

## PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

In keeping with the philosophy that a public school system is responsible for the education of all students within the community, and further, that every student is entitled to equal education opportunity, the Board will provide programs and services designed to meet the individual needs of students with disabilities, birth through 21 years of age.

The ultimate goals of these programs will be to have students with disabilities become as self-sufficient as their disability permits and to increase their life options and opportunities for personal liberty, happiness, and participation in our society.

Seeking out young children with disabilities so that they may receive special instruction in early childhood is part of this responsibility. The purpose of identifying these children and older students with disabilities is not to categorize them as disabled, but to determine and provide a free, appropriate education for each one.

The Board believes that most students with disabilities can be educated in the regular school program if they are given special instruction, accommodations, and the support they need. These students should also be given opportunity to participate in the school's nonacademic and extracurricular activities.

However, the Board recognizes that the needs of certain students are so great that special programs, special classes, or special schools may be necessary. When appropriate programs, services, or facilities are not possible within the district's schools, the district will provide these students with access to schools where such instruction and accommodations are available.

It is the desire of the Board that the schools work closely with parents in designing and providing programs and services to students with disabilities. Parents must be informed, conferred with, and give consent whenever their child is referred for an evaluation to determine if a disability exists. In event of any disagreement concerning evaluation, identification, individual education plan or placement, the parents must be accorded the right of due process. The schools must also obtain parental consent before releasing the child's records to anyone other than a school official.

The Board will secure properly trained personnel to work with students with disabilities. The financial commitment necessary to meet the needs of all students is extensive, and the Board, in accordance with state law, will include an amount in the district tax levy, not exceed 1.4 mill, which will be earmarked as the special education fund, to meet the needs of students who require special education or special education with related services. In addition, the Board will seek other available funding for these programs.

### Development of an Individual Education Plan (IEP)

A local placement committee will be comprised of parents, the student when appropriate, the superintendent or designee, a regular classroom teacher receiving or referring a student, an educator from the field of special education, and, if necessary, an evaluator to interpret the multidisciplinary data. This committee will be responsible for the evaluation and identification of students with disabilities, the design of an individual education program (IEP), and for placement. All procedures will be in accordance with federal and state requirements.

The individual education plan determined by the local placement committee will be developed in accordance with each child's individual needs. The IEP will be approved by the local placement committee. The plan will provide for frequent reevaluation of the child's needs, progress, and of the effectiveness of the program being offered.

The local placement committee will base its decision as to whether to place a student in a regular classroom, or in a special program, class or school on the best interests of the student. However, the needs of other student in the school will also be considered.

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