

**PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES UNDER THE IDEA
AND NEW YORK'S EDUCATION LAW ARTICLE 89**

The Board of Education shall make available a free appropriate public education to all students with disabilities who reside within its district and are eligible for special education and related services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and Article 89 of New York's Education Law, and their implementing regulations. Special education and related services will be provided to resident eligible students with disabilities in conformity with their individualized education program (IEP) and in the least restrictive environment appropriate to meet their individual educational needs. Special education services or programs will be designed to enable a student with disabilities to be involved in and progress in the general education curriculum, to the extent appropriate to his/her abilities.

To the maximum extent appropriate to their individual needs, eligible students with disabilities residing within the district and attending the district's public schools will be entitled to participate in school district academic, cocurricular and extracurricular activities available to all other students enrolled in the district's public schools. Such cocurricular and extracurricular activities may include athletics, transportation, recreational activities, school-sponsored special interest groups or clubs, and referrals to agencies that provide assistance to individuals with disabilities and the employment of students (including both employment by the school district and assistance in making outside employment available).

In providing a free appropriate public education to students with disabilities eligible under the IDEA and Article 89, the Board will afford the students and their parents the procedural safeguard rights they are entitled to under applicable law and regulations. The Board also will provide them with notice of such rights as required by law and regulation, using the form prescribed by the commissioner of education.

For purposes of this policy and others related to the provision of services to eligible students with disabilities, and consistent with applicable law and regulation, the word parent means a birth or adoptive parent, a legally appointed guardian generally authorized to act as the child's parent or authorized to make educational decisions for the child; a person in parental relationship to the child as defined in section 3212 of the Education Law; an individual designated as a person in parental relation pursuant to title 15-A of the General Obligations Law, including an individual so designated who is acting in the place of a birth or adoptive parent (including a grandparent, stepparent, or other relative with whom the child resides; or a surrogate parent who has been appointed in accordance with Commissioner's regulations.

Eligible students with disabilities will be entitled to special education and related services until the end of the school year in which they turn 21 or until they receive a local high school or Regents diploma.

Students with disabilities may not be required to take medication as a condition for receiving a free appropriate public education.

To ensure the provision of a free appropriate public education to all eligible students with disabilities:

1. School district staff will take steps to locate, identify, evaluate and maintain information about all children with disabilities within the district, including homeless children and children who are wards of the state, who are in need of special education.
2. The district will establish a plan and practice for implementing school-wide approaches and interventions in order to remediate a student's performance prior to referral for special education services. The district will provide general education support services, instructional modifications, and/or alternative program options to address a student's performance before referring the student to the Committee on Special Education (CSE). The Instructional Support Team or Pupil Personnel Team will develop, implement and evaluate pre-referral intervention strategies (4321.2, School-wide Prereferral Approaches and Interventions).
3. School district staff will initiate a request for evaluation of a student who has not made adequate progress after an appropriate period of time when provided instruction under a response to intervention program. In making the request the staff person will describe in writing intervention services, programs and methodologies used to remediate the student's performance prior to referral. In addition, the extent of parental contact will be described as well.
4. The Board will appoint a Committee on Special Education (CSE), Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) and, as appropriate, CSE subcommittees, to assure the timely identification, evaluation and placement of eligible students with disabilities.
5. The Board will arrange for special education programs and services based upon the recommendation of the CSE, CSE subcommittee, or CPSE. Because the placement of students is often a lengthy process, the Board authorizes the Superintendent, or designee, to act as its agent in making necessary arrangements to implement the appropriate recommended program/services prior to Board review.

6. The Superintendent shall establish a plan for the recruitment, hiring and retention of staff appropriately and adequately prepared to meet the needs of students with disabilities including, but not limited to, highly qualified special education teachers.
7. The Superintendent shall establish a comprehensive professional development plan designed to ensure that personnel who work with students with disabilities possess the skills and knowledge required to meet the needs of students with disabilities.
8. The Superintendent will establish a process for ensuring that district staff understand the right of students with disabilities to access and participate in the same academic, cocurricular and extracurricular programs and activities as all other students enrolled in the district's public schools, to the maximum extent appropriate to their individual needs.

Locate and Identify Students with Disabilities

The district will conduct an annual census to locate and identify all students with disabilities who reside in the district, and establish a register of such students who are entitled to attend the public schools of the district during the next school year, including students with disabilities who are homeless or wards of the State. The census shall be conducted, and the registry maintained, in accordance with the requirements established in Commissioner's regulations.

The Superintendent will determine what other activities might be appropriate to help locate and identify students with disabilities. These may include, but are not limited to, the mailing of the district calendar to all district residents which includes information regarding the availability of special education programs and services and their right to access such services, and/or the publication of a similar notice in school newsletters and other publications.

(Refer to policy 4321.10, Programs and Services for Parentally-placed Nonpublic School Students with Disabilities under the IDEA and New York's Education Law Article 89, for more information regarding how to locate and identify nonpublic school students with disabilities).

Evaluation of Students with Disabilities

To initially determine a student's eligibility for a free appropriate public education under the IDEA and Article 89, the district will conduct a full evaluation of the student in accordance within legally prescribed time lines. As set forth in Commissioner's Regulations, the initial evaluation will include, at least, a physical examination, an individual psychological evaluation unless the school psychologist determines it unnecessary, a social history, an observation of the student in the student's learning environment to document the student's

academic performance and behavior in the areas of difficulty, and other appropriate assessments or evaluations (including a functional behavioral assessment for a student whose behavior impedes his or her learning or that of others) to ascertain the physical, mental, behavioral and emotional factors that contribute to the suspected disabilities.

Once a student has been determined eligible to receive a free appropriate public education, the district will reevaluate the student with a disability whenever the student's parent requests a reevaluation, and when the district determines the educational and related services needs (including improved academic achievement and functional performance) of the child warrant a reevaluation. However, a reevaluation must take place at least once every three years, unless the student's parent and the district agree it is unnecessary.

Parental Consent for Student Evaluations

Before conducting any type of evaluation, district staff will take steps to obtain written informed consent from a student's parent, as required by applicable law and regulations. They also will keep a detailed record of those attempts and their results, including phone calls and correspondence, visits to the parent's home and any responses received.

1. If a parent refuses to give consent for an initial evaluation, or fails to respond to such a request, the parent will be given an opportunity to attend an informal conference and ask questions about the proposed evaluation. Unless the referral for evaluation is withdrawn, if the parent continues to withhold consent, the Board may commence due process proceedings to conduct an initial evaluation without parental consent within the time lines established in Commissioner's Regulations.
2. If a parent fails to respond to a request for consent for reevaluation, district staff will proceed with the reevaluation without parental consent if it has engaged in documented reasonable efforts to obtain such consent and the parent has failed to respond.
3. If district staff is unable to obtain consent for the initial evaluation or reevaluation of a home schooled or a parentally-placed nonpublic school student, the Board will not commence due process proceedings to conduct the evaluation without parental consent, and will consider the student as not eligible for special education.

Conduct of Evaluations

In conducting evaluations of students with disabilities, the district will use a variety of assessment tools and strategies, including parent-provided information, to gather relevant functional, developmental, and academic information for determining a student's eligibility for special education and related services, and the content of the student's individualized education program or individualized education services program or services plan in the case of nonpublic school students with disabilities (including information related to enabling the student to be involved in and progress in the general education curriculum).

The district also will assess a student in all areas of suspected disability, and the assessment and other evaluation used will not be discriminatory on a racial or cultural basis. In addition, students will be assessed in the language and form most likely to yield accurate information on what the student actually knows and can do academically, developmentally, and functionally, unless it is not feasible to do so.

In the case of students suspected of having a specific learning disability, the district will follow the procedures established in commissioner's regulations.

The district will notify a student's parent of any determination that no additional data is needed and the reasons for such a determination. It will also inform the parent of his or her right to request an assessment, notwithstanding that determination.

Eligibility Determination

The CSE, CSE subcommittee, or CPSE will determine whether a student is eligible for special education and related services under the IDEA and Article 89, as well as the student's educational needs.

The CSE or CSE subcommittee may not determine that a student is eligible for special education and related services if the determining factor is lack of appropriate instruction in the essential components of reading, including phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, reading fluency (including oral reading skills), and reading comprehension strategies; or lack of appropriate instruction in math; or limited English proficiency.

Committee on Special Education/Committee on Preschool Special Education

The members of the CSE/CPSE and CSE subcommittees will include those individuals identified in applicable law and regulations, and their attendance

at CSE and CSE subcommittee meetings will be required except as otherwise provided in law and regulations.

The parent of a student with disabilities is one of the mandated CSE/CPSE and CSE subcommittee members and as such has a right to participate in CSE/CPSE and CSE subcommittee meetings concerning the identification, evaluation, and educational placement of, and the provision of a free appropriate public education to, their child. District staff will take steps to ensure the parent's participation, in accordance with the following:

1. CSE/CPSE and CSE subcommittee meetings will be scheduled at a time and place that is mutually agreeable to the parent and the district.
2. The parent will be given at least five days notice of the time and place of a CSE/CPSE or CSE subcommittee meeting, except as otherwise provided in law and regulation, along with notice of the purpose of the meeting, those who will attend (including name and title), and the parent's right to be accompanied to the meeting by person(s) the parent considers to have knowledge and special expertise about their child.
3. The parent and the district may agree to use alternative means of participation at CSE/CPSE meetings, such as videoconferences or telephone conference calls.
4. District staff will take any action necessary to ensure that the parent understands the proceedings at CSE/CPSE meetings, including arranging for an interpreter for parents who are deaf or parents whose native language is other than English.

The CSE/CPSE or CSE subcommittee may meet without a student's parent only if district staff has been unable to obtain either parent's participation, and has a record of its attempts to arrange a mutually agreed upon time and place. Similarly, the CSE or CSE subcommittee may make a decision without the involvement of the student's parent only if district staff has been unable to obtain parental participation, even through the use of alternative means of participation, and has a record of its attempts to ensure parental involvement.

Provision of Services:

The Board will arrange for appropriate special education and related services recommended by the CSE or CSE subcommittee within 60 school days of the district's receipt of parental consent to evaluate a student not previously identified as a student with a disability, or within 60 school days of referral for review of a student with a disability, except as otherwise provided in law and

regulations.

All staff responsible for the implementation of a student's individualized education program, or an individualized education services program or services plan in the case of parentally placed nonpublic school students with disabilities, will be provided information regarding those responsibilities (refer to policy 4321.5 for more information on this topic).

Parental Consent for the Provision of Services:

The Board acknowledges that parental consent for initial evaluation does not constitute consent for placement for the provision of special education and related services. Therefore, district staff will take steps to obtain written informed consent for the initial provision of special education and related services to an eligible student. The Board will be precluded by applicable law and regulations from commencing due process proceedings to override the parent's refusal to provide such consent or override the parent's failure to respond to such a request.

Transition Service and Diploma/Credential Options

In accordance with law and regulation, the Board will ensure the provision of transition services, which are a coordinated set of activities for students with disabilities that facilitates movement from school to post-school activities, which may include but are not limited to post-secondary education, vocational education, integrated employment, continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living or community participation. At age 15, or younger if appropriate, the student's IEP will include a statement of transition service needs and will include undertaking activities in the following areas:

- Instruction
- Related services
- Community experiences
- The development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives; and
- When appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and provision of a functional vocational evaluation.

In developing the plan for transition services, students and parents will be made aware of the range of diploma and credential options available and the requirements associated with each option.

Cross ref: 1900, Parental Involvement (Title I)
4000, Student Learning Objectives and District Instructional Goals
4773, Diploma and Credential Options for Students with Disabilities
5500, Student Records
6700, Purchasing
9700, Staff Development

Ref: The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), 20 USC §§1400 et seq.
34 CFR Part 300
Education Law Article 89, §§4401 *et seq.*
8 NYCRR Part 200

Adoption date: February 27, 2008
Amended date: February 15, 2012
Amended date:

DIPLOMA AND CREDENTIAL OPTIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The Board of Education is committed to supporting all students so they are college- and career-ready upon graduation. The Committee on Special Education (CSE), which includes parents/guardians, will work with students with disabilities to attain the appropriate diploma or credential based on their Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

Regents Diploma or Regents Diploma with Advanced Designation

Students with disabilities are encouraged to work toward the completion of requirements for a Regents diploma or Regents diploma with an advanced designation, as established by New York State and the Board.

Local Diploma

Students with disabilities may work toward completion of the requirements of a local diploma. The local diploma may be earned by meeting the standards set forth in state regulations.

Career Development and Occupational Studies Commencement Credential

Students with disabilities, who are not students with severe disabilities under Commissioner's Regulations, may be issued a New York State Career Development and Occupational Studies Commencement Credential (CDOS), pursuant to the requirements of those regulations. The student may pursue a CDOS either in addition to or instead of a high school diploma. The district shall ensure that such students have been provided with appropriate opportunities to earn a high school diploma.

Skills and Achievement Commencement Credential

A student who meets the state definition of a student with severe disabilities, who has taken the State assessment for students with severe disabilities, may be issued a skills and achievement commencement credential pursuant to the requirements of Commissioner's Regulations 8 NYCRR §100.6.

Continued Right To Educational Services

If a student receiving a Career Development and Occupational Studies Commencement Credential or a Skills and Achievement Commencement Credential is less than twenty-one years of age, the credential shall be accompanied by a written assurance of the student's continued right to attend public school until the end of the school year in which the student reaches the age of twenty-one or until the student has earned a high school diploma, whichever is earlier.

Cross-ref: 4321, Programs for Students with Disabilities
4770, Graduation Requirements

Ref: 8 NYCRR §§100.1; 100.5, 100.6, 100.9

Adoption date:

STAFF EVALUATION

The Board of Education believes that the regular, rigorous and meaningful evaluation of staff is necessary to improve the achievement of students and the efficiency of district operations. To this end, the Superintendent of Schools shall be responsible for ensuring that all district employees are evaluated annually and receive additional staff training, if necessary, to improve their skills.

Administrators

All administrators reporting directly to the Superintendent in the school district shall be evaluated annually by the Superintendent in accordance with any applicable collective bargaining agreement. Administrators not reporting to the Superintendent shall be evaluated annually by their respective supervisors.

Professional Employees

All professional employees (teachers, counselors, school psychologists and social workers) shall be evaluated annually in accordance with any applicable collective bargaining agreement and the district's Professional Performance Review Plan. The plan shall include criteria for evaluating teachers and other professional employees, assessment methods, plans to improve unsatisfactory teacher performance, and training for evaluators.

The Superintendent or his/her designee shall collaborate with teachers, pupil personnel professionals, administrators and parents in developing the plan. The Superintendent shall be responsible for selecting those individuals with whom he or she will collaborate in the development of the plan. The Superintendent or his/her designee shall meet with a group of such individuals at least once each year.

The Superintendent shall submit the district's Professional Performance Review Plan, if any changes are recommended, to the Board at its reorganizational meeting each July. At that meeting, the Board may request that the Superintendent reconsider or reexamine certain aspects of the plan, in which case, the Superintendent will resubmit the plan at the Board's first regular meeting in August.

The Board must approve the amended plan before it becomes effective. The approved plan for each school year will be available in the district offices by September 10 of each year.

Support Staff

Support staff (those staff not required to be evaluated under the Professional Performance Review Plan) shall be evaluated annually in accordance with any applicable collective bargaining agreement and this policy.

Reporting

The Superintendent will prepare an annual report for the Board that provides data on the evaluation ratings so that the Board can assess the effectiveness of the district's evaluation program. Data may include the number of employees evaluated, a summary of the final evaluation ratings, the rates of staff turnover and other relevant information. Personally identifiable data will not be released to the public.

Training

The Superintendent shall ensure that all staff that are required to evaluate other staff are provided sufficient training in assessment and evaluation.

Cross-ref: 9160, Personnel Records
9420.1, Building Principal and Classroom Teacher Evaluation
9700, Staff Development

Ref: Education Law §3012-c
8 NYCRR § 100.2(o)(2) (Professional Performance Review Plans)

Adoption date: February 27, 2008

BUILDING PRINCIPAL AND CLASSROOM TEACHER EVALUATION

In accordance with state law and regulation, it is the goal of the Board of Education to have a high quality evaluation program for staff including building principals and classroom teachers which results in an effective teacher in every classroom and an effective leader in every building in the district. In order to achieve that goal, the Superintendent of Schools shall be responsible for ensuring that building principals and classroom teachers are evaluated annually, in accordance with state law and regulation. Evaluations will be a significant factor in employment decisions, including, but not limited to, promotion, retention, tenure determination, termination and supplemental compensation.

Annual Professional Performance Review Plan

The district will submit the required annual professional performance review plan to the State Education Department in a timely manner, in conformance with state law, Regents Rules and Commissioner's Regulations. The Superintendent will provide periodic reports to the Board of Education on the progress of negotiations regarding the negotiable parts of the plan, salient information about the preparation of the plan, present the plan for Board approval and apprise the Board when the plan has been approved by the State.

The plan shall include a description of the required elements, including the following:

- (a) the process for transmitting accurate data to the State Education Department,
- (b) scoring methods that ensures the integrity of the testing process,
- (c) how quality rating categories/criteria will be used to differentiate professional development, compensation and promotion,
- (d) how timely and constructive feedback from evaluations will be provided,
- (e) plans to improve teacher performance for those rated ineffective, and
- (f) training for evaluators.

Once the district has received approval of the plan by the State Education Department, the plan will be posted on the district's website within 10 days, or by September 10th, whichever is later.

Classroom Teachers and Principals (covered by Education Law §3201-c)

Classroom teachers and building principals will receive a composite performance rating as part of the annual professional performance review, in

accordance with state law, by September 1st of the following school year. The composite performance rating will fall into one of four categories: highly effective, effective; developing and ineffective. This composite rating will be made up of multiple measures of effectiveness and will include student performance on state and local tests, in accordance with the terms of the annual professional performance review plan.

Teacher and Principal Improvement Plans

When a teacher or principal is rated as developing or ineffective as a result of the annual performance review, the Superintendent or his/her designee must formulate and commence an improvement plan (TIP/PIP). The improvement plan will be developed in accordance with negotiated agreements, but must be in place no later than 10 school days from the opening of classes in the school year following the school year for which the performance was rated. The Superintendent will prepare an annual summary report for the Board on the number of TIPs/PIPs issued and other relevant data to support assessment of the effectiveness of the district's approach to improvement plans. In the event that the assessment reveals that progress isn't being made, the administration will recommend changes to the approach.

Appeals

For classroom teachers and principals, an appeal of an evaluation may be commenced once the composite evaluation score has been received. The right to appeal and the process of the appeal is prescribed by the annual professional performance review plan.

Training

The Superintendent is the lead evaluator for the district and shall plan his/her own professional development in order to maintain his/her expertise in this area. The Superintendent shall ensure that all staff that are required to evaluate other staff are provided appropriate and sufficient training in assessment and evaluation, in accordance with state law and regulation.

Reporting and Public Disclosure

In accordance with state law, the district will make aggregate information from the classroom teacher and building principal annual professional performance system available on the district website. This summary information will not include personally identifiable data.

9420.1

Upon request from a parent or legal guardian, the district will provide the final quality rating and composite effectiveness score for each of the classroom teachers and for the building principal to which the student is assigned. The district will take reasonable steps to review the request to verify that the parent/guardian is entitled to the information. The Superintendent will develop procedures to implement this provision of the policy.

Cross-ref: 9140.1, Employee Complaints and Grievances
9420, Staff Evaluation
9160, Personnel Records
9700, Staff Development

Ref: Education Law §3012-c
8 NYCRR Subpart 30-2
8 NYCRR § 100.2(o)(2) (Professional Performance Review Plans)
Guidance on New York State's Annual Professional Performance Review for Teachers and Principals to Implement Education law §3012-c and the Commissioner's Regulations, Updated, August 30, 2013

Adoption date: February 27, 2008
Amended date: