

# **PARENT HANDBOOK**

## **TO UNDERSTAND SPECIAL EDUCATION**

### **C.A.C.**



### **Community Advisory Committee**

**El Dorado County Special Education Local Plan Area  
(SELPA)**

**Dr. Vicki L. Barber, Superintendent**

**Emi Johnson, SELPA Director**

**Revised September, 2004**

**EL DORADO COUNTY SELPA  
MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of the El Dorado County SELPA is to provide quality leadership and support to El Dorado County school districts, parents, and students by promoting and insuring delivery of services to maximize educational opportunities for children with special needs.

**THANKS**

Special thanks to Mrs. Diana Haynie, CAC Chairperson and representative from the Black Oak Mine School District for several years. It was a goal of Diana's to have a parent handbook. Thanks to Mrs. Lisa Tomasello, current CAC Chairperson, for following through with the process.

## **WELCOME**

This handbook was created by the El Dorado County SELPA Community Advisory Committee (CAC). Using the Placer/Nevada handbook as our model, the information was revised to match the El Dorado County area, schools and services. Our many thanks to them for permission to use their handbook as our model. Our hope is that this handbook will serve as a resource for you.

The goal of the CAC is to empower parents of special education students to become an effective team member in their child's education through flexibility, collaboration, knowledge, and effective communication. Our goal is also to help parents of students with special needs serve as resources to others.

CAC primarily includes parents of special education students and community representatives from our local agencies. We provide training in law and issues surrounding special education. Members have been through many of the same emotions and circumstances that you, as a parent of a special education student, may face. Each school district's CAC representative volunteers his/her time and makes every effort to be available to parents. You may obtain your representative's name and phone number by contacting your district or the El Dorado County SELPA at (530) 295-2236.

### **Distribution Plan**

It is the desire of the CAC to have this handbook available to parents. Our intent is to have it available on the SELPA website, have some print copies available and the option of a CD disc available. Flyers will be distributed at IEP meetings to inform parents of the handbook. Due to the upcoming reauthorization of IDEA and the ever-changing laws and issues surrounding special education, the CAC is committed to evaluate and update this handbook annually.

### **Advocacy**

You may want support in your new role as a team member in planning your child's education. Someone to aid you in the special education process is available. Such persons are considered parent advocates. They can increase the team's awareness of special education programs and services. They can promote more effective participation in the process of developing an instructional plan for your child. Parent members of the SELPA's CAC are volunteers who have expressed an eagerness to assist you in finding answers to your questions and who support other parents who are new to the special education system.

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## **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)**

You, the parent, and your child have certain legal rights. IDEA is a federal law which mandates and affirms the right of all disabled children to a free public education. The purposes of IDEA are to do the following:

- to ensure that all children with disabilities have available to them a free appropriate public education that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for employment and independent living;
- to ensure that the rights of children with disabilities and parents of such children are protected;
- to assist States, localities, educational service agencies, and Federal agencies to provide for the education of all children with disabilities;
- to assist States in the implementation of a statewide, comprehensive, coordinated, multidisciplinary, interagency system of early intervention services for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families;
- to ensure that educators and parents have the necessary tools to improve educational results for children with disabilities by supporting systemic-change activities; coordinated research and personnel preparation; coordinated technical assistance, dissemination, and support; and technology development and media services; and
- to assess, and ensure the effectiveness of, efforts to educate children with disabilities.

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION PLACEMENT PROCESS AT A GLANCE**

- Special education services begin when an Individualized Education Program (IEP) team, including the parent(s), determine that a child is a “child with a disability” who “requires special education and services”. This team meeting is the result of multiple steps that precede it. (See sample letter)
  - First, a child will have been identified as a child with a need, by either the child’s teacher or parent.
  - At this point, a problem-solving team, including the parent, will convene to discuss the concern(s) and ways to address it. This is referred to by many names, including Student Success Team, Student Study Team, Child Study Team, Student Assessment Team. A meeting can also be more informal, involving a parent and teacher only, for example. The “SST” process is recommended in order to begin and document modifications and accommodations.
  - One of the many options of a team like this is to gather further information, from recommending eye exams, to academic assessments, to a referral for an assessment to determine eligibility for special education services.
- The team or a parent may submit a written referral for assessment to determine eligibility for special education program and services. The school has fifteen (15) calendar days from the date of a written referral to present an assessment plan.

If, down the road, a student is assessed for eligibility for special education, the IEP team must be able to document that modifications and accommodations have been attempted and are not adequate for the child’s success, as a condition of eligibility for special education.

The school district does have the right to decline to assess, with valid reasons; but, in those rare circumstances, the district must provide you with notice of the decline, and the reasons why.

- A representative of the school will contact you to review the proposed assessment plan and secure your signature. The school has fifty (50) calendar days (excluding school breaks of more than five (5) days) from the time of signed parent consent for assessment, to schedule and hold the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team meeting.
- IEP team membership must include: parent, administrator, Special Education teacher, a general education teacher, additional specialists, teachers, or people with knowledge of the student. Additional members may be present.
- An IEP team meeting will be held. The IEP team will determine if the student is eligible for special education programs and services. If the student is eligible, the IEP team will develop goals and objectives and determine appropriate services and placement. We suggest that you make a written request for the assessment results and other information pertinent to the IEP before the IEP meeting. This will give you the opportunity to read carefully all the documents.
- Services will begin on the date designated in the IEP, after the IEP is signed by you.
- Children can transition from Early Start early intervention services into special education preschool services at three years of age. The transition Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) process addresses the transition steps necessary for movement into preschool services including a projected IEP process.

## **REFERRAL FOR ASSESSMENT TO DETERMINE ELIGIBILITY**

“Referral” is a term used broadly for many purposes. Teachers and parents can refer a student for discussion of concerns to a Student Success Team-type meeting, or to a special intervention program, or to Mental Health/Children’s System of Care for services, etc. An SST team consists of the parents and school staff familiar with the child. Remember, you may bring a friend, CAC representative, or other support person to this meeting. A referral for problem-solving support to a Student Study Team is usually the first step when a teacher or parent has concerns about a child’s learning needs. This allows a team to develop accommodations, modifications, supports, resources, or any number of kinds of services immediately, and to assess the results of any such modifications.

Parents, teachers, counselors, principals, school nurses, or other persons who have an interest in the child’s welfare can make referrals. School personnel have a major responsibility to identify children who may have special needs and refer them, if there is a suspected disability, for assessment. Written notice of referral by the school personnel will be sent to parents. Individualized assessment cannot be conducted, however, without your written permission. Parents have the right and are encouraged to make referrals to the local school staff for assessment of their child’s possible needs, when a disability is suspected.

Write a specific request to the attention of your child’s principal, teacher or the district’s Special Education Administrator, asking for a Student Study Team meeting (see sample letter). Or, if you suspect a disability, you may write a letter requesting that a referral to assess for eligibility for special education services be initiated, including your reasons why you suspect that your child may have a disability. Keep a copy of the request for your child’s records. See the following “Sample Request for Referral for Assessment”.

The school has 15 (fifteen) calendar days from the date of a written referral to present an Assessment Plan.

At either a Student Study or Success Team Meeting, or at a subsequent Individualized Education Program (IEP) team meeting, one possibility that may occur is that a child is recognized as a child with a disability which would qualify the child for services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The definition of “disability” under 504 is much broader than the definition in IDEA (see following pages on Section 504). Therefore, a student may be “disabled” and eligible for a “504 Accommodation Plan”, but not necessarily be eligible under IDEA.

In order to be eligible under IDEA, a student must be identified and meet criteria as:

- a. Autistic
- b. Deaf
- c. Deaf/Blind
- d. Emotional Disturbance
- e. Visual Impairment

- f. Hearing Impaired
- g. Language/Speech Impairment
- h. Mental Retardation
- i. Multiple Disabilities
- j. Orthopedic Impairment
- k. Other Health Impaired
- l. Specific Learning Disability
- m. Traumatic Brain Injury

In addition, the team must determine that the degree of the impairment requires special education.

## SECTION 504

Section 504 is the section of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which applies to persons with physical or mental impairments. It is a civil rights act, which protects the civil and constitutional rights of persons with disabilities. It states that no person with a disability can be excluded from or denied benefits of any program receiving or benefiting from federal financial assistance.

### Definition of Appropriate Education

A free appropriate education is one provided by the public elementary or secondary school, which includes regular or special education and related aids and services that are:

- designed to meet the individual educational needs of persons with a disability as adequately as the needs of a non disabled person are met, and;
- based upon adherence to evaluation, placement and procedural safeguard requirements

### Definition of Disability

A person is considered disabled within the definition of Section 504 if he or she:

- has a mental or physical impairment which substantially limits one or more of such person's major life activities
- has a record of such impairments
- is regarded as having such an impairment

A student is also disabled if the student had a record of such impairment, or is regarded as having such an impairment. School staff should consider the potential existence of disability and possible Section 504 protection if the student has been diagnosed, for example with:

- HIV
- ADHD
- Communicable diseases
- Blood/sugar disorders
- Heart malfunctions

Note that there are also issues of protection of confidentiality for your child.

### Definition of Major Life Activity

"Major life activities" include functions such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, **learning**, and working. When a condition does not substantially limit a major life activity, the individual does not qualify for a Section 504 plan.

### School District Responsibility

If a school district has reason to believe that, because of an impairment as defined under Section 504, a student needs special accommodations or services in the regular setting in order to participate in the school program, the district must evaluate the student. If it is determined that a student is disabled under Section 504, the district

must develop and implement the delivery of all needed services and/or accommodations. Section 504 falls under the responsibility of the **regular education program**.

### Reasonable Accommodations

Section 504 requires a written plan describing placement and services. Placement decisions must be based upon information drawn from a variety of sources and all information must be considered. Although a formal **IEP is not required**, the placement decisions must be made by a group of persons knowledgeable about the child, about the meaning of the evaluation data, and about placement options. All members of the group or assistance team, including parents must sign the “educational accommodation plan”. Some examples of reasonable accommodations are:

- Untimed or extended time for assessment and/or assignments
- provision of readers
- provision of taped textbooks
- changes in the way tests are given
- seating in the front row of the classroom

## Sample Letter – Requesting a Student Study Team (SST) Meeting

Ms. Bev Blue  
Address  
City, State, Zip Code  
Telephone Number

Date

Mr./Mrs. Principal  
Local Unified School District  
Address  
City, State, Zip Code

Dear Mr. Green:

I am the parent of John Blue , who is currently enrolled at the Regular Elementary School in the fifth grade. John is not doing well in school and I am concerned about his academic performance.

I am therefore requesting a Student Study Team meeting to develop educational strategies and modification for John.

Sincerely,

Bev Blue

***Before using a letter like this, please be sure you have had the opportunity to communicate with your child's teacher.***

## Sample Letter – Referral for Special Education

Ms. Bev Blue  
Address  
City, State, Zip Code  
Telephone Number

Date

Mr./Mrs. Principal  
Local Unified School District  
Address  
City, State, Zip Code

Dear Mr. Green:

I am the parent of John Blue, who is currently enrolled at the Regular Elementary School in the fifth grade. We have had a Student Success Team (SST) meeting and the recommendations of that team have been implemented. John is still not doing well in school: (define here what those concerns are)

I am writing to make a referral for assessment to determine eligibility for special education services for John. I am requesting that John be given a comprehensive assessment in the area(s) of suspected disability(s) which is \_\_\_\_\_ by the school district to determine if John is eligible for special education and/or related services under IDEA and/or Section 504. I am requesting all written reports be provided to me five (5) days prior to the IEP.

I look forward to receiving an assessment plan within 15 days. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me. Thank you for your cooperation and assistance.

Sincerely,

Bev Blue

cc: Director of Special Education

***Before using a letter like this, please be sure you have had the opportunity to communicate with your child's teacher or other staff.***

## ASSESSMENT PLAN DEVELOPMENT

After a child is referred for special education assessment, a representative of the school will contact you to review an assessment plan. The school representative will:

1. Review the reason(s) for referral;
2. Explain the evaluation process and the methods or tests, which will be used to obtain more information about the child. Testing will be done in the child's native language or other means of communication, unless other provisions are necessary;
3. Explain the rights of the parents to:
  - a. review all relevant information;
  - b. obtain an independent evaluation, if the parents disagree with the assessment;
  - c. have an impartial due process hearing if they are not satisfied with the results (including Alternative Dispute Resolution);
4. Ask the parents to provide written permission for an assessment to be conducted;

This may occur at the same meeting where determination to make a referral is made. The assessment process has two major purposes: 1) to gather all information possible about the student and assess needs, through observation, testing, and gathering information from those who have worked with the child, including the parent, teachers, nurses, therapists and psychologists and any other pertinent information written or otherwise; and 2) to determine if a student is eligible for special education programs and services.

The school has 50 days (excluding days during school breaks of more than 5 days) from the time of signed parent consent for assessment, to schedule and hold the Individualized Educational Program (IEP) team meeting. During that time, communication with your child's teacher(s) and assessors may be helpful in both keeping informed as to progress of the process, and in developing a viable, understandable IEP at the meeting.



**EL DORADO COUNTY  
Special Education Local**

Sample

- Initial Referral
- Re-evaluation

**ASSESSMENT PLAN**

To the Parents of: \_\_\_\_\_ Birthdate: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  ELL

School: \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

In order to meet your student's individual education needs, the following assessment may be required. Assessment will be conducted by appropriately qualified staff; and, when appropriate, suitable interpreters or pre-recorded tests in the individual's primary language may be used. The assessment may include student observation in a group setting and/or an interview with you, plus a review of any reports you have authorized or that already exist in current school records. The result of completing these assessments may be a recommendation for special education services. All assessments have been validated for the specific purpose for which they are used.

- ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT-** Purpose: These assessments measure current reading, spelling, and/or oral and written language skills. Assessments may include but are not limited to: Wechsler Individual Achievement Test; Peabody Individual Achievement Test; Brigance Inventory of Skills; KeyMath Achievement Test; and Woodcock-Johnson.  
Others: \_\_\_\_\_
- SOCIAL/ADAPTIVE-** Purpose: This will indicate how an individual copes and how he/she gets along with other people. Assessments may include, but are not limited to: Interview; Adaptive Behavior Scales; Sentence Completion Test; Observation; and Draw-A-Person. Others \_\_\_\_\_
- PSYCHO-MOTOR DEVELOPMENT-** Purpose: Instruments in this area measure how well an individual coordinates body movements in small and large muscle activities. They may also measure visual perceptual skills. Assessments may include, but are not limited to: Bender; Berry; Brigance; Test of Gross Motor Development; Motor Maturity Evaluation; Learning-Accomplishment Profile; Cajon Valley Motor Assessment; Bruininks-Oseretsky; M.O.V.E., The Oregon Project; Hughs; Mount Diablo Assessment; Body Skills Inventory. Others: \_\_\_\_\_
- SPEECH/LANGUAGE COMMUNICATION DEVELOPMENT-** Purpose: These assessments measure the individual's ability to understand, relate to and use language and speech clearly and appropriately. Assessment may include the areas of language, articulation, voice and fluency. Assessments may include but are not limited to: Observation; Language Sample; Clinical Evaluation of Language Functions; and Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test.  
Others: \_\_\_\_\_
- INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT-** Purpose: These assessments measure how well an individual remembers what he/she has seen and heard, how well he/she can use that information, and how well he/she solves problems, and assist in predicting how well he/she will perform in school. Tests may include but are not limited to: Weschler Tests; Stanford Binet; Leiter International Performance Test; K-ABC; DAT; and TONI.  
Others: \_\_\_\_\_
- BEHAVIOR-** Purpose: To determine the communicational intent or function of the individual's behavior and how it impacts his/her learning. Assessments may include; Behavior Rating Scales; Student Interview; Observations.  
Others: \_\_\_\_\_
- HEALTH-** Purpose: Assess educationally relevant, health, developmental and medical findings. Hearing and vision screening is required for initial and 3 year re-evaluations. Assessments may include: Observation; Standard Vision/Hearing Assessment. Others: \_\_\_\_\_
- OTHER -** \_\_\_\_\_

The professionals involved in the individual assessment outlined above may include:

- Special Education Teacher  Psychologist  Speech-Language Specialist  Nurse  Adapted P.E. Teacher  Other \_\_\_\_\_

Please check the following item, if appropriate:

- I will submit a written report from \_\_\_\_\_  
Name and title of person/agency who has assessed my child)

If you have any questions about this Assessment Plan, please call:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Position: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**\*\*\*\*\* THIS FORM MUST BE SIGNED BEFORE ASSESSMENT CAN BEGIN \*\*\*\*\***

**PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING AND SIGN:**

- I GIVE MY INFORMED CONSENT** for the assessment indicated above to be made. I understand that the results will be kept confidential and that I will be invited to attend the individualized education program team meeting to discuss the results. It is also my understanding that no special educational service will result from this assessment without my written permission.

I DENY CONSENT to conduct the assessment described.

If the student speaks other than English at home, please indicate language: \_\_\_\_\_

Please check your student's ethnicity:  White  African American  Native American  Hispanic  Other:

Student Social Security #: \_\_\_\_\_

**SIGNATURE:** Parent/Guardian/Surrogate/Student \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please keep pink copy and return others to:** \_\_\_\_\_ Date received: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone verification for changes to the Assessment Plan herein documented:

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## IEP TEAM MEETING

Before your child receives any special education services, a written individualized education program (IEP) must be developed. This will be developed at the IEP team meeting. You have the right and are encouraged to present information during the IEP team meeting for use in developing the most appropriate (individualized) IEP for your child. You are encouraged to request in writing the assessment results, blank IEP forms to familiarize yourself with, and other information pertinent to the IEP before the IEP team meeting. Remember, you may bring a CAC representative or other support person to this meeting.

A number of items make up the IEP. They include:

- ◆ Statements of the child's level of educational performance/needs provided by parents and staff.
- ◆ Statements of yearly goals and short-term educational objectives
- ◆ Those individuals responsible for helping to accomplish the objectives
- ◆ Criteria and evaluation procedures for measuring the achievement of the educational objectives
- ◆ A statement of the specific special education programs and the related services needed by the student, and the degree of participation anticipated in the regular program
- ◆ Projected dates for beginning services and how long the services should continue
- ◆ Determination of participation in state and district-wide assessments

The parent(s) or guardian will be asked to give written approval of the newly developed individualized education program at the IEP meeting. You are not required to sign the IEP at this time. A system to measure progress for the student will be developed and reviewed at least yearly. The parent(s) or guardian must give permission before a change in educational placement or program of the student is implemented.

The student's program is a cooperative effort among the school, the home, and the student. Communication between home and school should be continued after the IEP team meetings take place. Requests for informal conferences with the student's teachers, requests to visit the student's classroom, notes or phone calls are all ways of learning about the child's program and performance. Another important way of finding out about program and performance is through talking with your child!

It is the team's right and responsibility to request an IEP team meeting or review at any time. A sample IEP agenda follows on the next page herein.

If your child does not qualify for special education services, he or she may still be eligible for services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.



## INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP) PROCESS OR TIMELINE

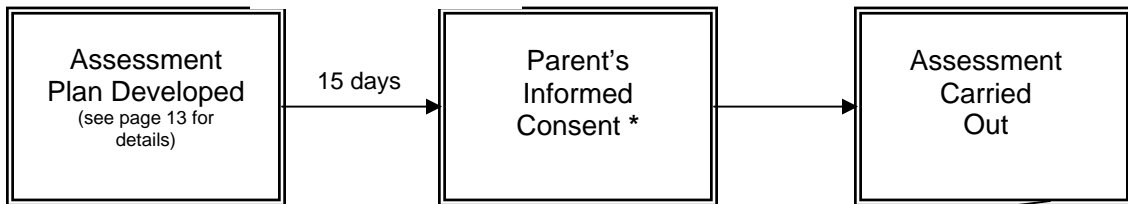
This flow chart is intended to be used as a brief overview of the IEP process. For more detailed information, note page numbers below the selected boxes.

### IDENTIFICATION



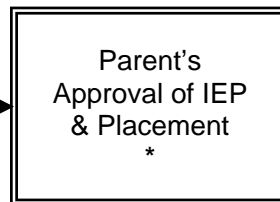
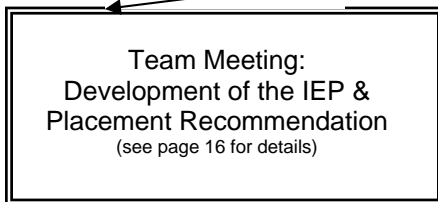
15 days

### ASSESSMENT

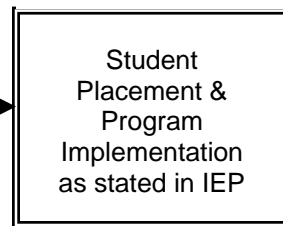


50 days\*\*

### PLANNING



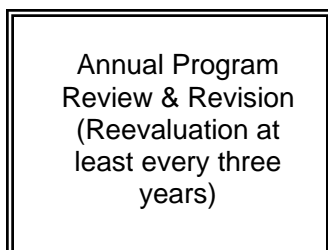
### IMPLEMENTATION



\*\*50 Calendar days, not to include school breaks of more than 5 days.

No later than 1 year

### EVALUATION



\*Parent's Informed Consent is Required

## **WHAT SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS/SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE?**

The Special Education Department provides a range of special education programs and services for students ages three to twenty-two residing in the Western Slope of El Dorado County.\* Through special education, instructional techniques, materials, and equipment will be adapted to meet the individual educational needs of your child.

Students receiving special education and DIS related services will be educated with general education students to the maximum extent appropriate. They will be integrated as much as possible in school activities and regular classroom activities as determined by the IEP team. If separate facilities and services for your child are necessary, they will be comparable to those provided for general education students.

Special education and DIS related services will be provided on behalf of your child, without cost, except for those fees that are charged to regular education students. Services will be provided in an appropriate setting as close to their homes/home school as feasible. When transportation to a more distant school, class or center is necessary, such transportation is to be provided without cost to the student.

\*For infants aged birth to three years who are suspected of having a disability, please call the Alta California Regional Center at 916/786-8110, or P.R.I.D.E. & Joy/Family Connections at 530/626-0670.

### **LEAST RESTRICTIVE EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT**

“Least restrictive environment” is that placement or program which can best meet an individual student’s needs and which does so with a minimum loss of contact with general class, students, and programs. Here is a brief look at how the IEP team might decide the least restrictive setting for the student to be educated, while still making sure that the student has the opportunity to interact with students who do not have disabilities.

- ◆ The IDEA has a strong preference for educating students with disabilities in regular classes with appropriate aids and services.
- ◆ The student’s placement in the general education classroom is the first option the IEP team must consider.
- ◆ Considering just the student, the IEP team answers the question: What supplementary aids and services would ensure that the student’s IEP can be appropriately implemented in the regular classroom?
- ◆ If the IEP team decides that the student can be educated satisfactorily in the regular classroom, then that placement is the LRE for that student.
- ◆ The IEP team may decide that the student cannot be educated satisfactorily in the regular classroom; even when appropriate aids and services are provided. The IEP team must then consider other placements and/or services.

- ◆ The public agency must have other placements available within the SELPA to the extent necessary to ensure that the student's IEP can be implemented. These might include: instruction in regular classes, special classes, special schools, home instruction, and instruction in hospitals and institutions.
- ◆ The IEP team decides which of these other placements is best for the student, given the student's individual needs and the importance of being educated, to the maximum extent appropriate, with students who do not have disabilities.

## **DESIGNATED INSTRUCTION AND SERVICES (DIS)/RELATED SERVICES**

Designated instruction and services are provided by specialists and are specific services not normally provided in a regular classroom, special class program, or the Resource Specialist program. Based on your child's individual assessed need, the following may be included as designated instruction and services:

- *Instruction and services in language and speech development and remediation*
- *Audiological services*
- *Interpreters for the deaf*
- *Instruction and services in mobility and instruction*
- *Instruction and services in home and/or hospital*
- *Adaptive Physical Education (APE)*
- *Physical or occupational therapy*
- *Low vision services and therapy; orientation and mobility services; Braille*
- *Specialized driver training instruction*
- *Counseling and guidance services*
- *Psychological services other than assessment and development of the IEP*
- *Parent counseling and training*
- *Health and nursing services*
- *School social work services*
- *Specially designed vocational education and career development*
- *Supplemental instruction and services including individual and small group instruction*
- *Recreation services*

- *Transportation*
- *Specialized services for low-incidence disabilities, e.g., reader, transcribers, and/or vision and hearing services.*

Instruction may be given in any appropriate setting, starting with regular classroom. Services shall be specified in the Individualized Education Program

### **RESOURCE SPECIALIST PROGRAM (RSP) / LEARNING CENTERS**

The Resource Specialist Program provides, directly or indirectly, instructional and other services for students whose needs have been identified by the IEP team as being exceptional. Students are assigned to regular classroom teachers for the majority of the school day and receive Resource Specialist services as determined by the IEP team.

The Resource Specialist coordinates services for children, provides instructional planning, special instruction, consultant services, resource information, and materials regarding individuals with special needs, to classroom teachers, parents or guardians. Such services can be within the regular classroom, in a RSP class, or through a Learning Center, and are often provided with the assistance of an aide,

### **SPECIAL DAY CLASSES (SDC)**

Special Day Classes provide services to students who have more intensive needs than can be met by regular education school programs, the Resource Specialist program, and/or Designated Instruction and Services. Students are placed in an SDC for a majority of the school day and grouped with other students who have similar instructional needs. Each SDC includes a special education teacher and instructional aide. The Special Day Class teacher works cooperatively with regular classroom teachers, Program Specialists, and with IEP personnel to implement and review the Individualized Education Programs for students with special needs.

### **STATE SPECIAL SCHOOLS**

Residential schools and services are operated by the State of California for the deaf, blind, and neurologically impaired. The schools are available for complete diagnostic workups and may be considered as placement for certain individuals with extraordinary needs. Placement in such programs will be arranged upon the recommendation of the IEP team and following a team determination that specialized diagnostic services or residential school placement is needed.

### **NONPUBLIC, NONSECTARIAN SCHOOL SERVICES**

Nonpublic, nonsectarian school services are available to individuals with exceptional needs, only when the local school district determines that an appropriate educational program is not available through the public school systems in the El Dorado County Special Education Local Plan Area or adjacent service regions.

### **HOME AND HOSPITAL SERVICES**

When children's' health needs require that services be provided in the home or hospital, the IEP team will determine those services.

Special Education services and classes are provided throughout the SELPA.

The El Dorado County Office of Education currently operates the following classes in various locations:

### **PRESCHOOL CLASSES**

The preschool classes are housed at the Camerado Springs Head Start in Shingle Springs, Schnell School (Bliss Center) in Placerville, Emigrant Trail School in Pollock Pines, and the Child Development Center. This program offers individualized and small group instruction in several integrated settings, depending upon the needs of each child. The program works on a variety of age appropriate skills in areas such as: socialization, language development, self-esteem, self-help skills, toileting, fine and gross motor skills, movement exploration and sensory integration, pre-academic skills, life skills, art, drama and music activities.

### **SEVERELY MULTIPLY IMPAIRED**

This program serves students who have severe multiple disabilities, and may be medically fragile. This program is located in the Winnie Wakeley Building in Camino and serves students from preschool through graduation (age 3–22). The program focuses on gross/fine motor activities and individualized instruction.

### **DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING**

This regional program serves children who are deaf or hard of hearing. This program focuses on the development of language, communication, academics, and social development skills and is located at Blue Oak Elementary School (grades K-5), Camerado Springs Middle School (grades 6-8), and Ponderosa High School (grades 9-12).

### **COMMUNICATIVELY HANDICAPPED**

This program serves students who have a severe disability in processing and expressing language. The program focuses on language and academic skill development and is located at Brooks Elementary School (grades K-5), and Ponderosa High School (grades 9-12). Program components include educational assessment, communication development, thematic instruction, self-esteem building, socialization skills, student/parent support, individualized instruction, modification of curriculum, and consultation/collaboration with general education.

### **SEVERELY HANDICAPPED**

This program serves students with orthopedic impairments, mental retardation, emotional disturbances, visual impairments and/or multiple disabilities. These students are served at the following locations, based on age and grade: Winnie Wakeley (grades K-2), Gold Oak Elementary School (grades 3-5), Markham Middle School (grades 6-8), El Dorado High School (grades 9-12), Union Mine High School (grades 9-12), and the Tunnel Street facility (adult). Program components include community-based instruction, individualized instruction, educational assessment, self-esteem building, socialization skills, inclusive education, independent living/vocational skills, functional life skills, gross motor, recreation and communication.

### **AUTISM – Structured Auditory and Visual Instruction (SAVI)**

This program includes highly structured classes based on the best available research related to the instruction of children with autism. Instruction includes use of the discrete trial format, Picture Exchange Communication systems, and visual instruction based on the highly successful TEACCH program. All components found in CH and SH classes are integrated into these classes. These students are served at the following locations, based on age and grade: Child Development Center (Preschool-K), Gold Oak Elementary School (grades K-5), Pleasant Grove Middle School (grades 6-8), and Ponderosa High School (grades 9-12).

### **INCLUSION**

This regional program is located at Buckeye Elementary School and serves students with developmental disabilities (Grades K-5). The students are included in the general education classroom with necessary supports and services provided. Students are recommended for this program through the IEP process.

### **ORTHOPEMICALLY IMPAIRED / OTHER HEALTH IMPAIRMENTS**

This regional program, located at Silva Valley Elementary School, serves students with orthopedic impairments or severe health impairments (Grades K-5). Additional OI services are available throughout the county on a DIS basis.

### **EMOTIONALLY DISTURBED**

This regional program is located in the Gold Trail School District and serves students with severe emotional problems. The K-3 classroom is located at Sutter's Mill School. Classes for students grades 4-5-6 and 7-8 are located at Gold Trail School. The program is supported by the El Dorado County Mental Health Department. The focus of the program is to develop social skills, appropriate behaviors, emotional stability and academics.

### **DESIGNATED INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES**

EDCOE also serves as the provider of DIS services throughout the El Dorado SELPA. **Speech and Language Services** include assessment, therapy, consultation with staff, parents and students, inservice education and parent education. **Occupational Therapy** includes evaluation of need for gross/fine motor therapy and consultation. **Transportation** includes door-to-door service for students requiring this service, bus stop service and coordinating district transportation. **Adapted Physical Education** includes gross/fine motor activities in P.E. and recreation. **Visually Impaired Services** include consultation with general education services, supplemental materials, mobility cane orientation and adaptive equipment such as enlarged print, magnifier, Braille and computers. **Deaf/Hard of Hearing Services** include consultation to teachers, closed captioning information, inservices of staff on disability awareness, signing and interpreters.

The fourteen school districts of the El Dorado County SELPA serve students with various handicapping conditions in a variety of settings. Students with learning disabilities are the largest number of students served in the home district's resource, special day class and/or learning center models.

## TRANSITION

**Transition Defined.** The definition of transition has evolved over the past few years. Nationally, it has been perceived as a period of time which includes high school, graduation, post-secondary education/training options, adult services, and the initial years of employment. Public Law 105-17, The Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), defines transition services as:

*“A coordinated set of activities for a student with a disability that is designed within an outcome-oriented process, which promotes movement from school to post-school activities, including post-secondary education, vocational training, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation; based upon the individual student’s needs, taking into account the student’s preferences and interests; includes instruction, community experiences, the development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives, and, when appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and a functional vocational evaluation.”*

**Individual Transition Plan (ITP).** The ITP is an articulated, interagency educational plan designed to facilitate a student’s move from school to employment and quality adult life. The Individualized Education Plan/Individualized Transition Plan (IEP/ITP) addresses critical aspects of a student’s transition, including employment goals, residential placement, guardianship, transportation, independent living, and income support. Ideally, an ITP should be done in conjunction with an IEP and supports the development of appropriate goals for the student.

## PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS

The law requires that the school districts shall establish procedures to protect the rights of special education students and their parents or guardians; these procedures are called Procedural Safeguards. These Procedural Safeguards are described throughout this handbook as they pertain to the different topics discussed. They are summarized below, however:

- ◆ the right of parents to give or refuse consent before their child is initially evaluated or placed in a special education program for the first time;
- ◆ the right of parents to inspect and review all of their child's educational records;
- ◆ the right of parents to obtain an independent educational evaluation (IEE) of their child (per policy);
- ◆ the right to written prior notice on matters regarding the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of their child, or the provision of FAPE to their child;
- ◆ the right to request a due process hearing on these matters, which must be conducted by an impartial hearing officer;
- ◆ the right to appeal the initial hearing decision to the State Educational Agency (SEA) if the SEA did not conduct the hearing;
- ◆ the right of the child to remain in his or her current educational placement, unless the parent and the agency agree otherwise, while administrative or judicial proceedings are pending (this provision has come to be known as the "stay-put" provision);
- ◆ the right to bring civil action in an appropriate State or Federal court to appeal a final hearing decision;
- ◆ the right of the parent to request reasonable attorney's fees from a court for actions or proceedings brought under IDEA (under certain circumstances);
- ◆ the right of parents to give or refuse consent before their child is initially evaluated or placed in a special education program for the first time.

Many of these procedural safeguards remain unchanged. Some have been amended, and some are new, as described below:

- ◆ Rather than always sending a detailed description of the procedural safeguards available to parents under the law, public agencies may now, in certain, well specified instances, merely provide to parents, as part of written prior notice, a statement that the parents of a child with a disability have protections under the procedural safeguards and indicate where parents might obtain assistance in understanding these safeguards. In other specific instances, the public agency must send parents a copy of a detailed description of the procedural safeguards.
- ◆ Parents must now notify the public agency when they intend to remove their

child from the public school and place the child in a private school at public expense. (10-day notice rule.)

- ◆ Parents must now notify the SEA or the LEA, as the case may be, when they intend to file a due process complaint.
- ◆ States must now have a voluntary mediation process in place, as a means of resolving dispute between LEAs and parents of children with disabilities.
- ◆ Specific requirements have been added to the law regarding the disciplining of children with disabilities. Under certain circumstances, such as the child bringing a weapon to school or a school function, the child may be removed from his or her current educational placement and placed in an interim alternative educational setting or suspended or expelled from school.
- ◆ Attorneys' fees may, under certain circumstances, be reduced or denied. Among the circumstances is when an attorney representing the parent did not provide the school district with the appropriate information in the due process complaint in accordance with IDEA. Attorneys' fees may not be awarded relating to any meeting of the IEP team unless the meeting is called as a result of a due process hearing or judicial action, or, at the discretion of the State, for a mediation that is conducted prior to the filing of a due process complaint.

## ALTERNATIVES TO DUE PROCESS

At times, parents may feel that there is a disagreement brewing between their school district's plans and the parents' wishes. The El Dorado County SELPA believes very strongly in positive, effective communication that is student-focused. In situations where parents are concerned about potential disagreements, they have several dispute resolution options to use for support, if a solution cannot be reached with communication with the district:

1. *Call your district's parent CAC representative; you can obtain the name and telephone number from your child's special education teacher or the SELPA office at 530/295-2236;*
2. *Call your SELPA Program Specialist – (530) 295-2289;*
3. *Ask for a Facilitated IEP Meeting; a facilitated IEP is one with a clear agenda and special focus which identifies the area of concern. It is facilitated by a trained, neutral person, usually from outside the district, specifically to address the area of concern.*
4. *Ask for an Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) panel meeting; an ADR panel is composed of two trained persons, at least one of whom is a parent, and all of whom are from outside the district. They provide the opportunity to support enhanced communication between the parties by hearing the concerns, which are "in dispute". Both parties participate in crafting a mutually satisfying resolution.*

## DUE PROCESS

If a solution is not reached by using any or all of the alternatives to due process, the next step may be to consider filing for a due process hearing.

- *Ask for a mediation hearing through the Special Education Hearing Office at McGeorge School of Law – (916) 739-7053;*

## COMPLAINT

*Call the Procedural Safeguards and Referral Service, 800/926-0648, if you have a complaint.* The complaint procedure is used to allege a matter which, if true, would constitute a violation of federal or state law or regulation governing special education and related services, including allegations of unlawful discrimination. A parent may allege a violation by the district of federal or state law or regulation by filing a written complaint with the district's superintendent. If relief is not found, a complaint may be filed with the Superintendent of Public Instruction by calling the Complaint Management Unit of the California Department of Education at the number referred to above.

## DUE PROCESS AND PARENTS' RIGHTS

Due process is a right guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States and federal and state laws and regulations. In regard to special education, "due process" assures that both school agencies and parents have the right to request a hearing to resolve disagreements relative to the appropriateness of the special education programs and services offered or being provided to an individual child.

A due process hearing ensures that specific procedures and timelines are followed whenever there is a proposed significant change in a child's educational program and the change is challenged. Issues which may be included for consideration under the due process hearing concept are limited to identification, assessment, the Individualized Education Program, and placement of individuals with exceptional needs.

It is the intent of the Legislature that parties to special education disputes be encouraged to seek resolution through mediation **prior** to filing a request for a due process hearing. It is also the intent of the Legislature that these "voluntary prehearing request mediation conferences" be an informal process conducted in a non-adversarial atmosphere to resolve issues relating to the identification, assessment, or educational placement of the child, or the provision of a free, appropriate public education to the child, to the satisfaction of both parties. Therefore, attorneys or other independent contractors used to provide legal advocacy services, shall not attend, or otherwise participate in any alternatives to the hearing, or in the "prehearing request mediation conferences". Participating in a mediation conference is not, however, a prerequisite to requesting a due process hearing. Willingness to do so may be indicated to the Special Education Hearing Office at Mc George School of Law by requesting "mediation only" versus a hearing.

Due process procedures include an informal conference, a mediation conference, and an informal administrative hearing at the state level. Parents are assured specific rights in connection with the due process procedures, including the right to waive the mediation conference.

Either the parent or school district may submit a written request for a due process hearing to the Special Education Hearing Office (SEHO) at McGeorge School of Law, 3200 Fifth Avenue, Sacramento, CA 95817. A copy of the hearing request must be provided to the other party at the time the request is initiated. The SEHO will then schedule a hearing date, and it must be scheduled within thirty (30) days of the date the due process hearing request is filed. A mediation conference, however, is encouraged, and the parties to the prehearing mediation conference agree to extend the time for completing the hearing. This is different from the "voluntary prehearing request mediation conference", even though it is also called "mediation". In this situation, attorneys or other advocates are allowed to attend or participate. The due process hearing must be completed within forty-five (45) days; or for good cause, the SEHO may extend the forty-five (45) day time limit, but only if the party who requested the hearing is agreeable to the extension.

Included in the rights of parents in relation to the due process hearing are:

- *The right to examine and receive copies of any documents contained in your child's file*
- *The right to be accompanied at the hearing by a representative(s) of your choosing*
- *The right to give or withhold permission for placement of the child*
- *The right to be advised and represented by counsel and/or by individuals with special knowledge or training related to problems of disabled children*

Attorney fees may be recoverable under certain circumstances, in accordance with the "Handicapped Children's Protection Act of 1986"-P.L. 99-372.

If either party disagrees with the decision of the Hearing Officer, they may appeal to a court of competent jurisdiction.

For more detailed information, consult your school district office or the Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) office, 530/295-2236.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY OF INFORMATION**

Each local educational agency has an obligation to protect the confidentiality of personally identifiable information which is gathered on children in special education. "Personally identifiable information" includes the name of the child, the child's parents, or other family members; address of the child; the child's social security number or student number; or a list of personal characteristics or other information which would make it possible to identify the child with reasonable certainty.

### **Access to Records**

As a parent(s) or guardian(s), you have the right to inspect and review any education records relating to your child. A child who is eighteen years of age or older has the same right to review records. With your approval, your representative may also look at the records.

If you want to look at your child's records, make a verbal or written request to the educational agency. Access to the records must be granted within five days of your request. The agency may charge a small reasonable fee if you ask for a copy of the records. If you are financially unable to pay this fee, it may be waived. You may also make reasonable requests for explanations and interpretations of the records.

### **Amendment of Records**

If you believe that the information contained within the education record is inaccurate or misleading or that it violates the privacy or other rights of your child, you may request the educational agency to amend the information in the student record.

All such requests are referred to the Superintendent who will meet with the parent and the employee who wrote the material or will designate a representative to do so. Following the meeting, the Superintendent or designee may direct that all, part, or none of the challenged material be removed.

If the parent is dissatisfied with this decision, you may, within thirty (30) days, appeal the decision in writing to the district Governing Board.

The Board, within thirty (30) days, is required to meet in closed session with the parent, the employee who wrote the material, and the Superintendent to review the actions taken.

The Board may sustain the actions of the Superintendent or modify them completely or partially, and order the Superintendent to take corrective action.

The actions of the Governing Board are final and all records of the proceedings are kept in a confidential manner.

If the decision is unfavorable to the parent, the parent may submit a written statement of their objections to the material. Such a statement becomes part of the pupil record.

### **Destruction of Records**

Mandatory permanent records are not destroyed but are kept on file permanently for all students. Personally identifiable information about students may be retained permanently unless the parents request it be destroyed.

## PARENTS' RECORD KEEPING

As the parent of a child with special needs, you will gather a tremendous amount of information about your child from various professionals and service agencies. Each time you seek services for your child, you may be asked to provide information about your child. Record keeping is not mandatory for parents of children with disabilities, but good records prove to be helpful in day-to-day contacts. The SELPA provides a folder to all parents of special education children in the El Dorado County SELPA. It, or any folder or binder of your choice, may be used to organize any paperwork for your child.

It may be helpful to have information on the following categories:

- Family History: May include child's birthdate, place of birth, parent's name, address, phone number and family history.
- Developmental History of the Child: May include mother's health during pregnancy and any unusual circumstances at the birth of your child. May also include milestones and at what age your child reached them.
- Medical History and Reports: May include information on the child and family health history, nature of serious illnesses and operations, record of the child's immunization, and medications taken.
- Educational History: May include names and dates of schools attended, copies of IEPs, test results and progress reports.
- Copies of records from any other agencies with which you have had contact.
- Correspondence: Keep copies of all correspondence written by you and received by you.

## WHO DO I CALL FOR INFORMATION?

For Special Education information, call the El Dorado County Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Chairperson Lisa Tomasello at 530/672-0137 or the district's (CAC) Representative (a/o 10/04) as follows:

### **Black Oak Mine Unified School District**

Post Office Box 4510  
Georgetown, CA 95634  
Ph: 530/333-8300

### **Buckeye Union School District**

Lisa Tomasello  
2227 Sterling Way  
Cameron Park, CA 9582  
Ph: 530/672-0137

### **Camino Union School District**

3060 Snows Road  
Camino, CA 95709  
Ph: 530/644-5412

### **El Dorado County Office of Education**

Emily Brooke  
2600-A Bryan Way  
Placerville, CA 95667  
Ph: 530/621-1535

### **El Dorado Union High School District**

4675 Missouri Flat Road  
Placerville, CA 95667  
Ph: 530/622-5081 x253

### **Gold Oak Union School District**

Christina Savage  
5975 Silver Ridge Lane  
Placerville, CA 95667  
Ph: 530/647-8810

### **Gold Trail Union School District**

Marta Harris  
5609 Petersen Lane  
Lotus, CA 95651  
Ph: 530/626-4575

### **Latrobe School District**

Gina Barrick  
7134 Ryan Ranch Road  
El Dorado Hills, CA 95682  
Ph: 916/933-6174

### **Mother Lode Union School District**

Debbie Murphy  
3600 Sawyer Court  
Diamond Springs, CA 95619  
Ph: 530/621-2150

### **Placerville Union School District**

1032 Thompson Way  
Placerville, CA 95667  
Ph: 530/622-7216

### **Pollock Pines School District**

6181-A Pine Street  
Pollock Pines, CA 95726  
Ph: 530/644-5416

### **Rescue Union School District**

Todd Ingram  
2640 Cambridge Road #22  
Cameron Park, CA 95682  
Ph: 530/558-5229

### **Alta Calif. Regional Center**

Leslyn Shortes  
344 Placerville Drive  
Placerville, CA 95667  
Ph: 530/626-1353

### **SELPA Office**

Elaine Potter  
6767 Green Valley Road  
Placerville, CA 95667  
Ph: 530/295-2289

### **P.R.I.D.E. & Joy (Family Connections)**

344 Placerville Drive, Suite 10  
Placerville, CA 95667  
Ph: 530/626-5164

### **Early Head Start**

Tamara Richards  
EDCOE Child Development Program  
6767 Green Valley Road  
Placerville, CA 95667  
Ph: 530/622-7130

### **Head Start**

Tamara Richards  
EDCOE Child Development Program  
6767 Green Valley Road  
Placerville, CA 95667  
Ph: 530/622-7130

### **Pioneer Union School District**

Post Office Box 8  
Somerset, CA 95684  
Ph: 530/620-3556

## **Special Education Community Advisory Committee (CAC)**

Parents comprise a majority of the membership of the Special Education Community Advisory Committee, and of these members, the majority must be parents of children receiving special education services. Members of local PTCs or PTAs, special education teachers, regular classroom teachers and other school personnel, disabled students, and/or representatives of related public and private agencies may also be represented.

The Special Education Community Advisory Committee is advisory to the Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA). The primary responsibilities and activities of the CAC include, but need not be limited to:

- *Advising the administration of the Special Education Local Plan Area and the Superintendent of the Responsible Local Agency regarding the development and review of programs and services*
- *Informing and advising Special Education Local Plan Area staff regarding community conditions, aspirations, and goals for individuals with special needs*
- *Making recommendations and suggestions for annual priorities to be addressed*
- *Assisting in parent education and in recruiting parents, volunteers, and agencies who may contribute to the implementation of the Local Plan*
- *Encouraging community awareness and involvement in the development and review of the Local Plan*
- *Supporting activities on behalf of individuals with special needs*
- *Facilitating communication between schools, parents and community*

Participation in regular monthly meetings helps to keep members well informed about current programs and legislation, and facilitates closer communication and better understanding of the mutual goals of school administrators, faculty, parents, and the community.

Your school district Administrator of Special Education or the Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) office will be able to give you information on Special Education Community Advisory Committee meetings. You may also access meeting information by going to the website at [www.edcoe.k12.ca.us](http://www.edcoe.k12.ca.us) and clicking on the SELPA link. All meetings are open to anyone interested. Childcare is available during the meeting, but must be requested ahead of time as space is limited. Please call (530) 295-2236 to request childcare. We encourage your participation.

### **MEETING TIMES AND PLACES**

Regular meeting times and places shall be established by the Committee. The maximum number of meetings would be ten per year, but in no case would there be less than six.

1. Special meetings of the Committee or subcommittees may be scheduled by the chairperson when necessary.
2. All meetings of the Committee shall be open to the public.
3. A notice and agenda of all regularly scheduled meetings shall be mailed to the membership prior to the meeting.

## **VOTING**

1. A quorum shall exist when a majority of the School Districts who have appointed members have representatives present.
2. A simple majority of a quorum is necessary for the conduct of usual business.

## **IMPLEMENTATION OF CAC RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. Members of the Community Advisory Committee have the responsibility to assist in the development and implementation of the Local Plan and setting priorities for special education programs operations by:
  - a. Actively participating and providing input at regularly scheduled CAC meetings.
  - b. Maintaining contact with the LEA special education staff and special education programs of the LEA to gain insight of local needs.
  - c. Periodically reporting CAC activities to LEA Governing Boards.
  - d. Serving on standing and special committees of the CAC.
2. Community Advisory Committee members assist with parent education by:
  - a. Organizing and participating in parent support groups.
  - b. Developing and distributing informational materials of interest to parents, e.g., SELPA Parent Handbook.
  - c. Organizing, attending and participating in local, regional and state CAC workshops and conferences.
  - d. Emphasizing the importance of regular school attendance in public relation activities supported by the CAC.
3. Community Advisory Committee members promote community involvement activities by:
  - a. Organizing and participating in community events such as the Kid's Expo.
4. Contributing to and participating in public relations efforts – news releases, photographs, etc.

**EL DORADO COUNTY SELPA STAFF**  
**(Revised July 2006)**

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(530) 295-2232

**Address:** El Dorado County SELPA  
6767 Green Valley Road  
Placerville, CA 95667  
Fax (530) 621-1397  
[www.edcoe.k12.ca.us/selpa](http://www.edcoe.k12.ca.us/selpa)

## RESOURCES FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Here is a list of CAC's favorite resources. For more resources, call the SELPA office at 530/295-2236, or your CAC representative.

### PUBLICATIONS

- *Special Education Rights and Responsibilities*, by Community Alliance for Special Education Protection and Advocacy, 800/776-5746
- *ADDitude Magazine*, 800/856-2032

### CONTACTS

- Legal Services of Northern California                      800/660-6107
- Alta California Regional Center                              Placerville – 530/626-1353
- Area Board III    916/263-1150
- Protection & Advocacy, Inc.                                    800/776-5746
- Warmline Family Resource Center                            800/660-7995

### CONTACT LIST:

Recreational Resources – Please call your CAC Representative directly for a copy of a list of Recreational Resources for People with Disabilities.

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Adapted Physical Education:** An individual program of developmental activities, games, sports, and rhythms suited to the interests, capacities, and limitations of students with disabilities who may not safely or successfully engage in unrestricted participation in the vigorous activities of the general physical education program.

**Advocate:** Anyone who supports the cause of a person with disabilities or group of people with disabilities, especially in legal or administrative proceedings or public forums.

**Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD):** Diagnostic category of the American Psychiatric Association for a condition in which a child exhibits developmentally inappropriate inattention, impulsivity, and hyperactivity.

**Auditory Processing:** The ability to understand and use information that is heard, both words as well as other non-verbal sounds.

**Autistic:** A term applied to children who exhibit the characteristics of autism, a severe disorder characterized by the inability to communicate through meaningful speech and the inability to develop relationships with other persons due to withdrawal.

**Behavior Disorder:** A disability characterized by behavior that differs markedly and chronically from current social or cultural norms and adversely affects educational performance.

**Behavior Intervention Plan:** Effective May 20, 1993, any student with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) who exhibits a serious behavior problem that significantly interferes with the implementation of the goals and objectives on the student's IEP must have a behavioral intervention plan (BIP) developed by an IEP team with a behavioral intervention case manager. The behavioral intervention plan must now become a part of the IEP under Sections 3001 and 3052 in Title 5, California Code of Regulations. These sections mandate that attempts to change serious and pervasive behavior problems result in lasting positive changes; provide greater access to community, social and public events; that the behavioral interventions do not cause pain or trauma, and that the interventions respect the dignity and privacy of the individual. In the event of a behavioral emergency, procedures are now defined which govern the range of responses to that emergency.

**Behavior Modification:** The systematic application of procedures derived from the principles of behavior (e.g., reinforcement) in order to achieve desired changes in behavior.

**Behavioral Objectives:** A precise measurable statement of what the pupil is expected to achieve, including the conditions under which the pupil will achieve and the criteria for measuring the achievement.

## **Glossary** *(continued)*

**Behavioral Support Plan:** In IDEA, Behavioral Support Plans (BSPs) are mandated for any child with a disability whose behavior impedes the learning of self or others. It is designed to be an earlier, positive intervention than a Behavior Intervention Plan in California Education Code.

**Case Management:** A service that assists student/clients to obtain and coordinate community resources such as income assistance, education, housing, medical care, treatment, vocational preparation, and recreation.

**Cerebral Palsy:** Motor impairment caused by brain damage, which is usually inflicted during the prenatal period or during the birth process. Can involve a wide variety of symptoms and range from mild to severe. It is neither curable, nor progressive.

**Communicatively Disabled (CD):** Difficulty understanding language or using language to the extent that it interferes with learning in school.

**Department of Rehabilitation:** A state agency that purchases services, through the Vocational Rehabilitation and Habilitation Services programs, which address work-related aspects of a person's development.

**Designated Instruction and Services (DIS):** (Also known as related services) Specialized instruction and/or support services identified through an assessment and written on an IEP as necessary for a child to benefit from special education (e.g., speech/language therapy, low vision services, vocational specialist, etc.) These are needed to implement goals of the IEP.

**Developmental Delay (DD):** A term used to describe the development of students who are not able to perform skills other students of the same age are usually able to perform.

**Disability:** Technically, refers to the reduced function or loss of a particular body part or organ. In practice, disability is often used to describe mental or physical impairment that restricts one's ability to function.

**Down Syndrome:** A chromosomal anomaly that often causes moderate to severe mental retardation along with certain physical characteristics such as large tongue, heart problems, poor muscle tone, and a broad flat bridge of the nose.

**Due Process:** Set of legal steps and proceedings carried out according to established rules and principles; designed to protect an individual's constitutional and legal rights.

**Dyslexia:** An impairment in reading ability or partial ability to read; often associated with cerebral dysfunction or minimal brain dysfunction. An individual with this condition does not understand clearly what he/she reads. A more generic term for learning problems including dyslexia is learning disability.

## **GLOSSARY** *(continued)*

**Emotional Disturbance (ED):** One or more of a set of characteristics which adversely affect educational performance; characteristics include an inability to learn which cannot be otherwise explained; an inability to build or maintain interpersonal relationships; inappropriate behaviors or feelings; depression; or school phobia.

**Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS):** A condition sometimes found in the infants of alcoholic mothers; can involve low birth weight, developmental delay, cardiac, and/or limb, and other physical defects.

**Habilitation:** The process through which individuals are assisted in acquiring and maintaining skills which enable them to cope more effectively with their personal needs and circumstances of their environments, and to strive to reach their full physical, mental, and social potential.

**Hearing Impaired:** Describes anyone who has a hearing loss significant enough to require special education training, and /or adaptations; includes both deaf and hard of hearing conditions.

**Inclusion:** Full inclusion refers to the inclusion of a student with special needs in an age appropriate regular classroom at the student's neighborhood school. The student moves with peers to subsequent grades. All related services are provided in the regular classroom through a collaborative approach, except where privacy is an issue. Curriculum may be district core curriculum as for the other students or modified core curriculum to provide physical assistance, adapted content and /or material, multi-level curriculum, curriculum overlapping (same activity, same goals) or substitute curriculum.

**Individualized Educational Program (IEP):** A written educational prescription developed by a school for each child with a disability. An IEP must contain:

- the child's present levels of educational performance
- annual and short-term educational goals
- the specific education program and related services that will be provided to the child
- the extent to which the child will participate in regular education program with non-disabled children

**Individualized Family Services Plan (IFSP):** A requirement of PL 99-457, Education of the Handicapped Act Amendments of 1986, for the coordination of early intervention services for infants and toddlers with disabilities. Similar to the IEP in that is required for all school-age children with disabilities.

**Individualized Program Plan (IPP):** An annually reviewed record of program and service needs provided by Regional Centers (e.g., respite care, behavior management training, etc.).

**Individualized Transition Plan (ITP):** An articulated, interagency educational plan designed to facilitate a student's move from school to employment and a quality adult life. The IEP/ITP addresses critical aspects of a student's transition, including employment goals, residential placement, guardianship, transportation, independent

## **GLOSSARY** *(continued)*

living, and income support. An ITP must be done in conjunction with an IEP.

**Integration:** Integration refers to the inclusion and interaction of students with special needs in an age appropriate regular education program and/or classroom from which they are able to derive educational benefit in a variety of areas including social skills and interactions, communication and language skills, classroom skills, independent living/vocational skills, and academic skills. Integration is an on-going process related to the individual needs of students.

**Learning Disability (LD):** A lack of achievement compared to ability in a specific learning area(s) within the range of achievement of individuals with comparable mental ability. Most definitions emphasize a basic disorder in psychological processes involved in understanding and using spoken or written language. (See *Specific Learning Disability*)

**Least Restrictive Environment (LRE):** A concept expressed by the courts in the 1970's, mandating that each person with a disability should be educated or served in the most "normal" setting and atmosphere. This led to the concept and practice of mainstreaming.

**Legally Blind:** Visual acuity of 20/200 or less in the better eye after the best possible correction with glasses or contact lenses, or vision restricted to a field of 20 degrees or less. Acuity of 20/200 means the eye can see clearly at 20 feet what the normal eye can see at 200.

**Mainstreaming:** A term referring to the predefined period of time during which a special education student participates in general education activities, either academic or non academic (e.g., math, reading, lunch, recess, and art).

**Mental Illness:** A condition that results in deviant thinking, feeling and behavior to a degree that causes difficulty in adjusting to life.

**Mental Retardation:** A broadly used term that refers to significantly sub-average general intellectual functioning manifested during the development period and existing concurrently with impairment in adaptive behavior. At present, definitions indicate a person having an IQ of 70 or less and showing impairment in adaptation or social ability.

**Occupational Therapist:** A professional who programs and/or delivers instructional activities and materials to help children and adults with disabilities learn to participate in daily activities.

**On-the-Job Training:** A method of teaching students with disabilities specific work skills by assigning them to employment on competitive jobs for part of a day or sometimes a full day.

**Orthopedic Impairment:** Any disability caused by disorders of the musculoskeletal system.

## **GLOSSARY** *(continued)*

**Physical Therapist:** A professional trained to help people with disabilities develop and maintain muscular and orthopedic capability.

**Program Specialist:** A Program Specialist is a specialist who holds a valid special education credential, health services credential, or a school psychologist authorization, and who has advanced training and related experience in the education of individuals with exceptional needs and a specialized, in-depth knowledge of special education services.

**Regional Occupational Center/Program (ROC/P):** The concept of ROC/Ps originated with Senate Bill 1379 and was enacted into law by the California Legislature in 1963. These centers and programs are intended to provide vocational and occupational instruction related to the attainment of skills for the upgrading of existing skills so that trainees are prepared for gainful employment.

**Rehabilitation:** A social service program designed to teach a newly disabled person basic skills needed for independence.

**Rehabilitation Department:** Department of Rehabilitation is a state agency that purchases services through the Vocational Rehabilitation and Habilitation Service programs, which address work-related aspects of a person's development.

**Resource Specialist Program (RSP):** Students receiving special education instruction for less than 50% of the school day are enrolled in RSP. These students may be "pulled out" of the general classroom for special assistance during specific periods of the day or week and are taught by credentialed special education Resource Specialists.

**Section 504:** Under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, this section prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities in employment and other fields. A set of regulations (Federal Register, May 4, 1977) was established in an effort to assure their civil rights.

**Special Day Class (SDC):** A self-contained classroom in which only students who require special education instruction for more than 50% of the school day are enrolled.

**Special Education:** The individually planned and systematically monitored arrangement of physical settings, special equipment and materials, teaching procedures, and other interventions designed to help learners with special needs achieve the greatest possible personal self-sufficiency and success in school and community.

**Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA):** The service area covered by the local plan developed under subdivision (a) (b) or (c) of Section 56170 of the Education Code. It may be comprised of one or more school districts or county offices which may choose to join together in planning and delivering special education services for children within their boundaries.

## **GLOSSARY** *(continued)*

**Special Education Community Advisory Committee (SECAC or CAC):** A committee of parents and guardians, including parents and guardians of individuals with exceptional needs, and representatives from schools and community agencies established to advise the SELPA regarding the development and review of programs under the local comprehensive plan.

**Specific Learning Disability (SLD):** A disability which involves a severe discrepancy between intellectual ability and academic achievement due to a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes and is not primarily the result of visual, hearing or motor disabilities, mental retardation, or of environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage.

**Student Study Team (SST):** A general education process designed to make preliminary modifications within the general education program of a student not succeeding in class (sometimes referred to as a “Child Study Team” or “Student Success Team”).

**Transition:** Transition is a purposeful, organized, and outcome-oriented process designed to help “at risk” students move from school to employment and a quality adult life. Expected student outcomes include meaningful employment, a further education, and/or participation in the community.

**Traumatic Brain Injury:** Term used in professional practice; applies only to person with acquired brain injuries caused by an external physical force. Does not apply to injuries caused by internal occurrences such as infections, tumors, fever, exposure to toxic substances, or near drowning. Educational performance may meet the criteria of one of the other disability categories, such as “other health impaired”, “specific learning disabilities”, or “multiple disabilities”.

**WorkAbility:** Program which promotes independent living and provides comprehensive pre-employment worksite training, employment and follow-up services for youth in special education who are making the transition from school to work, post-secondary education, or training.