

SECTION 504 POLICIES AND PROCEDURES “QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS”

What is Section 504? Section 504 prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities, including both students and staff members, by school districts receiving federal financial assistance. This includes all programs or activities of the Douglas County School District that receive federal funds.

Who has the responsibility to ensure compliance? Compliance with Section 504 is the responsibility of the Douglas County School District. As such, administrators are responsible for implementation and compliance with the provisions of Section 504 within our school district.

Is Section 504 an aspect of special education, as most educators currently know it? All students who are disabled under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) are protected from discrimination under Section 504. All students who have been determined to be disabled under Section 504 may not be eligible for special education under IDEA. (For a detailed answer to this question, information regarding the evaluation, eligibility, and planning of students eligible under Section 504, please review pages 1 through 5 of the Douglas County School District, Section 504, Policies and Procedures Manual).

What are the roles of the principal and of special education personnel in Section 504? Principals are responsible for the implementation of Section 504 within their schools. While special education personnel may participate in the Section 504 evaluation and planning process, they are not designated as the responsible representatives for purposes of implementing Section 504 in the Douglas County School District.

Who decides on the identification and referral procedures, evaluation, accommodation plan and the review of student progress for a student under Section 504? Each Douglas County School has a School Intervention Team (SIT) for identification and evaluation. The SIT will typically be composed of the student's regular teacher(s) and appropriate specialists as required. Based upon a review of existing documents, including academic records, social information, medical and diagnostic information, psychological evaluations, health records, and behavioral records the SIT will make a decision as to whether a Section 504 evaluation is appropriate.

What is the Douglas County School District required to do to ensure compliance? Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a civil rights statute, which provides that no otherwise handicapped individual shall, solely by reason of his/her disability, be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance from the federal government. The district must provide written assurance of nondiscrimination whenever the district receives Federal funds. The district must designate a coordinator for compliance with Section 504. The district must adopt grievance procedures to resolve complaints of discrimination. The district must provide notice to students, parents, employees, unions, and professional organizations of nondiscrimination in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs or activities. The notice must also specify the employee responsible for coordinating Section 504 and must be included in the student/parent handbook. Finally, the district must provide parents/guardians with procedural safeguards, including the right to an impartial hearing and review.

Does the Douglas County School District comply with Section 504? Yes, the Douglas County School District has written assurance of nondiscrimination. The Special Services Office is the designated coordinator for Section 504 compliance. The district has adopted grievance and impartial hearing procedures as outlined in the "Douglas County School District Section 504 Policies and Procedures

Manual." Notice has been provided through student handbooks and other materials. Finally, procedural safeguards are defined in the "Douglas County School District Section 504 Policies and Procedures Manual."

If I have further questions, what resources can I use? You can ask the building principal at your school for further information. You may also contact the **Section 504 Compliance Coordinator** at **(775) 265-5262**, or by mail at **1638 Mono Ave., Minden, Nevada 89423**. You may also obtain a copy of the "Douglas County School District Section 504 Policies and Procedures Manual."