

Section 504

Preparing for the Team Meeting

Section 504 meetings should be scheduled on an annual basis to review the progress and success of any accommodations that have been provided for students who have been identified as having a disability which “substantially limits” a student ability to demonstrate academic progress and success in regular education.

A full review and evaluation of services and qualifications should be conducted every three years.

Schools need to determine who should serve on the 504 Team. Some suggestions are:

School Nurse	Guidance Counselor
Teachers (current/past)	District 504 Coordinator
Principal/Superintendent	Parent

Documentation should be present for evaluation, review and determination:

- Academic performance records
- Testing performance records
- Accommodations and results provided in the past
- Documentation of problems and previous remedies
- Current information and recommendations from informed professionals

The team will evaluate the extent to which accommodations were required and if the student continues to qualify for Section 504.

Important things to remember:

Determination of Section 504 eligibility is a team decision.

If the team determines eligibility, the team develops a plan based on the needs of the student to ensure they make available every opportunity to participate in a Free Appropriate Public Education as well as every opportunity to participate in activities made available to other students.

A physician’s diagnosis does not automatically result in eligibility for Section 504.

Qualification for Section 504 is not a “permanent” designation of eligibility.

Upon review, eligibility must be determined by a team to have found that a student has a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits a major life activity and is in need of educational related accommodations.

Review of Current Plan

A significant change in a student's placement or a student transferring from another district or state will require a review of the current Section 504 Plan to evaluate whether the current plan is/will continue to meet the needs of the student. This may result in the development of a new Section 504 plan based on a complete evaluation of data from a variety of sources in the student file.

Guiding Questions:

Was student successful on plan?

Were there accommodations that were not needed for the student to be successful?

Did these meet the student's disability or individual needs?

Were there any identified needs not addressed in the 504 plan that need to be considered?

Is there currently evidence of a disability, which meets the definition of Section 504?

Is the impairment mild or severe?

Does the impairment result in failure or the student not achieving near expected levels?

Does the impairment impact on a major life activity? If so, how?

Has there been or is there a need for an evaluation under IDEA or any other assessment?

What are the techniques the student uses to minimize the effect of the disability?

Does the student receive services outside the school?

Does the school in any way prevent the student from accessing a public education or from making meaningful progress in their education?

Is the level of intervention/accommodation reasonable?

Does the student have the same services as provided to nondisabled peers? Do they have meaningful access to educational programs and extracurricular activities?

Check:

Did we draw upon information from a variety of sources?

Identify what articles of data were reviewed:

Did we establish procedures to ensure that information obtained from all such sources is documented and carefully considered?

Did we ensure that decisions about the child are made by a group of persons, including persons knowledgeable about the child, the evaluation data, and the placement options?