

Principles for Education of Students with Disabilities

1. Students with disabilities have the right to an equal education opportunity.
2. Students with disabilities and their families have the right to culturally and linguistically appropriate education supports.
3. Education agencies have an affirmative duty to do outreach and to identify children with disabilities.
4. Students with disabilities have a right to be free from discrimination, harassment and bullying.
5. Policies should encourage and facilitate participation of students with disabilities in general extra-curricular or nonacademic activities with peers without disabilities.
6. Policies should increase families' and students with disabilities' access to trained and qualified advocacy assistance and other resources so they can adequately understand their rights and receive the special education and related services they need.
7. Parents of children with disabilities are full partners in education planning and should be supported to participate meaningfully.
8. Students with disabilities have the right to remain in school with appropriate services and supports. Policies must not result in school exclusion or limit access to education in any form or require a student to "earn their way back" into the classroom.
9. Students with disabilities should be supported to the greatest extent to participate and self-determine their educational plan and goals.
10. Education practices and policies should promote the fact that all students with disabilities, including those with significant disabilities, can make progress in the general education curriculum.
11. Education investments and policies must promote Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles to increase access to programming by all students with diverse learning needs.
12. Students with disabilities have the right to be free from seclusion, restraint and other aversive behavior interventions.

Students Eligible for Individual with Disabilities Education Act-IDEA:

13. Students with disabilities have a right to a free appropriate public education and to access the general education curriculum to the same extent as their non-disabled peers.

This includes the right to an up-to-date Individualized Education Plan (IEP), quality special education evaluation and receipt of transition services.

14. Policies, programs or services must promote the right of a student with a disability to be educated and have access to the general education curriculum alongside students without disabilities.
15. Students with disabilities must have access to effective and appropriate supplementary aids and services, including assistive technologies, to achieve meaningful benefit from general education.
16. Access to general education curriculum for students with disabilities must assure effective and meaningful opportunity to participate and make measurable educational gains, including for students with the most significant with disabilities.
17. Students with disabilities have the right to remain in school with appropriate services rather than be excluded or expelled for conduct that is a manifestation of their disabilities or the result of inappropriate services, supports or implementation of behavioral plans from the school district.
18. Students with disabilities have the right to appropriate, evidence-based positive behavioral intervention services that are proactive in addressing behaviors that effect learning.
19. Children with disabilities have the right to appropriate early intervention services prior to the age of three and to appropriate transitions from early intervention to preschool settings.
20. At all times parents of students with disabilities should have an opportunity and formal process for complaint and remedy when there is disagreement. Students with disabilities and their families have the right to expect effective, fair, and competently administered due process procedures.
21. Policies should ensure a student's right to placement in the early childhood natural environment, neighborhood school and class he/she would otherwise attend, but for his/her disability.
22. Students with disabilities residing in institutional or correctional settings have a right to an appropriate education, including special education supports.

Transition:

23. Students with disabilities have the right to appropriate transition services that:
 - a) allow for exploration of individual interests;
 - b) are individualized;
 - c) are based in informed choice;

- d) are community-based;
- e) lead to outcomes that promote self-sufficiency, independence and competitive employment.

- 24. Transition programs, supports and policies should emphasize post-secondary training and competitive employment as the preferred outcome for students exiting public school.
- 25. Transition practices and policies should be based upon best-practice research and evidence, with an emphasis on research that indicates all students with disabilities, including those with significant disabilities, can achieve competitive integrated employment.

Students Eligible for Section 504:

- 26. Students with disabilities who qualify for Section 504 services have a right to adequate planning and supports to benefit from education. Students with disabilities have a right to be evaluated for Section 504 eligibility.

Education Professionals:

- 27. Students with disabilities, including those with significant disabilities, have the right to be taught by educators and other professionals who have the skills and knowledge necessary to meet the needs of children with disabilities.
- 28. Policies and funding must support a comprehensive system of personnel development to ensure that personnel providing services to students with disabilities are trained in best practices related to the position in which they serve.

Education Funding:

- 29. Education funding and policies that allocate funding must provide an equal educational opportunity for students with disabilities. Funding at the local level must be sufficient to meet the needs identified in a student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

Accountability:

- 30. Education accountability systems must include disaggregated data and performance targets for categories of students with disabilities.
- 31. Education policies must require accountability by the agencies responsible for monitoring compliance with state and federal special education laws. Accountability measures must be driven by measurable results.
- 32. Accountability systems must apply to all students with disabilities, including those with significant disabilities, and all educational settings that receive public funding.