

INFORMATION REGARDING SECTION 504

Section 504 is a federal law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with a disability in any program receiving federal assistance. The Act defines a person with a disability as anyone who:

1. Has a mental or physical impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities (major life activities such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working);
2. Has a record of such impairment; or
3. Is regarded as having such an impairment.

In order to fulfill its obligation under Section 504, the school district recognizes a responsibility to avoid discrimination in policies and practices regarding its personnel, students, and their parents. No discrimination against any person solely due to his or her disability will knowingly be permitted in any of the programs and practices in the school system.

The school district has specific responsibilities under the Act, which include the responsibility to identify and evaluate the child who is suspected of having a disability under the Act. When the child is determined to have a current disability and is therefore eligible under Section 504, the school district must afford access to appropriate educational programs. If the parent or guardian disagrees with the determination made by the professional staff of the school district, he or she has a right to a hearing with an impartial hearing officer.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) specifies rights related to educational records. This Act gives the parent or guardian or eligible student the right to: 1) inspect and review the child's educational records; 2) make copies of these records; 3) receive a list of all persons having access to those records; 4) ask for an explanation of any item in the records; 5) ask for an amendment to any report on the grounds that it is misleading, inaccurate, or violates the child's rights; and 6) a hearing on the issue if the school refuses to make the amendment.

If there are any questions, please feel free to contact Tonya Brown, Special Education Director and 504 Coordinator at 478-374-6489.