

## **INCLUSION OF STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

All elementary and secondary schools of the Catholic Diocese of Peoria shall admit students with special needs whenever possible.

## **INCLUSION OF STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

The Section 504 Handbook shall be considered to be part of this Administrative Regulation and must be consulted by all elementary and secondary schools regarding the inclusion of students with special needs. In addition, schools should consider the following guidelines when enrolling special needs students at the local level:

1. The goal of inclusion requires the cooperation of the school and the parents and the realization by both that circumstances and available resources may make inclusion (in whole or in part) of any particular student impossible.
2. When a special needs student applies for enrollment, the administration and the parents/guardians should meet to define the student's special needs and the school's ability to meet those needs. This meeting might include a conference with the student.
3. In accordance with the procedure outlined in the Section 504 Handbook an annual written agreement between the school and the student's family should be developed and executed before the commencement of each academic year. This agreement should set forth specific educational goals and expectations of the student and the responsibilities of both the school and the student's family.
4. The annual agreement should specifically identify the extent of the need for a teacher's aide for the student. The cost of a teacher's aide might need to be borne in whole or part by the student and his/her family, with such public or private assistance as may be obtained. Failure to reach agreement on these points in advance of the academic year may result in the student not being allowed to enroll.
5. In-service programs should be given to educational commission members, faculty, staff and students on an annual basis or more frequently if needed.
6. Any special arrangements for grading, promotion, and graduation should be described within the annual agreement.
7. Failure of the student or his/her family to abide by the terms of the annual agreement (including but not limited to any financial requirements) shall be grounds for dismissal.

- 8 “Inclusion” as used herein contemplates including the student in a normal classroom and classroom activities.
9. Some consideration of partial inclusion may be appropriate. Where some special services are available without charge to the family from the public schools or other sources (such as speech therapy, occupational therapy, etc.), these services might be coupled with part-time inclusion in the normal parochial school classroom.

Local schools may develop additional conditions for the inclusion of special needs students in their own schools. This should not be construed, however, as to encourage the setting of “quotas” or overly restrictive standards that violate the underlying philosophy of Policy D-105.