or after July 1, 2002. A teacher is defined as "not new to the profession" if they graduated from an accredited institution of higher education and received a credential, or were enrolled in, or had completed, an approved intern program before July 1, 2002. (5 CCR 6100)

An elementary teacher who holds at least a bachelor's degree, is currently enrolled in an approved intern program for less than three years (or has a credential), and meets the applicable requirements in Section 6102 or 6103 as noted in the next two paragraphs, meets NCLB requirements as "highly qualified". (5 CCR 6101)

An elementary teacher who is new to the profession, in addition to having at least a bachelor's degree and either being currently enrolled in an approved intern program for less than three years or holding a credential, must have passed a validated statewide subject matter examination certified by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC), including, but not limited to the California Subject Examination for Teachers (CSET) Multiple Subjects, Multiple Subject Assessment for Teachers (MSAT), and National Teaching Exams (NTE). (5 CCR 6102)

An elementary teacher who is not new to the profession at the elementary level, in addition to having at least a bachelor's degree and either being currently enrolled in an approved intern program for less than three years or holding a credential, must have completed **either**:

1. a validated statewide subject matter examination that the CTC has utilized to determine subject matter competence for credentialing purposes,
or
2. a high objective uniform state standard evaluation (HOUSSE) conducted pursuant to 5 CCR 6104 and in conjunction with the teacher's evaluation and assessment pursuant to Education Code section 44662. (5 CCR 6103)

A middle or high school teacher, who holds at least a bachelor's degree, is currently enrolled in an approved intern program for less than three years or has a full credential, and who meets the applicable requirements in Section 6111 or 6112 as noted in the next two paragraphs, meets NCLB requirements as "highly qualified". (5 CCR 6110)

A middle or high school teacher who is new to the profession, in addition to having at least a bachelor's degree and either being currently enrolled in an approved intern program for less than three years or holding a credential in the subject taught, must have passed or completed **one** of the following for every core subject currently assigned:

1. a validated statewide subject matter examination certified by the CTC,
2. university subject matter program approved by the CTC,
3. undergraduate major in the subject taught,
4. graduate degree in the subject taught, **or**
5. coursework equivalent to undergraduate major.

Note: A new special education teacher who is currently enrolled in an approved special education intern program for less than three years or who holds a special education credential, and can demonstrate subject matter competence in mathematics, language arts, or science, may demonstrate competence in the other core academic subjects in which the teacher teaches through the HOUSSE contained in 5 CCR 6104 not later than two years after date of employment.

A middle or high school teacher who is not new to the profession, in addition to having at least a bachelor's degree and either being currently enrolled in an approved intern program for less than three years or holding a credential, must have passed or completed **one** of the following for every core subject currently assigned:

1. a validated statewide subject matter examination that the CTC has utilized to determine subject matter competence for credentialing purposes,
2. university subject matter program approved by the CTC,
3. undergraduate major in the subject taught,
4. graduate degree in the subject taught,
5. coursework equivalent to undergraduate major,
6. advanced certification or credentialing (National Board Certification), **or**

7. a high objective uniform state standard evaluation pursuant to 5 CCR 6104.

The Charter LEA must establish and maintain qualifications to ensure that personnel necessary to carry out the purposes of this part are appropriately and adequately prepared and trained, including that those personnel have the content knowledge and skills to serve children with disabilities.

Caseloads for special education staff are specified in Education Code 56362 for resource specialists (see "Resource Specialists" section below) and in Education Code 56363.3 and 56441.7 for language, speech and hearing specialists.

The Charter CEO or designee shall ensure that caseloads for special education teachers are within the maximum caseloads established by law, or set by the Charter LEA.

Resource Specialists

Education Code 56195.8 mandates entities providing special education to adopt policy related to resource specialists. The following section fulfills this mandate and should be revised for consistency with the policy and regulations of the SELPA in which the Charter LEA participates.

The Charter LEA Governing Board shall employ certificated resource specialists to provide services which shall include, but not be limited to (Education Code 56362):

1. Instruction and services for students whose needs have been identified in an individualized education program (IEP) and who are assigned to regular classroom teachers for a majority of the school day
2. Information and assistance to students with disabilities and their parents/guardians
3. Consultation with and provision of resource information and material regarding students with disabilities to their parents/guardians and other staff members
4. Coordination of special education services with the regular school programs for each student enrolled in the resource specialist program
5. Monitoring of student progress on a regular basis, participation in the review and revision of IEPs as appropriate, and referral of students who do not demonstrate sufficient progress to the IEP team
6. Emphasis at the secondary school level on academic achievement, career and vocational development, and preparation for adult life.

The resource specialist program shall be directed by a resource specialist who is a credentialed special education teacher or who has a clinical services credential with a special class

authorization, and who has three or more years of teaching experience, including both regular and special education teaching experience. (Education Code 56362)

No resource specialist shall have a caseload which exceeds 28 students. As necessary and with the agreement of the resource specialist, the Charter LEA Governing Board may request a waiver from the State Board of Education to increase the caseload to no more than 32 students, provided that an individual resource specialist does not have a caseload exceeding 28 students for more than two school years and has the assistance of an instructional aide at least five hours daily during the period of the waiver. (Education Code 56362; 5 CCR 3100)

Resource specialists shall not simultaneously be assigned to serve as resource specialists and to teach regular classes. (Education Code 56362)

Related Services Personnel and Paraprofessionals:

Related services personnel and paraprofessionals must have qualifications established by the Charter LEA that are consistent with any State-approved or State-recognized certification, licensing, registration, or other comparable requirements that apply to the professional discipline in which those personnel are providing special education or related services.

The Charter LEA must ensure that related services personnel who deliver services in their discipline or profession meet the requirements to be licensed within their profession, having not had certification or licensure requirements waived on an emergency, temporary, or provisional basis.

The charter LEA must allow paraprofessionals and assistants who are appropriately trained and supervised, in accordance with State law, regulation, or written policy, to be used to assist in the provision of special education and related services under this part to children with disabilities.

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

44250-44279 Credentials, especially:

44256 Credential types, specialist instruction

44265 Special education credential

56195.8 Adoption of policies

56361 Program options

56362 Resource specialist program, contents, direction; resource specialists, case-loads, assignments, instructional aide; pupil enrollment

56362.1 Caseload

56362.5 Resource specialist certificate of competence

56362.7 Bilingual-crosscultural certificate of assessment competence

56363.3 Average caseload limits

56441.7 Maximum caseload (programs for individuals with exceptional needs between the ages of three and five inclusive)

CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 5

3051.1 Language, speech and hearing development and remediation; appropriate credential

3100 Waivers of maximum caseload for resource specialists

6100-6126 Teacher qualifications, No Child Left Behind Act

80046.5 Credential holders authorized to serve students with disabilities

80048-80048.6 Credential requirements and authorizations

UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 20

1401 Definition of highly qualified special education teacher

6319 Highly qualified teachers

7801 Definitions, highly qualified teacher

CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS, TITLE 34

200.55-200.57 Highly qualified teachers

200.61 Parent notification regarding teacher qualifications

300.18 Highly qualified special education teachers

300.156 Personnel Qualifications

Management Resources:

WEB SITES

California Association of Resource Specialists and Special Education Teachers:
<http://www.carsplus.org>

California Speech-Language-Hearing Association: <http://www.csha.org>

Commission on Teacher Credentialing: <http://www.ctc.ca.gov>

PERFORMANCE GOALS AND INDICATORS

It shall be the policy of this Charter Local Education Agency (LEA) to comply with the requirements of the performance goals and indicators developed by the CDE and provide data as required by the CDE.

Legal References:

EDUCATION CODE

56205(a)

UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 20

1412(a)(16)

PARTICIPATION IN ASSESSMENTS

It shall be the policy of the Charter LEA that all students with disabilities shall participate in state and district-wide assessment programs. The IEP team determines how a student will access assessments with or without accommodations, or access alternate assessments, consistent with state standards governing such determinations.

The CEO or designee shall administer mandatory student assessments within the state Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program as required by law and in accordance with CEO policy and administrative regulation.

Legal References:

EDUCATION CODE

56205(a)

UNITED STATE CODE, TITLE 20

1412(a)(17)

PARTICIPATION IN ASSESSMENTS

The LEAs within Sonoma County Charter SELPA are committed to all students having access to state and/or Charter LEA assessments. Through the IEP process each student's strengths and weaknesses will be evaluated as to the content of the Charter LEA and/or statewide assessment to determine appropriate means of access to the assessment(s).

The Charter SELPA IEP forms include an assessment plan as well as statements related to district and statewide assessment.

Special education students shall be tested with the designated state achievement test and the standards-based test, unless their individualized education program specifically identifies that the student will be tested with the California Alternate Performance Assessment (CAPA) or the California Modified Assessment (CMA). The IEP team will determine which assessment will be most appropriate for each student based on guidance provided by the California Department of Education.

A student shall be permitted to take exams or assessments with the accommodation(s) and/or modification(s) as identified in the IEP or 504 plan. These accommodations and/or modifications must be in compliance with the current "Testing Variations, Accommodations, and Modifications Matrix" provided by the California Department of Education.

School personnel have a responsibility to ensure special education students have appropriate accommodations and/or modifications to meet the individual needs of the students and allow access to all State and Charter LEA assessments. Each Charter LEA will follow and implement the California State Board of Education policies and administrative regulations related to assessment, data collection and waiver processes.

Legal References:

EDUCATION CODE

56205(a), 56345, 60640, 5 CCR 853, 5 CCR 850

SUPPLEMENTATION OF STATE, LOCAL AND OTHER FEDERAL FUNDS

Funds received by the Sonoma County Charter SELPA from Part B of the IDEA shall be expended in accordance with the applicable provisions of the IDEA and shall be used to supplement and not to supplant State, local and other Federal funds.

State and federal funds received by Sonoma County Charter SELPA are allocated and distributed among the local educational agencies in the SELPA according to the Sonoma County Charter SELPA adopted plan.

EDUCATION CODE:

56195

56195.7(i)

56205(a)(12)(D)(ii)(II)

56205(a)(16)

56841(a)(2)

Legal Reference:

20 USC §1413 (a)(2)(A)(ii)

34 CFR §300.202(a)

MAINTENANCE OF EFFORT

Federal funds available through Part B of the federal IDEA provided to the Sonoma County Charter SELPA shall not be used to reduce the level of expenditures for the education of children with disabilities made from local funds and/or combined level of local and state funds below the level of those expenditures for the preceding year except as provided in Federal law and regulations.

Legal References:

20 USC § 1413 (a)(2)

34 CFR §300.203

EDUCATION CODE

56205(a)(17)

56841

MAINTENANCE OF EFFORT (MOE)

Introduction

The Sonoma County Charter SELPA shall meet the federal maintenance of effort (MOE) regulations requiring that federal funds provided under Part B of the IDEA not be used to reduce the level of expenditures for the education of children with disabilities made from local funds below the level of those expenditures for the preceding fiscal year except as provided in federal law and regulations. This test must be met on either an aggregate or a per capita basis. (ref: Title 34 Code of Federal Regulations C.F.R. Sections 300.203-300.205).

Determination of Maintenance of Effort

The California Department of Education (CDE) monitors compliance with the MOE requirement at the SELPA level. The administrative unit (AU) of the Sonoma County Charter SELPA monitors compliance of its member LEAs. There are two required comparison tests determining MOE:

1. Budget vs. Actual Expenditures Comparison
Budgeted special education expenditures from local funds and/or combined level of local and state funds must equal or exceed prior year expenditures for each Charter LEA and for the Sonoma County Charter SELPA as a whole. Passing this test determines eligibility to receive IDEA Part B funds.
2. Actual Expenditures vs. Actual Expenditures Comparison
Actual special education expenditures from local funds and/or combined level of local and state funds must equal or exceed prior year expenditures for each Charter LEA and for the Sonoma County Charter SELPA as a whole. If the SELPA does not meet this test, it will be billed for the repayment of federal funds equal to the amount by which it reduced state and local spending.

Calculation of the Comparison Tests

The comparison tests are made by first taking into consideration if a reduction in expenditures occurred as a result of allowable exceptions to reduce the level of expenditures below that of the prior year (Test 1). If this comparison is not met, an adjustment is allowed for a portion of federal funds received in excess of the amount received in the prior year (Test 2). Whether expenditures from local/state funds equal or exceed prior year expenditures in total or on a per capita basis (Test 3).

Test 1

Compare taking into consideration one or more of the following exceptions (34 CFR Section 300.204):

1. The voluntary departure or departure for just cause, of special education or related services personnel
2. A decrease in the enrollment of children with disabilities
3. The termination of the obligation of the agency to provide a program of special education to a particular child with a disability that is an exceptionally costly program because the child:
 - a. Has left the jurisdiction of the agency
 - b. Has reached the age at which the obligation of the agency to provide FAPE to the child has terminated; or
 - c. No longer needs the program of special education
4. The termination of costly expenditures for long-term purchases, such as the acquisition of equipment or the construction of school facilities
5. The assumption of cost by the high cost fund operated by the SEA under 34 CCR § 300.704(c).

Test 2

Compare using 50 percent of the increase in federal funding received that year over the prior year as “local funds” (34 CFR Section 300.205). This option can **only** be used if the freed up funds will be used for activities authorized under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965.

Test 3

1. Combined state and local funding sources are used for comparison.
2. When the capability exists to isolate “local only” funding sources, the comparison may be made using only “local” resources
3. Comparison may be either total amount or on a per capita (per child with a disability unless some other basis is permitted by the CDE for determining “per capita”) basis (34 CFR Section 300.203(b))

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

It shall be the policy of this Charter LEA that public hearings, adequate notice of the hearings, and an opportunity for comment available to the general public, including individuals with disabilities and parents of children with disabilities are held prior to the adoption of any policies and/or regulations needed to comply with part B of the IDEA.

Per the Charter Local Plan, policies are adopted by the Charter CEO Council. It is the practice that policies are presented for a first read and then brought back for revision, review and/or adoption at a second read. As adequate time occurs between the first and second readings, the Charter LEAs will have the policies available for review and comment by the public, parents of children with disabilities, or individuals with disabilities.

Legal References:

EDUCATION CODE
56205(a)

UNITED STATE CODE, TITLE 20
1412(a)(19)

SUSPENSION/EXPULSION

The Charter LEA assures that data on suspension and expulsion rates will be provided in a manner prescribed by the CDE. When indicated by data analysis, the Charter LEA further assures that policies, procedures and practices related to the development and implementation of the IEPs will be revised.

Legal References:

EDUCATION CODE
56205(a)

UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 20
1412(a)(22)

SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION/DUE PROCESS

Note: The following administrative regulation reflects the 2004 reauthorization of the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) (20 USC 1400-1482), implementing federal regulations, effective October 13, 2006 (34 CFR 300.1-300.818, added by 71 Fed. Reg. 156), and conforming state legislation (AB 1662, Ch. 653, Statutes of 2005). Because federal regulatory provisions related to discipline were amended and renumbered pursuant to 71 Fed. Reg. 156, it is likely that further state legislation will be needed to conform state law to the new federal regulations. Note that in cases where state law provides greater protections to students, state law supersedes federal law.

Note: Neither state nor federal law requires that these procedures apply to students identified under the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504 (29 USC 794). However, in some instances, the Charter LEA may find it appropriate to apply portions of these procedures (e.g., the limitation that a student with a disability may not be suspended for more than 10 consecutive school days) to Section 504 students with an accommodation plan. Charter LEAs that wish to apply IDEA procedures to Section 504 students should modify the following regulation accordingly.

A student identified as an individual with disabilities pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is subject to the same grounds for suspension and expulsion which apply to students without disabilities.

Procedures for Students Not Yet Eligible for Special Education Services

A student who has not been officially identified as a student with disabilities pursuant to IDEA and who has engaged in behavior that violated Charter LEA's code of student conduct may assert any of the protections under IDEA only if the Charter LEA had knowledge that the student was disabled before the behavior that precipitated the disciplinary action occurred. (20 USC 1415(k)(5); 34 CFR 300.534)

The Charter LEA shall be deemed to have knowledge that the student has a disability if one of the following conditions exists: (20 USC 1415(k)(5); 34 CFR 300.534)

1. The parent/guardian has expressed concern to Charter LEA supervisory or administrative personnel in writing, or to a teacher of the student, that the student is in need of special education or related services.
2. The parent/guardian has requested an evaluation of the student for special education pursuant to 34 CFR 300.300-300.311.
3. The teacher of the student or other Charter LEA personnel has expressed specific concerns directly to the Charter LEA's director of special education or to other supervisory Charter LEA personnel about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the

student.

The Charter LEA would be deemed to not have knowledge that a student is disabled if the parent/guardian has not allowed the student to be evaluated for special education services or has refused services. In addition, the Charter LEA would be deemed to not have knowledge if the Charter LEA conducted an evaluation pursuant to 34 CFR 300.300-300.311 and determined that the student was not an individual with a disability. When the Charter LEA is deemed to not have knowledge of the disability, the student shall be disciplined in accordance with procedures established for students without disabilities who engage in comparable behavior. (20 USC 1415(k)(5); 34 CFR 300.534)

If a request is made for an evaluation of a student during the time period in which the student is subject to disciplinary measures pursuant to 34 CFR 300.530, the evaluation shall be conducted in an expedited manner. Until the evaluation is completed, the student shall remain in the educational placement determined by school authorities. (20 USC 1415(k)(5); 34 CFR 300.534)

Suspension

Note: Pursuant to 20 USC 1415(k)(1), 34 CFR 300.530, and a 1988 U.S. Supreme Court decision (*Honig v. Doe*), Charter LEAs receiving funds under the IDEA may suspend a student for no more than 10 consecutive or cumulative school days, as long as the removal does not constitute a change in placement pursuant to 34 CFR 300.536. Education Code 48903 specifies that a student may not be suspended for more than 20 cumulative school days in a school year.

Note: The Analysis of Comments to the federal regulations, 71 Fed. Reg. 156, pg. 46715, explains that whether a bus suspension or "in school suspension" would count as a day of suspension affecting the cumulative total depends on the unique circumstances of each case, such as whether bus transportation is part of the student's individualized education program (IEP). An "in-school suspension" or "supervised suspension classroom" as authorized by Education Code 48911.1 would not count towards the 20-day cumulative limit described above as long as the student is afforded the opportunity to continue to appropriately participate in the general curriculum, receive the services specified in his/her IEP, and participate with nondisabled students to the extent he/she would have in the current placement. However, the Charter LEA should be careful that such actions do not constitute a change of placement and should carefully monitor such suspensions.

The Charter CEO or designee may suspend a student with a disability for up to 10 consecutive or cumulative school days for a single incident of misconduct, and for up to 20 school days in a school year, as long as the suspension(s) does not constitute a change in placement pursuant to 34 CFR 300.536. (Education Code 48903; 34 CFR 300.530)

The principal or designee shall monitor the number of days, including portions of days, in which a student with a valid individualized education program (IEP) has been suspended during the

school year.

Note: As added by 71 Fed. Reg. 156, 34 CFR 300.536 lists new factors under which a series of removals would constitute a change of placement, as specified below. If the removal is determined to be a change in placement, 34 CFR 300.530 requires the IEP team to determine the appropriate services.

The Charter LEA shall determine, on a case-by-case basis, whether a pattern of removals of a student from his/her current educational placement for disciplinary reasons constitutes a change of placement. A change of placement shall be deemed to have occurred under any of the following circumstances: (34 CFR 300.536)

1. The removal is for more than 10 consecutive or cumulative school days.
2. The student has been subjected to a series of removals that constitute a pattern because of all of the following:
 - a. The series of removals total more than 10 school days in a school year.
 - b. The student's behavior is substantially similar to his/her behavior in previous incidents that resulted in the series of removals.
 - c. Additional factors, such as the length of each removal, the total amount of time the student has been removed, and the proximity of the removals to one another, indicate a change of placement.
3. If the removal has been determined to be a change of placement as specified in items #1-2 above, the student's IEP team shall determine the appropriate educational services. (34 CFR 300.530)

Services During Suspension

Note: Pursuant to 20 USC 1412(a)(1)(A) and 34 CFR 300.530, a "free appropriate public education" (FAPE) must be available to all children, including any student with disabilities who has been suspended for more than 10 school days in a year. The Analysis of Comments to the federal regulations, 71 Fed. Reg. 156, pg. 46716, clarifies that the Charter LEA is not required to provide a student who has been suspended for more than 10 school days in a school year for disciplinary reasons exactly the same services in exactly the same setting as the student was receiving prior to the imposition of discipline. However, the special education and related services the student does receive must enable him/her to continue to participate in the general curriculum and to progress toward meeting the goals set out in his/her IEP. The Analysis of Comments, 71 Fed. Reg. 156, pg. 46717, clarifies that services need not be provided when a student is removed for 10 school days or less, as long as the Charter LEA does not provide

services to nondisabled students removed for the same amount of time.

Any student suspended for more than 10 school days in the same school year shall continue to receive services during the term of the suspension. School personnel, in consultation with at least one of the student's teachers, shall determine the extent to which services are needed as provided in 34 CFR 300.101(a), so as to enable the student to continue to participate in the general education curriculum in another setting and to progress toward meeting the goals as set out in his/her IEP. (20 USC 1412(a)(1)(A); 34 CFR 300.530)

If a student with disabilities is excluded from school bus transportation, the student shall be provided with an alternative form of transportation at no cost to the student or his/her parent/guardian, provided that transportation is specified in his/her IEP. (Education Code 48915.5)

Interim Alternative Educational Placement Due to Dangerous Behavior

Note: 20 USC 1415(k) and 34 CFR 300.530 permit an alternative placement for 45 school days when a student with a disability, while on school grounds, while going to or coming from school, or at a school function, either (1) carries or possesses a weapon, (2) knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance, or (3) inflicts serious bodily injury upon another person. "Serious bodily injury" is defined in 18 USC 1365 as bodily injury which involves a substantial risk of death, extreme physical pain, protracted and obvious disfigurement, or protracted loss or impairment of the function of a bodily member, organ, or mental faculty. This alternative placement decision may be made unilaterally by the Charter LEA.

Note: The term "weapon," as used below, refers to a "dangerous weapon" as defined in 18 USC 930 and includes any device which is capable of causing death or serious bodily injury. The term does not include a pocket knife with a blade of less than 2 1/2 inches in length.

The Charter LEA may unilaterally place a student with a disability in an appropriate interim alternative educational setting for up to 45 school days, without regard to whether the behavior is a manifestation of the student's disability, when the student commits one of the following acts while at school, going to or from school, or at a school-related function: (20 USC 1415(k)(1)(G); 34 CFR 300.530)

1. Carries or possesses a weapon, as defined in 18 USC 930
2. Knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs
3. Sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance as identified in 21 USC 812(c), Schedules I-V
4. Inflicts serious bodily injury upon another person as defined in 18 USC 1365

The student's interim alternative educational setting shall be determined by his/her IEP team. (20 USC 1415(k)(1)(G), 34 CFR 300.531)

On the date the decision to take disciplinary action is made, the parents/guardians of the student shall be notified of the decision and provided the procedural safeguards notice pursuant to 34 CFR 300.504. (20 USC 1415(k)(1)(H); 34 CFR 300.530)

A student who has been removed from his/her current placement because of dangerous behavior shall receive services to the extent necessary to allow him/her to participate in the general education curriculum and to progress toward meeting the goals set out in his/her IEP. As appropriate, the student shall also receive a functional behavioral assessment and behavioral intervention services and modifications that are designed to address the behavior violation so that it does not recur. (20 USC 1415(k)(1)(D); 34 CFR 300.530)

Manifestation Determination

The following procedural safeguards shall apply when a student is suspended for more than 10 consecutive school days, when a series of removals of a student constitutes a pattern, or when a change of placement of a student is contemplated due to a violation of the Charter LEA's code of conduct:

1. Notice: On the date the decision to take disciplinary action is made, the parents/guardians of the student shall be notified of the decision and provided the procedural safeguards notice pursuant to 34 CFR 300.504. (20 USC 1415(k)(1)(H); 34 CFR 300.530)
2. Manifestation Determination Review: Immediately if possible, but in no case later than 10 school days after the date the decision to take disciplinary action is made, a manifestation determination review shall be made of the relationship between the student's disability and the behavior subject to the disciplinary action. (20 USC 1415(k)(1)(E); 34 CFR 300.530)

At the manifestation determination review, the Charter LEA, the student's parent/guardian, and relevant members of the IEP team (as determined by the Charter LEA and parent/guardian) shall review all relevant information in the student's file, including the student's IEP, any teacher observations, and any relevant information provided by the parents/guardians, to determine whether the conduct in question was either of the following: (20 USC 1415(k)(1)(E); 34 CFR 300.530)

- a. Caused by or had a direct and substantial relationship to the student's disability
- b. A direct result of the Charter LEA's failure to implement the student's IEP, in which case the Charter LEA shall take immediate steps to remedy those

deficiencies

If the manifestation review team determines that a condition in either #a or #b above was met, the conduct shall then be determined to be a manifestation of the student's disability. (20 USC 1415(k)(1)(E); 34 CFR 300.530)

3. Determination that Behavior is a Manifestation of the Student's Disability: When the conduct has been determined to be a manifestation of the student's disability, the IEP team shall conduct a functional behavioral assessment, unless a functional behavioral assessment had been conducted before the occurrence of the behavior that resulted in the change of placement, and shall implement a behavioral intervention plan for the student. If a behavior intervention plan has already been developed, the IEP team shall review the behavioral intervention plan and modify it as necessary to address the behavior. (20 USC 1415(k)(1)(F); 34 CFR 300.530)

The student shall be returned to the placement from which he/she was removed, unless the parent/guardian and Charter LEA agree to a change of placement as part of the modification of the behavioral intervention plan. (20 USC 1415(k)(1)(F); 34 CFR 300.530)

Note: Education Code 48915.5 provides that, if a student is excluded from school bus transportation, alternative transportation must be provided at no cost, provided that transportation is specified in the student's IEP. See section entitled "Services During Suspension" above.

4. Determination that Behavior is Not a Manifestation of the Student's Disability: If the manifestation determination review team determines that the student's behavior was not a manifestation of his/her disability, the student may be disciplined in accordance with the procedures for students without disabilities. (20 USC 1415(k)(1)(D); 34 CFR 300.530)

The student shall receive services to the extent necessary to participate in the general education curriculum in another setting and to allow him/her to progress toward meeting the goals set out in his/her IEP. As appropriate, the student shall also receive a functional behavioral assessment and behavioral intervention services and modifications that are designed to address the behavior violation so that it does not recur. (20 USC 1415(k)(1)(D); 34 CFR 300.530)

Due Process Appeals

Note: The Analysis of Comments to the federal regulations, 71 Fed. Reg. 156, pg. 46723, clarifies that the burden of proof in due process hearings is on the party that is responsible for the issue going forward to the due process hearing officer, consistent with the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *Schaeffer v. Weast*. Thus, if the Charter LEA has requested that a hearing officer remove a student to an interim alternative educational setting, the burden of persuasion at the

hearing is on the Charter LEA.

If the parent/guardian disagrees with any Charter LEA decision regarding placement under 34 CFR 300.530 (suspension and removal for dangerous circumstances) or 34 CFR 300.531 (interim alternative placement), or the manifestation determination under 34 CFR 300.530(e), he/she may appeal the decision by requesting a hearing. The Charter LEA may request a hearing if the Charter LEA believes that maintaining the student's current placement is substantially likely to result in injury to the student or others. In order to request a hearing, the requesting party shall file a complaint pursuant to 34 CFR 300.507 and 300.508(a) and (b). (20 USC 1415(k)(3); 34 CFR 300.532)

Whenever a hearing is requested as specified above, the parent/guardian or the Charter LEA shall have an opportunity for an expedited due process hearing consistent with requirements specified in 34 CFR 300.507, 300.508 (a)-(c), and 300.510-300.514.

If the student's parent/guardian or the Charter LEA has initiated a due process hearing under 34 CFR 300.532 as detailed above, the student shall remain in the interim alternative educational setting pending the decision of the hearing officer or until the expiration of the 45-day time period, whichever occurs first, unless the parent/guardian and Charter LEA agree otherwise. (20 USC 1415(k)(4); 34 CFR 300.533)

Readmission

Readmission procedures for students with disabilities shall be the same as those used for all students. Upon readmission, an IEP team meeting shall be convened.

Suspension of Expulsion

The Charter LEA Governing Board's criteria for suspending the enforcement of an expulsion order shall be applied to students with disabilities in the same manner as they are applied to all other students. (Education Code 48917)

Notification to Law Enforcement Authorities

Prior to the suspension or expulsion of any student with a disability, the principal or designee shall notify appropriate city or county law enforcement authorities of any act of assault with a deadly weapon which may have violated Penal Code 245. (Education Code 48902)

The principal or designee also shall notify appropriate city or county law enforcement authorities of acts by any student with a disability which may involve the possession or sale of narcotics or of a controlled substance or possession of weapons or firearms in violation of Penal Code 626.9 and 626.10. (Education Code 48902)

Within one school day after a suspension or expulsion of a student with disabilities, the principal or designee shall notify appropriate city or county law enforcement authorities, by telephone or other appropriate means, of any act by the student which may violate Education Code 48900(c) or (d), relating to the possession, use, offering or sale of controlled substances, alcohol or intoxicants of any kind. (Education Code 48902)

Report to County Superintendent of Schools

Note: As amended by SB 1327 (Ch. 59, Statutes of 2006), Education Code 48203 requires the Charter CEO to report to the County Superintendent of Schools when any special education student has been expelled or suspended for more than 10 school days. Education Code 48203 specifies that it is the duty of the County Superintendent to examine the reports and, if any case exists in which the interest of the student or welfare of the state may need further examination, draw the reports to the attention of the Charter LEA Governing Board and the County Board of Education.

The Charter CEO or designee shall report to the County Superintendent when any special education student has been expelled or suspended for more than 10 school days. The report shall include the student's name, last known address, and the reason for the action. (Education Code 48203)

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

35146 Closed sessions (re suspensions)
35291 Rules (of governing board)
48203 Reports of severance of attendance of disabled students
48900-48925 Suspension and expulsion
56000 Special education; legislative findings and declarations
56320 Educational needs; requirements
56321 Development or revision of individualized education program
56329 Independent educational assessment
56340-56347 Individual education program teams
56505 State hearing

PENAL CODE

245 Assault with deadly weapon
626.2 Entry upon campus after written notice of suspension or dismissal without permission
626.9 Gun-Free School Zone Act
626.10 Dirks, daggers, knives, razors or stun guns
UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 18
930 Weapons

1365 Serious bodily injury
UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 20
1412 State eligibility
1415 Procedural safeguards
UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 21
812(c) Controlled substances
UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 29
706 Definitions
794 Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504
CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS, TITLE 34
104.35 Evaluation and placement
104.36 Procedural safeguards
300.1-300.818 Assistance to states for the education of students with disabilities, especially:
300.530-300.537 Discipline procedures
COURT DECISIONS
Schaffer v. Weast (2005) 125 S. Ct. 528
Parents of Student W. v. Puyallup School District, (1994 9th Cir.) 31 F.3d 1489
M.P. v. Governing Board of Grossmont Union High School District, (1994) 858 F.Supp. 1044
Honig v. Doe, (1988) 484 U.S. 305

Management Resources:

FEDERAL REGISTER

Rules and Regulations, August 14, 2006, Vol. 71, Number 156, pages 46539-46845

WEB SITES

California Department of Education, Special Education: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/se>

U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs:

<http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osep/index.html>

ACCESS TO INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

It shall be the policy of the Charter LEA to provide instructional materials to blind students or other students with print disabilities in a timely manner according to the state adopted National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standard.

Legal References:

EDUCATION CODE
56205(a)

UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 20
1412(a)(24)

OVERIDENTIFICATION AND DISPROPORTIONALITY

It shall be the policy of the Charter LEA to prevent the inappropriate overidentification or disproportional representation by race and ethnicity of students with disabilities.

Legal References:

EDUCATION CODE
56205(a)

UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 20
1412(a)(24)

PROHIBITION ON MANDATORY MEDICINE

It shall be the policy of the Charter LEA to prohibit school personnel from requiring a student to obtain a prescription for a substance covered by the Controlled Substances Act as a condition of attending school, receiving an evaluation for special education, or receiving special education services.

Legal References:

EDUCATION CODE
56205(a)

UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 20
1412(a)(25)

DATA

It shall be the policy of the Charter LEA to provide data or information to the SELPA and the California Department of Education that may be required by regulations.

Legal References:

EDUCATION CODE
56205(a)

UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 20
1418 (a-d)

READING LITERACY

A. RATIONALE

Reading proficiency is an important goal for virtually all students who receive special education services. It is basic to ongoing school success and essential for successful participation in society. Without reading proficiency, students are excluded from full participation and opportunity to achieve academic success in school.

B. POLICY STATEMENT

In order to improve the educational results for students with disabilities, the Charter LEAs in the Sonoma County Charter SELPA ensure that all students who require special education will participate in reading instruction activities, just as do all other students in the Sonoma County Charter LEAs. In order to facilitate that effort, the Charter LEAs assure that special education instructional personnel will participate in staff development inservice opportunities in the area of literacy, including:

- a. information about current literacy and learning research;
- b. state-adopted student content standards and frameworks; and
- c. research-based instructional strategies for teaching reading to a wide range of diverse learners

Each of the Charter LEAs will include special education staff in their curriculum materials selection process, in order to support alignment with State standards. Each will also include all special education staff in all staff development on phonemics and phonics, as well as in any additional state or regional training based on new legislation, e.g., the California Reading and Literature Subject Matter Project, the rollouts on the frameworks, AB466 training.

The goals of the Charter LEAs are to increase the participation of students with disabilities in statewide student assessments, to increase the percentage of children with disabilities who are literate, and to assure that students with disabilities attain higher standards in reading.

In order to reach these goals, we assure that students with disabilities will have full access to:

1. all required core curriculum including state-adopted core curriculum textbooks and supplementary textbooks; and
2. instructional materials and support.

**ADMISSION OF LOCAL EDUCATION AGENCIES TO THE SONOMA COUNTY
CHARTER SELPA**

Any charter school may apply to the Charter SELPA Selection Committee to become a LEA member of the SELPA. Applications must be made to the SELPA on or before the date established by the AU, which generally would be April 1st of the school year preceding the school year in which the Charter LEA anticipates operating as a member within the SELPA. Charter LEA member status will not become effective prior to July 1st of the year in which final approval was granted. Once granted membership, the Charter LEA will participate in the governance of the SELPA in the same manner as all other Charter LEA members in the SELPA. If the Charter has been approved by the State Board of Education the timelines may be waived, in addition, the AU Superintendent can waive the timeline for consideration of a charter school application.

The applicant member will be deemed a member of the SELPA if the Charter SELPA Selection Committee determines that the Charter LEA has met all requirements as specified in this policy and the Local Plan. (The applicant Charter LEA will meet all other requirements, if any, from the California Department of Education and current SELPA to which the LEA belongs.) The SELPA requirements include an agreement to:

- Provide assurances that all eligible individuals with disabilities shall have access to appropriate special education programs and services
- Provide assurances of its knowledge and understanding of applicable special education laws
- Provide assurances that each certificated employee is appropriately credentialed to serve in his/her assignment
- Provide necessary staff as required to meet federal mandates
- Follow all requirements of the SELPA Local Plan
- Utilize SELPA approved forms
- Provide transportation as indicated in the student's IEP
- Provide assurances that the LEA understands its sole legal and financial responsibility to provide appropriate services to eligible student, and that the LEA shall not seek defense or indemnification from the SELPA or SELPA members unless liability is the result of acts or omissions of other agencies, their agents or employees, while performing services under an agreement.

To initiate an application, the interested Charter school must submit a letter of intent to the Sonoma County Charter SELPA Director. They must also submit the following:

- Completed comprehensive application
- Signed assurances
- Fiscal documents
- Detailed plan for service delivery
- One year notice or release from current SELPA

The Sonoma County SELPA Director will review the documents. The review will be provided to the Charter SELPA Selection Committee. This committee is comprised of:

- The Sonoma County Superintendent of Schools
- One Charter CEO selected by CEO Council
- One Charter CEO selected by the Sonoma County Superintendent of Schools

The Charter SELPA Selection Committee will meet, review all documents and approve or reject members. The Charter SELPA Selection Committee will inform the CEO Council members of their decision. The SELPA Director shall inform the Charter School of their decision.

Membership may be revoked by the CEO Council if it finds that the Charter LEA did any of the following:

- Committed a material violation of any of the conditions, standards, or procedures set forth in this policy or the Local Plan
- Failed to meet generally accepted accounting principles, failed to produce required financial information, or engaged in fiscal mismanagement of funds.
- Violated any provision of law applicable to the LEA relating to special education
- Has a history of complaints and non-compliance with CDE

The CEO Council shall examine the pattern of conduct by the LEA in implementing special education laws. The decision to revoke may be based on the ability of the LEA to cure and correct violations and/or the LEA's ability to ensure ongoing, consistent compliance with all applicable special education laws. The Charter LEA will be given notice in writing, and an opportunity to cure and correct the violations cited. The Charter LEA may request a meeting with the CEO Council to appeal and present their case. The decision of the CEO Council shall be final.

Federal Register §300.20(c) Treatment of Charter Schools and their students

**ADMISSION OF LOCAL EDUCATION AGENCIES TO THE SONOMA COUNTY
CHARTER SELPA**

Charter Schools who wish to join the Sonoma County Charter SELPA will need to follow the comprehensive process unless:

- A) They are a participating LEA Charter member adding a new start-up charter school
- B) They are a participating Charter Management Organization (CMO) SELPA member adding additional new charter school(s).
- C) CMO Charter SELPA member adding existing school(s).

In the case of either A or B above, the following process will be followed:

- 1.) Letter of Intent: The LEA Charter SELPA member or CMO Charter SELPA member will inform the SELPA Director and/or CEO Council by March 1st of their desire to add additional school(s) for the following school year.
- 2.) The Charter LEA SELPA member or CMO Charter SELPA member will provide the SELPA with information regarding the school, signed assurances and any other data requested by the Director. A plan for Special Education Service Delivery must also be included.
- 3.) The SELPA Director will review all information. The Director may approve the addition. If the Director has questions or concerns the information can be sent to the Charter SELPA Selection Committee.

In the case of C above, the following process will be followed:

- 1.) Provide one year notice to current SELPA of intent to leave (letter attached).
- 2.) Provide CASEMIS information of current students.
- 3.) Provide staff information and service delivery plan.
- 4.) Provide SARC and fiscal documents.

Charter School LEAs may apply to the Charter SELPA from the following paths:

- 1.) State Board Approved:
 - Completed comprehensive application including assurances, fiscal documents and detailed plan for service delivery.
- 2.) Charters who are currently operating in another SELPA:
 - Completed comprehensive application including assurances, fiscal documents, detailed plan for service delivery and an additional one year notice or release.
- 3.) New Start-Up Charters:
 - Completed comprehensive application including assurances, fiscal documents and detailed plan for service delivery.
- 4.) New Charter LEA from current members:
 - See requirement previously described in A.) above.
- 5.) New Charters from current CMO members:
 - See requirement previously described in B.) above.
- 6.) Transfer charters from CMO members:
 - See requirement previously described in C.) above.

BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTIONS FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS

A special education student's minor behavioral problems shall be subject to the disciplinary measures applicable to all students for such infractions.

When a child's behavior impedes the child's learning or that of others, the IEP team must consider strategies and supports, including positive behavioral interventions, to address that behavior consistent with the law and SELPA procedures. (20 U.S.C. § 1414(d)(3)(B)(i); 34 C.F.R. § 300.346(a)(2)(i), (b); Ed. Code § 56341.1, subd. (b)(1).)

The Charter CEO or designee shall ensure that staff is informed of the Sonoma Charter SELPA's policy and regulations governing the systematic use of behavioral and emergency interventions.

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

49001 Prohibition of corporal punishment
56321 Notice of parental rights; consent of parents
56500-56507 Procedural safeguards, including due process rights
56521.1-56521.2 Emergency Interventions
56523 Behavioral Interventions
56525 Board Certified Behavior Analyst

UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 20

1414 Individualized Education Programs

CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS, TITLE 34

300.1-300.818 Assistance to states for the education of students with disabilities

BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTIONS FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS

A special education student's behavior shall be subject to the disciplinary measures applicable to all students for such infractions unless it is a serious behavior problem as defined below.

Behavioral problems shall be addressed through the systematic use of behavioral and emergency interventions as provided below.

When a child's behavior impedes the child's learning or that of others, the IEP team must consider strategies and supports, including positive behavioral interventions, to address that behavior. (20 U.S.C. § 1414(d)(3)(B)(i); 34 C.F.R. § 300.346(a)(2)(i), (b); Ed. Code § 56341.1, subd. (b)(1).)

A Charter LEA *may* employ a Board Certified Behavior Analyst ("BCBA") to conduct behavior assessments and provide behavioral intervention services, but the law does not require that these services be provided by a BCBA. (Ed. Code, § 56525.)

Note: With the Repeal of the Hughes Bill, (Assembly Bill 86, effective July 1, 2013 ("AB 86")) the law does not contain a specific definition of "behavioral intervention" and does not impose any specific requirements for how to conduct or implement a behavior assessment or behavior intervention plan. LEAs are no longer required to conduct a Functional Analysis Assessment ("FAA") for students with serious behavioral problems. (Ed. Code, § 56523.)

1.

Behavioral Intervention Plan

Note: As amended in Federal Register Vol. 64, No. 48, 34 CFR 300.530 requires that a functional behavioral assessment and behavioral intervention plan be developed no later than 10 business days after a student is suspended for more than 10 school days in a school year or after a change of placement occurs.

Within 10 business days after removing a student for more than 10 school days in a school year or commencing a removal that constitutes a change in placement, the Charter LEA shall implement a behavioral intervention plan in accordance with 34 CFR 300.530, Board policy and administrative regulation.

Note re Terminology: BIP and BSP

The IDEA uses the term Behavior Intervention Plan ("BIP") to refer to a less intensive behavior plan developed by the IEP team. Previously, the Hughes Bill (repealed by AB 86) used the term "BIP" to refer to a more intensive behavior plan required whenever an FAA is performed. California also had previously used the term Behavior Support Plan ("BSP") to distinguish between the less intensive plan required by the IDEA and the more-intensive "BIP" required by the Hughes Bill. Now, with the repeal of the Hughes Bill by AB 86 it is recommended that Charter LEAs use only the term BIP for all types of behavior plans. (Ed. Code, § 56523.)

Emergency Interventions

Emergency interventions not specified in a student's behavioral intervention plan shall be used only when necessary to control unpredictable, spontaneous behavior which poses clear and present danger of serious physical harm to the individual with exceptional needs, or others, and that cannot be immediately prevented by a response less restrictive than the temporary application of a technique used to contain the behavior. Emergency interventions shall not be used as a substitute for systematic behavioral intervention plans that is designed to change, replace, modify, or eliminate a targeted behavior. No emergency intervention shall be employed for longer than is necessary to contain the behavior. A situation that requires prolonged use of an emergency intervention shall require staff to seek assistance of the school site administrator or law enforcement agency, as applicable to the situation. (Ed. Code, § 56521.1 (a) through (c).)

Only emergency interventions approved by the Sonoma County Charter SELPA may be used. No emergency intervention shall be used for longer than is necessary to contain the behavior. The following emergency interventions, included in “management of assaultive behavior” training, are approved by the Sonoma County Charter SELPA for use by **CPI (Crisis Prevention Institute) trained staff only** and may only be used as a ***last resort when a person is a danger to self or others:***

- a.) CPI’s Personal Safety Techniques
- b.) Nonviolent Physical Crisis Intervention and Team Intervention:
 - ✓ “children’s control position” for students who are considerably smaller than the staff person
 - ✓ “team control position” utilizing at least two team members
 - ✓ “transport position” utilizing at least two team members
 - ✓ “interim control position”

Parents/guardians/residential care provider, if appropriate, shall be notified within one school day whenever emergency intervention is used or serious property damage occurs. A behavior emergency report shall immediately be completed, kept in the student's file, and forwarded to the Charter CEO or designee for review. This report shall include: (Ed. Code § 56521.1 (e).)

1. The name and age of the student
2. The setting and location of the incident

3. The name of the staff or other persons involved
4. A description of the incident and the emergency intervention used
5. A statement of whether the student is currently engaged in a systematic behavioral intervention plan
6. Details of any injuries sustained by students or others, including staff, as a result of the incident

If the behavior emergency report is for a student who does not have a behavioral intervention plan, the Charter CEO or designee shall, within two days, schedule an IEP team meeting to review the emergency report, determine the necessity for a functional behavioral assessment, and determine the necessity for an interim plan. The IEP team shall document the reasons for not conducting the functional behavioral assessment and/or not developing an interim plan. (Ed. Code § 56521.1 (g).)

If the behavior emergency report is for a student who has a positive behavioral intervention plan, any incident involving a previously unseen serious behavior problem or where a previously designed intervention is not effective shall be referred to the IEP team. The IEP team shall review the incident and determine whether the student's behavioral intervention plan needs to be modified. (Ed. Code § 56521.1 (h).)

Sonoma

All behavioral emergency reports shall immediately be forwarded to, and reviewed by, a designated responsible administrator. (Ed. Code § 56521.1 (f).)

Prohibited Interventions

The Charter LEA prohibits any use of the following: (Ed. Code, § 56521.2))

1. Any intervention designed or likely to cause physical pain
2. Releasing noxious, toxic or otherwise unpleasant sprays, mists or substances near the student's face
3. Any intervention that denies adequate sleep, food, water, shelter, bedding, physical comfort or access to the bathroom
4. Any intervention that subjects the student to verbal abuse, ridicule, humiliation or excessive emotional trauma

5. Use of any material or objects which simultaneously immobilize all hands and feet, except that prone containment or similar techniques may be used by trained staff as a limited emergency intervention
6. Locked seclusion, unless in a facility otherwise licensed or permitted by law to use a locked room
7. Any intervention that precludes adequate supervision of the student
8. Any intervention that deprives the student of one or more of his/her senses
9. Force exceeding what is reasonable and necessary under the circumstances

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

49001 Prohibition of corporal punishment
56321 Notice of parental rights; consent of parents
56341.1 Individualized Education Plans
56500-56508 Procedural safeguards, including due process rights
56521.1-56521.2 Emergency Interventions
56523 Behavioral Interventions
56525 Board Certified Behavior Analyst

CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 5

3001 Definitions

UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 20

1412 State eligibility
1414 Individualized Education Programs
1415 Procedural safeguards

CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS, TITLE 34

300.1-300.818 Assistance to states for the education of students with disabilities

Management Resources:

FEDERAL REGISTER

Rules and Regulations, August 14, 2006, Vol. 71, Number 156, page 46539-46845

**NONPUBLIC, NONSECTARIAN SCHOOL AND AGENCY SERVICES FOR SPECIAL
EDUCATION**

Nonpublic, nonsectarian school (NPS) and agency (NPA) services shall be available to pupils in the Sonoma County Charter SELPA. When no appropriate public educational services are available within the Sonoma County Charter SELPA, neighboring counties or SELPAs, or state special schools, a designated member of the IEP team or the Sonoma County Charter SELPA Director shall contact the Charter LEA CEO/designee if this type of placement might be considered at an upcoming IEP meeting.

The Charter LEA Governing board may contract with state-certified nonpublic, nonsectarian schools or agencies to provide special education services or facilities when an appropriate public education program is not available.

When entering into agreements with nonpublic, nonsectarian schools or agencies, the Charter LEA Board shall consider the needs of the individual student and the recommendations of the individualized education program (IEP) team. The IEP team shall remain accountable for monitoring the progress of student placed in nonpublic, nonsectarian programs towards the goals identified in each student's IEP.

Legal References:**EDUCATION CODE**

56034-56035 Definitions of nonpublic, nonsectarian school and agency

56042 Placement not to be recommended by attorney with conflict of interest

56101 Waivers

56163 Certification

56168 Responsibility for education of student in hospital or health facility school

56195.8 Adoption of policies

56360-56369 Implementation of special education

56711 Computation of state aid

56740-56743 Apportionments and reports

56760 Annual budget plan; services proportions

56775.5 Reimbursement of assessment and identification costs

GOVERNMENT CODE757-7588 Interagency responsibilities for providing services to children with disabilities,
especially:

7572.55 Seriously emotionally disturbed child; out-of-state placement

FAMILY CODE

7911-7912 Interstate compact on placement of children

WELFARE AND INSTITUTIONS CODE

362.2 Out-of-home placement for IEP

727.1 Out-of-state placement of wards of court
CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 5
3001 Definitions
3061-3069 Nonpublic, nonsectarian school and agency services
UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 20
1400-1482 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS, TITLE 34
300.129-300.148 Children with disabilities in private schools
COURT DECISIONS
Agostini v. Felton, (1997) 521 U.S. 203, 117 S.Ct. 1997

Management Resources:

CDE LEGAL ADVISORIES

0317.99 Nonpublic School/Agency Waivers and Reimbursement to parents

FEDERAL REGISTER

Rules and Regulations, August 114, 2006, Vol. 71, Number 156, page 46539-46845

WEB SITES

CDE: <http://www.cde.ca.gov>

Us Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services:

[http://www. Ed.gov/offices/OSERS](http://www.Ed.gov/offices/OSERS)

**NONPUBLIC, NONSECTARIAN SCHOOL AND AGENCY SERVICES FOR SPECIAL
EDUCATION**

Placement and Services

Note: As amended in Register 99, No. 13, 5 CCR 3060 and 3061 specify new requirements regarding special education classes offered in non-public, nonsectarian schools and agencies. These requirements detail the staffing requirements for instructors, including the credentials that instructors must hold; the eligibility requirements for such credentials; and the number of instructors required per school or agency. Pursuant to 5 CCR 30664, the California Department of Education may issue conditional certifications to allow agencies and schools time to comply with the new requirements.

Procedures specified in law shall govern the selection of appropriate nonpublic school or agency services.

Note: Additional requirements related to contracts and personnel with nonpublic schools or agencies are specified in Education Code 56366 and 56366.3

Contracts with a nonpublic school or agency shall include an individual services agreement negotiated for each student. Individual services agreements shall be for the length of time for which nonpublic, nonsectarian school services are specified in the student's individualized education program (IEP), not to exceed one year. Changes in educational instruction, services or placement shall be made only on the basis of revisions to the student's IEP. (Education Code 56366)

The master contract shall specify the general administrative and financial agreements between the nonpublic, nonsectarian school or agency and the Charter LEA to provide the special education and designated instruction and services, as well as transportation specified in the student's IEP. The administrative provisions of the contract shall also include procedures for record keeping and documentation, and the maintenance of school records by the contracting charter LEA to ensure that appropriate high school graduation credit is received by the student. The contract may allow for partial or full-time attendance at the nonpublic nonsectarian school. (Education Code 56366)

Note: The nonpublic school or agency must be certified as meeting state standards pursuant to Education Code 56366. Contracts may be terminated for cause with 20 days notice; however, the availability of a public education program initiated during the period of the contract cannot give cause for termination unless the parent/guardian agrees to transfer the student to the program.

The master contract shall include a description of the process being utilized by the Charter LEA to oversee and evaluate placements in nonpublic, nonsectarian schools. This description shall

include a method for evaluating whether the student is making appropriate educational progress. (Education Code 56366)

The Charter CEO or designee of an elementary Charter LEA shall notify a high school district of all students placed in nonpublic school or agency programs prior to the annual review of the IEP for each student who may transfer to the high school district. (5 CCR 3068)

When a special education student meets the district requirements for completion of prescribed course of study as designated in the student's IEP, the district which developed the IEP shall award the diploma. (5 CCR 3069)

Out-of-State Placements

Note: Government Code 7572.55 and Welfare and Institutions Code 362.2 and 727.i, as amended by SB 933 (Ch. 311, Statutes of 1998) relate to the out-of-state placement of children who are seriously emotionally disturbed and/or wards of the court. Such placements may be made only after in-state alternatives have been considered and found not to meet the child's needs.

Before contracting with a nonpublic, nonsectarian school or agency outside California, the Charter CEO or designee shall document the district's efforts to find an appropriate program offered by a nonpublic, nonsectarian school or agency within California. (Education Code 56365)

Within 15 days of any decision for an out-of-state placement, the student's IEP team shall submit to the Superintendent of Public Instruction a report with information about the services provided by the out-of-state program, the related costs, and the district's efforts to locate an appropriate public school or nonpublic, nonsectarian school or agency within California (Education Code 56365)

If the Charter LEA decides to place a student with a nonpublic, nonsectarian school or agency outside the state, the Charter LEA shall indicate the anticipated date of the student's return to a placement within California and shall document efforts during the previous year to return the student to California (Education Code 56365)

Placement Procedures

The Charter LEA administrator or designee shall review all documented efforts to utilize all public school options prior to utilizing an NPS or NPA. The Charter LEA will process referrals and locate an appropriate nonpublic school to meet the student's needs. The Sonoma County Charter SELPA may assist and/or collaborate with the Charter LEA to locate an appropriate NPS.

Each Charter LEA agrees to use the Master Contract and Individual Service Agreement adopted by the Sonoma County Charter SELPA. The SELPA office will ensure that the Master Contract has been approved by the Sonoma County Charter SELPA legal counsel and is updated per federal or state requirements. The NPS is required by the Master Contract and the IEP to annually evaluate the pupils (formally and informally) to determine if the student is making appropriate educational progress. As part of the IEP review process, each Charter LEA that contracts with a NPS shall evaluate the placement of its pupil(s) in such a school on at least an annual basis. The Charter LEA representative shall collaboratively review the NPS evaluation data to ensure that the results are appropriate, reliable, and valid for measuring pupil progress. The Charter LEA may determine to conduct the evaluation(s) and/or choose to administer additional assessments with parent consent.

Legal References:

EDUCATION CODE
56205(c)
56198(b)(1)

ADMINISTRATION

Conflict of Interest

Every public agency is required to adopt and promulgate Conflict of Interest Codes in compliance with the Political Reform Act, Government Code section 81000, et seq. The Fair Political Practices Commission has adopted a standard set of regulations which contains the terms of the Conflict of Interest Code. (CCR, Title 2, Sec. 18730)

The standard regulations, enumerated in California Code of Regulations, Title 2, Sec. 18730, are hereby incorporated by reference. The Sonoma County Charter SELPA Chief Executive Officer's Council "CEO Council" members shall abide by the terms of the standard regulation.

Copies of the standard regulations can be obtained from the Sonoma County Charter SELPA.

Each participating charter in the Sonoma County Charter SELPA shall be responsible for adopting appropriate conflict of interest and ethics policies and regulations applicable to their representatives.

2 CCR § 18730

APPENDIX

Designated Positions/Disclosure Categories

It has been determined that persons occupying the following positions manage public investments and shall file a full statement of economic interests pursuant to Government Code 87200:

- Governing Board Members
- Superintendent of Schools

1. Persons occupying the following positions are designated employees in **Category 1** [public officials who manage public investments]:

- Deputy/Assistant/Associate Superintendent

Designated persons in this category must report:

a. Interests in real property located entirely or partly within district/county office boundaries, or within two miles of district/county office boundaries or of any land owned or used by the district/county office. Such interests include any leasehold, beneficial or ownership interest or option to acquire such interest in real property.

b. Investments or business positions in or income from sources which:

(1) Are engaged in the acquisition or disposal of real property within the district/county office

(2) Are contractors or subcontractors which are or have been within the past two years engaged in work or services of the type used by the district/county office or

(3) Manufacture or sell supplies, books, machinery or equipment of the type used by the district/county office.

2. Persons occupying the following positions are designated employees in **Category 2** [positions which involve the making or participation in the making of decisions which may foresee ably have a material effect on any financial interest]:

- None

Designated persons in this category must report investments or business positions in or income from sources which:

- a. Are contractors or subcontractors engaged in work or services of the type used by the department which the designated person manages or directs, or
 - b. Manufacture or sell supplies, books, machinery or equipment of the type used by the department which the designated person manages or directs. For the purposes of this category a principal's department is his/her entire school.
3. Consultants may also be designated employees who must disclose financial interests as determined on a case-by-case basis by the Superintendent or designee. The Superintendent or designee's written determination shall include a description of the consultant's duties and a statement of the extent of disclosure requirements based upon that description. All such determinations are public records and shall be retained for public inspection along with this conflict of interest code.

A consultant is an individual who, pursuant to a contract with the district/county office, makes a governmental decision whether to: (2 CCR 18701)

- a. Approve a rate, rule or regulation
- b. Adopt or enforce a law
- c. Issue, deny, suspend or revoke a permit, license, application, certificate, approval, order or similar authorization or entitlement
- d. Authorize the district/county office to enter into, modify or renew a contract that requires district/county office approval
- e. Grant district/county office approval to a contract or contract specifications which require district/county office approval and in which the district/county office is a party
- f. Grant district/county office approval to a plan, design, report, study or similar item
- g. Adopt or grant district/county office approval of district/county office policies, standards or guidelines

A consultant is also an individual who, pursuant to a contract with the district/county office, serves in a staff capacity with the district/county office and in that capacity participates in making a governmental decision as defined in 2 CCR 18702.2 or performs the same or substantially all the same duties for the district that would otherwise be performed by an individual holding a position specified in the district's Conflict of Interest Code. (2 CCR 18701)