



The 504 Bulletin

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Special Education Department

MANDATORY TRAINING IN FEBRUARY

Mandatory training for all building-level Section 504 coordinators will be held the week of February 22-25, 2011. All coordinators should sign up for one of the eight 2-hour training sessions on MLP, not later than February 11, 2011. The training will be held in the Special Education Computer Lab, second floor of the Education Services building according to the following schedule:



Tuesday 2/22/2011	9:00-11:00 am or 1:00-3:00pm
Wednesday 2/23/2011	9:00-11:00 am or 1:00-3:00pm
Thursday 2/24/2011	9:00-11:00 am or 1:00-3:00pm
Friday 2/25/2011	9:00-11:00 am or 1:00-3:00pm

If you have a laptop computer you should bring it to the training. If you work with a desktop computer, computers will be available for your use in the lab.

The training will focus on the electronic program used to submit 504 plans, the 504 program in Zangle, and program requirements.

If you have any questions regarding this training please contact Nancy Bertino @ X4272.

As space allows, additional staff may attend the training as well. Please contact Nancy Bertino at 742-4272 to recommend additional staff attend.



§504 Questions and Answers

1. When is it okay to include related services in a Section 504 plan?
2. Can an individual health plan serve as an accommodation on a 504 plan?
3. Can a 504 team provide accommodations via a 504 plan to an eligible student who is doing well because of his use of mitigating measures?

ELECTRONIC FORMAT

Please utilize the electronic forms, available on District Connection, to submit the 504 plans for your students. The electronic forms have been available since the beginning of the 2008-09 school year and the majority of plans have been submitted to this office electronically since that time. Beginning this year, 504 plans not submitted electronically and completed according to guidelines, will be returned to you for correction or completion and the information (thus accommodations) will not be entered into the system for that student. This may result in the student not receiving appropriate accommodations, particularly during standardized testing. Be sure to take the time to do it right the first time and everyone will benefit!

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SECTION 504 PROGRAM INFORMATION

Just who are the students being served by the 504 program? What are their disabilities? What accommodations are they provided?

As of the end of the first semester, December 17, 2010, the ASD Section 504 program had 372 students covered by a 504 plan. The numbers by grade level and ethnicity are:

Grade	# of students
1	6
2	5
3	8
4	21
5	21
6	40
7	39
8	37
9	28
10	54
11	64
12	49

Ethnicity	# of students
White	234
Multi Ethnic	39
Native Alaskan or American Indian	31
Hispanic	28
Black	24
Asian	11
Pacific Islander	5

Nationwide, the average percentage of students enrolled in Section 504 in comparable-sized districts is 1.3%. While 504 enrollment at individual schools will vary for a variety of reasons, a brief extrapolation of the above numbers to your individual school population would show that a significant number of your students could/should be enrolled in the Section 504 program.

It is important to remember that Section 504 does not require the level of analysis that special education does. Nor does it require a medical or mental health diagnosis. What it does require is a thorough analysis by a knowledgeable team of individuals of an individual student’s potential disability and specific needs for accommodations. When there is doubt, it is often in the student’s interest to err on the part of eligibility. Adjustments to a plan can be made at any time there is a need to do so.

One of the situations that should cause a 504 review is decertification from special education. While not every student being removed from special education will be in need of a 504 plan, the decertification should at least provoke a review of the potential need for continued supports.

The most common disabilities identified within the ASD include:

- ⊙ Attention Deficit Disorder or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADD or ADHD)
- ⊙ Learning Disabilities
- ⊙ Physical Impairments
- ⊙ Mental Health Impairments

The most common accommodations provided within the ASD include:

- ⊙ Additional Time on assignments
- ⊙ “Hot Passes”
- ⊙ Preferential Seating
- ⊙ Quiet Areas for Classroom Assignments
- ⊙ Quiet Areas for Classroom Testing

DISABILITY INFORMATION

Remember that a disability determination does not have to be supported by a medical diagnosis. A 504 team must conduct a thorough analysis of the student, their disability and the substantial limitations caused by the suspected disability in order to make a determination of eligibility and need. This can be accomplished by reviewing available material, perhaps including a medical diagnosis of a disability, academic records, parent reports, teacher reports, counselor reports, attendance, etc. This must occur prior to the development of accommodations for the student. Once the determination has been made, the development of appropriate accommodations and their implementation should include the linkage from the substantial limitation(s) to the accommodation(s). Do not randomly assign accommodations; they must always be in direct relation to the student's needs.



§504 Questions and Answers

1. Section 504 regulations at 34 CFR 104.33(b)(1) require related aids and services when necessary to provide FAPE. OCR has defined related services as developmental, corrective, and other supportive services, including psychological, counseling, and medical diagnostic services and transportation. Such services should be necessary to accommodate the major life activity that is substantially limited by a qualifying impairment. The nature and amount of related services required shall be determined by the 504 team.
2. An IHP may satisfy 504's requirements if it is designed to meet the individual needs of nondisabled peers and if it was developed in accordance with procedures that satisfy the requirements of 34 CFR 104.34, 104.35, and 104.36.
3. While the ADAAA prohibits the consideration of mitigating measures in determining eligibility, there is no prohibition on the use of mitigating measures when determining the need for accommodations. Remember: If there is no substantial impairment of a major life activity, then there is no need for accommodations.

Who? What? Where? When? How?

Perhaps you've been a 504 coordinator for a while and thought you had a handle on the process. Or, you have been asked by your Principal to assume the duties of the Section 504 Coordinator at your school. Of course your reply was, "no problem, be glad to do it!" Either way, how hard can it be to figure out? However, it quickly becomes apparent that the 504 program is not special education, and is not as straightforward as it appears. Panic sets in.

Not to worry. There are numerous resources throughout the ASD to assist you in the performance of your 504 duties. Most likely, you will have another person in your own building who has served as a 504 Coordinator or a staff member who has participated in the development of a 504 plan previously. Ask your Principal who might be able to help out. Perhaps you know someone outside your building who has had experience. A list of building-level Section 504 Coordinators is available online at <http://www.asdk12.org/depts/sped/504/contact.asp>.

Additionally, there are ongoing training sessions available through the Office of Special Education and one can be arranged for your staff upon request. There is a 504 tutorial on the ASD Tube, and a book chock full of information about 504 is available in all ASD schools.

You also have the availability of Section 504 staff at the Education Services Center. The phone number for Section 504 is 742-4272. Don't hesitate to call for assistance at any time.