

PROGRAM PARTICIPANT SERVICES

SECTION: ADMISSIONS

SUBJECT: Arlington School-Nondiscrimination, Application, and Enrollment Policies **REF: 5.1.12**
Arlington School provides services to School Choice and IEP placed students.

DEFINITION:

Therapeutic Approved Independent School (Therapeutic Independent School or Therapeutic School): an approved independent school that limits enrollment to students who are on an IEP or plan under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C § 794 and who are enrolled pursuant to a written agreement between an LEA (Local Education Association) and the school. These schools are eligible to receive public tuition, which is inclusive of both general and special education services and is at a rate approved by the Agency of Education. Link 2228.1, 2223, 2224, 2229, 22231, 2232.

SCOPE:

Pursuant to Vermont State Board of Education Rules 2223.2 and 2229, and related Vermont statutory and rule-based requirements, NFI- The Arlington School (hereinafter referred to as "Arlington School"), is considered a Therapeutic School, and operates under the following nondiscrimination, application, and enrollment policy. The Application Process and decisions regarding student enrollment are guided by the policies and procedures described below.

The nondiscrimination policy applies to all prospective and current staff, and all prospective and current students, regardless of how a student's tuition is funded.

The application and enrollment policies and associated enrollment procedures only apply to publicly funded tuition students (i.e. students who reside in a non-operating Vermont school district that pays tuition for its resident students). The "*Application Policy and Process for Publicly Funded Tuition Students*", "*Procedures for Offering Enrollment for Publicly Funded Tuition Students*", and "*Enrollment Process & Policy for Publicly Funded Students*" described below only apply to publicly funded students.

Nondiscrimination Policy

1. Nondiscrimination Statement. No student shall be unlawfully excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any educational program or activity as the result of, or based upon, the student's race, gender, color, creed, religion, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability, or any other reason set forth in state or federal law.
2. Arlington School complies with all requirements of the Vermont Public Accommodations Act (9 V.S.A. Chapter 139), and with all requirements of the Vermont Fair Employment Practices Act (21 V.S.A. Chapter 5, Subchapter 6) in all aspects of its recruitment, application, enrollment, operation, and employment activities.

3. Arlington School shall maintain and follow policies that implement this nondiscrimination statement. Arlington School shall distribute such policies to students and families of prospective students, enrolled students, and on request, members of the student's IEP team.

The Non-Discrimination Statement is posted on the NFI agency website. It is also included in the Program Participant Handbook and School Orientation Manual distributed to students/parents.

See also NFI Policies- Non-Discrimination/EOE 2.2.0 & Americans with Disabilities Act 2.2.1

Application Policy and Process for Publicly Funded Tuition Students

1. For School Choice placed students- An application for admission shall include information about the student's academic, athletic, and extracurricular interests and shall be submitted voluntarily by the student or their parent/guardian.
2. For School Choice placed students- Arlington School may request additional information about the student's academic, athletic, or extracurricular history, which shall not include any information that would reveal the need for a 504 accommodation or special education services.
3. For IEP placed students- Referrals to Arlington School require approval and pre-authorization by the School District-Supervisory Union. The student or parent of a student seeking enrollment can then voluntarily submit an application after receiving approval from the student's school.
4. Arlington School requires all prospective families to visit the school and meet with faculty and staff during the application process.
5. Arlington School requires all prospective families to sign an acknowledgement of the School's pedagogical approach, mission, and code of conduct.
6. For School Choice placed students- Arlington School may request information from the prospective student's prior teachers; such request shall not include any information about the student's educational needs.
7. For School Choice placed students- Arlington School will not request any information about the student's actual or suspected disabilities, prior testing for or diagnosis of a physical, emotional, mental, or cognitive condition, or participation in or receipt of special education services as part of the application process, but may request such information only after offering an invitation to the student to enroll.
8. Any student interested in applying for enrollment in the Arlington School, or their family member or member of their educational support team, shall be provided with a copy of this and any other policy that implements its nondiscrimination statement.

9. Any student interested in applying for enrollment in the Arlington School, or their family member or member of their educational support team, shall be provided with the Arlington School's application package and offered any assistance or reasonable accommodation needed to complete and submit the application, including translation or interpretation services.

Procedures for Offering Enrollment for Publicly Funded Tuition Students

1. For School Choice placed students- Arlington School will evaluate each applicant's academic, athletic, and extracurricular interests and history as factors when determining whether to extend an offer to enroll.
2. Arlington School will not extend an offer to enroll a student whose interests are not aligned with the school's program.
3. Arlington School manages grade level and program capacity limits based on estimates of returning students, anticipated staffing, as well as facility and program requirements and constraints. Before extending an offer to enroll, NFI Schools will first determine if there is available capacity at the student's grade level. Second, it will determine if there is available capacity in the academic, athletic, and extracurricular programs that are aligned to the interests indicated by the student in their application.
4. When the number of applicants exceeds capacity students are placed on a wait list and enrolled as spots (openings in the grade level classroom) become available on a first come, first serve basis.
5. Under no circumstances shall a student be denied acceptance for enrollment because of a disability, because they are eligible for special education services or because they are undergoing the comprehensive evaluation process for special education.

Enrollment Process & Policy for Publicly Funded Students

1. If the student is offered enrollment, the Arlington School will send the parent or guardian an invitation to enroll the student, which will include a request for additional information about the student, including academic and disciplinary history, and information about actual or suspected disabilities and/or special education needs.
2. For School Choice placed students- Upon a student's acceptance for enrollment, if the student requires accommodations or special education services and resides in a school district that does not operate a public school for the student's grade level, the student shall be provisionally enrolled and the Arlington School will contact the student's Local Education Authority (LEA) and request that a meeting be convened to determine how the student's services shall be provided, pursuant to and consistent with Vermont State Board of Education Rule 2229.4.

3. The LEA shall be responsible for the administration of the individualized education program (IEP) of a publicly funded student enrolled at the Arlington School, and the IEP team shall determine how the student will be provided a free and appropriate public education. Any required accommodations and services must be documented in a written agreement pursuant to Vermont State Board of Education Rule 2231, and shall be governed by the procedures in Rule 2229.4.
4. Prior to enrollment, the district must enter into a written contract with the Arlington School and shall accept financial responsibility for any tuition, fees, or other costs.
5. Nothing in this policy shall restrict the Arlington School from creating and preserving a safe and healthy environment for the entire Arlington School community and its members. The Arlington School may decline to enroll or may expel a student who is currently in a period of expulsion under 16 VSA §1163, or presents a threat to themselves or others, consistent with Arlington School's disciplinary policy.

New. 3/25/25. Requested by school staff for AOE Application for Independent Schools. Reference Vermont State Board of Education Rules. Reviewed and approved by the Board on ...

5.1.12