



CATEGORY: **Instruction, Guidance**

EFFECTIVE: **10-06-66**

SUBJECT: **School-Initiated Placement/School-Initiated Placement Council**

REVISED: **3-15-07**

A. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

- 1. To outline administrative procedures for processing school-initiated placement of students at a school in an attendance area other than that in which a student’s residence is located. The school-initiated placement is designed to provide the best educational program for students who present behavioral, personal and/or social adjustment problems. Consideration is also given to the effective running of the educational programs of the school site and the school district.
- 2. **Related Procedures:**
 - Choice enrollment 6127
 - Release of directory-type student information 6525

B. LEGAL AND POLICY BASIS

- 1. **Reference:** Board policy: A-4520, F-2510, F-6000, H-4000, H-7800; Education Code Sections 48432.5, 49072.
- 2. **Parent or Guardian Statement or Response on Actions Involving Student Discipline.** Parents or guardians of a student who has been disciplined may include a written statement of their views on the matter in the student’s official records (Education Code Section 49072).

C. GENERAL

- 1. **Originating Office.** Suggestions or questions concerning this procedure should be directed to the Placement and Appeal, Student Services Department, Office of Associate Superintendent.
- 2. **Definitions**
 - a. **School-Initiated Placement (SIP) Council:** A panel of site administrators and head counselors (or in some cases, district counselors) whose responsibility is to determine an appropriate school placement for a student based on the needs of the student, school, and district.
 - b. **Parent** (for purposes of this procedure): (1) either natural parent, without regard to custodial rights; (2) an adoptive parent or legal guardian; (3) a responsible adult with whom the student lives if the natural parent or legal guardian does not reside within San Diego Unified School District.

3. **Reasons for Transfer.** A student may be transferred from the school to another school through SIP Council under the following circumstances:
 - a. **A transfer is recommended by the principal** for disciplinary reasons when the problems have risen to a serious level and various appropriate interventions, including proactive interventions as well as consequences, have been utilized when possible.
 - b. **A parent requests a transfer** based on personal and/or social adjustment when various appropriate interventions by the school are not possible or have not been successful.
 - c. **The transfer does not replace** any other regular school district process (examples: SARB, Zero Tolerance, Special Education, and Enrollment Options).
4. **Eligibility for Student Privileges.** Eligibility for interscholastic athletics is covered in Procedure 4172 and eligibility for cocurricular and extracurricular activities in Procedure 4350.

D. IMPLEMENTATION

1. **School-Initiated Placement Council Process**
 - a. **Principal or designee** of initiating school determines that transfer is appropriate after examining circumstances in case. Sending school requests a hearing before SIP Council. If scheduled, sending school representative contacts proposed receiving schools (options) and parent to inform them of the hearing and of the pertinent issues.
 - b. The Placement and Appeal Program Manager or administrative designee:
 - (1) Determines eligibility of cases to be presented before SIP Council.
 - (2) Informs sending school of scheduled date and time of hearing.
 - (3) Facilitates SIP Council hearing.
 - (4) Schedules appeal, notifies parent and schools involved and provides synopsis of SIP Council hearing to Appeal Board.

c. Administrator or designee of initiating school

- (1) Consults with other school personnel in order to be fully informed about the student and serves as advocate for student at hearing.
- (2) For parent requests, advises parent regarding appropriateness of case for SIP Council. Makes request on behalf of parent when appropriate, or when parent insists.
- (3) Notifies parent of council procedures and rights of parents and students; outlines proposed transfer.
- (4) Sends SIP Council Request form (E.1., Attachment 1) to Placement and Appeal to request case review and scheduling for SIP Council.
- (5) Notifies all parties with minimum three (3) school days notice of the date and time of the hearing. Provides pertinent information regarding the student to receiving schools being considered prior to the hearing.
- (6) Prepares case for presentation to SIP Council. (See SIP Council presentation format [E.2., Attachment 2] and Student Discipline Guidelines [E.4.], available from Placement and Appeal.)
- (7) Presents case before SIP Council panel providing copies of documents for all panel members and parent. Acts on behalf of parent and student as well as the school in the hearing.
- (8) After hearing, secures signature of SIP Council chair and indication of council action on "School-Initiated Placement/Alternative Education Application" form (E.3.) and gives white original copy to SIP Council chair. Distributes copies to parent and school of placement. Provides receiving school with cumulative file and special education container.
- (9) Assists parent and receiving school on all aspects of follow-through of council recommendations.
- (10) If necessary, informs appropriate community agencies of council meeting and final outcome of case.

2. **Special Education.** A student with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) may be considered for SIP Council if the issue is safety for the student and not behavior or academics. Otherwise a transfer will be done by an IEP team.
 - a. **A recommendation for a SIP Council transfer** must be made by an IEP team, and must be written in the IEP team meeting notes. This should be sent in addition to the SIP Council Request form to Placement and Appeal.
 - b. **When a hearing is scheduled** for a student in a special day class (SDC) the following must happen:
 - (1) Certificated staff member arranging the SIP Council must work in coordination with the diagnostic resource teacher (DRT) of the sending school. Both the presenter and the DRT of the sending school must be in attendance in order to hold the hearing.
 - (2) DRT of the sending school:
 - (a) Arranges, through the Special Education Executive Director, for a reserved seat in an SDC in each of the two school options where seats are available.
 - (b) Attends the SIP Council hearing.
 - (c) Arranges transportation for a new school placement.
 - (d) Notifies the Special Education Executive Director regarding the placement status of the student after the hearing.
3. **Alternative School Placement**
 - a. **Voluntary.** There is no SIP Council hearing. This informal placement is made by using the “School-Initiated Placement/Alternative Education Application” form (E.3.).
 - (1) The student has the right to return to the sending school in the fall of the following year.
 - (2) With the consent of the Placement and Appeal Program Manager or designee, the student may return at any time.

- b. **Involuntary.** This formal placement is made through the School-Initiated Placement Council.
- (1) No transfer shall extend beyond the end of the semester following the semester in which the act(s) leading to the involuntary transfer occurred.
 - (2) A decision to transfer the student involuntarily shall be based on a finding that the student (a) committed an act(s) under Procedure 6290 and/or 6295, or (b) has been habitually truant or irregular in attendance from instruction that he/she is lawfully required to attend and has been through the School Attendance Review Board (SARB) process.
 - (3) An involuntary transfer shall be imposed only when other means fail to bring about student improvement; a student may be involuntarily transferred the first time he/she commits an act enumerated under Procedures 6290 and 6295, if the principal determines that the student's presence causes a danger to persons or property or threatens to disrupt the instructional process.
 - (4) A student may extend his/her stay at the alternative school with the agreement between the school and parent that his/her educational plan is progressing satisfactorily.

4. **School-Initiated Placement Council Hearing**

a. **Participants**

- (1) Panel Members. Placement and Appeal staff member chairs council. Placement and Appeal designates principal or designee of an alternative school, vice principals, and head counselors (or in some cases, district counselors). All members other than the Placement and Appeal staff member are assigned to *serve for one semester*.
- (2) Administrator or designee of school requesting meeting.
- (3) Parent must be present if the case is a parent-requested hearing.
- (4) Persons who may choose and are encouraged to be present during council proceedings:
 - (a) Parent (in the case of a school-requested hearing) and student. A reasonable effort must be made to notify a parent not residing within

the San Diego Unified School District of impending council action. Parent takes an active part in council proceedings, but does not vote. Information about the case, including copies of documents presented, must be available to parent at council proceedings.

- (b) Administrator or designee from other schools that are involved are requested to be present during council proceedings.
 - (c) Community agency representation. In cases involving a student under jurisdiction of a community agency such as the Probation Department or Welfare Department, a representative of such organization should be encouraged to attend council meetings to assist in planning for student. Written consent of parent is required prior to release of any student information to any nondistrict organization, agency, or individual. Receiving party must certify that information will not be used for any purpose other than that authorized. (Procedure 6525)
- b. **Voting members.** SIP Council chair will vote only in case of a tie; other panel members are entitled to one vote. A parent, representative of parent, or any other individual present at session is not entitled to vote.
- (1) Two members plus chairperson constitute a panel. Each person entitled to vote does so through use of a signed written ballot; a majority vote serves as basis for council's placement of student.
- c. **SIP Council decision.** Each decision is the result of judgment made by the SIP Council based on information available and presented, with due consideration for needs and rights of the individual and the district.
- d. Placement and Appeal Program Manager has the discretion to waive the SIP Council hearing if all parties agree on a proposed placement. The parties will meet with the Program Manager to complete the necessary paperwork.

5. **SIP Council Appeal Procedure**

- a. **Any request for appeal** must be made within one week of the hearing in writing/e-mail to the Placement and Appeal Program Manager
- b. **Receiving school enrolls student** until appeal is resolved. If appeal request is made within 24 hours the student remains at the sending school until appeal is resolved.

- c. **A school or parent** who did not attend the scheduled hearing, having been properly notified of the date and time with three (3) school days' notice, may not appeal.
 - d. **The Placement and Appeal Legal Specialist** determines whether the request warrants convening an additional hearing by the Appeal Board based on the following considerations:
 - (1) Was the student afforded a fair hearing before the SIP Council panel?
 - (2) Is there now new relevant and material evidence that could not have been reasonably produced at the time of the hearing or that was improperly excluded?
 - e. **Appeal is heard by Appeal Board**
 - (1) Legal Specialist acts as presiding officer at the hearing, and SIP Council chair presents essential information from the original hearing.
 - (2) The appealing party must attend. All other individuals involved in the original hearing are requested to attend
 - (3) The Appeal Board makes recommendations on the SIP Council actions, and its decisions are final.
6. **Administrative Placement**
- a. Placement and Appeal determines if a student requires immediate change of placement due to extreme safety or discipline problem.
 - b. Placement and Appeal Program Manager makes the placement without utilizing the SIP Council.

E. FORMS AND AUXILIARY REFERENCES

- 1. SIP Council Request form, Attachment 1
- 2. SIP Council presentation format, Attachment 2
- 3. School Initiated Placement/Alternative Education Application (NCR form), Inventory Item 2768

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4. Student Discipline Guidelines, available from the Placement and Appeal and in administrators' offices

F. REPORTS AND RECORDS

1. School-Initiated Placement/Alternative Education Application (NCR form):
 - a. Sending school representative gives form to the Placement and Appeal chair for signature upon determination of case.
 - b. School retains copy until student is graduated or leaves school.
 - c. Placement and Appeal retains copy until student is 18 years of age and is no longer enrolled or has graduated.

G. APPROVED BY



Chief of Staff
For the Superintendent of Schools