

Identification and Education Under Section 504

*Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a federal law that prevents discrimination against students with disabilities. Under this provision, any school that receives federal funding must make accommodations to ensure that all students with disabilities are guaranteed a free public education. A 504 plan refers to the methods and strategies designed by teachers, parents, and administrators to comply with this law. Such plans typically are developed when a student has a disability that is not classified within the 13 disabilities that are addressed by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act via an individualized education plan (“IEP”). While Section 504 does not mandate that boards of charter schools adopt a policy regarding Section 504, CSDC offers this sample as a starting point for schools that believe it is a good practice.*

The Governing Board of Sonoma Charter School recognizes the need to identify and evaluate students with disabilities, and desires to ensure that all students, including students with disabilities, have a free appropriate public education (FAPE). This means that students with disabilities will receive the same education as students without a disability.

The Director, if not in the role of 504 coordinator, shall designate a 504 coordinator to establish and implement evaluation procedures to be used whenever there is reason to believe that a student, because of a disability, needs or is believed to need special instruction or related services. This coordinator shall also ensure a system of procedural safeguards that includes notice, an opportunity for the parent/guardian of the student to examine relevant records, an impartial hearing with the opportunity for participation by the student’s parent/guardian and representation by counsel, and a review procedure.

The Director or designee shall ensure that identified students with disabilities receive regular or special education and related aids and services designed to meet their individual educational needs as adequately as the needs of nondisabled students are met.

If the student is found to have a disability that qualifies him/her for a FAPE under Section 504, then the Section 504 multi-disciplinary team members shall develop a written Section 504 service plan for the student. Upon reviewing the nature of the disability and how it impacts the student’s education, the members shall determine what general and/or special education services, related aids, supplemental aids and services, accommodations and/or modifications, are needed in order to provide the student with a FAPE. The student shall be educated with non-disabled students to the maximum extent appropriate.

STUDENT POLICY #24 – Students Section 504 Policy

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The Director or designee shall maintain a list of impartial hearing officers who are qualified and willing to conduct Section 504 hearings. The Section 504 multi-disciplinary team shall provide the parent/guardian with a copy of the Section 504 service plan. If the Section 504 multi-disciplinary team determines that the student is not eligible under Section 504, the parent/guardian shall receive a copy of the Section 504 multidisciplinary team meeting notes stating the basis for this decision. Parent/guardian shall also receive a copy of the procedural safeguards guaranteed under Section 504.

Adopted: 2/21/20

Amended:

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