

## **Special Education or Section 504 Services**

The Newman International Academy Special Education Department provides individual evaluation and educational planning for students with disabilities who would benefit from special education assessment, specially designed instruction, and/or related services to support their education. In general, students with disabilities must qualify under one of the thirteen IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) eligible disabilities:

Auditory Impairment, Autism, Deaf/Blindness, Emotional Disturbance, Intellectual Disability, Multi Disabilities, Non-Categorical Early Childhood, Orthopedic Impairment, Other Health Impairment, Speech Impairment, Visual Impairment, Specific Learning Disability or Traumatic Brain Injury. The Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) committee determines the instructional arrangement based on the student's Individual Educational Plan (IEP). An Admission Review and Dismissal (ARD) meeting will be held within 30 days of completion of an initial evaluation/ Full Individual Evaluation (FIE) to review the results of the evaluation and to determine if the student is eligible for Special Education services.

Contacts for Special Education and 504 Referrals:

Tracy Rodman, Director of Special Education: 682-207-5175 ext. 3021

Molly Scott, Assistant Director of Special Education: 682-207-5175 ext. 3025

Robert Noland, Lead 504 Coordinator: 682-352-6801

Kathy Tinklenberg, Lead Dyslexia Teacher: 682-400-4010

## **TEA- Required Notice Regarding Special Education and Section 504**

For those students who are having difficulty in the regular classroom, all school districts and open enrollment charter schools must consider tutorial, compensatory, and other academic or behavior support services that are available to all students, including a process based on Response to Intervention (RtI).

The implementation of RtI has the potential to have a positive impact on the ability of districts and charter schools to meet the needs of all struggling students.

If a student has learning difficulties, their parents may contact the individual(s) listed below to learn about the school's general education referral or screening system for support services. This system links students to a variety of support options, including making a referral for a special education evaluation or for a Section 504 evaluation to determine if the student needs specific aids, accommodations, or services. A parent may request an evaluation for special education or Section 504 services at any time.

### Special Education Referrals:

If a parent makes a written request for an initial evaluation for special education services to the director of special education services or an administrative employee of the school district or open enrollment charter school, the district or charter school must respond no later than 15 school days after receiving the request. At that time, the district or charter school must give the parent prior written notice of whether it agrees to or refuses to evaluate the student, along with a copy of the *Notice of Procedural Safeguards*. If the school district or charter school agrees to evaluate the student, it must also give the parent the opportunity to give written consent for the evaluation.

Please note that a request for a special education evaluation may be made verbally and does not need to be in writing. Districts and charter schools must still comply with all federal prior written notice and procedural safeguard requirements and the requirements for identifying, locating, and evaluating children who are suspected of being a child with a disability and in need of special education. However, a verbal request does not require the district or charter school to respond within the 15-school-day timeline.

If the district or charter school decides to evaluate the student, it must complete the student's initial evaluation and evaluation report no later than 45 school days from the day it receives a parent's written consent to evaluate the student. However, if the student is absent from school during the evaluation period for three or more school days, the evaluation period will be extended by the number of school days equal to the number of school days that the student is absent.

There is an exception to the 45-school-day timeline. If a district or charter school receives a parent's consent for the initial evaluation at least 35 but less than 45 school days before the last instructional day of the school year, it must complete the written report and provide a copy of the report to the parent by June 30 of that year. However, if the student is absent from school for three or more days during the evaluation period, the June 30th due date no longer applies. Instead, the general timeline of 45 school days plus extensions for absences of three or more days will apply.

Upon completing the evaluation, the district or charter school must give the parent a copy of the evaluation report at no cost.

Additional information regarding special education is available from the district or charter school in a companion document titled *Parent's Guide to the Admission, Review, and Dismissal Process*.

Contact Person for Special Education Referrals:

The designated person to contact regarding options for a student experiencing learning difficulties or regarding a referral for evaluation for special education services is:

Contact Person: Tracy Rodman

Phone Number: 682-207-5175 ext. 3025

Section 504 Referrals:

Each school district or charter school must have standards and procedures in place for the evaluation and placement of students in the district's or charter school's Section 504 program. Districts and charter schools must also implement a system of procedural safeguards that includes notice, an opportunity for a parent or guardian to examine relevant records, an impartial hearing with an opportunity for participation by the parent or guardian and representation by counsel, and a review procedure.

Contact Person for Section 504 Referrals:

The designated person to contact regarding options for a student experiencing learning difficulties or regarding a referral for evaluation for Section 504 services is:

Contact Person: Robert Noland

Phone Number: 682-352-6801

Additional Information: The following websites provide information and resources for students with disabilities and their families.

- [Legal Framework for the Child-Centered Special Education Process](#)
- [Partners Resource Network](#)
- [Special Education Information Center](#)
- [Texas Project First](#)