

Special Education and Related Services for Eligible Students

The purpose of the district's special education program procedures is to address program areas where state and federal regulations require specific local procedures, or permit local discretionary choices.

The state regulations governing implementation of special education services pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) 2004 are addressed in Chapter 392-172A WAC. These procedures do not address all of the requirements established in the regulations. District personnel who are not familiar with the regulations need to contact the Executive Director of Special Services if there are questions regarding special education. These procedures describe how the district implements its special education program but they do not add rights or services not required by state and federal laws and rules.

Free Appropriate Public Education

The district will apply annually for federal Part B and state special education funding to assist in the provision of special education and any necessary related services. This funding is in addition to eligible special education students' basic education funding.

The superintendent, in consultation with staff, shall annually determine whether to use Early Intervening Services (EIS) funding for students who have not been identified as needing special education or related services, but who need additional academic and behavioral support to succeed in a general education environment.

The district shall annually report to the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) the number of students receiving EIS; the number of students who received EIS and subsequently received special education and related services under Part B of IDEA during the preceding two-year period.

Services to eligible special education students age 3 to 21 will be provided without charge to the student. This does not include incidental fees that are normally charged to all students. The district's special education services will meet state education standards. Special education services will include preschool, elementary and secondary education and will be provided in conformance with the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP).

The district provides a continuum of services for students, regardless of the funding source. Where the district is unable to provide all or part of the special education or necessary related services, it will make arrangements through contracts with other public or non-public sources, interdistrict agreements or interagency coordination.

Early Intervention

The district participates in the provision of early intervention services to eligible children with a disability, birth to three, consistent with the state lead educational agency's policies and procedures and the regulations implementing Part C of the IDEA. ***Students Covered by Public or Private Insurance***

The district may use Medicaid or other public insurance benefits programs in which a student participates to provide or pay for services required to provide a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE), as permitted by the public insurance program. However, the district shall not:

- A. Require parents to sign up for or enroll in public insurance programs in order for their student to receive FAPE under Part B of the IDEA;
- B. Require parents to incur an out-of-pocket expense such as the payment of a deductible or co-pay amount incurred in filing a claim;
- C. Use a student's benefits under a public insurance program if that use would:
 - Decrease available lifetime coverage or any other insured benefit;
 - Result in the family paying for services required after school hours that would otherwise be covered by the public insurance program;

- Increase premiums or result in discontinuation of insurance; or
- Risk loss of eligibility for home and community-based waivers, based on aggregate health-related expenditures.

The district may access a parent’s private insurance proceeds to provide FAPE to an eligible student only if the parent provides informed consent. Whenever the district proposes to access the parent’s private insurance proceeds, the district shall:

- A. Obtain parent consent in accordance with Chapter 392-172 WAC; and
- B. Inform the parents that their refusal to permit the district to access their private insurance does not relieve the district of its responsibility to ensure that all required services are provided at no cost to the parents.

To avoid financial cost to parents who would otherwise consent to use private insurance or public insurance if the parent would incur a cost, the district may use its Part B funds to pay the cost the parents would incur.

Parent Participation and Meetings

The district encourages parental involvement and the exchange of information regarding parents’ children so that the district is able to provide appropriate services to its students. As used in these procedures, the term "parent" includes biological and adoptive parents, legal guardians, persons acting in the place of a parent, such as relatives and stepparents, foster parents, persons appointed as surrogate parents, and adult students.

Parents (and as appropriate, students) will be provided the opportunity to participate in any meetings with respect to the identification, evaluation, educational placement and provision of a free appropriate public education.

When a meeting is scheduled for matters other than IEP or placement decisions, parents will be:

- A. Notified of the meeting early enough that they will have an opportunity to attend; and
- B. Notified of the purpose, time, and location of the meeting and who will be in attendance.

When a meeting involves an IEP or placement, notification procedures described in the previous paragraph apply. In addition to the above notice requirements:

- A. Meetings shall be scheduled at a mutually agreeable time and place;
- B. Parents will be notified that the district or the parent may invite others who have knowledge or special expertise of the student. Invitation of others having knowledge or special expertise is at the discretion of the party making the invitation.
- C. When the meeting involves transition needs or services, the student will also be invited.
- D. If another agency is or may be responsible for payment or provision of transition services, an agency representative will be invited. If the agency representative cannot attend the meeting, district personnel shall keep the representative informed of the meeting and obtain agency information that will assist in the service provision.
- E. The district shall provide interpreters or accommodations necessary for a parent’s participation in meetings.
- F. The IEP educator will be responsible for notification and scheduling of IEP meeting.

The district shall take whatever action is necessary to ensure that the parent understands the proceedings of the IEP team meeting, including arranging for an interpreter for parents with deafness or whose native language is other than English.

The staff person responsible for inviting the parents to meetings will keep documentation of the information provided and the methods used to notify parents of the meeting. The district may proceed with the IEP or placement meeting if the district is not able to get the parent to attend. In this case, the district will document its attempts to arrange the meeting. This documentation will include records of telephone calls and the results, copies of correspondence sent to the parent and/or other means used to contact the parents.

This documentation will be kept in the student's special education file. The Evaluation Group Manager is responsible for notifying the parents of the evaluation and eligibility meetings. The IEP Case Manager is responsible for notifying the parents of the IEP and placement meetings.

If the parent cannot attend the IEP or placement meeting but wishes to participate, the district will arrange for other means to participate. This may include input provided by the parent orally or in writing, individual or conference phone calls or other conferencing arrangements.

A meeting does not include informal or unscheduled conversations involving district personnel; conversations on issues such as teaching methodology, lesson plans, coordination of service provisions; or preparatory activities that district personnel engage in to develop a proposal or a response to a parent proposal to be discussed at a later meeting.

The district will ensure parents have access to their child's classroom and school-sponsored activities for purposes of observing class procedure, teaching material and class conduct. Such access must not disrupt the classroom procedure or learning activities and will be granted following district procedures.

Identification and Referral (CHILDFIND)

Identification

The purpose of Childfind is to locate, evaluate and identify children, aged birth through 21 who have a disability who are not currently receiving special education and related services and who may be eligible for those services. All severities and conditions of disability are included. Activities are to reach:

- A. Children who reside within the school district boundaries, including preschool aged children.
- B. Children attending private elementary and secondary schools located within the district boundaries. **Elementary or secondary schools include public schools, nonprofit institutional day or residential schools and private schools;**
- C. Highly mobile children (such as homeless and migrant children)
- D. Children who have a disability and may need special education services even though they are advancing from grade to grade.
- E. Children both within the school district system and at home, home schooled, or enrolled in private schools and preschools, including religious schools.

The district will consult with representatives of private school students to ensure its Childfind activities are comparable in private schools within the district. These consultations will occur in a meeting hosted by the Issaquah School District or by phone or written correspondence.

The district reaches students who may be eligible for special education services through:

- A. District informational mailings; Website.
- B. Posting notices regarding screening and referral in schools and public locations including DSHS community service offices, physicians' offices, day care centers and community preschools.
- C. Notifying and coordinating with the designated Part C lead agencies;
- D. Early childhood screenings conducted by the district;
- E. Coordination with other public and private agencies and practitioners;
- F. Written information and training provided to district staff on referral, evaluation and identification procedures;
- G. Article in local newspaper informing parents of Childfind.

Review of district collected information around student behavior, discipline, attendance and assessment information. **Preschool Children**

The district, through its special services department conducts early childhood screenings for ages three to five. In district screening for children ages three to five occur four times per year at each school location housing an early childhood program. When parents or others inquire about screenings, the caller will be referred to the appropriate school location.

The screening process involves the following:

- A. Parents are asked to provide information to assist in assessing their child.
- B. Children are screened to assess cognitive, communication, physical, social-emotional and adaptive development. Parents will be notified at the screening of the results. The parents will also be provided prior written notice of the results within ten days of the screening. If the screening supports evaluation, written consent for evaluation will be requested at the exit interview, or consent forms will be included with the written notice notifying the parents of the results. If the screening results indicate that the child does not need an evaluation, written notice shall be sent to the parents, within 20 days of the screening. Evaluation occurs in accordance with evaluation procedures.

Parents of children birth to three who have concerns regarding their child's growth and development are referred to the community agencies serving this population through interagency agreements with the district.

Referral

A student or child birth through 21 whether or not enrolled in school, may be referred for a special education evaluation by any source. Each building principal and assigned school psychologist will be responsible for ensuring district staff understands the referral process. Referrals are required to be in writing unless the person referring is unable to write. A person who makes a referral orally should be asked to either make the referral in writing or go to the main office of the building for assistance in making the referral.

When a referral is made regarding a student, the district must act within a 25 school-day timeline to make a decision about the need for an evaluation to determine eligibility for special education services.

All certificated employees will document referrals immediately upon a referral being made to or by them. All other staff receiving a referral from another person shall notify the building principal or school psychologist.

The school psychologist (a) records the referral, (b) provides written notice of the referral to the parent, and (c) advises the building guidance team to collect and review District data and information provided by the parent to determine whether evaluation is warranted.

During the referral period school psychologist and the building guidance team will collect and review existing information from all sources, including parents.

Examples may include:

- A. Child's history, including developmental milestones;
- B. Report cards and progress reports;
- C. Individual teacher's or other provider information regarding the child;
- D. Assessment data;
- E. Medical information, if provided;
- F. Other information that may be relevant to assist in determining whether the child should be evaluated.

The parents will be invited to attend the Guidance Team meeting when the team reviews the data collected to determine the need for assessment. The school psychologist *provides* written notice to the parents of the decision regarding evaluation, whether or not the parents attend the meeting. The notice contains the decision to assess or not assess and the data upon which the decision was based.

When the determination is that the child will be evaluated, the composition of the evaluation group is determined. Parent consent for evaluation and consent for release of appropriate records will be obtained.

When the parent provides consent, The evaluation group is to complete the evaluation within 35 school days after parent consent is recorded, unless:

- The parents and district agree in writing to extend the timeline;
- The parent fails or refuses to make the student available for evaluation; or
- The student enrolls in another school district after the evaluation is begun but before completion and the parent and new district have an agreement for completion of the evaluation.

If a parent does not provide consent, the Evaluation Group Manager will notify the Executive Director of Special Services, to make a determination as to whether the district wishes to use mediation to seek agreement to evaluate or file a due process hearing to override the parent's refusal to consent. The district will not override a parent's refusal to consent for the evaluation if the student is homeschooled or is unilaterally placed in a private school.

Eligibility – Part C Students

Students turning three, who were previously determined eligible for early intervention services under Part C of IDEA, must be evaluated for initial eligibility for special education services. The evaluation must be completed in enough time to develop an initial IEP and placement by the date of the student's third birthday.

Evaluation and Eligibility

The purpose of evaluation is to determine eligibility for special education and related services and obtain enough information to develop the IEP, if eligible. Evaluation activities and procedures are used to determine whether:

- A. The student has a disability that adversely affects educational performance; and
- B. The student requires special education and any necessary related services, and,
- C. The nature and extent of special education and related services needed by the student including information related to enabling the child to be involved in and progress in the general education curriculum.

Evaluation activities include:

- A. Determining the student's eligibility and need for special education and related services.
- B. Measuring the student's present levels of functioning, needs, abilities, and limitations;
- C. Drawing conclusions about the significance of findings as they relate to the general education curriculum and instructional programming;
- D. Providing information that will assist the IEP team in making decisions about the special educational program, including necessary related services, assistive technology needs, extended school year services and supportive services.

The district will evaluate the student in all areas related to the suspected disability and sufficiently comprehensive to identify special education and related services needs, whether or not the needs are commonly linked to a particular disability category. Areas of evaluation should include, if appropriate, health, vision, hearing, social skills, emotional status, general intelligence, academic performance, communication skills, and motor abilities.

The Building Guidance Team shall select the members of the evaluation group. Members selected must be knowledgeable about the student and the areas of his or her suspected disabilities. Qualifications of a group member include having the appropriate professional license or certification, and may include outside practitioners when necessary. If the student requires a medical evaluation in order to determine eligibility, the district will coordinate with the parents to arrange for the evaluation.

When the district suspects the student may have a learning disability, the evaluation group will also include the parent and the general education teacher or, if the student does not have such a teacher, someone qualified to teach a student of that age.

The evaluation group shall use a variety of methods, tools, and strategies designed to gather relevant functional and developmental information. The evaluation does not rely on one source or procedure as the sole criterion for determination. All current evaluation data, as well as data previously reviewed by the team, must be considered. Professional members of the evaluation team need to be familiar with qualifying disability definitions and criteria in federal and state rules.

The review of existing data may be in the form of a meeting of IEP Team members or may be conducted without a meeting. It could include data provided by parents, data gathered in the general education classroom or from state and district level assessments. The data may provide information about the student's physical condition, social or cultural background and adaptive behavior and should include:

- A. Review of existing data;
- B. Relevant functional and developmental information;

- C. Information from parents;
- D. Information from other providers;
- E. Information related to enabling access to and progress within the general education curriculum and assisting in determining whether there is a disability and the content of the IEP;
- F. Current classroom-based evaluations, using criterion-referenced and curriculum-based methods, anecdotal records, and observations;
- G. Teacher and related service providers' observations;
- H. Testing and other evaluation materials, which may include medical or other evaluations when necessary.

Determining Needed Evaluation Data:

The evaluation group members select the specific assessments to be used in the evaluation, based on a review of existing data and the student's particular needs. The review of the existing data should include the evaluation group members, the parents, and other persons who would be members of the IEP team if the student is determined eligible. If it is determined that no additional testing data is necessary to make a decision about eligibility, the parents will be notified of that no additional testing is necessary and of their right to request additional assessments.

When additional assessments are necessary, the group members have the responsibility of selecting, administering, interpreting, and making judgments about evaluation methods and results, and ensuring that the tests and assessments are administered by qualified personnel in accordance with the instructions of the test producer. The evaluation group shall use a variety of methods, tools and strategies designed to gather relevant functional and developmental information. The evaluation will not rely on one source or procedure as the sole criterion for determination. The district will follow the evaluation procedures outlined in WAC 392-172A-03020-03025.

Evaluation Report

Each person conducting an assessment of the student will specify the procedures and instruments used and their results and the significance of findings related to the student's instructional program, including a specification of the factors interfering with performance and the special education and related services needed.

The evaluation group will determine who is most appropriate to develop the evaluation report reflecting the evaluation information. This will be completed before the conclusion of the evaluation period and will, at a minimum:

- A. Identify the disability which requires special education and related services, if a disability exists and review data supporting conclusions regarding disability;
- B. Describe how the disability or disabilities affect the student's involvement and progress in the general curriculum;
- C. Make recommendations to the IEP team with respect to special education and related services needed, materials or equipment, instructional and curricular practices, student management strategies, the need for services beyond 180 school days, and location of services;
- D. Other information, as determined through the evaluation process and parent input;
- E. Include the additional information required for the specific learning disability eligibility category;

- F. Provide any necessary professional judgments and the facts or reasons in support of the judgments; and
- G. Be signed and dated by the evaluation group members certifying their agreement. Any group member who disagrees with the conclusions shall prepare a statement presenting his or her conclusion.

The school psychologist is responsible for notifying parents of evaluation meetings. i.e. invitations.

Eligibility

The evaluation group and the parent will determine whether or not the student is a special education student.

- A. A student is not eligible if the determinant factor is lack of instruction in reading or math based on the states grade level expectations or limited English proficiency.
- B. Eligibility may be determined by documented professional judgment when
 - 1. Properly validated tests are unavailable, or
 - 2. Corroborating evidence indicates that results were influenced due to measuring a disability.

The parent will be provided with a copy of the evaluation report and the documentation of determination of eligibility. The school psychologist will provide the parent a copy of the report and the prior written notice. The written notice of the eligibility decision is provided within ten school days of the decision.

Eligible students remain eligible for special education services until one of the following events occur:

- A. The student is determined through a reevaluation to no longer need special education;
- B. The student has met the district’s high school graduation requirements; or
- C. The student has reached age twenty-one. A special education student whose twenty-first birthday occurs after August 31, shall continue to be eligible for special education and any necessary related services for the remainder of the school year.
- D. The student no longer receives special education services based on the parent’s written revocation of services.

When a special education student is expected to graduate prior to age 21, or when graduation is part of the transition plan, the IEP team will document a student’s progress towards achieving course credits towards graduation on the transition portion of the IEP. The district will provide prior written notice to parents and adult students that the student is expected to graduate and will no longer be eligible for special education services at least 6 months before graduation. The district will also provide the parent and student with a summary of academic and functional performance and recommendations to assist the student with post secondary goals.

Evaluation of Transfer Students

If a student transfers into the school district while an evaluation process is pending from the other district, the school psychologist and/or therapist is responsible for determining the status of evaluations conducted to date and making a determination as to whether the evaluation can be completed within the 35 day timeline from the date the parent provided consent. If the determination is that additional time will be needed, the parents will be provided prior written notice of the timeline needed to complete the evaluation and the reasons for the additional time needed.

Reevaluation

Every special education student will be reevaluated at least every three years using the evaluation procedures unless the school and parent agree it is not necessary. An agreement that the reevaluation is unnecessary shall be confirmed by the parent in writing. The Evaluation Group Case Manager will notify the Special Services Department of this agreement. Reevaluations may occur more frequently if the student's situation warrants a reevaluation or if requested by the parent or teacher and the district agrees. A reevaluation does not occur more than once a year unless parent and school agree otherwise.

For students under three years of age who were previously determined eligible under the category "developmentally delayed," the student must be reevaluated before the third birthday.

Students who turn six who met the eligibility requirements for the disability category of "Developmentally Delayed", under the criteria for ages three to six years need not be reevaluated at age six under the criteria for six to nine years until three years after their initial evaluation was completed and their eligibility was established in the age six to nine category.

Students who were previously eligible under the category "Developmentally Delayed" must be reevaluated before age nine to determine eligibility within another category.

The reevaluation process shall be completed within 35 school days after the parent's consent or within 35 school days after a parent's refusal to consent is overridden by a due process decision, and not later than three years after the previous eligibility determination.

As part of any reevaluation, the IEP team members and other professionals the district determines appropriate will review existing data that includes:

- A. Evaluations and information provided by the parents,
- B. Current classroom-based assessment and observations, and
- C. Observations by other teachers and related services providers data.

Based on this review the team will determine whether any additional data is necessary to determine:

- A. Whether the student continues to be eligible for special education and any necessary related services,
- B. The present levels of academic achievement and functional performance and educational needs, and
- C. Whether any additions or modifications to the student's program are needed.

This review can occur at a meeting or through individual review. If the IEP team members and any other persons reviewing the data determine that no further testing is necessary, the district will notify the parents of this determination, using written prior notice and will inform parents that they have the right to request assessments if they disagree with the determination that additional testing is not necessary. Parent consent is not required if additional testing is not needed.

If additional testing is needed, the district will request written parental consent for reevaluation. If the parents do not return the signed consent form the district shall send another letter explaining the need for reevaluation and parent consent, and will enclose another consent form and a copy of the prior written notice. If the parents do not respond to the request for consent, the district can proceed with the reevaluation. If the parents refuse to consent, the district should seek mediation in order to obtain consent, or, if necessary, a request a due process hearing to order reevaluation.

After the reevaluation is completed, the district will both invite parents to the eligibility meeting and will provide prior written notice of the results of reevaluation to parents in their primary language, indicating one or more of the following:

- A. Whether the student continues to be eligible and in need of special education
- B. Present levels of academic achievement and functional performance and educational needs of the student, and
- C. Whether any additions or modifications to the special education and related services are needed to enable the student to meet IEP annual goals and to participate, as appropriate, in the general curriculum.

This notice will occur within ten calendar days of the eligibility decision. The school psychologist is responsible for sending the notice.

Reevaluation and Graduation

No reevaluation is required when special education eligibility terminates due to graduation from high school with a regular diploma or due to reaching the end of the school year during which the student turned 21. Instead, the district will provide prior written notice and the IEP team will provide the student with a summary of academic achievement and functional performance including recommendations on how to assist the student in meeting post-secondary goals.

Independent Educational Evaluations

Parents of special education students or students who have been referred for special education and determined not to be eligible or students determined not to need an evaluation have a right to request an independent educational evaluation at public expense.

The following criteria for the selection of an individual to conduct an independent educational evaluation at public expense are established for the purpose of identifying the knowledge, experience and qualifications of individuals selected to conduct the evaluations; guaranteeing the selection of local professionals who can maintain any necessary ongoing contact and consultation with the district; and ensuring that such evaluations are conducted at reasonable fees commensurate with the usual and customary rate in this geographical area. Any individual selected to conduct either a district evaluation or an independent educational evaluation must be:

- A. Licensed, credentialed or otherwise qualified within the state of Washington or state of residence/practice to perform an evaluation in the specific professional discipline for which an independent evaluation is sought.
- B. Knowledgeable and experienced in evaluating children with similar disabilities.
- C. Geographically located within the state of Washington.
- D. Available to the district at a maximum fee which does not exceed by more than 25% the prevailing average for similar evaluations within the state of Washington.

Exceptions to the criteria will be granted only when it can be shown that the unique circumstances of the child or the disability:

- A. Make it impossible to identify anyone within the state of Washington who holds the appropriate credentials or experience necessary to conduct the evaluation; or

- B. Require a specialized evaluator whose fee exceeds the prevailing average by more than 25%; or
- C. Include factors which would warrant an exception in order to obtain an appropriate evaluation.

When parents request an independent educational evaluation the district must decide within fifteen calendar days whether or not to provide it. Any parent request for an independent evaluation should be immediately referred to the Executive Director of Special Services. The special services administrator shall review the request and determine whether or not the request is warranted. If the district denies the request it must file for a due process hearing. If the district agrees to provide an IEE, arrangements will be made promptly. The district may request mediation as an option, after filing the due process hearing. If the parents withdraw their request for an independent educational evaluation the due process hearing can be dismissed.

If the parent obtains an IEE at either public or private expense, any results of the IEE must be considered by the district if providing FAPE. The IEE may also be presented as evidence at a hearing regarding the student.

Individualized Education Programs

Transitions of Birth to Three Students to Preschool

The district will participate in transition planning conferences, arranged by the designated Part C lead agency, for each student who may be eligible for preschool services. Transition plans will be designed to promote uninterrupted provision of appropriate services to the child.

- A. Transitioning planning conferences shall be convened at least ninety calendar days (or at the discretion of all parties up to six months) before the student's third birthday. Planning conferences should include determinations of the needs in the re-evaluation for possible eligibility for Part B services.
- B. The transitioning planning conferences will include representatives of the Part C lead agency, the family, and the district.
- C. Participants will review the child's program options for the period from the child's third birthday through the remainder of the school year.
- D. By the student's third birthday, an IEP will be developed and implemented. If the third birthday is not during the school year and when appropriate the IEP may set a start date of the beginning of the school year.

IEP Development

The IEP is the written statement reflecting the implementation of instructional programs and other services for special education students. It is intended as a practical method of addressing from the evaluation results the identified needs of the student which include special education, any necessary related services, and any other services necessary for the student to progress towards meeting his or her goals in the IEP.

An IEP must be in effect before initiation of special education services. The IEP must be developed no later than thirty calendar days after an initial determination of eligibility for special services.

Additionally, parent consent is required for placement and the provision of special education services before the initial provision of special education services. Parent consent is not required after initial eligibility is established IEPs must be updated annually. IEP's may be revised more frequently as needed to adjust the program and services.

Parent consent is required before the initial provision of special education services. If a parent refuses to consent to the provision of special education services, the district may not use mediation or due process to override a parent's refusal. When a parent refuses to provide consent, the Evaluation Group Case Manager will notify the parent that the district does not have a FAPE obligation to the student. The notification will be documented in the student's file. The district will maintain a copy of the current IEP in the location(s) serving the special education student. The IEP is accessible to all staff members responsible for providing education, other services or implementation of the IEP. All staff members will be informed of their responsibilities for its implementation. This includes not only teachers and other service providers, but also bus drivers, playground and lunchroom supervisors, nursing staff and others who may be responsible for the proper implementation. The building principal is responsible for ensuring that staff members are knowledgeable about their responsibilities. IEPs will be implemented without undue delay following IEP meetings, regardless of the payment source for special education and or related services.

Parents are members of the IEP team and shall have the opportunity to fully participate. The district will make sure that the parents understand the proceedings; including arranging for an interpreter for parents who are deaf or whose native language is other than English. The district will also ensure that meeting locations are accessible. The special services department is responsible for coordinating interpreters and making arrangements for the meeting location.

The IEP team includes:

- A. The parents of the student;
- B. At least one general education teacher (or preschool teacher) of the student if the student is or will be participating in the general education environment; The general education teacher (or preschool provider), as a member of the IEP team, must, to the extent appropriate participate in the development, review and revision of the student's IEP including assisting in the determination of appropriate positive behavioral interventions and strategies for the student and the determination of supplementary aides and services, program modification, and supports for school personnel that will be provided to the student.
- C. At least one special education teacher, or if appropriate, at least one special education provider of the student.
- D. A representative of the district, who is qualified to provide or supervise the provision of special education and related services, is knowledgeable about general education curriculum, and is knowledgeable about the availability of district resources.
- E. An individual who can interpret the instructional implications of the evaluation results.
- F. Any other individuals who have knowledge or special expertise about the student. These individuals may be invited by both the district and the parents, at the discretion of the person making the invitation.
- G. The student, when appropriate, or when required.
- H. Transition participants when required.
- I. If another agency is or may be responsible for payment or provision of transition services, an agency representative will be invited, with the parent's consent. If the agency representative cannot attend the meeting, district personnel shall keep the representative informed of the meeting and obtain agency information that will assist in the service provision.
- J. Parents will be notified of the participation of the Part C service coordinator or other designated representatives of the Part C system as specified by the state lead educational agency for Part C at the initial IEP meeting for a child previously served under Part C of IDEA.

Existing team members may fill more than one of these roles if they meet the criteria for the role.

Refer to the Parent Participation and Meetings for the requirements of a parent invitation to IEP meetings.

The IEP Case Manager, who will manage the IEP, is usually the special education teacher. If the student is only receiving speech therapy, occupational therapy or physical therapy, then the IEP Case Manager may be the therapist.

The parents and district must agree in writing before any of the above team members are excused from all or part of a meeting. If a team member's area of the IEP is being discussed or modified, then the parent and District must consent to their excusal; and that specific team member must provide advance written input for their part of the IEP prior to the meeting.

If a member of the IEP team requests to be excused, s/he will ensure the parent has received written input into the IEP prior to the meeting and the IEP Case Manager has received written permission (email or other written correspondence) consenting to the excusal.

Sometimes parents do not attend IEP meetings. Additionally, there will be times the parents do not agree with the IEP as proposed, and despite attempts to reach agreement on IEP content, the team does not reach agreement. If a parent attends the IEP meeting and agreement is not reached on the IEP, the team shall determine whether another IEP meeting should be scheduled as soon as mutually possible, or whether there is enough information to complete the IEP. When the decision is made that the IEP will be implemented, the district must send prior written notice of the decisions reached to the parent, including the date the IEP will be implemented.

When the parents do not attend despite the district's efforts to ensure participation, or if the team does not reach agreement, it is the district's obligation to offer an appropriate educational program:

- A. Have IEP members participating sign the IEP (*or document participation if any member is unwilling to sign*).
- B. Send a copy to the parent, and provide the parent prior written notice that the district intends to implement the IEP.
- C. Forward the documentation of actual or attempted contacts to the special services department for processing when parents do not attend the meeting.

When making changes to an IEP after the annual IEP meeting for a school year, the parent and the district may agree not to convene an IEP meeting for the purposes of making changes. The parent and the district must complete an IEP Revision indicating the changes.

The IEP Case Manager will consult with the parent regarding the recommended changes. If the parent agrees to the revisions, the IEP Case Manager will revise the IEP and inform IEP team members and appropriate individuals of the changes.

IEP Preparation and Content

IEP teams will consider the recommendations in the most recent evaluation to develop the IEP. In developing the IEP, the team should consider:

- A. The strengths of the student and concerns of the parents for enhancing the education of their child;
- B. Whether a behavior plan, including positive supports and possible aversive interventions should be considered;
- C. Whether the student with limited English proficiency has language needs;
- D. Whether Braille instruction is appropriate for a student who is blind or visually impaired;

- E. Whether a student has other language and communication needs; and
- F. Whether assistive technology devices or services are needed.

IEP content includes:

- A. The student's present levels of academic achievement and functional performance with a description of how the disability(ies) affect the student's involvement and progress in the general curriculum or preschool activities.
- B. Measurable academic and functional annual goals for the student including benchmarks or short term objectives that will meet the student's needs resulting from the disability(ies) to enable involvement and progress in the general curriculum or in preschool activities, and will meet the student's other educational needs. Students ECE through second grade and all students involved in alternative assessments will have short term objectives.
- C. A statement of special education services, any necessary related services and supplementary aids and services based on peer reviewed research to the extent practicable to be provided to the student and program modifications or supports for personnel so that the student may advance towards annual goals, progress in the general curriculum and be educated and participate with other special education students and non-disabled students and participate in extracurricular and other nonacademic activities.
- D. A statement of the extent, if any, that the student will not participate with non-disabled students in general classroom, extra-curricular and non-academic activities.
- E. A statement of any individual appropriate modification in the administration of state or district-wide assessments of student achievement that are needed to allow the student to participate in the assessments. If the team determines that the student will not participate in a particular assessment, the IEP will address why that assessment(s) is not appropriate and how the student will be assessed.
- F. The date for the beginning of services and the anticipated frequency, location and duration of services and modifications.
- G. A statement of how the student's progress towards goals will be measured, how the student's parents will be regularly informed of their child's progress towards the annual goals and whether the progress is sufficient to enable the student to achieve the goal by the end of the year. Measurement of the student's progress will be based on data. Information to the parents can be provided through the use of progress reports and report cards or other agreed means, but the information must be provided at least as often as information is provided to students without disabilities.
- H. Beginning at age 16, or sooner if the IEP team determines it is appropriate, a statement of needed transition services and any interagency responsibilities or needed linkages. Transition services description must include appropriate measurable postsecondary goals based on age-appropriate transition and assessments related to training, education, employment, independent living skills where appropriate; and transition services (including course of study) needed to assist the child in reaching these goals.
- I. Aversive interventions, if appropriate. Any interventions considered must be provided by trained staff and only considered after the determination has been made that positive interventions alone are not effective. Any questions about the need for or use of aversive interventions should be referred to the special education supervisor. When aversive interventions are considered the IEP team will include a school psychologist or behavior specialist who understands the appropriate use of interventions and concurs with the need and shall include a person who works directly with the student. Evaluation of the data collected around the use of the aversive intervention will be done and recorded every three months during the school year (December, March and June).

- J. Extended school year services. The consideration for extended year services is a team decision, based on information provided in the evaluation report and based on the individual needs of a student. Extended school year services are not limited by categories of disability, or limited by type amount or duration of the services. If the need for extended school year services is not addressed in the IEP and extended school year services may be appropriate for the student, the IEP team will meet by June 1 to address the need for ESY Factors for the team to consider when determining the need for ESY may include, but are not limited to:
- Documentation of regression or difficulty regaining skills during pre and post-school breaks;
 - Acute/chronic health problems negatively impact the student's education;
 - A student is beginning to show progress in a critical skill and the team determines that an extended program is appropriate; or
 - A student is not making progress despite changing objectives, methods, materials, placement or time.
- K. Transfer of rights. When a student eligible for special education reaches the age of 18, all educational rights under Part B of IDEA, previously exercised by the parent, transfer to the student, unless the student is determined incapacitated in a guardianship proceeding. At an IEP meeting occurring during the year before the student turns 18, the district will inform the student about those educational rights. This information will be documented on the IEP.

Transfer Students

Students who transfer from one district to another within the state continue to be eligible for special education and any necessary related services. When a special education student transfers into the district, the building will notify the school psychologist. The school psychologist will review the student's evaluation and IEP to determine whether the student is eligible under the WAC for service and the evaluation and IEP are current and the district is able to implement the services on the IEP, as written, and will notify parents. If implementation of the IEP is not possible, the district will provide services that approximate the services on the old IEP until a new IEP can be developed. If it is necessary to develop a new IEP, the district will convene the IEP team as soon as possible.

When a student who was identified as eligible for special education, transfers from out of state into the district, the building psychologist will notify the special services department as soon as possible. The school psychologist will review the evaluation, eligibility documentation and IEP, to determine whether or not the student meets state eligibility criteria. If the student meets the state eligibility criteria, follow the procedures described in the previous paragraph. If the student needs to be evaluated to determine eligibility in this state, the school psychologist will notify the parents, obtain consent and evaluate the student for eligibility within 35 school days. The student will be served on the transferring IEP until the work is completed.

The district must take reasonable steps to promptly obtain records, including IEP supporting documents and any other records related to special education or related services from the previous school.

Placement

No student may receive special education and related services without being determined eligible for services, and thus the evaluation process precedes a special education placement. When a student has been evaluated and the evaluation team and parent have determined student eligibility and the need for special education and related services, programming decisions must occur. These decisions are made on the basis of information generated through the evaluation and IEP processes, and the actual program is considered within the context of least restrictive environment (LRE) and the continuum of placement alternatives (reviewed below). When determining initial eligibility for special education, including determination of the appropriate placement, the parent or adult student must provide written consent to services before the student receives special education services. Notification to parents and consent to receive

initial services must be obtained before special education services and any necessary related services are provided to an eligible student. If the parents do not consent to the provision of special education and related services, the district will offer and explain the benefits of mediation. If the mediation option is not effective, the district may file for a due process hearing to seek an order determining whether or not special education services are appropriate.

When programming decisions are addressed by the IEP team, proper consideration must be given to the least restrictive environment. Within the educational setting, the disabled student should be placed, whenever possible:

- A. In the school the disabled student would normally attend and,
- B. With nondisabled students in the general educational setting, to the maximum extent possible.

Special classes, separate schools or removal of students with disabilities from the general education environment occurs only when the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in the general education classroom with use of supplementary aids and services cannot be satisfactorily achieved.

If the IEP team believes that the student will not be successful within the general education classroom, the team will consider:

- A. The educational benefits of placement full-time in a regular classroom
- B. The non-academic benefits of such a placement
- C. The effect the student will have on the teacher and other students in the regular classroom
- D. The costs of placing the student in the regular classroom

The degree to which the student is to be integrated into the general classroom setting is dependent upon the evaluation-identified needs of the student. This placement is to occur unless the nature of the need is so severe that this cannot be satisfactorily achieved, even with supplementary aids and services. If the placement is in another building, the appropriate educational placement will be as close to the student's home as reasonably possible.

Within the nonacademic setting, students will be provided nonacademic and extracurricular activities with nondisabled students. These may include counseling services, career opportunities, athletics, transportation, health services, recreational opportunities or clubs, lunch and recess. Limits on nonparticipation or conditions of participation must be designated in the IEP.

The district will also make a variety of opportunities available for special education students to participate with non-disabled students in the district such as art, music, industrial arts, computer, consumer classes, home economics classes and any other classes deemed appropriate by the IEP team.

Within the district, a range of placement options exists spanning within-class, resource room, self-contained, home school support, home-bound, and out-of-district provisions. These options are intended to address the individual needs of students, and they are considered according to the following process:

The placement of each student with disability will be determined annually, or sooner if appropriate, by the IEP team.

The appropriateness of placement options will be based upon various decisions, including:

- A. Data-based judgments in IEP development;
- B. Judgments (data-based) in determining LRE;
- C. The reasonable probability of the placement option(s) assisting the student to attain annual goals and objectives and the quality of services needed.
- D. The reasonable probability of the placement option(s) assisting the student's attainment of annual goals and objectives; and
- E. The consideration of potentially harmful effects upon the student or on the quality of services needed.

Placement options along the continuum must include alternative placement options identified in the definition of special education and make provisions for supplementary services such as resource room or itinerant instruction to be provided in concert with the general education placement.

Students Unilaterally Enrolled in Private Schools by Parents

On November 1st each year, the district shall conduct an annual count of the number of private school special education students, residing in the school district boundaries, who are unilaterally enrolled by their parents in a private school even though the district has offered an appropriate special education program. The district Special Services Department shall have timely and meaningful consultation with appropriate representatives of private school students and available parents of private school students to decide what services will be provided and who will receive them. The purpose of the child count is to determine the proportionate amount that the district must spend on providing special education and related services, including transportation, to private school elementary and secondary students in the next fiscal year.

The district is required to spend a proportionate amount of federal special education Part B and Section 619 funds to provide special education and related services to private school students. In order to determine which students will receive services, what services will be provided, how and where the services will be provided, and how services provided will be evaluated, the district shall consult with appropriate representatives of private school students. The district shall make the final decision with respect to services to be provided to eligible private school students. The Special Services Department will notify each approved private school or preschool operating in the district seeking recommendations of persons to serve as representatives of special education private school students in consultations with the district. An initial meeting will be called by the district to establish a work plan and schedule with the private school student representatives to discuss how to identify students, which students will receive services, what services will be provided, how and where services will be provided, and how services will be evaluated. Executive Director of Special Services is responsible for private school involvement and service plan development.

A private school student has no individual entitlement to any service or amount of service s/he would have received if enrolled in the district. However, for each private school student receiving special education or related services, the district shall initiate and conduct meetings to develop, review and revise a services plan describing the specific special education and related services that the district will provide. The services plan must (1) meet the requirements of the Washington Administrative Code with respect to the services to be provided, and (2) be developed, reviewed, implemented and revised annually. The district shall make every effort to include a representative from the private school at each meeting. If the private school representative is not able to attend, the district shall use other methods, including individual or conference telephone calls, to assure the representative's participation.

Private school students may receive a different amount of services than special education students in public schools. However, the services provided to special education private school students will be provided by personnel meeting the same standards as personnel providing the services in the district.

Services to private school students are provided at a public school site designated by the district. Services to students in private schools including sectarian private schools may be provided on-site at times. District personnel may be made available to private schools only to the extent necessary to provide the services required, if those services are not normally provided by the private school. Services shall not include payment of private school teachers' or other employees' salaries, except for services performed outside regular private school hours and under public supervision and control.

Equipment and/or supplies may be placed on private school premises for the period of time necessary for the services plan program, but the district shall retain and exercise title and administrative control of said equipment/supplies. The district shall keep records and make an accounting assuring that said equipment/supplies is/are used solely for the services plan program. Said equipment/supplies shall be removed if necessary to avoid its/their use for other purposes or if no longer needed for the services plan program. No district funds shall be used for repairs, minor remodeling or construction of private school facilities.

Procedural Safeguards

Consent

The district will obtain informed, written parental consent before:

- A. Conducting an initial evaluation;
- B. Providing initial special education and related services to a special education student; and
- C. Conducting a reevaluation, if the reevaluation includes administration of additional assessments.

Parental consent is not required to review existing data as part of an evaluation or reevaluation, or to administer a test or other evaluation that is administered to all students unless consent is required of all students' parents. Informed consent means that the parent or adult student:

- A. Has been fully informed of all information that is relevant to the activity for which the district is asking consent, and that the information is provided in his or her native language or other mode of communication;
- B. Understands and agrees in writing to the activity for which consent is sought and the consent describes the activity and lists any records which will be released and to whom; and
- C. Understands that the granting of consent is voluntary and may be revoked at any time. If consent is revoked, the revocation does not negate an action that has occurred after the consent was given and before the consent was revoked.

The district may not use a parent's refusal to consent to one service or activity to deny the parent or child any other service, benefit or activity of the district.

If the district is unable to obtain a parent's consent, the district will ask the parent to agree to mediation. If that is unsuccessful, the district will request a due process hearing asking the administrative law judge to override the parent's refusal. The district may not request a due process hearing to override a parent's refusal to consent to initiate special education services. The district may not use mediation or due process to override a parent's refusal to consent to an evaluation or reevaluation if the student is home schooled or in a private school.

Revocation of Consent

If a parent revokes consent after the district has provided special education and related services, the district will not amend the student's education records to remove any references to the student's receipt of special education and related services.

Upon receipt of the parent's written notice of revocation, the district:

- A. Will provide prior written notice before ceasing services;**
- B. Stop providing all special education and related services after the effective date contained in the district's prior written notice;**
- C. Will not use mediation or the due process procedure to obtain agreement**

Discontinuation of special education and related services in response to the parent's written revocation will not be in violation of FAPE and eliminates the district's requirement to convene an IEP meeting or develop an IEP.

Notice of Procedural Safeguards

The school district shall provide a copy of procedural safeguards to the parents of eligible special education students and students referred for special education, and adult students:

- A. Upon initial referral for evaluation;
- B. Upon each notification of an IEP meeting; or initialed documentation of previous receipt.
- C. Upon reevaluation of the student;
- D. Upon receipt of request for due process; and
- E. Upon a change of placement for disciplinary action.

The procedural safeguard notice used by the district includes a full explanation of all the procedural safeguards relating to: independent educational evaluation, prior written notice, parental consent, access to educational records, opportunity to present complaints, procedures for students who are subject to placement in an interim alternative educational setting, requirements for unilateral placement by parents of children in private schools at public expense, state complaint procedures, the child's placement during pendency of due process proceedings, including requirements for disclosure of evidence, mediation, due process hearings, civil actions and attorney's fees. Copies of the district's special education procedural safeguards are available at each school and/or special services administration.

Prior Written Notice

The district will provide prior written notice to the parent or adult student whenever the district proposes or refuses to change the identification, evaluation, educational placement or provision of a free appropriate public education to the student.

The prior written notice will include:

- A. A statement that the parents of a special education student have procedural safeguard protections and if a copy of the procedural safeguards do not accompany the notice, a statement that describes how a copy of the statement of procedural safeguards may be obtained;

- B. A description of the action proposed or refused by the district;
- C. An explanation of why the district proposes or refuses to take the action and a description of other options that the district considered and the reasons why the options were rejected;
- D. A description of any other factors which are relevant to the district's proposal or refusal;
- E. A description of each evaluation procedure, test, record, or report the district used as a basis for the proposal or refusal;
- F. A description of any evaluation procedures the district proposes to conduct and sources for parents to contact to obtain assistance in understanding the procedural safeguards provision of this chapter.

Prior written notice and the notice of procedural safeguards must be provided in the native language of the parent or other mode of communication used by the parent unless it is clearly not feasible to do so. If the native language or other mode of communication of the parent is not a written language, the district will take steps to ensure that the notice is translated orally or by other means to the parent. This may involve:

- A. Arranging for an interpreter if English is not the native language of the parent or if the parent has a hearing impairment; or
- B. Providing notice orally if the written language is not a native language.

The district will document in writing the attempts to explain this information so that the parent understands the content of the notice. The Evaluation Group Case Manager is responsible for sending the prior written notice after evaluation and eligibility decisions are made. The IEP Team Case Manager is responsible for the prior written notice after the IEP Team and placement decisions are made.

Transfer of Educational Rights to an Adult Student

When a special education student reaches the age of 18, all educational rights under Part B of the IDEA, previously exercised by the parent, transfer to the student, unless the student is determined incapacitated as in a guardianship proceeding or the district has appointed an educational representative for the student. When the student turns 18, the district will send any required notices to both the parent and the adult student.

At the IEP meeting occurring one year before the student turns 18, the district will inform the parents and the student that educational rights will transfer to the student, and the district will inform the student about those educational rights. This information will be documented on the IEP.

The district will also notify the student and the parent, of the transfer of rights when the student turns 18.

Appointment of an Educational Representative

The district may determine that a student over the age of eighteen and not legally incapacitated is unable to provide informed consent or to make educational decisions and appoint an educational representative. This determination will only be made if two separate professionals state that they conducted an examination and interviewed the student, and conclude the student is incapable of providing informed consent. The district will inform the student of the decision and appoint either, the spouse, the student's parents, another adult or a surrogate educational representative to represent the student. The appointment of the educational representative will continue for one year.

The student or other adult may challenge the certification at any time. If a challenge occurs, the district will not rely on the educational representative, until the representative is recertified.

Confidentiality and Records Management

The Special Services Department is responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of personally identifiable information pertaining to special education and all other students at the central office Special Services Department. The Principal in each building is responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of personally identifiable information pertaining to special education students in each school building. The Special Services Department will maintain, for public inspection, a current list of the names and positions of district employees who have access to personally identifiable information of special education students. The district will provide parent and adult students, upon request, a list of the types and locations of educational records collected, maintained, or used by the district.

The district will provide instruction annually to employees collecting or using personally identifiable information on the procedures to protect the confidentiality of personally identifiable information. The training will address the protections outlined in WAC 392-172A, state law, and federal regulations implementing the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, FERPA, (34 CFR Part 99).

Upon request, the parent(s) of a special education student or adult student will be afforded an opportunity to inspect, review and challenge all educational records which shall include, but not be limited to, the identification, evaluation, delivery of educational services, and provision of free, appropriate public education (FAPE) to the student.

The district shall comply with the request promptly and before any meeting regarding an individualized education program or hearing relating to the identification, evaluation, educational placement of the student or provision of FAPE to the student, including disciplinary proceedings. In any case, the district shall respond no more than 45 calendar days after the date the district received the request.

If an educational record includes information on more than one student, the parents (and/or adult student) may only inspect and review information relating to their child. School personnel receiving requests for educational records will immediately forward the request to the Special Services Records Department.

If parents believe that information in an education record is inaccurate or misleading, or violates the privacy or rights of the student, they may challenge any information. Policy and Procedure 3231, Student Records, describes the process and timelines for challenges to and hearings regarding student records.

The district follows the guidelines for records retention outlined in the Secretary of State's, General Records Retention Schedule and Records Management Manual. The district shall inform parents or adult students when personally identifiable information collected, maintained, or used is no longer needed to provide educational services to the student. The information shall be destroyed at the request of the parent(s) or adult student, or will be provided to the parent or adult student upon their request. However, a permanent record of the student's name, address, and phone number, his or her grades, attendance, record, classes attended, grade level completed and year completed will be maintained without time limitation.

Records management is also governed by Policy and Procedure 4040, Public Access to District Records.

Surrogate Parents

A surrogate parent is a person appointed by the school district to act on behalf of a student to help ensure the rights of the student to a Free and Appropriate Public Education when a parent cannot be identified, the whereabouts of the parent are unknown or the student is a ward of the state and does not have a foster parent..

The special services department is responsible for determining the need for appointment of a surrogate parent.

Natural or adoptive parents, foster parents, persons acting in the place of a parent such as stepparents or relatives, and persons with legal custody or guardianship are considered parents. Students who are homeless and not living with a parent may need a surrogate parent.

When a child is in foster care, the district must determine, when a parent can be identified or the whereabouts of the parent are known, whether or not the parent still has rights to make educational decisions on behalf of their child.

The following is guidance for the district to follow to assist in determining the status of the parent's rights to make educational decisions:

In cases where the student is out of the home for care, the district must determine the legal custodial status of the child.

- A. Parents who have voluntarily placed their child in foster care still retain legal custody of the child and retain the right to make educational decisions. The student is not a ward of the state.
- B. Parents whose children are placed in group care, pending a determination of "dependency" still retain rights to make educational decisions unless otherwise ordered by the court.
- C. When a disposition order and order of dependency is issued, the state becomes the legal as well as physical custodian of the child. Parents may no longer have the right to make educational decisions during this stage of dependency.
- D. Parents whose parental rights are terminated no longer have the right to make educational decisions on behalf their child.

When a student is placed in foster care, the foster parent may act as parent. When a student is placed in group care the district will work with the parents, case-worker(s), foster parents, and others who have knowledge of the student's legal status in order to determine the need for appointment of a surrogate. When a child's relative is the foster parent, and the parent does not have the right to make educational decisions, the district may consider that person acting in place of the parent and does not need to appoint a surrogate.

When selecting a surrogate parent the district will select a person willing to participate in making decisions regarding the student's educational program, including participation in the identification, evaluation, placement of, and provisions of FAPE to the student.

If a student is referred for special education or a special education student transfers into the district who may require a surrogate parent the district special services office will be notified of the potential need. The special services office will then select a trained individual who can adequately represent the student to ensure that all student rights are observed.

The person selected as a surrogate:

- 1. Must have no interest that conflicts with the interests of the student he or she represents;
- 2. Must have knowledge and skills that assure adequate representation of the student; and
- 3. May not be an employee of a school district and/or other public agency which is involved in the education or care of the student. Public agencies include OSPI, DSHS in addition to district employees and group care providers.

The district will at a minimum, review with the surrogate parent procedural safeguards, parent involvement in the special education process, parent education publications, and special education regulations. The district will also cooperate with other districts, the ESD or OSPI in training surrogate parents and in establishing a list of persons willing and able to serve as surrogate parents.

Mediation

The purpose of mediation is to offer both the parent and the school district an alternative to a formal due process hearing. Mediation is voluntary and requires the consent and agreement of both parties. Mediation cannot be used to deny or delay access by a parent to a due process hearing. Mediation is used to resolve disagreements concerning the identification, evaluation and delivery of educational services or provision of a FAPE to a special education student. Mediation may be terminated by either party at any time during the process.

The primary participants are the parent(s), school district representative(s), and mediator. The process is voluntary, confidential, and informal. It is a collaborative process, conducted in a nonadversarial manner. Mediation services will be provided by the office of superintendent of public instruction (OSPI) at no cost to either party.

A request for mediation services from the school district will be made in writing to OSPI's contracted agent by the district's Executive Director of Special Services. If a parent requests mediation, notify the Executive Director, of Special Services and the Executive Director will respond to the parent and file appropriate requests with OSPI's contracted agent. Staff members are reminded that discussions that occur during the mediation process shall be confidential.

Due Process Hearing

Parents will be informed of the need to notify the school district of requests for due process hearings and informed that the request for hearing should include: 1) the name of the student 2) address of the residence of the student 3) the name of the school the student is attending 4) a description of the nature of the problem, including facts relating to the problem and 5) a proposed resolution of the problem to the extent known based on the information available to the parent. The district will inform parents that failure to provide the notice will hamper the district's availability to assist the student and could ultimately result in a reduction of attorney fees.

Parent requests for hearing should immediately be forwarded to the Executive Director of Special Services. If the parent has not filed the request for hearing with OSPI legal services, the district will forward the parent request to OSPI Legal Services. A copy of the Procedural Safeguards is provided to the parent. The district may not delay or deny a parent's due process hearing request. When a parent files a due process hearing, the student remains in the placement he or she was in at the time of the request for hearing unless the parents and district agree to a different placement. See the discipline section below for placements when a disciplinary action is challenged.

When parents file a request for a due process hearing, the Executive Director of Special Services will immediately schedule a resolution meeting. The meeting must occur within 15 days after a parent request for hearing or seven (7) days if the hearing request involves an expedited hearing regarding discipline. The Executive Director of Special Services will determine the appropriate district staff that will attend the resolution meeting. The district will ensure that one of the district representatives attending the resolution meeting has authority to bind the district in any resolution agreement. The district will not bring district counsel to a resolution meeting unless the parent is bringing an attorney to the meeting.

Any resolution agreement reached will be documented in writing and is binding on the parties. The document will inform the parent of their right to void the agreement within three business days of signing the agreement.

Discipline

Students eligible for special education may be disciplined consistent with disciplinary rules that apply to all students. The district shall determine on a case by case basis, when and what discipline measures are appropriate. Special education students must not be improperly excluded from school for disciplinary reasons that are related to their disability or related to the district's failure to implement a student's IEP. The district shall take steps to ensure that each employee, contractor and other agent of the

district responsible for education or care of a special education student is knowledgeable of special education disciplinary procedures.

Removal Up to Ten Days

Authorized school personnel may order the removal of a special education student from his/her current placement for no more than ten consecutive school days or ten cumulative school days. The district need not provide services to a special education student removed from his/her current for ten school days or less in any school year, if services are not provided to a student without disabilities.

Removal for More than Ten Days

Once a student has been removed from placement for a total of ten school days in the same school year, the district must, during subsequent days of removal, provide appropriate services to the extent necessary to enable the student to participate in the general curriculum, although in another setting, and to progress toward meeting the goals set out in the student’s IEP. The IEP Case Manager in consultation with the School Psychologist and one or more of the student’s teachers, shall make the determination of such necessary service.

If the IEP team members described in the manifestation determination section determine that the behavior is not a manifestation of the student’s disability and the removal is a change of placement, the district may apply the same disciplinary measures that apply to students without disabilities. However, the student must continue to receive services to the extent necessary to enable the student to participate in the general curriculum, although in another setting, and to progress toward meeting the goals set out in the student’s IEP. The relevant IEP team members shall determine appropriate services.

Change in Placement

A change of placement occurs when a special education student is:

- Removed from his/her current placement for more than ten consecutive days in a school year; or
- Subjected to a series of removals in a school year and which constitute a pattern of removal because: 1) the series of removals total more than ten school days in a year; 2) the student behavior is substantially similar to the student’s behavior in previous incidents that resulted in the series of removals; and 3) because of factors such as the length of each removal, the total amount of time a student is removed, and the proximity of the removals to one another.

Whether a pattern of removal constitutes a change in placement is determined on a case by case basis by the IEP team and is subject to review through due process and judicial proceedings.

Procedure of Disciplinary Removals that May Exceed Ten Days

Day 1: On the same day as the decision to suspend, the Building Administrator notifies the School Psychologist who prepares the special education prior written notice. The Principal gives the prior written notice to the parent with a copy of the Notice of Procedural Safeguards. The Principal also notifies the IEP Case Manager.

Within 10 School Days of Disciplinary Action: The IEP Case Manager, School Psychologist and Principal convene an IEP meeting to determine:

- An Alternative Education Setting (AES) for up to 45 days (as there can be no cessation of special education services);
- Conduct a Functional Behavior Assessment, or review and modify existing behavior intervention plan; and
- Conduct a manifestation determination.

Manifestation Determination

Within ten school days after the date on which the decision to change the placement is made, the district shall conduct a “manifestation determination” of the relationship between the student’s disability and the behavior subject to the disciplinary action.

The review of the relationship between a student's disability and the behavior subject to the disciplinary action shall be done in a meeting by the parent and relevant members of the IEP team who are selected by the parent and the district. The IEP Case Manager or School Psychologist is responsible for contacting the parent in order to determine relevant IEP team members and providing notice of the meeting.

The team shall review all relevant information in the student's file, including the IEP, teacher observations and information provided by the parent to determine:

- If the conduct 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 district's failure to implement the student's IEP.

If the team determines that the behavior resulted from any of the above, the behavior must be considered a manifestation of the student's disability and the contemplated disciplinary action shall not proceed.

If the team determines, specifically, that the conduct was the direct result of the district's failure to implement the IEP, the district must take immediate action to remedy the deficiencies.

If the team determines that the conduct was a manifestation of the student's disability, the team must:

- 1) Conduct a functional behavioral assessment (unless already completed) and implement a behavioral intervention plan; or
- 2) Review the existing behavioral intervention plan and modify it to address the behavior; and
- 3) Return the child to the placement removed from unless the parents and district agree a change is necessary as part of the behavioral intervention plan, or unless the infraction involves drugs, weapons or bodily harm.

Special Circumstances

School personnel may order a change in placement to an appropriate interim alternative educational setting for the same amount of time that a student without disabilities would be subject to discipline, but for not more than 45 school days, if a special education student:

- Possesses a "dangerous weapon", or carries such a weapon to school or a school function; or
- Knowingly possesses or uses "illegal drugs", while at school or a school function; or
- Sells or solicits the sale of a "controlled substance", while at school or a school function.
- Inflicts serious bodily injury upon another person while at school or a school function. Serious bodily injury means 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.

Any interim alternative educational setting in which the student is placed is determined by the student's IEP team and will:

- Be selected so as to enable the student to participate in the general curriculum although in another setting and to progress toward meeting the goals set out in the student's IEP; and include services and modifications designed to address the behavior, to prevent the behavior from recurring.

The district may ask an administrative law judge or seek injunctive relief through a court having jurisdiction of the parties, to order a change in placement to an appropriate interim alternative educational setting, for not more than 45 calendar days, or seek injunctive relief through a court having jurisdiction of the parties, when:

- The district can demonstrate beyond a preponderance of evidence that maintaining said student's current placement is substantially likely to result in injury to the student or others;
- The district has made reasonable efforts to minimize the risk of harm in the current placement, including the use of supplementary aids and services; and
- The proposed interim alternative educational setting has been proposed by school personnel in consultation with the student's special education teacher and meets the requirements of the Washington Administrative Code.

Basis of Knowledge

A student who has not been determined eligible for special education services may assert the protection if the district had knowledge that the student was eligible for special education before the behavior that precipitated disciplinary action occurred.

The district is deemed to have knowledge if:

- The parent expressed concern in writing (or orally, if the parent does not know how to write or has a disability that prevents a written statement) to district supervisory or administrative personnel or a teacher that the student is in need of special education and related services;
- The parent requested that the student be evaluated for special education services; or
- The teacher or other school personnel has expressed specific concern about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the student to the Executive Director of Special Services or to other Administrative staff.

If instituting disciplinary action that would exceed ten days, and the Principal believes that one or more of these events applies to the student, the Principal will consult with Special Education administration to determine the appropriate disciplinary procedures.

The district is not deemed to have knowledge if, as a result of receiving the information described above, the district either:

- Conducted a special education evaluation of the student and determined that the student was not eligible for services; or
- The parent of the student has not allowed an evaluation of the child or has refused services.

If the district is not deemed to have knowledge that a student is a special education student, the student may be subjected to the same disciplinary measures as measures applied to students without disabilities who engage in comparable behaviors. The district shall conduct an evaluation, which is requested during the time period such a student is subjected to disciplinary measures, in an expedited manner. Until the evaluation is completed, such a student shall remain in the educational placement determined by the district, which can include suspension or expulsion without educational services.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the district may report a crime committed by a special education student to appropriate authorities. In the event of such a report, the district shall ensure that copies of the student's special education and disciplinary records are transmitted for consideration by the appropriate authorities to whom the crime is reported; to the extent transmission of the reports is permitted by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

Staff Qualifications

All employees of the district funded in whole or part with state or federal excess special education funds will meet the standards established by the state board of education and defined in WAC 392-172A-02090 and -202.

All employees will hold such credentials, certificates or permits as are now or hereafter required by the state board of education for the particular position of employment and shall meet any standards established by the district.

All special education teachers providing, designing, supervising, evaluating or monitoring the provision of special education shall possess "substantial professional training." This shall be shown by the issuance of an appropriate special education endorsement on an individual teaching certificate issued by the superintendent of public instruction.

In the event a special education teacher does not have a certificate endorsed in special education, a district may apply for a pre-endorsement waiver through the special education section of the OSPI.

If the district must temporarily assign a classroom teacher without a special education endorsement to a special education position, the district Executive Director of Personnel will document in writing that:

- A. The district is unable to recruit a teacher with the proper endorsement who was qualified for the position; and/or
- B. The need for a teacher with such an endorsement could not have been reasonably anticipated and the recruitment of such a classroom teacher at the time of assignment was not reasonably practical; and/or
- C. The reassignment of another teacher within the district would be unreasonably disruptive to the current assignments of other classroom teachers or would have an adverse effect on the educational program of the students assigned to the other teacher.

If one or more of these criteria can be documented, the district determines that a teacher has the competencies to be an effective special education teacher, and the teacher has completed six semester hours or nine quarter hours of course work which are applicable to the special education endorsement, the district can assign the teacher to special education in compliance with the process for making out of endorsement assignments and reporting them to the state.

Classified staff will present evidence of skills and knowledge necessary to meet the needs of students with disabilities. The district will provide training to classified staff to meet the state recommended core competencies.

Personnel Development

In order to provide a staff development program to improve the quality of instructional programs, the following procedures will be employed:

- A. Training will be provided annually to all personnel who may be providing aversive interventions under a student's IEP.
- B. In-service training schedules will be developed based on needs identified and
- C. Training activities will be conducted for regular general and special education staff, and staff of other agencies and organizations and private school staff providing services for special education student.
- D. Training for classified staff, as needed, in the state recommended core competencies will be dispatched through direct training by certificated staff.

Public Participation

The district will:

- A. Invite parents, families, and other interested parties may be invited to participate in planning through the district's special education advisory group, school PTSA councils, or other meetings at the school or district level.
- B. Teachers and other interested parties may be invited to participate in planning at least annually through special education department meetings.
- C. Strategies for providing opportunities for participation in planning may include the use of surveys, questionnaires or other civic meetings.
- D. Make information available to families through the district web site and newsletters.