



Mountain Education

Section 504

System

Manual

Updated August 2024

Mission Statement

To provide a second chance opportunity to students across North Georgia to earn an accredited high school diploma in a student-centered, self-paced, evening public high school.

ME is committed to:

- partnering with local school systems, families, and community members to nurture educational excellence
- engaging students in meaningful learning with personalized graduation coaching, preparing them for college or career
- offering course credit recovery for students to stay on track for graduation
- providing dual enrollment opportunities to jump-start the college experience

Vision Statement

The first choice for a second chance to build a better future through education.

Superintendent

Mr. Stan Davis

1963 Tom Bell Rd.

Cleveland, GA 30528

(706) 219-4664

stan.davis@mymec.org

Dr. Tammy Foster: Special Education Director

1963 Tom Bell Rd.

Cleveland, GA

30528

(706)219-4664 Ext. 1130

tammy.foster@mymec.org

Randall Jarrard: Compliance Monitor/ Section 504 Monitor

1963 Tom Bell Rd.

Cleveland, GA 30528

(706) 219-4664

The purpose of this manual is to outline Mountain Education High School's processes and procedures for serving students with disabilities under Section 504.

Table of Contents

Section 1: General Information

- Important Acronyms..... Page 5
- What is Section 504?..... Page 5
- How Does Section 504 Affect Schools?..... Page 5
- Who Enforces 504?..... Page 5
- What is ADA?..... Page 6
- How Does Section 504 Define *Disability*?..... Page 6
- What is Considered a Major Life Activity?..... Page 6
- What's the Difference between Special Education and 504?..... Page 6

Section 2: Steps in the Process

- Flowchart..... Page 7
- Referral..... Page 8
- Evaluation..... Page 8
- Eligibility Determination..... Page 10
- Placement: Write a 504 Accommodation Plan (If Needed)..... Page 12
- Implementing the Plan..... Page 13
- Reviewing Plans..... Page 13

Section 3: Tracking Eligible Students..... Page 14

Section 4: Transfer Procedures..... Page 14

Section 5: 504 and Discipline..... Page 14

Section 6: Role of RTI and SST

- How does 504 fit in with RTI and the Georgia Pyramid of Interventions?....
Page 15
- What About SST?..... Page 15

Section 7: Parent Participation

- Notification Requirements..... Page 16

- Team Participation..... Page 16
- Grievance procedures..... Page 18

Section 8: Duties and Responsibilities

- 504 Section Appointee..... Page 19
- District 504 Coordinator..... Page 19

Appendix: Forms (Links)..... Page 20

- [Rights and Procedural Safeguards](#)
- [Registration Procedures](#)
- [Parent Referral Form](#)
- [Staff Referral Form](#)
- [Notice of Meeting](#)
- [Parent Consent to Evaluate](#)
- [504 Eligibility Determination & Accommodation Plan](#)
- [504 Reevaluation & Accommodation Plan](#)
- [Manifestation Determination](#)
- [Grievance/Complaint Form](#)
- [Release of Information](#)
- [Medical Information Form](#)
- [Section 504 Termination Form](#)

SECTION 1: GENERAL INFORMATION

Important Acronyms:

- 504: Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- ADA: American with Disabilities Act
- ME: Mountain Education
- FAPE: Free Appropriate Public Education
- IDEA: Individuals with Disabilities Act
- IEP: Individualized Education Program
- MTSS: Multi-Tier System of Supports
- OCR: Office of Civil Rights
- RTI: Response to Intervention
- SPED: Special Education
- SIS: Student Information System
- SST: Student Support Team

What is Section 504?

Section 504 is a part of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, a civil rights statute focused on the prevention of discrimination. The purpose of Section 504 is to prohibit discrimination based on disability. Section 504 has no age limits and serves all disabilities. Section 504 states: *No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States...shall, solely by reason of her or his disability be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.*

How Does Section 504 Affect Schools?

If a school receives any federal financial assistance, all programs or activities of the school are obligated to abide by Section 504 regulations. The regulation basically says, "If you take our money, you must play by our rules." Public schools receive federal funds. Therefore, they must comply with this law. Public schools comply by providing a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) to each qualified student with a disability.

Accommodations must also be provided to families who need accommodations in order to participate in school activities. For example, a parent who is deaf and requires an interpreter to communicate with the child's teacher will need to have one provided for parent-teacher conferences and other visits to school.

Who Enforces 504?

The Office of Civil Rights (OCR). The Office of Civil Rights has many documents and information available on its webcampus: <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/index.html>

OCR is a part of the U.S. Department of Education and is based in Washington, DC. OCR has a regional office in Atlanta, GA.

OCR enforces civil rights laws prohibiting discrimination in education programs on the basis of: race, color, national origin, disability, and age.

What is ADA?

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 provides protection from discrimination in employment, public education, transportation and public accommodations.

The ADA was amended by Congress to supersede Supreme Court decisions that had too narrowly interpreted the ADA's definition of a disability. The Amendments Act went into effect on January 1, 2009. Although the Amendments to the ADA did not change the language in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the ADA Amendments had implications as to how 504 is interpreted. The Amended ADA is generally considered to have "broadened" the Section 504 protections.

How Does Section 504 Define *Disability*?

Section 504 offers a very broad and inclusive definition of disability. Under Section 504, a person may be considered disabled if the individual:

- Has a mental or physical impairment, which substantially limits one or more major life activity.

Persons protected from discrimination include those who have:

- A record of such impairment; or
- Is regarded as having such impairment.

Students with a "record of impairment" or are "regarded as having an impairment" will not be discriminated against at ME. If a 504 Accommodation Plan is needed, the student must be evaluated prior to the multidisciplinary committee meeting to develop the plan.

The 504 Central Office Administration must be consulted prior to this process beginning.

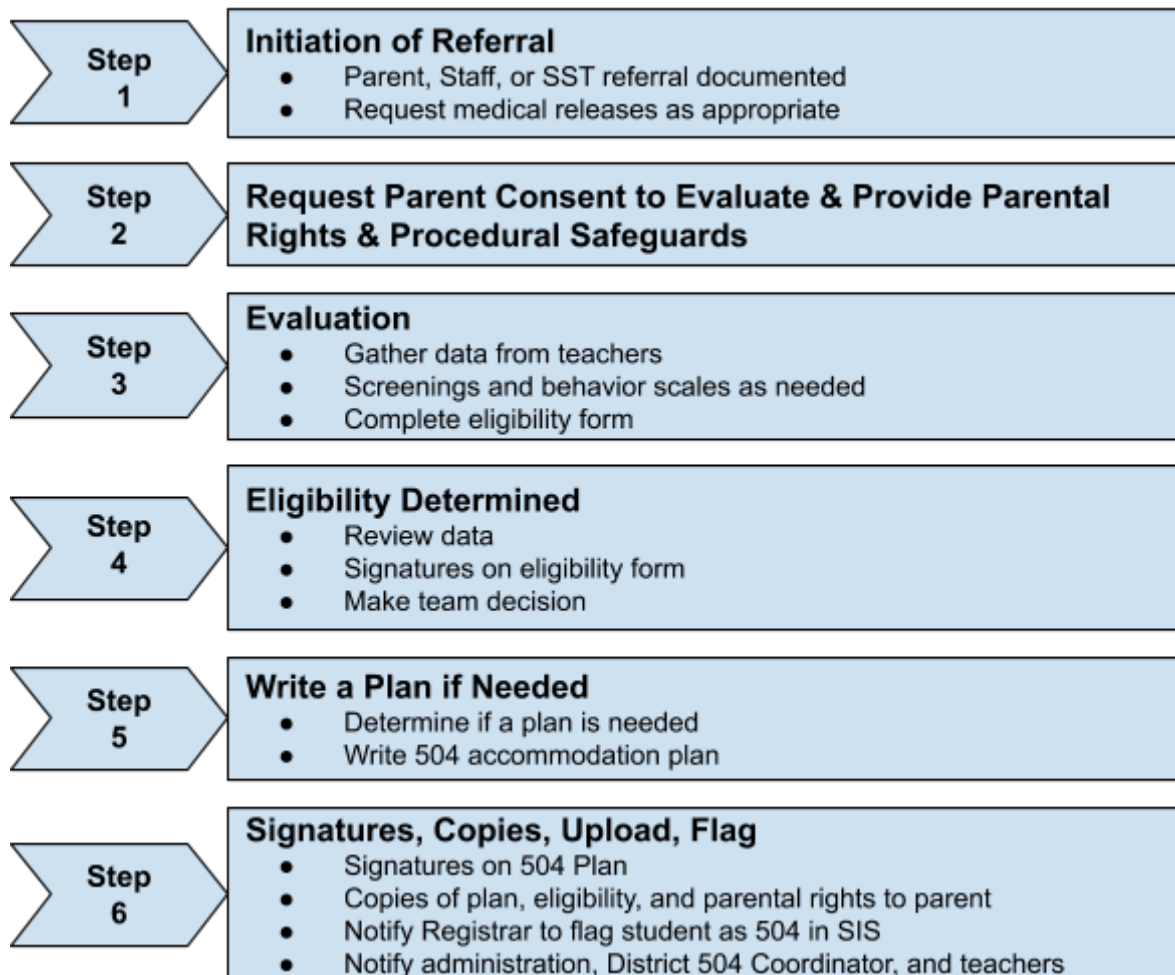
What is Considered a Major Life Activity?

Major Life Activities include, but are not limited to: caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating and working.

Major bodily functions are also included, such as functions of the immune system, normal cell growth, digestive, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, endocrine, and reproductive functions.

What's the Difference between Special Education and 504?

IDEA	Section 504
<p>In Georgia, a student with a disability must meet eligibility criteria for one of the following disability categories AND must be found to need special education services due to an educational impact.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Autism Spectrum Disorder ● Emotional and Behavioral Disorder ● Deaf/Hard of Hearing ● Other Health Impairment ● Specific Learning Disability ● Mild, Moderate, Severe Intellectual Disability ● Orthopedic Impairment ● Significant Developmental Delay ● Speech/Language Impairment ● Traumatic Brain Injury ● Blind/Visual Impairment <p>List is from categories of eligibility in Georgia Special Education Rules/Regulations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● https://goo.gl/JySV6e 	<p>What is considered a disability under 504 is much broader than that of special education. Any individual with a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits a major life activity is <i>disabled</i> under 504.</p> <p>The guidelines governing 504 eligibility and services are less clearly defined than those of special education. Each school district must define its own process and procedures for ensuring 504 compliance.</p> <p>504 is an anti-discriminatory law. All individuals with disabilities are protected from discrimination under 504. Such individuals may or may not need a 504 plan.</p>



Step 1: Referral

What is the 504 Referral Process?

A 504 referral can be initiated by a parent, a teacher, a Student Support Team, an IEP/Eligibility Team, or by other school staff as appropriate (such as the nurse or counselor).

Some medical conditions may be “covered” under 504. The 504 team will work with parents to develop medical plans for students as needed. The 504 coordinator will work closely with the 504 team to ensure appropriate referrals for 504 evaluations.

Teachers need to consult with the school’s 504 Appointee about concerns regarding 504. When a parent expresses a concern to a teacher or school personnel, he/she is directed to the 504 Appointee. When parents request a 504 evaluation, they may be asked to complete the “[504 Parent Referral Form](#).”

Parents are provided a [written notification](#) of the referral for a 504 evaluation. Parents are provided a copy of 504 Rights and Procedural Safeguards. A copy of [Rights and Procedural Safeguards](#), as well as links to important 504 information and resources, are available on the District’s webcampus: http://www.mymec.org/Departments/special_education/

Referral for 504 versus Special Education Evaluation?

The MTSS Process (includes RTI (Response to Intervention) and SST (Student Support Team) guide district intervention decisions and facilitates appropriate referrals for special education evaluations.

An effective SST process should have a high “hit-rate,” meaning that most students referred for special education evaluations should qualify for services. Failure to respond to increasingly intensive interventions, including SST, is a “trigger” for Child-Find under IDEA. Remember IDEA requires the need for special education.

504 does not require the need for services. The threshold is “lower” for reasonable suspicion of a disability. Child-Find may be triggered by the provision of an outside evaluation and/or diagnosis or the presence of certain medical conditions. This may happen at any “Tier” in the intervention process. Generally, however, the district should not be expected to have a reasonable suspicion of a disability when a student has not needed interventions beyond best practice Tier 1 interventions.

Step 2: Evaluation

Is an Evaluation Required for 504 Eligibility?

Yes.

Do We Need Parental Consent?

Yes. OCR frequently opines that Section 504 requires informed parental consent before a student can be evaluated. See 504 FAQ Protecting Students with Disabilities, Question 41:

<http://www.2ed.gov/print/about/offices/list/ocr/504faq.html> “Section 504 requires informed parental permission for initial evaluations.”

The ME “[Parental Consent for 504 Evaluation](#)” form may be used to document written consent.

What Happens if a Parent Withholds Consent to Evaluate for 504?

If parental consent is withheld and the school system has reason to believe the child needs special instruction or related services, then both 504 and IDEA afford that districts may use due process hearing procedures to seek to override the parental denial of consent for initial evaluation. However, neither 504 nor IDEA require school systems to initiate due process in the event that parents do not consent to an evaluation.

Does the system need to conduct a 504 evaluation when the parent requests one?

No.

If the system has reasons to deny an evaluation, then parents must be notified and due process procedures must be followed.

Verbal and/or written parent evaluation requests are considered by the school system. Email notification may be regarded as a written request. If a parent makes a verbal request, the campus may request the parent to complete a [Parent Referral Form](#).

When a teacher or other school official receives a request for an evaluation. The campus 504 designee is notified as soon as possible. The campus 504 designee will notify the district 504 monitor.

Some parental evaluations will be honored by offering a special education evaluation and parents will be asked to sign an IDEA consent to evaluate for determining eligibility. Following IDEA procedures shall suffice for a 504 evaluation. In these situations, if a parent refuses to sign the IDEA consent to evaluate, the school system will not be required to conduct a 504 evaluation per parent request “in lieu of” a special education evaluation.

How Much Information is Needed to Determine 504 Eligibility?

A medical diagnosis in and of itself is not enough for a 504 evaluation.

Evaluations must be comprehensive, but are tailored to the specific needs of each child.

OCR maintains that an evaluation under 504 must draw upon a variety of sources so that the possibility of error is minimized. 504 eligibility must be determined by a team. This team must include a minimum of three persons knowledgeable about the child.

The scope of the evaluation is determined by “the multidisciplinary committee gathered to evaluate the student” ([504 FAQ Question 19, “Protecting Students with Disabilities”](#)).

Does a Doctor's Diagnosis or Note Obligate the School to Write a 504?

No. A doctor's opinion is relevant to eligibility, but it does not determine eligibility.

What should I do if I receive an Outside Evaluation or Medical Information?

Give any received evaluations or medical information to the school 504 Appointee.

"Outside" psychological and/or educational evaluations shall be forwarded to the campus's psychologist for review. The campus's Lead Special Education Teacher will also be notified. Remember, IDEA rules and regulations must be followed when addressing the needs of students who have or may have a disability. Parent provided psychological and educational evaluations might be treated as Independent Educational Evaluations under IDEA and procedures outlined in the District's Special Education Manual need to be followed.

What is the Timeline for Completing a 504 Evaluation?

ME will complete initial 504 evaluations within 60 school days after receiving parental consent to evaluate. School days do not include weekends, school holidays/breaks, or closings.

Does a Special Education Evaluation Fulfill 504 Evaluation Requirements?

Yes.

What About Reevaluations?

For all ME students with 504 plans, a review meeting will occur annually.

At this meeting, the 504 team will review available data to decide if additional evaluations are needed to continue eligibility status.

If no additional evaluations are needed for the team to conclude that the student is still eligible, then the child will still be regarded as a student with a disability under 504. His/her plan will continue as appropriate.

The review meeting may result in the team deciding that no additional evaluations are needed to determine eligibility.

Decisions regarding eligibility status will be clearly documented using the District's appropriate 504 forms.

The 504 Appointee will address parent and teacher concerns about 504 eligibility and evaluations as needed.

Step 3: Eligibility Determination

Who Determines 504 Eligibility?

A 504 Team.

Who Needs to be on the 504 Team?

The OCR requires that a 504 Team consists of persons knowledgeable about the child. The Team may

include counselors, nurses, school psychologists, speech pathologists, or other service providers who are able to provide meaningful input.

District Requirements:

- The 504 Appointee coordinates the development of an appropriate 504 Team.
- 504 Team shall include a general education classroom teacher.
- A **minimum** of 3 team members is expected at meetings. A parent may serve as one of the three team members.

Are Parents Required to be on the Eligibility Team?

No. However, ME is committed to 100% parent participation in eligibility determination. Refer to Section 7 for additional information regarding parent participation.

What does the 504 Eligibility Team Need to Decide?

1. Does the student have a physical or mental impairment? The first part of having a disability under 504 is documentation of a physical or mental impairment. School system awareness of a condition often prompts a referral for 504 evaluations.
2. Does the impairment substantially limit one or more major life activities or major bodily functions?

How Does the Team Answer the Eligibility Questions?

By reviewing the evaluation data. The ME "[504 Eligibility Determination & Accommodation Form](#)" is designed to facilitate the team decision process. The "Eligibility Determination Form" serves as documentation of the team decision as to whether or not the child has a disability under 504; and, if the child needs a 504 Accommodation Plan.

Is a Medical Diagnosis Necessary for Documenting a Physical or Mental Impairment?

No.

Although a medical diagnosis is not always necessary, there must be adequate documentation that the student has a mental or physical impairment in order to be eligible as a person with a disability under 504.

In most cases, adequate documentation of a mental or physical impairment may include a diagnosis from a person considered licensed or qualified by the State of Georgia to make the diagnosis.

For all parent reported medical or psychological conditions, attempts will be made to receive appropriate documentation. Parents/guardians may be asked to sign an [authorization](#) to release information. Release forms are kept with the 504 appointee, who works with the campus psychologist to obtain information.

The Mountain Education High School "[Medical Information Form](#)" may be used, when appropriate, to gather relevant diagnostic information.

What Does Substantially Limited Mean?

This has generally been interpreted as deviating from the average. Does the student's impairment cause him/her to have much more difficulty with a major life activity or major bodily function compared to the average person without a disability?

There is no numerical formula for deciding substantial limitations. The ADA (Amended 2008) makes clear that the limitation does not have to be severe to qualify.

The team must review the evaluation data to determine if there is substantial impairment in one or more of the major life activities or major bodily functions.

What are Mitigating Measures? Why are they Important in the 504 Eligibility Determination?

Mitigating Measures are anything used to treat or lessen the effects of a physical or mental impairment. With the exception of corrective lenses or ordinary contacts, teams cannot consider mitigating factors when determining if a student is Section 504 eligible.

When determining 504 Eligibility, the team must "take out" the mitigating measures, such as medication for the treatment of ADHD, accommodations and assistive technology devices the student is using, prosthetics, medical supplies and devices, and hearing aids. An intervention provided through the RTI/STT process may be considered a mitigating factor.

What About Episodic or in Remission Impairments?

An episodic impairment or impairment in remission may be a disability if it substantially limits a major life activity when active (ADA Amendments Act 2008). Students with these types of impairments, however, may not require a 504 plan because the student's impairment is intermittent, in remission, or is controlled by medication or other mitigating measures.

What is Not Covered by Section 504?

Only physical and mental disabilities are included. Students with learning problems *resulting from environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantages are not covered under Section 504.*

English Language Learners: A student is not disabled when learning problems are due to lack of English language proficiency. A student's primary or Native language does not constitute a mental or physical impairment.

Temporary Impairments: A 504 eligibility consideration is generally not necessary if the temporary impairment has an expected duration of six months or less. Most cases of broken bones are temporary impairments. The severity of the temporary impairment is taken into consideration when deciding if a 504 referral is warranted. Although not required to consider 504 due to temporary impairments, the school district is not prevented from doing so when needed. Some State mandated tests require a student receiving accommodations to be “coded” as 504 or SPED. When it is likely that an injury or other temporary disability will necessitate accommodations for the student to have equal access to testing, then a 504 referral will be initiated.

Step 4: Placement: Write a 504 Accommodation Plan (If Needed)

Does Everyone who is Eligible under 504 Need a Plan?

No. Recall, 504 is an anti-discriminatory law. Many students will be protected from discrimination by this law; however, not all of these students will require an accommodation plan.

Do We Need to Write 504 Plans for Students Who No Longer Have a Disability?

No. 504 Accommodations are provided for students who currently have a disability and need a plan in order to meet their needs related to their disabilities.

Remember, 504 is an anti-discrimination law. While plans are not written for those who are no longer disabled, individuals with a history of a disability or who are regarded as having a disability are still protected from discrimination.

Who Needs a 504 Accommodation Plan?

While the team “takes out” mitigating measures when determining if the student has a disability; the team considers the present levels of functioning of the child with current interventions and plans in place.

A child does not need a 504 Accommodation Plan when other plans or general education services are currently meeting the student’s needs. Both SST and Medical Plans may be sufficient. However, a student cannot receive state-approved testing accommodations unless he or she has either a 504 plan or IEP.

Who Writes a 504 Plan?

A 504 Plan is constructed by the 504 Team; however, the 504 appointee or campus psychologist must assist the team in completing necessary 504 documentation.

The ME “[504 Eligibility & Individual Accommodation Plan](#)” form is used to facilitate this process.

What are Appropriate Accommodations, Services and Placements for the 504 Plan?

Accommodations and services required to provide FAPE. Each 504 plan is data-driven and individualized based on the needs of the student. What are the effects of the disability? What barriers to FAPE exist because of the disability? These are the questions that guide the 504 accommodation plan.

Do Students with an IEP Need a 504 Plan?

No. The IEP addresses all needs related to the student’s disability and meets 504 requirements.

Step 5: Implementing the 504 Accommodation Plan

Is Implementing the 504 Accommodation Plan Optional?

No. The 504 plan is a legally binding document that spells out what is needed for a student with a disability to have equal access to his/her education and school activities. Choosing to not follow a 504 plan, violates 504 protections and the rights of the student with the disability.

If there are questions about the appropriateness of the 504 plan, then the 504 Appointee should be consulted and a 504 Team meeting scheduled as needed to review and revise the plan.

Step 6: Monitoring and Reviewing 504 Plans

How Often Should 504 Plans be Reviewed?

Annual Reviews: Annual reviews are completed for all 504 plans. The team may meet more than once a school year, but must meet within a calendar year from the previous meeting. Example, if the current 504 Plan has a meeting date of March 13, 2018, then a 504 Team must meet to review the plan by March 12, 2019.

SECTION 3: TRACKING 504 STUDENTS

Tracking 504 Students

The 504 Appointee is responsible for ensuring that eligibility forms and accommodation plans are completed, signed and uploaded to SIS and that 504 students are “flagged”. Appointees will notify the District 504 Monitor and campus administrator by email when a student is determined eligible.

Teachers are responsible for being aware of students in his/her classes who have a 504 plan. Student accommodations are listed within our internal platform, Ontrack.

SECTION 4: TRANSFER PROCEDURES

What happens to a 504 plan when a student leaves ME?

A copy will be sent to the new school upon receipt for records. Both eligibility determinations and 504 plans are sent.

Do we practice reciprocity upon receiving a 504?

Any 504 received from another school system will be forwarded ASAP to the 504 Appointee.

Reciprocity will be granted for out-of-system 504 eligibilities and plans. However, if the 504 Appointee, parent or teacher has concerns about the validity of the eligibility decision and/or appropriateness of the accommodation plan, then a 504 review meeting will be held and the plan amended as needed. Referral for a 504 reevaluation may also be initiated by the review team. The student will continue receiving appropriate accommodations during the evaluation process.

SECTION 5: 504 and DISCIPLINE

504 and IDEA are similar regarding discipline guidelines.

“Before implementing a suspension or expulsion that constitutes a significant change in the placement of a student with a disability, a school district must conduct a manifestation determination to determine whether the misconduct in question is caused by the student’s disability and, if so, whether the student’s current educational placement is appropriate.” (OCR Publication - Discipline of Students with Disabilities in Elementary and Secondary Schools, Page 2)

Given the rights regarding discipline afforded by Section 504, it is particularly important that school teams develop a Behavioral Intervention Plan for students who present with behavioral problems. Also, the 504 team should identify the types of problem behaviors that should be considered to be a manifestation of the student’s disability. If the team determines the behavior is a manifestation, it must be documented on the Behavior Intervention Plan. If a manifestation meeting is needed, please contact the system Special Education Director.

Manifestation Determination Meeting:

Prior to imposing a suspension beyond 10 days (cumulative) for any student with a disability, the administrator must provide appropriate notification to parent/student and utilize a 504 review committee to conduct a manifestation determination. A manifestation determination must occur within 10 days of any decision to change the child’s placement because of a violation of a code of student conduct.

School administrators work with the 504 Appointee to develop the review committee and schedule the manifestation determination.

Parents must receive prior written and oral (phone or in person) notice of the 504 Manifestation Determination meeting, but are not required to be a part of the review committee. If the parent/guardian does not attend the review, then he/she must receive appropriate feedback regarding outcomes.

The purpose of the 504 review committee is to determine if the conduct in question was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to, the child’s disability; or, if the conduct in question was the direct result of the school’s failure to implement the 504 accommodation plan.

To make these determinations, the group will review all relevant information in the student’s file, including the student’s 504 plan, any teacher observations, and any relevant information provided by the parents.

The [504 Manifestation Form](#) is completed by the 504 review committee.

The original “[Section 504 Manifestation Determination Form](#)” should be uploaded into SIS and copies given to the parent.

If the conduct in question is determined not to be a manifestation of the disability, then a copy of the “[Section 504 Manifestation Determination Form](#)” must be included with the disciplinary Tribunal referral.

SECTION 6: ROLE OF MTSS (RTI/SST)

How does 504 fit in with MTSS- GA's Multi-Tiered System of Supports?

504 can be thought of as weaving in and out of the MTSS process.

Some students with 504 accommodation plans may not need additional education or behavioral interventions. However, any student with a 504 plan shall have full access to general education interventions when needed. Not accessing the Tiers of Intervention as needed due to 504 status is viewed as discriminatory and in violation of 504 protections. The same referral procedures for initiating Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions will be followed by both 504 and non-504 students.

What about SST?

It is very important for students with 504 plans to access the SST process as needed.

One function of the Student Support Team is to ensure appropriate referrals for special education evaluations.

The SST rule is the State's permanent commitment to Federal Court after Marshal vs. Georgia, August 1984. This court case involved disproportionate placement of minority students in special education.

Excerpt from the State SST Commitment:

*"Each local agency shall develop a Student Support Team. The Student Support Team is a joint effort of regular education and special education to identify and plan alternative instructional strategies for children **prior to or in lieu of a special education referral**. Each building level team is comprised of such persons as administrator, classroom teacher, requesting teacher, special education teacher, counselor, school psychologist, special education resource person, school social worker or central office personnel. Parental involvement is also a critical part of the Student Support Team process. This interdisciplinary group which plans for modification in a student's education program shall engage in a six step process to include: (1) identification of needs, (2) assessment, if necessary, (3) educational plan, (4) implementation, (5) follow-up and support, and (6) continuous monitoring and evaluation."*

The SST process can often fulfill 504 documentation requirements and result in 504 evaluations and appropriate accommodation plans. Sometimes the SST plan will be sufficient for the 504 eligible student and a separate 504 accommodations plan will not be developed. All decisions are handled on a case-by-case basis, are data-driven, and governed by SST and 504 Team processes. Visit the Georgia Department of Education's webcampus for more information about Student Support Teams:

<http://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Student-Support-Teams/Pages/default.aspx>

SECTION 7: PARENT PARTICIPATION

Notification Requirements:

Parents must receive prior notice of any 504 team meetings, including eligibility determinations, annual reviews, reevaluation considerations, and manifestation hearings. A record of parent notifications will be maintained under the contact tab in the SIS.

Parents must be notified when the student is referred for an evaluation. The ME "[Consent to Evaluate Form](#)" includes the Notice of Referral statement. In addition, parents will be provided a copy of the [Parent/Student Rights and Procedural Safeguards](#). The signed "Consent to Evaluate Form" will be uploaded into SIS.

ME will document varied attempts to involve the parent in the 504 Team process prior to continuing the meeting without them. Generally, 10 calendar days written notice is considered sufficient prior to notice to parents/guardians and may be waived by the parent.

Team Participation:

Must parents attend 504 team meetings?

Although parent participation in 504 eligibility and placement is not mandated by 504, it is best practice for parents to participate in this process.

Parents will receive prior written notice of initial 504 eligibility and review team meetings. A follow-up phone call and/or email notification shall be attempted and recorded in SIS. If the parent fails to attend the meeting, another attempt will be made to schedule the meeting in order to include parents. The 504 team may proceed with the meeting if the parent fails to attend after the second notice.

The second attempt procedure may be waived under some circumstances due to the need for 100% compliance with evaluation and review timelines.

Must parents consent to the 504 Accommodation plan?

No. Parents must consent to the initial 504 evaluation. However, as long as they have been notified of the meeting, parents are not required to participate in either 504 team eligibility determination or development of the accommodation plan. While parental consent is not required to implement 504 accommodations, school teams must adhere to the Least Restrictive Environment mandate when developing 504 plans. 504 accommodations will be provided in the general education classes. 504 cannot be used to circumvent IDEA processes or override parent refusal of special education placement.

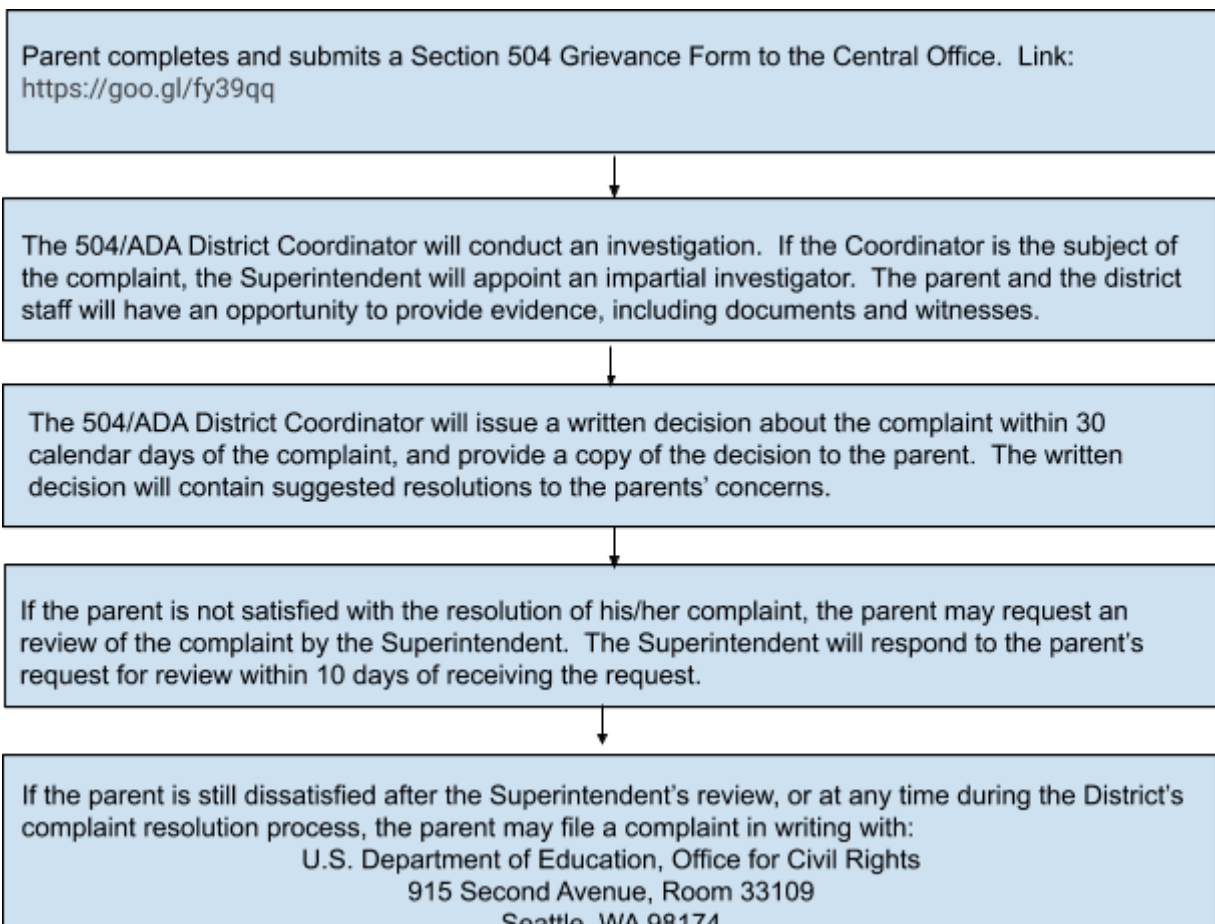
Grievance Procedures:

How do parents voice a concern?

It is our hope that we work as a team (school and parents) to best meet the student's needs. We welcome open communication. A parent does have the right to file a formal grievance.

Parent Grievance Procedure

The best solutions to parent concerns often occur at the school level. Therefore, the District encourages parents to attempt to resolve concerns by working with the building administrator, building 504 Appointee, and other appropriate staff to reach a joint resolution of the issue. However, if a parent is unable to resolve the issue at the building level, a parent may file a formal complaint under Section 504 through the following process:



SECTION 8: EMPLOYEE PROCEDURES

Section 504 Campus Appointee:

- Maintains compliant records and documentation for all eligible students.
- Uploads 504 Plans to SIS.
- Ensures the implementation of Section 504 procedures in the building
 - Coordinates referrals
 - Determines appropriate Section 504 team composition
 - Facilitates evaluation/eligibility determination
 - Provides notices and consents
 - Leads Teams in the development of Section 504 plans
 - Monitors the implementation of Section 504 plans
 - Ensures that annual reviews are scheduled for each Section 504 student
- Serves as a resource to the building administrators, teachers, and parents/guardians.
- Advises the campus administrator regarding discipline issues and procedures for Section 504 eligible students being considered for suspension or expulsion.
- Serves as a liaison between the school building and other district staff regarding Section 504 issues.
- Attends District Section 504 training meetings.
- Provides presentations/training to school/system staff.
- Works with building testing coordinator to insure all testing accommodations are met.

Section 504 District Monitor

- Maintains compliant district records and documentation for all eligible students.
- Ensures the implementation of Section 504 procedures in the district.
- Facilitates the implementation of the school board approved Section 504/ADA policy.
- Provides ongoing training and support to district staff.
- Continually monitors the reduction of architecture barriers for individuals with disabilities.
- Facilitates the provision of reasonable accommodations for district employees with disabilities.
- Serves as a resource to district administrators, building level teams, and community members regarding Section 504/ADA issues.
- Coordinates Section 504/ADA grievance procedures.
- Serves as the school district's liaison to the Office for Civil Rights (OCR complaint resolution and correction plan implementation).
- Advises the district superintendent and school board regarding Section 504/ADA compliance issues and needs.

Appendix: Forms (Links)

- [Rights and Procedural Safeguards](#)
- [Parent Referral Form](#)
- [Staff Referral Form](#)
- [Notice of Meeting](#)
- [Parent Consent to Evaluate](#)
- [504 Eligibility Determination & Accommodation Plan](#)
- [504 Reevaluation & Accommodation Plan](#)
- [Manifestation Determination](#)
- [Grievance/Complaint Form](#)
- [Release of Information](#)
- [Medical Information Form](#)
- [Section 504 Termination](#)