

Georgia Department of Education

Policies and Procedures

Policy Title:	Admissions, State Schools	
Policy Number:	SS-6021 JBC	
Release Date:	7-13-06	

Purpose

To describe placement requirements for students attending the State Schools

Applicability

This policy applies to all students at the Atlanta Area School for the Deaf, the Georgia Academy for the Blind, and the Georgia School for the Deaf.

Policy

Admission Requirements

- A. The three State Schools operated by the Department of Education [Georgia School for the Deaf (GSD), Atlanta Area School for the Deaf (AASD) or Georgia Academy for the Blind (GAB)] are referral-based educational options in Georgia's comprehensive continuum of programs and services available to sensory-impaired, school-aged children who are legal residents of the state, their parents and local school officials. Day school placement at all three schools is available for students ages 3 to 21. The residential programs at Georgia School for the Deaf and Georgia Academy for the Blind serve eligible students between the ages of 4 and 21.
- B. Referral to the State School is the responsibility of the student's local school system (LSS), working in collaboration with the student's parents. The LSS must provide all evaluations and assessments, including any medical information and evaluations, to the State School in order to formally initiate the referral process.
- C. At times, an LSS will refer a student to a State School and that student will have significant medical, physical, mental, and/or emotional conditions that require medical/intervention support services. The IEP team would need to meet to determine if there

are measures the LSS and State School could take to address the students' IEP goals while also addressing the other aforementioned concerns. In making this determination, the IEP team should consider additional supports provided by the LSS including but not limited to the following: one-on-one paraprofessional, nursing support, one-on-one behavior support, etc., if the State School cannot provide such supports. **If reasonable supports/interventions cannot be put into place to address the aforementioned concerns, the State School would not be an appropriate placement.**

- D. Eligibility Criteria: The actual enrollment of a student at AASD or GSD (two State Schools for students that are Deaf) will be determined by the student's IEP Team following a review of Present Levels of Academic and Independent Functioning, a development of student programming goals, and a discussion of placement options. A State Schools representative must be part of the IEP team. The following enrollment criteria is suggested to provide guidance to the IEP Team(s), and to help clarify students for whom AASD or GSD might be an appropriate option:
1. The student must meet the eligibility requirements as outlined in State Board Rule 160-4-7-.02 for deaf/hard of hearing students. The student's hearing loss must be such that it inhibits the child's ability to process information auditorily and therefore requires the use of visual communication methods and specialized instructional techniques. The hearing impairment must have the potential to adversely affect the applicant's academic performance, social development, language development, communication skill, or intellectual functioning.
 2. The Local School System must provide the following information as a part of the referral process for AASD or GSD:
 - a. A letter of referral stating what services are requested;
 - b. An audiological evaluation current within the past year and a hearing impaired eligibility form current within the past three years;
 - c. The current IEP/IFSP;
 - d. State School Application materials;
 - e. General Basic Medical Form signed by a physician;
 - f. Current assessment information, including psychological/cognitive functioning information, psycho-social assessment information and vision screening/assessment information;
 - g. Current eligibility reports;
 - h. Consent to evaluate form if evaluation is requested;
 - i. Education records, including transcript, report card, attendance record, and disciplinary record.
 - j. Information from law enforcement agencies, the Department of Juvenile Justice, Georgia Family and Children Services, and any other agency with which the student has been involved.

- E. The actual placement of a student at GAB (one school for students that are blind or visually impaired) will be determined by the student's IEP Team following a review of Present Levels of Academic and Independent Functioning, a development of student programming goals, and a discussion of placement options. However, the following enrollment criteria is suggested to provide guidance to the IEP Team(s), and to help clarify students for whom GAB might be an appropriate option:
1. There is documented eye impairment as manifested by at least one of the following:
 - a. Visual acuity of 20/70 or less in the better eye after the best possible correction.
 - b. Peripheral field so constricted that it affects the applicant's ability to function in an academic setting, or
 - c. Progressive loss of vision which may affect the applicant's ability to function in an academic setting.
 - d. Functional vision loss that inhibits optimal processing of information through the visual channel and/or requires the use of specialized techniques, textbooks, materials or equipment.
- F. The Local School System must complete the following steps in the referral process for GAB:
- a. Complete a letter of referral stating what services are requested;
 - b. Provide an eye report current within the past year signed by an optometrist or ophthalmologist or an audiological evaluation current within the past year and a hearing impaired eligibility form current within the past three years;
 - c. Assessment of Learning Media (if available);
 - d. Current IEP;
 - e. State School Application;
 - f. General Basic Medical Form signed by a physician;
 - g. Current assessment information;
 - h. Current eligibility reports;
 - i. Consent to evaluate form if evaluation is requested;
 - j. Education records, including transcript, report card, attendance record, and disciplinary record.
 - k. Information from law enforcement agencies, the Department of Juvenile Justice, Georgia Family and Children Services, and any other agency with which the student has been involved.
- G. The State Schools shall adhere to the State Schools enrollment and withdrawal policy. If a student is a "no show" after 10 consecutive school days, the student is automatically withdrawn from the State School and is referred back to the LSS.
- H. In addition, in order to seek a referral to enroll in one of the State Schools, the following requirements apply:

1. If a student has not been evaluated by a local school system (LSS) and determined eligible for a special education program, the student or local school official will be directed by the State School to have the student evaluated by the LSS and to prepare an IEP. No student will be considered for placement to a State School without the LSS evaluation.
 2. If the student has already been evaluated by the LSS and determined eligible for a special education program, the student will be considered for placement. Once placement at a State School has been recommended, the LSS shall send all current evaluation data and a copy of the current or proposed IEP.
 3. If necessary, a State School and a LSS may enter into an agreement for the State School to conduct an evaluation or assessment, make an eligibility determination, and/or develop an IEP.
- I. In order to seek a referral to enroll in the residential program at one of the State Schools, these additional requirements apply:
1. The student is able to finger-feed, chew and swallow most foods, indicate need for help when self-soiled or wet, and assist in self-dressing and bathing.
 2. The student is not a danger to himself/herself or others.
 3. The student must show a level of age appropriate maturity to live independently away from home with support from school staff.