

About Section 504 and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a federal civil rights statute that prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities. Section 504 applies to recipients of federal funds, including public schools. The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) extends the protection of Section 504 without regard to federal funding. The ADA also applies to public schools.

The Section 504 regulations prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities and requires school districts to provide a free appropriate public education to students with disabilities. Through the Section 504 process, a 504 team decides what supports and accommodations a student with disabilities needs to “level the playing field” so the student can access educational opportunities.

Some students with disabilities qualify for special education services and supports under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA). Section 504 is NOT the same as Special Education.

Section 504 Process

1. Student is referred to the Section 504 Coordinator by parent or school staff. Parents are notified of referral.
2. Evaluation information is gathered.
3. 504 Conference is scheduled to determine eligibility.
4. Parents are notified in writing of the 504 Conference.
5. Parent and school staff concerns are documented during the 504 meeting.
6. 504 eligibility is determined by the summarization of evaluation/ assessment data provided by school and parents:
 - a. Does the committee find that the student has a physical or mental impairment?
 - b. If the student has impairment; does the impairment substantially limit a major life activity?
 - c. Does the committee have sufficient data to determine that the student has a disability under 504?
7. A 504 Accommodation Plan is developed for eligible students.
8. If a student is found to be non-eligible, a referral to the school Student Assistance Team may be appropriate.

Westbrook Public School Section 504 Coordinator: Madeline Illinger, Director of Special Education

Daisy Ingraham Contact: School Psychologist

Westbrook Middle School Contact: Guidance Counselor

Westbrook High School Contact: School Psychologist