



# **TEXAS**

**CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD POLICY MANUAL**

**GREATHEARTS-TEXAS CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD POLICY  
MANUAL  
SPECIAL EDUCATION**

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## **District and Campus Improvement Plan**

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

### **Child Find**

GreatHearts-Texas shall ensure that all children residing within the GreatHearts-Texas boundaries who have disabilities, regardless of the severity of their disabilities, and who are in need of special education and related services are identified, located, and evaluated. This requirement applies to:

1. Homeless children;
2. Children who are wards of the state;
3. Children attending private schools;
4. Highly mobile children (including migrant children); and
5. Children who are suspected of being in need of special education but who are advancing from grade to grade.

20 U.S.C. 1412(a)(3)(A); 34 CFR 300.111(a)(1)(i), (c).

### ***Prekindergarten Programs***

#### **Tuition-Free Program**

GreatHearts-Texas shall offer tuition-free prekindergarten classes if it identified 15 or more eligible children who are at least four years of age. GreatHearts-Texas may offer tuition-free prekindergarten classes if it identifies 15 or more eligible children who are at least three years of age.

#### **Exemption**

GreatHearts-Texas may apply to the Commissioner for an exemption from the requirement that it provide a free prekindergarten program if GreatHearts-Texas would be required to construct classroom facilities in order to provide the program.

#### **Half-Day Basis**

A tuition-free prekindergarten class shall be operated on a half-day basis.

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**Program Eligibility**

A child is eligible for enrollment in free prekindergarten if the child is at least three years of age and:

1. Is unable to speak and comprehend the English language;
2. Is educationally disadvantaged;
3. Is homeless, as defined by federal law, regardless of the residence of the child, of either parent of the child, or of the child's guardian or other person having lawful control;
4. Is the child of an active duty member of the armed forces of the United States, including the state military forces or a reserve component of the armed forces, who is ordered to active duty by proper authority;
5. Is the child of a member of the armed forces of the United States, including the state military forces or a reserve component of the armed forces, who was injured or killed while serving on active duty; or
6. Is or ever has been in the conservatorship of the Department of Family and Protective Services following an adversary hearing under Family Code 262.201.

A child who is eligible for enrollment under item 4 or 5 above remains eligible if the child's parent leaves the armed forces, or is no longer on active duty, after the child begins the prekindergarten class.

**Public Notice**

The Superintendent shall develop a system to notify the population in the community with children eligible or enrollment of the availability of the program. The system must include public notices issued in English and Spanish.

***Preschool-Aged Children***

If GreatHearts-Texas open-enrollment charter school offers preschool, GreatHearts-Texas must provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment to preschool-aged students even if GreatHearts-Texas does not provide free preschool programs to all preschool-aged children.

(34 C.F.R. §§300.101(a)-(b) and §300.116)

GreatHearts-Texas may provide opportunities for the participation of the preschool students with disabilities in other preschool programs operated by public agencies or by locating classes for preschool students with disabilities in regular elementary schools. However, GreatHearts-Texas is not required to initiate preschool programs or to establish extensive contact programs with private schools which serve both students with disabilities and students without disabilities solely to satisfy the requirements regarding

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placement in the least restrictive environment. (OSEP Policy Memo 89-23; 34 C.F.R. §300.102(a))

GreatHearts-Texas shall develop a system to notify residents within the GreatHearts-Texas boundaries with children who are at least three and younger than six and who are eligible for enrollment in a special education program of the availability of such programs. (TEC §29.009)

**Students who Transfer with an IEP**

When a student transfers to GreatHearts-Texas from another school within Texas, GreatHearts-Texas shall provide a free appropriate public education to the student. GreatHearts-Texas shall provide comparable services as those described in the IEP the student transferred with until GreatHearts-Texas adopts the student's IEP from the previous school, or develops, adopts and implements a new IEP.

If the student with a disability transfers to from a school outside of Texas, GreatHearts-Texas shall provide the student with FAPE, including comparable services, until GreatHearts-Texas conducts an evaluation and develops, adopts, and implements a new IEP. (34 CFR §300.323)

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.

If a student transfers from GreatHearts-Texas, GreatHearts-Texas will furnish the student's special education records to the student's new school not later than 30 calendar days after school student was enrolled. (19 TAC §89.1050)

**Private School Students**

GreatHearts-Texas shall conduct a timely and meaningful consultation 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 the GreatHearts-Texas boundaries.

GreatHearts-Texas shall undertake activities similar to those undertaken for public school children 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 the GreatHearts-Texas boundaries. 20 U.S.C. 1412(a)(10)(A)(ii)-(iv).

**Preschool Students**

GreatHearts-Texas shall develop a system to notify residents within the GreatHearts-Texas boundaries with children who are at least three and younger than six and who

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are eligible for enrollment in a special education program of the availability of such programs. Education Code 29.009

After each student is enrolled in GreatHearts-Texas will promptly request all student records from the student's previous school.

**Foster Parent**

GreatHearts-Texas must give preferential consideration to a foster parent of a child with a disability when assigning a surrogate parent for the child. (TEC §29.015(a))

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 Protective and Regulatory Services is appointed as the temporary or permanent managing conservator of the child;
- 2) the child has been placed with the foster parent for at least 60 days;
- 3) the foster parent agrees to:
  - a. participate in making educational decisions on the child's behalf; and
  - b. complete a training program for surrogate parents that complies with minimum standards established by the Texas Education Agency rule; and
- 4) the foster parent has no interest that conflicts with the child's interests.

(TEC §29.015(b))

A foster parent who is denied the right to act as a surrogate parent or a parent under TEC §29.015 by an open-enrollment charter school may file a complaint with the Texas Education Agency in accordance with federal law and regulations. (TEC §29.015(c))

GreatHearts-Texas 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 Section 29.003;
- 2) admission, review, and dismissal committee meetings;
- 3) manifestation determination reviews required by Section 37.004(b);
- 4) any disciplinary actions under Chapter 37 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 Section 37.0021; and
- 7) use of corporal punishment as provided by Section 37.0011.

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(TEC §25.007)

**Transfer of Rights to Adult Students**

When a student reaches the age of 18, GreatHearts-Texas shall notify the student and the parents of the transfer of parental rights. This notice is separate and distinct from the requirement that, beginning at least one year before the student reaches the age of 18, the student's IEP include a statement regarding transfer of parental rights.

A student with a disability who is 18 years of age or older or whose disabilities of minority have been removed for general purposes under Chapter 31, Family Code, shall have the same right to make educational decisions as a student without a disability. All other rights accorded to parents under Chapter 29, Subchapter A of the Education Code or 20 U.S.C. 1415 transfer to the student. (34 CFR 300.520; Education Code 29.017(a)–(b); 19 TAC 89.1049(c))

## **Closing the Gap**

**Early Intervening Service**

The education of students with disabilities can be made more effective by providing incentives for whole-school approaches, scientifically-based early reading programs, positive behavioral interventions and supports, and early intervening services to reduce the need to label students as disabled in order to address the learning and behavioral needs of such students. (20 USC §1400(c)(5)(F))

In implementing coordinated, early intervening services, GreatHearts-Texas may carry out activities that include:

1. professional development (which may be provided by entities other than local educational agencies) for teachers and other school staff to enable such personnel to deliver scientifically based academic instruction and behavioral interventions, including scientifically based literacy instruction, and, where appropriate, instruction on the use of adaptive and instructional software; and
2. providing educational and behavioral evaluations, services, and supports, including scientifically based literacy instruction.

(20 USC §1413(f)(2); 34 CFR §300.226(b))

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An early intervening service (including a response-to-intervention or (RTI)) process cannot delay the initial evaluation for special education services of a student suspected of having a disability. A parent may request an evaluation at any time to determine whether the student is a student with a disability. If a parent requests an evaluation and GreatHearts-Texas agrees that the student may be eligible for special education, GreatHearts-Texas must evaluate the student. If GreatHearts-Texas denies the parent's request for evaluation, GreatHearts-Texas shall provide notice to the parent explaining the basis for the refusal. The parent may challenge the refusal to evaluate through the impartial hearing process. (20 USC §1413(f)(3); 34 CFR §300.226(c))

**Bilingual Education Program**

GreatHearts-Texas shall identify Limited English Proficient (LEP) students based on state criteria. GreatHearts-Texas shall provide an appropriate Bilingual Education (BE) or English as a Second Language (ESL) program conducted by teachers certified for such courses. (Texas Education Code Chapter 29, Subchapter B; 19 TAC §§89.1201-1265)

**Student with Disabilities and Limited English Proficiency**

GreatHearts-Texas shall ensure that a student with limited English proficiency who also qualifies for special education services as a student with a disability under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) 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)

**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. (TEC §12.104(b)(2)(G)). GreatHearts-Texas adopts the requirements of Subchapter B (Bilingual Education and Special Language Programs), Chapter 29, Texas Education Code pursuant to TEC §12.104(b)(2)(G).

**Establishment of Bilingual Education and Special Language Program**

GreatHearts-Texas shall establish a Bilingual Education (BE) or English as a Second Language (ESL) program as required by TEC §29.053 (Establishment of Bilingual Education and Special Language Programs) and in accordance with the procedures established by the Texas Education Agency, unless otherwise excepted under TEC §29.054 (Exception). (TEC §29.053)

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**Language Proficiency Assessment Committees**

GreatHearts-Texas shall further establish a Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) that complies with TEC §29.063. (TEC §29.063)

**Program Content; Method of Instruction**

GreatHearts-Texas's bilingual education program's content and instruction shall comply with TEC §29.055. (TEC §29.055)

**Enrollment of Students in Program**

GreatHearts-Texas shall comply with the Texas Education Agency criteria for identification, assessment, and classification of students of limited English proficiency eligible for entry into the program or exit from the program. (TEC §29.056(a))

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 TEC §29.064. (TEC §29.056(a))

GreatHearts-Texas through its language proficiency assessment committee (LPAC) shall evaluate and consider reenrollment of students who have transferred out of a bilingual education or special language program under TEC §29.056(h) as required by TEC §29.0561.

**Facilities; Classes**

GreatHearts-Texas shall ensure that bilingual education and special language programs are located in the regular public charter school rather than in separate facilities. (TEC §29.057)

**Enrollment of Students Who Do Not Have Limited English Proficiency**

GreatHearts-Texas ensures that enrollment of students who do not have limited English proficiency may occur only if the requirements of TEC §29.058 are met. (TEC §29.058)

**Cooperation among Schools**

GreatHearts-Texas may cooperate with other schools to provide a bilingual education or special language program. (TEC §29.059)

**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

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schedule the governing board establishes. The program shall meet the requirements of TEC §29.060. (TEC §29.060(a))

Enrollment of a student in the program is optional with the parent of the student. (TEC §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. (TEC §29.060(c))

GreatHearts-Texas 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. (TEC §29.060(d))

The programs required or authorized by TEC §29.060 may not be a substitute for programs required to be provided during the regular school year. (TEC §29.060(e))

The legislature may appropriate money from the foundation school fund for support of a program under TEC §29.060(a). (TEC §29.060(f))

**Bilingual Education and Special Language Program Teachers**

GreatHearts-Texas shall ensure that bilingual education and special language program teachers are properly certified. (TEC §29.061)

**Appeals**

A parent of a student enrolled in a bilingual education or special language program may appeal to the Commissioner if the open-enrollment charter school fails to comply with the requirements established by law or by the Texas Education Agency. If the parent disagrees with the placement of the student in the program, the parent may appeal that decision to the open-enrollment charter school governing body. Appeals shall be conducted in accordance with procedures adopted by the Commissioner under Chapter 157 of the Texas Administrative Code. (TEC §29.064; 19 TAC §89.1240)

**PEIMS Reporting Requirements**

The open-enrollment charter school shall meet Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) Reporting Requirements with respect to its bilingual education or special language programs. (TEC §29.066)

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**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 GreatHearts-Texas. These procedures shall be implemented in accordance with the State Board of Education's *Dyslexia Handbook: Procedures Concerning Dyslexia and Related Disorders (Dyslexia Handbook)*.

**Identification and Testing**

Screening should be done only by individuals or professionals who are trained to assess students for dyslexia and related disorders.

Before an identification or assessment procedure is used selectively with an individual student, GreatHearts-Texas must notify the student's parent or guardian or another person standing in parental relation to the student.

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*.

**Treatment**

GreatHearts-Texas 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. GreatHearts-Texas 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.

**Reading Program**

GreatHearts-Texas 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.

**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

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purpose of reassessing the student's need for accommodations until GreatHearts-Texas reevaluates the information obtained from previous testing of the student.

**Parental Notifications**

GreatHearts-Texas shall inform parents and guardians of students eligible under Section 504 Of all services and options available to the student under that law.

**Parent Education Program**

GreatHearts-Texas 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.

## **Evaluation for Special Education**

### **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 GreatHearts-Texas overall general education referral or screening system. Either a parent, TEA, another state agency, or GreatHearts-Texas may initiate a request for an initial evaluation.

#### **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, GreatHearts-Texas 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.

#### **Parent Request**

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

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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).

**Notice of Rights**

GreatHearts-Texas 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 FAPE. 20 U.S.C. 1415(b)(3); 34 CFR 300.503(a).

**Initial Evaluation**

GreatHearts-Texas 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).

GreatHearts-Texas 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).

**Consent For Initial Evaluation**

GreatHearts-Texas 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, GreatHearts-Texas 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.

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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.

*Wards of the State*

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

1. GreatHearts-Texas 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).

**Providing Assistance to Students Who Have Learning Difficulties or Need Special Education Services (required statement)**

If a student is experiencing learning difficulties, the parent may contact the GreatHearts Headmaster to learn about GreatHearts-Texas'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 Response to Intervention ("Rtl"). The implementation of Rtl has the potential to have a positive impact on GreatHearts-Texas'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 Education Campus Coordinator or an administrative employee of the GreatHearts School. GreatHearts-Texas 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 GreatHearts-Texas. Additionally, the parent will receive a copy of the *Notice of Procedural Safeguards – Rights of Parents of Students with Disabilities*.

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

**Full and Individual Evaluation (FIE)**

GreatHearts-Texas shall ensure that upon completion of the administration of such tests and other evaluation materials administered according to the evaluation procedures of the IDEA, and preparation of the written report, the ARD committee determines if the student is a student with a disability under state and federal standards.

GreatHearts-Texas 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 Texas Education Code.

GreatHearts-Texas shall have in place procedures 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; TEC §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 and 300.304; TEC §29.310)

All assessments must be administered in accordance with the instructions provided and by a trained and knowledgeable person. (34 CFR §§300.301 and 300.304)

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**Timeline**

If parent provides a written request for an evaluation to the school's director of special education services or to a district administrative employee, GreatHearts-Texas 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. (TEC §29.004(c)).

A written FIE report must be completed not later than the 45<sup>th</sup> school day following the date on which GreatHearts-Texas receives written consent for the evaluation, signed by the student's parent or legal guardian. If the student is absent for more than 3 days in that time period, the timeline must be extended by the number of days the student was absent. (TEC §29.004(a))

This time frame 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. (TEC 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, 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, the language proficiency assessment committee (LPAC) must also attend the meeting to determine services. (19 TAC §89.1230)

If GreatHearts-Texas receives written consent for an FIE from a student's parent or guardian 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 or legal guardian not later than June 30 of that year. The

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ARD committee must meet by the 15th school day of the following school year to consider the evaluation.

If GreatHearts-Texas receives written consent signed by a student's parent or legal guardian 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 45<sup>th</sup> 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.  
(TEC 29.004)

**Specific Learning Disability Evaluation**

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) cannot require GreatHearts-Texas 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).

**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, GreatHearts-Texas 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 BIP. If an FBA was already completed, the ARD committee must review and update the BIP. (34 CFR §300.350(f))

**Review of Existing Evaluation Data (REED)**

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 admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee members and other

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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 individualized education program (IEP) of the student and to participate, as appropriate, in the general education curriculum.

GreatHearts-Texas 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)

GreatHearts-Texas shall conduct a reevaluation of the student if the school determines that the educational or related services 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).

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**Change in Eligibility**

GreatHearts-Texas 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. GreatHearts-Texas shall create a summary of performance and include recommendations on how to assist the student in meeting postsecondary goals. (34 CFR §300.305(e))

**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))

**Coordination of Evaluations with Prior and Subsequent Schools**

The school shall ensure that evaluations of students who transfer from one LEA 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))

**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, GreatHearts-Texas 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 GreatHearts-Texas determines that an additional examination or test is required for the evaluation of a child's need for special education, GreatHearts-Texas 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).

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If GreatHearts-Texas determines that an additional examination or test is required for the evaluation, GreatHearts-Texas 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 GreatHearts-Texas to provide information and seek consent may not be counted toward the timeframe for completion of an evaluation. Education Code 29.0041.

**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 admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee. (34 CFR 300.309(c))

**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. (TEC §29.016)

**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 the open-enrollment charter school.

If the parent requests an IEE, GreatHearts-Texas must provide the parent with information about where the parent may obtain an independent educational evaluation and about the open-enrollment charter school's criteria that apply to IEE.

**Definitions**

Independent educational evaluation (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 the open-enrollment 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.

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(34 CFR §300.502)

**Right to 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 GreatHearts-Texas.

If the parent requests an IEE, GreatHearts-Texas must respond to the parent by either:

- 1) without unnecessary delay, file a due process complaint to request a hearing to show that its evaluation of the student is appropriate; or
- 2) provide an IEE at public expense, unless the open-enrollment charter school demonstrates in a due process hearing that the evaluation of the student that the parent obtained did not meet the open-enrollment charter school's criteria.

If GreatHearts-Texas requests a hearing and the final decision is that the open-enrollment 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, GreatHearts-Texas may ask why the parent objects to the evaluation of the student obtained by GreatHearts-Texas; however, GreatHearts-Texas 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 GreatHearts-Texas's evaluation of the student.

The parent is entitled to only one IEE of the student at public expense each time the open-enrollment charter school conducts an evaluation of the student with which the parent disagrees. (34 CFR §300.502)

**Parent-Initiated Evaluations**

If the parent obtains an independent educational evaluation (IEE) of the student at public expense or the parent shares with [CHARTER HOLDER an evaluation of the student that the parent obtained at private expense:

- (1) the open-enrollment charter school must consider the results of the evaluation of the student, if it meets GreatHearts-Texas's criteria for IEE, in any decision made with respect to the provision of a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to the student; and
- (2) the parent or GreatHearts-Texas may present the evaluation as evidence at a due process hearing regarding the student.

(34 CFR §300.502)

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**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.

**Open-Enrollment Charter School Criteria**

The criteria under which the independent evaluation 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 independent educational evaluation.

*Location*

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

*Cost*

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

GreatHearts-Texas 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 GreatHearts-Texas criteria outlined in this document.

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

In the event a parent pursues an IEE independently or pursues an IEE provider that is not on GreatHearts-Texas independent evaluator list, GreatHearts-Texas will determine if the evaluator meets GreatHearts-Texas criteria prior to authorizing payment or reimbursement. If payment will be authorized, an original billing form and an original

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written report with original signature must be submitted to GreatHearts-Texas prior to payment.

GreatHearts-Texas will deny payment for an IEE conducted by an evaluator who does not meet GreatHearts-Texas criteria. GreatHearts-Texas will deny payment for an IEE that does not meet Texas Education Agency 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 GreatHearts-Texas rates for travel as established by state guidelines.

A contract for an IEE between an evaluator and GreatHearts-Texas will not exceed one year. All terms will become void after the expiration date of one year.

*Evaluator Criteria*

The evaluator conducting the IEE must meet GreatHearts-Texas 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

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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 GreatHearts-Texas with which the parent disagrees.

Copies of protocols must be provided to GreatHearts-Texas.

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

The evaluation must be provided to GreatHearts-Texas upon completion.

Except for the criteria described above, an open-enrollment charter school may not impose conditions or timelines related to obtaining an IEE at public expense. (34 CFR 300.502(e))

**Eligibility Criteria**

A student that is at least 3 years old but not more than 21 years of age may be eligible for special education services. Through an evaluation, if a student is found to have a disability in one of the following categories, and has an educational need, they may be found eligible for special education:

- 1) Intellectual Disability
- 2) Hearing impairment
- 3) Visual Impairment
- 4) Speech or Language impairment
- 5) Emotional disturbance
- 6) Orthopedic impairment
- 7) Other health impairment
- 8) Traumatic brain injury
- 9) Deaf-blindness
- 10) Specific Learning Disability
- 11) Autism
- 12) Developmental delay
- 13) Multiple Disabilities

(34 CFR § 300.008)

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Additionally, a student is eligible to participate in GreatHearts-Texas's special education program if the student is not more than 21 years of age and 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. (TEC §29.003)

**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)

When interpreting evaluation data for the purpose of determining if a student is a student with a disability under § 300.8, and the educational needs of the student, GreatHearts-Texas 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, an IEP must be developed for the student in accordance with §§ 300.320 through 300.324. (34 CFR §300.306)

A student is not eligible for special education services through the evaluation, if a student is found to only need related services. A student cannot be found eligible for services if the determinant factor for that determination is lack of appropriate instruction in reading, including in the essential components of reading instruction, lack of appropriate instruction in math, or limited English proficiency. (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.

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(34 CFR §300.8(b))

**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))

**Speech or Language 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))

**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))

**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(10))  
The multidisciplinary team determining eligibility must include a licensed physician. (19 TAC §89.1040(10))

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**Other Health Impairment (OHI)**

A student with limited strength, vitality, or alertness, including a heightened alertness to environmental stimuli caused by chronic or acute health problems such as:

- 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) Sickle Cell Anemia
- 12) Tourette Syndrome

If the health condition limits alertness in the educational environment and adversely impacts a student's learning, he or she is eligible for OHI. In determining eligibility, GreatHearts-Texas shall must include a licensed physician on the multidisciplinary team.

**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.

GreatHearts-Texas 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(11))

**Hearing or Auditory impairment and Deafness**

A student with an impairment in hearing, whether permanent or fluctuating, that adversely affects a student's educational performance but is not included under the definition of deafness.

The student's evaluation must include an otological examination performed by an

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otologist or by a licensed medical doctor, with documentation that an otologist is not reasonably available. GreatHearts-Texas 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)(5); 19 TAC 89.1040(c)(3))

**Deafness**

Deafness is a hearing impairment that is so severe that the student is impaired in processing linguistic information through hearing, with or without amplification that adversely affects a student's educational performance. (34 CFR §300.8(c)(3))

**Visual Impairment Including Blindness**

An impairment in vision that, even with correction, adversely affects a student's educational performance. The term includes both partial sight and blindness. (34 CFR 300.8(c)(13).

A student with a visual impairment is one who:

- 1) has been determined by a licensed ophthalmologist or optometrist to have no vision or to have a serious visual loss after correction; or to have a progressive medical condition that results in no vision or a serious visual loss after correction.
- 2) has been determined by the following evaluations to have a need for special services, including:
  - a) a functional vision evaluation by a professional certified in the education of students with visual impairments or a certified orientation and mobility instructor. The evaluation must include the performance of tasks in a variety of environments requiring the use of both near and distance vision and recommendations concerning the need for a clinical low vision evaluation and an orientation and mobility evaluation;
  - b) a learning media assessment by a professional certified in the education of students with visual impairments. The learning media assessment must include recommendations concerning which specific visual, tactual, and/or auditory learning media are appropriate for the student and whether or not there is a need for ongoing evaluation in this area.

(19 TAC 89.1040(12)(A))

Through evaluation, GreatHearts-Texas should state the student's visual loss in exact measures of visual field and corrected visual acuity at a distance and at close range in each eye by a licensed ophthalmologist or optometrist. The report should also include prognosis whenever possible. If exact measures cannot be obtained, the eye specialist must so state and provide best estimates.

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A student that qualifies as a student with a visual impairment is considered functionally blind if, based on the preceding evaluations, the student will use tactual media (which includes Braille) as a primary tool for learning to be able to communicate in both reading and writing at the same level of proficiency as other students of comparable ability. (19 TAC §89.1040(12)(B))

**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 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))

**Specific Learning Disability**

Specific learning disability 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, including conditions such as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia. (34 CFR §300.8(c)(10))

In addition to being identified as having a disorder that impacts a basic psychological process, GreatHearts-Texas shall also show that the student does not achieve adequately

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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.

GreatHearts-Texas'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))

A specific learning disability does not include learning problems that are primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor disabilities, of mental retardation, of emotional disturbance, or of environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage. (34 CFR §300.8(c)(10))

Prior to identifying a student as one with a learning disability, GreatHearts-Texas shall ensure that the suspected disability is not due to lack of educational opportunity or lack of appropriate instruction. GreatHearts-Texas shall consider data that shows the student has received appropriate instruction in math and reading in the general education setting. GreatHearts-Texas 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))

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**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))

**Multiple Disabilities**

A student may qualify as a student with multiple disabilities if they are identified to have a combination of impairments (such as mental retardation-blindness or mental retardation-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. (34 CFR §300.8(c)(7))

The impairments must be expected to continue indefinitely and the impairments must severely limit performance in 2 or more of the following:

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

A student that 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))

## **Admission, Review and Dismissal Committees**

GreatHearts-Texas 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.

### **ARD Committee Responsibilities**

The ARD committee and GreatHearts-Texas 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.

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

### **Committee Members**

GreatHearts-Texas shall ensure that each ARD committee meeting includes all of the following:

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);
3. At least one special education teacher, or where appropriate, at least one special education provider of the child;

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4. A representative of GreatHearts-Texas 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 GreatHearts-Texas' resources;
5. An individual who can interpret the instructional implications of evaluation results, who may be a member of the ARD committee (who may be a member of the committee listed in items 2–5);
6. At the discretion of the parent or GreatHearts-Texas, other individuals who have knowledge or special expertise regarding the child, including related services personnel as appropriate;
7. The child, whenever appropriate;
8. A representative from career and technical education, preferably the teacher, when considering initial or continued placement of a student in a career and technical education program;
9. For a child with limited English proficiency, a member of the child's language-proficiency assessment committee (LPAC) when deciding upon the selection of assessments and appropriate accommodations;
10. For a child with an auditory impairment, including deaf-blindness, a teacher who is certified in the education of children with auditory impairments; and
11. For a child with a visual impairment, including deaf-blindness, a teacher who is certified in the education of children with visual impairments.

20 U.S.C. 1414(d)(1)(B); 34 CFR 300.321; 19 TAC 75.1023(d)(1), 89.1131(b)(3)–(4), 101.1009

A GreatHearts-Texas member of the ARD committee shall not be required to attend an IEP meeting, in whole or in part, if the parent and GreatHearts-Texas 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 GreatHearts-Texas 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 GreatHearts-Texas 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)

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**Transition Meeting Membership**

If the ARD committee is meeting to consider postsecondary goals and the transition services needed to assist the student in reaching those goals, GreatHearts-Texas shall invite:

1. The student. If the student does not attend, GreatHearts-Texas shall take other steps to ensure that the student's preferences and interests are considered.
2. To the extent appropriate, and with the consent of the parent or student who has reached the age of majority, a representative of any other agency that is likely to be responsible for providing or paying for transition services.

34 CFR 300.321(b).

**Parental Involvement**

GreatHearts-Texas 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.

If the purpose of the meeting is to consider transition services, the notice must also indicate this purpose, indicate that the Student will invite the student, and identify any other agency that will be invited to send a representative. 34 CFR 300.322(a)–(b); 19 TAC 89.1045.

**Alternative Participation Methods**

If neither parent can attend an ARD committee meeting, GreatHearts-Texas 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 GreatHearts-Texas is unable to convince the parents that they should attend. In such event, GreatHearts-Texas 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;

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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).

**ARD Committee Meetings**

GreatHearts-Texas 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.

A meeting does not include informal or unscheduled conversations involving GreatHearts-Texas 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 GreatHearts-Texas 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).

**Meeting at Parent Request**

A parent may request an ARD committee meeting at any mutually agreeable time to address specific concerns about his or her child's special education services. GreatHearts-Texas must respond to the request by holding the meeting or requesting TEA's assistance through the mediation process. GreatHearts-Texas shall inform parents of the functions of the ARD committee and the circumstances or types of problems for which requesting an ARD committee meeting would be appropriate. 19 TAC 89.1045(b)

**Transfer Students**

If a student transfer to GreatHearts-Texas, and the student had a previous IEP in place, GreatHearts-Texas shall provide the student with a 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, GreatHearts-Texas 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, GreatHearts-Texas conducts an evaluation, if determined necessary by

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GreatHearts-Texas, 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).

**Transfer of Records**

GreatHearts-Texas 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).

**Military Dependents**

GreatHearts-Texas shall initially provide comparable services to a military student with disabilities based on his or her current IEP. This does not preclude GreatHearts-Texas from performing subsequent evaluations to ensure appropriate placement of the student. Education Code 162.002 art. V, § C.

**Eligibility Determinations**

Upon completion of the administration of assessments and other evaluation measures, a team of qualified professionals and the parent shall make the determination of whether the child has a disability and of the educational needs of the child.

GreatHearts-Texas 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 admission, review, and dismissal ("ARD") committee must make its decisions regarding a student's initial eligibility determination and, if appropriate, individualized education program ("IEP") and placement within 30 calendar days from the date of the completion of the written full individual and initial evaluation report. 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, IEP, and placement, unless the full individual and initial evaluation indicates that the student will need extended school year (ESY) services during that summer.

When a report is provided to a parent not later than June 30 as described at Timeframe for Completion of Written Report, above, the ARD committee must meet not later than the 15th school day of the following school year to consider the evaluation. If, however, an evaluation indicates that a student will need ESY services, the ARD committee must meet as expeditiously as possible. 19 TAC 89.1011(d), (e)(4).

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**Individualized Education Program (IEP)**

GreatHearts-Texas shall develop, review, and revise an IEP for each child with a disability. 20 U.S.C. 1412(a)(4); 34 CFR 300.320(a).

GreatHearts-Texas shall have an IEP in effect for each child with a disability at the beginning of each school year. 20 U.S.C. 1414(d)(2)(A); 34 CFR 300.323(a).

The term “individualized education program” 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;
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

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- 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

**Translating IEPs**

If the child's parent is unable to speak English, GreatHearts-Texas 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).

**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;

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8. Communication interventions, including language forms and functions that enhance effective communication across settings;
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).

**Visual Impairment**

GreatHearts-Texas 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).

**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.

**Recess**

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 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 GreatHearts-Texas to reach agreement about all required elements of an IEP.

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

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

**No Agreement Reached**

If, after the ten-day recess, the ARD committee still cannot reach agreement, GreatHearts-Texas shall implement the IEP it has determined to be appropriate for the student. A written statement of the basis for the disagreement shall be included in the IEP. The members who disagree shall be offered the opportunity to write their own statements.

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

Parents shall have the right to file a complaint, request mediation, or request a due process hearing at any point, when they disagree with ARD committee decisions. 19 TAC 89.1050(h).

**IEP Modification**

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.

After the annual IEP meeting for a school year, the parent and GreatHearts-Texas may agree not to convene an IEP meeting for the purposes of making changes to the IEP and instead may develop a written document to amend or modify the child's current IEP.

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

To the extent possible, GreatHearts-Texas shall encourage the consolidation of reevaluation meetings for the child and other ARD meetings for the child. 20 U.S.C. 1414(d)(3)(D)–(F); 34 CFR 300.324(a)(4)–(a)(6).

**Least Restrictive Environment**

GreatHearts-Texas 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

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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).

**Extended School-Year Services**

GreatHearts-Texas shall ensure that extended school-year (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. GreatHearts-Texas 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.

**Graduation**

A student receiving special education services who successfully completes the requirements of his or her IEP, including performance on a state assessment required for graduation, shall receive a high school diploma. A student's admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee shall determine if the student will be required to meet satisfactory performance on an assessment for purposes of graduation. 19 TAC 101.3023(a).

**State Assessments**

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 accommodations, would not provide an appropriate measure of student achievement, as determined by the student's admission, review, and dismissal ("ARD") committee, including assessment instruments approved by the Commissioner that measure 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.

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 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.

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**Transportation**

GreatHearts-Texas 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).

**Consent and Prior Written Notice**

**Procedural Safeguards**

The Superintendent of GreatHearts-Texas 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, GreatHearts-Texas 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 GreatHearts-Texas 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 to the other party a due process complaint (which shall remain confidential). 34 CFR 300.508.

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**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, GreatHearts-Texas 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

**Language of Notices**

The procedural safeguards and prior notices described below must be written in 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).

**Electronic Delivery of Notices**

A parent of a child with a disability may elect to receive required notices by electronic mail, if GreatHearts-Texas makes that option available. 34 CFR 300.505.

**Notice of Procedural Safeguards**

GreatHearts-Texas 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.

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GreatHearts-Texas may also place a current copy of the procedural safeguards notice on its Internet website.

**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 GreatHearts-Texas 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).

**Prior Notice and Consent**

GreatHearts-Texas 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. 34 CFR 300.503(a).

“Reasonable time” is defined as at least five school days, unless the parents agree otherwise. 19 TAC 89.1015.

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**Contents of Notice**

The notice must include:

1. A description of the action proposed or refused by GreatHearts-Texas;
2. An explanation of why GreatHearts-Texas proposes or refuses to take the action;
3. A description of each evaluation procedure, assessment, record, or report GreatHearts-Texas 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 IDEA rules;
6. A description of other options the ARD committee considered and the reasons why those options were rejected; and
7. A description of other factors relevant to GreatHearts-Texas's proposal or refusal.

34 CFR 300.503(b)

**Consent to Initial Evaluation**

Before GreatHearts-Texas conducts an initial evaluation, it shall provide prior written notice, including a description of any evaluation GreatHearts-Texas 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).

**Consent to Services**

GreatHearts-Texas 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).

**Consent to Reevaluation**

GreatHearts-Texas 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 GreatHearts-Texas 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).

**Consent to Excuse Member from Attending ARD Committee Meeting**

A GreatHearts-Texas 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

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GreatHearts-Texas 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.

**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, GreatHearts-Texas shall provide to the child's parent:

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

If GreatHearts-Texas determines that an additional examination or test is required for the evaluation of a child's need for special education, GreatHearts-Texas 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).

**Parental Consent to Access Public Benefits**

GreatHearts-Texas 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))

**Parental Consent for Transfer of Assistive Technology Devices**

GreatHearts-Texas shall obtain informed consent from the parent or the adult student if the adult student has the legal capacity to enter into a contract before transferring an assistive technology device through a transfer agreement that incorporates the standards of the state.

**Other Consent Requirements**

Parental consent is not required before the open-enrollment 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)

**Applicability of Title Relating to High School  
Graduation**

GreatHearts-Texas 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

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under Title 2 (Public Education) of the Texas Education Code, relating to high school graduation under TEC §28.025. (TEC §12.104(b)(2)(E))

**ARD Committee and IEP**

For each student who is at least 14 years of age and qualifies for special education, the admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) committee must begin transition planning. The ARD committee must also consider the student's graduation plan and what state assessments are required for graduation. (TEC §29.0111; 19 TAC §89.1070)

**Special Education Eligibility upon Graduation**

Graduation with a regular high school diploma terminates a student's eligibility for special education and related services. Termination of eligibility based on graduation requires GreatHearts-Texas to complete a summary of performance in accordance with 34 CFR §300.305(e)(3), and prior written notice must be provided to the parent. (34 CFR §300.102)

A student who receives a diploma, but took one or more classes with a modified curriculum, may return to school as long as the student meets the age eligibility requirements. Modified curriculum is defined as curriculum or content that is reduced in amount or complexity of the required TEKS. (19 TAC §89.1070)

**Graduation Requirements under the Foundation High School Program**

A student with disability that receives special education services and who enters 9<sup>th</sup> grade in or after the 2014-2015 school year, may receive a regular high school diploma if the student:

- 1) Demonstrates mastery of the required states standards
- 2) Completes the credit requirements under the Foundation High School Program
- 3) Achieves satisfactory performance on the required state assessment unless the ARD committee determines that satisfactory performance on the required state assessment is not necessary for graduation

A student who receives special education services entering 9<sup>th</sup> grade in 2014-2015 or after may also earn a high school diploma if the student the student meets the above requirements and successfully completes the IEP and meets one of the following:

- 1) consistent with the IEP, the student obtains full-time employment and masters sufficient self-help skills to enable to the student to maintain employment without direct or ongoing educational support;
- 2) consistent with the IEP, demonstrated mastery of specific employability skills and self-help skills that do not require ongoing educational support;

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- 3) has access to services that are not within the legal responsibility of GreatHearts-Texas or educational options for which the student has been prepared for by the academic program; or
- 4) No longer meets eligibility requirements  
(19 TAC §89.1070; TEC §28.025)

**Endorsements under the Foundation High School Program**

A student receiving special education services, may receive an endorsement if the student:

- 1) Completes the requirements for graduation under the Foundation High School Program and completes the additional credits requirements in mathematics, science, and elective courses required for an endorsement with or without modified curriculum;
- 2) Completes the courses required for the endorsement without modified curriculum; and
- 3) Performs satisfactorily on the state assessment

A student who is in 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> grade in 2014-2015, 2015-2016, or 2016-2017 school years who took each of the required assessments, but failed to achieve satisfactorily on no more than two assessments is eligible for an endorsement if the student meets the other endorsement requirements.

For students receiving special education services, if the student wants to use a course to satisfy both the Foundation High School Program requirements and for the endorsement requirement, the course must be completed without modified curriculum.  
(19 TAC §89.1070; TEC §28.025)

**Transitioning to the Foundation High School Program**

For students who entered 9<sup>th</sup> grade prior to the 2014-2015 school year, a student may receive a diploma under the Foundation High School Program if the student's ARD committee determines the student should take courses under the Foundations program and the student completes the requirements.

A student transitioning may also receive an endorsement if he or she meets the requirements.

A student who is in 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> grade in 2014-2015, 2015-2016, or 2016-2017 school years and transitioning to the Foundation High School Program, who took each of the required assessments, but failed to achieve satisfactorily on no more than two assessments may graduate if the student met the other graduation requirements.  
(19 TAC §89.1070; TEC §28.025)

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**Substitutions under the Foundation High School Program**

**Language other than English**

If the ARD committee determines that a student with a disability is unable to complete two credits in the same language other than English, the ARD committee may determine to:

- 1) may substitute a combination of two credits from ELA, math, science, or social studies; or
- 2) may substitute two credits of CTE, technology applications, or other academic electives

(TEC §74.12(b)(5)(D)(i); §28.025(b-14)(1))

**Physical Education**

In accordance with State Board of Education (SBOE) rules, a student who is unable to participate in physical activity due to disability or illness is allowed to substitute one credit in English language arts, mathematics, science, or social studies or one academic elective credit for the required physical education credit. A credit allowed to be substituted may not also be used by the student to satisfy a graduation requirement other than completion of the physical education credit. The determination regarding a student's ability to participate in physical activity must be made by:

- The student's ARD committee, if the student receives special education services under the IDEA and Texas Education Code Chapter 29;
- The student's 504 committee, if the student does not receive special education services under the IDEA or Texas Education Code Chapter 29, Subchapter A but is covered by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. Section 794; or
- If each of the described committees is inapplicable, a committee established by the school of persons with appropriate knowledge regarding the student.

(TEC §28.025(b-11))

Credits allowed as a substitution for the language and PE requirement may not be used to satisfy other graduation credit requirements.

(TEC §28.025(b-11) and (b-14))

**Distinguished Achievement, Recommended, and Minimum High School Program**

A student receiving special education services who entered 9<sup>th</sup> grade before the 2014-2015 school year, may graduate with a regular diploma if the student:

- 1) Demonstrates mastery of the state standards;
- 2) Completes credit requirements for graduation under the recommended or distinguished program; and
- 3) Achieves satisfactory performance on the required state assessment

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A student who is in 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> grade in 2014-2015, 2015-2016, or 2016-2017 school years and who took each of the required assessments, but failed to achieve satisfactorily on no more than two assessments may graduate under the recommended or distinguished program if the student met the other graduation requirements.

A student receiving special education services who entered 9<sup>th</sup> grade before the 2014-2015 school year, may also graduate with a regular diploma if the student:

- 1) Demonstrates mastery of the state standards
- 2) Completes credit requirements for graduation under the minimum program; and
- 3) Participates in or satisfactorily performs on the required state assessment as determined by the ARD committee

A student receiving special education services who entered 9<sup>th</sup> grade before the 2014-2015 school year, may also graduate with a regular diploma if the student:

- 1) Demonstrates mastery of the state standards through courses, one or more of which contained modified content and is aligned with the requirements under the minimum high school program;
- 2) Completes credit requirements for graduation under the minimum program;
- 3) Participates in or satisfactorily performs on the required state assessment as determined by the ARD committee; and
- 4) Successfully completes the IEP and meets one of the following conditions:
  - consistent with the IEP, the student obtains full-time employment and masters sufficient self-help skills to enable to the student to maintain employment without direct or ongoing educational support;
  - consistent with the IEP, demonstrated mastery of specific employability skills and self-help skills that do not require ongoing educational support;
  - has access to services that are not within the legal responsibility of GreatHearts-Texas or educational options for which the student has been prepared for by the academic program; or
  - No longer meets eligibility requirements

(19 TAC §89.1070)

**High School Diploma and Certificate; Academic Achievement Record**

GreatHearts-Texas does issue a certificate of coursework completion to a student who successfully completes the curriculum requirements identified by the State Board of Education (SBOE) under TEC §28.025(a) but who fails to comply with TEC §39.025 (Secondary-Level Performance Required) relating to exit-level assessment requirements. GreatHearts-Texas does allow a student who receives a certificate to

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participate in a graduation ceremony with students receiving high school diplomas. (TEC §28.025(d))

**Certificate of Attendance**

GreatHearts-Texas does issue a Certificate of Attendance to a student who receives special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and who has completed four years of high school but has not completed the student's individualized education program (IEP). GreatHearts-Texas shall allow a student who receives a certificate to participate in a graduation ceremony with students receiving high school diplomas. A student may participate in only one graduation ceremony. Receiving a Certificate of Attendance does not preclude a student from receiving a diploma. (TEC §28.025(f))

**Promotion to 6th or 9th Grade**

A student may not be promoted to 6<sup>th</sup> grade if the student does not perform satisfactorily on the 5<sup>th</sup> grade mathematics and reading assessments.

A student may not be promoted to 9<sup>th</sup> grade if the student did not perform satisfactorily on the 8<sup>th</sup> grade mathematics and reading assessments.

Each time a student fails to perform satisfactorily on an assessment administered under Section 39.023(a) in the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, or 8<sup>th</sup> grade, GreatHearts-Texas shall provide the student with accelerated instruction in the applicable subject area. Accelerated instruction may require participation of the student before or after normal school hours and may include participation at times of the year outside normal school operations.

The ARD committee of a student who participates in GreatHearts-Texas's special education program and who does not perform satisfactorily on an assessment shall determine:

- 1) the manner in which the student will participate in an accelerated instruction program under this section; and
- 2) whether the student will be promoted or retained under this section

(TEC §28.0211)

## **Discipline, Restraint & Time-Out**

### **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 regarding the student shall be determined in accordance with federal law and regulations.

### **Removal for Ten Days or Less**

A student with a disability who violates the GreatHearts-Texas 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 alternatives are applied to children without disabilities.

#### **Services During Removal**

GreatHearts-Texas is required to provide services during the period of removal if GreatHearts-Texas provides services to a child without disabilities who is similarly removed.

### **Subsequent Removals of Ten Days or Less**

GreatHearts-Texas 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.

#### **Services During Removal**

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 IEP.

### **Notice of Procedural Safeguards**

Not later than the date on which the decision to take the disciplinary action is made, GreatHearts-Texas shall notify the student's parents of the decision and of all procedural safeguards.

### **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.

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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;
  - 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.

GreatHearts-Texas determines, on a case-by-case basis, whether a pattern of removals constitutes a change in placement. GreatHearts-Texas's determination is subject to review through due process and judicial proceedings.

GreatHearts-Texas 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.

**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, GreatHearts-Texas, parents, and relevant members of the ARD committee (as determined by the parent and GreatHearts-Texas) 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 GreatHearts-Texas' failure to implement the IEP.

If GreatHearts-Texas, 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.

**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

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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.

*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.

**Manifestation**

If GreatHearts-Texas, 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 GreatHearts-Texas 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 GreatHearts-Texas agree to a change in placement as part of the modification of the BIP.

**Special Circumstances**

GreatHearts-Texas 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 TEA or GreatHearts-Texas; or

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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 TEA or GreatHearts-Texas;
3. Has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of TEA or GreatHearts-Texas.

The ARD committee shall determine the interim alternative education setting.

**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.

**Appeals**

A parent who disagrees with a placement decision or the manifestation determination may request a hearing. Additionally, GreatHearts-Texas 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.

**Placement During Appeals**

When an appeal has been requested by a parent or GreatHearts-Texas, 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 GreatHearts-Texas agree otherwise.

**Reporting Crimes**

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

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**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 IDEA if GreatHearts-Texas had knowledge that the student had a disability before the behavior that precipitated that disciplinary action occurred.

**School Knowledge**

GreatHearts-Texas 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 GreatHearts-Texas 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 GreatHearts-Texas personnel, expressed specific concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the student directly to the special education director or to other GreatHearts-Texas supervisory personnel.

**Exception**

GreatHearts-Texas shall not be deemed to have knowledge that the student had a disability if:

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.

If GreatHearts-Texas 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.

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**Behavior Management Techniques**

It is GreatHearts-Texas'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.

**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;
2. An educational services provider with whom a student is placed by a judicial authority, unless the services are provided in a GreatHearts-Texas educational program.

Further, 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).

**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.

**Seclusion**

A GreatHearts-Texas employee or volunteer or an independent contractor of GreatHearts-Texas 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.

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**Restraint**

A GreatHearts-Texas 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.

“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.

“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.

**Training**

Training for GreatHearts-Texas 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).

**Documentation**

In a case in which restraint is used, GreatHearts-Texas employees, volunteers, or independent contractors shall implement the documentation requirements set forth at 19 TAC 89.1053(e).

**Time-Out**

A GreatHearts-Texas 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 may only be used in conjunction with an array of positive behavior intervention strategies and techniques and must be included in the student’s IEP and/or BIP if it is utilized on a recurrent basis to increase or decrease targeted behavior.

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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.

“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.

**Training**

Training for GreatHearts-Texas 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).

**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.

## **Administration**

**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. (TEC §12.104(b)(2)(F)).

GreatHearts-Texas 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.

**Assurance**

Open-enrollment charter schools must submit a plan to the Texas Education Agency that provide assurances that the charter school has in effect policies, procedures and

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programs that are consistent with the State and Federal policies and procedures governing special education. (20 USC §1413(a); 34 CFR §§300.200-.201)

**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).

**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 Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) to the extent necessary to monitor compliance with Subchapter D (Open-Enrollment Charter School), Chapter 12, Texas Education Code. (TEC §12.104(b)(2)(A))

The Superintendent or designee shall prepare required Public Education Information Management System (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.

**Contracts for Services; Residential Placement**

GreatHearts-Texas 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. (TEC §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

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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. (TEC §29.008(c))

If GreatHearts-Texas contracts for the provision of education services rather than providing the services, GreatHearts-Texas 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 the open-enrollment charter school contracts shall periodically report to the open-enrollment 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 the open-enrollment charter school requires in order to fulfill its obligations under Subchapter A (Special Education), Chapter 29, Texas Education Code. (TEC §29.008(d))

**Facilities**

Any construction of new facilities or alteration of existing facilities with authorized 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*)

**Administration of Equipment**

The ARD committee must consider whether the student needs assistive technology devices (ATDs) as a 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)

GreatHearts-Texas may transfer an assistive technology device (ATD) in accordance to TEC, §30.0015. The transfer agreement must include the standards in TEC §30.0015, including the following:

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- 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 GreatHearts-Texas 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" (UTA) 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)

**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.

**Compliance with Federal and State Personnel Standards for Individuals Serving Children with Disabilities**

GreatHearts-Texas shall ensure that personnel standards for all individuals serving children with disabilities are met in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and its procedures.

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GreatHearts-Texas recognizes that both the No Child Left Behind 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. §7801(23) (A) (i); 20 U.S.C. §1401(10) (B) (i). In Texas, that means that the charter school special education teacher must be certified.

GreatHearts-Texas 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 ARD committee.

GreatHearts-Texas 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.

GreatHearts-Texas 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 a charter holder 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. (TEC §12.129)

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; TEC §§21.002, 21.003, and 29.304; or appropriate state agency credentials. (19 T.A.C. §89.1131(a))

**Notice to Parents – Qualifications**

The Superintendent or designee shall provide to the parent or guardian of each student enrolled in GreatHearts-Texas written notice of the qualifications of each teacher employed by GreatHearts-Texas.

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Additionally, the Superintendent or designee shall, at the beginning of each school year, notify the parents of each student attending GreatHearts-Texas that the parents may request, and GreatHearts-Texas 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. The baccalaureate degree major of the teacher and any other graduate certification or degree held by the teacher, and the field of discipline of the certification or degree.
4. Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

GreatHearts-Texas 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 is not highly qualified.

## **Records**

Student records shall be maintained for each student from the time the student is in attendance at GreatHearts-Texas until withdrawal or graduation from GreatHearts-Texas. 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.

### **SECTION 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 GreatHearts-Texas or by a person acting for GreatHearts-Texas.

The term "education records" does not include:

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1. Records that are created or received by GreatHearts-Texas 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 GreatHearts-Texas 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 GreatHearts-Texas 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 or guardian; 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 or guardian.

**b. Screening Records**

The principal of each GreatHearts-Texas campus shall maintain records of screening for special senses and communication disorders, spinal screening, and assessment for type 2 diabetes for each student in GreatHearts-Texas. 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

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records relating to assessment for type 2 diabetes. Individual screening records may be transferred among schools in accordance with provisions below concerning ACCESS BY OTHER PERSONS.

**c. Immunization Records**

GreatHearts-Texas 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 or by representatives of local health departments or the Texas Department of State Health Services. GreatHearts-Texas shall cooperate with other districts and schools in transferring students' immunization records between other schools. Specific approval from students, parents, or guardians is not required prior to making such record transfers.

**d. Medical Records**

The parent or guardian of a student is entitled to access to the student's medical records maintained by GreatHearts-Texas. On request of a student's parent or guardian, GreatHearts-Texas shall provide a copy of the student's medical records to the parent or guardian. GreatHearts-Texas 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 GreatHearts-Texas is a covered entity under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), GreatHearts-Texas 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 GreatHearts-Texas, shall be retained in the child's student records, but may not be placed in the health record maintained for the child by GreatHearts-Texas.

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**Exceptions**

If GreatHearts-Texas receives documentation of a food allergy from a physician, that documentation shall be placed in the health record maintained for the child by GreatHearts-Texas. A registered nurse may enter appropriate notes about a child's possible food allergy in the health record maintained for the child by GreatHearts-Texas, including a notation that the child's student records indicate that a parent has notified GreatHearts-Texas 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 GreatHearts-Texas are confidential and may be made available only to the student, the student's parent or guardian, and to GreatHearts-Texas 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)**

GreatHearts-Texas shall use the academic achievement record (transcript) form adopted by the State Board. This form shall serve as the academic record for each student and shall be maintained permanently by GreatHearts-Texas. 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. GreatHearts-Texas 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 GreatHearts-Texas, the parent or other person, or the school district in which the child most recently attended school, shall furnish to GreatHearts-Texas 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 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.

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GreatHearts-Texas must furnish information under items 1 and 2 not later than the tenth working day after the date GreatHearts-Texas receives a request for the information.

If a parent or other person with legal control of a child under a court order requests that GreatHearts-Texas transfer a child's student records, GreatHearts-Texas 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.

**SECTION 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;

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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 GreatHearts-Texas 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 GreatHearts-Texas.

**viii. “Signed and Dated Written Consent”**

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

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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 GreatHearts-Texas shall be granted to the parent of the student who is a minor or who is a dependent for tax purposes.

GreatHearts-Texas 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 GreatHearts-Texas 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:

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**i. School Officials**

GreatHearts-Texas 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 GreatHearts-Texas as an administrator, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel).
2. A person serving on the GreatHearts-Texas Board of Directors.
3. A person or company with whom GreatHearts-Texas 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 GreatHearts-Texas has outsourced institutional services or functions, provided that the outside party:
  - a. Performs an institutional service or function for which GreatHearts-Texas would otherwise use employees;
  - b. Is under the direct control of GreatHearts-Texas 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.

GreatHearts-Texas 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 GreatHearts-Texas 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).

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In either case, GreatHearts-Texas 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.

GreatHearts-Texas 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. GreatHearts-Texas 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 GreatHearts-Texas 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, GreatHearts-Texas 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

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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.

GreatHearts-Texas 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 GreatHearts-Texas 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 GreatHearts-Texas 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 GreatHearts-Texas in accordance with the requirements of 34 C.F.R. 99.33(b).

GreatHearts-Texas 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, GreatHearts-Texas 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 GreatHearts-Texas determines that there is an articulable and significant threat to the health or safety of a student or other individuals, it may disclose information

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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 GreatHearts-Texas has given public notice of that definition

**e. Written Consent**

The parent shall provide a signed and dated written consent before GreatHearts-Texas 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 shall be available for inspection by the parents or guardians of students.

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**g. Information Collection**

**i. U.S. DOE Funded Surveys**

No student shall be required, as part of any program funded in whole or in part by the U.S. Department of Education (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 U.S. DOE, GreatHearts-Texas 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**

GreatHearts-Texas shall release student records to an entity or persons designated in a subpoena. GreatHearts-Texas shall not disclose to any person the existence or contents of the subpoena if a court orders GreatHearts-Texas to refrain from such disclosure. Unless the court or other issuing agency orders GreatHearts-Texas 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, GreatHearts-Texas shall make a reasonable effort to notify the parents and the student of all such subpoenas in advance of compliance.

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**iv. Sex Offenders**

GreatHearts-Texas 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 GreatHearts-Texas 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, GreatHearts-Texas 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 GreatHearts-Texas 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, GreatHearts-Texas 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. GreatHearts-Texas 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. GreatHearts-Texas 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 GreatHearts-Texas, 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

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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 GreatHearts-Texas. At a minimum, GreatHearts-Texas 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**

Upon request of a properly qualified individual, access to a student's education record shall be granted within a reasonable period of time, not to exceed 45 days. GreatHearts-Texas shall respond to reasonable requests for explanations and interpretations of the records.

**j. Destruction of Records**

GreatHearts-Texas shall not destroy any education records if there is an outstanding request to inspect and review the records.

**k. De-Identified Records**

GreatHearts-Texas, 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 GreatHearts-Texas or other party has made a reasonable determination that a student's

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identity is not personally identifiable, whether through single or multiple releases, and taking into account other reasonably available information.

**I. Education Research**

GreatHearts-Texas, 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. GreatHearts-Texas 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**

GreatHearts-Texas must use reasonable methods to identify and authenticate the identity of parents, students, school officials, and any other parties to whom GreatHearts-Texas 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, GreatHearts-Texas shall not permit access to information from education records to that third party for a period of not less than five years.

GreatHearts-Texas 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.

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GreatHearts-Texas may disclose personally identifiable information with the understanding that the party receiving the information may make further disclosures of the information on behalf of GreatHearts-Texas if:

1. The disclosures meet the requirements of 34 CFR 99.31; and
2. GreatHearts-Texas 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. GreatHearts-Texas 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.

GreatHearts-Texas must record the following information when it discloses personally identifiable information from education records under the health or safety emergency exception [see HEALTH & SAFETY EMERGENCY, 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 GreatHearts-Texas 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 GreatHearts-Texas 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 GreatHearts-Texas, 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.

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**p. Right to Amend Records**

The parent of a student whose records are covered by this policy may ask GreatHearts-Texas 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 GreatHearts-Texas 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 GreatHearts-Texas 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, GreatHearts-Texas 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 GreatHearts-Texas. 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**

GreatHearts-Texas 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. GreatHearts-Texas shall comply with a request without unnecessary delay and before any meeting regarding an individualized education program (IEP) or hearing

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relating to the identification, evaluation, or placement of the child, and in no case longer than 45 days after the request.

3. GreatHearts-Texas 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**

GreatHearts-Texas 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 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act or disclosed to anyone other than officials of agencies collecting or using this information. GreatHearts-Texas may not release information from these records without parental consent except as provided in FERPA.

**iv. Confidentiality**

GreatHearts-Texas shall protect the confidentiality of personally identifiable information in collection, storage, disclosure, and destruction of records. One official in GreatHearts-Texas 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. GreatHearts-Texas 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**

GreatHearts-Texas 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.

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**s. Annual Notification of Rights**

GreatHearts-Texas 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 United States Department of Education a complaint under 34 CFR 99.63 and 99.64 concerning alleged failures by GreatHearts-Texas 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 GreatHearts-Texas 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.

GreatHearts-Texas may provide this notice by any means that are reasonably likely to inform the parents or eligible students of their rights. GreatHearts-Texas 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.

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**SECTION 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 GreatHearts-Texas to release directory information.

**a. Definition**

GreatHearts-Texas has designated the following categories of information as directory information for the purpose of disclosure relating solely to school-sponsored/school-affiliated purposes:

1. Student’s name;
2. Address;
3. Telephone listing;
4. Electronic mail address;
5. Photographs (including video images);
6. Date and place of birth;
7. Major field of study;
8. Dates of attendance;
9. Grade level;
10. Participation in officially recognized activities and sports;
11. Weight and height of members of athletic teams;
12. Degrees, honors, and awards received; and
13. The most recent educational agency or institution 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.

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School-sponsored/school-affiliated purposes are those events/activities that GreatHearts-Texas conducts and/or sponsors to support GreatHearts-Texas' 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.).

GreatHearts-Texas has designated the following categories of information for the purpose of disclosure to military recruiters and institutions of higher education, but only for secondary students:

1. Student's name;
2. Address;
3. Telephone listing; and
4. E-mail address.

**b. Disclosure of Directory Information**

GreatHearts-Texas shall not release directory information except for the purposes indicated above, namely:

1. Disclosure relating to school-sponsored/school-affiliated purposes; and
2. Disclosure to military recruiters and institutions of higher education, but only for secondary students.

**c. In Class**

A parent or eligible student may not use the right of refusal to opt out of directory information disclosures to prevent GreatHearts-Texas 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.

**d. Former Students**

GreatHearts-Texas may disclose directory information about former students without satisfying the public notice conditions above. However, GreatHearts-Texas must continue

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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.

**e. Confirmation of Identity or Records**

GreatHearts-Texas 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.

**f. Designation of Directory Information**

GreatHearts-Texas 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 GreatHearts-Texas as directory information is excepted from disclosure by GreatHearts-Texas 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 GreatHearts-Texas, remains otherwise confidential and may not be released under Government Code Chapter 552.

**g. Student Recruiting Information**

Notwithstanding the DIRECTORY INFORMATION provisions above, each school receiving assistance under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) shall provide, on a request made by military recruiters or an institution of higher education, access to secondary school students' names, addresses, and telephone listings.

A secondary school student or the parent of the student may request that the student's name, address, and telephone listing described above not be released without prior written parental consent. GreatHearts-Texas shall notify parents of the option to make a request and shall comply with any request.

**SECTION 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

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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 GreatHearts-Texas under this provision shall not be attached to the permanent academic file of the student who is the subject of the report. GreatHearts-Texas 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 GreatHearts-Texas is missing, GreatHearts-Texas shall flag the child's records and maintain the records in its possession so that on receipt of a request regarding the child, GreatHearts-Texas will be able to notify law enforcement or

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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, GreatHearts-Texas 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, GreatHearts-Texas 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, GreatHearts-Texas 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, GreatHearts-Texas 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, GreatHearts-Texas shall remove the flag from the records.

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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, GreatHearts-Texas 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.

**SECTION 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). GreatHearts-Texas 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. GreatHearts-Texas 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).

**Records Retention and Destruction**

**Section 1. Definitions**

1.1 “Records:”

(a) Means all documents, papers, letters, books, maps, photographs, sound or video recordings, microfilm, magnetic tape, electronic media, or other recording media, regardless of physical form or characteristic, and regardless of whether public access to it is open or restricted under the laws of the state, created or received by GreatHearts-Texas, or any of its officers or employees pursuant to law or in the transaction of public business, are hereby declared to be the records of GreatHearts-Texas and shall be created, maintained, and disposed of in accordance with the provisions of this ordinance or procedures authorized by it and in no other manner.

(b) Does not include

(i) Convenience copies: “Extra identical copies of documents created only for convenience of reference or research.”

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(ii) Copies of documents furnished to the public (to fulfill a Public Information Act request).

(iii) Blank forms/stocks of publications.

(iv) Library or museum materials.

1.2 "Essential record" means any record of GreatHearts-Texas necessary to the resumption or continuation of operations of GreatHearts-Texas in an emergency or disaster, to the recreation of the legal and financial status of GreatHearts-Texas, or to the protection and fulfillment of obligations to the people of the state.

1.3 "Records management" means the application of management techniques to the creation, use, maintenance, retention, preservation, and disposal of records for the purposes of reducing the costs and improving the efficiency of record keeping. The term includes the development of records control schedules, the management of filing and information retrieval systems, the protection of essential and permanent records, the economical and space-effective storage of inactive records, control over the creation and distribution of forms, reports, and correspondence, and the management of micrographic and electronic and other records storage systems.

1.4 "Records Liaison Officers" means the persons designated under Section 9 of this policy.

1.5 "Records Management Committee" means the committee established under Section 5 of this policy.

1.6 "Records Management Officer" means the person designated in Section 4 of this policy.

1.7 "Records management plan" means the plan developed under Section 6 of this policy.

**Section 2. Records Declared Public Property**

All records as defined in Section 1 of this policy are hereby declared to be the property of GreatHearts-Texas. No official or employee of GreatHearts-Texas has, by virtue of his or her position, any personal or property right to such records, even though he or she may have developed or compiled them. The unauthorized destruction, removal from files, or use of such records is prohibited.

**Section 3. Policy**

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It is hereby declared to be the policy of GreatHearts-Texas to provide for efficient, economical, and effective controls over the creation, distribution, organization, maintenance, use, and disposition of all records of this office through a comprehensive system of integrated procedures for the management of records from their creation to their ultimate disposition, consistent with the requirements of the Local Government Records Act and accepted records management practice.

**Section 4. Records Management Officer**

The Operations Manager will serve as Records Management Officer for GreatHearts-Texas as provided by law, and will ensure that the maintenance, destruction, electronic storage, or other disposition of the records of this office are carried out in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Records Act.

**Section 5. Establishment of Records Management Committee; Duties**

5.1 The Records Management Officer, in consultation with the Compliance Manager, shall appoint a Records Management Committee consisting of:

- A financial officer for GreatHearts-Texas; and
- An executive or administrative officer for GreatHearts-Texas;
- Any additional personnel that the GreatHearts-Texas administrative officer deems appropriate.

5.2 The committee shall:

- (a) Assist the Records Management Officer in the development of policies and procedures governing the records management program;
- (b) Review the performance of the program on a regular basis and propose changes and improvements if needed;
- (c) Review and approve records control schedules submitted by the Records Management Officer;
- (d) Give final approval to the destruction of records in accordance with approved records control schedules; and
- (e) Actively support and promote the records management program throughout GreatHearts-Texas.

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**Section 6. Records Management Plan to be Developed; Approval of Plan; Authority of Plan**

6.1 The Records Management Officer and the Records Management Committee shall develop a records management plan for GreatHearts-Texas to be submitted to the Board. The plan must contain policies and procedures designed to reduce the costs and improve the efficiency of record keeping, to adequately protect the essential records of GreatHearts-Texas, and to properly preserve those records of GreatHearts-Texas that are of historical value. The plan must be designed to enable the Records Management Officer to carry out his or her duties prescribed by state law and this policy effectively.

6.2 Once approved by the Board of Directors, the records management plan shall be binding on all offices, departments, divisions, programs, commissions, bureaus, boards, committees, or similar entities of GreatHearts-Texas, and records shall be created, maintained, stored, microfilmed, or disposed of in accordance with the plan.

**Section 7. Duties of Records Management Officer**

In addition to other duties assigned in this policy, the Records Management Officer shall:

- (a) Administer the records management program and provide assistance to department heads in its implementation;
- (b) Plan, formulate, and prescribe records disposition policies, systems, standards, and procedures;
- (c) In cooperation with Principals and department heads, identify essential records and establish a disaster plan for each GreatHearts-Texas campus and department to ensure maximum availability of the records in order to re-establish operations quickly and with minimum disruption and expense;
- (d) Develop procedures to ensure the permanent preservation of the historically valuable records of GreatHearts-Texas;
- (e) Establish standards for filing and storage equipment and for record keeping supplies;
- (f) Study the feasibility of and, if appropriate, establish a uniform filing system and a forms design and control system for GreatHearts-Texas;
- (g) Provide records management advice and assistance to all GreatHearts-Texas departments by preparing a manual or manuals of procedure and policy and by on-site consultation;

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- (h) Monitor records retention schedules and administrative rules issued by the Texas State Library and Archives Commission to determine if the records management program and GreatHearts-Texas' records control schedules are in compliance with state regulations;
- (i) Disseminate to the Board of Directors, department heads, and Principals information concerning state laws and administrative rules relating to local government records;
- (j) Instruct Records Liaison Officers and other personnel in policies and procedures of the records management plan and their duties in the records management program;
- (k) Direct Records Liaison Officers or other personnel in the conduct of records inventories in preparation for the development of records control schedules as required by state law and this policy;
- (l) Ensure that the maintenance, preservation, microfilming, destruction, or other disposition of GreatHearts-Texas records is carried out in accordance with the policies and procedures of the records management program and the requirements of state law;
- (m) Maintain records on the volume of records destroyed under approved records -- control schedules, the volume of records microfilmed or stored electronically, and the estimated cost and space savings as the result of such disposal or disposition;
- (n) Report annually to the Superintendent on the implementation of the records management plan in each department of GreatHearts-Texas; and
- (o) Bring to the attention of the Superintendent non-compliance by department heads, Principals, or other GreatHearts-Texas personnel with the policies and procedures of the records management program or the Local Government Records Act.

**Section 8. Duties and Responsibilities of Department Heads and Principals**

In addition to other duties assigned in this policy, department heads and Principals shall:

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- (a) Cooperate with the Records Management Officer in carrying out the policies and procedures established by GreatHearts-Texas for the efficient and economical management of records and in carrying out the requirements of this policy;
- (b) Adequately document the transaction of government business and the services, programs, and duties for which the department head, principal, and his or her staff are responsible; and
- (c) Maintain the records in his or her care and carry out their preservation, microfilming, destruction, or other disposition only in accordance with the policies and procedures of the records management program of GreatHearts-Texas and the requirements of this policy.

**Section 9. Designation of Records Liaison Officers**

9.1 Each department head and Principal shall designate a member of his or her staff to serve as a Records Liaison Officer for the implementation of the records management program in the department.

9.2 If the Records Management Officer determines that in the best interests of the records management program more than one Records Liaison Officer should be designated for a department, the department head or Principal shall designate the number of Records Liaison Officers specified by the Records Management Officer.

9.3 Persons designated as Records Liaison Officers shall be thoroughly familiar with all records created and maintained by the department.

9.4 In the event of the resignation, retirement, dismissal, or removal by action of the department head or Principal of a person designated as a Records Liaison Officer, the department head or Principal shall promptly designate another person to fill the vacancy.

9.5 A department head or Principal may serve as Records Liaison Officer for his or her department.

**Section 10. Duties and Responsibilities of Records Liaison Officers**

In addition to other duties assigned in this policy, Records Liaison Officers shall:

- (a) Conduct or supervise the conduct of inventories of the records of the department in preparation for the development of records control schedules;

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- (b) In cooperation with the Records Management Officer, coordinate and implement the policies and procedures of the records management program in their department; and
- (c) Disseminate information to department staff concerning the records management program.

**Section 11. Records Control Schedules to be Developed; Approval; Filing with State**

- (a) The Records Management Officer, in cooperation with department heads, Principals, and Records Liaison Officers, shall prepare records control schedules on a department by department basis, listing all records created or received by the department and the retention period for each record. Records control schedules shall also contain such other information regarding the disposition of GreatHearts-Texas records as the records management plan may require.
- (b) Each records control schedule shall be monitored and amended as needed by the Records Management Officer on a regular basis to ensure that it is in compliance with records retention schedules issued by the state, and that it continues to reflect the record keeping procedures and needs of the department and the records management program of GreatHearts-Texas.
- (c) Before its adoption, a records control schedule or amended schedule for a department must be approved by the department head or Principal and the members of the Records Management Committee.
- (d) Before its adoption, a records control schedule must be submitted to and accepted for filing by the director and librarian as provided by state law. If a schedule is not accepted for filing, the schedule shall be amended to make it acceptable for filing. The Records Management Officer shall submit the records control schedules to the director and librarian.

**Section 12. Implementation of Records Control Schedules; Destruction of Records Under Schedule**

- (a) A records control schedule for a department that has been approved and adopted under Section 11 shall be implemented by department heads, principals and Records Liaison Officers according to the policies and procedures of the records management plan.

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(b) A record whose retention period has expired on a record control schedule shall be destroyed unless an open records request is pending on the record, the subject matter of the records is pertinent to a pending lawsuit, or the department head or principal requests in writing to the Records Management Committee that the record be retained for an additional period.

(c) Prior to the destruction of a record under an approved records control schedule, authorization for the destruction must be obtained by the Records Management Officer from the Records Management Committee.

**Section 13. Destruction of Unscheduled Records**

A record that has not yet been listed on an approved records control schedule may be destroyed if its destruction has been approved in the same manner as a record destroyed under an approved schedule and the Records Management Officer has submitted to and received back from the director and librarian an approved destruction authorization request.

**Section 14. Contract Services**

With approval of the Board of Directors, the Records Management Officer and Committee may assign and delegate duties under this Policy to contracted services. The engagement of contract services will not relieve persons assigned and responsible under this policy from such assignment and responsibilities.

**Section 15. Record of Access**

GreatHearts-Texas shall maintain a record of each request for access to and each disclosure of personally identifiable information from the education records of each student, (except access by parents and authorized employees of the participating agency), including the name of the party, the date access was given, and the purpose for which the party is authorized to use the records. The record of access shall be maintained with the education records of the student as long as the records are maintained.

## **Funding**

**State Funding: Special Allotments**

GreatHearts-Texas shall maintain records of students participating in special programs in accordance with the Commissioner 's rules. (19 TAC §129.21)

**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

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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 42.151, Texas Education Code.

Funds allocated under this section, other than an indirect cost allotment established under State Board of Education rule, must be used in the special education program under Subchapter A, Chapter 29. (TEC §42.151(h))

**Compensatory Education Allotment**

GreatHearts-Texas must use funds allocated under TEC §42.152(a) for a purpose authorized in TEC §42.152(c) but is not otherwise subject to Subchapter C (Compensatory Education Programs), Chapter 29, Texas Education Code governing compensatory educational programs. (TEC §42.152(c))

Funds allocated under TEC §42.152 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 TEC §29.081 (Compensatory, Intensive, and Accelerated Instruction) and all other students. Specifically, the funds, other than an indirect cost allotment established under State Board of Education (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 TEC §29.081 or an alternative education program established under TEC §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 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 TEC §29.081, GreatHearts-Texas'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. (TEC §42.152(c))

**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

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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 State Board of Education 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. (TEC §§12.104(b)(2)(G) and 42.153)

**Career and Technology Education Allotment**

For each full-time equivalent student in average daily attendance in an approved career and technology education program in grades nine through 12 or in career and technology education programs for students with disabilities in grades seven through 12, an open-enrollment charter school is entitled to:

- 1) an annual allotment equal to the adjusted basic allotment multiplied by a weight of 1.35; and
- 2) \$50, if the student is enrolled in:
  - a. two or more advanced career and technology education classes for a total of three or more credits; or
  - b. an advanced course as part of a tech-prep program under Subchapter T, Chapter 61.

For purposes of this allotment, "full-time equivalent student" means 30 hours of contact a week between a student and career and technology education program personnel.

Funds allocated under this section, other than an indirect cost allotment established under State Board of Education rule, must be used in providing career and technology education programs in grades nine through 12 or career and technology education programs for students with disabilities in grades seven through 12 under Sections 29.182, 29.183, and 29.184. (TEC §§12.104(d) and 42.154)

**Indirect Cost Allotments**

Beginning with the 2012–13 school year, an open-enrollment charter school may choose to use a greater indirect cost allotment under Education Code 42.151, .153, .154, and .156, to the extent the school receives less funding per weighted student in state and local maintenance and operations revenue than in the 2011–12 school year.

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The Commissioner will limit the percentage increase in allowable indirect cost to no more than the percentage decrease in state and local maintenance and operations revenue from the 2011-2012 school year. (TEC §42.1541; 19 TAC §105.11)

**Federal Compliance**

GreatHearts-Texas shall use 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 USC §1413(a)(2)).

**Reducing Level of Expenditures**

Funds provided to GreatHearts-Texas will not be used to reduce the level of expenditures for the education of students with disabilities made by GreatHearts-Texas below the level of those funds for the preceding year. (2 USC §1423(a)(2)(A)(iii), Appendix E to Part 300)

GreatHearts-Texas 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 GreatHearts-Texas to provide a special education program to a particular student with a disability that is an exceptionally costly program because the child left GreatHearts-Texas, aged out of services, or no longer needs special education
- 4) The termination of costly expenditures for long-term purchases
- 5) The assumption of cost by the high cost fund operated by TEA

(34 CFR §300.204)

**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

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- child with a 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. GreatHearts-Texas may not use more than 15 percent of the amount received under IDEA Part B for any fiscal year, less any adjustments by GreatHearts-Texas 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 GreatHearts-Texas, or for GreatHearts-Texas's working in a consortium of which GreatHearts-Texas is a part, to pay for high-cost special education and related services.
  4. GreatHearts-Texas 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)

**Early Intervening Services**

Funds made available for early intervening services, must supplement not supplant funds available under the ESEA. (34 CFR §300.226(e))

**Use of IDEA Part B funds for Title 1 Programs**

Notwithstanding any other provisions related to commingling of funds, GreatHearts-Texas may use IDEA Part B funds received for any fiscal year to carry out a Title 1, Part A school wide program under the ESEA, except that the amount may not exceed:

- the amount received by the school under IDEA Part B for that fiscal year; divided by
- the number of students with disabilities in the jurisdiction of the school; and multiplied by
- the number of students with disabilities participating in the school wide program.

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(34 CFR §300.206; 20 USC §1413)

**Compliance with Federal Funding Requirements: Title 1**

To the extent required under Title 1 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, GreatHearts-Texas shall ensure equity among school programs in staff/student ratios and in expenditures of money for curriculum materials and instructional supplies. “Staff” shall include teachers, administrators, and auxiliary personnel. In special programs, such as special education and bilingual education, a lower ratio may be maintained and more money may be spent as necessary to fulfill other legal requirements.

The parental involvement program shall be set up in accordance with requirements of Title 1 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as applicable. Parental involvement is encouraged and required in the planning and decision-making process for the school and for the campus.

**Coordination of Funds to Purchase Instructional Materials**

Instructional materials adopted by GreatHearts-Texas must be provided to students at no cost.

If GreatHearts-Texas chooses to coordinate with the National Instructional Materials Access Center (NIMAC) when purchasing print instructional materials, it must acquire the print instructional materials in the same manner and subject to the same conditions as the Texas Education Agency acquires print instructional materials.

If GreatHearts-Texas chooses not to coordinate with the National Instructional Materials Access Center (NIMAC) when purchasing 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.

**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

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disabilities and their families so that those students may receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment. (TEC §29.013(a))

GreatHearts-Texas shall use any funds allocated under TEC §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. (TEC §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. (TEC §29.013(c))

The provision of services under TEC §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 TEC §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. (TEC §29.013(d))

**Shared Services Arrangement**

GreatHearts-Texas may enter into a written contract to jointly operate its special education programs. The contract must be approved by the Commissioner of Education. 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. (TEC §29.007)

**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 GreatHearts-Texas. (42 U.S.C. 12132; 29 U.S.C. 794(a); 34 CFR 104.4(a))

**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

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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 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.

**Least Restrictive Environment**

GreatHearts-Texas 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).

**Discipline**

All disciplinary actions regarding students with disabilities shall be determined in accordance with applicable federal regulations, Education Code Chapter 37, and 19 Administrative Code 89.1053. 19 TAC 89.1050(g).

**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. Homebound: services provided at home or hospital bedside;
3. Hospital class: services provided in a classroom, hospital facility, or residential care and treatment facility not operated by GreatHearts-Texas;
4. Speech therapy: speech therapy services provided, whether in a regular education classroom or other setting;

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5. Resource room/services: services provided in a setting other than the regular classroom for less than 50% of the regular school day;
6. Self-contained (mild, moderate, or severe) regular campus: services provided to a student who is in a self-contained program for 50% or more of the regular school day on a regular school campus;
7. Off home campus: services provided in an interdistrict program, through GreatHearts-Texas personnel in a non-GreatHearts-Texas facility, or at a GreatHearts-Texas campus that provides only special education and related services.
8. Nonpublic day school: services provided through a contractual agreement with a nonpublic school;
9. Vocational adjustment class/program: services provided to a student who is placed on a job with regularly scheduled direct involvement by special education personnel in the implementation of the student's IEP;
10. Residential care and treatment facility (not GreatHearts-Texas resident): services provided to students who reside in care and treatment facilities and whose parents do not reside within the boundaries of GreatHearts-Texas;
11. State supported living center: services provided to a student who resides at a state supported living center when the services are provided at the state supported living center location; or
12. Other program options, including contracts with other districts and programs approved by TEA.

19 TAC 89.63(c), (f).

**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.

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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.