



Solano County SELPA Parent Handbook

Solano SELPA



SOLANO COUNTY SELPA PARENT HANDBOOK: INFORMATION ON SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

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These materials are based on special education laws and court decisions in effect at the time of publication. Federal and State special education law may change at any time. If there is any question about the continued legal authority of any information in this handbook, contact your school district's director of special education.

Solano County Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA)
 Solano County Office of Education
 5100 Business Center Drive, Fairfield, CA 94534
 707-399-4460

Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) Participants:
Local Education Agencies (LEAs)/Public Education Agencies (PEAs)

| | |
|---|--|
| Solano County Office of Education (SCOE) Special Education Programs Golden Hills Educational Center, Building 8 2460 Clay Bank Road Fairfield, CA 94533 707-399-4867 | Travis Unified School District (TUSD) 2751 De Ronde Drive Fairfield, CA 94533-9710 707-437-4604 ext. 1216 |
| Benicia Unified School District (BUSD) 350 East K Street Benicia, CA 94510 707-748-2640 | Dixon Unified School District (DUSD) 180 South First Street Dixon, CA 95620-2797 707-678-5582 ext. 8010 |
| Fairfield-Suisun Unified School District (FSUSD) 2490 Hilborn Road Fairfield, CA 94534 707- 399-5071 | Vacaville Unified School District (VUSD) 401 Nut Tree Vacaville, CA 95687 707-453-7207 |



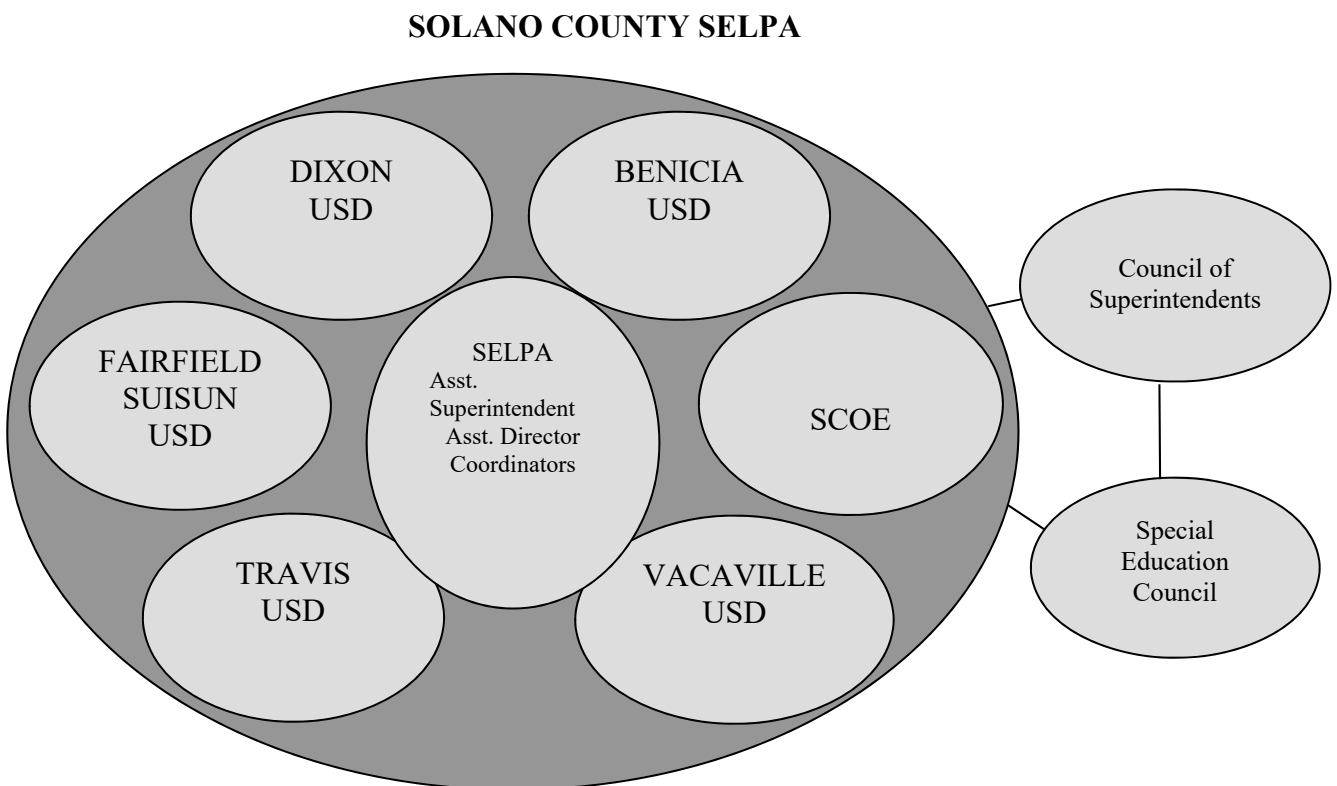
CHAPTER 1. THE SPECIAL EDUCATION PROCESS: AN OVERVIEW

What is a SELPA?

In 1977, all school districts and county school offices were mandated to form consortiums in geographical regions of sufficient size and scope to provide for all special education service needs of children residing within the region boundaries. Each region, Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA), developed a local plan describing how it would provide special education services.

SELPA's are dedicated to the belief that all students can learn and that special needs students must be guaranteed equal opportunity to become contributing members of society. SELPA's facilitate high quality educational programs and services for special needs students and training for parents and educators. The SELPA collaborates with county agencies and school districts to develop and maintain healthy and enriching environments in which special needs students and families can live and succeed.

The Solano County SELPA consists of five school districts and the Solano County Office of Education. The Solano County Office of Education also serves as the administrative unit for the SELPA. Member districts include: Benicia Unified School District, Dixon Unified School District, Fairfield-Suisun Unified School District, Travis Unified School District, and Vacaville Unified School District.



What is the function of the Solano County SELPA?

The SELPA develops a Local Plan for special education that defines the governance structure and the local procedures for identifying and serving pupils with disabilities across all five districts. Each member district's board of education approves the SELPA Local Plan for special education. The Solano County SELPA's Council of Superintendents approves all plans and expenditures developed by the Special Education Council of District Directors with the support of the SELPA Assistant Superintendent.

What role does the SELPA Assistant Superintendent play?

The SELPA Assistant Superintendent works at the direction of the Superintendent's Council to assure full compliance with state and federal special education laws. Responsibilities include:

- * Ensuring Program Availability for All Children with Disabilities
- * Community Advisory Committee Support
- * Management Information System
- * Interagency Coordination
- * Personnel Development
- * Budget Review
- * Evaluation
- * Program Coordination
- * Fiscal Management
- * Community Awareness
- * Ensuring Legal Compliance

What roles do the Directors of Special Education play?

The district directors administer the provision of special education programs and services in each district. The county office director and assistant director oversee county-operated classes throughout the SELPA.

What is special education?

Special education is a specially designed instruction, at no cost to the parents, designed to meet the unique educational needs of children with disabilities. Special education services can begin at birth and continue, if needed, up to 22 years of age for students who qualify per laws and regulations outlined by the federal and state governments and whose parents give their written consent to such services.

Who receives special education services?

To receive special education services, a student must meet the legal criteria for eligibility. The student's eligibility is determined after a complete assessment, in all areas of suspected disability, by a qualified multidisciplinary team of professionals. The student must fall into one of the following categories:



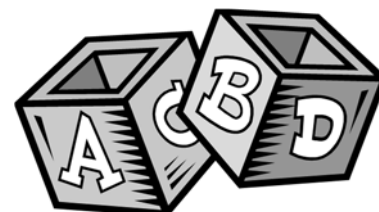
1. Infant/Toddler Disabilities (ages birth to 2.11) - A significant developmental delay in one or more of the five developmental areas, have an at-risk condition, or have potential high risk factors.
2. Preschool Disabilities (ages 3-5) - Children in this age group must meet the same eligibility requirements as the K-12 population unless they have a disabling medical condition or syndrome that the IEP team determines has a high predictability of requiring special education services.
3. School age population - Students in Kindergarten through grade 12.

4. Post-secondary students from ages 18-21 who have not completed their course of study and require intensive educational services to make a successful transition into adult life.

There are 13 categories of special education as defined by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). To qualify for special education, the IEP team must determine that a child has one of the following **and** requires specially designed instruction:

| | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Autism | Blindness |
| Deafness | Emotional Disturbance |
| Hearing Impairment | Intellectual Disability |
| Multiple Disabilities | Orthopedic Impairment |
| Other Health Impaired | Specific Learning Disability |
| Speech or Language Impairment | Traumatic Brain Injury |
| Visual Impairment | |

Preschool children, ages 3 to 5 years old, may qualify for special education services if they have one of the previously listed eligible disabilities or an "established medical disability." An "established medical disability" is a disabling medical condition or congenital syndrome very likely to require special education services.



Conditions that alone do not make a child eligible for special education:

| Classification | Explanation |
|--|--|
| Dyslexia (or reading difficulties) | A student who is assessed as being dyslexic must meet the criteria for "specific learning disability" in order to qualify for special education. |
| Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) and/or ADHD | A student whose educational performance is adversely affected by a suspected or diagnosed Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) or Attention Deficit with Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and demonstrates a need for special education and related services must meet the criteria for Other Health Impairment, Emotional Disturbance, or Specific Learning Disability as defined in the California Education Code of Regulations in order to qualify for special education. |

Who is not eligible?

Individuals are not eligible for special education when it has been determined that their difficulties are the result of one or more of the following:

- Limited school experience
- Poor school attendance



- Cultural or economic disadvantages
- Lack of familiarity with the English language

These difficulties must be addressed by modifications, accommodations, or by other regular categorical services offered within general education.

What if my child has disabilities but does not qualify for special education under IDEA?

If, based on the assessment results, the IEP team agrees that the child is not eligible for special education services, an IEP will not be written. However, he/she may qualify for accommodations under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Under this act, disability is defined more broadly to include persons who have, or have a record of, physical or mental impairments that substantially limit one or more major life activities. Examples of such activities include caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working.

Per Section 504, physical impairments may include any physical disorder or condition, cosmetic disfigurement, or loss of bodily parts or functions. Mental impairments may include such mental or psychological disorders as organic brain syndrome, emotional or mental illness, and specific learning disabilities.

Section 504 assures that a child with disabilities not suffer discrimination in any program receiving federal funding. Specifically, it states that "...no otherwise qualified individual with disabilities shall, solely by reason of the disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.

What is a Section 504 Accommodation?

The Student Study Team will suggest interventions and accommodations to the general education program for a student who may qualify under Section 504. The Student Study Team will approve a plan for interventions related to the needs of the eligible student to ensure

that the individual receives an appropriate education. This is called a "504 Accommodation Plan."

The Plan outlines program accommodations to be made for the student and/or provides special aids and services required for the student to succeed in the classroom. Accommodations and services might include, modifications in student assignments, modifications in test taking procedures, help in organization and study skills, etc. An accommodation plan is designed by the general education staff for the student based on his/her individual needs. Each school district in Solano County has appointed a 504 Coordinator to assist parents with questions related to the implementation of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Contact your school district office for the name and phone number of this person.

Children who have been medically diagnosed as having a chronic illness or acute health problem may be provided services under Section 504 guidelines or may be referred for an assessment to determine the need for special education.

CHAPTER 2. PARENT'S ROLE AND RIGHTS IN THE SPECIAL EDUCATION PROCESS: PARENTS AS PARTNERS

Why are parent partners in the special education process?

As parents, you are the primary advocate and decision-maker for your child. Your participation and involvement in your child's education is vital to his/her success. Communication and collaboration between home and school is an important key to the educational success of your child. The following are ways in which your participation can make a difference:

- Participate in planning the Individual Education Program (IEP) for your child;
- Present information to the IEP team in person or through a representative;
- Bring additional persons to the IEP team meeting, i.e., grandparents, social worker, friend, case manager, advocate;
- Maintain contact with the teacher regarding the child's continuing progress;
- Ask for a parent/teacher conference when desired;
- Ask for an IEP team review as appropriate;
- Confer with site/program administrator or district administrator when needed;
- Participate as members of your school district's Advisory Committee;
- Attend parent workshops to learn more about child development and special education issues;
- Participate as a volunteer in school-related activities;
- Participate in the school's Parent-Teacher Association/Organization/PTA/PTO.

What are my responsibilities in this partnership?

Here is a checklist for parents (adapted from Alexander, R. and Tompkins-McGill, P. (1987), *Social Work*, 32, (4), 361-362,) that may help you better understand your role and responsibilities as a partner in the special education process.

- I believe I am an equal partner with professionals, and accept my share of the responsibility for solving problems and making plans for my child.
- I clearly express my child's educational needs and needs of my family to professionals in an assertive manner.
- I treat each professional as an individual and avoid letting past negative experiences or negative attitudes get in the way of establishing a good working relationship.
- I communicate quickly with professionals serving my child when significant changes or notable events occur.
- When I make a commitment for a plan of action, I follow through.
- I maintain realistic expectations of professionals, my child, and myself.



What is the role of surrogate parents?

To protect the rights of the child, the district must determine if he or she needs a surrogate parent, and if appropriate, assign a surrogate parent when:

- No parent or guardian can be identified;
- The district, after reasonable efforts, cannot find the parent or guardian; or
- The child is a dependent or ward of the court, and the parent's educational rights have been removed.

The school district or court must ensure that the person selected to be a surrogate parent has no interest that conflicts with the interest of the child he or she represents. In addition, the person selected should have the knowledge and skills to adequately represent the child.

The surrogate parent may not be a person employed by the school district, county office of education, or any other agency that is involved with the education or care of the child. A person is not an employee of the district solely because he or she is paid by the district to serve as a surrogate parent.

The surrogate parent may represent the child in matters relating to identification, assessment, instructional planning and development, educational placement, reviewing and revising the IEP, and provision of a full and appropriate education (FAPE) to the child. He or she may sign any consent related to IEP purposes. This includes consenting to an IEP including non-emergency medical services, mental health treatment services, and occupational or physical therapy services.

A surrogate parent will be held harmless by the State of California when acting in his or her official capacity except for wanton, reckless, or malicious acts of omissions.

The following is a link to the procedural safeguards. These procedural safeguards transfer to the student upon his/her 18th birthday if he/she is still receiving special education programs and/or services.

[Procedural Safeguards \(English\)](#)

The California Department of Special Education also provides several translations of the procedural safeguards.

[Available Translations of Procedural Safeguards](#)

CHAPTER 3. COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION

What is the Community Advisory Committee (CAC)?

The Community Advisory Committee (CAC) originated under the California Master Plan and since that time has functioned under legislative mandate (Education Code Section 56194). The CAC acts in an advisory capacity to the Special Education Local Plan Area and involves the community in actively participating in the development, amendment, and review of the SELPA's Local Plan for Special Education.

The CAC's responsibilities include the following:

- Advising the policy and administrative entity of the district, special education local plan area, or county office, regarding the development, amendment, and review of the local plan for special education.
- Recommending annual priorities to be addressed by the plan.
- Assisting in parent education and in recruiting parents and other volunteers who may contribute to the implementation of the plan.
- Encouraging community involvement in the development and review of the plan.
- Supporting activities on behalf of individuals with exceptional needs.
- Assisting in parent awareness of the importance of regular school attendance.



What are Local Advisory Committees (LACs)?

A Local Advisory Committee (LAC) is an optional advisory body in each district convened at the discretion of the District Board. LACs may meet monthly to discuss district special education issues. It is separate from the CAC, and is not mandated by law. A representative from each district LAC is recommended to attend the SELPA Community Advisory Committee (CAC) monthly meetings to share local concerns and activities as well as to bring information from the CAC back to the district.

[Link to CAC Bylaws](#)

[Link Brochure here also](#)

When are the meetings?

CAC meets monthly during the school year. For information on meeting location, dates, and times, call the SELPA at 399.4460. For information on local advisory meetings, call your local district's Director of Special Education.

| | |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| Benicia USD | 707-748-2640 |
| Dixon USD | 707-639-6300 Ext. 8010 |
| Fairfield-Suisun USD | 707-399-5071 |
| Travis USD | 707-437-4604 ext. 1216 |
| Vacaville USD | 707-453-7207 |

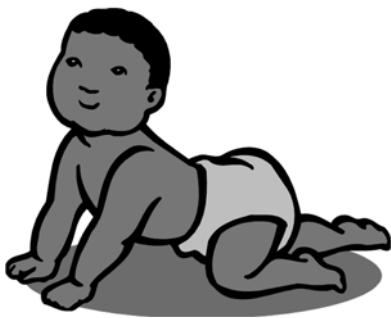
CHAPTER 4. INFANTS AND TODDLERS WHO REQUIRE SPECIAL EDUCATION

The Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP)

The Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) for infants and toddlers (ages birth to 3 years) is a specific plan written with your help and input as the parent. The IFSP is developed to help identify strengths, needs, concerns, and priorities for early intervention services. You are needed to help develop this plan and to share your ideas about your child's special needs, the type of program appropriate to meeting those needs, and the related services the school or agencies will provide to help your child benefit from the educational program. To ensure your child receives the most out of his or her educational program, you need to: develop a partnership with the school or agency; share relevant information about your child's education and development; and monitor your child's progress and keep records. Your observations and suggestions can be a valuable resource to aid your child's progress. You are the single, most important influence on your child's growth and development.

How are infant and toddler programs and services provided in this SELPA?

Since the enactment of the California Early Intervention Services Act (10/1/93), the Solano County SELPA works together with other agencies as part of the Early Start Interagency Network. Providing educational services with active parent involvement can significantly reduce the potential impact of many disabling conditions and positively influence later development when the child reaches school age. North Bay Regional Center is the lead agency for services to children and families under age three in Solano County.



Early education programs provide a continuum of program options provided by a multidisciplinary team to meet the multiple and varied needs of infants and their families. Recognizing the parent as the infant's primary teacher, early education programs include opportunities for the family to receive home visits and to participate in family involvement activities. To the maximum extent appropriate, services will be provided in natural environments including the home and community settings in which children without disabilities participate.

Services from state and local agencies serving infants with exceptional needs and their families are coordinated between the SELPA and North Bay Regional Center.

In the Solano County SELPA, the infant/toddler program is called the Me Too Program and operates as part of California's Interagency Early Start Program. The special education services that are provided through this program are based on the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP). The Me Too Program works in coordination with other agencies to provide early intervention services.

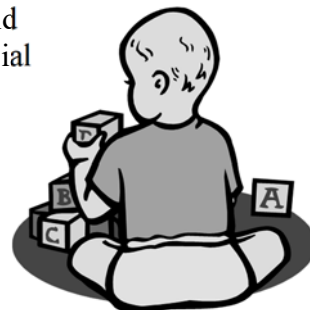
To refer an infant/toddler for services, call the Early Start Early Intervention "Warmline" located at North Bay Regional Center (NBRC) at 1-800-646-3268.

The Warmline will accept referrals up to the child's third birthday. An intake coordinator or an Early Intervention specialist will be assigned and will contact you to discuss your child's and family's needs, which may include a referral to the Me Too Program, if appropriate for your child. The program locations are at T.C. McDaniel Center, 1895 Woolner Avenue,

Fairfield (422-3418) and at the Irene Larsen Center, 1707 California Drive, Vacaville (449.6420).

What services are provided by the Me Too Program?

- Screening and comprehensive developmental assessments by a multidisciplinary educational team.
- Home visit educational programs for the child and child's family.
- Community or center-based classroom educational program for toddlers that includes parent participation and education.
- Speech and language therapy provided through individual and small group sessions and/or parent-child groups.
- Coordination with professionals from other programs and services, such as Child Haven, Easter Seals, North Bay Rehabilitation Services and Solano County Social Services.



Services for Parents

Family-focused services designed to enhance the ability of the family to meet their child's special needs:

- Parent education.
- Parent support groups.
- Community resources referrals.
- Coordination with the Family Resource Center.

Eligibility

Eligibility is based on federal and state criteria. The child must:

- Be from birth to three years of age.
- Be a resident of Solano County (excluding Vallejo, where services are provided through a separate program).
- Exhibit a delay in motor, cognitive, communication, social/emotional, and/or adaptive development of 50% of chronological age in one developmental area or 25% in two or more developmental areas.
- Or - have an established risk condition such as a diagnosis of Down syndrome or cerebral palsy.
- Or - have a low incidence disability such as a visual impairment, a hearing impairment, an orthopedic impairment, or a combination of these disabilities.

What is the timeline for developing the Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP)?

Within two working days: Identification is made by "primary referral source." Referral is made to the "appropriate public agency" which is North Bay Regional Center Warmline.

Within 45 calendar days: Referral is received by appropriate public agency. Parent is notified of referral and intent to evaluate. Parent consents to initial evaluation and assessment. Evaluation and assessment activities are conducted. Meeting is held to develop initial service IFSP including identification of service coordinator. Parent consents to provision of early intervention services (for the first time). The services will begin on the date designated in the child's IFSP. A periodic review will be conducted at least every six months. Annually, a child's IFSP will be reviewed.



What must the IFSP include?

An IFSP must include the following specific information:

- With the concurrence of the family, a statement of the family's concerns, priorities, and resources related to enhancing the development of the eligible infant or toddler.
- Statement based on evaluation and assessment information of the infant or toddler's present levels of physical development, including fine and gross motor development, vision, hearing and health status; cognitive development; communication development; social or emotional development; and adaptive developments.
- A statement of the developmental outcomes expected to be achieved for the infant or toddler and family when services for the family are related to meeting the special developmental needs of the infant or toddler.
- The criteria, procedures, and timelines used to determine the degree to which progress toward achieving the outcomes is being made and whether modifications or revisions are necessary.
- A statement of the specific early intervention services necessary to meet the unique needs of the infant or toddler, the frequency, intensity, location, initiation date, duration, and method of delivering the services, and ways of providing services in natural environments. The statement shall include a justification of the extent to which services will not be provided in a natural environment.
- A statement of the agency responsible for providing the identified services.
- The name of the service coordinator who shall be responsible for facilitating implementation of the plan and coordinating with other agencies and persons.
- The steps to be taken to ensure transition of the infant or toddler upon reaching three years of age to other appropriate services, and must be started by 30-33 months of age for ongoing clients.

CHAPTER 5. SUPPORTS FOR SCHOOL-AGE STUDENTS AT RISK: PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION

What can I do if my child is having difficulty in school?

Parents who question whether their child is making satisfactory progress in the classroom should request a conference with the child's teacher, principal, and/or counselor. If it is felt that additional assistance for the student is needed, parents or teachers can request that he/she be brought to the attention of the Student Study Team (SST) or Child Study Team.

What is the Student Study Team (SST)?

The SST is a general education process that is used at every school to address concerns about students' progress. It uses a systematic approach to assist students who struggling in general education classes. Although it is a major vehicle for assimilating and reviewing identification and screening information for students who are "at risk," it does not have a special education focus.

The SST is responsible for ensuring that all general education programs and modifications have been exhausted before a special education referral is made.

SST recommendations at your child's school may include:

- Changes in your child's program or modification to the curriculum,
- Changes in or modification of education materials,
- Changes in the regular teacher's teaching methods (instructional style, behavior management, etc.),
- Changes in home school communication, such as homework assignments,
- Your child's participation in other programs and services available at your child's school (such as limited English proficiency language programs, or Title I reading programs).



The SST is a multi-disciplinary group process that may include the following participants:

- Referring Teacher
- Parent (You are encouraged to participate in the Student Study Team process if you are notified of such a meeting regarding your child.)
- Principal or his/her designee
- Resource Teacher
- Department Chairman (High School)
- Resource Specialist
- Others as needed (Psychologist, Language/Speech Specialist, Nurse)

What if these interventions do not work for my child?



Referrals from general education to special education are only made after extensive efforts are used by the school staff to improve a child's educational or developmental growth. If classroom modifications and strategies tried as a result of the SST process do not appear to remedy their child's learning difficulties, parents may refer their child for consideration for special education. They may do so in writing or orally, but it is best to make a referral in writing so there is a record of it and the date the request was made. If you are unsure about how to write the request staff are required to assist you in putting your request in writing. Appropriate professional persons, such as medical doctors and certified therapists, may refer a child, as may community service agency representatives and concerned members of the public. Students may even refer themselves. In fact, the school district's

identification procedures must include systematic methods of soliciting referrals of children from such individuals and agencies.

Individuals who refer a child for consideration for special education services should state clearly the specific concerns about the child that prompted the referral, that is; they should state why they think the child may have a disability that makes the child eligible for special education. Please see sample letter on page 28.

Who might benefit from a referral for consideration for special education services?

Children having significant difficulties or delays in the areas of vision, hearing, speech and/or language, overall cognitive or motor development, or those who have emotional disturbance, traumatic brain injury, autism spectrum disorder, multiple disabilities, or other health impairments may benefit from a referral for special education evaluation, intervention, and/or related services. (See eligibility criteria in Chapter 6.)

Children whose achievement is being significantly affected by learning disabilities (with or without Attention Deficit Disorder or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder) may be evaluated for special education eligibility after a series of prescribed classroom interventions, modifications, and supplemental aides and services have been attempted, documented, and have been proven to be inadequate or unsuccessful over time.

CHAPTER 6. THE SPECIAL EDUCATION PROCESS: DETERMINING ELIGIBILITY

The special education process determines whether or not your child is eligible for special education service, and if so, what special education service(s) are appropriate for your child. There are six basic steps in the special education process:

1. Provision of supports, interventions, and modifications to the child's general education program
2. Referral for assessment (if these interventions are ineffective)
3. Assessment and determination of eligibility for special education services
4. Development and implementation of an Individualized Education Program (IEP)
5. IEP review at least annually
6. Reassessment every three (3) years thereafter



Who is responsible for identifying children who may have disabilities?

Each public school district, special education local plan area, or county office is required by law to identify all individuals who have disabilities as specified in the IDEIA. These individuals are of ages birth-21 years who reside in the district or are under the jurisdiction of the special education local plan area (SELPA). They also include students enrolled in private school. The school districts in the Solano County SELPA conduct ongoing search and serve efforts to identify these students.

School staff has a responsibility to identify children and youth who have exceptional needs and refer them for assessment. This means that teachers may be asking parents and others to join them in the identification process. Parents are encouraged to make referrals to the local school for assessment of their child's possible needs if they are concerned that their child may have a disability.

How are children who may have disabilities identified?

Although the legal responsibility for identifying children who may benefit from special education services belongs to the school district, parents may also refer their children for consideration for special education services. Before making a referral, however, parents who are concerned about their child's educational performance should contact their child's teachers or the school principal.

When a child may have special needs, he/she may be referred for an assessment to determine whether or not he/she is eligible for special education services. Parents, teachers, the principal, a doctor, a community agency, the school's Student Study Team (SST), any concerned individual, or the child may make a referral.

If a child continues to have difficulty after general education modifications, supports and supplementary services have been implemented; the referring person prepares a special

education referral form and gives it to one of the special education staff at their school. The following information is provided to the parents:

- Notification of the referral,
- Information in writing of parent rights and due process procedures, and
- An assessment plan that parents are asked to sign giving permission to the school to assess the child. (An assessment plan must be developed and presented to the parents within 15 days of the referral.)

Parent referrals should be made in writing. SELPA form "Parent and/or Agency Referral for Special Education services," may be used or the parent may refer by writing a letter such as the following to the principal and/or school psychologist.

Referral for Special Education Sample Letter

Date

Name, Director of Special Education
Local Unified School District
Address
City State, Zip Code

Dear Name:

I am the parent of (child's name) who is currently enrolled at the _____
School in the _____ grade. My child has not been doing well in school, and I am
concerned about his/her educational progress.

I am writing to make a referral for assessment for special education services for (child's name). He/She may be eligible for special education assistance. I am requesting that (child's name) be given a comprehensive assessment by the school district and that an IEP meeting be scheduled for him/her.

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,

Your Name
Address
City, State, Zip Code
Telephone Number(s)

Children should be referred to special education only after all other school resources have been considered and appropriately used in a general education program. Referrals of infants (birth through 2 years) are made by calling North Bay Regional Center Warmline at 800-646-3268. Parents, daycare providers, agencies, and public and private preschools who wish to refer preschool students (ages 3-5) should contact the district director of special education who then notifies the appropriate staff to proceed with the assessment. For children attending other than a public school or for children not of school age, parents should contact the public school the child would normally attend if enrolled in a public school to begin the referral process.

Note: A referral to special education does not mean that a child will automatically receive special education services. A referral does mean that a child shall be considered for assessment.

Who tests my child and what do they assess?

When a request for assessment is received from the SST/CST or the parents, the student is considered for assessment by appropriate staff. If the assessment is appropriate, the child will be tested in all areas of suspected disability, by a multidisciplinary team.

No assessment for special education can be conducted without prior written consent of the parent. This requirement does not apply to the generalized screening and routine testing given to all students in school, but it does apply to any activity that will lead to in-depth testing or placement in special education. Within 15 days of the receipt of the referral, the school district will develop an assessment plan.

After a child is referred by school staff, a representative of the district (often the school psychologist or resource specialist) will contact the parent(s) or guardian and will:

- Review the reason(s) for the proposed assessment.
- Describe the materials and procedures that will be used to obtain more information about the child.
- Explain the rights of the parent(s) related to assessment.
- Determine the student's primary language and language proficiency status.
- Describe alternate assessment means as appropriate.
- Ask the parent(s) to provide written permission for an evaluation to be conducted.
- Obtain written consent for the release of any confidential information.

Your consent is essential for the district to determine whether special education is an option for your child. Without your consent, the district has no authority to proceed. When parents sign the assessment plan, they give the school district the authority to proceed with assessments and testing specified in the plan.

The parents or legal guardian may take as much time as they feel necessary to sign and return the assessment plan. If the parents or their representatives cannot be contacted, a log of the efforts to contact is maintained which may include telephone calls, home visits, and copies of communications sent by registered mail.

If you have any questions about the assessment plan for your child, do not hesitate to contact the appropriate staff member for further explanation. If you have assessment information from another specialist (e.g., doctor, therapist, etc.), this information should be shared with the IEP/IFSP team.

A multidisciplinary team, including at least one teacher or specialist knowledgeable in the area of the suspected disability is designated by the IEP team chairperson to conduct the assessment. The assessment team maintains a complete written record of all procedures, conclusions, and suggestions as to the student's future programming. Parent participation in the development of the assessment plan is encouraged to provide an optimum view of the student's unique needs.

Available information from recent assessments, including available independent assessments, and information provided by the parent are considered along with the school's assessments when determining the child's eligibility, programs, and/or services.



When will the assessment be performed and completed?

The school has sixty (60) days, not counting school vacations greater than five (5) days, from the receipt of your signed assessment plan to complete the assessment and hold an Individualized Education Program (IEP) meeting.

If you do not consent to the assessment plan, the school may take steps to protect your child if it believes that he or she is being denied appropriate special education services. The school may request to meet with you informally or initiate a due process hearing to override your refusal to consent. If the school determines an assessment is not necessary, the parent has the right to initiate a due process hearing if they believe an assessment is appropriate.

What kind of assessment procedures are used to determine a child's eligibility for special education?

An assessment involves gathering information about your child to determine whether your child has a disability, if he or she is eligible, and the nature and extent of special education services that your child may need.

Assessment procedures might include observation of the child in classroom and real-life settings, standardized tests, review of school records, interviews, conferences, and a review of steps already taken to help the child. The specific procedures used will depend on the child's suspected disability. No single assessment procedure is to serve as the sole means of determining eligibility for special education. Parents have the right to participate in the development of an assessment plan and are encouraged to do so.

- Your child will be assessed in all areas related to his or her suspected disability.
- The assessment will be administered in your child's primary language or a qualified interpreter will be provided.
- The assessment must include a variety of appropriate tests to measure your child's strengths and needs. The persons administering these tests must be qualified to do so.
- The assessment will be adapted for students with impaired sensory, physical, or speaking skills.
- A multidisciplinary team, including at least one teacher or other specialist with knowledge in the area of your child's suspected disability, will assess your child.
- Testing and assessment materials and procedures must not be racially, culturally, or sexually discriminatory.



The procedures and materials used in assessment must avoid discrimination against the child on the basis of race, culture, or sex. They must also be:

- Used and provided in the language with which the child is most comfortable, if feasible. (If it is not feasible to do so, the reason must be stated in the assessment plan, which also must indicate the language in which the assessment will be conducted.)
- Appropriate for the specific purposes for which they are intended.
- Administered by trained personnel, knowledgeable about the disabilities the child may have.
- Tailored to the child's specific educational needs.

What happens to the assessment information/results?

Once an assessment is completed, the school district personnel who conducted the assessment prepare a written report. The report must provide a recommendation as to whether the child needs special education and related services and explain how the decision was made. It must describe the behavior of the child observed during assessment and explain the relationship of that behavior to the child's academic performance and social interactions. It also must describe any health and development, and medical findings that might have a bearing on the child's education. If environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantages were found to affect the child's educational performance, these are to be noted and explained also.



What if I don't agree with the assessment results?

If you disagree with the school's assessment of your child, you may obtain an independent educational assessment of your child. Upon your request, the school must give you information about how to obtain this independent assessment by a qualified examiner who is not employed by the district.

You have the right to request that the district pay for the independent educational assessment of your child. Whenever the district pays for an independent educational assessment, the criteria under which the assessment is obtained, including the location of the assessment and the qualifications of the examiner, must be the same criteria used by the district when it initiates an assessment.

The district may initiate a due process hearing to show its assessment was proper. If the final decision of the hearing officer is that the district's assessment was proper, you still have the right to an independent educational assessment, but you will be required to pay for that assessment. If you obtain an independent educational assessment at your own expense, the results of the assessment must be considered by the district in any decision made concerning your child's education, and may be presented as evidence at a due process hearing regarding your child.

If a hearing officer requests an independent educational assessment as part of a hearing, you will not have to pay for that assessment.

Remember, assessment does not necessarily result in special education placement. Your child may not be eligible for nor need special education services. However, the decision regarding special education eligibility is made by the complete IEP team, including the parent.

CHAPTER 7. PREPARING FOR AND PARTICIPATING IN THE IEP TEAM MEETING

What is an Individualized Education Program?

If the IEP team - the participants in the IEP meeting - determine that a child has a disability covered under special education law and would benefit from special education services, the team develops an Individualized Education Program. The IEP is not to be developed prior to the initial IEP team meeting or without the participation of the child's parents. However, staff may prepare a draft of proposed goals and objectives to be discussed, amended, and approved by the IEP team. The IEP is a written document that describes what the child's needs are and what services will best meet those needs.



The IEP may be considered an educational blueprint. It describes the child's skills and needs, outlines a plan of specially designed instruction to take advantage of those skills and respond to those needs, and establishes educational goals and objectives or benchmarks to be achieved during the next year. The plan is to be reviewed each year and more often if parents or teachers request it. The IEP is an agreement by the school to provide specific services; however, it does not guarantee specific outcomes.

What is the IEP team meeting?

When the assessment has been completed, an Individualized Education Program (IEP) team meeting will be held. The parent will receive written notification as to when and where this meeting will take place. The IEP team meeting is very important. If you cannot attend at the time suggested, call the IEP chairperson immediately to arrange a time that is mutually convenient for you and the school and discuss other meeting options, such as participating by phone.

Who participates on the IEP team?

The IEP team consists of at least four persons: the parent(s), the administrator or his/her designee, at least one of the child's general education teachers, a special education teacher and others familiar with the assessments of your child and his/her needs, such as, a speech/language specialist, the school psychologist, therapist, counselor, translator, etc. The student may attend when appropriate and should attend when his/her Individualized Transition Plan (ITP) is being designed and reviewed. As of July 1, 2005, IEP team members may be excused from attending the meeting if their area of focus will not be discussed or if they have submitted a report in writing and the parent and district consent in writing to excuse their attendance.

What will happen at the IEP team meeting?

You will have the opportunity to participate as an active member of the IEP team by:

- Listening to others' information* regarding your child;
- Sharing your own information about your child;
- Sharing your thoughts and concerns;
- Participating in decisions regarding your child's education.

* The IEP team members will share with you the results of the assessment, observation of your child's performance at school, and other factors that the team members consider important.



What is my role in the IEP team?

Parents are to participate as full and equal members of the IEP team. They bring vital information to the IEP meeting, because they know their children in a way no one else does.

Parents should not hesitate to ask other team members to repeat information, to offer additional explanation, or to define terms in everyday language, nor should they hesitate to suggest the kinds of interventions they believe their child needs and to raise questions about suggestions made by other team members.

What decisions will be made at the IEP team meeting?

The IEP team determines whether the child is eligible for services based upon his/her needs and federal and state criteria for eligibility. If the child is eligible, an IEP will be developed and written with input provided by the team. Parent participation is very important in the entire process.

You will be asked to give written approval of the Individualized Education Program at the IEP meeting. A system to measure your child's progress will be developed and reviewed yearly. Your written permission is required when a change in educational placement or program is proposed. For instances where only partial agreement is reached, only those goals and objectives, programs, and services to which you agree will be implemented.

A student's IEP is a cooperative effort among the school, the home, and the student. Communication between home and school should be continued even after the formal conferences and meetings take place. Requests for informal conferences with the teachers, requests to visit the classroom, notes, or phone calls are all ways that parents can use to learn about their child's program and performance as well as contribute important information and suggestions to staff who work with their child.

IEP's may be amended by either:

1. an IEP team at an IEP team meeting **or**
2. in a written agreement to amend the IEP that is signed by both the parent and the district representative.

When a child is found to be eligible for special education services, the IEP will contain:

- **A description of the student's present levels of educational performance in each area of suspected disability:**

The statements should be in narrative form with descriptions based on the assessments of what the child can and cannot do, that is, of skills the child has mastered and what he or she needs to learn next. The skills described should include academics, social behavior, language development, self-help skills, motor development, and prevocational/vocational skills, as appropriate to the child's age and disability.

- **A statement of annual educational goals, including for children who have significant cognitive disabilities, short-term educational objectives:**

This statement will list - in priority order and in a positive, action-oriented way - skills and/or behaviors that the child and his or her teachers will be striving to develop during the next year. Categories of skills parents might expect to be listed are academic skills (for example, reading, writing, spelling, math); social skills (for example, getting along with others, following rules, etc.); self-help skills (for example, asking for help, working independently, etc.); motor skills (for example, handwriting skills, P.E. skills, etc.); and prevocational/vocational skills (for example, following directions, completing jobs, using tools), depending on the child's age and disability. For each goal listed, the steps that must be taken to reach the goal will be described in the objectives that follow. For students whose primary language is other than English, linguistically appropriate goals, objectives, programs and services are included.



- **A description of the necessary special education instruction and related services:**

This description specifies services that will be provided to meet the child's learning needs, for example, speech/language services, assistive technology, adaptive physical education or vocational education. It will specify the type of program or class in which the child will be placed, for example, general education classroom with special assistance, part-time services, or full-time special class placement. Persons responsible for providing the services will be listed, for example, resource specialist or adaptive physical education teacher.

Extended school year:

If the IEP team determines that the child needs extended school year services (ESY), that is, services that go beyond the average school year, those services will be listed on the placement page. Extended school year services are appropriate when it is clear that interrupting the child's educational program - for example, for summer vacation - will likely cause the child a loss in acquired knowledge or skills or will make it unlikely that the child will maintain the knowledge or skills targeted on the IEP as short-term instructional objectives.

- **A statement will be made describing the extent to which the child will participate in regular education programs:**

As well as a statement describing those areas in which he/she will receive special education instruction: these statements should indicate both the academic and nonacademic general education programs in which their child will participate with his or her non-disabled peers and will describe any modifications or accommodations that may be necessary in general education programs to facilitate the child's participation.



- **The projected date for beginning the programs and services** is described and the anticipated duration of the programs and services as well as the date on which the IEP will be reviewed is listed.

- **A description of how the child's progress** toward meeting the annual goals will be measured.

- **When periodic reports on the progress** the child is making toward meeting the annual goals (such as through the use of quarterly or other periodic reports, concurrent with the issuance of report cards) will be provided.
- **The extent of the child's participation in the state and district standardized assessment program** with or without accommodations. If he/she will not be participating, a statement describing alternate assessment procedures must be included.
- **Behavioral goals and objectives and/or a behavioral plan** if the child's inability to follow classroom and school rules is interfering with his/her educational program.
- **At age 16, transition services language** regarding career exploration, vocational education, etc.
- **Proficiency Standards:**
IEPs for students in grades 7 through 12 should include any alternative means necessary for the students to complete the school district's course of study and to meet or exceed the district's proficiency standards for graduation. If an IEP team determines that a student has not demonstrated the ability to attain the district's regular proficiency standards with appropriate educational services and support, the team, in accordance with district procedure, is to develop differential proficiency standards appropriate to the student's needs and potential and to include them as part of the student's IEP.
- **IEP team members recognize**, as state law does, that there may be some students who cannot meet regular or differential standards of proficiency in reading, writing, and mathematical skills and will be working toward a Letter of Completion rather than a diploma.
- **Educational rights** will transfer to the student upon turning 18.

How do I prepare for the IEP team meeting?

Federal and state laws have established your right to participate in making decisions about your child's special education program. It is important for you to be an informed participant and advocate for your child. The most important information you contribute to the IEP is knowledge of your child. Share your knowledge as you listen to the information and observations of the other team members. Then, through a shared decision-making process an effective plan can be developed to determine placement and services to be provided.

Things to do before the meeting:

- Talk to your child about:
 - How he/she feels about school.
 - Likes/dislikes.
 - What he/she would like to improve.
- Review your child's last IEP and know what goals were worked on.
- Prepare to share information about your concerns. Make a list of any questions and bring the list to the IEP meeting. Some information that you may wish to share at the meeting could include:
 - Your child's likes and dislikes.
 - Your child's specific strengths (things he/she does well).
 - General social skills that your child needs to develop.
 - Learning strategies that work best with your child.
 - Things that motivate your child in the learning process.
 - Your child's specific limitations or problems.
 - If you feel your child is working to his/her ability.

- The kind of job or work you expect your child to be able to do after completion of schooling.
- The knowledge or skills you think your child should have to accomplish these goals.
- What you can do as a parent to help your child learn at home and support the school program.
- The kind of support you can expect from the school.
- Programs and services are available to your child from preschool through 12th grade and beyond.
- What you can do as a parent to prepare for the future.
- Extra-curricular activities or experiences that would be helpful for your child.
- As a courtesy, inform the meeting contact person if you plan to bring another person to the meeting including what expertise or knowledge he/she possesses that is necessary for the development of your child's IEP.
- Be prepared to discuss the expectations you have for your child.
 - Know your child's needs.
 - Know the kind of progress you would like to see and share it with the IEP team.
 - Share your ideas when the long-term goals and short-term objectives are developed/proposed.
- Send the school any relevant or recent information about your child that the school does not have so the school has time to review prior to the IEP meeting, (e.g., independent evaluations, medical information, etc.).
- Call your [local Community Advisory Committee representative](#) if you need information or assistance (names and phone numbers are available through your district director of special education).
- Organize your child's special education records. Large three-ring binders are handy.

Things to do during the meeting:

- Be an active team member.
- Share relevant information about your child.
- Present questions you have.
- Present your expectations for your child.
- Ask questions regarding things that are not clear.
- Request example(s) to clarify assessment information.
- Make sure your child's program includes opportunities for participation in the general education program such as: music, physical education, lunch, recess, art, and academic subjects where appropriate.
- Share any goals and objectives you may have prepared.
- Share any relevant information the school may not have (e.g., medical information, recent evaluation).
- Discuss placement after goals/objectives have been determined.
- Focus on your child's needs.
- Be sure services are based on your child's needs.



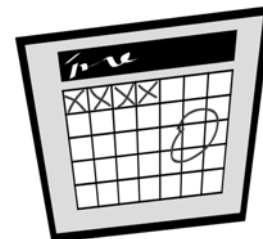
Will I receive notice of the IEP meeting?

The school must provide you with written notice of the IEP meeting within a reasonable time prior to the meeting. This notice will include: the date, time, and place of the meeting; the reason for the meeting; and who will be at the meeting. If you are unable to attend the meeting, you may call the school to reschedule. If an interpreter will be needed, please indicate that on the notification form as well, or call the director's office to ask that one be present.

When must an IEP meeting be held?

An IEP meeting must be held:

- Following an assessment to determine eligibility for special education.
- Once a year to review your child's progress and placement and to make any changes to the IEP.
- Every three years to review your child's progress and to determine whether special education programs and/or services are still required.
- After your child has received a formal assessment or reassessment.
- When you or a teacher requests a meeting to develop, review, or revise the IEP.
- To develop an Individualized Transition Plan (ITP), for students who will be turning 16 years of age.
- To determine whether a student's misconduct was a manifestation of his or her disability before suspending the student from school for more than 10 school days, or expelling the student.
- To develop a Behavior Intervention Plan following a Functional Analysis Assessment.



If your child is already enrolled in a special education program and you request an IEP meeting, you must do so in writing. Once your request is received, the meeting must be held within 30 days, not counting school vacations greater than 5 days.

Note: IEPs may now be amended without convening an IEP meeting with parental consent. This does not change the required times when IEP meetings must be held.

What programs will be considered for my child?

Decisions about placement are made at the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team meeting for each child. The goal is to provide special education services in a way that can best meet the individual student's needs and does so with a minimal loss of contact with general education. Assignment to special classes, special schooling, or other removal of the individual from the general education environment shall occur only when the nature and severity of the disability is such that education in general classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.

Who receives a copy of the IEP?

The parents of a student for whom an IEP has been prepared are to receive a copy of the IEP. In addition, before a student is placed in a special education program, it is the responsibility of the school district to ensure that any district personnel who will provide services to the student - including regular classroom teachers, special education teachers and other persons who may provide services - are knowledgeable of the child's IEP. A copy of the IEP is to be maintained at each school site where the student is enrolled. Persons from other agencies who provide the student with special education services may receive a copy of the IEP with parent's written permission. All IEPs are to be maintained in accordance with state and federal pupil record confidentiality laws.

When will the IEP be implemented?

After the initial IEP has been developed, the school district must implement the IEP within a "reasonable period of time" as determined by the IEP team and the parents.

When are IEPs changed?

A child's IEP team is to meet at least annually, to review the child's progress and the appropriateness of the programs and services designated in the IEP. If team members determine that changes are required in order to meet the child's educational needs, they may revise the IEP.

In addition, a parent or teacher may request an IEP team meeting to review, and if necessary, revise an individualized education program. However, if changes to a child's IEP are necessary after the annual IEP meeting for a school year, the parent and the Local Education Agency (LEA), may agree not to convene to make the changes, but instead, may develop a written document to amend or modify the current IEP. Changes to the IEP may be made by the entire IEP team or, by amending the IEP as explained above rather than redrafting it in its entirety. Upon request, a parent shall be provided a revised copy of the IEP with the amendments incorporated. If a parent requests a meeting to review an IEP, the meeting must be held within 30 days of receipt of a written request, not counting days in July and August.



Finally, a reevaluation of the child is to be conducted at least every three years, and more frequently, if conditions warrant. Based on the reevaluation results, the IEP may be updated with new goals and objectives and/or the team may write transition goals in preparation for exiting the student from special education. For more information on reevaluation, refer to Chapter 9.

Things to do after the meeting:

Review the IEP.

Call the IEP meeting contact person if you have any questions or concerns.

Give your child feedback.

- Tell him/her what they have accomplished.
- Tell him/her what you expect for the following year.

What to do if you do not agree with the IEP:

The IEP team, as represented by school staff, has a responsibility to indicate on the IEP those services they will provide. However, you may find that you disagree with something that is offered.

1. If you do not consent to all the components of the IEP, initial those components to which you do consent in order that they may be implemented. This will prevent a delay in providing instruction and services to the student.
2. Sign that you attended the meeting.
3. Sign that you are not in agreement with the IEP in its entirety, marking the areas in which you disagree.
4. Those components to which you did not agree will not be implemented. The IEP meeting will be adjourned to allow both parties to work toward resolution of the issue(s).

Contact any of the following resources to assist you in resolving the disagreement:

- Your director of special education
- Your child's principal
- A district program specialist
- A SELPA program coordinator
- The SELPA Alternative Dispute Resolution Coordinator

CHAPTER 8. INDIVIDUAL TRANSITION PLANNING: PREPARING STUDENTS FOR ADULT LIFE

How does the IEP address transition from school to adult life?

The IEP or ITP describes appropriate measurable post-secondary goals based upon age appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment, and where appropriate, independent living skills. They further identify needed transition services (including courses of study) needed to assist the student in reaching those goals.

What are transition services?

The term "transition services" means a coordinated set of activities for a student with a disability that:



1. Is designed within an outcome-oriented process that 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;
2. Is based on the individual student's needs, taking into account the student's preferences and interests; and
3. Includes instruction, related services, community experiences, the development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives; and if appropriate, acquisition of daily skills and functional vocational evaluation.

When must transition services language for a student be discussed?

Transition services must be addressed and in effect the year in which the child will turn 16 years of age and updated annually thereafter.

Is there a required format or language to be used for developing transition services language for student's IEP?

The statement of a student's needed transition services can either be written as long-term goals and short-term objectives, activity statements in each area, or as narration. A narration, for example, could state the required area being addressed, describe needed activities as well as listing the agency(s) or individuals responsible for carrying out each activity within a designated timeline.

What are the areas of transition services that must be addressed?

Needed transition services to be considered include: instruction, including courses of study, related services, community experiences, the development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives, and if appropriate, Acquisition of Daily Living Skills and Functional Vocational Evaluation.



Do all areas need to be addressed?

The IEP team needs to consider those transition services needed to assist the student in reaching appropriate measurable post-secondary goals based upon age appropriate transitions assessment related to training, education employment and where appropriate, independent living skills.

What are related services in regards to transition to adult life?

Related service includes any designated instructional service as it relates to student school-to-work transition needs. This area may also address assistive or augmentative devices. Related services may be provided by the public school or other public agencies, and may include "rehabilitation counseling services." Qualified personnel, that provide these services, focus on career development, employment preparation, achieving independence, and integration in the workplace and community of a student with a disability.

What happens if an agency that agreed to provide transition services fails to do so?

If a participating agency other than the Local Education Agency (LEA) fails to provide transition services described in the IEP, the local LEA shall reconvene the IEP team to identify alternative strategies to meet the transition objectives for the student set out in the IEP.

What is the requirement that relates to the "age of majority?"

Beginning at least one year before the student reaches the age of majority under State law, age 18, the student's IEP/ITP must include a statement that indicates the student has been informed of his/her rights. The student's rights must be explained and presented in a written format just as parents' rights are provided prior to the age of 18.

Do "related services" need to be addressed separately on the ITP?

There is no requirement for development of Individualized Transition Plan (ITP) only that transition services language be addressed on the IEP. If the LEA requires that an ITP document be a part of the IEP, then related services for transition would be incorporated as part of the IEP development process. There is no necessity to address related services twice in both the IEP and ITP documents. It is recommended that related services be written with transition activities in mind and that training be provided to related services providers on how to write transition activity statements.

What if the student is not allowed to attend the IEP?

In a case where the family refuses to allow the student at the IEP, minimum requirements would be for school representatives to work with the student identifying preferences and interests. Pre-planning transition activities with the student would allow staff to convey student interests and preferences to the IEP team. The team should also document reason for student's non-attendance and the process utilized to gain student input (i.e., interview and/or survey).



Must you state frequency and duration in the IEP as related services do?

If the LEA is using a separate Transition Plan with the IEP, then activity statements should reflect service, length of service, and how services are provided.

If a student receives educational accommodation under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, does the plan have to address needed transition services?

Yes. The LEA must provide accommodations and "related services" necessary for these students to benefit from free, appropriate public education (FAPE). If the LEA has reason to believe that, because of a disability as defined under Section 504, a student needs either special accommodations or "related" services in the regular setting in order to participate in a school program, the district must develop and implement a plan for delivery of all needed services. Again, these steps

must be taken even though the student is not covered by the special education legal provisions and procedures.

Why is the LEA required to coordinate needed transition services across, and linkages between, agencies responsible for providing or paying for services?

Service coordination is consistent with the LEA's ultimate responsibility to ensure that FAPE is available to each eligible child with a disability. That responsibility includes the planning and coordination of services through the IEP. This interagency planning and coordination may be supported through a variety of mechanisms, including Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs), interagency agreements, assignment of transition personnel to work with other participating agencies, or the establishment of guidelines to work with other agencies identified as potential services providers. The LEA is required to exercise "alternative strategies" to meet the student's needs if agreed-upon services are not provided.

What are the implications of "alternative strategies" implementation for the LEA?

Under the "alternative strategies" requirement, the LEA provides the services, or might identify another funding source, referral to another agency, or identify another community resource that can meet the student's identified need appropriately. Section 300.142(b)(2), requires that if another agency fails to provide to pay for special education or related services, including transition services, the LEA must provide or pay for the service, and may then claim reimbursement from the agency that failed to provide for the services.

When a student exits from special education due to receiving a diploma or "aging out", the district must provide a summary of the student's achievement and functional performance along with recommendations how to assist the student in meeting their post-secondary goals.

CHAPTER 9. IEP REVIEW PROCESS

IEP REVIEWS

What are annual and triennial reviews?

If your child is receiving special education services, his or her IEP will be reviewed in an IEP meeting at least once a year to determine how well it is meeting his or her needs. In addition, every three years, your child will be reassessed and the results will be presented at the triennial IEP meeting. During the meeting, the student's program is reviewed to determine how well the program is meeting his/her needs, to evaluate present levels of the student's performance, and to determine whether special education programs and/or services continue to be necessary for your child. If the team agrees that services need to continue, it may also establish new goals and objectives for the coming year.

What if no additional information is needed?

If the team feels that sufficient student data is available and that no new testing is needed and the parent agrees, the review meeting is held. The team discusses the student's performance, progress on goals and objectives, grades, results of annual district standardized testing, etc., to determine goals and objectives for the coming year if the student continues to require special education.

If you feel that new assessment data is needed for your child's three-year review, it is your right to request it and to sign the assessment plan that outlines the testing to be administered.

What can I do if I have concerns about my child's progress?

If you have concerns that your child's educational needs are not being met you should first discuss this with your child's teacher. Either you or school personnel may request an IEP meeting to review the IEP at any time during the year also by sending a written request to the school. Once your request is received, the meeting must be held within 30 days, not counting school vacations greater than five days. You may request an reassessment by sending a written request to your child's special education teacher. If you request that your child be reassessed, the school must obtain your written permission to proceed with the assessments. However, re-evaluation need not occur more than once per year unless the parent and school both agree to it.



How often will I receive progress reports?

Special education law mandates that parents of students who have IEPs receive reports of student progress at the same intervals as students without IEPs. The progress report itself will indicate whether or not he/she is expected to achieve each of the goals prior to the next annual review. If you have any questions about this reporting process and/or how it relates to the district's general reporting process, contact your child's case manager.

CHAPTER 10. BEHAVIORAL SUPPORTS, DISCIPLINE, SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION

How are my child's behavioral issues addressed through the IEP?

Special procedures apply to students with IEPs who have behavioral challenges. If the teachers using their standard classroom rules and consequences can manage his/her behavior, the IEP will indicate that there are not significant concerns in this area of his/her program. If a student's behavior interferes with their learning or the learning of others, this must be indicated on the IEP, and a behavior intervention plan must be developed to address the behavior.

What is a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)?

Education Code Section 56521.1 (b) says: In the case of a child whose behavior impedes the child's learning or that of others, the individualized education program team shall consider the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and other strategies, to address that behavior, consistent with Section 1414(d)(3)(B)(i) and (d)(4) of Title 20 of the United States Code and associated federal regulations. If the IEP team determines that a BIP would be appropriate for the child, it must be included in the IEP. (20 USC sections 1415(k)(1)(D)(ii); 1415(k)(1)(F)(i) and(ii); 34 CFR sections 300.530(b)(2); 300.530 (d)(ii); 300.530 (d)(5); 300.530(f); See Sections 56525-56520 of the California Ed Code for detailed information about the development and implementation of a behavioral intervention plan.

When a student for whom an IEP has been written exhibits behavior that interferes with the implementation of the goals and objectives of the student's IEP, including serious behavior challenges that could lead to suspension or expulsion, a behavioral intervention case manager must be assigned to the student's IEP team and a behavioral intervention plan (BIP) written. The case manager must be someone trained in behavioral analysis with an emphasis on positive behavioral interventions.



The behavioral intervention plan, which is to become a part of the student's IEP, is to:

- Summarize information gathered in the process of analyzing the purpose the maladaptive behavior serves;
- Describe the maladaptive behaviors and the positive behaviors proposed as replacements;
- Describe the goals and objectives of the behavioral plan;
- Describe in detail the behavioral interventions to be used and the circumstances in which they will be used (no interventions that cause pain or trauma may be used);
- Specify a schedule for use of behavioral interventions that will be phased out or replaced with less restrictive interventions; and
- Specify dates for periodic review of the behavioral intervention program by the IEP team.



Can students with exceptional needs be suspended or expelled from school for misbehavior?

School personnel may suspend a child with a disability who violates a code of student conduct for not more than ten (10) days (to the extent applied to children without disabilities), A change in placement may be considered after a child with a disability has been removed from his or her current placement for ten (10) school days in the same school year. During any subsequent days of removal, the public

agency must provide services to the extent required to enable the child to continue to participate in general education curriculum as progress toward meeting IEP goals.

What is a "Manifestation Determination?"

A student with exceptional needs may be suspended or expelled if it is determined that the student's misconduct thought to warrant disciplinary action is not directly and substantially related to the student's disability or if the conduct in question was the direct result of the LEA's failure to implement the IEP. Refer to the Procedural Safeguards section for further details.

School personnel may remove a student to an interim alternative educational setting for not more than 45 school days without regard to whether the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the child's disability, if the child:

- Carries a weapon to or possesses a weapon at school, on school premises, or to or at a school function;
- Knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs, or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance, while at school, on school premises, or at a school function; or
- Has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function.

Under what conditions may a student be removed from the school campus?

School personnel have the authority to, on a case by case basis; consider unique circumstances when determining whether to order a change in placement of a child with a disability who violates a code of student conduct. School personnel may remove a student to an interim alternative setting (without a hearing officer) for up to 45 school days. In addition, school personnel may remove a student who "has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function" to such an interim placement without a hearing officer ruling.

The Individualized Education Program (IEP) team will determine the AES. The AES should enable the child to continue to participate in general education, although in another setting, and to receive services that enable the child to meet the goals in his or her current IEP and that address the behavior subject to discipline.

An LEA shall not be deemed to have knowledge that the child is a child with a disability if the parent of the child has not allowed an evaluation of the child or has refused services, or the child has been evaluated and it was determined that the child was not a child with a disability.

CHAPTER 11. WHEN STUDENTS EXIT SPECIAL EDUCATION

How long will my child be in special education?

The answer to that question is as individual as is each child. While some students may need a program and/or related service for a short time, others will need services throughout their public school years. Many students fall somewhere in between.



When will my child exit special education?

Special education programs and services are to be provided for eligible students between birth and 22 years of age who need them. Students who graduate with a diploma and/or complete their course of study will exit special education at the same time they exit the K-12 program and enter the adult world.

When does my child no longer need special education?

Many students will exit special education when they are able to succeed in the general education program with passing grades, or they have acquired the skills that were lacking at one time, such as using intelligible speech/language skills. Other students will remain in special education as their base program and participate in selected general education classes such as electives and P.E. as appropriate or participate in most general education classes with support.

The question of whether the student continues to need special education services is asked each year at the annual IEP review meeting as well as at the 3-year reevaluation meeting, so your involvement as a team member is important. It is at the IEP review that the team must make recommendations regarding the student's continued need for services.

How are students transitioned from special to general education?

If it is felt that the student will be able to continue being successful in the general education program without special education, the IEP team will develop an appropriate transition plan for the student. If the transition period is successful, prior to the student's formal exit, a reevaluation of his/her academic progress will be done and the results will be shared with you at, if not prior to, the exit IEP meeting.

When do students with IEPs receive a diploma?

When a student with an IEP completes the district's prescribed course of study by earning the prescribed number of course credits and passes the district proficiency test of basic skills either with or without differential standards, he/she will be awarded a diploma and exit the K-12 program.

What does a Certificate of Completion mean for a student with an IEP?

A Certificate of Completion is awarded upon exit of the K-12 program. Students who do not participate in the district's prescribed course of study and who do not take nor pass the High School Exit Exam may remain in the special education program as long as is appropriate up to age 22 to accomplish their individual goals and objectives.

Can students who receive a Certificate of Completion participate in a Graduation Ceremony and related graduation school activities?

Yes, however the right to participate in graduation ceremonies does not imply a Certificate of Completion is equal to a regular High School diploma



What services are available upon receipt of a Certificate of Completion?

Students who receive a certificate of completion may still be eligible to receive special education transition services. The transition services are those needed to assist the child in reaching appropriate measurable post-secondary goals based upon transition assessment related to training, education, employment, and, where appropriate, independent living skills. Services could be provided by the student's school district, Solano County Transition Partnership program (TPP), Solano County Regional Occupational Program (ROP) and District or County Transition programs. Some students may be eligible for adult services through other agencies after receiving the certificate of completion. Connections to Solano County Mental Health, North Bay Regional Center and the California Department of Rehabilitation should be coordinated through the Individual Transition Program (ITP) process and monitored by the LEA.

Transfer of parental rights at age of majority (age 18):

Special education law requires IEP teams to give notice to students and their parents one year prior to their 18th birthday that upon turning 18, the student's educational rights will transfer to them. If the student is declared mentally incompetent to assume their rights by the court (conservation of rights), the parent, guardian, or a surrogate parent may be appointed to represent the educational interests of the student. Additionally, a student can designate his/her parent to continue to act on his/her behalf.

CHAPTER 12. KEEPING, REQUESTING, AND CHANGING STUDENT RECORDS

What records should I keep on my child?

Parents say one of the most practical and useful projects for parents is the formulation of a file of your child's medical, developmental, and educational histories (including IEP meetings). The three-ring binder is an ideal system for organizing and storing important records. Record keeping is not mandatory, but accurate records and documentation are helpful in resolving conflicts and addressing concerns as well as important in the decision-making process of the IEP team. These records may also be very useful if your family should move to another school district.

The following is a general guide for organizing information about your child:

Medical

- Developmental history, including pregnancy and birth
- Birth certificate (copy)
- Doctor's reports (pediatrician, allergist, or others)
- Therapy reports (speech therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy)
- Agency reports (Regional Center, Community Mental Health and/or others)
- A list of long-term medications being given to your child at home and at school. Include the kind of medication, time and dosage information, note the prescription numbers, as well as any changes in dosage or reaction)
- Dated notes you have taken in conversations with your child's physician and/or other professionals who see your child
- Any significant medical events, including dates they occurred (seizures, surgeries, hospitalizations, infections, therapies, etc.)

School

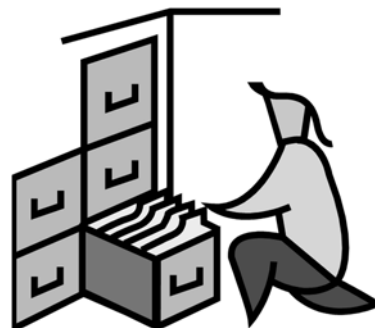
- Copies of all Individualized Education Programs (IEP)
- All written letters and notes to and from school personnel
- Assessment reports (psychological, speech and language, health, academic, etc.)
- Report cards; with examples of school work (dated); dates noted on parent/teacher conferences; dated notes on all telephone conversations with school personnel or others regarding your child
- Progress reports; updates on progress toward achieving long-term goals.

Personal/Social

- Child's interests
- Clubs and organizations
- Family history
- Camps
- Special awards
- Pictures

Miscellaneous

- Financial resources
- Legal documents



- Community agencies
- Special education legislation, etc.

What if I need copies of records?

If you find that your records are incomplete and that you need copies of certain information or forms from the school or district, the following is a sample letter through which you may request them. The district will have copies available to you within 5 days of receipt of your request.

Under the new law, districts may charge for the cost of copying records. Check with your special education teacher or administrator regarding the specifics for obtaining copies of your child's records.

Request for School Records Sample Letter

Date

Name, Director or Coordinator of Special Services
 _____ Unified School District
 Street Address
 City, State, Zip Code

Dear Director:

I am the parent/guardian of (child's name) , a resident of the _____
 School District. My child was born (date) and currently attends
 _____ School. I am requesting a copy of
 my child's records including assessment plans, progress reports, IEPs, incident reports, written
 observations, teacher reports, results of any individual or group testing, and any other
 information contained in his/her records.

Please send the above information to me at: _____ (address)
 _____ (city, state, zip code)
 _____ (phone number)

OR

I will call your office to arrange to pick up these records. I understand the records are to be
 made available to me within five days.

Sincerely,

Your Name

What can I do if I disagree with information in the records?

If you believe your child's records contain information that is wrong, misleading, or that violates the privacy or other rights of your child, you may request that the district change the

information. The district will decide whether or not to grant your request within a reasonable period of time from the receipt of your request. If the district refuses to change the information, you will receive notice of that decision and your right to a hearing on the issue.

Upon request, the district will provide you with an opportunity for a hearing to challenge the information in your child's educational records. If the decision at the hearing is in your favor, the district will amend the information accordingly and inform you in writing.

If the decision at the hearing is unfavorable to you, you will have the right to include in your child's records a written statement of your objections to the information. This statement will be part of your child's school records until the information objected to is corrected or removed. If your child's records or the contested information is disclosed to anyone, your written statement will also be disclosed.

CHAPTER 13. PROBLEM SOLVING: WORKING TOGETHER TO RESOLVE DISAGREEMENTS

What do I do if I have a problem or disagreement?

For a variety of reasons, the role of the parent in the special education process can sometimes be confusing, frustrating, and/or difficult. Parents are put in the position of having to make critical decisions for their child and may be unfamiliar with the resources and strategies that will assist them in this role. The following are resources collected from various groups and suggestions made by parents to address parents' needs.

Any time there is a disagreement about your child's special education program or placement, you have the right to voice your concerns. After you have made attempts to resolve the issue with school personnel, the Director of Special Education, the SELPA Director, etc., and if you feel that continued dialogue will not resolve your concerns, you may request a mediation conference, due process hearing, and/or file a complaint with either the district or the California Department of Education.

What steps can I take to resolve the issue(s)?

If you are a parent of a child for whom an individualized education program has been written, and you experience a problem with your child's education, take the following steps. If the problem is not resolved at one level, then make your concerns known at the next level, until you have found a satisfactory resolution.

- Step 1: Discuss the problem with your child's classroom teacher and/or other school staff members who are aware of your child's specific needs; for example, a nurse; counselor; speech, language and hearing specialist; adaptive physical education teacher.
- Step 2: Discuss the problem with the administrator of your child's school.
- Step 3: Contact your child's special education teacher and/or school psychologist and request a review of your child's individualized education plan.
- Step 4: Contact your Director of Special Education and express your concerns.
- Step 5: Contact the Alternate Dispute Resolution (ADR) coordinator (707.399.4468) to assist in working through the issues.
- Step 6: Contact the SELPA Director at 707.399.4460.
- Step 7: Initiate in writing a request for due process. For information on whom to contact, see information that follows.



What is a Facilitated IEP?

An IEP meeting in which the team works collaboratively with the help of a trained facilitator who has no direct involvement with the current issue and who guides the meeting process, supporting the relationship to meet the educational needs of the student.

What is the Independent Child Advocate (ICA)?

The Independent Child Advocate is an independent entity, experienced in child advocacy and special education, who focuses on identifying student needs in respect to legal requirements and best practices.

What is a compliance complaint?

Filing complaints under Uniform Complaint Procedures: Uniform Complaint Procedures are procedures used to resolve complaints regarding state and federal law. There are procedures for local complaints, which are filed with the district, and procedures for state complaints, which are filed with the California Department of Education.

What can the Independent Child Advocate (ICA) do?

The Independent Child Advocate will consult with all of the parties, gather information, review documents, at times attend IEP meetings, and make recommendations to parents and to districts from an independent perspective.

Complaints: If you believe that the school has violated federal or state laws or regulations governing special education programs by, for example, failing to implement your child's IEP, you can file a complaint. The complaint should describe the problem and include all the information needed to support the allegation or complaint. If desired, a special education staff site administrator and/or the SELPA office can help you write your complaint.

You may send your complaint to either your school district in care of the director of special education or to the SELPA office to:

California Department of Education
Special Education Division, Procedural Safeguards Referral Services
1430 N Street, Suite 2401, Sacramento, CA 95814
Phone: (800) 926-0648 FAX: (916) 327-3704

OR

Solano County Office of Education
Attn: SELPA Director
5100 Business Center Drive, Fairfield, CA 94534

Once your complaint is received, the district has one day to notify the Special Education Division of the California Department of Education (CDE) of the complaint. The district has ten days to resolve the complaint without the CDE's involvement. If there is no resolution by the tenth day, the CDE will begin its own investigation.

What is a due process hearing?

If a party requests a due process hearing, a resolution meeting shall be held within fifteen (15) days with the parents and relevant members of the IEP Team who have knowledge of the facts identified in the request. No attorney retained by the district may attend unless the parent brings their attorney. A resolution meeting shall be held unless waived by both parties or mediation is requested. If resolution is reached, a signed legally binding agreement will be

developed which may be voided within three (3) business days. Such agreement shall be enforceable in Court. A due process hearing will be scheduled if no resolution is reached within thirty (30) days. A due process hearing is a more formal process of resolution. You or the district may initiate a due process hearing when:

- There is a proposal to initiate or change your child's identification, assessment, educational placement, or special education services with which you disagree;
- There is a refusal to initiate or change your child's identification, assessment, educational placement, or special education services; and/or
- The parent refuses to consent to an assessment of his or her child.

The due process hearing will be held at a reasonably convenient time and place. The due process hearing must be held and a written decision mailed to all parties within 45 days of receiving your request for a due process hearing. The hearing officer may grant specific extensions of time at the request of either party to the hearing.



Upon your request or your initiation of a due process hearing, the California Department of Education will inform you of any free or low-cost legal, and other relevant services available in your area.

The Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH) or its designee will conduct the hearing. The case will be heard by an Administrative Law Judge employed by the OAH.

What is a mediation conference?

A mediation conference is a voluntary and informal process where a mediator meets with you and the school to work out an agreement about your child's assessment, eligibility for special education services, educational placement, or special education services. The mediation conference will be held at a reasonably convenient time and place, and will be scheduled and completed within 30 days after the receipt of your request, unless you agree to an extension of time.

There are two types of mediation conferences. The first is a prehearing mediation. A request for a prehearing mediation must occur before requesting a due process hearing. At a prehearing mediation, attorneys or paid advocates may not participate.

The second type of mediation conference is simply called mediation. Mediation can be requested any time after a due process hearing has been requested. Attorneys or other paid advocates may be present during this type of mediation.

How do I request a mediation conference or due process hearing?

You may send your written request for a mediation conference or due process hearing to:

Office of Administrative Hearings
Special Education Unit
2349 Gateway Oaks Drive, Suite 200
Sacramento, CA 95833-4231
Phone: (916) 263-0550 Fax: (916) 263-0554

You must also send a copy of your request to your child's school district of residence.

**APPENDIX A
SPECIAL EDUCATION ACRONYMS AND GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

| <u>ACRONYM</u> | <u>TERM</u> | <u>DEFINITION</u> |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| 504 | Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act | |
| ADA | Americans with Disabilities Act | |
| ADL | Activities of Daily Living | Activities that make a student independent in his environment, such as dressing, eating, and toileting. |
| ADR | Alternative Dispute Resolution | An interest-based approach to resolving disagreements between two parties. |
| Ad PE or APE | Adapted Physical Education | Specialized physical education for students with disabilities not able to participate effectively in general education physical education. |
| ALJ | Administrative Law Judge | |

| <u>ACRONYM</u> | <u>TERM</u> | <u>DEFINITION</u> |
|-----------------------|---|---|
| ASD | Autistic Spectrum Disorders (or Autism) | <p>Persistent deficits in social communication and social interaction across multiple contexts, as manifested by the following, currently or by history (examples are illustrative, not exhaustive; see text):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Deficits in social-emotional reciprocity, ranging, for example, from abnormal social approach and failure of normal back-and-forth conversation; to reduced sharing of interests, emotions, or affect; to failure to initiate or respond to social interactions. 2. Deficits in nonverbal communicative behaviors used for social interaction, ranging, for example, from poorly integrated verbal and nonverbal communication; to abnormalities in eye contact and body language or deficits in understanding and use of gestures; to a total lack of facial expressions and nonverbal communication. 3. Deficits in developing, maintaining, and understand relationships, ranging, for example, from difficulties adjusting behavior to suit various social contexts; to difficulties in sharing imaginative play or in making friends; to absence of interest in peers. |
| AT | Assistive Technology | |
| | Assessment | Observations and testing of children to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the child to develop an appropriate educational plan. |
| | Behavioral Intervention | The systematic implementation of procedures that results in lasting positive changes in the individual's behavior. |
| BIP | Behavioral Intervention Plan | A written document which is developed when an individual exhibits a serious behavior problem that significantly interferes with the implementation of the goals and objectives of the individual's IEP. The behavioral intervention plan becomes part of the IEP. |

| <u>ACRONYM</u> | <u>TERM</u> | <u>DEFINITION</u> |
|-----------------------|---|---|
| CAC | Community Advisory Committee | A legally mandated organization of parents, school personnel, and various agency representatives which advises the SELPA in development and revision of the Local Plan for Special Education. |
| CASE | Community Alliance for Special Education | |
| CBI | Community Based Instruction | A form of instruction in which IEP goals are met in a “natural” environment within the community. For example, math, sequencing, travel, and social skills may be developed through a trip to the grocery store. |
| CCS | California Children’s Services | State agency that provides specialized medical care and rehabilitation for children with physical impairments who have a medically eligible condition. |
| CD | Communication Disability | Disorders in processing of language and/or speech sounds. |
| CDE | California Department of Education | |
| CDC | California Diagnostic Center | |
| COS | Council of Superintendents | Decision making body of the SELPA composed of the superintendents of the districts and county office as well as the SELPA director. |
| | Complaint Compliance | The process of resolving an alleged violation of special education laws or regulations. |
| DIS | Designated Instruction and Services | Also known as related services, specialized instruction, and/or support services identified through an assessment provided as necessary for a child to benefit from his/her educational program. |
| DR | Department of Rehabilitation | The California Department of Rehabilitation works in partnership with consumers and other stakeholders to provide services and advocacy resulting in employment, independent living and equality for individuals with disabilities. |
| DOE | U.S. Department of Education | |
| DOR | District of Residence or Department of Rehabilitation | |

| <u>ACRONYM</u> | <u>TERM</u> | <u>DEFINITION</u> |
|-----------------------|--|--|
| | Due Process | All procedural safeguards of Public Law (P.L.) 94-192 and related laws and regulations. A process for resolving disagreements regarding IEP issues. |
| EC | California Education Code | The body of regulations which governs education in the State of California. |
| ED | Emotionally Disturbed | An emotional problem that has existed for a marked degree and over a long period of time which interferes with learning. |
| ESY | Extended School Year | The special education program provided between school sessions when the IEP team determines they are needed to prevent regression of skills. |
| | Fair Hearing | A formal hearing that is requested by parents or school district personnel. Issues that may be considered under the fair hearing procedure are limited to eligibility, assessment, the individualized education program, and placement of individuals with exceptional needs. A specially trained hearing officer resolves the issues. |
| FAA | Functional Analysis Assessment | A behavior analysis assessment which shall occur after the IEP team finds that instructional/behavioral approaches specified in the student's IEP have been ineffective. |
| FAPE | Free and Appropriate Public Education | Every school-age child with a disability is entitled to an education that meets his/her individual needs, which is at no cost to parents. |
| FERPA | Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act | |
| FIEP | Facilitated Individual Education Program | A local alternative dispute resolution process where a neutral facilitator helps districts and families reach consensus about the child's IEP. |
| | Inclusive Education Supported Education Full Inclusion | A process in which a continuum of supported education options are considered for all students and which provides for equal access to the school community. Placement decisions and programming are based on the agreed upon identified educational outcomes. |
| ICA | Independent Child Advocate | An independent entity who focuses on identifying student needs in respect to legal requirements and best practices. |

| <u>ACRONYM</u> | <u>TERM</u> | <u>DEFINITION</u> |
|-----------------------|---|---|
| IDEA | Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act | |
| IEE | Independent Educational Evaluation | |
| IEP | Individualized Education Program | A written document, mandated by law, that defines a child's disability, states current levels of educational performance, describes educational needs, and specifies annual goals and short-term objectives/benchmarks, and an evaluation and progress reporting schedule. |
| | Individualized Education Program Team | A minimum of four individuals who meet to develop and review the student's IEP. The team is composed of an administrator or his/her designee, the student's special education and general education teacher, and the parents. Other members may include the student, those who have assessed the student and others as appropriate. |
| IFSP | Individualized Family Plan Service | An individualized education plan for an infant or which is developed by the team to identify strengths, needs, concerns, and priorities for early intervention services for students less than 3 years of age. |
| ITP | Individualized Transition Plan | That portion of the IEP that specifies activities and services for students age 14 and older to facilitate their transition from high school to the adult world. Developed at an IEP meeting, the ITP includes parents, student, school personnel, and agency representatives as appropriate. |
| IDEA 97 | Individuals With Disabilities Education Act, Reauthorized in 1997 | An amendment to and reauthorization of Public Law 94-142, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975, which mandates a free, appropriate public education for all children with exceptional needs. |
| IPP | Individual Program Plan (Regional Center) | |
| IWEN | Individuals With Exceptional Needs | Individuals from infancy through age 22 identified by an individualized education program team as having a disability or condition that requires specialized instruction and/or services. |

| <u>ACRONYM</u> | <u>TERM</u> | <u>DEFINITION</u> |
|-----------------------|--|--|
| LAC | Local Advisory Committee | An optional local advisory body may meet in each district on a monthly basis to discuss special education issues and concerns. A representative from each LAC is recommended to participate and give input to the monthly CAC meetings and may take CAC information back to the LAC. |
| LRE | Least Restrictive Environment | A learning environment for a student with exceptional needs that meets his learning needs while providing maximum interaction with the general school population in a manner appropriate to the needs of the student and his/her peers. |
| LEP | Limited English Proficiency | Students whose primary language is other than English, who lack competence in the English language, and for whom linguistically appropriate goals and objectives are developed. |
| LEA | Local Education Agency (Now known as Public Education Agency) | A school district providing special education service within the SELPA. There are five LEAs within our SELPA. |
| LP | Local Plan | The document developed by staff and the community that describes the delivery of special education programs and services which will be provided by all districts in the SELPA to meet the educational needs of eligible individuals with exceptional needs. Each SELPA develops a new plan every four years that is approved by the State Department of Education. |
| LI | Low Incidence Disabilities | Those severe disabling conditions with an expected incidence rate of less than one percent of the total statewide enrollment in kindergarten through grade 12. These conditions are hearing impairments, vision impairments, severe orthopedic impairments, or any combination of these. |
| MDT | Multidisciplinary Team | Using a combination of the skills of several persons with specialized areas of training for a common purpose, i.e., assessment of a student to determine eligibility for services. |

| <u>ACRONYM</u> | <u>TERM</u> | <u>DEFINITION</u> |
|-----------------------|--|--|
| NBRC | North Bay Regional Center | Any person who lives in Sonoma, Solano or Napa counties, regardless of age or income, who is believed to have, or be at risk of having, a developmental disability may receive an assessment from NBRC clinical professionals to determine if he/she is eligible for regional center services to prevent the onset of a disability or to minimize the impact of a disability |
| NPS | Non-Public School | Licensed private, nonsectarian school that provides special education programs and services for a child whose needs cannot be served within the SELPA. |
| OAH | Office of Administrative Hearings | |
| OCR | Office for Civil Rights | |
| O & M | Orientation and Mobility | Specialized instruction for students with significant visual impairments to develop spatial awareness skills that enable them to move through space and travel independently. |
| OHI | Other Health Impaired | An eligibility category that specifies certain chronic and acute health problems that result in the students having limited strength, vitality, and alertness which adversely affect his/her educational performance. |
| OI | Orthopedic Impairment | A physical disability impairment that adversely affects a child's educational performance, such as congenital anomalies, impairments caused by disease and from other causes. |
| OSEP | U.S. Office of Special Education Programs | |
| OSERS | U.S. Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services | |
| OT | Occupational Therapy | |
| PEA | Public Education Agency | See LEA above. |
| PL 99-547 | Public Law 99-547 | Education of the Handicapped Act Amendments of 1986 provides for coordination of early intervention services for all young children with disabilities (age 0-3). |
| PT | Physical Therapy | |

| <u>ACRONYM</u> | <u>TERM</u> | <u>DEFINITION</u> |
|-----------------------|--|---|
| PTI | Parent Training and Information Center | |
| PWN | Prior Written Notice | |
| | Referral | The request to identify and assess a child's possible special education needs; a referral may be made by a parent, teacher, medical personnel, or anyone with specific knowledge of the child. |
| | Related Services | Those additional services that a child requires in order to benefit from his educational program. |
| ROP | Regional Occupation Program | Career and technical training courses which include classroom and community-based education services. They are available to high school students and adults to provide skilled work experiences. |
| RSP | Resource Specialist Program | Provides students with special education instruction for a portion of their day. Students may receive RSP services in general education classrooms, in a special education classroom, or in both settings. |
| SEC | Special Education Council | Decision making body composed of directors of special education and SELPA director. |
| SELPA | Special Education Local Plan Area | A single large school district or a group of smaller school districts within a geographic area in accordance with the law to coordinate the administration and delivery of special education services. |
| SDC | Special Day Class | An instructional setting through which the student receives special education instruction. |
| Sp. Ed. | Special Education | Instruction that is specifically designed for each individual student to meet his unique needs. Students who receive special education must meet eligibility requirements under specific disability categories as specified in federal and state law and regulations. |
| SLD | Specific Learning Disability | A disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or using spoken and/or written language, as well as a severe discrepancy between intellectual ability and achievement. |

| <u>ACRONYM</u> | <u>TERM</u> | <u>DEFINITION</u> |
|-----------------------|--|--|
| SLI | Speech/Language Impairment | Difficulty in understanding or using language to the extent that it interferes with learning; also a disability category which includes severe language disorders, hearing impairment, and language delay. |
| SLP or SLT | Speech and Language Pathologist or Speech and Language Therapist | |
| SST | Student Study Team Child Study Team | A general education process designed to make instructional modifications within the general education program when a student is experiencing difficulties. |
| | Surrogate Parent | A person selected by the local school district to act as the parent after determination that the child's actual parent(s) cannot be located. Or after the child has been made a ward of the court, the court has removed the parent's right to make educational decisions for the child. |
| | Transdisciplinary | A type of assessment approach in which the family and professionals work together to train each other in their area of expertise. |
| VI | Visual Impairment | A student whose visual acuity, even with correction, adversely affects educational performance. This includes students who are blind or have limited vision. |
| Voc Ed | Vocational Education | Programs and curriculum designed to assist students in developing self-confidence and vocational competencies to secure future employment and become productive members of their community. |

APPENDIX B
DIRECTORY OF RESOURCES AND TOLL FREE AGENCY PHONE NUMBERS

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| The Arc - Solano 3272 Sonoma Blvd., Ste 4, Vallejo 94590 (programs for people with developmental disabilities) | 707-552-2935 Fax: (707) 644-6555 | www.thearcsolano.org |
| | A Chapter of Arc California, providing services for individuals with developmental disabilities as well as the Independent Child Advocate program. | |
| Area Board 4 Office of the State Council on Developmental Disabilities 236 Georgia Street, Suite 201, Vallejo 94590 | 707-648-4073 FAX: 707-648-4100 | www.scdd.ca.gov norhtbay@scdd.ca.gov |
| | A State agency providing oversight and monitoring of agencies that serve people with developmental disabilities. | |
| Alison Ann Ruch Burn Foundation 4534 Mission Street, Ste 5, San Francisco 94112 | 800-755-BURN (2876) FAX: 415- 495-7204 | www.aarbf.org info@aarbf.org |
| | Provides burn survivor assistance and a camp for children who are burn survivors. | |
| Children and Adults with Attention Deficit Disorder CH.A.D.D. 4601 Presidents Drive, Ste 300 Lanham, MD 20706 | 800.233.4050 | www.chadd.org |
| | Provides information and support to families with children with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder. National, state and local chapters. | |
| CH.A.D.D. of Northern California 369 Santa Paula, San Leandro, CA 94579 | | www.chaddnorcal.org |
| | Contact by mail or online form | |
| Child Start (Head Start) 439 Devlin Road, Napa, Ca 94558-6274 | Voice: (866) 573-4274 Fax(707) 252-8931 | www.childstartinc.org |
| | Provides developmental, nutrition, and family support services to children age 0-5 years and their families, including children with special needs. | |
| Community Alliance for Special Education (C.A.S.E.) 1550 Bryant St., Ste 735., San Francisco 94103-2525 | 415-431-2285 FAX: 415- | www.caseadvocacy.org info@caseadvocacy.org |
| | Provides free individual technical assistance, consultations, representation, and training through our network of educational and legal specialists. | |
| Compassionate Friends - Solano County Chapter #1117 Fairfield Family Moose Lodge 623 Taylor Street, Fairfield CA 94533 | 707. 208-0736 tcfstanoco@gmail.com | www.compassionatefriends.org |
| | Parents helping parents cope with the death of their child. Provides support and information for parents following the death of a child of any age with weekly support group meetings. | |
| Deaf Counseling, Advocacy, and Referral Agency (DCARA) 14895 East 14 th ST, Suite 200, San Leandro, CA 94578 | (510) 343-6670 | http://www.dcara.org info@dcaa.org |
| | One of the first deaf-run agencies in the country, DCARA provides a comprehensive range of services to the deaf and hard-of-hearing people of the San Francisco Bay Area of California | |
| Disability Rights of California 1831 K Street Sacramento, CA 95811 | (916) 504-5800 TTY 800-719-5798 | http://www.disabilityrightsca.org/ info@disabilityrightsca.org |
| | Disability Rights of California advocates, educates, investigates, and litigates to advance and protect the rights of Californians with disabilities | |

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| Disability Rights Education Defense Fund (DREDF) 3075 Adeline St., Ste 210, Berkeley CA 94703(Promotes assistance/ information on issues related to due process) | 510-644-2555 V/TTY | http://www.dredf.org |
| | National law and policy center dedicated to protecting and advancing the civil rights of people with disabilities through legislation, litigation, advocacy, technical assistance, and education and training of attorneys, advocates, person with disabilities, and parents of children with disabilities. | |
| Down Syndrome Connection of the Bay Area 101-J Town and Country Drive Danville, CA 94526 | 925-362-8660 | http://www.dsconnection.org/ |
| | The Down Syndrome Connection is passionate and dedicated to encouraging the unlimited potential in children and adults with Down syndrome throughout the San Francisco Bay Area. Our mission is to empower, inspire and support people with Down syndrome, their families and the community that serves them, while fostering awareness and acceptance in all areas of life. | |
| Easter Seals Bay Area 391 Taylor Blvd., Ste 250, Pleasant Hill, CA 94523 | 5510.835.2131 Early Intervention Ext. 161 | www.bayarea.easterseals.com |
| | Provides services to children and adults with disabilities and other special needs, and support to their families, including Early intervention services. | |
| | | |
| | Founded and run by families in Solano County with members on the Autism spectrum. Provides support for parents of children on the autism spectrum through education and the sharing of ideas and experiences. | |
| Independent Living Resource-Solano County Branch , Fairfield 94534 470 Chadbourne Rd., Ste B | 707-435-8174 FAX: 707-435-8177 | http://www.rehab.cahwnet.gov/ILS/ILC-ILRCoCo-Sol.html or www.ilrsec.org |
| | Promotes the full participation and inclusion of disabled person in community life. Provides advocacy, support and information. Part of a national network of Independent Living Centers. | |
| Matrix Parent Network and Resource Center 94 Galli Drive, Suite C, Novato, CA 94949 | Toll Free: 800-578-2592 | http://www.matrixparents.org info@matrixparents.org |
| | A federally funded parent training and information center providing information, training and consultation to parents regarding special education issues. | |
| National Center for Learning Disabilities , New York, NY 10013 32 Laight Street | 212.545.7510 Toll-free: 1.888.575.7373 Fax: 212.545.9665 | www.nclld.org info@nclld.org |
| | Provides information and resources to parents and professionals regarding learning disabilities. | |
| North Bay Regional Center (NBRC) 610 Airpark Rd, Napa CA 94558 | 707-256-1100 FAX: 707-256-1112 | http://www.nbrc.net warm line (800) 646-3268 |
| | Provides assessment, support and payment for services for qualifying individuals with developmental disabilities in. part of a state-wide system of regional centers holding contracts with the Department of Developmental Services. | |
| Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired 214 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94102 | 415-431-1481 FAX: 415-863-7568 | http://www.lighthouse-sf.org info@lighthousesf.org video line (415) 255-5906 |
| | Provides a variety of educational, recreational, rehabilitative and social services to blind and visually impaired clients. Offers programs and | |

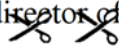
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| | services to youth, adults, and seniors experiencing varying degrees of vision loss. | |
| Charles and Helen Schwab Foundation 201 Mission St., Ste 1950, San Francisco CA 94105 | (415) 795-4920 FAX: (415)795-4921 | www.schwabfoundation.org info@schwabfoundation.org |
| | Provides information and strategies for families whose children struggle with learning and attention problems. | |
| Solano Parent Network 1125 Missouri, Suite 200, Fairfield 94533 | 707.427.3545 ext. 137 | http://www.solanoparentnetwork.org |
| | Provides support to families with children who have or are at risk of having, serious emotional, behavioral, or mental disorders. Offers support groups, speaker meetings, library, and respite services. | |
| Tourette Syndrome Association – NorCal/Hawaii | (925)846-8075 | info@tsnorcal-hawaii.org |
| | Voluntary non-profit organization providing information, resources and support to families of individuals with Tourette Syndrome. | |

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



The Solano County CAC would like to thank all those who have contributed to the development and subsequent revisions to this handbook:

Cut here and deliver to your district director of special education



Date: _____

To: _____
(Your District Director of Special Education - see addresses in section of this book)

From: Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

I would like more information on:

- Community Advisory Committee (CAC) or Local Advisory Committee (LAC)
- Transition to the World of Work
- Infant/Preschool Programs
- Behavior Intervention Plans
- Other _____