



Special Education Policies and Procedures

Effective 2026-2027

Purpose and Legal Framework

Alternatives in Action High School (AIAHS) is committed to providing a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to all eligible students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment. This policy governs AIAHS's identification, referral, evaluation, eligibility determination, Individualized Education Program (IEP) process, service delivery, parent/guardian participation, records, notices, discipline, and dispute resolution procedures for students with disabilities.

AIAHS adheres to all applicable federal and state law affecting students with disabilities, including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA) and its implementing regulations (34 CFR Part 300), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504), the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and the California Education Code. All students have equal access to AIAHS regardless of disability, and AIAHS does not discriminate against any student on the basis of disability.

SELPA Membership and Special Education Service Delivery

AIAHS is an independent local educational agency (LEA) member of the El Dorado County Charter SELPA (Special Education Local Plan Area) pursuant to Education Code Section 47641(a). As a SELPA member, AIAHS receives state and federal special education revenues directly, in accordance with the SELPA's allocation plan, and complies with all applicable SELPA policies, procedures, and forms.

AIAHS has contracted with the non-profit agency Seneca and SPG to support with students individually and in small groups, coordinates IEP meetings, and provides compliance oversight, training, and staff development on instructional accommodations and modifications. AIAHS reviews this program annually to confirm that services meet student and school needs and all applicable compliance requirements.

AIAHS may also seek related services and resources (e.g., speech, occupational therapy, adapted P.E., nursing, and transportation) from the SELPA, subject to SELPA approval and availability, or by hiring credentialed or licensed providers through private agencies or independent contractors. AIAHS is solely responsible for its compliance with Section 504 and the ADA.

Multi-Tiered System of Support Prior to Referral

AIAHS provides a tiered system of academic, behavioral, and social-emotional support so that students receive appropriate general education interventions before a referral for special education is considered.

Tier 1 — General Education and School Culture Supports

- Math and English pre-assessment to support correct course placement and academic support services
- Data-driven instruction and progress monitoring



- Differentiated instruction within the general education program, including groupings and assignment modification
- Staff training in youth development, group development, and restorative justice
- Dedicated Student Services, Restorative Justice, and Family Engagement staffing
- Small class sizes (average of 1:25)
- Individual orientation meetings with students and parents to establish school culture expectations and relationships
- Structured community-building activities, including an overnight retreat, monthly community meetings, and new-student breakfasts
- Leadership Teams supporting individual goal-setting, academic progress review, and the Presentation of Learning process
- Extended Day Program (EDP) for youth development and academic support, including homework assistance
- Clear attendance and participation structures

Tier 2 — Targeted Interventions

- Coordination of Service Team (COST) manages the referral process for additional support based on academics, attendance, and behavior
- Afterschool tutoring and academic intervention through EDP
- Small-group literacy intervention (Barton curriculum)
- English Language support through the Edge program
- Parent conferences and home visits

Tier 3 — Intensive, Case-Managed Support

- Increased parent/guardian meetings and communication
- On-site services, including anger management groups, counseling, and gender-based groups
- Referrals to off-site services, including substance abuse treatment and housing support

Students who continue to struggle after these tiered interventions are referred for a comprehensive evaluation and considered for eligibility for special education services under IDEA.

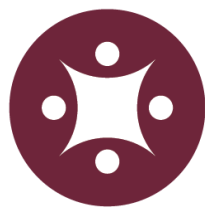
Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act

Any student who has an objectively identified physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity, including but not limited to learning, has a record of such an impairment, or is regarded as having such an impairment, is eligible for protection and accommodation under Section 504.

504 Coordinator

The AIAHS Director or designee serves as the 504 Coordinator.

504 Team, Evaluation, and Eligibility



The 504 Coordinator assembles a 504 team consisting of the parent(s)/guardian(s), the student (as appropriate), and other persons knowledgeable about the student, the meaning of the evaluation data, placement options, and the legal requirements for least restrictive environment. The 504 team reviews the student's existing academic, social, and behavioral records and determines whether a 504 evaluation is appropriate. Evaluations previously conducted under IDEA — including evaluations that found a student ineligible for special education — may be used to help determine 504 eligibility.

The 504 team's evaluation considers the nature of the student's disability, its impact on the student's education, and any behaviors that interfere with regular participation in the educational program or activities. The team may also consider:

- Tests and other evaluation materials validated for the specific purpose for which they are used and administered by trained personnel
- Tests and materials tailored to assess specific areas of educational need, not merely those producing a single general intelligence quotient
- Tests selected and administered so that results for a student with impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills accurately reflect aptitude or achievement rather than the impairment itself

The final eligibility determination is made by the 504 team in writing and noticed in writing to the parent(s)/guardian(s) in their primary language, along with applicable procedural safeguards. If the 504 team's evaluation indicates possible eligibility for special education under IDEA, the team makes a referral for a special education assessment.

504 Plan Development, Distribution, and Review

If a student is found eligible under Section 504, the 504 team determines what accommodations, modifications, or services are necessary for the student to receive FAPE, drawing on all relevant evaluation information, including assessments conducted by AIAHS professional staff. The 504 Plan describes the student's Section 504 disability and any necessary program accommodations, modifications, or services.

All 504 team participants — including parents, guardians, teachers, substitutes, and tutors involved in the student's education — must have access to the student's 504 Plan. The 504 Coordinator ensures that 504 Plans are included with lesson plans for short-term substitutes and reviewed directly with long-term substitutes. A copy of each 504 Plan is maintained in the student's file and reviewed at least annually to determine continued appropriateness, needed modifications, and continued eligibility.

AIAHS notifies the district in writing of any planned changes to special education services at AIAHS.

Identification and Referral (Child Find)

AIAHS is responsible for identifying, referring, and cooperatively locating students who have, or may have, exceptional needs that qualify them for special education services. AIAHS implements SELPA child-find policies and procedures to ensure timely identification and referral. A student is referred for special education only after the resources of the general education program (Tiers 1–3, above) have been considered and, where appropriate, utilized.

AIAHS follows SELPA child-find procedures to identify students who may require assessment to determine special education eligibility in cases where general education interventions do not provide FAPE to the student in question.



Evaluation (Assessment)

The term "assessment" has the same meaning as "evaluation" under IDEA (20 U.S.C. § 1414). AIAHS determines what assessments are necessary and arranges for those assessments for referred or eligible students in accordance with applicable law, and obtains parent/guardian consent before conducting an evaluation.

Eligibility Determination

Decisions regarding eligibility, goals and objectives, program, services, placement, and exit from special education are made by the IEP team through the IEP process, in accordance with the policies, procedures, and requirements of the El Dorado County Charter SELPA and state and federal law.

IEP Meetings

AIAHS arranges and provides notice of required IEP meetings. IEP team membership complies with state and federal law, including the requirement that the parent(s)/guardian(s) be included as a required member of the IEP team (34 CFR § 300.321). AIAHS ensures the following individuals attend IEP meetings:

- The parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student
- An AIAHS administrator or designated representative with the administrative authority required by IDEA
- The student's special education teacher or provider
- The student's general education teacher, if the student is or may be participating in the general education classroom
- The student, where appropriate
- Other AIAHS representatives knowledgeable about the general education program and/or the student

AIAHS arranges for the attendance or participation of other necessary staff as required, which may include an appropriate administrator, a speech therapist, psychologist, resource specialist, and/or behavior specialist. AIAHS documents each IEP meeting and provides notice of parental rights.

IEP Development and Implementation

Programs, services, and placements are provided to all eligible AIAHS students in accordance with the policies, procedures, and requirements of the El Dorado County Charter SELPA and state and federal law. AIAHS is responsible for all school-site implementation of each student's IEP, including providing the student's special education teacher and coaches with the IEP and required accommodations/modifications, and providing parents with reports on the student's progress toward IEP goals at least as frequently as report cards are provided to non-special-education students. AIAHS is responsible for home-school coordination, information exchange, curriculum, classroom materials, classroom modifications, and assistive technology.

AIAHS's special education program educates students alongside non-disabled peers to the maximum extent appropriate, consistent with the least restrictive environment. AIAHS has devised a hybrid program of push-in and



pull-out services; special education students are integrated into regular classes with small class sizes and modifications or accommodations from coaches as stipulated in the student's IEP or as needed to provide FAPE.

Interim and Initial Placement of Transferring Students

AIAHS complies with Education Code Section 56325 for students transferring into AIAHS during the academic year:

1. For a student transferring from another California school district within the same academic year with a current IEP, AIAHS provides FAPE, including services comparable to those in the prior IEP, in consultation with the parent, for up to thirty (30) days, by which time AIAHS adopts the prior IEP or develops, adopts, and implements a new IEP consistent with federal and state law.
2. For a student with an IEP transferring from a district program within the same SELPA during the same academic year, AIAHS continues, without delay, to provide comparable services described in the existing IEP, unless the parent and AIAHS agree to develop a new IEP.
3. For a student transferring with an IEP from outside California during the same academic year, AIAHS provides FAPE, including comparable services, in consultation with the parent, until AIAHS conducts any assessment it determines necessary and develops a new IEP, if appropriate.

Non-Public Placements and Agencies

AIAHS is solely responsible for selecting, contracting with, and overseeing any non-public schools or non-public agencies used to serve special education students.

Non-Discrimination

All children have access to AIAHS. No student is denied admission or counseled out of AIAHS due to the nature, extent, or severity of a disability, or due to a student's request for, or need for, special education services.

Parent/Guardian Participation

Parents and guardians are integral participants throughout the special education process at AIAHS, including as required members of the 504 team and the IEP team, recipients of written notice of evaluation and eligibility determinations in their primary language, and partners in ongoing communication regarding their student's progress. AIAHS provides parents with procedural safeguards notices and ensures parents are informed of their right to participate in all meetings regarding identification, evaluation, and placement of their child.

Records

AIAHS maintains the confidentiality of special education pupil records in accordance with IDEA, FERPA, and applicable SELPA policy, and utilizes SELPA forms and procedures for responding to record requests. Special education records, including 504 Plans, evaluations, and IEPs, are maintained in the student's file. Parents and



guardians may inspect and review their child's education records and request amendment of records they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. AIAHS provides parents with notice before the destruction of special education records that are no longer needed to provide educational services, consistent with SELPA records-retention policy.

Notices

AIAHS provides parents/guardians with written notice, in their native language or other mode of communication, whenever AIAHS proposes or refuses to initiate or change the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of a student, or the provision of FAPE (Prior Written Notice, 34 CFR §§ 300.503–300.504). AIAHS also provides parents with a copy of the procedural safeguards notice at least once per school year, and upon initial referral or parent request for evaluation, filing of a complaint, or a disciplinary removal that constitutes a change in placement.

Discipline Procedures for Students with Disabilities

AIAHS follows special procedures for the consideration of suspension and expulsion of students with disabilities, consistent with IDEA (20 U.S.C. § 1415(k); 34 CFR §§ 300.530–300.536).

Notification of District

AIAHS immediately notifies the district and coordinates these procedures with the district for the discipline of any student with a disability, or any student whom AIAHS or the district would be deemed to have knowledge had a disability.

Services During Suspension

A student suspended for more than ten (10) school days in a school year continues to receive services enabling continued participation in the general education curriculum, in another setting if necessary, and progress toward IEP/504 Plan goals, along with, as appropriate, a functional behavioral assessment and behavioral intervention services designed to prevent recurrence of the behavior. These services may be provided in an interim alternative educational setting.

Procedural Safeguards / Manifestation Determination

Within ten (10) school days of a recommendation for expulsion or any decision to change the placement of a student with a disability due to a code-of-conduct violation, AIAHS, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP/504 team review all relevant information — including the IEP/504 Plan, teacher observations, and parent-provided information — to determine whether the conduct was caused by or directly related to the student's disability, or was the direct result of AIAHS's failure to implement the IEP/504 Plan.

If the conduct is determined to be a manifestation of the student's disability, the IEP/504 team conducts a functional behavioral assessment and implements (or reviews and modifies) a behavioral intervention plan, and returns the student to the prior placement unless the parent and AIAHS agree otherwise. If the conduct is determined not to be a manifestation of the student's disability, AIAHS may apply the same disciplinary procedures and duration applicable to students without disabilities.



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Due Process Appeals

A parent who disagrees with a placement decision or manifestation determination, or AIAHS if it believes the student's current placement is substantially likely to result in injury, may request an expedited administrative hearing through the Special Education Unit of the Office of Administrative Hearings, or use the dispute provisions of the 504 Policy and Procedures. Pending the hearing decision, the student remains in the interim alternative educational setting until the earlier of the hearing officer's decision or the expiration of the forty-five (45) day interim placement period, unless the parent and AIAHS agree otherwise.

Special Circumstances

AIAHS personnel may remove a student to an interim alternative educational setting for up to forty-five (45) days without regard to manifestation, where the student: (a) carries or possesses a weapon (as defined in 18 U.S.C. § 930) at school, on school premises, or at a school function; (b) knowingly possesses, uses, sells, or solicits the sale of a controlled substance at school, on school premises, or at a school function; or (c) has inflicted serious bodily injury (as defined in 20 U.S.C. § 1415(k)(7)(D)) upon a person at school, on school premises, or at a school function. The student's interim alternative educational setting is determined by the student's IEP/504 team.

Procedures for Students Not Yet Identified as Eligible

A student not yet identified as an individual with a disability under IDEA may assert the procedural safeguards above only if AIAHS had knowledge that the student was disabled before the behavior occurred. AIAHS is deemed to have such knowledge if: (a) the parent/guardian expressed concern in writing (or orally, if unable to write) to AIAHS supervisory, administrative, or teaching personnel that the student needs special education or related services; (b) the parent requested an evaluation of the student; or (c) a teacher or other AIAHS personnel expressed specific concerns about a pattern of behavior directly to the director of special education or other AIAHS supervisory personnel.

If AIAHS knew or should have known of the disability under any of these circumstances, the student may assert the protections available to IDEA-eligible students, including the right to stay-put. If AIAHS had no basis for knowledge, it proceeds with the proposed discipline, though it conducts an expedited evaluation if requested by the parent while the student remains in the placement determined by AIAHS pending results. AIAHS is not deemed to have knowledge of a disability where the parent has not permitted an evaluation, has refused services, or where the student has been evaluated and found not eligible.

Dispute Resolution

Parent/Guardian Concerns and Complaints

AIAHS's designated representative receives, investigates as necessary, and responds to parent/guardian concerns or complaints regarding special education and related services and rights.

Mediation and Due Process Hearings

AIAHS may initiate, and will defend, a due process hearing or mediation request with respect to a student enrolled at AIAHS where legally necessary or advisable.

State Complaint Procedure



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In addition to mediation and due process, a parent/guardian may file a written complaint with the California Department of Education (CDE) under the Uniform Complaint Procedures alleging a violation of federal or state special education law. AIAHS cooperates with any CDE investigation and provides timely notice of receipt of such a complaint.

SELPA Representation

AIAHS represents itself at all El Dorado County Charter SELPA meetings.

Funding

As an independent LEA member of the El Dorado County Charter SELPA, AIAHS receives state and federal special education revenues directly, in accordance with the SELPA's allocation plan, and is subject to the SELPA's funding and allocation requirements.