The Louisiana School for Math, Science, and the Arts, in conjunction with the Louisiana Department of Education, is committed to making equal educational opportunities available to students with disabilities, in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act, and companion Louisiana laws and regulations. Such opportunities include the right to a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive educational environment.

Identification of Students Who May Be Eligible For Special Education Services

Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA) and its companion Louisiana law, all public schools, including LSMSA, must identify and evaluate all students who are suspected of having a disability and are in need of special education and related services----the so-called "child find" obligation. This obligation is not just for very young children, but extends to all school-aged students. If the parents/guardians/student of majority age or LSMSA teachers or faculty observe a student who is experiencing academic and/or behavioral issues that may be significantly interfering with the student's educational performance, a referral may be made to the Counseling Office. This team of individuals, consisting of educational and assessment professionals and the parent/guardian/student of majority age, will review a variety of information about the student to determine whether the student is suspected of having a disability under the IDEA and Louisiana Bulletins 1706 and 1508. The team may seek additional information from the parent, recommend academic and/or behavioral interventions, and/or recommend that the student be evaluated for possible classification as a student with a disability ("exceptionality" under Louisiana law and regulations). If recommended for such evaluation, the written consent of the parent/majority aged student must be obtained in order for the evaluation process to begin. The educational evaluation will be performed by a counselor or designated professional. This evaluation source will complete the process in compliance with Louisiana Bulletin 1508, the Louisiana regulations that guide the evaluation process consistent with the IDEA.

Student With An Individualized Education Program (IEP)

Consistent with the mandates of IDEA and companion Louisiana law and regulations, any LSMSA student with an IEP shall be provided the opportunity to receive special education and related services specified in the student's IEP. The overarching principle of IDEA is that all eligible students shall have available to them the opportunity to receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE). Although LSMSA will make every effort to provide FAPE to students with IEPs, each student must also meet LSMSA's stringent academic and other performance standards. Note that each student's "home" school system (i.e., school system where the student resides under Louisiana law) is under the obligation to provide FAPE to students with disabilities who reside within its geographical jurisdiction. If a student with disabilities under IDEA who does not meet LSMSA's neutral admission criteria, or is dismissed and/or voluntarily withdrawn from LSMSA, the student is entitled to receive FAPE in his/her home school system. We would also note that parents/guardians and eligible students have a right to decline receipt of FAPE (opt out of special education services) at any time.

Information regarding the procedural rights available to eligible students with disabilities under the above-referenced laws and regulations may be found on the LSMSA website under "Special Services".

NOTE :

1. School age students who are identified under Louisiana Bulletins 1706 and 1508 as "Students with Disabilities" or identified as "Gifted" or "Talented", are regarded as "**Students with Exceptionalities**" in the State. Such "Students with Exceptionalities" must be provided an opportunity to receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive educational environment (LRE). It is the obligation of each city or parish school system in the State to ensure that FAPE available in the LRE to students with exceptionalities residing within its jurisdiction.

2. The term "Gifted and Talented" as defined for the purpose of admission to LSMSA is separate and distinct from the exceptionalities of "Gifted" or "Talented" determined in accordance with Louisiana Bulletins 1706 and 1508. Specifically, LSMSA does not require a student to be identified with an exceptionality of Gifted or Talented as a condition of admission to the school, nor does an exceptionality of Gifted or Talented provide a student with any greater consideration with respect to admission to the school. Rather, LSMSA is committed to ensuring that students are selected for admission based on test scores, courses taken, grades earned, interviews, auditions, leadership, achievement, self-discipline, self-motivation, recommendations of teachers and others knowledgeable about the student's performance, and other personal attributes, regardless of race, color, creed, gender, disability, or exceptionality.

DISCLAIMER: As established by the Louisiana Legislature, LSMSA functions as an independent, residential public school with a uniquely challenging and highly accelerated college preparatory/college level curriculum. As such, LSMSA was established for those students who unilaterally elect to apply for admission to the school and, if selected for admission, voluntarily withdraw from the educational programs and services available to them in their respective city or parish school systems, in favor of participation in the academic and socialization opportunities embedded into the living/learning environment at LSMSA. Because of its independent structure and unconventional establishment, LSMSA does not seek, and is not authorized, to replicate programs and services that may be available to students in the school systems where they reside.

Accommodations For Test Takers With Disabilities - the ACT

ACT has long provided accommodations to test takers with disabilities and is committed to compliance with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). In this regard, ACT has adopted the following guiding principles for responding to requests for testing accommodations:

1. Requirements and procedures for testing accommodations must ensure fairness for all candidates, both those seeking accommodations and those testing under standard conditions.
2. Accommodations must be consistent with ADA requirements, and appropriate and reasonable for the documented disability.
3. Accommodations must not result in an undue burden, as that term is used under the ADA, or fundamentally alter that which the test is designed to measure.
4. Documentation of the disability must meet guidelines that are considered appropriate

by qualified professionals and must provide evidence that the disability substantially limits one or more major life activities.

5. Applicants must also provide information about prior accommodations made in a similar setting, such as academic classes and test taking.

Accommodations For Test Takers With Disabilities - the SAT

A student with a documented disability may be eligible for accommodations on College Board tests. A SSD Student Eligibility Form must be submitted for each student requesting accommodations. To be eligible, the student must:

1. Have a disability that necessitates testing accommodations;
2. Have a documentation on file at school that supports the need for requested accommodations and meets the Guidelines for Documentation, and;
3. Receive the requested accommodation, due to the disability, for school-based tests.

If any of these requirements are not met, the student may appeal.