



STATE SPECIAL SCHOOLS AND SERVICES

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.
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.

Education Code Relating to State Schools

The California School for the Deaf is part of the public school system of the state except that it derives no revenue from the State School Fund, and has for its object the education of the deaf who, because of their severe hearing loss and educational needs, cannot be provided an appropriate educational program and related services in the regular public schools.

The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:

- It is essential for the well-being and growth of deaf and hard-of-hearing pupils that educational programs recognize the unique nature of deafness and ensure that all deaf and hard-of-hearing pupils have appropriate, ongoing, and fully accessible educational opportunities.
- It is essential that a deaf or hard-of-hearing pupil obtain an education in which special education teachers, psychologists, speech therapists, assessors, administrators, and other school and residential program personnel understand the unique nature of deafness and are trained to work with a deaf or hard-of-hearing pupil.
- It is essential that a deaf or hard-of-hearing pupil obtain an education in which his or her special education teachers are proficient in the primary language mode of that pupil.
- It is essential that a deaf or hard-of-hearing pupil obtain an education in which his or her parents are involved in determining the extent, content, and purpose of programs.
- It is essential that a deaf or hard-of-hearing pupil, like all pupils, have programs in which his or her unique vocational needs are provided for, including appropriate research, curricula, programs, staff, and outreach.
- Each deaf or hard-of-hearing pupil should receive an education that allows him or her to master a primary language.