

BLOOMFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Bloomfield, Connecticut

BOARD POLICY

No. 6159(a)

RE: Individualized Education Programs/Special Education Program
Instruction
Special Education

Approved: May 12, 2015

Revised: November 12, 2019

Revised: May 10, 2022

Bloomfield Public Schools will comply with all state and federal laws concerning the provision of a Free Appropriate Public Education to students with disabilities.

Individualized Education Program/Special Education Program

Any child, whether a student of Bloomfield Public Schools, of pre-school age, or between the ages of three and 22 years of age, inclusive, but not attending Bloomfield Schools, who is identified as being in need of a special program shall be referred to a "special education planning and placement team" (PPT) which shall make an evaluative study to determine whether the child is a child with a disability as defined in state and federal statutes and if special education is required and to establish the scope of the special education program.

Students receiving special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) remain eligible for such services up until their 22nd birthday or until they graduate from high school with a regular high school diploma, whichever comes first. The adult student or his/her parent/guardian will be asked by the district if the student wishes to receive the special education and related services outlined in their Individualized Education Program (IEP) until they turn 22 years of age or they graduate with a regular high school diploma, whichever comes first.

Prior to the referring of a student for special education, the pre-referral process should be completed. This process assures that strategies in the regular education classroom have been developed, implemented and evaluated. If it is determined that the alternative strategies have been attempted and that significant progress towards meeting the student's identified needs has not been made, then the student shall be referred to a Planning and Placement Team in order to determine whether special education services are necessary.

A parent of a child, the State Department of Education, or other state agencies available to Bloomfield Public Schools may initiate a request for an initial evaluation to determine if the child is a child with a disability at any time. During these situations the alternative strategies process may be bypassed.

BLOOMFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Bloomfield, Connecticut

BOARD POLICY

No. 6159(b)

Initial evaluations using a variety of assessment tools and measures to gather relevant functional, developmental, and academic information, must be completed within 60 days of the receipt of parental consent, for the initial evaluation; or implement the student's IEP within 45 school days of a referral, (not counting the time necessary to obtain written parental consent to conduct the initial evaluation or to begin providing special education). The 45 school day requirement begins after the District receives a completed and signed PPT referral form or letter requesting a referral to the PPT process or per a timeline determined by the State. Exceptions to this timeframe include children moving between school districts and parental refusal to make a child available for evaluation, as provided by law. Assessments for disabled children who are transfer students shall be coordinated between the sending or receiving district in an expeditious manner.

The timelines for implementation of an IEP must occur within 60 school days of the PPT referral in those situations in which a student's IEP requires an out-of-district or private placement (not including the time it takes to obtain written parental consent).

The District will provide parents/guardians with State Department of Education information and resources relating to IEPs as soon as a child is identified as requiring special education.

Each child who has been suspended repeatedly or whose behavior, attendance or progress in Bloomfield Schools is considered unsatisfactory shall be referred to a Planning and Placement Team for consideration of eligibility for special education services.

Prior to the Referral PPT Bloomfield staff will provide parents/guardians with State Department of Education information and resources relating to IEPs. These resources can also be found on-line under the Student Support Services Document Library.

Planning and Placement Team or Individualized Education Program Team

The term "individualized education program team" or "IEP Team" means a group of individuals composed of -

- (i) the parents of a child with a disability
- (ii) not less than one regular education teacher of such child (if the child is, or may be, participating in the regular education environment);
- (iii) not less than one special education teacher, or where appropriate, not less than one special education provider of such child;
- (iv) a representative of the local educational agency who -

BLOOMFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Bloomfield, Connecticut

BOARD POLICY

No. 6159(c)

(I) is qualified to provide, or supervise the provision of, specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of children with disabilities;

(II) is knowledgeable about the general education curriculum; and

(III) is knowledgeable about the availability of resources of the local educational agency;

(v) an individual who can interpret the instructional implications of evaluation results, who may be a member of the team described in clauses (ii) through (vi);

(vi) at the discretion of the parent of the agency, other individuals who have knowledge or special expertise regarding the child, including related services personnel as appropriate;

(VII) The school paraprofessional, if any, assigned to such child; and

(viii) Whenever appropriate, the child with a disability.

NOTE: An IEP Team member is not required to attend all or part of an IEP meeting if the parents and Bloomfield school based team agree that the team member's participation is not necessary because the member's area of the curriculum or related services is not being modified or discussed at the meeting. If the meeting does involve a modification or discussion of the member's area of the curriculum or related services, parents and the Bloomfield PPT team can agree to excuse the member from attending all or part of the meeting if the member submits written input to the parent and the IEP Team prior to the meeting. Parental consent in writing is required in either case.

In addition to the above, the special education specialist, school psychologist, school nurse, school social worker, counselor, or other student service worker who has conducted an assessment of the student shall participate whenever the results or recommendations based on such assessment are significant to the development of the student's individualized education program and placement. Where the student is limited or non-English speaking, a Bloomfield representative who is fluent in the student's primary language and who is knowledgeable about the process of second-language acquisition and competent in the assessment of limited English and non-English speaking individuals should be included.

Any member of the PPT employed by the Board of Education who discusses or makes recommendations concerning the provisions of special education and related services during a PPT meeting shall not be disciplined, suspended, or otherwise punished for such recommendations.

The parent/guardian or surrogate parent shall be given at least five (5) school days prior notice of any PPT meeting and shall have the right to be present and participate in all portions of such meetings at which an educational program for their child is developed, reviewed or revised. In addition, parent/guardians or surrogate parents have the right to be present at and participate in all portions of the PPT meeting at which an educational program for their child is developed, reviewed or revised. In addition, the parent/guardian/surrogate shall have advisors and the child's assigned paraprofessional, if any, be present at and participate in all portions of the PPT meeting in which the child's educational program is developed, reviewed or revised.

BLOOMFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Bloomfield, Connecticut

BOARD POLICY

No. 6159(d)

Bloomfield Support Service Staff shall offer to meet with the student's parents/guardians, upon the request of the parents/guardians, after the student has been assessed for possible placement in special education and before the Planning and Placement Team (PPT) meets. The sole purpose of such meeting is to discuss the PPT process and any concerns the parent/guardian has about the student. The meeting will involve a member of the PPT designated by Bloomfield Administration before the referral PPT meeting at which the student's assessments and evaluations will be discussed for the first time. This applies to students under evaluation for possible placement in special education.

Upon request of a parent/guardian, Bloomfield Support Service Staff will provide the results of the assessments and evaluations used in the determination of eligibility for special education of a student at least three (3) school days before the referral PPT meeting at which such results of the assessment and evaluations will be discussed for the first time.

Bloomfield schools shall take steps to ensure that one or both parents are afforded the opportunity to participate in each meeting to develop, review or revise the Individualized Education Plan for that child. Every effort shall be made to schedule meetings at a mutually agreed-upon time and place.

Parents/Guardians and Bloomfield PPT team may agree to conduct IEP meetings, and other meetings, through alternative means, such as including but not limited to, videoconferences or conference calls.

BLOOMFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Bloomfield, Connecticut

BOARD POLICY

No. 6159(e)

(a) ***General.*** The IEP for each child must include -

(1) A statement of the child's present levels of educational performance based upon parental provider information, current classroom-based, local, state assessments and classroom-based observations, including -

(i) How the child's disability affects the child's involvement and progress in the general education curriculum; or

(ii) For preschool children, as appropriate, how the disability affects the child's participation in appropriate activities;

(2) A statement of measurable annual academic and functional goals, related to -

(i) Meeting the child's needs that result from the child's disability to enable the child to be involved in and progress in the general education curriculum; and

(ii) Meeting each of the child's other educational needs that result from the child's disability.

(iii) Providing a meaningful opportunity for a child to meet challenging objectives.

Alternate Assessments

(iv) A statement of "benchmarks or short-term objectives" is required only with respect to students with disabilities who take alternate assessments aligned with alternate achievement standards.

If a child will participate in alternate assessments based on either general or alternate achievement standards, the IEP must explain why the child cannot participate in the regular assessment and why the alternate assessment selected is appropriate for the child.

The IEP/PPT Team may only recommend appropriate accommodation or use of alternate assessment, but may not exempt students with disabilities from the state assessment.

BLOOMFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Bloomfield, Connecticut

BOARD POLICY

No. 6159(f)

(3) A statement of the special education and related services and supplementary aids and services to be provided to the child, or on behalf of the child and a statement of the program modifications or supports for school personnel that will be provided for the child -

- (i) To advance appropriately toward attaining the annual goals;
- (ii) To be involved and progress in the general curriculum in accordance with paragraph (a)(1) of this section and to participate in extracurricular and other nonacademic activities; and
- (iii) To be educated and participate with other children with disabilities and non-disabled children in the activities described in this paragraph;

(4) A school must offer an IEP that is “reasonable calculated to enable a child to make progress appropriate in light of the child’s circumstances.” The child’s educational program must be appropriately ambitious in light of his/her circumstances and every child should have the chance to meet challenging objectives. The IEP Team in determining whether an IEP is reasonably calculated to enable a child to make progress should consider the child’s:

- Previous rate or academic growth,
- Progress towards achieving or exceeding grade-level proficiency,
- Behaviors, if any, interfering with the child’s progress, and
- Parent’s input and any additional information provided by such parents.

(5) An explanation of the extent, if any, to which the child will not participate with non-disabled children in the regular class and in the activities described in paragraph (a) (3) of this section;

(6) (i) A statement of any individual modifications in the administration of State or district-wide assessments of student achievement that are needed in order for the child to participate in the assessment; and

(7) The projected date for the beginning of the services and modifications described in paragraph (a) (3) of this section, and the anticipated frequency, location, and duration of those services and modifications; and

BLOOMFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Bloomfield, Connecticut

BOARD POLICY

No. 6159(g)

(8) A statement of -

- (i) How the child's progress toward the annual goals described in paragraph (a) (2) of this section will be measured; and
- (ii) How the child's parents will be regularly informed (through such means as periodic report cards), at least as often as parents are informed of their non-disabled children's progress, of -

- (A) Their child's progress toward the annual goals; and
- (B) The extent to which that progress is sufficient to enable the child to achieve the goals by the end of the year

(9) Reevaluation of a student's progress may not occur more than once a year unless agreed to by the parents and the Bloomfield PPT team. Reevaluation must occur at least once every three years unless the parent and Bloomfield PPT team agree that it is unnecessary. If parties agree that a reevaluation is unnecessary, then a comprehensive record review may be conducted in lieu of these assessments.

(b) *Transition services.*

(1) The IEP must include -

(i) For each student beginning not later than the first IEP to be in effect when the child is sixteen, and younger if appropriate, and updated annually, thereafter, appropriate measurable postsecondary goals based upon age appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment, and, where appropriate, independent living skills; and

(ii) For each student beginning not later than the first IEP to be in effect when the child is sixteen, (or younger, if determined appropriate by the IEP Team), a statement of needed transition services for the student, including courses of study, needed to assist the child in reaching these goals;

(iii) For each student, who is at least fourteen years of age, and diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder, beginning not later than the date on which the first IEP takes effect, a statement of transition service needs which shall include appropriate measurable postsecondary goals based upon age-appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment and where appropriate, independent living skills. In addition, the statement of transition needs shall include the transition services, including courses of study, needed to assist a child in reaching those goals. Such IEP shall be updated annually.

BLOOMFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Bloomfield, Connecticut

BOARD POLICY

No. 6159(h)

(iv) For a student no longer eligible for services due to graduation from high school with a regular diploma or for a student who exceeds the age of eligibility under State law, a summary of the student's academic achievement and functional performance including recommendations on how to assist the student in meeting his/her postsecondary goals.

(2) If the IEP team determines that services are not needed in one or more of the areas specified in §300.27(c) (1) through (c) (4), the IEP must include a statement to that effect and the basis upon which the determination was made.

(c) ***Transfer of rights.*** Beginning not later than one year before a student reaches the age of majority under State law, the student's IEP must include a statement that the student has been informed of his or her rights under this title if any, that will transfer to the student on reaching the age of majority, consistent with §615(m)

(d) ***Students with disabilities convicted as adults and incarcerated in adult prisons.*** Special rules concerning the content of IEP's for students with disabilities convicted as adults and incarcerated in adult prisons are contained §612(a)(5)A.

(e) ***Students with disabilities identified as deaf or hearing impaired.*** For a child identified as deaf or hearing impaired, the PPT shall develop an IEP which includes a language and communication plan which shall address;

- (i) the child's primary language or mode of communication;
- (ii) opportunities for direct communication between the child and his/her peers and professional personnel in the primary child's language or mode of communication;
- (iii) educational options available to the child;
- (iv) the qualifications of teachers and other professional personnel administering the plan for the child, including their proficiency in the child's primary language or mode of communication;
- (v) the accessibility of academic instruction, school services and extracurricular activities to the child;

BLOOMFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Bloomfield, Connecticut

BOARD POLICY

No. 6159(i)

- (vi) Assistive devices and services for the child; and
- (vii) Communication and physical environment accommodations for the child.
- (viii) An emergency communications plan that includes procedures for alerting the child of an emergency situation and ensuring that the specific needs of the child are met during the emergency situation. Such plan is to be developed for a student identified as deaf, hard of hearing, or both blind or visually impaired and deaf.

Transfers

When an individual has been on an IEP in another school district, the PPT shall make an evaluative study of the student and develop an IEP for the student as though the student were newly referred, but the PPT may use the previous IEP (if available) in developing the new one. If the transfer involves districts within Connecticut, Bloomfield Schools will provide services “comparable to those described in the previously held IEP,” until Bloomfield Schools adopts the previously held IEP or develops, adopts, and implements a new IEP. If the student has transferred from another state, Bloomfield Schools will provide services “comparable to those described in the previously held IEP,” until Bloomfield PPT team conducts an evaluation, if deemed necessary, and if appropriate, develops a new IEP. If a student who is on an IEP transfers from Bloomfield Schools to another district, or to a private school, the written IEP and any additional records relating to the student's program and achievement shall be forwarded to the receiving school on the request of the receiving school and the individual's parent or guardian.

Independent Educational Assessment

If an independent educational assessment is necessary, it shall be conducted by a Connecticut credentialed or licensed professional examiner who is not employed by and does not routinely provide assessment for the State Department of Education or Bloomfield Public Schools.

BLOOMFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Bloomfield, Connecticut

BOARD POLICY

No. 6159(j)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
10-76a Definitions
10-76b State supervision of special education programs and services.
Regulations. (as amended by PA 12-173)
10-76d Duties and powers of Boards of Education to provide special
education programs and services (as amended by June Special Session PA
15-5, Sec 277, and PA 19-49).
10-76ff Procedures for determining if a child requires special education
10-76g State aid for special education.
10-76h Special education hearing and review procedure.
10-76jj Language and communication plan as part of individualized
education program for child identified as deaf or hard of hearing (as
amended by PA 19-184).
PA 12-173 An Act Concerning Individualized Education Programs and
Other Issues Relating to Special Education
State Board of Education Regulations
34 C.F.R. 300 et seq. Assistance to States for Education of Handicapped
Children.
300.14 Special education definitions.
300.340-349 Individualized education programs.
300.503 Independent educational assessment.
300.533 Placement procedures.
300.550-556 Least restrictive environment.
P.L. 108-446 The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement
Act of 2004
Rowley v. Board of Education, 485 U.S.-176 (1982)
Endrew F. v. Douglas County School District RE-1, 15-827 U.S.
(2017)
A.M. v. N.Y. City Department of Education, 845F.3d 523, 541 (2d Cir.
1997)
Mrs. B., v. Milford Board of Education 103 F. 3d 1114, 1121 (2d Cir.
1997)
A.R. V. Connecticut State Board of Education, 3:16-CV-01197 (CS4
D. CONN. JUNE 10, 2020)