



STATE OF NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

NONPUBLIC SCHOOL SERVICES GUIDANCE CHAPTER 192/193 - TIMELY AND MEANINGFUL CONSULTATION

Statutes

N.J.S.A. 18A:46-19.7. Contracts for speech correction services. A board of education may contract with an educational improvement center, an educational services commission or other public or private agency approved by the commissioner other than a church or sectarian school, for the provision of examination, classification and speech correction services required by this act. Prior to any change in the provision of these services, the board shall provide timely and meaningful consultation with appropriate nonpublic school representatives, including parents.

N.J.S.A. 18A:46A-7. Contracts for auxiliary services. Any board of education may contract with an educational improvement center, an educational services commission or other public or private agency, other than a church or sectarian school, approved by the commissioner for the provision of auxiliary services. Prior to any change in the provision of these services, the board shall provide timely and meaningful consultation with appropriate nonpublic school representatives, including parents.

Guidance

The objective of *timely* and *meaningful* consultation is to provide the best services possible to the students in nonpublic schools. Toward that end, the New Jersey Department of Education recommends that discussions occur between the head of the nonpublic school (or his/her designee) and the student's parents in a time frame suitable to understand the student's needs and properly arrange for services to begin as close to the start of the school year as possible. Ideally, such consultations will take place over the summer and *prior* to services being bid, contracted and provided, and then as needed throughout the year.

The department recommends that the discussions include the following topics:

- The total amount of funds allocated to the nonpublic school for the upcoming school year;
- The total amount of administrative fees anticipated;
- The amount of funds remaining mid-way through the year;
- Any remaining amounts that the nonpublic may want to expend, with sufficient time for the funds to be used in an efficient and effective manner;
- The time, place and format of services; and
- The method of student assessment for both evaluative and formative purposes and the means by which the results will be communicated to both the nonpublic school and parents of the nonpublic school student.



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According to the statute, "Prior to any change in the provision of these services the board shall provide timely and meaningful consultation with appropriate nonpublic school representatives, including parents." Any change to a provider of nonpublic school services is a change requiring prior consultation. The department recommends that the consultation include the following:

- Input from both the nonpublic school administrator and parents regarding their level of satisfaction with the current provider and their concerns relative to the need for, delivery and quality of services and outcomes desired. Input from parents may be gathered through a survey, a face-to-face meeting or through the nonpublic school administrator.
- The board's reasons why it wants to change the provider.
- A listing of providers available that offer the services and their suitability for the students' situations.

Once a decision to change providers has been made, and prior to the effective date of the change in service, the nonpublic school shall be notified.