

SECTION 504 GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

The West Carroll Parish School Board has adopted an internal grievance procedure providing for prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging any action prohibited by THE OFFICE OF CIVIL RIGHTS regulations implementing Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. 794). Section 504 states, in part, that "no otherwise qualified handicapped individual ... shall, solely by reason of his handicap, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits *of*, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance ..."

Complaints shall be addressed to: Susan Sims 504 Coordinator, 410 Willis Street, Oak Grove, LA 71263, (318)428-4215, who has been designated to coordinate Section 504 compliance efforts.

1. A complaint shall be filed in writing, containing the name, address and telephone number of the person filing it as well as that person's relationship with the School Board (i.e., employee, parent, student, etc.), and briefly describe the alleged violation of the regulations. If the person filing is different from the complainant, the name of the individual who is the subject of the alleged Section 504 violation shall be given, this person's address and telephone number, and the identification of the school the individual is associated with shall be part of the descriptive narrative.
2. A complaint must be filed within thirty (30) calendar days after the complaint, or the individual formally filing said complaint, becomes aware of the alleged violation, otherwise the complainant waives his/her right of action. The only exception would be if mitigating circumstances exist such as, lack of knowledge, fraud, or duress, in which case an equitable amount of time shall be allowed on a case by case basis.
3. An investigation, as may be appropriate, will follow a filing of a complaint. The investigation will be conducted by the Superintendent of Schools or his designee. These rules contemplate informal but thorough investigations, affording all interested persons and their representatives, if any, an opportunity to submit written evidence relevant to a complaint. All written evidence, whenever received, shall be stamped as of the date received and shall be made available to all parties to the complaint.

Under the OFFICE OF CIVIL RIGHTS regulations, the WEST CARROLL PARISH SCHOOL BOARD need not process complaints from applicants for employment or from applicants for admission to post-secondary educational institutions.

4. A written determination as to the validity of the complaint and a description of the resolution, if any, will be issued by the Superintendent and a copy forwarded to the complainant no later than fifteen (15) working days after its filing.

5. The Section 504 Coordinator will maintain the files and records of the WEST CARROLL PARISH SCHOOL BOARD relating to the complaints filed.
6. The complainant can request a reconsideration of the case in instances where he or she is not satisfied with the resolution. The request for reconsideration shall be made within fifteen (15) working to the Superintendent. The person handling the appeal shall render a written decision within fifteen (15) working days of the receipt of the complaint. The STANDARD OF REVIEW for the appeal shall be that of arbitrary and capricious, that is, the review officer shall not take new evidence, but shall judge the initial hearing officer's decision only as to whether or not he/she had a valid objective reason for his/her decision and that his/her decision was fairly arrived at considering all equal protection ramifications.
7. The right of a person to a prompt and equitable resolution of the complaint filed hereunder will not be impaired by the person's pursuit of other remedies such as the filing of a Section 504 complaint with the responsible federal department or agency. Using this grievance procedure is not a prerequisite to the pursuit of other remedies.
8. These rules will be construed to protect the substantive rights of interested persons, meet appropriate due process standards, and assure that WEST CARROLL PARISH SCHOOL BOARD complies with Section 504 and its implementing regulations.

Confidentiality:	The school system is responsible for protecting the confidentiality of the students educational records and any and all documents generated during the evaluation and discernment process.
	The school system will apply all of the conditions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act <FERPA>.