

SECTION 504 GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

It is the policy of Merced Union High School District (MUHSD) not to discriminate on the basis of disability. The MUHSD has adopted an internal grievance procedure providing for prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging any action prohibited by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services regulations implementing the Act. Section 504 prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance. The Law and Regulations may be examined in the office of *Student Services, Cristi Johnson, Director of Section 504 Director, 209-325-2121*, who has been designated to coordinate the efforts of *MUHSD* to comply with Section 504.

Any person who believes she or he has been subjected to discrimination on the basis of disability may file a grievance under this procedure. It is against the law for *MUHSD* to retaliate against anyone who files a grievance or cooperates in the investigation of a grievance.

Procedure:

- Grievances must be submitted to the Section 504 Coordinator within 180 days of the date the person filing the grievance becomes aware of the alleged discriminatory action.
- A complaint must be in writing, containing the name and address of the person filing it. The complaint must state the problem or action alleged to be discriminatory and the remedy or relief sought.
- The Section 504 Coordinator (or her/his designee) shall conduct an investigation of the complaint. This investigation may be informal, but it must be thorough, affording all interested persons an opportunity to submit evidence relevant to the complaint. The Section 504 Director will maintain the files and records of *MUHSD* relating to such grievances.
- The Section 504 Coordinator will issue a written decision on the grievance no later than 30 days after its filing.
- The person filing the grievance may appeal the decision of the Section 504 Director by writing to the Assistant Superintendent within 15 days of receiving the Section 504 Coordinator's decision. The Assistant Superintendent shall issue a written decision in response to the appeal no later than 30 days after its filing.

- The availability and use of this grievance procedure does not prevent a person from filing a complaint of discrimination on the basis of disability with the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights.

MUHSD will make appropriate arrangements to ensure that disabled persons are provided other accommodations, if needed, to participate in this grievance process. Such arrangements may include, but are not limited to, providing interpreters for the deaf, providing taped cassettes of material for the blind, or assuring a barrier-free location for the proceedings. The Section 504 Coordinator will be responsible for such arrangements.

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