

Protocol for Administration of Services to Students Confined to Hospitals

Purpose

The purpose of this Protocol is to outline the responsibilities and procedures for identifying students within the District who are confined to a hospital setting, and offering appropriate educational services consistent with state and federal law and regulations and Board Policies and strategic goals, including [Policy No. 117](#). This protocol aims to guide District oversight of the education of students in hospitals in order to increase successful educational re-engagement upon discharge.

Definitions

Hospital Education Liaison: A designated representative employed by the hospital to which a student is confined, who will serve as the main point of contact with the Office of Diverse Learners for communication regarding the student's education.

Educational Decision Maker (EDM): The person with legal authority to make educational decisions for the student pursuant to Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) regulations or judicial decree. [5][6]

Office of Diverse Learners (ODL): The District's department charged with overseeing the provision of special education and/or related services to meet the unique needs of diverse learners.

Confined: Admitted to and remaining as a registered resident patient upon the recommendation of a physician for a minimum of five (5) days.

Local Education Agency (LEA): A public board of education or other public authority legally constituted within the State for either administrative control or direction of, or to perform a service function for, public elementary schools or secondary schools in a city, county, township, school district, or other political subdivision of a State. [4]

Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE): Special education and related services that are provided at public expense, under public supervision and direction, and without charge; meet the standards of the Pennsylvania Department of Education, including an appropriate preschool,



conformity with an IEP that is required under section 1414(d) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and reasonably calculated to enable the student to make meaningful progress appropriate in light of the child's circumstances.[1][2][3]

Protocols

ODL shall maintain protocols regarding the process and administration of education to students confined to hospital settings. [7] The protocols, at a minimum, shall include provisions regarding: (1) the identification of students confined to hospital settings located in Philadelphia; and (2) the provision of educational services to those students identified.

A. Identification of students confined to hospital settings located in Philadelphia

- a. ODL will request each hospital in Philadelphia designate an internal Hospital Education Liaison.
 - i. The Hospital Education Liaison will be advised to notify the District at odl-medical@philasd.org within three (3) business days of a school-aged child's confinement to the hospital for treatment. Notice should include,, identification of the child's EDM, a HIPAA release, and a FERPA release.
- b. Upon notification of a student's confinement to a hospital setting, ODL will share available educational records for the student with the Hospital Education Liaison within ten (10) school days.
- c. Within five (5) school days of receiving notification of an enrolled resident student's confinement to a hospital setting, ODL will notify the Special Education Compliance Monitor ("SPECM") and the school counselor of the student's school of enrollment.
 - i. SPECMs and counselors should also send notification to odl-medical@philasd.org as soon as they become aware that a student has been confined to a hospital setting.
- d. The District will record non-resident and charter school students' admittance to hospital placements located within the District's boundaries. [8]
 - i. ODL will support the Hospital Education Liaison as needed in requesting records for charter school students and non-resident students' school districts of residence.



- e. Cross departmental communication between ODL, Office of Child Accounting, Office of Prevention and Intervention, Office of Student Health Services, and Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities will occur to ensure that all school-aged students in hospital placements have been appropriately identified

B. Provision of educational services for students confined to hospital settings

- a. The District will offer students confined to a hospital with educational services pursuant to and consistent with state and federal law and regulations and District policies and procedures.
- b. An LEA representative will be maintained or assigned for students with disabilities who have been found eligible for special education services. The LEA representative will be responsible for overseeing special education compliance and discharge transition planning.
 - i. [Link to Policy 113](#) - Special Education
- c. A Notice of Recommended Educational Placement (“NOREP”) will be issued within five (5) days of a student’s admission confirming the student’s non-educational hospital placement and interim services until an Individualized Education Program (“IEP”) meeting occurs.
 - i. Until the IEP team convenes, the student should receive educational services comparable to their existing IEP to the greatest extent possible and commensurate with their ability to access learning per medical recommendations.
- d. An Individualized Education Program (“IEP”) meeting will be scheduled within 30-days of an eligible special education student’s hospital admission. Relevant IEP team members, including the student’s EDM, will be invited to attend.
 - i. At the IEP meeting, the IEP team will review the IEP, determine FAPE during the student’s hospitalization, and revise the IEP as necessary.
- e. Students confined to hospital settings will be screened and evaluated for eligibility for special education services pursuant to state and federal law and regulations and District policies and procedures.
 - i. [Link to Policy 113.3](#) - Screening and Evaluations for Students with Disabilities



- ii. Ineligible students will be screened within ninety (90) calendar days of hospital admission for referral for a special education evaluation.
 - 1. If the student is thought-to-be eligible, a Permission to Evaluate (PTE) form will be issued.
 - 2. If the student is not thought-to-be eligible, or if an evaluation would not be appropriate due to the student's acute medical needs, a Refusal to Evaluate NOREP will be issued.
 - f. ODL will request the Hospital Education Liaison share quarterly progress monitoring, grades and educational documentation with the student's EDM and the District at odl-medical@philasd.org.
 - g. ODL will support the Hospital Education Liaison as needed in inviting charter schools and resident school districts to attend education and transition planning meetings.
 - h. ODL will advise the Hospital Education Liaison that EDMs can communicate with the District through the student's LEA or at odl-medical@philasd.org.
- C. Discharge and transition planning for students confined to hospital settings
 - a. ODL will request notification from the Hospital Education Liaison of a student's anticipated date of discharge in order to coordinate a discharge planning meeting to include the student's EDM, hospital case manager, and school team members, as well as other applicable agency representatives (e.g. Department of Human Services (DHS), Community Umbrella Agency (CUA)).
 - b. Students who are hospitalized for more than 30-days may be referred to the Student Transition Center (STC), if needed.
 - c. Unenrolled resident students who are in need of a school assignment will be referred to the STC.
 - d. The LEA representative will maintain contact with the student's school of enrollment to coordinate discharge and transition planning, including evaluating the need for a change of educational placement.

