

## Frequently Asked Questions FAQ Sheet # 7

**Question:** How do I respond to parent requests?

**Answer:** In general, the district must respond to parent requests within five school days. The following questions require formal action from the district.

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**Question:** How do I respond to parent requests to access records?

**Answer:** Parents have the right to review and or receive copies of any educational record, including a copy of test protocols, video tapes, audio tapes, electronic records regarding their child. It is essential that school staff be aware of where records are maintained when material is not maintained in the student's cumulative record. (See FAQ 18 Records)

Example: Discipline Records- Assistant Principal's office  
Health Records- Health Office

Request to review records: Under the Family Education Privacy Rights Act, (FERPA) a parent has the right to review any records on their child. If the school receives a request to review records, they must make the records available to the parent within a reasonable period of time. The parent can review the records in the presence of school personnel. *Remember that the parent must sign the file access log if reviewing the file.*

Request for copies of records: If the school receives a request for data that is not typical of the data sent home to any parent (test scores, worksheets, etc.) or is information that has already been provided to the parent, contact your special education supervisor immediately.

When a parent requests copies of their child's records, they must be provided those copies within 10 school days. They must pay for the copies at the rate established by the district.

Request to remove an item from the file: A parent may not insist that something be removed from the file. If they have a concern about a specific record, they should address their concern in writing. If the school, in consultation with special education administration, determine that the item need not be maintained, it will be removed. If the decision is that the item must continue to be considered part of the file, the parent may submit documentation of their concerns to be kept in the file. *Remember that the parent must sign the file access log if reviewing the file.*

Requests for records that are not student records: Under the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act (MGDPA) a parent has the right to a copy of records within a reasonable period of time. Contact your special education supervisor or program supervisor.

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**Question:** What do I do when a parent makes a request for assessment?

**Answer:** If a parent requests that their child be assessed for special education services (initial), talk with the parent to determine the areas of concern. Discuss the process for assessment and inform the parent of the appropriateness of pre-referral interventions.

- If the parent is agreeable to wait for assessment pending the results of pre-referral interventions, the intervention specialist must provide the parent Prior Written Notice documenting the rationale for the denial.

- If the parent is not agreeable to wait for assessment, the procedures for evaluation must begin.

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**Question:** What do I do when a parent makes a request for an independent education evaluation?

**Answer:** A request of this nature requires immediate attention, contact your special education supervisor or program supervisor.

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**Question:** What do I do when a parent makes a request for placement or change in services?

**Answer:** If you receive requests of this nature, schedule an IEP meeting. Discuss the request with your special education supervisor or program supervisor to determine whether they should attend. The IEP team must specifically consider the parent's request, noting the decision within the Prior Written Notice.

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**Question:** What do I do when a parent makes a request staff to use a specific device, curriculum or strategy with their child?

**Answer:** We have always had specific requests from parents but now, with the arrival of technology like iPads and iPods, staff are receiving frequent requests from parents. In some cases parents are purchasing devices and requesting the school to use them, in other cases, parents are asking school staff to write a letter of recommendation so the parent can purchase a device using some type of waiver funding. This section will deal with all of these versions of the request.

1. If a parent makes a request of this nature, schedule an IEP meeting, making sure that the appropriate service providers are present (i.e. involve the speech/language pathologist if this is a communication issue, the occupational therapist if a motor issue, etc.).
  - At the meeting, discuss the student's current special education needs and how the needs are currently being met. The following questions may assist you in this discussion:
    - How are we addressing this need now? Is it working?
    - Has the student already tried the solution being requested? What types of results have you seen?
    - Are there other options we should be trying?
  - If the team agrees that a device and/or application might be appropriate to meet a need or needs, the team should discuss trialing that device or application to determine its effectiveness.
  - The team should determine how long the trial will be and what data will be collected to meet the need.
  - Remember that we must do significant changes when we are:
    - Increasing or decreasing time with non-disabled peers
    - Adding or deleting goals
    - Adding, changing or deleting services

If the trial will not impact any of these, there would be no need to complete a significant change.
2. If the student/school does not have access to the device/application, complete the AT request form on the SPED website.
3. If the student has a device that the parent wants to send to school we need to make sure the parent will not hold the school responsible for theft or damage. To accomplish this a sample Prior Written Notice has been posted on the SPED website in the AT/UDL Resource section.
4. Staff should **not write a letter of recommendation** so the student can receive funding for a device unless they are knowledgeable about the device and it's appropriateness for the student.

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**Question:** What do I do if a parent requests a shortened day or alternate schedule because of a student's health or safety needs?

**Answer:** If a parent makes a request of this nature, schedule an IEP meeting in which your supervisor or program supervisor attends, as well as any other appropriate team members.

- At the IEP meeting, discuss whether the student's current IEP is able to provide an appropriate education to meet the student's special education needs.
- Review any pertinent medical or other documentation.
- Consider any changes or modifications that are needed to the IEP proposal.
- Consider services that are required to provide the student an appropriate education.

If the IEP team agrees that a shortened day is required, special transportation must be identified in the IEP as a related service.

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**Question:** What do I do if a parent requests a shortened day or alternate schedule in order to obtain outside services?

**Answer:** Parents must consider many factors when making a request for a shortened day. Staff needs to ask parents to consider:

1. *Compulsory School Age-* The compulsory instruction statute applies to all students including sped student age 7 to 16. That statute requires that students attend school on a regular basis. The district is obligated to provide an appropriate education. (Please see page 3 for process for non-compulsory school age students.)
2. *Other parental placement options:* If there is a concern with the educational plan being proposed, parents may consider other options such as placing their child in a private school, another public school, or the option to home school. Since the school district is prepared to offer FAPE, such placements become the responsibility of the parent.
3. *Least Restrictive Environment-* If a parent were to choose to Home School, they should consider that their child would not have the same access to peers.

Process:

1. If a parent makes a request of this nature, schedule an IEP meeting in which your supervisor or program supervisor attends, as well as any other appropriate team members.
  - At the IEP meeting, discuss whether the student's current IEP is able to provide an appropriate education to meet the student's special education needs.
  - Consider any changes or modifications that are needed to the IEP proposal.
  - Consider how the change in schedule would impact the school's ability to provide a free, appropriate, public education (FAPE). Examples:
    - If the student is going to be missing a short period of time that does not impact involvement in the general education curriculum or necessary sped service, the team may determine that the student could receive FAPE on that schedule.
    - If a student's special education program does not reflect any services in the mainstream and all required special education services could be provided during the time the student is at school and the team agrees that the portions of general education curriculum missed are not crucial to the student's current educational program, the team may determine that the student could still receive FAPE.
    - If the schedule requires that the student miss essential academic instruction the team may determine that the student could not receive FAPE on a shortened day.
2. Since the request for a shortened day is to allow the student to receive outside services, transportation outside of the regularly scheduled pick up and drop off times (associated with the regular start and end times), will be the responsibility of the parent and would not be reflected as a related service. **Note that this is not the case for students who are receiving services in a shortened day schedule because of medical or safety needs.**

3. If the team remains unsure whether the student can receive FAPE on a shortened day, the team may consider a trial basis while data is collected on student progress. If the team is considering this option, the following actions need to occur:
  - a. Explain to parents that the school could consider the shortened day on a trial basis for period of time while data is collected. A meeting would be held to review the data to determine if the student is receiving FAPE.
    - If the data shows that the student was making adequate progress on all goals and on essential curriculum, the team may determine that the school is able to provide FAPE on a shortened day.
    - If the student is not making progress, the team will need to increase the amount of time at school or parents would need to consider other options.
  - b. The parent must be informed that the district will provide transportation at the start of the school day and at the end of the school day. The parent is responsible for transporting the student during the school day (see 2 above).
  - c. In the proposed IEP, the service time and dates need to reflect the trial period with the specified end date. The services should reflect the current services and length of day resuming after the trial period. This would assure that the shortened day does not become the “stay put” IEP.
  - d. In the Prior Written Notice document that the school believes the student should be at school full time, but the district is willing to try the parent request for a shortened day on a trial basis. The PWN must indicate the date that the team would review progress and determine if the district is able to provide FAPE on the shortened day.
3. The school district cannot simply agree to a parent’s request for a shortened day. If the team determines that they cannot provide FAPE on a shortened day, the district is obligated to propose an IEP and the team needs to discuss parent options if they want to continue to pursue outside services that would alter the school day. Parents would need to consider the following options:
  - Open enrollment in another school district
  - Enroll in a private school
  - Home-School their child
  - If the child is not yet of compulsory school age, parents may un-enroll their child until they are seven, in which time the compulsory instruction statute applies.
4. If parents decide to enroll their child in private school or Home School, the school district would be willing to consider an individual service plan (ISP) to discuss possible special education services that would be made available to that child.
5. If parents decide to Home-School their child, they need to contact the Community Education Office and enroll their child as home-schooled. To enroll their child in home-school, parents need to do the following:
  - Go to the Community Education Website: [www.anoka.k12.mn.us/cu](http://www.anoka.k12.mn.us/cu)
  - Click on the “Home Education/nonpublic Home Page” tab from the options on the left.
  - Click on the “Forms to download” tab from the options on the left
  - Complete the required forms and return them to the Community Education Department.
  - If you have any questions about the Home Schooling process, please contact Community Education at 763-506-1260.

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**Question:** What do I do when a parent makes a request to allow a private provider to serve in the school setting?

**Answer:** When a parent makes a request to allow an outside provider to serve on a school site it is important that you contact your special education supervisor or program supervisor. Such requests must be addressed in an appropriate manner to meet Due Process Requirements.

- It is the duty of the IEP team to determine the special education needs of students with disabilities.
- When the IEP team determines the need for paraprofessional support, the school district will provide appropriate support.
- In the event that the school district is unable to locate and hire appropriate support for the student, the school district may contract with an agency that provides needed supports.
- When the IEP team determines that there is a need for skilled nursing care to safely maintain a student in the school setting, the school district may pursue the following avenues in order to meet the needs of the student
  - Hire a nurse with the appropriate skills to meet the needs of the student
  - Contract with an agency to provide nursing care
  - Allow the parent to send the nurse to school with the child.

In rare situations, the school district may contract with the agency utilized by the parent. Reasons for this may include frequent absences of the student, which would result in unnecessary and costly services, and/or the student's health condition is extremely precarious and continuity of health care providers is needed.

When the IEP team has not reached consensus regarding the need for a paraprofessional, health care, or other support, or the parent indicates an intention to designate an individual to accompany the child throughout the school day, the IEP team must address the following:

- What is the parental concern or student need to be addressed through the presence of this individual?
- Is the need or concern of the parent a legitimate educational concern, i.e., related to health, safety of the student?
- If yes, why has the IEP team not made a determination of need in this matter?
- What is the function/purpose of the individual accompanying the child?
- Is the stated function/purpose in the best interest of students and employees of the school district?
  - Yes – See below
  - No – Deny the parent request

If the team determined that a PCA or nurse may accompany the child, the program supervisor or your Special Education Supervisor must be notified.

- Identify the vendor who employs the individual accompanying the child
- The program supervisor or supervisor will seek a "certificate of accord" which demonstrates that the individual has liability and work comp insurance from the vendor and has passed the state criminal records and background check.

The program supervisor or building principal will provide an identification badge, which signifies status of visitor in the school. The program supervisor or your Special Education Supervisor must define, in a letter to the parent the purpose, proposed length of duration for the individual to remain with the student and provide a copy of the visitor's policy (copy attached) to parent. The letter must advise parent that any violation of the visitor policy may result in revocation of permission to accompany the student.

**Question:** What do I do when a parent makes a request to have a service animal accompany their child for part or all of a school day?

**Answer:** When a parent make a request to have a service animal accompany their child for part or all of a school day, it is important that you contact your special education supervisor. Such requests must be addressed in an appropriate manner to meet Due Process Requirements.

- A. Since it is the duty of the IEP team to determine the special education needs of students with disabilities, a team meeting should be held to discuss:

- What is the parental concern or student need to be addressed through the presence of the service animal?
  - Is the need or concern of the parent related to an already identified special educational need?
  - If no, does the IEP team agree that this is an appropriate special education need?
  - What is the function/purpose that the parents hope the service animal can meet?
  - Will the parent accept responsibility to ensure that the animal is properly trained and behaves appropriately in the classroom? School staff will not take responsibility for managing the needs of the service animal.
- B. If the team determines that there is or maybe a special education need that could be met through the use of a service animal, the parent must provide the school with:
- A letter from an appropriate professional, such as a therapist or physician, explaining the need for a support/service animal.
  - Documentation regarding the specialized training provided to the animal.
  - Documentation that the service animal has the proper license and immunizations required by the county of residence.
- C. Once all documentation has been provided:
- School staff must complete an animal variance form.
  - Staff will inform other students and staff of the request in order to determine if the other students or staff are allergic or would be otherwise disrupted by the presence of the animal in the classroom.
  - If there were issues regarding allergies or fears of animals, the request will be denied. The IEP team will need to determine other ways to meet this need.
- D. The IEP team and parent will determine an appropriate trial period to evaluate the need and effectiveness of using the service animal. The team must agree upon the form and type of data to be taken. Following the trial period, the team should meet to discuss results and determine whether the plan will continue. Any changes will be documented through the IEP process.

POLICY ON VISITORS TO ANOKA-HENNEPIN  
SCHOOL DISTRICT BUILDINGS AND SITES

**I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to inform the school community and the general public of the position of the School Board on visitors to school buildings and other school property and leased sites.

**II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY**

- A. The School Board encourages interest on the part of parents and community members in school programs and student activities. The School Board welcomes visits to school buildings and school property by parents and community members, provided the visits are consistent with the health, education, and safety of students and employees and are conducted within the procedures and requirements established by the Anoka-Hennepin School District.
- B. The School Board reaffirms its position on the importance of maintaining a school environment that is safe for students and employees and free of activity that may be disruptive to the student learning process or employee working environment.

**III. VISITOR LIMITATIONS**

- A. All visitors to Anoka-Hennepin buildings and sites must register with the administrative office upon arrival and departure.
- B. Visitors to Anoka-Hennepin buildings and sites will receive and must wear a highly visible visitor badge to signify their status and the fact that school administration has authorized their presence in the building.
- C. Visitors who wish to meet with or observe teachers should schedule appointments in advance and register with the administrative office upon arrival.
- D. If school district personnel or volunteers see a visitor in the building without a visitor badge, they will courteously escort the visitor to the administrative office or immediately notify the administrative office of the presence of the visitor.
- E. Pursuant to this policy, an individual or group may be denied permission to visit a school or school site; or such permission may be revoked if the visitor does not comply with the school district procedures and regulations, or if the presence of the individual or group is not in the best interest of students, employees, or the school district.
- F. Pursuant to state statute, an individual who enters school property and does not comply with the policy and its requirements may be charged with criminal trespass and thus may be subject to criminal penalty.

Anoka-Hennepin District No. 11  
Coon Rapids, MN 55433  
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