

STATE SPECIAL SCHOOLS AND SERVICES PROCEDURES

The State Special Schools & Services Division is a subdivision of the California Department of Education that provides services to deaf, hard-of-hearing, blind and visually impaired students in addition to offering LEA/district special education programs with assessment services, technical assistance and staff development.

State run schools for the deaf and schools for the blind also provide intensive, disability-specific educational services for pupils who are blind, visually impaired, deaf and hard of hearing pupils, or deaf-blind, age 3-22.

The Diagnostic Centers provide comprehensive assessments to special education students and staff development and training services to LEA/districts.

Referral to Special Schools and Services for Further Assessment

A referral to a Special School or the Diagnostic Center must follow the guidelines below.

- Prior to referring a pupil for further assessment to California Schools for the Deaf or Blind or to one of the Diagnostic Centers, assessments shall first be conducted at the local level within the capabilities of the LEA/district. Results of local assessments shall accompany the referral request. The reason for the referral shall be discussed with the parents. The LEA/district refers a student by submitting an application packet. Applications are reviewed by the Admissions Committee at the State School or Diagnostic Center to determine if the applicant meets the admissions criteria set forth in the California Code of Regulations, Title 5, Sections 17660-17663.
- The Schools for the Deaf and Blind, and the Diagnostic Schools shall conduct assessments pursuant to the provisions of EC 56320.
- A representative of the LEA/district shall participate in the staffing meeting and shall receive copies of the final report and recommendations. Conference calls may be acceptable forms of participation, provided that written reports and recommendations have been received by the LEA/district representative prior to the meeting.

Procedure for Referral to State Schools for Placement

The procedure for a referral is as follows:

1. Referrals to state special schools for placement shall be made only as a result of recommendations from the IEP team, upon determining that no appropriate placement is available in the local plan area. Parents have the right to appeal any decision of the IEP team, including whether their child should be referred to a state special school.
2. Whenever a referral for placement is being considered to one of the state special schools, the IEP team shall include a representative of the LEA/district.

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3. If the IEP team (including the representative from the LEA/district) determines that a referral to a state special school is appropriate, a case manager shall be designated to coordinate the referral process.
4. As provided within EC 59300, the LEA/district of the parent or guardian of any pupil attending a state-operated school is responsible for 10% of the excess cost of the placement. The cost for a student placed less than a full year is prorated based on the number of days in attendance.

Review of Placement at State Special Schools

The LEA/district shall be notified of any upcoming review of students placed in state special schools. The LEA/district may request assistance from the County Office of Education (if appropriate) in attending the review, considering assessment results or any other activity needed.