

**GOUVERNEUR CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
504 COMMITTEE
133 EAST BARNEY STREET
GOUVERNEUR, NY 13642**

**NOTICE OF PARENT AND STUDENT RIGHTS
UNDER SECTION 504, THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973**

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, commonly referred to as "Section 504", is a nondiscrimination statute enacted by the United States Congress. The purpose of the Act and its accompanying regulations is to prohibit discrimination and to assure that disabled students have educational opportunities and benefits equal to those provided to non-disabled students.

An eligible student under Section 504 is a student who a) has, b) has a record of having, or c) is regarded as having, a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits a major life activity such as learning, self-care, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, working, and performing manual tasks.

DUAL ELIGIBILITY: Many students will be eligible for education services under both Section 504 and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Students who are eligible under IDEA have many specific rights that are not available to students who are eligible solely under Section 504. It is the purpose of this Notice form to set out the rights assured by Section 504 to those disabled students who do not qualify under IDEA.

The enabling regulations for Section 504 as set out in 34 CFR Part 104 provide parents and/or students with the following rights:

1. You have a right to be informed by the school district of your rights under Section 504. (The purpose of this Notice is to advise you of those rights).
2. Your child has the right to an appropriate education designed to meet his/her individual educational needs as adequately as the needs of non-disabled students are met.
3. Your child has the right to free educational services except for those fees that are imposed on non-disabled student or their parents. Insurers and similar third parties are not relieved from an otherwise valid obligation to provide or pay for services provided to a disabled student.
4. Your child has a right to placement in the least restrictive environment.
5. Your child has a right to facilities, services, and activities that are comparable to those provided for non-disabled students.
6. Your child has a right to an evaluation prior to an initial Section 504 placement and any subsequent significant change in placement.

- 7. Testing and other evaluation procedures must conform with the requirements of this section as to validation, administration, areas of evaluation, etc. The school district shall consider information from a variety of sources, including aptitude and achievement tests, teacher recommendations, physical condition, social and cultural background, adaptive behavior, physical or medical reports, student grades, progress reports, parent observations, and anecdotal reports.**
- 8. Placement decisions must be made by a group of persons (i.e. the Section 504 Committee), including persons knowledgeable about your child, the meaning of the evaluation data, the placement options, and the legal requirements for the least restrictive environment and comparable facilities.**
- 9. If eligible under Section 504, your child has a right to periodic reevaluations, every three years.**
- 10. You have the right to notice prior to any action by the District in regard to the identification, evaluation, or placement of your child.**
- 11. You have the right to examine relevant records.**
- 12. You have the right to an impartial hearing with respect to the District's actions regarding your child's identification, evaluation, or educational placement, with opportunity for parental participation in the hearing and representation by an attorney.**
- 13. If you wish to challenge the actions of the District's Section 504 Committee in regard to your child's identification, evaluation or educational placement, you should file a written Notice of Appeal with the District's Section 504 Officer, Jennifer Bell, at 133 East Barney Street, Gouverneur, New York 13642, within 30 calendar days from the time you received written notice of the Section 504 Committee's action(s). A hearing will be scheduled before an impartial hearing officer and you will be notified in writing of the date, time, and place for the hearing.**
- 14. If you disagree with the decision of the impartial hearing officer, you have a right to have that decision reviewed by a court or competent jurisdiction.**
- 15. On Section 504 matter other than your child's identification, evaluation, and placement, you have a right to file a complaint with the District's 504 Officer, Jennifer Bell, who will investigate all allegations to the extent warranted by the nature of the complaint in an effort to reach a prompt and equitable resolution.**
- 16. You also have a right to file a complaint with the Office of Civil Rights.**

In addition to the regulations and rights outlined above, mediation is available as a means to improve communication and resolve differences of opinion between the parent(s) or guardian(s) of a student with a disability and the school district. At mediation, the parents and a representative of the school district meet with an independent mediator to reach a more complete understanding of one another's concerns and to attempt to reach an agreement about the special and/or regular education programs, accommodations, and services the student will receive.