

SECTION 18F

F. ADVOCACY FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

See [Fair Futures Program Manual Section 5G](#) for a detailed overview on how to provide educational advocacy for special education students and students with disabilities, and [Appendix F1_K-12 Educational Advocacy Manual, Section V](#).

Students who require accommodations to make sure their educational needs are met may have an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) or a 504 plan. For these students, an additional required goal is “[Ensure receipt of appropriate accommodations or special education services](#).” This is important because sometimes students can fall through the cracks and not receive the services they need to succeed academically.

The **Required Steps** that ensure students are receiving appropriate services include:

- ☐ Obtain copy of most recent IEP/504 Plan and ensure it is current within the last year. If it's not, contact the school to see if a more recent version exists; if needed, work with the school and family to schedule a new meeting as soon as possible
- ☐ Participate in annual IEP meeting and/or 504 meeting; try to ensure the student and student's parent participates
- ☐ Confirm student is receiving all accommodations and services mandated by 504 or IEP, and is in the right classroom setting

Some **Potential Steps** include (depending on the course of action needed):

- ☐ Renew 504 Plan;
- ☐ Obtain copy of most recent psycho-educational evaluation and ensure it is current within the last 3 years (required for students with IEPs but not 504s);
- ☐ Request new accommodation(s), if needed (requires parent's consent);
- ☐ Request that the school conduct a new IEP or 504 evaluation, if needed (requires parent's consent);
- ☐ Request an independent educational evaluation if student is not demonstrating progress and the school evaluation is not comprehensive (requires parental consent);
- ☐ Request that the school make changes to IEP, if needed (requires parent's consent);
- ☐ If needed, work with educational decision-maker to exercise due process rights on behalf of student (e.g., request mediation or an impartial hearing).
This should only happen after talking with the student's teachers, IEP team, and case planning team (and, when needed, the District Superintendent).
- ☐ Work with school [to apply to ACCES-VR](#); proceed to Career Development Goals in [Appendix E Goals & Steps Guide and Worksheets](#) or in the Online Platform.

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