Summary of 504 Best Practices discussed with 504 representatives from each school in January 2018 (August Updates)
Meeting Minutes (written by someone in attendance who understands these suggestions):

- The meeting minutes do not belong in the planning document itself, but are created from the "meetings" link below "details" when the 504 plan is open. At this point, click on "options" at the top left and "add" to create meeting minutes. It is important to remember that the minutes should tell a story that shows that all who are involved with the student's education were offered opportunities to participate in the process.
  - Draft: A draft copy (or a copy of the active 504 plan) was provided to parents and teachers, so that everyone could provide feedback and suggestions prior the meeting, including those not present in today's meeting.
  - Those in attendance: Please list those in attendance, either using the drop downs, or in narrative format with name and position (math teacher, parent, student, etc.).
  - Parents:
    - Please invite the parents at least two weeks prior to the meeting, sending the notice of the meeting, Parent Rights, and a draft copy of the 504 accommodations plan (preferably after discussing current concerns with the parents and teachers). Include this information in your minutes.
    - If parents do not arrive for the first attempt to meet, create a meeting, include the information above and that another attempt will be made to include the parent (provide another two-weeks' notice, Parent Rights and draft which may be updated).
    - If parents do not arrive at the second attempt for a student who has an active 504 plan, the team can have the meeting without them, but document this in the minutes. Parents were given two opportunities to attend the meeting. Due to the needs of the student and time constraints, the team needs to move forward with developing a new 504 accommodation plan. Copies of the meeting paperwork will be sent to the parents. If the parents request an additional meeting, the team will meet again with the parents, but this does not undo the meeting that occurred.
    - Make sure to indicate whether the parent participated in the meeting.
    - If parent asks for A but the team agrees to B, the meeting minutes might say something like, "Parents requested A, which initiated discussion about the student's specific needs that led to the request. Options were considered and the team including parents agreed to B."
  - He said, She said: Please use your professional judgement to summarize the key concepts discussed, rather than word for word statements provided by team members. Something like, "Parents stated that they have seen improvement in X, while continuing to be concerned about Y." "Most teachers are seeing a pattern of difficulty remaining on task, completing assignments and tests in a timely manner, being easily distracted, missing steps or details in multi-step questions or tasks." However, he is easily redirected and the frequency of on task behavior has improved. During music, the student is on task, is making progress that indicates practice is occurring at home, but the student is not completing the practice logs."
  - Reading or projecting minutes:
    - If you have drafted minutes, think of this as an agenda, rather than minutes. Make sure you are updating your agenda or drafted minutes if the meeting takes you in a different direction than anticipated.
    - The suggestion is that you read the minutes at different times in the meeting to a point, and from that point, to the next, etc., to make sure all are in agreement, especially since you are summarizing and not writing word for word. My experience has been that team members appreciated the summarization and not having to hear the minutes all at one time.
  - **This is a change: Diagnoses or other private information disclosing the specific disability are not be included in the plan itself, but can be included in the meeting minutes** The meeting minutes are stored in the health file, while the accommodation plan in the cumulative folder. For some meetings, we may have two sets of minutes. One for the eligibility portion and another for the development of the accommodation plan. We may also have a set of meeting minutes during a less than annual review where no changes are made to the plan.

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The 504 Accommodation Plan in Aspen. Some key points that were discussed include:

- How to "add" or "copy" a plan in Aspen rather than changing the current active plan's dates, etc. Once the "draft" is agreed to and signed, it should be changed to "active." The plan that was "active" will automatically change to "previous."
- Instructions for accessing or adding Meetings (minutes) and best practices for what to include and not to include.
- The "Determination" meeting minutes are separate from the "Initial" or "Plan Review" minutes~~. "Determination" meeting minutes will go in the Health File, but the other meeting minutes are attached to the accommodation plan in the cumulative record~~. **Change**: All meeting minutes will be stored in the student's health record.
- The different Status options for the 504 plan were explained: Draft (default), active (current), Previous (old), Rejected (parent/adult student reject the 504 or not eligible), Discarded (team agrees 504 plan is no longer needed).
- Instructions for best way to "discard" a plan when an IEP team includes in their meeting minutes that the IEP addresses all the concerns that were addressed in the 504 plan and the student no longer needs this 504 plan.
- Instructions for how to confirm in the meeting minutes that parents/adult student understand the ramifications for rejecting the 504 accommodation plan.
- Instructions for how to show a student is eligible for 504 protections, but due to mitigating circumstances, does not need accommodations at this time (end date 1 year, helps trigger review and giving blank accommodation puts on teacher radar to watch for changes, and admin to know when disciplining that 504 protections are in place).
- Dates on the front: Effective Date (draft-when first drafted, active and rejected - the date this becomes effective)
- End Date: one year (minus 1 day) from the effective date
- Review Date: 30 days before the end date for an active status
- Parent signed date: date signed- no changes can be made to active plan after this date
- Major Life Activity: discussed different drop down options and reasons why "Learning" is usually accompanied by additional areas.
- Describe basis for determining the disabilities (only 200 characters): use language understood by all to explain why accommodations are needed (do not include a diagnosis).
- Evaluations used to determine eligibility: include the date and type from drop down options. The description should not include a diagnosis, but a description of the information provided that helps develop the accommodation plan (needs frequent redirection, inattentive, easily distracted, needs blood sugar tested prior to exercise, etc.). Teacher reports, vision/hearing screenings and other can also be included as evaluations used.
- Student history and evaluative data considered at meeting (200 max characters): use language understood by all to describe present needs or information not previously mentioned: "Recent episodes of repertory difficulty during PE, completing only about 20% of assigned classwork and frequently appears to be off task despite frequent redirection," etc.
- Accommodations **(This will be easier when the new template is completed- There will be drop down choices for system-wide assessments and free write for other accommodations):**
    - Currently in Aspen, you must choose the accommodation category, then content area, then description. However, the descriptions are the same for all content areas, so this has caused a great deal of confusion. Please use the drop down options whenever possible, rather than trying to include at the bottom under non-standard or in the summary. If the student has a health plan or behavior plan a statement can be made that these plans exist and if needed, could be added in the summary section. If there is room to include these accommodations using the drop down, please do. However, if there is a need to prioritize, make sure all testing accommodations are included first.
- Summary: **This section will be removed from all new plans and only available as "read only" so that previous 504 plans still show this section**. Best practice would be to explain here in real language the information a teacher needs to know that did not fit in the 200 character windows above. This is where we can use plain English to describe why the accommodations are needed. This is not where the minutes for the meeting would go.