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Traci Coleman, Director

TO: State Supported Schools for the Blind and Deaf

FROM: Traci Coleman, Director, Rate-Setting and STAC

DATE: August 30, 2019

SUBJECT: Transporting 3- and 4-Year-Old Students Appointed to State Supported School (§4201) Programs

This is to confirm our discussion earlier this year regarding the responsibility for the transportation of 3- and 4- year old students placed in State-supported school (§4201) programs, and the available state aid for those transportation costs. As communicated previously, and as was clarified on the NYSED STAC website, school district responsibility for the education and transportation for students appointed to a §4201 program includes both school age (5 – 21) and preschool age (3 – 4) students.

The following State-supported schools provide education for students with deafness, visual impairment, emotional disturbance or multiple disabilities:

Cleary School for the Deaf
Lexington School for the Deaf
New York School for the Deaf
The Henry Viscardi School
Mill Neck Manor School for the Deaf
Rochester School for the Deaf

Lavelle School for the Blind
The New York Institute for Special Education
St. Francis de Sales School for the Deaf
St. Joseph's School for the Deaf
St. Mary's School for the Deaf

The federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires school districts to provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE), which includes transportation to enable students to benefit from special education programs and services. In accordance with Education Law §4402(4) and §4405, school districts are responsible for the transportation of all students attending §4201 schools, and such transportation costs are aidable.

The school district which is responsible for payment of education tuition is also responsible for the cost of transporting the student to the education program. Transportation aid is dependent on the program placement for a 3 to 4 year old student at a State-supported school, as follows:

- For 10-month (September - June), the responsible school district may claim reimbursement for 10-month transportation costs through the State Aid Transportation Aid process, along with transportation costs for other 10-month students. The Transportation Aid process is not tied to the STAC Online System's education/maintenance placement records, and no 10-month transportation costs for these students are reported to the STAC/Medicaid unit.

- For 2-month (July - August), the responsible school district may claim reimbursement through the STAC Online System summer school claim process (§4408) for special education students. The STAC Online System screen used by school districts to report and verify transportation costs is *DVST3*. Costs are reported on a child-specific basis. A school district can only submit costs on the *DVST3* screen when a corresponding 2-month education/maintenance placement record is/has been added to the STAC Online System.
- Certain State-supported schools offer §4410 preschool services. The cost of transportation for students placed in a §4410 preschool education program is the responsibility of the municipality (county of residence). The STAC/Medicaid unit will process reimbursement for county transportation costs reported as part of the STAC Online System *DSPRE* education placement record. Actual cost is verified by the county for reimbursement on their §4410 Automated Voucher Listing (AVL).

State supported schools should review transportation arrangements with the responsible school districts to ensure such transportation meets NYSED requirements to be approved as aidable. If a school district has yet to start providing transportation for 3- and 4- year old students placed in a State supported school program and needs additional time to arrange for such transportation, the State supported schools are asked to work with the school district to develop a reasonable plan and timeframe for the school district to assume this responsibility. All such arrangements are to be in place by no later than July 1, 2020.

State supported schools may only include transportation expenses that are incurred by the State supported school in their 2019-20 Consolidated Fiscal Report (CFR). Beginning with the 2020-21 school year, it is NYSED's expectation that State supported schools will no longer be including transportation expenses in their CFR.