

GAINESVILLE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT SPECIAL EDUCATION OPERATING PROCEDURES: TRANSITION & GRADUATION

The Gainesville ISD has entered into an Interlocal Agreement to cooperatively operate its special education programs under the authority of Tex. Ed. Code § 11.157. The Denton County Special Education Services Cooperative may provide for the efficient delivery of legally required special education and related services to the Gainesville’s eligible students with disabilities as set forth in the Interlocal Agreement, including the implementation of these Special Education Operating Procedures.

Gainesville ISD Board Policy along with these *Special Education Operating Procedures* constitute the Policies and Procedures of Gainesville ISD, designed to be consistent with the State policies and procedures developed pursuant to the IDEA. Gainesville ISD *Special Education Operating Procedures* are not to be for the purpose of creating a requirement that is not otherwise imposed by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (“IDEA”), together with its implementing federal regulations, state statutes and rules, as they shall from time to time be amended, and shall not be construed to create a higher standard than that established by IDEA. These *Special Education Operating Procedures* will be posted on Gainesville ISD’s website. These *Special Education Operating Procedures* should be interpreted consistent with the IDEA. Gainesville ISD’s *Special Education Operating Procedures* are reviewed and updated, as needed, on at least an annual basis. Gainesville ISD will make timely changes to policies and procedures in response to IDEA amendments, regulatory or rule changes, changes to state policy, or new legal interpretation as are necessary to bring Gainesville ISD into compliance with the requirements of IDEA. Gainesville ISD maintains systems to ensure that all students with disabilities residing in the District, including students with disabilities attending non-public schools, regardless of the severity of their disabilities, and who are in need of special education and related services, are identified, located, and evaluated and provided a free appropriate public education. Gainesville ISD maintains systems to ensure that students with disabilities and their parents are afforded the procedural safeguards required under the IDEA (and its implementing federal regulations, state statutes and rules) including with respect to the confidentiality of records and personally identifiable information.

How does the District ensure adult students are included in the IEP development process?

At least one year before a student with a disability turns 18, the Transition Counselor shall ensure that the student’s IEP contains a statement regarding the transfer of special education rights and responsibilities at the age of 18. The student’s IEP shall also state that the student has been provided information and resources regarding guardianship, alternatives to guardianship, including a supported decision-making agreement and other supports and services that may enable the student to live independently. When the student turns 18, the Transition Counselor shall notify the adult student and her or his parent or guardian of the transfer of parental rights, and shall begin sending both the parent or guardian and student any notice required in these Operating Procedures.¹

What happens when a student with an IEP graduates with a regular high school diploma?

¹ 19 TEX. ADMIN. CODE § 89.1049

Graduation from the District with a regular high school diploma terminates a student's eligibility to receive special education and related services.² A student who receives special education services may graduate and be awarded a regular high school diploma if the student has demonstrated mastery of the required state standards (or district standards, if greater) and completed credit requirements (for graduation under the Foundation High School Program) specified in the Foundation High School Program that are applicable to students in general education, as well as satisfactory performance on the required state assessments, unless the student's ARD committee has determined that satisfactory performance on the required state assessments is not necessary for graduation.³

The Diagnostician shall ensure that whenever a student's eligibility for special education and related services is terminated through receipt of a regular high school diploma or because the student no longer meets age eligibility requirements for special education and related services, the Diagnostician shall provide the student a written summary of the student's then-present level of academic achievement and functional performance. This summary must consider, as appropriate, the views of the parent or guardian and student, and written recommendations from adult service agencies on how to assist the student in meeting postsecondary goals. An evaluation or REED shall be included as part of the summary.⁴

For students who receive a diploma based upon successful completion of the IEP and other relevant factors, the ARD committee shall determine needed educational services upon the request of the student or the student's parent or guardian to resume services, as long as the student meets the age eligibility requirements set out in **the District's Child Find Duty Operating Procedure**.⁵

Demonstrations of this procedure's implementation may include, but are not limited to, examples such as:

- ARD committee reports
- Transfer of rights notification and related correspondence
- Outside agency invitations and forms demonstrating the District's requests for consent to exchange information with outside agencies
- Vocational or transitional Assessments
- Transition supplements
- Transcripts
- Summary of performance documents
- Invitations to outside agencies
- Supported Decision Making Agreements

² 19 TEX. ADMIN. CODE § 89.1070(a)

³ 19 TEX. ADMIN. CODE § 89.1070(b)(1)

⁴ 19 TEX. ADMIN. CODE § 89.1070(g)

⁵ 19 TEX. ADMIN. CODE § 89.1070(j)

- Guardianship records