

### **What is a mental impairment?**

A mental impairment is any mental or psychological disorder such as, but not limited to, intellectual disability, specific learning disability, anxiety disorder, major depressive disorder, and attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder.

### **What is physical impairment?**

A physical impairment is a physiological disorder or condition, a cosmetic disfigurement, or anatomical loss affecting one or more of the following body systems: neurological, musculoskeletal, special sense organs, respiratory, speech organs, cardiovascular, reproductive, digestive, genito-urinary, hemic, lymphatic, skin, and endocrine.

### **What is a substantial limitation?**

A student is considered to have a substantial limitation when the student is unable to perform a major life activity that the average student of approximately the same age in the general population can perform. The term “substantially limits” means significantly restricted as to the condition, manner, or duration under which a student can perform a particular major life activity.

### **What are major life activities?**

Major life activities may include, but are not limited to, functions such as caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, working, eating, sleeping, standing, lifting, bending, reading, concentrating, thinking, and communicating.

### **What is the 504 complaint process?**

The Section 504 administrator, Ms. Bianca Barquin, Assistant Superintendent, Teaching & Learning is responsible for coordinating the district’s compliance with Section 504. This includes complaints regarding the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of a student with a disability under Section 504 and complaints alleging discrimination or harassment of a student based on his/her actual or perceived disability. To file a complaint, please contact SAUSD’s Section 504 Coordinator:

**Bianca Barquin**

**Assistant Superintendent K-12 Teaching and Learning**

**Email: [Bianca.Barquin@sausd.us](mailto:Bianca.Barquin@sausd.us)**

**Phone: 714-558-5656**

**1601 E. Chestnut Avenue, Santa Ana, CA 92701**

If you believe that the district has not acted in compliance with the law, you also have the right to file a complaint with the Office of Civil Rights at:

**OFFICE OF CIVIL RIGHTS, REGION IX**

**U.S. Department of Education**

**50 Beale Street Suite 7200**

**San Francisco, CA 94105**



# **Section 504**

## **Informational Pamphlet**



# **What is a 504 Plan?**

A Section 504 Plan specifies the educational accommodations and supports that are needed to ensure that the individual educational needs of a student with a disability are met as adequately as the needs of students without a disability.

## **What is Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act?**

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a federal civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against persons with a disability in any program receiving federal financial assistance and requires that students with disabilities be provided a free and appropriate public education through appropriate accommodations and supports.

## **How does the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 Section 504 define a disability?**

Section 504 defines a person with a disability as a person who: (1) Has a mental or physical impairment which substantially limits a major life activity; (2) has a record of such an impairment; or (3) is regarded as having such an impairment.

## **What are impairments that are transitory, episodic or in remission?**

If an impairment is a transitory (temporary) condition, it is a disability if, during the temporary phase of the impairment, it substantially limits a major life activity. For example, a student with a broken bone is a student with a disability if the student is substantially limited in a major life activity such as a performing a manual task like writing.

If an impairment is episodic (occurs periodically) or is in remission, it is a disability, if during an active phase, it substantially limits a major life activity. For example, a student with epilepsy is a student with a disability if, during a seizure, the student is substantially limited in a major life activity such as thinking, breathing, or neurological function. Or, a student with bipolar disorder is a person with a disability if, during manic or depressive episodes, the student is substantially limited in a major life activity such as concentrating or learning.

## **What are some examples of accommodations that can be provided?**

Examples of accommodations include, but are not limited to, changing the way an assessment is given, developing a behavior intervention plan, breaking tasks into smaller parts, or increasing the amount of time for a task to be completed.

## **What important topics are included in the 504 procedural safeguards for parents/legal guardians?**

The 504 parent/legal guardian procedural safeguards include information on written notification of any decisions concerning the identification, evaluation, and/or accommodation of students. The procedural safeguards also include information needed to appeal any such decisions and examine relevant records.

## **Who can refer a student for consideration for a 504?**

A referral may be initiated by anyone, including parents or legal guardians, teachers or other school support staff.

## **How does a parent/legal guardian initiate a request for a 504 Plan?**

A written request for a possible evaluation may be made to any of the following: The student's school principal, vice principal or the district 504 administrator. The referral should include the student's name, school, grade, and the name and contact information of the parent/legal guardian. The referral should explain the reason for the referral including information pertaining to the suspected or formally identified disability and the student's difficulties associated with educational performance.

## **How is a student evaluated under Section 504?**

A school team will conduct a Section 504 evaluation for a student who, because of a disability, may need accommodations in the general education program. The team will:

- 1) consider all available and relevant information about the student drawn from a variety of sources;
- 2) evaluate the nature of the student's disability and the impact of the disability on the student's education; and
- 3) develop a Section 504 Plan if the student meets the criteria and accommodations are needed.

## **Where can I obtain further information/assistance?**

A copy of the 504 procedural safeguards, along with additional information and assistance can be obtained by contacting the student's school principal.