



June 30, 2009

Dear Superintendent:

The *Ohio Operating Standards for Ohio Educational Agencies Serving Children with Disabilities* ("Operating Standards"), requires traditional public schools and chartered community schools to adopt written policies and procedures regarding the education of children with disabilities (For example, see 3301-51-02(A) of the Operating Standards). In addition, the Operating Standards allows districts to choose which method they will use to determine the existence of a specific learning disability and requires districts to develop written procedures for the implementation of their chosen method (3301-51-06(H)(3)(f) of the Operating Standards). The Office for Exceptional Children (OEC) has developed the two enclosed documents to assist you in meeting these requirements.

One document is the Model Special Education Policies and Procedures ("Model Policies"). Your school/district may choose to adopt these policies in their entirety. Alternatively, your school/district may choose to adopt its own Special Education Policies and Procedures as long as they are in accordance with Ohio's Operating Standards and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA). If your school/district chooses to adopt their own Special Education Policies and Procedures, you may choose to incorporate portions of the Model Policies. However, you must submit a copy of your Special Education Policies and Procedures to OEC for approval no later than November 1, 2009.

The second document enclosed is a form that must be completed and returned to OEC. In the top portion check the appropriate statement that indicates your district's chosen method for complying with the requirement to have adopted written policies and procedures for the education of children with disabilities. In the bottom portion choose the statement that reflects the manner that your district/school has chosen to satisfy the requirement that it have a written policy and procedure regarding the determination of a specific learning disability. If your district uses a method based on identifying a severe discrepancy or a method based on response to intervention, or a combination of these methods, you can choose to satisfy the requirement of a written policy and procedure by adopting the OEC Model Policies and indicating that your district follows the procedures set forth in *Procedures and Guidance for Ohio Educational Agencies Serving Children With Disabilities* at §6.7, Specific Learning Disabilities. If your school/district uses an alternative research-based procedure, you must submit your written policies and procedures regarding the implementation of that method to OEC for approval. You may also choose to develop your own written policy and procedure regarding the manner in which you determine the existence of a specific learning disability, regardless of the method that you use.

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I am well aware that this is a busy time for you and I want you to know we greatly appreciate your assistance in ensuring that your school/district adopts written policies and procedures and reports its compliance to OEC in a timely manner. Again, please be aware that **districts and schools must adopt written policies and procedures for the education of children with disabilities and return the enclosed form (and required documents if necessary) to OEC no later than November 1, 2009**. Send all documents to:

Ohio Department of Education
Office for Exceptional Children
Attn: Model Policies and Procedures
25 S. Front St, Mail Stop 202
Columbus, OH 43215

Should you have any questions regarding this letter or the enclosed materials, please contact Ann Guinan at (614) 466-2650 or ann.guinan@ode.state.oh.us.

Sincerely,



Kathe Shelby, Ph.D.
Director, Office for Exceptional Children

c: Special Education Director