

# *CHILD FIND* *AND* *SEARCH AND SERVE* **LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**

All schools are required to have procedures in place for identifying children who have or are suspected of having a disability and needing special education and related services. These procedures are commonly referred to as “search and serve” or “child find.”

## ***SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES***

The school’s responsibilities for search and serve apply to the families and students attending and enrolling in the school. The District also has responsibilities for search and serve activities directed at the families of children below school age and students in private schools.

There are three search and serve responsibilities that each school must implement:

1. All schools must distribute the “*Are You Puzzled by Your Child’s Special Needs?*” brochure to every student to take home at the beginning of each school year.
2. Students with disabilities, requiring special services, enrolling in the school are identified and promptly provided the appropriate services.
3. There is a process in place, understood by all staff members, for referring students who may require special services.

## ***PROCEDURES FOR DISTRIBUTING REQUIRED “CHILD FIND” INFORMATION TO PARENTS***

Federal and State laws require the District to annually notify all students and their parents about the availability of and information on special education and related services.

All schools are required to send home the “*Are You Puzzled by your Child’s Special Needs?*” brochure annually at the beginning of the school year and available to parents and staff members upon request. The brochure is available in the following languages:

- Armenian • English • Russian • Tagalog
- Chinese • Korean • Spanish • Vietnamese

NOTE: Other languages are available upon request.

Also required to be sent home annually at the beginning of the school year is the *LAUSD Parent-Student Handbook* and the *Section 504 Brochure*.

In addition, the following publications and forms must be maintained in the school office and made available to parents and staff upon request:

- Student Enrollment Form
- Request for Special Education Assessment Form
- *A Parent’s Guide to Special Education Services (Including Procedural Rights and Safeguards)*

- *The IEP and You*
- *The ITP and You*

Schools must also prominently display the Complaint Response Unit (CRU) poster that provides parents information about where to call if they have complaints concerning special education.

School staff should be prepared to assist parents in completing forms and answering questions they may have. When appropriate, refer the parent to the District's Complaint Response Unit, (800) 933- 8133.

**Note:** The term parent, used throughout the electronic policies and procedures manual (ePPM), includes:

- Any person having legal custody of the child;
- A person acting in place of a parent such as a grandparent or stepparent with whom the child lives;
- A person designated by the parent to represent the interests of the student.

**Note:** In such cases the school should attempt to obtain the designation from the parent in writing including the scope of the representation. If it cannot be obtained, in writing, document the reason why and the means by which the designation was obtained;

- A foster parent, if the natural parent's authority to make educational decisions has been limited by court order and the foster parent has an ongoing long term relationship with the student, is willing to assume the role of parent in educational decision-making, and has no interest that would conflict with the interest of the student;
- A surrogate parent appointed for the student who is a ward of the State or for a student whose parents are unknown or unavailable;
- A student, who has reached the age of 18, for whom no guardian or conservator has been appointed.

### ***IDENTIFYING AND SERVING STUDENTS ENROLLING IN THE SCHOOL***

All schools are responsible for having procedures in place to identify and promptly serve students, who require or may need special services, when they enroll in the school. The mechanism for implementing the procedures is the District's Student Enrollment Form that must be completed by parents at the time they are enrolling their child. Section 10 - Special Services asks the following five questions:

- Did the student receive special education services at his/her previous school?
- Did the student have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) at his/her previous school?
- Did the student have a Section 504 Plan at his/her previous school?
- Does the student have difficulties that interfere with his/her ability to go to school or learn?
- Has this student been identified for Gifted and Talented Educational services (GATE)?

Office personnel have the responsibility to assist parents, if necessary, answer the questions and ensure that all questions are answered. If all questions in Section 10 are answered NO, further follow-up is not required, other than checking NO on Question A (1) on the Special Services Follow-up Section of the form. If any question in Section 10 is answered YES, the Special Services Follow-up Section of the form must be completed.

It is important that office personnel and administrator/designees familiarize themselves with the form and their duties to ensure that students who require special services are identified and promptly provided appropriate school programs and services.

Please ensure the following procedures are followed as applicable:

- View the active IEP in the Welligent IEP system when the student has an IEP from a previous school. Once a student has enrolled in the school, the IEP will transfer in the Welligent system and will be viewable to the new school of enrollment.
- Provide the parent the Parent Request/Reasonable Accommodations form and maintain the completed form in the student's special education folder. This form can be found in the *Documents* section of the Welligent IEP system. On this form, the parent identifies if any accommodations are needed (by the parent) to access the IEP meeting, such as an oral interpreter, wheelchair access, etc.
- Review the IEP document and provide the student the programs and services specified.
- Note: If the IEP is out of date or no longer appropriate, still implement it but hold an IEP team meeting as soon as possible (within thirty calendar days of student's enrollment).
- Review the IEP document and provide the student the programs and services specified if the student enrolled with an IEP from another school district. Hold a review IEP team meeting within thirty calendar days of student's enrollment.
- Implement a student's existing 504 plan, if available, or hold a meeting to develop a 504 plan.
- Take the specified actions without delay when the parents have indicated that the student has difficulties that interfere with his/her ability to go to school or learn.
- Enter all appropriate information into the student information system for students who have an existing IEP.
- If the student is transferring from another school district, promptly obtain the IEP and any other records from the previous district.
- If a student has begun the assessment process in another school district and then transfers to LAUSD, LAUSD and the other district are responsible for expeditiously coordinating and completing the evaluation within legal timelines.
- If a student transfers to LAUSD with an IEP from another school district in California, LAUSD will provide comparable services in consultation with the parents pending an LAUSD review IEP team meeting. LAUSD will conduct a review IEP team meeting within 30 calendar days of the student's enrollment to determine recommendations for special education services.
- If a student transfers into LAUSD from another state, LAUSD will provide comparable services, in consultation with the parents, until a new evaluation is conducted, if necessary, and a new IEP is developed in an IEP team meeting.

### ***REQUESTS FOR A SPECIAL EDUCATION ASSESSMENT***

Any person who believes that a student has or may have a disability and requires special education and related services may make a formal request for a special education assessment. The request must be in writing and entered on the *Request for a Special Education Assessment Form* which can be located in the *Documents* section of Welligent.

If a parent submits a letter making the request, transfer the information on to a Request for Special Education Assessment Form. If the request is made verbally, the school shall assist the requestor in putting the request in writing. Once a written request for a special education assessment has been received, the administrator/ designee has 15 days to develop and provide the parents with a special education assessment plan. See the *Developing a Special Education Assessment Plan* section of this ePPM for details.

Note: If appropriate, a request for a special education assessment may be denied. The administrator/designee may discuss with the requestor accommodations or modifications that can be made

in the general education program to assist the student progress in the general education curriculum. A meeting of the Student Support and Progress Team (SSPT), involving the requestor, can be utilized to design the accommodations or modifications but may not delay the District's legal obligation to provide the parent with a timely response. The requestor may agree to postpone their request for a special education assessment until the accommodations or modifications have been implemented and the results evaluated. If the requestor agrees to postpone the assessment, assist them in putting their decision in writing. Be sure it is signed and dated. Attach the document to the Request Form and note the decision and date on the Referral Details section on the Welligent IEP system. Scan and upload all correspondences to Welligent.

***Note: If they do not agree to postpone the assessment, the assessment plan must be generated and provided to the parents within 15 days from the date the initial request for assessment was received by the school.***

Administrator/designees should take the following actions to ensure that requests for a special education assessment are managed properly and within legal timelines:

- Copies of the Request for A Special Education Assessment Form are to be uploaded to the Welligent IEP System and responsible personnel notified. All school staff should be knowledgeable about the referral process and how to access the forms.
- Provide the appropriate forms to parents, staff and others upon request. They may also be provided when a parent/guardian responds affirmatively to questions A, B, or D in Section 10 of the Student Enrollment Form.
- On an individual basis, assist the person making the request to complete the form(s) by providing information or clarification as necessary.
- If a request for a special education assessment is made by a parent/guardian, the administrator/designee must do the following:
  - If the request is made through a letter, the information must be transferred to the Request Form. Also, provide the parent with a copy of the Parent Request/Reasonable Accommodation form and maintain the completed copy in the student's special education folder.
  - When the signed and dated Request Form is received, review Section B and fill in the remaining portion of Section E.
  - The date that a request letter or form is received must be entered on the Referral Details section on the Welligent IEP system.
  - A Special Education Assessment Plan must be developed and provided to the parent within 15 calendar days of receipt of the written request.
  - When appropriate, discuss with the parent accommodations or modifications that can be made to the general education program (see above) and whether they want to delay the assessment until the modifications have been implemented and evaluated. If a parent agrees to postpone the assessment, assist them in putting their decision in writing. Be sure it is signed and dated. Attach the document to the Request Form and note the decision and date on the Referral Details section on the Welligent IEP system. If the parent does not agree to postpone the assessment, the assessment plan must be generated and provided to the parents within 15 days from the date the initial request for assessment was received by the school.
- If a request for a special education assessment is made by a staff member the administrator/designee must do the following:
  - When a staff member requests a copy of the request form, discuss with them the information required in Section C. They must list the prior accommodations or modifications that have been

taken to help the student. If no accommodations or modifications have been attempted and outcomes documented, advise the staff member that a request for an assessment cannot be made at this time and assist them in developing and implementing appropriate actions/modifications. However, if some accommodations or modifications have been attempted, discuss if warranted, others that might be implemented. If the staff member still wants to request a special education assessment for the student, assist them in completing the Request Form.

- Enter the date that the Request Form was received on the Referral Details section on the Welligent IEP system.
- Inform the parent/guardian that a request for a special education assessment has been made and that they will receive a Special Education Assessment Plan for their review and approval.
- Ensure that the assessment plan is completed and provided to the parent/guardian within 15 calendar days of receipt of the written request.

### ***OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES***

- To process requests for initial assessment for LAUSD resident students attending another school district on a general education permit, please see the *Inter-District Permits* section of this e-PPM for details.
- If a parent refers a child, birth to age three, or a child age three or four who is not enrolled in a District preschool program, call, or have the parent call, the Early Childhood Special Education Office at (213) 241-4713. If the child is currently in a District preschool program, see the *Early Childhood Education* section in this e-PPM for details.
- If the request for a special education assessment is received from a parent whose child has been placed by the parent in a private school, follow the District's procedures for serving students with disabilities placed by their parents at private schools. See the *Private School Students* section of this e-PPM for details.