

WAC 392-172A-04115 Placement of students when FAPE is at issue.

(1) If a student eligible for special education services has a FAPE available and the parents choose to place the student in a private school or facility, the school district is not required by this chapter to pay for the student's education, including special education and related services, at the private school or facility. However, the school district shall include that student in the population whose needs are addressed consistent with WAC 392-172A-04000 through 392-172A-04070.

(2) Disagreements between the parents and a school district regarding the availability of a program appropriate for the student and the question of financial reimbursement are subject to the due process procedures at WAC 392-172A-05080 through 392-172A-05125.

(3) If the parents of a student, who previously received special education and related services under the authority of a school district, enroll the student in a private preschool, elementary or secondary school, or other facility without the consent of or referral by a school district or other public agency, a court or an administrative law judge may require a school district or other public agency to reimburse the parents for the cost of that enrollment if the court or administrative law judge finds that a school district or other public agency had not made a free appropriate public education available to the student in a timely manner prior to that enrollment and that the private placement is appropriate. A parental placement may be found to be appropriate by a hearing officer or a court even if it does not meet the state standards that apply to education provided by a school district or other public agency.

(4) The cost of reimbursement may be reduced or denied if:

(a)(i) At the most recent individualized education program meeting that the parents attended prior to removal of the student from the public school, the parents did not inform the team that they were rejecting the placement proposed by a school district to provide a FAPE to their student, including stating their concerns and their intent to enroll their student in a private school at public expense; or

(ii) At least ten business days (including any holidays that occur on a business day) prior to the removal of the student from the public school, the parents did not give written notice to a school district of the information described in (a)(i) of this subsection; or

(b) Prior to the parents' removal of the student from the public school, a school district informed the parents, through the notice requirements described in this chapter, of its intent to evaluate the student (including a statement of the purpose of the evaluation that was appropriate and reasonable), but the parents did not make the student available for the evaluation; or

(c) Upon a judicial finding of unreasonableness with respect to actions taken by the parents.

(5) Notwithstanding the notice requirement in subsection (4)(a)(i) of this section, the cost of reimbursement must not be reduced or denied for failure to provide the notice if:

(a) The school district prevented the parent from providing the notice; or

(b) The parent had not received the procedural safeguards containing notice of the requirement to notify a school district of the information required in subsection (4)(a)(i) of this section.

(6) An administrative law judge or court may, in its discretion, determine that the cost of reimbursement will not be reduced or denied

for failure to provide the notice in subsection (4)(a)(i) of this section if:

(a) The parents are not literate or cannot write in English; or

(b) Compliance with subsection (4)(a)(i) of this section would likely result in serious emotional harm to the student.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 28A.155.090. WSR 21-19-065, § 392-172A-04115, filed 9/14/21, effective 10/15/21. Statutory Authority: RCW 28A.155.090, 20 U.S.C. 1400 (c)(12)(C), 20 U.S.C. 1401 (3)(A)(i), and 20 U.S.C. 1401 (30)(C). WSR 11-06-052, § 392-172A-04115, filed 3/1/11, effective 4/1/11. Statutory Authority: RCW 28A.155.090(7) and 42 U.S.C. 1400 et. seq. WSR 07-14-078, § 392-172A-04115, filed 6/29/07, effective 7/30/07.]