



OPERATIONAL SERVICES DIVISION

Gary J. Lambert
Assistant Secretary for Operational Services

Charles D. Baker
Governor
Karyn E. Polito
Lieutenant Governor
Michael J. Heffernan
Secretary

May 20, 2020

Dear Special Education Colleagues,

Please note that approved private special education school tuition rates are not negotiated rates. Rather, these rates are set by OSD by statute. The rates for Fiscal Year 2020 (FY20) were established on February 5, 2019, and expire on June 30, 2020.

Questions have arisen regarding the extent to which approved special education schools may invoice districts when students in residential programs are temporarily at home due to factors associated with COVID-19. OSD tuition rates are not based on services, but on various program components, including fixed costs and enrollment. OSD sets rates for an entire school year associated with those costs. As a result, even when a student is temporarily at home due to factors associated with COVID-19, the invoice for that student's tuition will remain unchanged. For example, if a residential school is closed and still providing residential services to the student the residential rate should be paid. Please note: to ensure a student's placement in a residential program, the district is responsible for continuing to pay tuition costs based on the OSD rate.

As stated by OSD on April 17, 2020:

Please note if special education services are being provided, the districts should be paying for these services as outlined in the advisory issued by DESE on March 27, 2020. OSD has set current school year tuition rates for special education schools, which are non-negotiable. DESE has confirmed that tuition payments based upon OSD rates are eligible for circuit breaker reimbursement.

As stated earlier, FY20 tuition rates are valid until June 30, 2020. FY21 tuition rates start on July 1, 2020, and end on June 30, 2021.

Please direct questions regarding special education rate setting to Jacquiline.brown@mass.gov

Sincerely,

Jacquiline Brown
Director of Financial Compliance
Operational Services Division

cc: Russell Johnston, Senior Associate Commissioner, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
William Bell, Senior Associate Commissioner, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
John Sullivan, Associate Commissioner, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Nina M. Marchese, M.Ed., Director, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

