

Sec. 1. NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY

No qualified student with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any service, program, or activity provided or offered by SFA Charter School.

42 U.S.C. 12132; 29 U.S.C. 794(a); 34 CFR 104.4(a).

Sec. 2. FREE APPROPRIATE PUBLIC EDUCATION

Eligible students with disabilities shall enjoy the right to a free appropriate public education ("FAPE"), which may include instruction in the regular classroom, instruction through special teaching, or instruction through approved contracts. Instruction shall be supplemented by the provision of related services when appropriate. Education Code 29.003(a).

FAPE means special education and related services that:

1. Have been provided at public expense, under public supervision and direction, and without charge;
2. Meet standards set out by Texas Education Agency ("TEA");
3. Include an appropriate preschool, elementary school, or secondary school education; and
4. Are provided in conformity with the student's individualized education program ("IEP").

20 U.S.C. 1401(9); 34 CFR 300.13, 300.17, 300.36.

Sec. 3. LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT

SFA Charter School shall ensure that, to the maximum extent possible, children with disabilities shall be educated with children who are not disabled. Special classes, special schooling, or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment shall occur only when the nature or severity of the child's disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be satisfactorily achieved.

20 U.S.C. 1412(a)(5); 34 CFR 300.114(a)(2).

Sec. 4. DISCIPLINE

All disciplinary actions regarding students with disabilities shall be determined in accordance with applicable federal regulations, Education Code Chapter 37, 19 Administrative Code 89.1053, and SFA Charter School policy.

19 TAC 89.1050(g).

Sec. 5. INSTRUCTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS AND SETTINGS

Instructional arrangements and settings shall be based on the individual needs and IEPs of eligible students receiving special education services. Instructional arrangements and settings include:

1. Mainstream: services provided in the regular classroom in accordance with the student's IEP;
2. Speech therapy: speech therapy services provided, whether in a regular education classroom or other setting;
3. Resource room/services: services provided in a setting other than the regular classroom for less than 50% of the regular school day;
or
4. Other program options, including contracts with other districts and programs approved by TEA.

19 TAC 89.63(c), (f).

Sec. 6. RELATED SERVICES

“Related services” means transportation, and such developmental, corrective, and other supportive services as may be required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from special education, including the early identification and assessment of disabling conditions in children.

The term includes speech-language pathology and audiology services, interpreting services, psychological services, physical and occupational therapy, recreation, including therapeutic recreation, social work services, school nurse services designed to enable a child with a disability to receive a FAPE as described in the child's IEP, counseling services, including rehabilitation counseling, orientation and mobility services, and medical services, except that medical services shall be for diagnostic and evaluation purposes only.

The term does not include a medical device that is surgically implanted, the optimization of the device's functioning, or the replacement of such device.

20 U.S.C. 1401(26); 34 CFR 300.34.

Sec. 1. APPLICABILITY OF TEXAS EDUCATION CODE

An open-enrollment charter school is subject to a prohibition, restriction, or requirement, as applicable, imposed by Title 2 (Public Education) of the Texas Education Code, or a rule adopted under Title 2 (Public Education) of the Texas Education Code relating to special education programs.

Education Code 12.104(b)(2)(F).

SFA Charter School shall comply with the requirements for monitoring compliance with federal and state laws relating to special education pursuant to Texas Education Code Section 29.010.

Sec. 2. ASSURANCE

Open-enrollment charter schools must submit a plan to the Texas Education Agency that provides assurances that the charter school has in effect policies, procedures and programs that are consistent with the State and Federal policies and procedures governing special education.

20 U.S.C. 1413(a); 34 CFR 300.200-.201.

Sec. 3. PUBLIC EDUCATION INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (PEIMS)

“Most of the data TEA requests from school districts and charter schools are gathered using the Public Education Information Management System (“PEIMS”). PEIMS data are used for the Academic Excellence Indicator System (“AEIS”), Foundation School Program (“FSP”), statistical purposes, federal reporting, legislative requests, and audit purposes. Through PEIMS, schools report data including student demographic and academic performance, student attendance, personnel information, financial data, and organizational information.” *Texas Open-Enrollment Charter School Handbook* (TEA, Division of Charter School Administration, September 2011).

Sec. 4. APPLICABILITY OF TITLE RELATING TO THE PEIMS

An open-enrollment charter school is subject to a prohibition, restriction, or requirement, as applicable, imposed by Title 2 (Public Education) of the Texas Education Code, or a rule adopted under Title 2 (Public Education) of the Texas Education Code, relating to the PEIMS to the extent necessary to monitor compliance with Subchapter D (Open-Enrollment Charter School), Chapter 12, Texas Education Code.

Education Code 12.104(b)(2)(A).

The Superintendent or designee shall prepare required PEIMS submissions in accordance with PEIMS Data Standards and Module 10 of the Financial Accountability System Resource Guide. The Superintendent or designee may collaborate with the regional education service center in preparing and timely submitting PEIMS reports.

Sec. 5. CONTRACTS FOR SERVICES; RESIDENTIAL PLACEMENT

SFA Charter School may contract with a public or private facility, institution, or agency inside or outside of this State for the provision of services to students with disabilities. Each contract for residential placement must be approved by the Commissioner. The Commissioner may approve a residential placement contract only after at least a programmatic evaluation of personnel qualifications, adequacy of physical plant and equipment, and curriculum content. The Commissioner may approve either the whole or a part of a facility or program.

Education Code 29.008(a).

When a student, including one for whom the State is managing conservator, is placed primarily for care or treatment reasons in a private residential facility that operates its own private education program, none of the costs may be paid from public education funds. If a residential placement primarily for care or treatment reasons involves a private residential facility in which the education program is provided by the open-enrollment charter school, the portion of the costs that includes appropriate education services, as determined by the admission, review, and dismissal (“ARD”) committee, shall be paid from State and Federal education funds.

Education Code 29.008(c)..

If SFA Charter School contracts for the provision of education services rather than providing the services, SFA Charter School shall oversee the implementation of the student’s individualized education program (“IEP”) and shall annually reevaluate the appropriateness of the arrangement. An approved facility, institution, or agency with whom SFA Charter School contracts shall periodically report to SFA Charter School on the services the student has received or will receive in accordance with the contract as well as diagnostic or other evaluative information that SFA Charter School requires in order to fulfill its obligations under Subchapter A (Special Education), Chapter 29, Texas Education Code.

Education Code 29.008(d).

Sec. 6. FACILITIES

Any construction of new facilities or alteration of existing facilities with authorized Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (“IDEA”) program funds must comply with the requirements of:

- Appendix A of Part 36 of Title 28, Code of Federal Regulations (commonly known as the *Americans with Disabilities Accessibility Guidelines for Buildings and Facilities*); and
- Appendix A of Subpart 101-19.6 of Title 41, Code of Federal Regulations (commonly known as the *Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards*).

Sec. 7. ADMINISTRATION OF EQUIPMENT

The ARD committee must consider whether the student needs assistive technology devices (“ATDs”) as part of the student’s special education, related services, or supplementary aids and services. On a case-by-case basis, the use of school-purchased ATDs in the student’s home or in other settings is required if the student’s ARD committee determines that the student needs access to those devices in order to receive free appropriate public education. (34 CFR §§300.105; 300.324(a)(2)(v); 20 USC §1414(d)(3)(B)(v))

Assistive technology means any device or equipment used to improve or maintain the function capabilities of a student with a disability. Assistive technology does not include a medical device that is surgically implanted. (34 CFR §§300.5-300.6)

SFA Charter School may transfer an ATD in accordance to TEC, §30.0015. The transfer agreement must include the standards in TEC §30.0015, including the following:

- 1) The transferor and transferee must represent and agree that the terms of the transfer are based on the fair market value of the ATD, determined in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.
- 2) The informed consent of the parent of the student with a disability, or the adult student, for whom the ATD is being transferred must be obtained before the transfer of an ATD pursuant to TEC, §30.0015. The procedures employed by SFA Charter School in obtaining informed consent shall be consistent with the procedures employed by the school to obtain parental consent under 34 CFR §300.300. Consistent with 34 CFR, §300.505(c), informed parental or adult student consent need not be obtained if the school can demonstrate that it has taken reasonable measures to obtain that consent, and the student’s parent or the adult student has failed to respond. To meet the reasonable measures requirement, the school must use procedures consistent with those described in 34 CFR, §300.322(d).
- 3) If the transfer is a sale, then the sale of the ATD shall be evidenced by a “Uniform Transfer Agreement” which includes the following:
 - a. the names of the transferor and the transferee (which may be any individual or entity identified in TEC, §30.0015(b));
 - b. the date of the transfer;
 - c. a description of the ATD being transferred;

- d. the terms of the transfer (including the transfer of warranties, to the extent applicable); and
- e. the signatures of authorized representatives of both transferor and transferee.

(19 TAC 89.1056)

Sec. 8. SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER DEFINED (20 U.S.C. §1401(10)(B)(i))

When used with respect to any public elementary school or secondary school special education teacher teaching in a State, such term means that—the teacher has obtained full State certification as a special education teacher (including certification obtained through alternative routes to certification), or passed the State special education teacher licensing examination, and holds a license to teach in the State as a special education teacher, except that when used with respect to any teacher teaching in a public charter school, the term means that the teacher meets the requirements set forth in the State’s public charter school law.

Sec. 9. COMPLIANCE WITH FEDERAL AND STATE PERSONNEL STANDARDS FOR INDIVIDUALS SERVING CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

SFA Charter School shall ensure that personnel standards for all individuals serving children with disabilities are met in accordance with the IDEA and its procedures.

SFA Charter School recognizes that both the Every Student Succeeds Act and the IDEA provide that charter school teachers must meet the requirements set forth in the State’s public charter school law. 20 U.S.C. §§ 6311(g)(2)(J); 20 U.S.C. §1401(10)(B)(i). In Texas, that means that the charter school special education teacher must be certified.

SFA Charter School shall make an ongoing good-faith effort to recruit and hire appropriately and adequately certified and/or licensed personnel to provide a wide range of special education and related services to students with disabilities who are eligible for special education services. Special education staffing needs come from the individualized decisions made by the Admission Review and Dismissal (“ARD”) committee.

SFA Charter School shall ensure that all personnel necessary to carry out the requirements of the IDEA 2004 are appropriately and adequately certified and/or licensed, prepared and assigned.

SFA Charter School adopts as policy the provisions under State and Federal law concerning personnel, including:

Charter school teachers must only meet the requirements of the State’s public charter school law, which differ from the requirements for Texas teacher certification. In Texas, State law

does not require a teacher employed by an open-enrollment charter school to be certified unless the teacher is assigned to teach in special education or bilingual education programs, in which case the appropriate State certification is required. The minimum qualification under State law for a teacher at an open-enrollment charter school, other than a special education or bilingual education teacher, is a bachelor's degree. However, the governing body of SFA Charter School may set the qualifications for teachers at a standard above what State law requires.

The open-enrollment charter school shall not employ a person as a teacher unless that person holds a bachelor's degree.

Education Code 12.129(a).

All special education and related service personnel shall be certified, endorsed, or licensed in the area or areas of assignment in accordance with 34 CFR 300.156; Education Code Sections 21.002, 21.003, and 29.304; or appropriate state agency credentials.

19 TAC 89.1131(a).

Sec. 10. NOTICE TO PARENTS – QUALIFICATIONS

The Superintendent or designee shall provide to the parent or guardian of each student enrolled in SFA Charter School written notice of the qualifications of each teacher employed by SFA Charter School.

Additionally, the Superintendent or designee shall, at the beginning of each school year, notify the parents of each student attending SFA Charter School that the parents may request, and SFA Charter School shall provide the parents on request (and in a timely manner), information regarding the professional qualifications of the student's classroom teachers, including, at a minimum, the following:

1. Whether the teacher has met state qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction.
2. Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which state qualification or licensing criteria have been waived.
3. Whether the teacher is teaching in the field of discipline of the certification of the teacher.
4. Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

SFA Charter School shall also provide to each individual parent timely notice that the parent's child has been assigned, or has been taught for four or more consecutive weeks by, a teacher who does not meet applicable state certification standards or licensure requirements at the grade level and subject area in which the teacher has been assigned.

POLICY GROUP 6 - SPECIAL EDUCATION
ADMISSION, REVIEW, AND DISMISSAL COMMITTEE

Sec. 1. ADMISSION, REVIEW AND DISMISSAL COMMITTEES

Stephen F Austin State University shall establish an admission, review and dismissal (“ARD”) committee for each eligible student with a disability and for each student for whom a full and individual initial evaluation is conducted. The ARD committee shall be the individualized education program (“IEP”) team defined at 34 CFR 300.321.

Sec. 2. ARD COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

The ARD committee and SFA Charter School are responsible for:

1. Evaluating, reevaluating, and determining eligibility for special education and related services;
2. Placement of students with disabilities, including disciplinary changes in placement;
3. Development of student IEPs;
4. Development and implementation of service plans for students who have been placed by their parents in private schools and who have been designated to receive special education and related services;
5. Compliance with the least restrictive environment standard;
6. Compliance with state requirements for reading diagnosis and state assessments;
7. Development of personal graduation plans;
8. Development of accelerated instruction under Education Code 28.0211 and intensive programs of instruction under Education Code 28.0213;
9. Evaluation, placement, and coordination of services for students who are deaf, hard of hearing, blind, or visually impaired; and
10. Determining eligibility for extracurricular activities, under Education Code 33.081.

34 CFR 300.116(a), 300.321(a); 19 TAC 89.1050(a).

Sec. 3. COMMITTEE MEMBERS

SFA Charter School shall ensure that each ARD committee meeting includes:

1. The parents of a child with a disability;
2. At least one regular education teacher of the child (if the child is, or may be, participating in the regular education environment) who must, to the extent practicable, be a teacher who is responsible for implementing a portion of the student’s IEP;
3. At least one special education teacher, or where appropriate, at least one special education provider of the child;
4. A representative of SFA Charter School who:
 - a. Is qualified to provide, or supervise the provision of, specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of children with disabilities;
 - b. Is knowledgeable about the general education curriculum; and
 - c. Is knowledgeable about the availability of SFA Charter School’s resources;

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5. An individual who can interpret the instructional implications of evaluation results, who may be a member of team described in Section 3(2)-(6);
6. At the discretion of the parent or SFA Charter School, other individuals who have knowledge or special expertise regarding the child, including related services personnel as appropriate;
7. The child, whenever appropriate;
8. To the extent appropriate, with the consent of the parent(s) or a student who has reached the age of majority, a representative of any participating agency that is likely to be responsible for providing or paying for transition services;
9. A representative from career and technical education ("CTE"), preferably the teacher, when considering initial or continued placement of a student in CTE;
10. For a child who is an emergent bilingual student, a member of the child's language-proficiency assessment committee ("LPAC");
11. For a child with an auditory impairment, including deaf-blindness, a teacher who is certified in the education of children with auditory impairments; and
12. For a child with a visual impairment, including deaf-blindness, a teacher who is certified in the education of children with visual impairments.

19 TAC 89.1050.

A SFA Charter School member of the ARD committee shall not be required to attend an IEP meeting, in whole or in part, if the parent and SFA Charter School agree in writing that the attendance is not necessary because the member's area of the curriculum or related services is not being modified or discussed during the meeting.

A SFA Charter School member of the ARD committee may be excused from attending an IEP meeting, in whole or in part, when the meeting involves a modification to or discussion of the member's area of curriculum or related services if the parent, in writing, and SFA Charter School consent to the excusal and the member submits, in writing, to the parent and the ARD committee, input into the development of the IEP before the meeting.

20 U.S.C. 1414(d)(1)(C); 34 CFR 300.321(e).

Sec. 4. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

SFA Charter School shall take steps to ensure that one or both of the parents of a student with a disability are present at each ARD committee meeting or are afforded the opportunity to participate, including:

1. Notifying the parents of the meeting early enough to ensure that they will have an opportunity to attend (the notice shall include all information required by applicable regulation); and
2. Scheduling the meeting at a mutually agreed time and place.

34 CFR 300.322(a)–(b); 19 TAC 89.1050.

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Sec. 5. ALTERNATIVE PARTICIPATION METHODS

If neither parent can attend an ARD committee meeting, SFA Charter School must use other methods to ensure parent participation, including individual or conference telephone calls.

20 U.S.C. 1414(f); 34 CFR 300.322(c).

An ARD committee meeting may be conducted without a parent in attendance if SFA Charter School is unable to convince the parents that they should attend. In such event, SFA Charter School must keep a record of its attempts to arrange a mutually agreed time and place, such as:

1. Detailed records of telephone calls made or attempted and the results of those calls;
2. Copies of correspondence sent to the parents and any responses received; and
3. Detailed records of visits made to the parent's home or place of employment and the results of those visits.

34 CFR 300.322(d).

Sec. 6. ARD COMMITTEE MEETINGS

SFA Charter School shall initiate and conduct ARD committee meetings for the purpose of developing, reviewing, and revising the IEP of a student with a disability. The committee shall review each student's IEP periodically, and, if appropriate, revise the IEP. A meeting must be held for this purpose at least once a year. The ARD committee must also determine the child's placement once per year.

If the student has a behavioral intervention plan ("BIP") as part of the child's IEP, the ARD committee must review the BIP at least annually and more frequently if appropriate to address the safety of the student, the safety of others, or changes in the child's circumstances that may impact the child's behavior in accordance with TEC 29.005(h).

A meeting does not include informal or unscheduled conversations involving SFA Charter School personnel and conversations on issues such as teaching methodology, lesson plans, or coordination of service provision. A meeting also does not include preparatory activities that SFA Charter School personnel engage in to develop a proposal or response to a parent proposal that will be discussed at a later meeting.

20 U.S.C. 1414(d)(4); 34 CFR 300.116(b)(1), 300.324(b), (c)(1); 300.501(b)(3).

a) *Meeting at Parent Request*

Upon request of a written request for an ARD committee meeting from a parent, the SFA Charter School must (1) schedule and convene a meeting; or (2) within five school days, provide the parent with written notice explaining why the district refuses to convene a meeting.

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19 TAC 89.1050(e).

b) *Transfer Students*

If a student transfers to SFA Charter School, and the student had a previous IEP in place, SFA Charter School shall provide the student with a free appropriate public education (“FAPE”), including services comparable to those described in the previous IEP, in consultation with the parents, until:

1. In the case of a student who transfers within the state, SFA Charter School adopts the previous IEP or develops, adopts, and implements a new IEP.
2. In the case of a student who had an IEP in effect in another state, SFA Charter School conducts an evaluation, if determined necessary by SFA Charter School, and develops, adopts, and implements a new IEP, if appropriate.

20 U.S.C. 1414(d)(2)(C)(i); 34 CFR 300.323(e), (f).

c) *Transfer of Records*

SFA Charter School shall take reasonable steps to promptly obtain the child’s records, including the IEP and supporting documents and any other records relating to the provision of special education or related services to the child, from the child’s previous district.

20 U.S.C. 1414(d)(2)(C)(ii); 34 CFR 300.323(g).

d) *Military Dependents*

SFA Charter School shall initially provide comparable services to a military student with disabilities based on his or her current IEP. This does not preclude SFA Charter School from performing subsequent evaluations to ensure appropriate placement of the student.

Education Code 162.002 art. V, § C.

Sec. 7. ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATIONS

The group of qualified professionals that determines whether a child is a child with a disability and the child’s educational needs is the ARD committee.

Evaluations and eligibility determinations shall adhere to the requirements set forth in the IDEA, the Texas Education Code, and their implementing regulations. For additional information, *see* PG-6.14 through 6.16.

19 TAC 89.1040(b), 89.1050(a)(5); 34 CFR 300.306(a)(1).

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SFA Charter School shall provide a copy of the evaluation report and the documentation of determination of eligibility at no cost to the parent.

20 U.S.C. 1414(b)(4)(B); 34 CFR 300.306(a).

The ARD committee must make its decisions regarding a student's initial eligibility determination and, when appropriate, the student's IEP and placement within the timeframes prescribed by state and federal law.

19 TAC 89.1011(d), (e).

Sec. 8. INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM

SFA Charter School shall develop, review, and revise an IEP for each child with a disability, and SFA Charter School shall have an IEP in effect for each child with a disability at the beginning of each school year.

20 U.S.C. 1412(a)(4),(d)(2)(A); 34 CFR 300.320(a).

The term “individualized education program” or “IEP” means a written statement for each child with a disability that includes:

1. A statement of the child's present levels of academic achievement and functional performance;
2. A statement of measurable annual goals, including academic and functional goals;
3. A description of how the child's progress toward the annual goals will be measured and when periodic reports on the progress of the child will be provided;
4. A statement of the specific special education and related services and supplementary aids and services, based on peer-reviewed research to the extent practicable, to be provided to the child;
5. A statement of the program modifications or supports for school personnel that will be provided for the child;
6. An explanation of the extent, if any, to which the child will not participate with nondisabled children in the regular class and in extracurricular and nonacademic activities;
7. The projected dates for initiation of services and modifications and the anticipated frequency, location, and duration of these services and modifications;
8. A statement of any individual appropriate accommodations that are necessary to measure the academic achievement and functional performance of the child on state or system-wide assessments;
9. If the ARD committee determines that the child must take an alternative assessment instead of a particular regular state or system-wide assessment, a statement of why the child cannot participate in the regular assessment and why the particular assessment selected is appropriate for the child;

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10. Beginning not later than the first IEP to be in effect when the child is 16, or younger if determined appropriate by the ARD committee, and updated annually thereafter, a statement of appropriate, measurable postsecondary goals and transition services needed to assist the child in reaching those goals; and
11. Beginning not later than one year before the child reaches the age of 17, a statement that the child has been informed of the rights that will transfer to the child upon reaching the age of majority.

20 U.S.C. 1414(d); 34 CFR 300.320; 19 TAC 89.1055.

Sec. 9. TRANSLATING IEPs

If the child's parent is unable to speak English, SFA Charter School shall:

1. Provide the parent with a written or audio-taped copy of the child's IEP translated into Spanish if Spanish is the parent's native language; or
2. If the parent's native language is a language other than Spanish, make a good faith effort to provide the parent with a written or audiotaped copy of the child's IEP translated into the parent's native language.

Education Code 29.005(d).

Sec. 10. AUTISM/PERVASIVE DEVELOPMENTAL DISORDERS

For students with autism/pervasive developmental disorders, the following strategies shall be considered by the ARD committee, based on peer-reviewed, research-based educational programming practices to the extent practicable and, when needed, addressed in the IEP:

1. Extended educational programming;
2. Daily schedules reflecting minimal unstructured time and active engagement in learning activities;
3. In-home training and community-based training or viable alternatives that assist the student with the acquisition of social/behavioral skills;
4. Positive behavior support strategies based on relevant information;
5. Beginning at any age, futures planning for integrated living, work, community, and educational environments that considers skills necessary to function in current and post-secondary environments;
6. Parent/family training and support, provided by qualified personnel with experience in Autism Spectrum Disorders ("ASD");
7. Suitable staff-to-student ratio appropriate to identified activities and as needed to achieve social/behavioral progress based on the child's developmental and learning level (acquisition, fluency, maintenance, generalization) that encourages work towards individual independence;
8. Communication interventions, including language forms and functions that enhance effective communication across settings;

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9. Social skills supports and strategies based on social skills assessment/curriculum and provided across settings;
10. Professional educator/staff support; and
11. Teaching strategies based on peer-reviewed, research-based practices for students with ASD.

If the ARD committee determines that services are not needed in one or more of the areas in 1–11 above, the IEP shall include a statement reflecting that decision and the basis upon which the determination was made.

19 TAC 89.1055(e)–(f).

Sec. 11. VISUAL IMPAIRMENT

SFA Charter School shall adopt written procedures as required in Education Code 30.002(c)(10) for providing special education services to students with visual impairments, if such services are necessary.

19 TAC 89.1075(b).

An IEP for a student with a visual impairment must include instruction in braille unless the student's ARD committee determines and documents that braille is not an appropriate literacy medium for the student, based on an evaluation of the student's appropriate literacy media and literacy skills and the student's current and future instructional needs.

Education Code 30.002.

Sec. 12. STUDENTS WHO ARE DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING

SFA Charter School must develop an IEP for students who are deaf or hard of hearing in which the students have an education in which their unique communication mode is respected, used, and developed to an appropriate level of proficiency.

Education Code 29.303.

Sec. 13. COLLABORATIVE PROCESS

All members of the ARD committee shall have the opportunity to participate in a collaborative manner in developing the IEP. Decisions concerning the required elements of the IEP shall be made by agreement of the required members, if possible. The ARD committee may agree to an annual IEP or an IEP of shorter duration.

a) *Recess*

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When agreement about all required elements of the IEP is not achieved, the parent or adult student who disagrees shall be offered a single opportunity to have the ARD committee recess for a period not to exceed ten school days. This recess is not required when:

1. The student's presence on campus represents a danger of physical harm to the student or others;
2. The student has committed an expellable offense; or
3. The student has committed an offense that may lead to placement in a disciplinary alternative education program.

These requirements do not prohibit the members of the ARD committee from recessing an ARD committee meeting for reasons other than failure of the parents and SFA Charter School to reach agreement about all required elements of an IEP.

During the recess, the ARD committee members shall consider alternatives, gather additional data, prepare further documentation, and/or obtain additional resource persons to enable the ARD committee to reach agreement.

The date, time, and place for continuing the ARD committee meeting shall be determined by agreement before the recess.

19 TAC 89.1050(g).

When an ARD committee agrees to recess and reconvene due to a lack of mutual agreement about one or more required IEP elements, the parent or SFA Charter School may request an independent facilitator from the Texas Education Agency in accordance with 19 TAC 89.1197 and TEC 29.020.

b) *No Agreement Reached*

If, after the ten-day recess, the ARD committee still cannot reach agreement, SFA Charter School shall implement the IEP that it has determined to be appropriate for the student. A written statement of the basis for the disagreement shall be included in the IEP. Each ARD committee member who disagrees with the IEP is entitled to include a statement of disagreement in the IEP.

TEC 29.005(c); 19 TAC 89.1050(g).

When SFA Charter School implements an IEP with which the parents or an adult student disagree, it shall provide prior written notice in compliance with applicable regulations and SFA Charter School policy.

19 TAC 89.1050.

Sec. 14. IEP MODIFICATION

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After a student's annual ARD committee meeting, changes to an IEP may be made either by the entire ARD committee or by amending the IEP by agreement, rather than redrafting the entire IEP. To do so, the parent and SFA Charter School must agree to not convene an ARD committee meeting to amend the IEP and SFA Charter School must develop a written document to amend or modify the IEP.

Upon request, a parent shall be provided with a revised copy of the IEP with amendments incorporated.

Decisions regarding eligibility, changes of placement, and manifestation determination reviews may not be conducted through the amendment process.

34 CFR 300.324(a)(4),(6).

To the extent possible, SFA Charter School shall encourage the consolidation of reevaluation meetings for the child and other ARD committee meetings for the child.

20 U.S.C. 1414(d)(3)(D)–(F); 34 CFR 300.324(a)(4)–(a)(6).

Sec. 15. LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT

SFA Charter School shall ensure that, to the maximum extent possible, children with disabilities shall be educated with children who are not disabled. Special classes, special schooling, or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment shall occur only when the nature or severity of the child's disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be satisfactorily achieved.

20 U.S.C. 1412(a)(5); 34 CFR 300.114(a)(2).

Sec. 16. EXTENDED SCHOOL YEAR SERVICES

SFA Charter School shall ensure that ESY services are available as necessary to provide a student with a disability with a FAPE.

ESY services must be provided only if the ARD committee determines, on an individual basis, that the services are necessary for a FAPE. SFA Charter School may not limit ESY services to particular categories of disability or unilaterally limit the type, amount, or duration of ESY services.

34 CFR 300.106; 19 TAC 89.1065.

Sec. 17. STATE ASSESSMENTS

The TEA shall develop or adopt appropriate criterion-referenced alternative assessment instruments to be administered to each student in a special education program for whom a state assessment instrument adopted under Education Code 39.023(a), even with allowable

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accommodations, would not provide an appropriate measure of student achievement, as determined by the student's ARD committee, including assessment instruments approved by the Commissioner that measures growth. The assessment instruments developed or adopted, including the assessment instruments approved by the Commissioner, must, to the extent allowed under federal law, provide a district with options for the assessment of students.

The TEA may not adopt a performance standard that indicates that a student's performance on the alternate assessment does not meet standards if the lowest level of the assessment accurately represents the student's developmental level as determined by the student's ARD committee.

The student's ARD committee shall determine whether any allowable modification is necessary in administering to the student a required end-of-course ("EOC") assessment instrument under Education Code 39.023(c), and whether the student is required to achieve satisfactory performance on an EOC assessment instrument to receive a high school diploma.

Sec. 18. TRANSPORTATION

SFA Charter School shall provide special transportation with federal funds only when the ARD committee determines that the condition of the student warrants the service in order for the student to receive the special education and related services (if any) set forth in the IEP.

19 TAC 89.1096(e).

Sec. 19. TRANSITION SERVICES

a) *Definitions*

"Transition services" means a coordinated set of activities for a child with a disability that:

1. Is designed to be within a results-oriented process, that is focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of the child to facilitate the child's movement from school to post-school activities, including postsecondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation.
2. Is based on the individual child's needs, taking into account the child's strengths, preferences, and interests; and includes:
 - a. Instruction;
 - b. Related services;
 - c. Community experiences;
 - d. The development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives; and
 - e. If appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and provision of a functional vocational evaluation.

20 U.S.C. 1401(34); 34 CFR 300.43.

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20 U.S.C. 1414(c)(5); 34 CFR 300.102(a)(3), 300.305(e)(2); 19 TAC 89.1070.

Sec. 20. BEHAVIOR IMPROVEMENT PLANS/BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION PLANS

The ARD committee may determine that a behavior improvement plan or a behavioral intervention plan (“BIP”) is appropriate for a student with an IEP. If deemed appropriate, the BIP shall be included as part of the student's IEP and provided to each teacher with responsibility for educating the student.

If a BIP is included as part of a student's IEP, the ARD committee shall review the plan at least annually and more frequently if appropriate to address:

1. changes in a student's circumstances that may impact the student's behavior, such as:
 - a. the placement of the student in a different educational setting;
 - b. an increase or persistence in disciplinary actions taken regarding the student for similar types of behavioral incidents;
 - c. a pattern of unexcused absences; or
 - d. an unauthorized unsupervised departure from an educational setting; or
2. the safety of the student or others.

Education Code 29.005(g),(h).

Sec. 21. COVID-19 SPECIAL EDUCATION RECOVERY ACT¹

a) *IEP Supplement Applicability*

Not later than May 1, 2022, SFA Charter School shall prepare a supplement to be included with the IEP developed under Education Code 29.005(b) for each child who was enrolled in SFA Charter School's special education program during the 2019-2020 school year or the 2020-2021 school year.

b) *Required Content*

The supplement must include information indicating:

1. if applicable, whether the written report of the child's full individual and initial evaluation under Education Code 29.004 was completed during the 2019-2020 school year or the 2020-2021 school year and, if so, whether the report was completed by the date required under section 29.004;
2. if applicable, whether the child's initial IEP was developed under Education Code 29.005(b) during the 2019-2020 school year or the 2020-2021 school year and, if so, whether the program was developed by the date required under 34 CFR 300.323(c)(1);

¹ The provisions set forth in Section 22 expire Sept. 1, 2023.

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3. whether the provision of special services to the child under an IEP during the 2019-2020 school year or the 2020-2021 school year was interrupted, reduced, delayed, suspended, or discontinued; and
4. whether compensatory educational services are appropriate for the child based on the information under (1)-(3) above or any other factors.

c) *Exception*

Education Code 29.0052 does not apply to a child if during the 2020-2021 school year the child's IEP documents the information described in Subsections (b)(1)-(4) above.

Education Code 29.0052.

Sec. 22. SUPPLEMENTAL SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES PROGRAM

The Texas Education Agency ("TEA") shall establish and administer a supplemental special education services program under Chapter 29, Education Code, Subchapter A-1 ("the SSES Program"). The SSES Program provides a grant of not more than \$1,500 to the parent of an eligible student for purchase certain supplemental special education services and supplemental special education instructional materials.

a) *ARD Committee Duties*

For a student who has been approved to participate in the SSES Program, the ARD committee shall meet and provide to the parent:

1. Information regarding the types of supplemental special education services available under the SSES Program and provided by TEA-approved providers for which an account maintained under Education Code 29.042(b) may be used; and
2. Instructions regarding accessing the SSES Program account.

Education Code 29.048(b).

b) *ARD Committee Prohibited Considerations*

The ARD committee shall not consider a student's receipt of services under the SSES Program when developing the student's IEP.

Education Code 29.048(a).

The SFA Charter School is an elementary school serving students from kindergarten to 5th grade and does not have adult students.

SFA Charter School is an elementary school serving students from kindergarten through 5th grade and does not serve Prekindergarten students.

POLICY GROUP 6 - SPECIAL EDUCATION
CHILDREN WHO TRANSFER

Sec. 1. STUDENTS WHO TRANSFER WITH AN IEP DURING THE SAME SCHOOL YEAR

a. Texas Transfers

When a student transfers to SFA Charter School from another school within Texas, SFA Charter School shall provide a free appropriate public education (“FAPE”) to the student. SFA Charter School shall provide comparable services as those described in the individualized education program (“IEP”) the student transferred with until SFA Charter School adopts the student’s IEP from the previous school, or develops, adopts, and implements a new IEP.

34 CFR 300.323(e); 19 TAC 89.1050(j)(1).

b. Out-of-State Transfers

If the student with a disability, transfers to SFA Charter School from a school outside of Texas, SFA Charter School shall provide the student with FAPE, including comparable services, until SFA Charter School conducts an evaluation and develops, adopts, and implements a new IEP.

A new IEP must be implemented within 30 school days from the date the student is verified as being a student eligible for special education services.

34 CFR 300.323(f); 19 TAC 89.1050(j)(2).

If a student transfers from SFA Charter School, SFA Charter School will furnish the student’s special education records to the student’s new school not later than the 10th working day after the date a request for the information is received by SFA Charter School.

19 TAC 89.1050(j)(3).

Sec. 2. STUDENTS WHO TRANSFER WITH AN IEP DURING THE SUMMER

A student with a disability who has an IEP in place from a previous in- or out-of-state LEA and who enrolls in a new LEA during the summer is not considered a transfer student for the purposes of 34 CFR 300.323(e) or (f) and corresponding state law and/or regulations.

The new LEA must; (1) implement the IEP from the previous LEA in full on the first day of class of the new school year; or (2) must convene an ARD committee meeting during the summer to revise the student's IEP for implementation on the first day of class of the new school year.

19 TAC 89.1050(j)(4).

POLICY GROUP 6 - SPECIAL EDUCATION
CHILDREN WHO TRANSFER

Sec. 1. STUDENTS WHO TRANSFER WITH AN IEP DURING THE SAME SCHOOL YEAR

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When a student transfers to SFA Charter School from another school within Texas, SFA Charter School shall provide a free appropriate public education (“FAPE”) to the student. SFA Charter School shall provide comparable services as those described in the individualized education program (“IEP”) the student transferred with until SFA Charter School adopts the student’s IEP from the previous school, or develops, adopts, and implements a new IEP.

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The new LEA must; (1) implement the IEP from the previous LEA in full on the first day of class of the new school year; or (2) must convene an ARD committee meeting during the summer to revise the student's IEP for implementation on the first day of class of the new school year.

19 TAC 89.1050(j)(4).

Sec. 1. BILINGUAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

SFA Charter School shall identify emergent bilingual students based on state criteria. SFA Charter School shall provide an appropriate Bilingual Education (BE) or English as a Second Language (ESL) program conducted by teachers certified for such courses.

Education Code Chapter 29, Subchapter B; 19 TAC 89.1201-1265; Education Code 29.060(a).

Sec. 2. STUDENT WITH DISABILITIES AND EMERGENT BILINGUAL STUDENTS

SFA Charter School shall ensure that an emergent bilingual student who also qualifies for special education services as a student with a disability under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act is not refused services in a bilingual education or English as a second language program solely because the student has a disability.

19 TAC 89.1230.

Sec. 3. APPLICABILITY OF TITLE RELATING TO BILINGUAL EDUCATION

An open-enrollment charter school is subject to a prohibition, restriction, or requirement, as applicable, imposed by Title 2 (Public Education) of the Texas Education Code, or a rule adopted under Title 2 (Public Education) of the Texas Education Code, relating to bilingual education under Subchapter B (Bilingual Education and Special Language Programs), Chapter 29, Texas Education Code.

Education Code 12.104(b)(2)(G).

SFA Charter School adopts the requirements of Subchapter B (Bilingual Education and Special Language Programs), Chapter 29, Texas Education Code pursuant to Education Code 12.104(b)(2)(G).

Sec. 4. ESTABLISHMENT OF BILINGUAL EDUCATION AND SPECIAL LANGUAGE PROGRAM

SFA Charter School shall establish a BE or ESL program as required by Education Code Section 29.053 (Establishment of Bilingual Education and Special Language Programs) and in accordance with the procedures established by the Texas Education Agency (“TEA”), unless otherwise excepted under Education Code 29.054 (Exception).

Sec. 5. LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY ASSESSMENT COMMITTEES

SFA Charter School shall further establish a Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (“LPAC”) that complies with Education Code Section 29.063. The LPAC shall select the appropriate assessment option for each English language learner (ELL) in accordance with this

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CLOSING THE GAP

subchapter. For each ELL who receives special education services, the student's admission, review, and dismissal ("ARD") committee in conjunction with the student's LPAC shall select the appropriate assessments. The LPAC shall document the decisions and justifications in the student's permanent record file, and the ARD committee shall document the decisions and justifications in the student's individualized education program. Assessment decisions shall be made on an individual student basis and in accordance with administrative procedures established by the TEA.

19 TAC 101.1005(a).

Sec. 6. PROGRAM CONTENT; METHOD OF INSTRUCTION

SFA Charter School's bilingual education program's content and instruction shall comply with Education Code Section 29.055.

Sec. 7. ENROLLMENT OF STUDENTS IN PROGRAM

SFA Charter School shall comply with the TEA criteria for identification, assessment, and classification of emergent bilingual students eligible for entry into the program or exit from the program.

Education Code 29.056(a); 19 TAC 89.1226.

The student's parent must approve a student's entry into the program, exit from the program, or placement in the program. The open-enrollment charter school or parent may appeal the decision under Education Code Section 29.064.

Education Code 29.056(a).

SFA Charter School, through its LPAC, shall evaluate and consider reenrollment of students who have transferred out of a bilingual education or special language program under Education Code Section 29.056(h) as required by Education Code Section 29.0561.

Sec. 8. FACILITIES; CLASSES

SFA Charter School shall ensure that bilingual education and special language programs are located in the regular public charter school rather than in separate facilities.

Education Code 29.057.

Sec. 9. ENROLLMENT OF STUDENTS WHO ARE NOT EMERGENT BILINGUAL STUDENTS.

SFA Charter School ensures that enrollment of students who do not have limited English proficiency may occur only if the requirements of Education Code Section 29.058 are met.

Education Code 29.058.

Sec. 10. COOPERATION AMONG SCHOOLS

SFA Charter School may cooperate with other schools to provide a bilingual education or special language program.

Education Code 29.059.

Sec. 11. PRESCHOOL, SUMMER SCHOOL, AND EXTENDED TIME PROGRAMS

Each open-enrollment charter school that is required to offer a bilingual education or special language program shall offer a voluntary program for students of limited English proficiency who will be eligible for admission to kindergarten or the first grade at the beginning of the school year. A school that operates on a system permitted by the Texas Education Code other than a semester system shall offer 120 hours of instruction on a schedule the governing board establishes. The program shall meet the requirements of Education Code Section 29.060.

Education Code 29.060(a).

Enrollment of a student in the program is optional with the parent of the student.

Education Code 29.060(b).

The program must be an intensive bilingual education or special language program that meets standards established by the Texas Education Agency. The student/teacher ratio for the program may not exceed 18:1.

Education Code 29.060(c).

SFA Charter School may establish on a full- or part-time basis summer school, extended day, or extended week bilingual education or special language programs for students of limited English proficiency and may join with other schools or schools in establishing the programs.

Education Code 29.060(d).

The programs required or authorized by Education Code Section 29.060 may not be a substitute for programs required to be provided during the regular school year.

Education Code 29.060(e).

The legislature may appropriate money from the foundation school fund for support of a program under Education Code Section 29.060(a).

Education Code 29.060(f).

Sec. 12. BILINGUAL EDUCATION AND SPECIAL LANGUAGE PROGRAM TEACHERS

SFA Charter School shall ensure that bilingual education and special language program teachers are properly certified.

Education Code 29.061.

Sec. 13. APPEALS

A parent of a student enrolled in a bilingual education or special language program may appeal to the Commissioner of Education if SFA Charter School fails to comply with the requirements established by law or by the TEA. If the parent disagrees with the placement of the student in the program, the parent may appeal that decision to the Board. Appeals shall be conducted in accordance with procedures adopted by the Commissioner of Education under Chapter 157 of the Texas Administrative Code.

Education Code 29.064; 19 TAC 89.1240.

Sec. 14. PEIMS REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

SFA Charter School shall meet Public Education Information Management System Reporting Requirements with respect to its bilingual education or special language programs.

Education Code 29.066.

POLICY GROUP 6 - SPECIAL EDUCATION
CONSENT AND PRIOR WRITTEN NOTICE

Sec. 1. CONSENT

Consent means that:

1. The parent has been fully informed of all information relevant to the activity for which consent is sought, in his or her native language, or other mode of communication;
2. The parent understands and agrees in writing to the activity for which his or her consent is sought, and the consent describes that activity and lists the records (if any) that will be released and to whom; and
3. The parent understands that the granting of consent is voluntary on the part of the parent and may be revoked at any time. A revocation of consent is not retroactive.

If the parent revokes consent in writing for his or her child's receipt of services after the child is initially provided special education and related services, SFA Charter School is not required to amend the child's education records to remove any references to the child's receipt of services because of the revocation of consent.

34 CFR 300.9.

Sec. 2. LANGUAGE OF NOTICES

The procedural safeguards and prior notices described below must be written in a language understandable to the general public. The notice must be provided in the native language of the parent or other mode of communication used by the parent, unless it is clearly not feasible to do so.

34 CFR 300.503(c), 300.504(d).

a) *Electronic Delivery of Notices*

A parent of a child with a disability may elect to receive required notices by electronic mail, if SFA Charter School makes that option available.

34 CFR 300.505.

Sec. 3. NOTICE OF PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS

SFA Charter School shall provide a copy of the procedural safeguards to parents ~~only~~ once per year, except that a copy also shall be given to the parents:

1. Upon initial referral or parental request for evaluation;

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CONSENT AND PRIOR WRITTEN NOTICE

2. Upon receipt of the first state complaint and upon receipt of the first due process complaint in a school year;
3. On the date of a decision to make a disciplinary removal that is a change in placement; and
4. Upon request by a parent.

SFA Charter School may also place a current copy of the procedural safeguards notice on its Internet website.

a) *Contents of Notice*

The notice shall include a full explanation of the procedural safeguards relating to:

1. Independent educational evaluations;
2. Prior written notice;
3. Parental consent;
4. Access to educational records;
5. Opportunity to present and resolve complaints through the due process complaint and state complaint procedures, including:
 - a. The time period in which to file a complaint,
 - b. The opportunity for SFA Charter School to resolve the complaint; and
 - c. The difference between the due process complaint and the state complaint procedures, including the jurisdiction of each procedure, what issues may be raised, filing and decisional timelines, and relevant procedures.
6. The availability of mediation;
7. The child's placement during pendency of any due process proceedings;
8. Procedures for children who are subject to placement in an interim alternative educational setting;
9. Requirements for unilateral placement by parents of children in private schools at public expense;
10. Hearings on due process complaints, including requirements for disclosure of evaluation results and recommendations;
11. Civil actions, including the time period in which to file such actions; and
12. Attorneys' fees.

20 U.S.C. 1415(a)–(b), (d); 34 CFR 300.504(c).

Sec. 4. PRIOR WRITTEN NOTICE AND CONSENT

SFA Charter School shall provide prior written notice to the parents within a reasonable time before the school proposes to initiate or change, or refuses to initiate or change, the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of a child or the provision of a FAPE to the child.

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CONSENT AND PRIOR WRITTEN NOTICE

34 CFR 300.503(a).

Notice must be provided to the parent in the parent's native language or other mode of communication at least five school days before SFA Charter School proposes or refuses the action, unless the parent agrees to a shorter time frame.

19 TAC 89.1050(h).

a) *Contents of Notice*

The notice must include:

1. A description of the action proposed or refused by SFA Charter School;
2. An explanation of why SFA Charter School proposes or refuses to take the action;
3. A description of each evaluation procedure, assessment, record, or report SFA Charter School used as a basis for the proposed or refused action;
4. A statement that the parents have protection under the procedural safeguards and, if this notice is not an initial referral for evaluation, the means by which a copy of the procedural safeguards can be obtained;
5. Sources for parents to contact to obtain assistance in understanding the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ("IDEA") rules;
6. A description of other options the admission, review and dismissal ("ARD") committee considered and the reasons why those options were rejected; and
7. A description of other factors relevant to SFA Charter School's proposal or refusal.

34 CFR 300.503(b).

b) *Consent to Initial Evaluation*

Before SFA Charter School conducts an initial evaluation, it shall provide prior written notice, including a description of any evaluation SFA Charter School proposes to conduct, and obtain informed consent for the evaluation from the parents.

20 U.S.C. 1414(a)(1)(D), (E); 34 CFR 300.304(a).

c) *Consent to Services*

SFA Charter School shall seek informed consent from the parent before providing special education and related services to a child.

20 U.S.C. 1414(a)(1)(D).

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CONSENT AND PRIOR WRITTEN NOTICE

d) *Consent to Reevaluation*

SFA Charter School shall obtain informed parental consent before conducting any reevaluation of a child with a disability, except that such informed parental consent need not be obtained if SFA Charter School can demonstrate that it has taken reasonable measures to obtain such consent and the parent has failed to respond.

20 U.S.C. 1414(c)(3).

e) *Psychological Examinations and Tests*

On request of a child's parent, before obtaining the parent's consent under 20 U.S.C. Section 1414 for the administration of any psychological examination or test to the child as part of the evaluation of the child's need for special education, SFA Charter School shall provide to the child's parent:

1. The name and type of the examination or test; and
2. An explanation of how the examination or test will be used to develop an appropriate Individualized Education Program ("IEP") for the child.

If SFA Charter School determines that an additional examination or test is required for the evaluation of a child's need for special education after obtaining consent from the child's parent, SFA Charter School shall provide the information above to the parent regarding the additional examination or test and shall obtain additional consent for the examination or test.

Education Code 29.0041(a), (b).

Sec. 5. CONSENT TO EXCUSE MEMBER FROM ATTENDING ARD COMMITTEE MEETING

A SFA Charter School member of the ARD committee may be excused from attending an individualized education program ("IEP") meeting, in whole or in part, when the meeting involves a modification to or discussion of the member's area of curriculum or related services if the parent, in writing, and SFA Charter School consent to the excusal and the member submits, in writing, to the parent and the ARD committee, input into the development of the IEP before the meeting.

Sec. 6. PARENTAL CONSENT TO ACCESS PUBLIC BENEFITS

SFA Charter School shall obtain informed consent from the parent each time that access to a parent's private insurance proceeds or to public benefits or an insurance program is sought.

34 CFR 300.154(d)(2)(iv)(A).

Sec. 7. PARENTAL CONSENT FOR TRANSFER OF ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY DEVICES

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SFA Charter School shall obtain informed consent from the parent before transferring an assistive technology device through a transfer agreement that incorporates the standards of the state.

Sec. 8. OTHER CONSENT REQUIREMENTS

Parental consent is not required before SFA Charter School may:

1. review existing data as part of the student's evaluation or a reevaluation; or
2. give the student a test or other evaluation that is given to all students unless, before that test or evaluation, consent is required from parents of all students.

34 CFR 300.300(d).

**STEPHEN F AUSTIN STATE UNIVERSITY BOARD POLICY
MANUAL
POLICY GROUP 6 - SPECIAL EDUCATION
COORDINATION OF FUNDS TO PURCHASE INSTRUCTIONAL
MATERIALS**

PG-6.10

The SFA Charter School must provide accessible versions of instructional materials to students who are blind or otherwise unable to use standard-format materials. State-adopted accessible instructional materials, including braille, large print, audio, and digital are provided free of charge to eligible students.

If SFA Charter School purchases print instructional materials, it will provide instructional materials to blind persons or other persons with print disabilities in a timely manner and shall provide assurance of compliance with this policy to the Texas Education Agency.

PART I: DISCIPLINE OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES UNDER SECTION 504

Sec. 1. STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES UNDER SECTION 504

SFA Charter School shall conduct an evaluation in accordance with 34 C.F.R. 104.35(b) before taking any action with respect to any significant change in placement of a student with a disability who needs or is believed to need special education and related services. *34 CFR 104.35(a)*.

SFA Charter School may take disciplinary action pertaining to the use or possession of illegal drugs or alcohol against any student with a disability who is currently engaging in the illegal use of drugs or alcohol to the same extent that SFA Charter School would take disciplinary action against nondisabled students. The due process procedures afforded under Section 504 do not apply to such disciplinary action. *29 U.S.C. 705(20)(C)(iv)*.

PART II: DISCIPLINE OF STUDENTS RECEIVING SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

Sec. 2. SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS

Except as set forth below, the placement of a student with a disability who receives special education services may be made only by a duly constituted admission, review, and dismissal (“ARD”) committee. Any disciplinary action shall be determined in accordance with federal law and regulations, including those requiring the provision of:

1. functional behavioral assessments (“FBAs”);
2. positive behavioral interventions, strategies, and supports;
3. behavioral intervention plans/behavior improvement plans (“BIPs”); and
4. the manifestation determination review (“MDR”).

Education Code 37.004(b).

Sec. 3. REMOVAL FOR TEN DAYS OR LESS

A student with a disability who violates the SFA Charter School Student Code of Conduct may be moved from his or her current placement to an appropriate interim alternative educational setting, another setting, or suspension, for not more than ten consecutive school days, to the extent those

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alternatives are applied to children without disabilities. *20 U.S.C. 1415(k)(1)(B); 34 C.F.R. 300.530(b)(1).*

Services During Removal for Ten Days or Less. SFA Charter School is required to provide services during the period of removal if SFA Charter School provides services to a child without disabilities who is similarly removed. *34 C.F.R. 300.530(d).*

Sec. 4. SUBSEQUENT REMOVALS OF TEN DAYS OR LESS

SFA Charter School personnel may remove the student for additional removals of not more than ten consecutive school days in that same school year for separate incidents of misconduct, as long as those removals do not constitute a change in placement under 34 CFR 300.536. *34 C.F.R. 300.530(b)(1).*

Services During Subsequent Removals of Ten Days or Less. After a student has been removed from his or her current placement for ten school days in the same school year, during any subsequent removal of ten consecutive school days or less, school personnel, in consultation with at least one of the student's teachers, shall determine the extent to which services are needed so as to enable the student to continue to participate in the general education curriculum, although in another setting, and to progress toward meeting the goals set out in the student's individualized education program ("IEP"). *20 U.S.C. 1415(k)(1)(D); 34 C.F.R. 300.530(d)(4).*

Sec. 5. NOTICE OF PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS

Not later than the date on which the decision to take the disciplinary action is made, SFA Charter School shall notify the student's parents of the decision and of all procedural safeguards. *20 U.S.C. 1415(k)(1)(H).*

Sec. 6. CHANGES IN PLACEMENT

Any disciplinary action that would constitute a change in placement may be taken only after the student's ARD committee conducts a manifestation determination review ("MDR")

For purposes of disciplinary removal of a student with a disability, a change in placement occurs if a student is:

1. Removed from the student's current educational placement for more than ten consecutive school days; or
2. Subjected to a series of removals that constitute a pattern because:
 - a. The series of removals total more than ten school days in a school year;

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- b. The student's behavior is substantially similar to the student's behavior in the previous incidents that resulted in the series of removals; and
- c. Additional factors exist, such as the length of each removal, the total amount of time the student is removed, and the proximity of the removals to one another.

SFA Charter School determines, on a case-by-case basis, whether a pattern of removals constitutes a change in placement. SFA Charter School's determination is subject to review through due process and judicial proceedings. *34 C.F.R. 300.536*.

SFA Charter School personnel may consider any unique circumstances on a case-by-case basis when determining whether to order a change in placement for a student who violates the Student Code of Conduct. *20 U.S.C. 1415(k)(1)(A)*.

Sec. 7. MANIFESTATION DETERMINATION

Within ten school days of any decision to change the placement of a student because of a violation of the Student Code of Conduct, SFA Charter School, parents, and relevant members of the ARD committee (as determined by the parent and SFA Charter School) shall review all relevant information in the student's file, including the student's IEP, any teacher observations, and any relevant information provided by the parents to determine whether the conduct in question was:

- 1. Caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to, the student's disability; or
- 2. The direct result of SFA Charter School's failure to implement the IEP.

If SFA Charter School, the parent, and relevant members of the ARD committee determine that either of the above is applicable, the conduct shall be determined to be a manifestation of the student's disability.

20 U.S.C. 1415(k)(1)(E); 34 C.F.R. 300.530(e).

a) *Not a Manifestation*

If the determination is that the student's behavior was not a manifestation of the student's disability, school personnel may apply the relevant disciplinary procedures to the student in the same manner and for the same duration as for students without disabilities. The ARD committee shall determine the interim alternative educational setting. *20 U.S.C. 1415(k)(1)(C), (k)(2); 34 C.F.R. 300.530(c)*.

i. Services During Removal

The student must:

POLICY GROUP 6 - SPECIAL EDUCATION
DISCIPLINE OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

1. Continue to receive educational services so as to enable the student to continue to participate in the general education curriculum, although in another setting, and to progress toward meeting the goals in the student's IEP.
2. Receive, as appropriate, a functional behavioral assessment, and behavioral intervention services and modifications, that are designed to address the behavior violation so that it does not recur.

These services may be provided in an interim alternative educational setting. *34 C.F.R. 300.530(d)(1)–(2).*

b) *Manifestation*

If SFA Charter School, the parents, and relevant members of the ARD committee determine that the conduct was a manifestation of the student's disability, the ARD committee shall:

1. Conduct a functional behavioral assessment ("FBA"), unless SFA Charter School had conducted an FBA before the behavior that resulted in the change in placement occurred, and implement a behavioral intervention plan ("BIP") for the student; or
2. If a BIP has already been developed, review the BIP and modify it, as necessary, to address the behavior.

Except as provided at SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES below, the ARD committee shall return the student to the placement from which the student was removed, unless the parent, and SFA Charter School agree to a change in placement as part of the modification of the BIP.

20 U.S.C. 1415(k)(1)(F); 34 C.F.R. 300.530(f).

i. Special Circumstances

SFA Charter School personnel may remove a student to an interim alternative educational setting for not more than 45 school days without regard to whether the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the student's disability, if the student:

1. Carries or possesses a weapon to or at school, on school premises, or to or at a school function under the jurisdiction of Texas Education Agency (the "TEA") or SFA Charter School; or
2. Knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of the TEA or SFA Charter School;

POLICY GROUP 6 - SPECIAL EDUCATION
DISCIPLINE OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

3. Has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of the TEA or SFA Charter School.

20 U.S.C. 1415(k)(1)(G); 34 C.F.R. 300.530(g).

The ARD committee shall determine the interim alternative education setting. *20 U.S.C. 1415(k)(2).*

c) *Services During Removal*

The student must:

1. Continue to receive educational services so as to enable the student to continue to participate in the general education curriculum, although in another setting, and to progress toward meeting the goals in the student's IEP.
2. Receive, as appropriate, a functional behavioral assessment, and behavioral intervention services and modifications, that are designed to address the behavior violation so that it does not recur.

These services may be provided in an interim alternative educational setting.

34 C.F.R. 300.530(d)(1).

Sec. 8. APPEALS

A parent who disagrees with a placement decision or the manifestation determination may request a hearing. Additionally, SFA Charter School may request a hearing if it believes that maintaining a current placement of a student is substantially likely to result in injury to the student or others.

20 U.S.C. 1415(k)(3)(A); 34 C.F.R. 300.532(a); 19 TAC 89.1151.

a) *Placement During Appeals*

When an appeal has been requested by a parent or SFA Charter School, the student shall remain in the interim alternative educational setting pending the decision of the hearing officer or until the expiration of the student's assignment to the alternative setting, whichever occurs first, unless the parent and SFA Charter School agree otherwise.

20 U.S.C. 1415(k)(4); 34 C.F.R. 300.533.

POLICY GROUP 6 - SPECIAL EDUCATION
DISCIPLINE OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Sec. 9. REPORTING CRIMES

Federal law does not prohibit SFA Charter School from reporting a crime committed by a student with a disability to appropriate authorities. If SFA Charter School reports a crime, SFA Charter School shall ensure that copies of the special education and disciplinary records of the student are transmitted for consideration by the appropriate authorities to whom SFA Charter School reported the crime. SFA Charter School may transmit records only to the extent permitted by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA").

20 U.S.C. 1415(k)(6); 34 C.F.R. 300.535.

Sec. 10. STUDENTS NOT YET IDENTIFIED

A student who has not been determined to be eligible for special education and related services and who has engaged in behavior that violated the Student Code of Conduct may assert any of the protections provided for in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act if SFA Charter School had knowledge that the student had a disability before the behavior that precipitated that disciplinary action occurred. *20 U.S.C. 1415(k)(5)(A); 34 C.F.R. 300.534(a).*

a) *School Knowledge*

SFA Charter School shall be deemed to have knowledge that a student has a disability if, before the behavior that precipitated the disciplinary action occurred:

1. The parent of the student expressed concern in writing to SFA Charter School supervisory or administrative personnel, or to the teacher of the student, that the student was in need of special education and related services;
2. The parent requested an evaluation of the student for special education and related services; or
3. The student's teacher, or other SFA Charter School personnel, expressed specific concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the student directly to the special education director or to other SFA Charter School supervisory personnel.

20 U.S.C. 1415(k)(5)(B); 34 C.F.R. 300.534(b).

b) *Exceptions*

SFA Charter School shall not be deemed to have knowledge that the student had a disability if:

**POLICY GROUP 6 - SPECIAL EDUCATION
DISCIPLINE OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

1. The parent has not allowed an evaluation of the student;
2. The parent has refused services; or
3. The student has been evaluated and it was determined that the student did not have a disability.

20 U.S.C. 1415(k)(5)(C); 34 C.F.R. 300.534(c).

If SFA Charter School does not have knowledge, before taking disciplinary measures, that a student has a disability, the student may be subjected to the same disciplinary measures applied to students without disabilities who engaged in comparable behaviors.

However, if a request is made for an evaluation during the time period in which the student is subjected to disciplinary measures, the evaluation shall be conducted in an expedited manner. Until the evaluation is completed, the student shall remain in the educational placement determined by school authorities, which can include suspension or expulsion without educational services.

20 U.S.C. 1415(k)(5)(D); 34 C.F.R. 300.534(d).

**POLICY GROUP 6 - SPECIAL EDUCATION
DISTRICT AND CAMPUS IMPROVEMENT PLANS**

It is the policy of SFA Charter School to annually conduct a comprehensive needs assessment and to conduct district and campus improvement plans, if required by state and federal funding requirements.

Sec. 1. DYSLEXIA AND RELATED DISORDERS

The Board shall ensure that procedures for identifying and providing appropriate instructional services to students for dyslexia and related disorders are implemented by SFA Charter School. These procedures shall be implemented in accordance with the most recently updated version of the State Board of Education's *Dyslexia Handbook: Procedures Concerning Dyslexia and Related Disorders* (*Dyslexia Handbook*).

SEC. 2. PARENTAL NOTIFICATIONS AND CONSENT

Anytime a child is suspected to have dyslexia or a related disorder and may need dyslexia intervention services, the LEA must seek parental consent for a Full Individual Initial Evaluation (FIIIE) under the IDEA. The process of seeking informed parental consent under the IDEA must include proper prior written notice and be accompanied by the notice of procedural safeguards.

SFA Charter School shall provide to parents of children suspected to have dyslexia or a related disorder a copy of or link to the electronic version of the most recently updated version of the State Board of Education's *Dyslexia Handbook: Procedures Concerning Dyslexia and Related Disorders* (*Dyslexia Handbook*).

Parents and guardians of students with dyslexia or a related disorder must be informed of all services and options available to the student, including general education interventions under response to intervention and multi-tiered systems of support modules as required by Section 26.0081 of the Education Code.

Sec 3. IDENTIFICATION AND TESTING

A process for early identification, intervention, and support for students at risk for dyslexia and related disorders must be available, as outlined in the *Dyslexia Handbook*. The program must include a screening at the end of each school year for all kindergarten students and by January 31st for first grade students.

SFA Charter School may not use early intervention strategies, including multi-tiered systems of support, to delay or deny the provision of a full and individual evaluation to a child suspected of having a specific learning disability, including dyslexia or a related disorder.

SEC 4. PERSONNEL QUALIFICATIONS

Highly trained individuals must deliver dyslexia instruction. Teachers who provide dyslexia intervention for students are not required to hold a specific license or certification. However, these educators must at a minimum have additional documented dyslexia training aligned to 19 TAC §74.28(c) and must deliver the instruction with fidelity. A provider of dyslexia instruction does not have to be certified as a special educator when serving a student who also receives special

education and related services if that provider is the most appropriate person to offer dyslexia instruction.

SEC. 5. TREATMENT AND SERVICES

SFA Charter School shall provide each identified student access at his or her campus to instructional programs and to the services of a teacher trained in dyslexia and related services. SFA Charter School may, with the approval of each student's parents or guardians, offer additional services at a centralized location, so long as such centralized services do not preclude each student from receiving services at his or her campus.

a) *Reading Program*

SFA Charter School shall purchase a reading program or develop its own reading program for students with dyslexia and related disorders that is aligned with the descriptors found in the *Dyslexia Handbook*.

Teachers who screen and treat these students must be trained in instructional strategies that utilize individualized, intensive, multi-sensory, phonetic methods and a variety of writing and spelling components described in the *Dyslexia Handbook*. The professional development activities specified by each school and/or campus planning committee shall include these instructional strategies.

b) *Reassessment*

Unless otherwise provided by law, a student determined to have dyslexia during testing or accommodated because of dyslexia may not be retested for dyslexia for the purpose of reassessing the student's need for accommodations until SFA Charter School reevaluates the information obtained from previous testing of the student.

SEC 6. PARENT EDUCATION PROGRAM

SFA Charter School shall develop and provide a parent education program for parents and guardians of students with dyslexia and related disorders. This program should include:

- Awareness of characteristics of dyslexia and related disorders;
- Information on testing and diagnosis of dyslexia;
- Information on effective strategies for teaching dyslexic students; and
- Awareness of information on modification, especially modifications allowed on standardized testing.

Education Code 38.003; 19 TAC 74.28.

Sec. 7. REPORTING

SFA Charter School must report through the Public Education Information Management System to the Texas Education Agency the number of students enrolled who are identified as having dyslexia.

Sec. 1. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

A student that is at least three years old but not more than 21 years of age may be eligible for special education services if the student is found to have a disability in one of the following categories, and, by reason of the disability, has need for special education and related services:

1. Autism
2. Deaf-blindness
3. Deaf or hard of hearing
4. Emotional disturbance
5. Intellectual disability
6. Multiple disabilities
7. Orthopedic impairment
8. Other health impairment
9. Specific learning disability
10. Speech impairment
11. Traumatic brain injury
12. Visual impairment
13. Noncategorical

34 CFR 300.306(a)(5), 300.8; 19 TAC 89.1040(a).

Additionally,, a student is eligible to participate in SFA Charter School's special education program if the student has a visual or auditory impairment that prevents the student from being adequately or safely educated in public school without the provision of special services.

Education Code 29.003.

Sec. 2. DETERMINING ELIGIBILITY

Following the completion of the full and individual initial evaluation, the student's admission, review, and dismissal ("ARD") committee must make an eligibility determination. The ARD committee members reviewing evaluations and data to determine eligibility must include a licensed specialist in school psychology ("LSSP"), an educational diagnostician, or other appropriately certified or licensed practitioner with experience, and a licensed or certified professional for a specific eligibility category defined below.

19 TAC 89.1040(b).

When interpreting evaluation data for the purpose of determining if a student is a student with a disability under 34 CFR 300.8 and the educational needs of the student, SFA Charter School shall:

1. Draw upon information from a variety of sources, including aptitude and achievement tests, parent input, and teacher recommendations, as well as information about the child's physical condition, social or cultural background, and adaptive behavior; and

2. Ensure that information obtained from all of these sources is documented and carefully considered.

If a student is determined to be a student with a disability and needs special education and related services, the ARD committee must develop an individualized education program (“IEP”) for the student in accordance with 34 CFR 300.320 through 300.324 and corresponding state law.

34 CFR 300.306.

A student must not be determined to be a child with a disability if:

1. The determinant factor for that determination is:
 - a. lack of appropriate instruction in reading, including in the essential components of reading instruction;
 - b. lack of appropriate instruction in math; or
 - c. limited English proficiency/status as an emergent bilingual student; or
2. The child does not otherwise meet the eligibility criteria and 34 CFR 300.8(a).

34 CFR 300.306(b).

For children aged three through nine, or any subset of that age range, may be a child with a disability if the student is:

1. experiencing developmental delays, as defined by the State and as measured by appropriate diagnostic instruments and procedures, in one or more of the following areas: Physical development, cognitive development, communication development, social or emotional development, or adaptive development; and
2. needs special education and related services.

34 CFR 300.8(b).

Sec. 3. AUTISM

A student with autism is one that meets the criteria outlined in 34 CFR 300.8(c)(1) of the IDEA. It also includes students with pervasive developmental disorders.

19 TAC 89.1040(c)(1).

Under IDEA, autism is a developmental disability significantly affecting a student’s verbal and nonverbal communication and social interactions that adversely affects a student’s educational performance. Engagement in repetitive activities and stereotyped movements, resistance to environmental change or change in daily routines, and unusual responses to sensory experiences are often associated with autism. Characteristics of autism are generally evident before age three. A child who manifests the characteristics of autism after age three could be identified as having autism if the student meets the above criteria also defined in 34 CFR 300.8(c)(1)(i).

A student does not meet the eligibility category for autism if a student's educational performance is adversely affected primarily because the student has an emotional disturbance, as defined above and in 34 CFR 300.8(c)(4).

34 CFR 300.8(c)(1).

The written evaluation determining eligibility under autism must include recommendations for behavior interventions.

19 TAC 89.1040(c)(1).

Sec. 4. DEAF-BLINDNESS

A student is eligible under deaf-blindness if identified with hearing and visual impairments, the combination of which causes such severe communication and other developmental and educational needs that they cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for students with deafness or students with blindness.

34 CFR 300.8(c)(2).

In addition to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ("IDEA") requirements, a student may be eligible if a student is found to:

1. meet the eligibility criteria for auditory impairment specified in subsection 19 TAC 89.1040(c)(3) and visual impairment specified in subsection 19 TAC 89.1040 (c)(12);
2. meet the eligibility criteria for a student with a visual impairment and has a suspected hearing loss that cannot be demonstrated conclusively, but a speech/language therapist, a certified speech and language therapist, or a licensed speech language pathologist indicates there is no speech at an age when speech would normally be expected;
3. have documented hearing and visual losses that, if considered individually, may not meet the requirements for auditory impairment or visual impairment, but the combination of such losses adversely affects the student's educational performance; or
4. have a documented medical diagnosis of a progressive medical condition that will result in concomitant hearing and visual losses that, without special education intervention, will adversely affect the student's educational performance.

19 TAC 89.1040(c)(2).

Sec. 5. DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING

A student who is deaf or hard of hearing is one who has been determined to meet the criteria for deafness as stated in 34 CFR 300.8(c)(3), or for students who are deaf or hard of hearing as defined in 34 CFR 300.8(c)(5).

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ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The student's evaluation must include an otological examination performed by an otologist or by a licensed medical doctor, with documentation that an otologist is not reasonably available. SFA Charter School shall also conduct an audiological evaluation by a licensed audiologist. The evaluation must include a description of the implications of the hearing loss for the student's hearing in a variety of circumstances with or without recommended amplification.

34 CFR 300.8(c)(3),(5); 19 TAC 89.1040(c)(3).

Sec. 6. EMOTIONAL DISTURBANCE

A student may be eligible for services as a student with an emotional disturbance if they exhibit one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree that adversely affects a child's educational performance:

1. An inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors;
2. An inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers;
3. Inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances;
4. A general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression; or
5. A tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems.

Emotional disturbance includes schizophrenia, but does not include children who are socially maladjusted, unless it is determined that they have an emotional disturbance. A written evaluation must include recommendations for behavior intervention strategies.

34 CFR 300.8(c)(4); 19 TAC 89.1040(c)(4).

Sec. 7. INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY

A student qualifies as a student with an intellectual disability if the student has significantly sub-average general intellectual functioning, existing concurrently with deficits in adaptive behavior and manifested during the developmental period, that adversely affects a student's educational performance.

34 CFR 300.8(c)(6); 19 TAC 89.1040(c)(5).

Sec. 8. MULTIPLE DISABILITIES

A student may qualify as a student with multiple disabilities if they are identified to have a combination of impairments (such as intellectual disability-blindness or intellectual disability-orthopedic impairment) and the combination causes such severe educational needs that they cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for one of the impairments. Multiple disabilities does not include deaf-blindness.

POLICY GROUP 6 - SPECIAL EDUCATION
ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

34 CFR 300.8(c)(7).

The impairments must be: (a) expected to continue indefinitely; and (b) severely limit performance in two or more of the following:

1. psychomotor skills;
2. self-care skills;
3. communication;
4. social and emotional development, or
5. cognition.

A student who qualifies for more than one impairment, but does not severely impair performance in one of the above categories, or is not expected to continue indefinitely, does not qualify as a student with multiple disabilities.

19 TAC 89.1040(c)(6).

Sec. 9. ORTHOPEDIC IMPAIRMENT

A severe orthopedic impairment, including impairments caused by congenital anomaly, impairments caused by disease (e.g., poliomyelitis, bone tuberculosis), and impairments from other causes (e.g., cerebral palsy, amputations, and fractures or burns that cause contractures). If the impairment adversely impacts a student's educational performance, the student is eligible under this category.

34 CFR 300.8(c)(8); 19 TAC 89.1040(c)(7).

The multidisciplinary team determining eligibility under the criteria for an orthopedic impairment must include a licensed physician.

19 TAC 89.1040(c)(7).

Sec. 10. OTHER HEALTH IMPAIRMENT ("OHI")

A student with OHI is one who has been determined to meet the criteria for OHI due to chronic or acute health problems.

19 TAC 89.1040(c)(8).

OHI means having limited strength, vitality, or alertness that adversely affects a child's educational performance.

34 CFR 300.8(c)(9)(i).

The term "health problems" includes:

POLICY GROUP 6 - SPECIAL EDUCATION
ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

1. Asthma;
2. Attention Deficit Disorder or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder;
3. Diabetes;
4. Epilepsy;
5. Heart Condition;
6. Hemophilia;
7. Lead poisoning;
8. Leukemia;
9. Nephritis;
10. Rheumatic Fever;
11. Sick Cell Anemia; or
12. Tourette Syndrome.

19 TAC 89.1040(c)(8); 34 CFR 300.(c)(9)(i).

“Limited alertness” includes a heightened alertness to environmental stimuli that results in limited alertness with respect to the educational environment.

34 CFR 300.8(c)(9).

In determining eligibility, SFA Charter School shall must include a licensed physician on the multidisciplinary team.

19 TAC 89.1040(c)(8).

Sec. 11. SPECIFIC LEARNING DISABILITY

Specific learning disability (or “SLD”) includes a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself in the imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations.

SLD includes conditions such as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia.

A specific learning disability does not include learning problems that are primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor disabilities, of intellectual disability, of emotional disturbance, or of environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage.

34 CFR 300.8(c)(10); 19 TAC 89.1040(c)(9).

POLICY GROUP 6 - SPECIAL EDUCATION
ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

In addition to being identified as having a disorder that impacts a basic psychological process, SFA Charter School shall also show that the student does not achieve adequately for the student's age or meet state-approved grade-level standards in oral expression, listening comprehension, written expression, basic reading skill, reading fluency skills, reading comprehension, mathematics calculation, or mathematics problem solving when provided appropriate instruction, as indicated by performance on multiple measures such as in-class tests; grade average over time (e.g. six weeks, semester); norm- or criterion- referenced tests; statewide assessments; or a process based on the child's response to scientific, research-based intervention. SFA Charter School's evaluation must also show that the student:

1. does not make sufficient progress when provided a process based on the student's response to scientific, research-based intervention (as defined in 20 USC, §7801(37)), as indicated by the student's performance relative to the performance of the student's peers on repeated, curriculum-based assessments of achievement at reasonable intervals, reflecting student progress during classroom instruction; or
2. the student exhibits a pattern of strengths and weaknesses in performance, achievement, or both relative to age, grade-level standards, or intellectual ability, as indicated by significant variance among specific areas of cognitive function, such as working memory and verbal comprehension, or between specific areas of cognitive function and academic achievement.

19 TAC 89.1040(c)(9).

Prior to identifying a student as one with a learning disability, SFA Charter School shall ensure that the suspected disability is not due to lack of educational opportunity or lack of appropriate instruction. SFA Charter School shall consider data that shows the student has received appropriate instruction in math and reading in the general education setting. SFA Charter School shall also consider documentation of repeated assessments of achievement at reasonable intervals, reflecting formal evaluation of student progress during instruction. This may include, but is not limited to, RTI progress results, in-class tests on grade-level curriculum, or other regularly administered assessments. Intervals are considered reasonable if consistent with the assessment requirements of a student's specific instructional program.

19 TAC 89.1040(c)(9).

For more information related to SLD and dyslexia, see PG.-2.27.

Sec. 12. SPEECH IMPAIRMENT

A communication disorder, such as stuttering, impaired articulation, a language impairment, or a voice impairment, that adversely affects a child's educational performance. The evaluation team shall include a certified speech and hearing therapist, a certified speech and language therapist, or a licensed speech/language pathologist.

34 CFR 300.8(c)(11); 19 TAC 89.1040(c)(10).

Sec. 13. TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY

An acquired injury to the brain caused by an external physical force, resulting in total or partial functional disability or psychosocial impairment, or both, that adversely affects a student's educational performance. Traumatic brain injury applies to open or closed head injuries resulting in impairments in one or more areas, such as cognition; language; memory; attention; reasoning; abstract thinking; judgment; problem-solving; sensory, perceptual, and motor abilities; psychosocial behavior; physical functions; information processing; and speech. Traumatic brain injury does not apply to brain injuries that are congenital or degenerative, or to brain injuries induced by birth trauma.

SFA Charter School shall include a licensed physician, and a licensed specialist in school psychology (LSSP), an educational diagnostician, or other appropriately certified or licensed practitioner with experience and training in this area to review the data and determine eligibility.

19 TAC 89.1040(c)(11).

Sec. 14. VISUAL IMPAIRMENT

A child with a visual impairment is one who has been determined to meet the criteria for visual impairment.

34 CFR 300.8(c)(13); 19 TAC 89.1040(c)(12).

The term "visual impairment including blindness" means an impairment in vision that, even with correction, adversely affects the student's educational performance, and includes both partial sight and blindness.

34 CFR 300.8(c)(13).

Evaluation, eligibility, and ARD committee requirements shall adhere to federal and state law.

34 CFR 300.8(c)(13); Education Code 30.002(c-1); 19 TAC 89.1040(c)(12).

Sec. 15. NONCATEGORICAL

A student between the ages of 3-5 who is evaluated as having an intellectual disability, an emotional disturbance, a specific learning disability, or autism may be described as noncategorical early childhood.

19 TAC 89.1040(c)(13).

Sec. 1. REFERRAL FOR FULL AND INDIVIDUAL INITIAL EVALUATION

Referral of students for a full and individual initial evaluation for possible special education services shall be a part of SFA Charter School's overall general education referral or screening system. Either a parent, the Texas Educational Agency ("TEA"), another state agency, or SFA Charter School may initiate a request for an initial evaluation.

a) *Obligation to Refer*

Before referral, students experiencing difficulty in the general classroom should be considered for all support services available to all students. If a student continues to experience difficulty in the general classroom after the provision of interventions, SFA Charter School personnel must refer the student for a full and individual initial evaluation.

20 U.S.C. 1414(a)(1); 34 CFR 300.301; 19 TAC 89.1011.

b) *Parent Request*

If a parent submits a written request for a full individual and initial evaluation of a student, SFA Charter School shall, not later than the 15th school day after the date SFA Charter School receives the request:

1. Provide the parent with prior written notice of its proposal to conduct an evaluation consistent with 34 CFR 300.503, a copy of the procedural safeguards notice required by 34 CFR 300.504, and an opportunity to give written consent for the evaluation; or
2. Provide the parent with prior written notice of its refusal to conduct an evaluation consistent with 34 CFR 300.503, and a copy of the procedural safeguards notice required by 34 CFR 300.504.

20 U.S.C. 1414(a)(1); 34 C.F.R. 300.301; 19 TAC 89.1011(a), (b); Education Code 29.004(c).

Sec. 2. NOTICE OF RIGHTS

SFA Charter School shall provide written notice to a student's parent or guardian within a reasonable time before proposing or refusing to initiate the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of a student or the provision of a free appropriate public education ("FAPE").

34 CFR §300.8(c)(10)

POLICY GROUP 6 - SPECIAL EDUCATION
REFERRAL FOR POSSIBLE SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

Sec. 3. INITIAL EVALUATION

SFA Charter School shall conduct a full and individual initial evaluation before the initial provision of special education and related services. *20 U.S.C. 1414(a)(1)(A).*

SFA Charter School shall ensure that evaluations of children who transfer from one district to another in the same academic year are coordinated with the children's prior and subsequent schools, as necessary and as expeditiously as possible, to ensure prompt completion of evaluations. *20 U.S.C. 1414(b)(3)(D).*

The screening of a student by a teacher or specialist to determine appropriate instructional strategies for curriculum implementation shall not be considered to be an evaluation for eligibility for special education and related services. *20 U.S.C. 1414(a)(1)(E).*

a) *Consent for Initial Evaluation*

SFA Charter School shall make reasonable efforts to obtain informed parental consent before conducting an initial evaluation.

If the parent does not provide consent for an initial evaluation or fails to respond to a request to provide consent, SFA Charter School may—but is not required to—pursue the initial evaluation by utilizing due process procedures, except to the extent inconsistent with state law relating to such parental consent.

Parental consent to initial evaluation shall not be construed as consent for placement for special education and related services. *20 U.S.C. 1414(a)(1)(D)(i)(1); 34 CFR 300.300.*

b) *Wards of the State*

If the child is a ward of the state and is not residing with the child's parent, SFA Charter School shall make reasonable efforts to obtain the informed consent from the parent for an initial evaluation, unless:

1. SFA Charter School cannot discover the whereabouts of the parent, despite reasonable efforts to do so;
2. The rights of the parent have been terminated; or
3. The rights of the parent to make educational decisions have been subrogated and an individual appointed by a judge to represent the student has given consent for an initial evaluation.

20 U.S.C. 1414(a)(1)(D)(iii); 34 CFR 300.300(a)(2).

POLICY GROUP 6 - SPECIAL EDUCATION
REFERRAL FOR POSSIBLE SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

Sec. 4. PROVIDING ASSISTANCE TO STUDENTS WHO HAVE LEARNING DIFFICULTIES OR NEED SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

If a student is experiencing learning difficulties, the parent may contact their child's campus principal to learn about SFA Charter School's overall general education referral or screening system for support services. This system links students to a variety of support options, including referral for a special education evaluation. Students having difficulty in the regular classroom should be considered for tutorial, compensatory, and other academic or behavior support services that are available to all students, including a process based on Multi-Tiered System of Support ("MTSS"). The implementation of MTSS has the potential to have a positive impact on SFA Charter School's ability to meet the needs of all struggling students.

At any time, a parent is entitled to request an evaluation for special education services by presenting a written request to Special Services Specialist or to a SFA Charter School CEO/Principal. SFA Charter School must, within 15 school days of receiving the request, either (1) give the parent an opportunity to give written consent for the evaluation or (2) refuse to provide the evaluation and provide the parent with written notice that explains why the child will not be evaluated. This written notice will include a statement that informs the parents of their rights if they disagree with SFA Charter School. Additionally, the parent will receive a copy of the *Notice of Procedural Safeguards – Rights of Parents of Students with Disabilities*.

If consent for evaluation is obtained, SFA Charter School must generally complete the evaluation and report within 45 school days of the date SFA Charter School receives the written consent. SFA Charter School must give a copy of the evaluation report to the parent.

Sec. 5. NOTIFICATION TO PARENTS REGARDING INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

Each school year, SFA Charter School shall notify a parent of each child, other than a child enrolled in a special education program, who receives assistance from the SFA Charter School for learning difficulties, including through the use of intervention strategies that SFA Charter School provides to the child. The notice must:

1. Be provided when the child begins to receive the assistance for that school year;
2. Be written in English or, to the extent practicable, the parent's native language; and
3. Include:
 - a. A reasonable description of the assistance that may be provided to the child, including any intervention strategies that may be used;
 - b. Information collected regarding any intervention in the base tier of a multi-tiered system of supports that has previously been used with the child;

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- c. An estimate of the duration for which the assistance, including through the use of intervention strategies, will be provided;
- d. The estimated time frames within which a report on the child's progress with the assistance, including any intervention strategies used, will be provided to the parent; and
- e. A copy of a written explanation of the options and requirements for providing assistance to students who have learning difficulties or who need or may need special education. The explanation must state that a parent is entitled at any time to request an evaluation of the parent's child for special education services or for aids, accommodations, or services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act ("Section 504").

The notice under this policy may be provided to a child's parent at a Section 504 meeting.

A parent is entitled to access to all written records of SFA Charter School concerning the parent's child, including attendance records, test scores, grades, disciplinary records, counseling records, psychological records, applications for admission, health and immunization information, teacher and school counselor evaluations, reports of behavioral progress, and records relating to assistance provided for learning difficulties, including information collected regarding any intervention strategies used with the child.

Sec. 1. FULL AND INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION (FIE)

SFA Charter School shall ensure that upon completion of the administration of such tests and other evaluation materials administered according to the evaluation procedures of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (“IDEA”), and preparation of the written report, the admission, review and dismissal (“ARD”) committee determines if the student is a student with a disability under state and federal standards.

SFA Charter School shall conduct a full and individual initial evaluation (“FIE”) prior to providing special education and related services to any student. All students must be evaluated in accordance with the IDEA and the Texas Education Code.

SFA Charter School shall have procedures in place to ensure that testing and evaluation materials and procedures utilized for the purposes of evaluation and placement of students with disabilities are selected and administered so as to not be racially, culturally, or gender discriminatory. Assessment and procedures shall be provided and administered in the student’s native language or most proficient mode of communication and in the form most likely to yield accurate information on what the student knows and can do academically, developmentally, and functionally, unless it is clearly not feasible to do so.

34 CFR 300.301; Education Code 29.310.

All implementing assessment procedures must differentiate between language proficiency and handicapping condition. Additionally, placement procedures must ensure that placement in a bilingual education or English as a second language program is not refused solely because the student has a disability.

19 TAC 89.1230.

No single procedure shall be the sole criterion for determining whether a student is a student with a disability or for determining an appropriate education program for a student with a disability. The evaluation must be sufficiently comprehensive to identify all of the student’s special education and related services’ needs. Each student must be evaluated in all suspected areas of disability.

34 CFR 300.301, 300.304; Education Code 29.310.

All assessments must be administered in accordance with the instructions provided and by a trained and knowledgeable person.

34 CFR 300.301, 300.304.

Sec. 2. TIMELINE

If a student's parent provides a written request for an evaluation to the school's special services specialist or to the CEO/Principal, SFA Charter School shall, within 15 school days, (1) provide the parent with prior written notice of its proposal to conduct an evaluation, a copy of the procedural safeguards, and an opportunity to give written consent for the evaluation, or (2) provide prior written notice and procedural safeguards if the school is denying the request for evaluation.

Education Code 29.004(c).

A written FIE report must be completed not later than the 45th school day following the date on which SFA Charter School receives written consent for the evaluation, signed by the student's parent. If the student is absent for more than three days in that time period, the timeline must be extended by the number of days the student was absent.

Education Code 29.004(a).

This timeframe shall not apply if:

1. A student enrolls in the current school after the relevant time frame has begun and before the previous school made a determination as to whether the student has a disability, but only if the current school is making sufficient progress to ensure a prompt completion of the evaluation and the parent and current school agree to a specific time for completion of the evaluation; or
2. The parent repeatedly fails or refuses to produce the student for the evaluation.

34 CFR 300.301(d).

Following the completion of the FIE, the ARD committee must meet within 30 calendar days from the date of completion to review and determine eligibility.

Education Code 29.004.

If the 30th day falls during the summer and school is not in session, the student's ARD committee has until the first day of classes in the fall to finalize decisions concerning the student's initial eligibility determination, individualized education program ("IEP"), and placement, unless the full individual and initial evaluation indicates that the student will need extended school year services during that summer.

If the student is an English language learner, a language proficiency assessment committee (LPAC) member must also attend the meeting to determine services. (19 TAC §89.1050(c)(J))

If SFA Charter School receives written consent for an FIE from a student's parent at least 35 but less than 45 school days before the last instructional day of the school year, the evaluation must be completed and the written report of the evaluation must be provided to the parent not later than June 30 of that year. The ARD committee must meet by the 15th school day of the following school year to consider the evaluation.

If SFA Charter School receives written consent signed by a student's parent less than 35 school days before the last instructional day of the school year or if the school receives the written consent at least 35 but less than 45 school days before the last instructional day of the school year but the student is absent from school during that period on three or more days, the FIE must be completed not later than the 45th school day after receiving consent.

School days do not include days following the last instructional day of the spring term and before the first day of the fall term.

Education Code 29.004.

Sec. 3. SPECIFIC LEARNING DISABILITY EVALUATION

The Texas Education Agency cannot require SFA Charter School to use the severe discrepancy between intellectual ability and achievement for determining whether a student has a specific learning disability. TEA must permit the use of a process based on the child's response to scientific, research-based intervention; and may permit the use of other alternative research-based procedures for determining whether a student has a specific learning disability.

34 CFR 300.307.

The evaluation process for specific learning disability includes an observation of the child in the learning environment, including the regular classroom setting, to document academic performance and behavior in the areas of difficulty.

34 CFR 300.310 (a).

Sec. 4. FUNCTIONAL BEHAVIOR ASSESSMENT (FBA)

A functional behavior assessment ("FBA") may be necessary for a student whose behavior impedes their education. Prior to completing an FBA, SFA Charter School shall get consent from the parent.

34 CFR 300.9.

If an ARD committee determines a change of placement is necessary due to the student's behavior, it must conduct an FBA and implement a behavioral intervention plan ("BIP"). If an FBA was already completed, the ARD committee must review and update the BIP.

34 CFR 300.350(f).

Sec. 5. REVIEW OF EXISTING EVALUATION DATA

A Review of Existing Evaluation Data ("REED") is required as part of an initial evaluation, if appropriate, and as part of any reevaluation. The REED must be conducted by the ARD committee members and other qualified professionals, as appropriate. The ARD committee members may conduct the review without a meeting.

The REED must include a review of the following:

- Evaluations and information provided by the parents of the student;
- Current classroom-based, local, or State assessments, and classroom-based observations; and
- Observations by teachers and related services providers.

On the basis of that review, and input from the student's parents, the ARD committee members must identify what additional data, if any, are needed to determine:

- Whether the student is a student with a disability, and the educational needs of the student, or, in case of a reevaluation of a student, whether the student continues to have such a disability and the educational needs of the student;
- Whether the student needs special education and related services, or in the case of a reevaluation of a student, whether the student continues to need special education and related services;
- The present levels of academic achievement and related developmental needs of the student; and
- Whether any additions or modifications to the special education and related services are needed to enable the student to meet the measurable annual goals set out in the IEP of the student and to participate, as appropriate, in the general education curriculum.

SFA Charter School shall administer any assessments or other evaluation measures needed to produce the data identified by the REED in accordance with applicable procedural requirements regarding notice and consent.

If additional data is not needed, the ARD committee must notify the parent of the determination decision and provide information about the parent's right to request additional assessments to determine student needs and eligibility.

34 CFR 300.305.

SFA Charter School shall conduct a reevaluation of the student if the school determines that the educational or related service needs, including improved academic achievement and functional performance, of the child warrant a reevaluation or if the child's parent or teacher requests a reevaluation. A reevaluation may not occur more than once per year, unless agreed to by the school and the parent. A reevaluation must occur at least every three years, unless the school and parent agree the evaluation is unnecessary.

34 CFR 300.303.

Sec. 6. CHANGE IN ELIGIBILITY

SFA Charter School shall evaluate a student with a disability before determining a student is no longer eligible for special education and related services.

An evaluation is not required if a student is no longer eligible due to graduation or exceeding the age eligibility in Texas. SFA Charter School shall create a summary of performance and include recommendations on how to assist the student in meeting postsecondary goals.

34 CFR 300.305(e).

Sec. 7. CONSIDERATION OF SERVICES PROVIDED IN REGULAR EDUCATION SETTING

To ensure that underachievement in the student suspected of having a specific learning disability is not due to lack of appropriate instruction in reading or math, the group of qualified professionals, as part of a full and individual evaluation, must consider:

- Data that demonstrate that prior to, or as part of, the referral process, the student was provided appropriate instruction in regular education settings, delivered by qualified personnel; and
- Data-based documentation of repeated assessments of achievement at reasonable intervals, reflecting formal assessment of progress during instruction, which was provided to the student's parents.

34 CFR 300.309(b).

Sec. 8. COORDINATION OF EVALUATIONS WITH PRIOR AND SUBSEQUENT SCHOOLS

The school shall ensure that evaluations of students who transfer from one local education agency to another in the same academic year are coordinated with the student's prior and subsequent schools, as necessary and as expeditiously as possible, to ensure prompt completion of evaluations.

20 U.S.C. 1414(b)(3)(D).

Sec. 9. PSYCHOLOGICAL EXAMINATIONS AND TESTS

On request of a child's parent, before obtaining the parent's consent for the administration of any psychological examination or test to the child as part of the evaluation of the child's need for special education, SFA Charter School shall provide to the child's parent:

1. The name and type of the examination or test; and
2. An explanation of how the examination or test will be used to develop an appropriate IEP for the child.

If SFA Charter School determines that an additional examination or test is required for the evaluation of a child's need for special education, SFA Charter School shall provide the information above to the parent regarding the additional examination or test and shall obtain additional consent for the examination of test.

Education Code 29.0041(a), (b).

If SFA Charter School determines that an additional examination or test is required for the evaluation, SFA Charter School shall provide the information required by Education Code 29.0041(a) and shall obtain parental consent. If a parent does not give consent within 20 calendar days after the School provides the information, the parent's consent is considered denied.

The time required for SFA Charter School to provide information and seek consent may not be counted toward the timeframe for completion of an evaluation.

Education Code 29.0041.

Sec. 10. EXTENSION OF TIMELINES

For a specific learning disability, the timelines for evaluation under this policy may be extended by mutual written agreement of the student's parents and the ARD committee.

34 CFR 300.309(c).

Sec. 11. EVALUATION CONDUCTED PURSUANT TO A SPECIAL EDUCATION DUE PROCESS HEARING

A special education hearing officer in an impartial due process hearing brought under 20 U.S.C. §1415 may issue an order or decision that authorizes one or more evaluations of a student who is eligible for, or who is suspected as being eligible for, special education services. Such an order or decision authorizes the evaluation of the student without parental consent as if it were a court order for purposes of any State or federal law providing for consent by order of a court.

Education Code 29.016.

Sec. 12. INDEPENDENT EDUCATIONAL EVALUATIONS

The parent of a student with a disability has the right to obtain an independent educational evaluation (“IEE”) of the parent’s child if the parent disagrees with the evaluation of the student that was obtained by SFA Charter School.

If the parent requests an IEE, SFA Charter School must provide the parent with information about where the parent may obtain an IEE and about SFA Charter School’s criteria that apply to IEE.

Sec. 13. DEFINITIONS

An IEE means an evaluation conducted by a qualified examiner who is not employed by the school responsible for the education of a student.

Public expense means that SFA Charter School either pays for the full cost of the evaluation or ensures that the evaluation is otherwise provided at no cost to the parent, consistent with the provisions of Part B of IDEA, which allow each State to use whatever State, local, Federal, and private sources of support are available in the State to meet the requirements of Part B of IDEA.

34 CFR 300.502.

Sec. 14. RIGHT TO AN INDEPENDENT EVALUATION AT PUBLIC EXPENSE

The parent has the right to request an IEE of the parent’s child at public expense if the parent disagrees with an evaluation of the student completed by SFA Charter School.

If the parent requests an IEE, SFA Charter School must respond to the parent by either:

1. without unnecessary delay, filing a due process complaint to request a hearing to show that its evaluation of the student is appropriate; or
2. providing an IEE at public expense, unless SFA Charter School demonstrates in a due process hearing that the evaluation of the student that the parent obtained did not meet SFA Charter School's criteria.

If SFA Charter School requests a hearing and the final decision is that SFA Charter School's evaluation of the student is appropriate, the parent still has the right to an IEE, but not at public expense.

If the parent requests an IEE of the student, SFA Charter School may ask why the parent objects to the evaluation of the student obtained by SFA Charter School; however, SFA Charter School may not require an explanation and may not unreasonably delay either providing the IEE of the student at public expense or filing a due process complaint to request a due process hearing to defend SFA Charter School's evaluation of the student.

The parent is entitled to only one IEE of the student at public expense each time SFA Charter School conducts an evaluation of the student with which the parent disagrees.

34 CFR 300.502.

a) *Parent-Initiated Evaluations*

If the parent obtains an IEE of the student at public expense or the parent shares with SFA Charter School an evaluation of the student that the parent obtained at private expense:

1. SFA Charter School must consider the results of the evaluation of the student, if it meets SFA Charter School's criteria for IEE, in any decision made with respect to the provision of a free appropriate public education to the student; and
2. the parent or SFA Charter School may present the evaluation as evidence at a due process hearing regarding the student.

34 CFR 300.502.

b) *Requests for Evaluations by Hearing Officers*

If a hearing officer requests an IEE of the student as part of a due process hearing, the cost of the evaluation must be at public expense.

Sec. 15. CRITERIA FOR OBTAINING IEE AT PUBLIC EXPENSE

The criteria under which the IEE is obtained, including the location of the evaluation and the qualifications of the examiner, must be the same as the criteria that the public agency uses when it initiates an evaluation, to the extent those criteria are consistent with the parent's right to an IEE.

a) *Location*

The evaluator conducting an IEE of a child with a disability at public expense must be located within a 100-mile radius of SFA Charter School. This will allow the evaluator access to SFA Charter School for observation of the student and access to the student's cumulative and special education eligibility folders.

b) *Cost*

Parents are free to select whomever they choose to perform the IEE, so long as the examiner meets SFA Charter School's criteria. SFA Charter School will pay a fee for an IEE that allows a parent to choose from among qualified professionals in the area.

SFA Charter School will not pay unreasonably excessive fees. An unreasonably excessive fee is one which is 20% above the prevailing fees in the area as established by the Medicaid/Medicare Service Provider Manual for the specific test being considered.

Parents will be offered the opportunity to demonstrate to their child's ARD committee that unique circumstances exist which justify an IEE that does not meet SFA Charter School criteria outlined in this document.

When evaluators have a sliding scale fee based on parent income, SFA Charter School will pay the amount charged to the parent if the evaluator meets SFA Charter School criteria or SFA Charter School has approved the IEE that does not meet SFA Charter School criteria.

In the event a parent pursues an IEE independently or pursues an IEE provider that is not on SFA Charter School independent evaluator list, SFA Charter School will determine if the evaluator meets SFA Charter School criteria prior to authorizing payment or reimbursement. If payment will be authorized, an original billing form and an original written report with original signature must be submitted to SFA Charter School prior to payment.

SFA Charter School will deny payment for an IEE conducted by an evaluator who does not meet SFA Charter School criteria. SFA Charter School will deny payment for an IEE that does not meet TEA criteria for the specific disability identified.

If a hearing officer requests an IEE as part of a hearing on a due process complaint, the cost of the evaluation must be at public expense.

Travel costs for evaluators will not exceed SFA Charter School rates for travel as established by state guidelines.

A contract for an IEE between an evaluator and SFA Charter School will not exceed one year. All terms will become void after the expiration date of one year.

c) *Evaluator Criteria*

The evaluator conducting the IEE must meet SFA Charter School criteria and possess comparable credentials to the examiner that conducted the evaluation that is in dispute.

Evaluators must possess current licensure/certification to conduct the evaluation and must provide copies of his or her license or certification with the evaluation, if not previously provided.

Evaluators must comply with all requirements specified in state and federal law, including those outlined in the professional board responsible for providing the license or certification.

Evaluators must meet the examiner qualifications for the tests administered as outlined by the test producer.

The evaluator will have access to the student's cumulative folder and special education folders in gathering information about the student.

The evaluator will have the ability to interview teachers and observe the student in the educational setting.

Prior to conducting the assessment, the evaluator agrees to submit to a national criminal history review and to provide any and all information necessary to secure the national criminal history review, including fingerprints and photographs, or other information required by Texas Education Code § 22.0834 concerning Contractor or Contractor's Subcontractors.

The evaluator agrees to conduct a thorough evaluation in the area(s) performed by SFA Charter School with which the parent disagrees.

Copies of protocols must be provided to SFA Charter School.

The report must comply with all federal and state requirements, including addressing the presence or absence of a disability condition as defined under the IDEA and the Texas Education Code.

The evaluation must be provided to SFA Charter School upon completion.

Except for the criteria described above, SFA Charter School may not impose conditions or timelines related to obtaining an IEE at public expense.

34 CFR 300.502(e).

Sec. 1. COMPLIANCE

SFA Charter School shall use Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (“IDEA”) Part B funds received to:

1. comply with the federal maintenance of effort (“MOE”) requirements;
2. supplement State, local and other Federal funds and not supplant such funds; and
3. pay the excess costs of providing special education and related services to children with disabilities and must be used to supplement State, local, and other Federal funds.

34 CFR 300.202, 20 U.S.C. 1413(a)(2).

Sec. 2. REDUCING LEVEL OF EXPENDITURES

Funds provided to SFA Charter School will not be used to reduce the level of expenditures for the education of students with disabilities made by SFA Charter School below the level of those funds for the preceding year.

20 U.S.C. 1423(a)(2)(A)(iii), Appendix E to Part 300.

SFA Charter School may reduce the level of expenditures if the reduction is attributable to:

1. Voluntary departure, retirement, or departure for just cause of special education personnel;
2. A decrease in enrollment of students with disabilities;
3. The termination of the obligation of SFA Charter School to provide a special education program to a particular student with a disability that is an exceptionally costly program because the child left SFA Charter School, aged out of services, or no longer needs special education;
4. The termination of costly expenditures for long-term purchases; or
5. The assumption of cost by the high cost fund operated by the Texas Education Agency.

34 CFR 300.204.

Sec. 3. EXCESS EXPENDITURES

Having complied with MOE and excess costs requirements, IDEA Part B funds provided to the school will be used for the following activities:

1. For the costs of special education and related services, and supplementary aids and services, provided in a regular class or other education-related setting to the child with a

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disability in accordance with the individualized education program (“IEP”) of the child, even if nondisabled children benefit from such services;

2. To develop and implement coordinated, early intervening educational services in compliance with the child find and administration requirements, including:
 - a. Early intervening services, which may include interagency financing structures, for children in kindergarten through grade 12 (with a particular emphasis on children in kindergarten through grade 3) who are not currently identified as needing special education or related services but who need additional academic and behavioral support to succeed in a general education environment;
 - b. SFA Charter School may not use more than 15 percent of the amount received under IDEA Part B for any fiscal year, less any adjustments by SFA Charter School to local fiscal effort, if any, in combination with other amounts, which may include amounts other than education funds, to develop and implement coordinated, early intervening services; and
3. To establish and implement cost or risk-sharing funds, consortia, or cooperatives for SFA Charter School, or for SFA Charter School’s working in a consortium of which SFA Charter School is a part, to pay for high-cost special education and related services.
4. SFA Charter School may use IDEA Part B funds to purchase appropriate technology for recordkeeping, data collection, and related case management activities of teachers and related services personnel providing services described in the IEP that is needed for the implementation of such case management activities.

34 CFR 300.208.

Sec. 4. EARLY INTERVENING SERVICES

Funds made available for early intervening services, must supplement not supplant funds available under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (“ESEA”).

34 CFR 300.226(e).

Sec. 1. NONEDUCATIONAL COMMUNITY BASED SUPPORT SERVICES

Students with disabilities and their families may be eligible to receive noneducational community based support services paid for by public funds.

The Texas Education Agency (“TEA”) is responsible for establishing procedures and criteria for the allocation of noneducational funds to open-enrollment charter schools for the provision of noneducational community-based support services to certain students with disabilities and their families so that those students may receive a free appropriate public education (“FAPE”) in the least restrictive environment.

Education Code 29.013(a).

SFA Charter School shall use any funds allocated under Education Code Section 29.013 only for eligible students with disabilities who would remain or would have to be placed in residential facilities primarily for educational reasons without the provision of noneducational community-based support services.

Education Code 29.013(b).

The support services may include in-home family support, respite care, and case management for families with a student who otherwise would have been placed by an open-enrollment charter school in a private residential facility.

Education Code 29.013(c).

The provision of services under Education Code Section 29.013 does not supersede or limit the responsibility of other agencies to provide or pay for costs of noneducational community-based support services to enable any student with disabilities to receive a FAPE in the least restrictive environment. Specifically, services provided under Education Code Section 29.013 may not be used for a student with disabilities who is currently placed or who needs to be placed in a residential facility primarily for noneducational reasons. Funds cannot be used to cover services already required through the student’s individual education program or for long-term care.

Education Code 29.013(d).

Sec. 1. SHARED SERVICES ARRANGEMENT

SFA Charter School may enter into a written contract to jointly operate its special education programs. Funds to which the cooperating schools/charter schools are entitled may be allocated to the schools/charter schools jointly as shared services arrangement units or shared services arrangement funds in accordance with the shared services arrangement schools/charters' agreement, Texas Education Agency Guidance and Texas Government. Code Chapter 791 (interlocal agreements).

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Sec. 1. STATE FUNDING: SPECIAL ALLOTMENTS

SFA Charter School shall maintain records of students participating in special programs in accordance with the Commissioner of Education's rules.

19 TAC 129.21.

Sec. 2. SPECIAL EDUCATION ALLOTMENT

Each open-enrollment charter school will receive an annual allotment equal to the adjusted basic allotment multiplied by 1.1 for each student receiving special education and related services in a mainstream instructional arrangement. For each full-time equivalent student receiving special education and related services in average daily attendance in an instructional arrangement other than a mainstream instructional arrangement, the open-enrollment charter school is entitled to an annual allotment equal to the adjusted basic allotment multiplied by a weight determined according to instructional arrangement as set forth in Section 48.102, Texas Education Code.

Funds allocated under this section, other than an indirect cost allotment established under State Board of Education ("SBOE") rule, must be used in the special education program under Subchapter A, Chapter 29 of the Texas Education Code.

Education Code 48.102(h).

Sec. 3. COMPENSATORY EDUCATION ALLOTMENT

SFA Charter School must use funds allocated under TEC §48.104 for a purpose authorized in Section 48.104(j-1), (k) of the Texas Education Code

Education Code 48.104.

Funds allocated under Education Code Section 48.104 shall be used to fund supplemental programs and services designed to eliminate any disparity in performance on assessment instruments administered under Subchapter B (School-Based Health Centers), Chapter 39, Texas Education Code, or disparity in the rates of high school completion between students at risk of dropping out of school, as defined by Section 29.081 of the Education Code (Compensatory, Intensive, and Accelerated Instruction) and all other students. Specifically, the funds, other than an indirect cost allotment established under SBOE rule, which may not exceed 45 percent, may be used to meet the costs of providing a compensatory, intensive, or accelerated instruction program under Education Code Section 29.081 or an alternative education program established under Education Code Section 37.008 (Disciplinary Alternative Education Programs) or to support a program eligible under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as provided

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by Pub. L. No. 103-382 and its subsequent amendments, and by federal regulations implementing that Act, at a campus at which at least 40 percent of the students are educationally disadvantaged. In meeting the costs of providing a compensatory, intensive, or accelerated instruction program under Education Code Section 29.081, SFA Charter School's compensatory education allotment shall be used for costs supplementary to the regular education program, such as costs for program and student evaluation, instructional materials and equipment and other supplies required for quality instruction, supplemental staff expenses, salary for teachers of at-risk students, smaller class size, and individualized instruction.

Education Code 48.104(k).

Sec. 4. BILINGUAL EDUCATION ALLOTMENT

For each student in average daily attendance in a bilingual education or special language program under Subchapter B, Chapter 29, an open-enrollment charter school is entitled to an annual allotment equal to the adjusted basic allotment multiplied by 0.1. Funds allocated under this section, other than an indirect cost allotment established under SBOE rule, must be used in providing bilingual education or special language programs under Subchapter B, Chapter 29, and must be accounted for under existing agency reporting and auditing procedures. An open-enrollment charter school's bilingual education or special language allocation may only be used for program and student evaluation, instructional materials and equipment, staff development, supplemental staff expenses, salary supplements for teachers, and other supplies required for quality instruction and smaller class size.

Education Code 12.104(b)(3)(G), 42.105.

**POLICY GROUP 6 - SPECIAL EDUCATION
GENERAL AND FISCAL GUIDELINES**

Sec. 1. COMPLIANCE WITH GENERAL AND FISCAL GUIDELINES

SFA Charter School must comply with the Texas Education Agency General and Fiscal Guidelines.

Sec. 2. CHARGING COSTS TO SPECIAL EDUCATION GRANT

SFA Charter School may charge costs to a special education grant when those costs follow the Stephen F Austin State University's local written procedures for allowability of costs and meet the following criteria:

- Are reasonable for the performance of the special education grant and are allocable under the applicable cost principles;
- Conform to limitations or exclusions set forth in applicable cost principles or the special education grant agreement as to types or amount of costs;
- Are consistent with policies and procedures that apply uniformly to federally or state-funded activities funded from other sources;
- Are accorded consistent treatment among all grant programs, regardless of funding source;
- Are not included as a cost or used to meet cost-sharing or matching requirements of any other federally or state-funded program in the current or a prior period; and
- Are adequately documented.

Sec. 3. REASONABLE COST

A cost can be considered reasonable if it meets the following standards:

- The cost is of a type generally recognized as ordinary and necessary for the operation of SFA Charter School or grant performance;
- Restrictions or requirements are imposed for generally accepted sound business practices, arms-length bargaining, federal or state laws and regulations, and grant award terms and conditions;
- Consideration is given to market prices for comparable goods or services for the geographical area;
- Individuals are acting with prudence in the circumstances of responsibility to SFA Charter School and federal and state government; and
- There are no significant deviations from established practices of SFA Charter School that may unjustifiably increase grant costs.

POLICY GROUP 6 - SPECIAL EDUCATION
GENERAL AND FISCAL GUIDELINES

a) *Allocating Costs*

A cost is allocable to the special education grant in accordance with relative benefits received if it is treated consistently with other costs incurred for the same purposes in like circumstance and if it meets the following:

- Is incurred specifically for the grant;
- Benefits both the grant and the other work and can be distributed in reasonable proportion to the benefits received; and
- Is necessary to the overall operation of SFA Charter School and is assignable in part to the special education grant award in accordance with the principles of this framework.

The SFA Charter School is an elementary school serving students in kindergarten through 5th grade.

Sec. 1. FOSTER PARENT

A foster parent may act as a parent of a child with a disability, as authorized under 20 U.S.C. 1415(b) and its subsequent amendments, if:

1. the Department of Family and Protective Services (“DFPS”) is appointed as the temporary or permanent managing conservator of the child;
2. the rights and duties of the department to make decisions regarding education provided to the child under Section 153.371, Family Code, have not been limited by court order; and
3. the foster parent agrees to:
 - a. participate in making special education decisions on the child’s behalf; and
 - b. complete a training program that complies with minimum standards established by the Texas Education Agency (“TEA”) rule.

Education Code 29.015(a).

A foster parent who will act as a parent of a child with a disability must complete a training program before the next scheduled admission, review, and dismissal (“ARD”) committee meeting for the child but not later than the 90th day after the date the foster parent begins acting as the parent for the purpose of making special education decisions.

Education Code 29.015(b).

SFA Charter School may not require a foster parent to retake a training program to continue serving as a child’s parent or to serve as the surrogate parent for another child if the foster parent has completed a training program to act as a parent of a child with a disability provided by:

1. the DFPS;
2. a school district;
3. an education service center; or
4. any other entity that receives federal funds to provide special education training to parents.

A foster parent who is denied the right to act as a parent under Education Code Section 29.015 by an open-enrollment charter school may file a complaint with the TEA in accordance with federal law and regulations.

Education Code 29.015(c).

SFA Charter School shall provide notice to the student’s educational decision-maker and caseworker regarding events that may significantly impact the education of a student, including:

1. requests or referrals for an evaluation under Section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. Section 794), or special education under Education Code Section 29.003;
2. ARD committee meetings;
3. manifestation determination reviews required by Education Code Section 37.004(b);
4. any disciplinary actions under Chapter 37 of the Education Code for which parental notice is required;
5. citations issued for Class C misdemeanor offenses on school property or at school-sponsored activities;
6. reports of restraint and seclusion required by Education Code Section 37.0021; and
7. use of corporal punishment as provided by Education Code Section 37.0011.

Education Code 25.007.

Sec. 2. SURROGATE PARENT

SFA Charter School must appoint an individual to serve as the surrogate parent for a child if:

1. SFA Charter School is unable to identify or locate a parent for a child with a disability; or
2. the foster parent of a child is unwilling or unable to serve as a parent.

A surrogate parent appointed by SFA Charter School may not:

1. be an employee of the state, SFA Charter School, or any other agency involved in the education or care of the child; or
2. have any interest that conflicts with the interests of the child.

A surrogate parent must:

1. be willing to serve in that capacity;
2. exercise independent judgement in pursuing the child's interests;
3. ensure that the child's due process rights under applicable state and federal laws are not violated;
4. complete a training program that complies with minimum standards established by agency rule before the next scheduled admission, review, and dismissal committee meeting for the child but not later than the 90th day after the date the surrogate parent is appointed;
5. visit the child and the school where the child is enrolled;
6. review the child's educational records;
7. consult with any person involved in the child's education, including the child's teachers, caseworkers, court-appointed volunteers, guardian ad litem, attorney ad litem, foster parent, and caregiver; and
8. attend meetings of the child's admission, review, and dismissal committee.

SFA Charter School may appoint a person who has been appointed to serve as a child's guardian ad litem or as a court-certified volunteer advocate as the child's surrogate parent. As soon as practicable after appointing a surrogate parent SFA Charter School shall provide written notice of the appointment to the child's educational decision-maker and caseworker.

If a court appoints a surrogate parent for a child with a disability and the SFA Charter School determines that the surrogate parent is failing to perform or is not properly performing the duties listed in this policy, SFA Charter School shall consult with the DFPS regarding whether another person should be appointed to serve as the surrogate parent for the child.

Sec. 1. CHILD FIND PRIVATE SCHOOL STUDENTS

SFA Charter School shall coordinate with home school districts, who are primarily responsible for consulting with private school representatives, regarding the child find process and the provision of special education and related services to children enrolled in private schools within SFA Charter School's boundaries.

SFA Charter School shall undertake activities similar to those undertaken for children enrolled in public schools and shall complete the child find process for children enrolled in private schools in a time period comparable to that for other students attending the public schools within SFA Charter School's boundaries.

20 U.S.C. 1412(a)(10)(A)(ii)–(iv).

Sec. 2. SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS PLACED IN PRIVATE SCHOOL

a) Placement by SFA Charter School

If SFA Charter School places a child with a disability in a private school or facility, or refers the child to a private school or facility, as a means of carrying out the requirements of the special education laws, SFA Charter School shall ensure that the child is provided special education and related services, in accordance with an individualized education program ("IEP"), at no cost to the parents.

20 U.S.C. 1412(a)(10)(B)(i).

b) Placement by the Parent

When a student with a disability who has been placed by his or her parent directly in a private school is referred to SFA Charter School, SFA Charter School shall convene an admission, review, and dismissal ("ARD") committee to determine whether SFA Charter School can offer the child a free appropriate public education ("FAPE"). If SFA Charter School determines that it can offer a FAPE to the student, SFA Charter School is not responsible for providing educational services to the student, except as provided in 34 CFR 300.130–300.144 or 19 TAC 89.1096(e), until such time as the parents choose to enroll the student in SFA Charter School full time.

19 TAC 89.1096(b).

Sec. 3. REJECTION OF OFFER OF FAPE

a) Student Receives ISP

If SFA Charter School offers to provide a FAPE to a child with a disability and the parents elect to place the child in a private school or facility, SFA Charter School is not required to pay for the cost of education, including special education and related services. However, SFA Charter School must develop and implement an individualized services plan (“ISP”) for the child.

20 U.S.C. 1412(a)(10)(C)(i); 34 CFR 300.148(a).

b) *Reimbursement*

If the parents of a child with a disability, who previously received special education and related services under the authority of SFA Charter School, enroll the child in a private school without the consent or referral by SFA Charter School, a court or a hearing officer may require SFA Charter School to reimburse the parents for the cost of that enrollment if the court or hearing officer finds that SFA Charter School had not made a FAPE available to the child in a timely manner before the enrollment.

20 U.S.C. 1412(a)(10)(C)(ii); 34 CFR 300.148(c).

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Sec. 1. PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS

The Superintendent or designee shall establish and maintain procedures to ensure that children with disabilities and their parents are guaranteed procedural safeguards with respect to the provision of a free appropriate public education (“FAPE”).

20 U.S.C. 1415(a)–(b).

These procedures shall include:

1. An opportunity for the parents to review all education records and to participate in meetings relating to the identification, evaluation, and educational placement of the child and the provision of FAPE to the child. *34 CFR 300.501.*
2. An opportunity for the parents to obtain an independent educational evaluation of the child. *34 CFR 300.502.*
3. Assignment of an individual to act as a surrogate for the parent when no parent can be identified, SFA Charter School cannot locate the parents, or the child is a ward of the state. *34 CFR 300.519.*
4. Prior written notice to the parents whenever SFA Charter School proposes to initiate or change, or refuses to initiate or change, the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of the child, or the provision of FAPE to the child. *34 CFR 300.503.*
5. Procedures to allow parties to resolve disputes through a mediation process. *34 CFR 300.506.*
6. An opportunity for any party to file a due process complaint on any matter relating to the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of the child, or the provision of FAPE to the child. *34 CFR 300.507.*
7. Procedures that require either party, or the attorney representing a party, to provide the other party a due process complaint (which shall remain confidential). *34 CFR 300.508.*

Sec. 2. LANGUAGE OF NOTICES

The procedural safeguards and prior written notices described below must be written in a language understandable to the general public. The notice must be provided in the native language of the parent or other mode of communication used by the parent, unless it is clearly not feasible to do so.

34 CFR 300.503(c), 300.504(d).

a) *Electronic Delivery of Notices*

A parent who has a child with a disability may elect to receive required notices required by 34 CFR 300.503, 300.504 and 300.508 by electronic mail, if SFA Charter School makes that option available.

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34 CFR 300.505.

b) *Notice of Procedural Safeguards*

SFA Charter School shall provide a copy of the procedural safeguards to parents only once per year, except that a copy also shall be given to the parents:

1. Upon initial referral or parental request for evaluation;
2. Upon receipt of the first state complaint and upon receipt of the first due process complaint in a school year;
3. On the date of a decision to make a disciplinary removal that is a change in placement; and
4. Upon request by a parent.

SFA Charter School may also place a current copy of the procedural safeguards notice on its Internet website.

c) *Contents of Notice*

The notice shall include a full explanation of the procedural safeguards relating to:

1. Independent educational evaluations;
2. Prior written notice;
3. Parental consent;
4. Access to educational records;
5. Opportunity to present and resolve complaints through the due process complaint and state complaint procedures, including:
 - a. The time period in which to file a complaint,
 - b. The opportunity for SFA Charter School to resolve the complaint; and
 - c. The difference between the due process complaint and the state complaint procedures, including the jurisdiction of each procedure, what issues may be raised, filing and decisional timelines, and relevant procedures.
6. The availability of mediation;
7. The child's placement during pendency of any due process proceedings;
8. Procedures for children who are subject to placement in an interim alternative educational setting;
9. Requirements for unilateral placement by parents of children in private schools at public expense;
10. Hearings on due process complaints, including requirements for disclosure of evaluation results and recommendations;
11. Civil actions, including the time period in which to file such actions; and
12. Attorneys' fees.

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20 U.S.C. 1415(a)–(b), (d); 34 CFR 300.504(c).

Sec. 3. DISPUTE RESOLUTION

The possible options for resolving disputes that arise between a parent and SFA Charter School relating to the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of or the provision of FAPE to a student with a disability include, but are not limited to:

1. ARD committee meetings, including IEP facilitation if offered by SFA Charter School, under 19 TAC 89.1196;
2. Meetings or conferences with the student’s teachers;
3. Meetings or conferences, subject to SFA Charter School policies, with the principal, special education director, Superintendent, or Board;
4. Requesting state IEP facilitation in accordance with 19 TAC 89.1197 (relating to State Individualized Education Program Facilitation);
5. Requesting mediation through the Texas Education Agency (“TEA”) in accordance with 34 CFR 300.506;
6. Filing a complaint with TEA in accordance with 34 CFR 300.153; or
7. Requesting a due process hearing through TEA in accordance with 34 CFR 300.507-300.514.

19 TAC 89.1150.

Sec. 4. DUE PROCESS COMPLAINT

Whenever a due process complaint has been received by SFA Charter School, the parent shall have an opportunity for an impartial due process hearing, which shall be conducted by TEA.

a) *Time Limits*

1. *Due Process Complaints Filed Before September 1, 2022:*

A due process complaint filed before September 1, 2022 must set forth an alleged violation that occurred not more than one year before the date the parent or SFA Charter School knew or should have known about the alleged action that forms the basis of the complaint. *20 U.S.C. 1415(f)(1)(A); 19 TAC 89.1151(c).*

2. *Due Process Complaints Filed On or After September 1, 2022:*

A due process complaint filed on or after September 1, 2022 must set forth an alleged violation that occurred not more than two years before the date the parent or SFA Charter School knew or should have known about the alleged action that forms the basis of the complaint. *20 U.S.C. 1415(f)(1)(A); Education Code 29.0164.*

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b) *Exceptions*

These time limits shall not apply if the parent was prevented from requesting a hearing due to:

1. A specific misrepresentation by SFA Charter School that it had resolved the problem forming the basis of the complaint; or
2. SFA Charter School's withholding of information from the parent that SFA Charter School was required by the IDEA to provide.

20 U.S.C. 1415(f)(3)(D); 34 CFR 300.511(f); 19 TAC 89.1151(d).

c) *"Stay Put"*

During the pendency of any administrative or judicial proceeding regarding a due process complaint notice requesting a due process hearing, the child shall remain in the then-current educational placement unless SFA Charter School and the parent agree otherwise. If the child is applying for initial admission to a public school, the child shall, with the consent of the parents, be placed in the public school program until all proceedings have been completed. *20 U.S.C. 1415(j); 34 CFR 300.518, 300.533.*

d) *Resolution Process*

Within 15 days of receiving notice of a parent's due process complaint, and before initiating a due process hearing under 34 CFR 300.511, SFA Charter School shall convene a meeting with the parent and the relevant member or members of the ARD committee. The purpose of the meeting is for the parent to discuss the due process complaint and the facts that form the basis of the due process complaint, so that SFA Charter School has the opportunity to resolve the dispute.

The meeting need not be held if the parent and SFA Charter School agree in writing to waive the meeting, or the parent and SFA Charter School agree to use the mediation process.

If SFA Charter School has not resolved the due process complaint to the satisfaction of the parent within 30 days of the receipt of the complaint, the due process hearing may occur. If SFA Charter School is unable to obtain the participation of the parent in the resolution meeting after reasonable efforts have been made, SFA Charter School may, at the conclusion of the 30-day period, request that a hearing officer dismiss the parent's due process complaint.

34 CFR 300.510.

Student records shall be maintained for each student from the time the student is in attendance at SFA Charter School until withdrawal or graduation from SFA Charter School. These records shall move with the respective student from campus to campus. Records for students not in attendance and/or withdrawn students and graduates shall be retained for the period of time required by law. No permanent records may be destroyed without explicit written permission from the Superintendent.

Sec. 1. EDUCATION RECORDS

a) *“Education Records” Defined*

For the purposes of this policy, the term “education records” means those records, files, documents, and other materials that contain information directly related to a student and are maintained by SFA Charter School or by a person acting for SFA Charter School.

The term “education records” does not include:

1. Records that are created or received by SFA Charter School after an individual is no longer a student in attendance, and that are not directly related to the individual’s attendance as a student.
2. Records made by SFA Charter School personnel that are kept in the sole possession of the maker, are used only as a personal memory aid, and are not accessible or revealed to anyone other than a temporary substitute for the maker of the record.
3. Records maintained by a law enforcement unit of SFA Charter School that were created by that law enforcement unit for the purpose of law enforcement.
4. Records on a student who is eighteen years of age or older, or who is attending an institution of postsecondary education, that are:
 - a. Made or maintained by a physician, psychiatrist, psychologist, or other recognized professional or paraprofessional acting in his or her professional capacity or assisting in a paraprofessional capacity;
 - b. Made, maintained, or used only in connection with treatment of the student; and
 - c. Disclosed only to individuals providing the treatment. For the purpose of this definition, “treatment” does not include remedial educational activities or activities that are part of the program of instruction at the agency or institution.
5. Grades on peer-graded papers before they are collected and recorded by a teacher.

State and federal law safeguard educational records from unauthorized inspection or use. All information relating to student performance, including grades, test results, and disciplinary records are considered confidential educational records. Release of those records are restricted to parents; school staff members with a legitimate educational interest; various governmental agencies or in response to a subpoena or court order; or a school to which the student transfers or subsequently

enrolls. Release to any other person or agency will occur only with prior written consent of the parent.

b) *Screening Records*

The Principal of each SFA Charter School campus shall maintain records of screening for special senses and communication disorders, spinal screening, and assessment for type 2 diabetes for each student in SFA Charter School. Records shall be open for inspection by the state or local health department. The Texas-Mexico Border Health Coordination Office may, directly or through local health departments, enter a school and inspect records relating to assessment for type 2 diabetes. Individual screening records may be transferred among schools in accordance with Section 2-d (Access by Other Persons) below.

c) *Immunization Records*

SFA Charter School shall maintain an individual immunization record during the period of attendance for each student admitted. The records shall be open for inspection at all reasonable times by the Texas Education Agency (“TEA”) or by representatives of local health departments or the Texas Department of State Health Services (“TDSHS”). SFA Charter School shall cooperate with other districts and schools in transferring students’ immunization records between other schools. Specific approval from students or parents is not required prior to making such record transfers.

d) *Medical Records*

The parent of a student is entitled to access the student’s medical records maintained by SFA Charter School. On request of a student’s parent, SFA Charter School shall provide a copy of the student’s medical records to the parent. SFA Charter School may not impose a charge that exceeds the amount authorized by Section 552.261 of the Government Code.

e) *Privacy Rule for Non-“Education Records”*

To the extent SFA Charter School is a covered entity under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (“HIPAA”), SFA Charter School must comply with the Privacy Rule, 45 CFR Part 164, with respect to protected health information that is not an education record.

f) *Food Allergy Information*

Information regarding a child’s food allergy, regardless of how it is received by SFA Charter School, shall be retained in the child’s student records, but may not be placed in the health record maintained for the child by SFA Charter School.

i. Exceptions

If SFA Charter School receives documentation of a food allergy from a physician, that documentation shall be placed in the health record maintained for the child by SFA Charter School. A registered nurse may enter appropriate notes about a child's possible food allergy in the health record maintained for the child by SFA Charter School, including a notation that the child's student records indicate that a parent has notified SFA Charter School of the child's possible food allergy.

g) ***Assessment Instruments***

The results of individual student performance on basic skills assessment instruments or other achievement tests administered by SFA Charter School are confidential and may be made available only to the student, the student's parent, and to SFA Charter School personnel directly involved with the student's educational program. However, overall student performance data shall be aggregated by ethnicity, sex, grade level, subject area, campus, and school system, and made available to the public, with appropriate interpretations, at regularly scheduled Board meetings. The information may not contain the names of individual students or teachers.

h) ***Academic Achievement Records (Grades 9–12)***

SFA Charter School shall use the academic achievement record (transcript) form adopted by the State Board of Education ("SBOE"). This form shall serve as the academic record for each student and shall be maintained permanently by SFA Charter School. Copies of the record shall be made available to students transferring to another district. The information may be provided to the student or to the receiving district or to both. SFA Charter School shall respond promptly to all requests for student records from receiving districts.

i) ***Enrollment Records***

If a parent or other person with legal control of a child enrolls the child in SFA Charter School, the parent or other person, or the school district in which the child most recently attended school, shall furnish to SFA Charter School all of the following:

1. The child's birth certificate, or another document suitable as proof of the child's identity as defined by the Commissioner of Education in the Student Attendance Accounting Handbook.
2. A copy of the child's records from the school the child most recently attended if he or she was previously enrolled in a school in Texas or in another state.

SFA Charter School must furnish information under items 1 and 2 not later than the tenth working day after the date SFA Charter School receives a request for the information.

If a parent or other person with legal control of a child under a court order requests that SFA Charter School transfer a child's student records, SFA Charter School shall notify the parent or other person as soon as practicable that the parent or other person may request and receive an unofficial copy of the records for delivery in person to a school in another district.

Sec. 2. ACCESS, DISCLOSURE, AND AMENDMENT

a) *Definitions*

i. "Attendance"

"Attendance" includes, but is not limited to:

1. Attendance in person or by paper correspondence, videoconference, satellite, Internet, or other electronic information and telecommunications technologies for students who are not physically present in the classroom; and
2. The period during which a person is working under a work-study program.

ii. "Disclosure"

"Disclosure" means to permit access to or the release, transfer, or other communication of personally identifiable information contained in education records by any means, including oral, written, or electronic means, to any party except the party identified as the party that provided or created the record.

iii. "Parent"

"Parent" includes a natural parent, a guardian, or an individual acting as a parent in the absence of a parent or guardian.

iv. "Personally Identifiable Information"

"Personally identifiable information" includes, but is not limited to:

1. The student's name;
2. The name of the student's parent or other family members;
3. The address of the student or student's family;

4. A personal identifier, such as the student's biometric record, defined as a record of one or more measurable biological or behavioral characteristics that can be used for automated recognition of an individual (e.g., fingerprints, retina and iris patterns, voiceprints, DNA sequence, facial characteristics, and handwriting); social security number; or student number;
5. Other indirect identifiers, such as the student's date of birth, place of birth, and mother's maiden name;
6. Other information that, alone or in combination, is linked or linkable to a specific student that would allow a reasonable person in the school community, who does not have personal knowledge of the relevant circumstances, to identify the student with reasonable certainty; or
7. Information requested by a person who SFA Charter School reasonably believes knows the identity of the student to whom the education record relates.

v. "Record"

"Record" means any information recorded in any way, including, but not limited to, handwriting, print, computer media, video or audiotape, film, microfilm, and microfiche.

vi. "Authorized Representative"

"Authorized representative" means any entity or individual designated by a state or local educational authority or an agency headed by an official listed in 34 C.F.R. 99.31(a)(3) to conduct—with respect to federal- or state-supported education programs—any audit, evaluation, or any compliance or enforcement activity in connection with federal legal requirements that relate to these programs.

vii. "Education Program"

"Education program" means any program that is principally engaged in the provision of education, including but not limited to, early childhood education, elementary and secondary education, postsecondary education, special education, job training, career and technical education, and adult education, and any program that is administered by SFA Charter School.

viii. "Signed and Dated Written Consent"

"Signed and dated written consent" may include a record and signature in electronic form that:

1. Identifies and authenticates a particular person as the source of the electronic consent; and
2. Indicates such person's approval of the information contained in the electronic consent.

b) *Access by Parents*

Access to the education records of a student who is or has been in attendance at SFA Charter School shall be granted to the parent of the student who is a minor or who is a dependent for tax purposes.

SFA Charter School shall presume that a parent has authority to inspect and review the student's records unless it has been provided with evidence that there is a court order, state statute, or legally binding document that specifically revokes these rights. A court may order the custodian of records to delete all references in a child's records to the place of residence of either party appointed as conservator before their release to another party appointed as conservator.

c) *Access by Student*

Whenever a student has attained 18 years of age or is attending an institution of postsecondary education, the rights accorded to, and consent required of, parents transfer from the parents to the student.

Nothing in this section prevents SFA Charter School from disclosing education records, or personally identifiable information from education records, to a parent without prior written consent of an eligible student if the disclosure meets the conditions in 34 CFR 99.31(a), including if the student is a dependent for tax purposes or in the case of a health or safety emergency.

If material in the education record of a student includes information on another student, only the portion of the material relating to the student whose records were requested may be inspected and reviewed.

d) *Access by Other Persons*

Personally identifiable information in education records shall not be released without the written consent of the student's parents, except to the following:

i. *School Officials*

SFA Charter School may disclose personally identifiable information without parent consent when disclosure is made to school officials with legitimate educational interest in the information. A school official is:

1. A person employed by SFA Charter School as an administrator, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel).
2. A person serving on the Board.

3. A person or company with whom SFA Charter School has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist).
4. A consultant, contractor, volunteer, or other party to whom SFA Charter School has outsourced institutional services or functions, provided that the outside party:
 - a. Performs an institutional service or function for which SFA Charter School would otherwise use employees;
 - b. Is under the direct control of SFA Charter School with respect to the use and maintenance of education records; and
 - c. Is subject to the requirements of 34 CFR 99.33(a) governing the use and redisclosure of personally identifiable information from education records.
5. A parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an educational record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

SFA Charter School must use reasonable methods to ensure that school officials obtain access to only those education records in which they have legitimate educational interests.

ii. Officials of Other Schools

Officials of other schools or school systems in which the student seeks or intends to enroll, or where the student is already enrolled so long as the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer, provided that SFA Charter School either:

1. Includes in its policies a statement that notifies the parent or student that it forwards education records on request of the other school to such officials; or
2. Makes a reasonable attempt to notify the parent (unless the record transfer is initiated by the parent).

In either case, SFA Charter School shall furnish a copy of the transferred records to the parent if requested and shall give the parent an opportunity for a hearing to challenge the content of the record.

iii. Authorized Governmental Representatives

Authorized representatives of the officials or agencies headed by the Comptroller General of the United States, the Attorney General of the United States, the Secretary of Education, or state and local educational authorities who require access to student or other records necessary in connection with the audit and evaluation of federal- or state-supported education programs or in connection with the enforcement of or compliance with federal legal requirements that relate to such programs.

SFA Charter School may not refuse to report information concerning a student holding an F, J, or M visa on the basis of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (“FERPA”) and any regulation implementing FERPA. SFA Charter School is authorized and required to report information that would ordinarily be protected by FERPA only to the extent required by 8 U.S.C. 1372, 8 CFR 214.3, or any corresponding regulation.

iv. Financial Aid Personnel

Personnel involved with a student’s application for, or receipt of, financial aid.

v. Juvenile Justice Officials

State and local officials to whom such information is specifically allowed to be reported or disclosed by state statute if:

1. The allowed reporting or disclosure concerns the juvenile justice system and its ability to effectively serve the student whose records are released, and
2. The officials and authorities to whom such information is disclosed certify in writing to SFA Charter School that the information will not be disclosed to any other party except as provided under state law without the prior written consent of the parent of the student.

vi. Organizations Conducting Surveys

Organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, SFA Charter School for the purpose of developing, validating, or administering predictive tests, administering student aid programs, and improving instruction. Such studies must be conducted so that personal identification of students and their parents will not be revealed to persons other than authorized personnel of the organizations conducting the studies who have legitimate interests in the information. Such information must be destroyed when no longer needed for the original purposes of the studies.

SFA Charter School must enter into a written agreement with the organization that:

1. Specifies the purpose, scope, and duration of the study or studies and the information to be disclosed;
2. Requires the organization to use personally identifiable information from education records only to meet the purpose or purposes of the study as stated in the written agreement;
3. Requires the organization to conduct the study in a manner that does not permit personal identification of parents and students, as defined in this part, by anyone other than representatives of the organization with legitimate interests; and

4. Requires the organization to destroy or return to SFA Charter School all personally identifiable information when the information is no longer needed for the purposes for which the study was conducted and specifies the time period in which the information must be returned or destroyed.

If SFA Charter School enters into an agreement with an organization conducting a study, it may redisclose personally identifiable information from education records on behalf of educational agencies and institutions that disclosed the information to SFA Charter School in accordance with the requirements of 34 C.F.R. 99.33(b).

SFA Charter School is not required to initiate a study or agree with or endorse the conclusions or results of the study.

vii. Accrediting Organizations

Accrediting organizations that require the information for purposes of accreditation.

viii. Health & Safety Emergency

Appropriate persons, including the student's parents, who, in an emergency, must have such information in order to protect the health or safety of the student or other person.

In making a determination, SFA Charter School may take into account the totality of the circumstances pertaining to a threat to the health or safety of a student or other individuals. If SFA Charter School determines that there is an articulable and significant threat to the health or safety of a student or other individuals, it may disclose information from education records to any person whose knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals.

ix. Secretary of Agriculture

The Secretary of Agriculture, or authorized representative from the Food and Nutrition Service, for the purposes of conducting program monitoring, evaluations, and performance measurements of schools receiving funding or providing benefits of programs authorized under the National School Lunch Act or the Child Nutrition Act.

x. State or Local Child Welfare Agency

An agency caseworker or other representative of a state or local child welfare agency who has the right to access a student's case plan when the agency is legally responsible, in accordance with state law, for the care and protection of the student.

xi. Directory Information

Any person requesting directory information after SFA Charter School has given public notice of that definition.

e) *Written Consent*

The parent shall provide a signed and dated written consent before SFA Charter School discloses personally identifiable information from a student's education records to any individual, agency, or organization other than the parent, the student, or those listed above. Such consent shall specify records to be released, the reason for such release, and to whom the records are to be released.

f) *Instructional Resources and Parental Rights*

All instructional materials, including teacher's manuals, films, tapes, or other supplementary material that will be used in connection with any survey, analysis, or evaluation as part of any program funded in whole or in part by the U. S. Department of Education ("DOE") shall be available for inspection by the parents of students.

g) *Information Collection*

i. DOE Funded Surveys

No student shall be required, as part of any program funded in whole or in part by the DOE, to submit to a survey, analysis, or evaluation that reveals information concerning the following topics without the prior consent of the student (if the student is an adult or emancipated minor), or, in the case of an unemancipated minor, without the prior written consent of the parent:

1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parents.
2. Mental and psychological problems of the student or the student's family.
3. Sex behavior and attitudes.
4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, and demeaning behavior.
5. Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom students have close family relationships.
6. Legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, and ministers.
7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or student's parent.
8. Income, other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such program.

ii. Information Collection Funded by Other Sources

Except as provided by 20 U.S.C. 1232h(a) or (b), as a condition of receiving funds from programs funded in whole or in part by the DOE, SFA Charter School shall develop and adopt policies, in consultation with parents, pursuant to 20 U.S.C. 1232h(c)(1), and provide for parent notification in accordance with 20 U.S.C. 1232(c)(2).

iii. Subpoenaed Records

SFA Charter School shall release student records to an entity or persons designated in a subpoena. SFA Charter School shall not disclose to any person the existence or contents of the subpoena if a court orders SFA Charter School to refrain from such disclosure. Unless the court or other issuing agency orders SFA Charter School to refrain from such disclosure or the order is an *ex parte* court order obtained by the United States Attorney General (or designee not lower than an Assistant Attorney General) concerning investigations or prosecutions of an offense listed in 18 U.S.C. 2332b(g)(5)(B) or an act of domestic or international terrorism as defined in 18 U.S.C. 2331, SFA Charter School shall make a reasonable effort to notify the parents and the student of all such subpoenas in advance of compliance.

iv. Sex Offenders

SFA Charter School may disclose personally identifiable information without consent if the disclosure concerns sex offenders and other individuals required to register under section 170101 of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994, 42 U.S.C. 14071, and the information was provided to SFA Charter School under 42 U.S.C. 14071 and applicable federal guidelines.

h) Parental Rights and Student Privacy

As a condition of receiving funds under any applicable program, SFA Charter School adopts the following policies, pursuant to 20 U.S.C. 1232h(c)(1):

1. Parents have a right to inspect any survey created by a third party before the survey is administered or distributed by SFA Charter School to the student. Parents should submit such a request to the Principal, and shall be provided an opportunity to inspect the survey within a reasonable period of time as determined by the Principal. Upon a parent's request to inspect a survey, the parent's child shall not participate in the survey until the parent has had a reasonable opportunity to inspect the survey, as determined by the Principal.

2. In the event a survey contains the items listed above, and is administered or distributed to students, SFA Charter School shall comply with FERPA and other applicable law to protect student privacy.
3. Parents have a right to inspect any instructional material used in the educational curriculum for the student. Parents should submit such a request to the Principal. The Principal shall provide reasonable access to parents within a reasonable period of time, as determined by the Principal.
4. SFA Charter School may administer physical examinations or other screenings to students as required and/or authorized by state or federal law and in accordance with other applicable policy.
5. SFA Charter School shall not collect, disclose, or use a student's personal information for the purpose of marketing or selling that information to third parties. This policy does not apply to or restrict the use of personal information collected from students for the purpose of developing, evaluating, or providing educational products or services offered by SFA Charter School, for or to students or educational institutions, such as recruiters, book clubs, curriculum and instructional materials used by schools, sale by students of products or services to raise funds for school-related or education-related activities, or student recognition programs, or as otherwise required by law. This policy is also subject to state and federal public information laws and FERPA, that makes some student personal information, defined in this policy as "Directory Information," public.
6. Parents have a right to inspect any instrument used in collection of personal information, described above, before the instrument is administered to the student. Parents should submit such a request to the Principal. The Principal shall provide reasonable access to parents within a reasonable period of time, as determined by the Principal. Upon a parent's request to inspect such an instrument, the parent's child shall not participate until the parent has had a reasonable opportunity to inspect the instrument, as determined by the Principal.

The Superintendent shall ensure that parents are provided reasonable notice of the adoption or continued use of these policies. Such notice shall be provided directly to the parents of the students in attendance at SFA Charter School. At a minimum, SFA Charter School shall:

1. Provide notice at least annually, at the beginning of the school year and within a reasonable time after any substantive change in the policies; and
2. Offer an opportunity for the parent to opt the student out of participation in an activity described above.

i) *Request Procedure*

SFA Charter School must permit parents to inspect and review education records related to their children that are collected, maintained, or used by the SFA Charter School under the IDEA. SFA Charter School must comply with the request without unnecessary delay and before any meeting regarding an IEP, any due process hearing, or resolution session, and in no case more than 45 days after the request has been made.

j) *Destruction of Records*

SFA Charter School shall not destroy any education records if there is an outstanding request to inspect and review the records.

k) *De-Identified Records*

SFA Charter School, or a party that has received education records or information from education records, may release the records or information without the parent's written consent after the removal of all personally identifiable information provided that SFA Charter School or other party has made a reasonable determination that a student's identity is not personally identifiable, whether through single or multiple releases, and taking into account other reasonably available information.

l) *Education Research*

SFA Charter School, or a party that has received education records or information from education records, may release de-identified student level data from education records for the purpose of education research by attaching a code to each record that may allow the recipient to match information received from the same source, provided that:

1. SFA Charter School or other party that releases de-identified data under this section does not disclose any information about how it generates and assigns a record code, or that would allow a recipient to identify a student based on a record code;
2. The record code is used for no purpose other than identifying a de-identified record for purposes of education research and cannot be used to ascertain personally identifiable information about a student; and
3. The record code is not based on a student's social security number or other personal information.

m) *Authenticating Requestors' Identities*

SFA Charter School must use reasonable methods to identify and authenticate the identity of parents, students, school officials, and any other parties to whom SFA Charter School discloses personally identifiable information from education records.

n) *Transfer Not Permitted*

Personal information from student education records shall be transferred to a third party only on the condition that such party will not permit any other party to have access to such information without the written consent of the student's parent. If a third party permits access to information in violation of this policy, SFA Charter School shall not permit access to information from education records to that third party for a period of not less than five years.

SFA Charter School shall inform a party to whom a disclosure is made of the requirements of 34 CFR 99.33, unless the disclosure is made pursuant to a court order, lawfully issued subpoena, or litigation; the disclosed information is directory information; the disclosure concerns sex offenders; or the disclosure is made to a parent of a student who is not an eligible student or to a student.

SFA Charter School may disclose personally identifiable information with the understanding that the party receiving the information may make further disclosures of the information on behalf of SFA Charter School if:

1. The disclosures meet the requirements of 34 CFR 99.31; and
2. SFA Charter School has complied with the requirements of 34 CFR 99.32(b) regarding the record of disclosure; or a state or local educational authority or federal official or agency listed requesting information through a subpoena or ex parte order has complied with the requirements of 34 CFR 99.32(b)(2).

o) *Record of Access to Student Records*

Each campus shall maintain a record, kept with the education record of each student, that indicates all individuals, agencies, or organizations that have requested or obtained access to a student's education records, as well as the names of state and local educational authorities and federal officials and agencies listed in 34 CFR 99.31(a)(3) that may make further disclosures of personally identifiable information from the student's education records without consent. SFA Charter School must obtain a copy of the record of further disclosures maintained by the named authorities, officials, and agencies under 34 CFR 99.32(b)(2) and make it available in response to a parent's request to review the record.

SFA Charter School must record the following information when it discloses personally identifiable information from education records under the health or safety emergency exception (see Section 2-d-viii above):

1. The articulable and significant threat to the health or safety of a student or other individuals that formed the basis for the disclosure; and
2. The parties to whom SFA Charter School disclosed the information.

The records shall include at least the name of the person or agency that made the request and the legitimate interest the person or agency had in the information. The record will be maintained as long as SFA Charter School maintains the student's education record. The record of access shall be available only to parents, school officials responsible for custody of the records, and those state, local, and federal officials authorized to audit the operation of the system.

The record shall not include requests for access by, or access granted to, parents of the student or officials of SFA Charter School, requests accompanied by prior written consent of the parent, requests for directory information, or a party seeking or receiving records in accordance with a subpoena or ex parte order.

p) *Right to Amend Records*

The parent of a student whose records are covered by this policy may ask SFA Charter School to amend the student's record if the parent believes it contains information that is inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the student's right of privacy or other rights. If SFA Charter School decides not to amend the education records requested, it shall inform the parent of its decision and his or her right to a hearing to challenge the content of the student's education records.

If SFA Charter School decides to amend the records as a result of the hearing, it shall inform the parent in writing. If, as a result of the hearing, SFA Charter School decides not to amend the records, it shall inform the parent of the right to place a statement in the records commenting on the contested information and/or stating why the parent disagrees with the decision of SFA Charter School. Any explanation shall be maintained with the contested part of the record for as long as the record is maintained and shall be disclosed whenever the contested portion of the record is disclosed.

q) *Fees for Copies*

No fee shall be charged to search for or to retrieve the education records of a student. A fee may be charged for copies of education records that are made for the parents or students under this policy provided that the fee does not effectively prevent them from exercising their right to inspect and review those records. Hardship cases shall be dealt with on an individual basis.

r) *Records of Students with Disabilities*

SFA Charter School shall permit parents to inspect and review education records collected, maintained, or used for purposes of identifying, evaluating, placing, or educating students with disabilities.

i. *Access Rights*

In addition to policies applicable to all student records, the following guidelines shall apply when parents of a student with disabilities request to review or inspect school records relating to the education of their child:

1. Parents may request that a representative inspect and review the records.
2. SFA Charter School shall comply with a request without unnecessary delay and before any meeting regarding an IEP or hearing relating to the identification, evaluation, or placement of the child, and in no case longer than 45 days after the request.
3. SFA Charter School shall keep a record of persons obtaining access to these student records (except access by parents and authorized employees), including name, date of access, and the purpose for which the person is authorized to use the records.

ii. *List of Types and Locations of Information*

SFA Charter School shall provide parents on request a list of types and locations of education records.

iii. *Parental Consent*

Parental consent must be obtained before personally identifiable information is used for any purpose other than meeting a requirement under the IDEA or disclosed to anyone other than officials of agencies collecting or using this information. SFA Charter School may not release information from these records without parental consent except as provided in FERPA.

iv. *Confidentiality*

SFA Charter School shall protect the confidentiality of personally identifiable information in collection, storage, disclosure, and destruction of records. One official in SFA Charter School shall assume responsibility for ensuring confidentiality of personally identifiable information. All persons collecting or using this information shall receive training or instruction concerning the legal requirements involved in handling these records. SFA Charter School shall maintain for

public inspection a current listing of the names and positions of employees who may have access to this information.

v. *Destruction of Information*

SFA Charter School shall inform parents when personally identifiable information collected, maintained, or used to provide special education and related services is no longer needed to provide educational services to the student. Such information shall be destroyed at the request of the parents.

A permanent record of the student's name, address, phone number, grades, attendance record, classes attended, grade level completed, and year completed may be maintained without time limitation.

s) *Annual Notification of Rights*

SFA Charter School shall give parents of students in attendance and eligible students in attendance annual notification of their rights under FERPA.

The notice must inform parents or eligible students that they have the right to:

1. Inspect and review the student's education records;
2. Seek amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes to be inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights;
3. Consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that the Act and 34 CFR 99.31 authorize disclosure without consent; and
4. File with the DOE a complaint under 34 CFR 99.63 and 99.64 concerning alleged failures by SFA Charter School to comply with the requirements of the Act and 34 CFR part 99.

The notice must include all of the following:

1. The procedure for exercising the right to inspect and review education records.
2. The procedure for requesting amendment of records under 34 CFR 99.20.
3. If SFA Charter School has a policy of disclosing education records under 34 CFR 99.31(a)(1), a specification of criteria for determining who constitutes a school official and what constitutes a legitimate educational interest.

SFA Charter School may provide this notice by any means that are reasonably likely to inform the parents or eligible students of their rights. SFA Charter School shall effectively notify parents who are disabled and parents of students who have a primary or home language other than English.

t) *Custodian of Records*

The Superintendent or designee is designated as the custodian of all student records. The Principal of each campus is designated as an agent of the Superintendent or designee for the purposes of the receipt of requests concerning the disclosure of student records.

Sec. 3. DIRECTORY INFORMATION

Certain information about students is considered “directory information” and will be released to anyone who follows procedures for requesting it unless the parent or eligible student objects in writing to its release, within a reasonable time period set by the Superintendent, of receiving notice of FERPA rights. A parent or eligible student may also choose to opt out of the release of directory information at any time during the school year. At any time after restricting the release of directory information, a parent or eligible student may in writing authorize SFA Charter School to release directory information.

a) *Definition*

SFA Charter School has designated the following categories of information as directory information for the purpose of disclosure:

1. Student’s name;
2. All address, including university issued email addresses;
3. All telephone numbers;
4. Photographs (including video images);
5. Major field of study;
6. Dates of attendance and enrollment status;
7. Grade level/academic classification;
8. Participation in officially recognized activities and sports;
9. Weight and height of members of athletic teams;
10. Degrees, honors, and awards received; and
11. previous schools attended.

“Directory information” does not include a student’s:

1. Social security number; or

2. Student identification number, unless the student identification number, user identification number, or other unique personal identifier used by the student for purposes of accessing or communicating in electronic systems cannot be used to gain access to education records except when used in conjunction with one or more factors that authenticate the user's identity, such as a personal identification number, password, or other factor known or possessed only by the authorized user.

School-sponsored/school-affiliated purposes are those events/activities that SFA Charter School conducts and/or sponsors to support SFA Charter School's educational mission. Examples include, but are not limited to:

1. Extracurricular programs or events (e.g., school plays, concerts, athletic events, graduation ceremonies).
2. Publications (e.g., newsletters, yearbook, etc.).
3. Honor roll and other student recognition lists.
4. Marketing materials of the School (e.g., print media, website, videos, newspaper, etc.).

b) *In Class*

A parent or eligible student may not use the right of refusal to opt out of directory information disclosures to prevent SFA Charter School from disclosing or requiring a student to disclose the student's name, identifier, or institutional e-mail address in a class in which the student is enrolled.

c) *Former Students*

SFA Charter School may disclose directory information about former students without satisfying the public notice conditions above. However, SFA Charter School must continue to honor any valid request to opt out of the disclosure of directory information made while a student was in attendance unless the student rescinds the opt-out request.

d) *Confirmation of Identity or Records*

SFA Charter School may not disclose or confirm directory information without meeting the written consent requirements in 34 CFR 99.30 if a student's social security number or other non-directory information is used alone or combined with other data elements to identify or help identify the student or the student's records.

e) *Designation of Directory Information*

SFA Charter School may designate as directory information any or all information defined as directory information by FERPA. Directory information under that Act that is not designated by

SFA Charter School as directory information is excepted from disclosure by SFA Charter School under Government Code Chapter 552.

Directory information consented to by a parent for use only for a limited school-sponsored purpose, such as for a student directory, student yearbook, or school publication, if any such purpose has been designated by SFA Charter School, remains otherwise confidential and may not be released under Government Code Chapter 552.

Sec. 4. INFORMATION FROM LAW ENFORCEMENT

a) *Oral Notice of Arrest or Referral*

Upon receipt of oral notice from a law enforcement agency that it has arrested a student or referred a student to the juvenile board for a specified offense, the Superintendent shall promptly notify all instructional and support personnel who have responsibility for supervising the student. All personnel shall keep the information received confidential.

b) *Written Notice of Arrest or Referral*

Upon subsequent receipt of confidential, written notice of the arrest or referral, the Superintendent or designee may send the information in the confidential notice to a School employee having direct supervisory responsibility over the student if the Superintendent or designee determines that the employee needs the information for educational purposes or for the protection of the person informed or others.

c) *Oral Notice of Conviction or Adjudication*

Upon receipt of oral notice from a prosecuting attorney of a student's conviction, deferred prosecution, or adjudication of a specified offense, including a statement as to whether the student is required to register as a sex offender, the Superintendent shall, within 24 hours of receiving the notice, notify all instructional and support personnel who have regular contact with the student.

d) *Notice of Transfer or Reenrollment*

Upon receipt of notice from a parole, probation, or community supervision office having jurisdiction over a student that a student has transferred or reenrolled, the Superintendent shall, within 24 hours of receiving the notice, notify all instructional and support personnel who have regular contact with the student.

A person who receives information described above shall not disclose it except as specifically authorized by Code of Criminal Procedure 15.27.

Information received by SFA Charter School under this provision shall not be attached to the permanent academic file of the student who is the subject of the report. SFA Charter School shall destroy the information at the end of the academic year in which the report was filed.

e) *Duty to Flag Records*

Upon receipt of notification from a law enforcement agency or the missing children and missing persons information clearinghouse that a child under 11 years of age who attended or who is enrolled in SFA Charter School is missing, SFA Charter School shall flag the child's records and maintain the records in its possession so that on receipt of a request regarding the child, SFA Charter School will be able to notify law enforcement or the missing children and missing persons information clearinghouse that a request for a flagged record has been made.

i. Request in Person

When a request for a flagged record is made in person, SFA Charter School may not advise the requesting party that the request concerns a missing child and shall:

1. Require the person requesting the flagged record to complete a form stating the person's name, address, telephone number, and relationship to the child for whom a request is made, and the name, address, and birth date of the child;
2. Obtain a copy of the requesting party's driver's license or other photographic identification, if possible;
3. If the request is for a birth certificate, inform the requesting party that a copy of a certificate will be sent by mail; and
4. Immediately notify the appropriate law enforcement agency that a request has been made concerning a flagged record and include a physical description of the requesting party, the identity and address of the requesting party, and a copy of the requesting party's driver's license or other photographic identification.

After providing the information listed above, SFA Charter School shall mail a copy of the requested record to the requesting party on or after the 21st day after the date of the request.

ii. Request in Writing

When a request for a flagged record is made in writing, SFA Charter School may not advise the requesting party that the request concerns a missing child and shall immediately notify the appropriate law enforcement agency that a request has been made concerning a flagged record and provide to the law enforcement agency a copy of the written request. After providing the

notification, SFA Charter School shall mail a copy of the requested record to the requesting party on or after the 21st day after the date of the request.

iii. Removal of Flag

On the return of a missing child under 11 years of age, the law enforcement agency shall notify each school that has maintained flagged records for the child that the child is no longer missing. On receipt of this notification, SFA Charter School shall remove the flag from the records.

A school that has reason to believe that a missing child has been recovered may request confirmation that the missing child has been recovered from the appropriate law enforcement agency or the missing children and missing persons information clearing-house. If a response is not received after the 45th day after the date of the request for confirmation, SFA Charter School may remove the flag from the record and shall inform the law enforcement agency or the missing children and missing persons information clearing-house that the flag has been removed.

Sec. 5. ACCESS TO RECORDS UNDER THE IDEA

The IDEA grants parents the right to inspect and review all educational records with respect to the identification, evaluation, educational placement, and the provision of FAPE to the child. 34 CFR § 300.501(a). SFA Charter School must permit parents to inspect and review any education records relating to their children that are collected, maintained, or used by the district under the IDEA. SFA Charter School must comply with the request without unnecessary delay and before any meeting regarding an IEP, any due process hearing, or resolution session, and in no case more than 45 days after the request has been made. 34 CFR § 300.613(a).

**POLICY GROUP 6 - SPECIAL EDUCATION
RECORDS RETENTION AND DESTRUCTION**

University Policy 2.9 governs the SFA Charter School.

Sec. 1. BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

It is SFA Charter School's policy to treat all students with dignity and respect, including students with disabilities who receive special education services. Any behavior management technique and/or discipline management practice must be implemented in such a way as to protect the health and safety of the student and others. No discipline management practice may be calculated to inflict injury, cause harm, demean, or deprive the student of basic human necessities.

Education Code 37.0021(a); 19 TAC 89.1053(a), (j).

Exceptions. Education Code 37.0021 (regarding use of confinement, seclusion, restraint, and time-out) does not apply to:

1. A peace officer, while performing law enforcement duties, except as provided by Education Code 37.0021(i); and
2. An educational services provider with whom a student is placed by a judicial authority unless the services are provided in a SFA Charter School educational program.

Education Code 37.0021(g).

Sec. 2. CONFINEMENT

A student with a disability who receives special education services may not be confined in a locked box, locked closet, or other specially designed locked space as either a discipline management practice or a behavior management technique. *Education Code 37.0021(a).*

Education Code 37.0021 does not prevent a student's locked, unattended confinement in an emergency situation while awaiting the arrival of law enforcement personnel if:

1. The student possesses a weapon; and
2. The confinement is necessary to prevent the student from causing bodily harm to the student or another person.

For these purposes, "weapon" includes any weapon described under Education Code 37.007(a)(1).

Education Code 37.0021(f), 37.007(a)(1); Penal Code 46.01(1), (3), (6), 46.05.

Sec. 3. SECLUSION

A SFA Charter School employee or volunteer or an independent contractor of SFA Charter School may not place a student in seclusion. “Seclusion” means a behavior management technique in which a student is confined in a locked box, locked closet, or locked room that:

1. Is designed solely to seclude a person; and
2. Contains less than 50 square feet of space.

Education Code 37.0021(b)(2), (c).

Sec. 4. RESTRAINT

A SFA Charter School employee, volunteer, or independent contractor may use restraint only in an emergency and with the following limitations:

1. Restraint shall be limited to the use of such reasonable force as is necessary to address the emergency.
2. Restraint shall be discontinued at the point at which the emergency no longer exists.
3. Restraint shall be implemented in such a way as to protect the health and safety of the student and others.
4. Restraint shall not deprive the student of basic human necessities.

19 TAC 89.1053(c).

a) *Definitions*

“Restraint” means the use of physical force or a mechanical device to significantly restrict the free movement of all or a portion of a student’s body.

Education Code 37.0021(b)(1); 19 TAC 89.1053(b)(2).

“Restraint” does not include the use of:

1. Physical contact or appropriately prescribed adaptive equipment to promote normative body positioning and/or physical functioning;
2. Limited physical contact with a child to promote safety (*e.g.*, holding a student’s hand), to prevent a potentially harmful action (*e.g.*, running into the street), to teach a skill, or to provide comfort;

POLICY GROUP 6 - SPECIAL EDUCATION
RESTRAINT AND TIME-OUT

3. Limited physical contact or appropriately prescribed adaptive equipment to prevent a child from engaging in ongoing, repetitive self-injurious behaviors; or
4. Seat belts and other safety equipment used to secure children during transportation.

19 TAC 89.1053(f).

“Emergency” means a situation in which a student’s behavior poses a threat of:

1. Imminent, serious physical harm to the student or others; or
2. Imminent, serious property destruction.

19 TAC 89.1053(b)(1).

b) Training

Training for SFA Charter School employees, volunteers, or independent contractors regarding the use of restraint shall be provided according to the requirements set forth at 19 TAC 89.1053(d).

c) Data Reporting

Cumulative data regarding the use of restraint must be electronically reported through the Public Education Information Management System in accordance with reporting standards specified by the Texas Education Agency.

Education Code 37.0021(i); 19 TAC 89.1053(f),(k).

d) Documentation

In a case in which restraint is used by SFA Charter School employees, volunteers, or independent contractors, SFA Charter School shall comply with the documentation requirements set forth at 19 TAC 89.1053(e).

Sec. 5. TIME-OUT

A SFA Charter School employee, volunteer, or independent contractor may use time-out with the following limitations:

1. Physical force or threat of physical force shall not be used to place a student in time-out;
2. Time-out must only be used in conjunction with an array of positive behavior intervention strategies and techniques and must be included in the student’s individualized education

program (“IEP”) and/or behavior intervention plan (“BIP”) if it is utilized on a recurrent basis to increase or decrease targeted behavior; and

3. Use of time-out shall not be implemented in a fashion that precludes the ability of the student to be involved in and progress in the general curriculum and advance appropriately toward attaining the annual goals specified in the student’s IEP.

19 TAC 89.1053(b)(3), (g).

“Time-out” means a behavior management technique in which, to provide a student with an opportunity to regain self-control, the student is separated from other students for a limited period in a setting:

1. That is not locked; and
2. From which the exit is not physically blocked by furniture, a closed door held shut from the outside, or another inanimate object.

Education Code 37.0021(b)(3); 19 TAC 89.1053(b)(3).

a) *Training*

Training for SFA Charter School employees, volunteers, or independent contractors regarding the use of time-out shall be provided according to the requirements set forth at 19 TAC 89.1053(h).

b) *Documentation*

Necessary documentation or data collection regarding the use of time-out, if any, must be addressed in the IEP or BIP. The ARD committee must use any collected data to judge the effectiveness of the intervention and provide a basis for making determinations regarding its continued use.

19 TAC 89.1053(i).

Sec. 6. PROHIBITED AVERSIVE TECHNIQUES

SFA Charter School and employees, volunteers, and independent contractor of SFA Charter School may not apply an aversive technique, or by authorization, order, or consent, cause an aversive technique to be applied, to a child.

Education Code 37.0023(b).

POLICY GROUP 6 - SPECIAL EDUCATION
RESTRAINT AND TIME-OUT

“Aversive technique” means a technique or intervention that is intended to reduce the likelihood of a behavior reoccurring by intentionally inflicting on a student significant physical or emotional discomfort or pain. The term includes a technique or intervention that:

1. is designed to or likely to cause physical pain, other than an intervention or technique permitted under Section 37.0011;
2. notwithstanding Section 37.0011, is designed to or likely to cause physical pain through the use of electric shock or any procedure that involves the use of pressure points or joint locks;
3. involves the directed release of a noxious, toxic, or otherwise unpleasant spray, mist, or substance near the student's face;
4. denies adequate sleep, air, food, water, shelter, bedding, physical comfort, supervision, or access to a restroom facility;
5. ridicules or demeans the student in a manner that adversely affects or endangers the learning or mental health of the student or constitutes verbal abuse;
6. employs a device, material, or object that simultaneously immobilizes all four extremities, including any procedure that results in such immobilization known as prone or supine floor restraint;
7. impairs the student's breathing, including any procedure that involves:
 - a. applying pressure to the student's torso or neck; or
 - b. obstructing the student's airway, including placing an object in, on, or over the student's mouth or nose or placing a bag, cover, or mask over the student's face;
8. restricts the student's circulation;
9. secures the student to a stationary object while the student is in a sitting or standing position;
10. inhibits, reduces, or hinders the student's ability to communicate;
11. involves the use of a chemical restraint;
12. constitutes a use of time-out that precludes the student from being able to be involved in and progress appropriately in the required curriculum and, if applicable, toward the annual goals included in the student's individualized education program, including isolating the student by the use of physical barriers; or
13. except as provided by Section 37.0023 (c), deprives the student of the use of one or more of the student's senses.

Education Code 37.0023(a).

The SFA Charter School does not have special education classrooms, therefore we do not have video surveillance as specified.