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To: Ohio Virtual Academy Parents

**Fm: Jeff Shaw, Head of School
Bridget Castle, Special Education Manager**

Re: Students with Special Needs and Disabilities

It is the desire of Ohio Virtual Academy to identify, locate, and evaluate all enrolled children who may have disabilities. Disability, in this instance, means such conditions as hearing impairment, visual impairment, speech or language impairment, specific learning disability, emotionally disturbance, multiple disabilities, cognitive disability, other health impairment, physical impairment, autism, and traumatic brain injury. As a public school, we will respond vigorously to Federal and State mandates requiring the provision of a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) regardless of a child's disability. However, before we can serve children with disabilities, they must be brought to our attention.

Once a child has been identified as having a "suspected disability" or identified as having a disability, the Ohio Virtual Academy will ask for information about the child, such as: How has the suspected disability or disability hindered the student's learning? What has been done, educationally, to address the student's learning needs? What educational or medical information relative to the suspected disability or identified disability is available to be shared with the school? This information may be obtained from parents and the student, present or former teachers, therapists, doctors, or from other agencies that have information about the student. This information will be used to decide whether the child has a disability and needs special educational services. All information collected will be held in strict confidence and released to others only with parent permission or as allowed by law. For example, our school will send records, when requested to do so, by a school district or other educational agency in which a student intends to enroll. The student's parents may have a copy of these records upon request.

In keeping with this confidence, the Ohio Virtual Academy will keep a record of all persons who review confidential records with the exception of authorized school employees, or other educational agency personnel. Our school will also maintain a list of employees who may have access to records. When the information is no longer needed to provide educational services to the child, the parents will be informed. Parents and students have rights in this process. Parents have the right to:

- review their child's records;
- refuse permission to release information (except as required by, or permitted by, law for release);
- request that information they believe to be inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of their child's privacy or other rights be changed. The school has a process to resolve disagreements about information collected.

The Ohio Virtual Academy has appointed one person to make sure that information about students is kept confidential. Our school also operates a Child Management System (CMS) that assures a practical method of identifying which children are currently receiving special education services and which children are not. Certain data regarding children are maintained within this system. We are committed to meeting the needs of children with disabilities. If you have or know of a child who may have a disability, please contact Ohio Virtual Academy for clarification, more information or assistance.

