



Lexington County School District One

Section 504

of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

A Guide for Families



Support



Access



Partnership

Understanding Section 504

Section 504 is a federal civil rights law that protects students with disabilities from discrimination at school. It helps ensure that students with disabilities have equal access to learning and school activities.

Schools are required to provide eligible students with a free appropriate public education (FAPE). This means schools must provide supports, accommodations, and services that allow students with disabilities equal access to educational programs, school activities, and extracurricular opportunities.

Section 504 accommodations are different from special education services provided through an Individualized Education Program (IEP), although both are designed to support students with disabilities.



A student may qualify for Section 504 if they have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity or major bodily function.

Examples of major life activities and bodily functions include learning, reading, concentrating, communicating, walking, seeing, hearing, self-care, regulating emotions, interacting with others, brain function, digestion, breathing, and immune system function.

Each student's needs are considered individually.

Eligibility and Evaluation

A parent, teacher, counselor, administrator, or other school staff member may request that a student be considered for Section 504 supports.

The Section 504 team must include individuals who are knowledgeable about the student, the evaluation data, and the supports and services being considered. This typically includes the parent/guardian and appropriate school staff, such as the teacher, counselor, administrator, or nurse.

The student's Section 504 team reviews information from multiple sources, which may include:

- attendance records
- teacher observations
- parent input
- grades
- standardized test scores
- medical documentation
- classroom performance
- discipline records

If the team determines that the student is eligible under Section 504, the team will review the student's individual needs and determine whether accommodations are necessary for the student to have equal access to school and school activities.

Some eligible students may require a formal Section 504 Accommodation Plan, while others may be determined eligible without the need for a plan.



Accommodation Plans

If the Section 504 team determines that a student both qualifies for protections and requires accommodations to ensure equal access, the team will develop a Section 504 Accommodation Plan.

Examples of accommodations may include:

- preferential seating
- extended time on assignments or tests
- breaks during instruction
- health-related accommodations
- behavioral supports

The student's Section 504 Accommodation Plan is shared only with school staff who have responsibility for implementing the plan or supporting the student's educational program.

Plans may be reviewed or revised whenever needed. Parents may request a meeting at any time.



Family Partnership

Families play an important role in the Section 504 process. Families help schools better understand their child's strengths, challenges, medical needs, and educational concerns. They are an important part of the team's decision-making process when considering eligibility and accommodations.

Families are encouraged to:

- communicate concerns with school staff
- participate in meetings
- provide relevant medical or educational information
- ask questions about supports and services

Strong communication between home and school helps teams make effective decisions for students.



Student Discipline

Students eligible under Section 504 are expected to follow all school rules and the district's code of conduct; they are not exempt from school rules or disciplinary consequences. However, when discipline concerns arise, the school may need to consider whether the student's disability contributed to the behavior.

The Section 504 team may review the student's plan and consider whether additional supports, accommodations, or behavioral interventions are needed.

Procedural Safeguards

Parents have rights under Section 504. These rights are called procedural safeguards and help ensure that decisions regarding identification, evaluation, placement, and services are made fairly.



Parents have the right to:

- participate in meetings
- review records
- receive notice of decisions
- request evaluations
- disagree with decisions and request further review

A copy of the district's procedural safeguards is available on the Lexington County School District One website.

Additional Information

For additional information about Section 504 requirements and protections, families may visit the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) website, including the [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#) and the [Parent and Educator Resource Guide to Section 504](#).

Nondiscrimination Statement

Lexington County School District One is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination and equal opportunity for all students, parents/legal guardians, staff, visitors, personnel and community members who participate or seek to participate in its programs or activities. Therefore, the district does not discriminate against any individual on the basis of race, religion, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, or any related medical conditions), color, disability, age, genetic information, national origin, or any other applicable status protected by local, state, or federal law.

The district will use the grievance procedures set forth in policy to process complaints based on alleged violations of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975; the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967; the Equal Pay Act of 1963; the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008; and Titles I and II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

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