



SHERBURNE-EARLVILLE CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

SUPPORT FOR STRUGGLING STUDENTS

"My child needs some help in school to be successful. What options are available for my student?" It is helpful to speak directly with a student-support staff member to determine what is most appropriate to assist your child.

GENERAL EDUCATION INTERVENTIONS

These can be organized by any staff member in the building, including a school psychologist, a school counselor, school social worker, teacher or administrator. Some examples of general education intervention plans may be:

- **Short Term Support Plans:** If a student is experiencing a loss or trauma at home or is going through a stressful time that is not a consistent, long-term experience (i.e. death/serious illness of a family member/friend, moving to a new school, struggling to deal with a difficult personal or academic event), a plan can be created to collaborate with teachers and staff to help the student catch up.
- **Academic Intervention Supports (AIS) Classes:** A student may be enrolled in an AIS class of a challenging subject area to allow more time to review and complete work with teacher assistance in a small class setting.
- **Counseling Improvement/Check-ins:** Some students may benefit from setting academic goals, organizational/planning support, or informal counseling services so the student can progress and participate academically and social-emotionally in school.
- **Academic Planning Supports:** This can involve students creating a specific plan with staff to make up work and missed assignments on a reasonable timeline created by the student and involved school staff.

504 PLAN

This is a plan covered under the American with Disabilities Act (ADA). This law allows for students with physical or mental impairments that substantially impact their ability to participate in a General Education setting to receive services and changes to the learning environment to enable students to learn alongside their peers. Students can receive accommodations and modifications on these plans but are still held to curriculum requirements of all General Education students.

To request a 504 Plan:

- A staff member, parent/guardian, or student must request an initial 504 Plan.
- An evaluation must be completed to determine level of need, and any medical documentation appropriate must be provided. This may include testing but typically includes a review of records, staff feedback and any relevant medical information.
- Parent/guardian must sign a consent form to complete an initial evaluation and agree to the 504 Plan.
- This process can take up to two months to complete, but the typical timeline is three-to-six weeks.
- Level of need is reviewed annually, and a re-evaluation of eligibility is completed every three years. Parents/guardians and student are invited, as well as staff members.

This is a General Education plan. These are General Education students who receive accommodations and minimal modifications.



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INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PLAN

This plan is covered under IDEA Federal Law, which requires public schools to provide a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). Students must have a disability (learning or otherwise) that impedes their ability to access a General Education and causes them to require significant modifications to the curriculum to be successful academically. Students must demonstrate significant learning differences when compared to peers AND require significant modifications to curriculum to be eligible.

These students are Special Education students who receive accommodations and modifications. Some services that are only available through Special Education are:

- **Special Class settings:** Smaller classes (15:1, 12:1:1)
- **Modified curriculums:** Teachers modify the curriculum and assignments of students when compared to general education peers (Consultant Teacher, 15:1, 12:1:1 classes)

Students must qualify under one of the 13 areas of disability considered in IDEA. The process of being evaluated for Special Education includes:

1. Parent/guardian or school requesting permission to evaluate for Special Education.
2. Parent/guardian returning a signed consent form to complete an initial evaluation for Special Education services (required).
3. Evaluation of school psychologist after return of signed consent form. The school psychologist has 60 calendar days to complete an evaluation after the form is returned. This typically requires a full 60 days.
4. A scheduled meeting to review evaluation results and determine eligibility.
5. If found eligible, an IEP is put into place. If found ineligible for Special Education services, a student may be found eligible for a 504 Plan (if deemed appropriate by the Committee on Special Education).

If you feel your child requires the support of Special Education services, it is strongly recommended that you speak directly to the School Psychologist or CSE Chairperson.

CSE Chairperson/SPED Director: Ginger Rinaldo

CSE Chairperson MS/HS: Jennifer Ford

CSE Chairperson ES/School Psychologist ES: Erin Young

School Psychologist MS/HS: Sarah Schur

ACCOMMODATIONS VS. MODIFICATIONS

What is an accommodation?

An accommodation describes a change in the environment, format of an assignment, or equipment in a school that allows a person with a disability to gain access to academic content or complete academic assignments or tasks. This allows students with disabilities to follow a General Education course of study in an environment that is the least restrictive setting and also supports their needs on assignments.

An accommodation does not modify what is taught. Some examples of accommodations include:

- Preferential seating
- Refocusing and redirection
- Checks for understanding
- Alternative setting for testing
- Extended time on tests and assignments
- Verbal, visual, or technology aids
- Multiple formats of textbooks
- Behavior management support
- Breaks from class



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What is a modification?

A modification describes a change in the curriculum. Modifications are made for students with disabilities who are unable to comprehend all of the content an instructor is teaching without significant changes in the curriculum or pacing of the coursework.

For example, assignments might be reduced in number and modified significantly for an elementary school student with cognitive impairments that limit his/her ability to understand the content in general education class in which they are included. Some examples of modifications include:

- Word bank of choices for answers to test questions
- Film or video supplements in place of reading text
- Reworded questions in simpler language
- Projects instead of written reports
- Highlighting important words or phrases in reading assignments
- Modified workload or length of assignments/tests

IEP VS. 504 PLAN

To qualify for an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) through Special Education, a student must demonstrate a need for specialized instruction to support learning. Specially Designed Instruction is instruction that teaches specific underlying skills (not concepts) that a student does not have. These services must be provided by a Special Education or a related service provider (Occupational Therapist, Physical Therapist, School Counselor, School Psychologist, Social Worker, etc.) and work toward specific, individualized skill goals.

Examples of students who have a disability and benefit from a 504 Plan, rather than an IEP:

- A student with an Autism Spectrum Disorder who is doing well academically but needs social skills assistance or specific accommodations, such as a visual calendar.
- A student with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder who does not need specialized instruction but would benefit from additional time in a less distracting environment for tests and accommodations, such as preferential seating or physical breaks.
- A student with Anxiety Disorder who does not need specialized instruction but would benefit from breaks from class, access to a calming routine, and alternative locations for testing to reduce anxiety in the academic setting.

To request initial eligibility evaluations for a 504 Plan OR an Individualized Education Plan, you must:

- Identify the name and grade of your student
- Describe in detail the specific areas of concern
- Provide any relevant medical information (if appropriate), including relevant diagnoses
- Indicate if you are requesting an evaluation for a 504 Plan (General Education) or an IEP (Special Ed)
- Sign and date this letter and return it to the Department of Special Education in the District Office

Helpful Online Information

Mobility International USA | IEPs and 504 plans: Understanding the Difference

<https://www.miusa.org/resource/tipsheet/iep504plans>

NYSED | Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

<http://www.acces.nysed.gov/aapp/section-504-rehabilitation-act-1973>

NYSED | Process and Individualized Education Program (IEP) Development

<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/techassist/CSE-IEP.htm>

U.S. Department of Education | Section 504 and the Education of Children with Disabilities FAQs

<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/504faq.html#interrelationship>



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504	vs.	IEP
General Education	Type of Service	Special Education
Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973	Governing Law	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act amended 2004
U.S. Department of Education: Office of Civil Rights	Overseeing Agency	U.S. Department of Education: Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services
Entire Life	Ages Covered	Birth through age 21
Student must have a disability AND the disability affects the student's ability to access the curriculum.	Eligibility	Student must qualify in one of the 13 categories of disability, AND disability affects the child's ability to access curriculum.
Does not require a written plan	Written Plan	Does require a written plan
Law does not specify evaluation procedures. Simply states "periodic" evaluation	Evaluation	Initial evaluation using standard assessment tools. Student must be re-evaluated and requalified every three years.
School must get permission to evaluation. School can create a plan without parent participation. SECSO invites guardians/parents and students to attend all meetings.	Parent Involvement	Parents are required to be part of the IEP team. SECSO invites guardians/parents and students (as appropriate) to all meetings.
Curriculum is not customized for the student. The student completes the same curriculum as students without disabilities.	Customized Curriculum	The IEP must be an individualized plan that meets the needs of the student.
SECSO holds an Annual Review for all students with a 504 Plan every year; the law does not require the school to review annually.	Annual Review	SECSO holds an Annual Review for all students with an IEP every year; the law requires that a plan must be reviewed at least once a year.
No goals or progress monitoring.	Goals	Goals must be written, measurable, and reviewed annually.
Student must be given accommodation to 'equal the playing field' so they are able to access the curriculum.	Accommodations	Students may be given accommodations to make it easier to access their education.
The student can have modified assignments. The student cannot have a completely different curriculum.	Modifications	The student can have modified assignments or a modified curriculum.