

Parent Handbook for Special Education



Contra Costa SELPA

(925) 827-0949

ccselpa.org

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Introduction

A foundation of service for a student with disabilities is parent knowledge of and participation in the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) process. Our professionals within the Contra Costa SELPA, recognize that you, as a parent or guardian, have unique insight and expertise about your child and their educational experience. By working closely with parents, we feel that our efforts to reach the goal of providing effective education programs for our students can be achieved. We hope that this guide will provide parents with an understanding of the IEP process that will assist us all in meeting the individual needs of every student.

Although our staff makes every effort to acquaint parents with the many aspects of our programs and services, we acknowledge a more comprehensive overview of the IEP process and District resources is necessary. Therefore, the Contra Costa SELPA has developed this handbook to provide you with information that will support your participation in the IEP process. If further questions arise, after reviewing the information contained in this manual, please contact any member of the special education staff with your questions, in your district or at the SELPA office.

What is Special Education and Who's Involved

Special Education is defined in the California Education Code as:

"Specially designed instruction, at no cost to the parents, to meet the unique needs of individuals with exceptional needs, whose educational needs cannot be met with modification of the regular instructional programs, and related services at no cost to the parents, which may be needed to assist such individuals to benefit from specially designed instruction.

Special education is an integral part of the total public education system and provides education in a manner that promotes maximum interaction between pupils with disabilities and those without disabilities in a manner which is appropriate to the needs of both."

13 Disability Categories

To qualify for an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), your student must qualify for at least one of thirteen disabilities. These disabilities are:

1. Autism
2. Deaf-Blindness
3. Deafness
4. Emotional Disturbance (ED)
5. Hearing Impairment
6. Intellectual Disabilities (ID)
7. Multiple Disabilities (MD)
8. Orthopedically Impaired (OI)
9. Other Health Impaired (OHI)
10. Specific Learning Disability (SLD)
11. Speech and Language Impairment (SLI)
12. Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)
13. Visual Impairment, including blindness (VI)

SELPA LEA's / District's

<p style="text-align: center;">Acalanes Union High School District 1212 Pleasant Hill Rd. Lafayette, CA 94549 (925) 280-3910</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Antioch Unified School District 510 G St. Antioch, CA 94509 (925) 779-7500 x53500</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Brentwood Union School District 255 Guthrie Ln. Brentwood, CA 94513 (925) 513-6318</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Byron Union School District 14401 Byron Hwy Byron, CA 94514 (925) 809-7505</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Canyon School District Pinehurst Rd. Canyon, CA 94516 (925) 376-4631</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">County Office of Education 77 Santa Barbara Rd Pleasant Hill, CA 94523 (925) 942-3376</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">John Swett Unified School District 400 Parker Ave. Rodeo, CA 94572 (510) 245-4300 x3501</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Knightsen School District 1923 Delta Rd. Knightsen, CA 94548 (925) 625-3303</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Lafayette School District 3477 School St. Lafayette, CA 94549 (925) 927-3516</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Liberty Union High School District 20 Oak St. Brentwood, CA 94513 (925) 634-2166</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Martinez Unified School District 921 Susana St. Martinez, CA 94553 (925) 335-5918</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Moraga School District 1540 School St. Moraga, CA 94556 (925) 377-4109</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Oakley Union School District 91 Mercedes Ln. Oakley, CA 94561 (925) 625-7060</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Orinda School District 8 Altarinda Rd. Orinda, CA 94563 (925) 258-6216</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Pittsburg Unified School District 2000 Railroad Ave. Pittsburg, CA 94565 (925) 473-2340</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Walnut Creek School District 960 Ygnacio Valley Rd. Walnut Creek, CA 94596 (925) 944-6850</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Contra Costa Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) 2520 Stanwell Drive, Suite 270 Concord, CA 94520 (925) 827-0949</p>	

The Roles of a Parent

Parents as Partners

Parents are valued partners. Parent participation is one of the outstanding features of current legislation concerning exceptional children. It is important you understand fully all the ways you can participate as a partner. Your rights and responsibilities as a parent in the identification, assessment, planning, placement, and appeals processes are specifically outlined in this handbook. Read them carefully and use them.

Participate

Be active in all the processes of your child's special education. As a parent you will find yourself one of a team of people all working together to plan and provide the most appropriate educational program for your child. Be prepared. Ask questions about anything you do not understand. Your participation is needed in a variety of ways.

Here are some examples:

- **Consent** - By law your consent is required before your child can be tested or receive any special education services.
- **Communication** - Good communication between home and school is an important key to the success of a child's program. Once the decisions have been reached and the IEP written, keep in close touch with what is going on at school.
- **Information** - As part of the assessment process and the IEP planning you will be asked to provide needed information concerning your child. Your cooperation will help in planning the best program for your child.
- **Review**- Your child's IEP will be reviewed once a year. Be involved in this process every year. Your input is needed. Remember the IEP is the heart of your child's education and your participation in the process is vital.
- **Attendance** - Attend all IEP meetings and parent conferences concerning your child. Also, you may have the opportunity to attend parent education programs to learn more about special education activities.

Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)

What is Alternative Dispute Resolution?

ADR is a process for resolving special education disagreements in a respectful, neutral environment. The goal of ADR is that families and districts work together to create solutions to benefit the student

Who Should Choose Alternative Dispute Resolution?

ADR is designed for families and districts who want to work together to preserve their relationship for the benefit of the child.

ADR is Voluntary

All ADR activities are voluntary and mutually agreed to by the parents and district. The goal is to reach local resolution for disputes, maintain positive relationships, and ensure an appropriate education for the student

The most important stage of conflict management is prevention. The foundation of our ADR program is to build capacity at the parent and district level to resolve conflict. Through parent engagement and training, staff training in pro-active case management, communication and conducting productive meetings, conflict is preempted. Parents and Districts work with their assigned CCSELPA Program Specialists through this process.

Why Choose Alternative Dispute Resolution? ADR keeps the decision making in the hands of the family and the district. Special education agreements are more effective when families and schools develop their own solutions rather than abide by an agreement imposed by a third party.

For more information on ADR, please visit the SELPA website at ccselpa.org

Community Advisory Committee (CAC)

An important organization to become aware of and be involved in is the Community Advisory Committee for Special Education (CAC). The law requires that a majority of its members be parents and a majority of those be parents of special education children. Representatives of public and private agencies, community groups, special and regular education teachers, disabled students, school personnel, and other concerned citizens make up the rest of the committee. This organization plays an important role in special education in the Contra Costa SELPA. The CAC's responsibilities and activities include:

- Advising the Contra Costa SELPA's Governance Board regarding the development and review of special education programs;
- Making recommendations on priorities to be addressed under the local special education plan;
- Acting in support of children with disabilities;
- Assisting in the evaluation of how well the Local Plan for Special Education is meeting the needs of our children;
- Assisting in parent education and the development of public information materials such as this handbook;

You are encouraged to attend the monthly CAC meetings. Call the Contra Costa SELPA office for meeting details.

Programs

Special Education programs in the SELPA's 16 local education agency's (LEA's) differ in what they are called and what they are. Below is a general overview of special education programs and services. Individual LEAs could clarify their own programs. Please keep in mind, that for each of the program options, the IEP team determines placement.

Resource Specialist Program (RSP)

Under the Resource Specialist Program, students with specific learning problems are assigned to general education classrooms for the majority of the school day but receive supportive instruction by the Resource Specialist Teacher, either in a separate classroom or the general education classroom.

Special Day Classes (SDC)

These classes provide services to students with more intensive needs than can be met within the general education class or the Resource Specialist Program. Students are enrolled in these special classes, usually for the majority of their core academic courses and are grouped according to similar instructional needs. The four types of SDC's are Mild, Moderate, Intensive, and Counseling Enriched.

Infants and Toddlers

Children from birth to 3 years who display significant developmental delays, have a known disability, or are at high risk for future developmental delay or disability may receive education, consultation, and services.

Transition Program

A transition program is designed to provide services to students 18-22 years old who have a Certificate of Completion and an IEP. The transition program focuses on developing independence aligned with each student's individual abilities. These programs usually provide support in any roll of the following areas:

- Daily living skills/self-help
- Vocational
- Functional Academics
- Community skills
- Social/interpersonal skills
- Leisure and recreation

Classes and services for students, between the ages of 18-22, that are not on a diploma track and who are usually clients of the Regional Center of the East Bay (RCEB), are in the Transition Program. The program works to give students the ability to focus on five areas: academics, community, leisure and recreation, self-help, and vocational.

Related Services

These services are provided to meet specific needs of a student and are offered to support the student in their educational setting. These services include speech therapy, adaptive physical education, counseling, audiological services, behavior support, occupational therapy, and services for students with visual or hearing impairments.

Nonpublic (NPS) or State Special Schools

If a student's special education needs cannot be met through the local programs, a nonpublic school program may be provided. State special schools may be an option for some students.

District Supports and Structure

When you have a question or an issue to address about your child's IEP, it helps to go to those who most closely work with your child first. That said, if you ever feel that you are not being heard or that there are questions that are not being heard, there are others to go to in the district who can help you. Listed below is a sequential list of those you can go to for questions/supports:

1. Case Manager ... your child's primary special education provider, usually a special education teacher or speech language pathologist.
2. Principal ... the school site Principal at your child's school site.
3. Program Supervisor and/or District Special Education Director. Check in with your district's special education office to see who can support you and/or your child. This information may also be listed on your district's website.

The SELPA Office

We have Program Specialists, a Coordinator, and a Director.

Please do not hesitate to call our office with any questions and we will have a person who can work with.

What is an Individualized Education Program (IEP)?

Defined

The law requires that an Individualized Education Program (IEP) be written for each child who is eligible for Special Education. Each student's IEP must be reviewed at least once a year and must be changed as the student's needs change.

What the IEP must include

- A statement of the student's present levels of educational performance and special needs.
- Annual education goals
- Services and related services
- The amount of time the child will participate in regular classes or activities.
- Implementation, frequency, and duration of placement
- Parent input
- Transition Plan, for students who are 16 years of age or older or will turn 16 before their next annual IEP
- Placement options discussed and program offered

The IEP Team

The IEP must be written by a team, including the parents or guardians, the student's general education teacher, special education teacher/provider and a school administrator/designee. In addition, anyone who has assessed the student and is presenting a report must be present. Lastly, if the student has any related service providers, they would be present as well. A parent is allowed to bring guests as well, to support them and/or to share information about their child.

The IEP Meeting

The team's initial responsibility is to review the student's assessment(s), present levels, and any observations made about the student, and determine eligibility for Special Education services. The discussion will include the present levels of the student, and applicable goals and objectives that are decided upon by the team. Relevant services are presented in the meeting. The frequency and duration of those services will be determined along with the start date, person responsible for the goals and services, the expected completion date, and the date the objectives hope to be completed. A rationale for eligibility will be stated indicating the 'handicapping condition' and the 'least restrictive environment' to be utilized.

Remember, decisions are made only with the active participation of all team members during the meeting.

Preparing for the Meeting

Planning for an IEP will be one of the most helpful things you can do for yourself and your child. Organizing your concerns, issues, and questions ahead of time will help significantly during the meeting.

STEP 1

- Organize your paperwork.
- Familiarize yourself with the current copy of the IEP.
- Write down any questions/concerns that you may have.
- Write down any areas of challenge that you would like the IEP team to address.
- Be prepared to write notes at the IEP.

STEP 2

Questions you may have:

- Look at the meeting notice and determine if you understand each person's role. If not, ask your case manager.
- Have you thought about bringing a relative or a friend to the meeting?
- Will you tape record the meeting? You must let your case manager know 24 hours in advance of the meeting.

The IEP Meeting

Developing an IEP gives the parents, teacher, and school official the opportunity to review the assessment and educational history of the child and make plans that will meet the needs of the student.

Specific items that will be discussed during the IEP meeting are listed below. Remember that you are part of the team, and you may ask questions at any time during the meeting.

1. Formal and Informal Assessments
2. Impact of Disability on Academics and Social Skills
 - How disability affects your child's academic abilities
 - How disability affects social skills/behavior
 - Present Levels of Performance
3. Goals
 - Baseline (Your student's current level of performance)
 - Goals (all identified areas of need have goals)
4. Placement
 - Your child's participation in the general education curriculum
 - When services will be provided and how it will impact amount of time your child is in the classroom
5. Support Services, Accommodations, and Modifications
 - Support services that will be provided
 - Supplementary aids (i.e., extended time on tests, preferential seating)

Signing off on an IEP

- Listen closely to what the IEP team members are saying. Don't hesitate to ask them to repeat, give additional explanation, or define terms in everyday language. Before you sign the IEP, you should understand and agree with all aspects of it.

- You may take the IEP home before signing. If you have additional concerns that warrant changes, the IEP team will need to reconvene. In any case, an IEP must be in effect before special education and related services are provided. Once you have signed the IEP, make sure to get a copy for your personal records.

When IEP's Can be Held:

- To review the results of a formal assessment
- When the student's placement or instruction is initiated, changed, or terminated
- When lack of progress exists in the Special Education Program
- Within 30 days of a written request by a parent for a review
- When a teacher requests a review
- At least annually
- For reevaluation every 3 years to reestablish eligibility for Special Education
- Within 30 days of the student's transfer into the district from another special education local plan area (SELPA)

Related Timelines

- 24 hours ... The minimum amount of time, prior to an assessment being presented, that parents should receive a copy or copies, of the assessment plans being presented
- 5 days ... The goal of the IEP team, regarding the number of days ahead of an IEP meeting, that they want to provide parents with a draft copy of much of an IEP and a copy of any draft report that is being presented. This is the goal of our staff in but please know, this is not the law, and it is not always achievable.
- 15 days ... When a parent requests that their child be assessed for special education, the district has fifteen days from the day of request, to offer an assessment plan and/or address the parents' concerns.
- 30 days ... When a parent requests an IEP meeting for their child, the district has thirty days from the day of request to schedule and hold the IEP meeting. It is recommended that parents put the request in writing, to their child's special education teacher and that they give the reason why they are requesting the meeting.
- 60 days ... When an assessment plan is received by the district staff: they have 60 days from the date the assessment plan was received, to hold, provide, and present the findings of the assessments.

Disciplinary Process for Special Education Students

Suspension

A child with a disability can be suspended for not more than ten (10) consecutive days for violation of school conduct codes using the same procedures as a child without a disability. For a suspension of ten (10) days or under, educational services do not need to be provided. If the suspension is for more than ten (10) days in a school year, certain procedural safeguards must be followed. They include a meeting of the IEP team not later than ten (10) days after deciding to take disciplinary action to review the child's behavior intervention plan; determine if the misconduct is a manifestation of the disability; determine appropriate action based on the outcome.

Expulsion

A child with a disability can be expelled for violation of school conduct codes only when certain procedural safeguards are followed. Within ten (10) days of the school's decision to propose a specific disciplinary action that includes a change in placement of more than ten (10) days, the IEP team must meet to determine if the misconduct is a manifestation of the disability; determine an appropriate interim alternative setting for the child's educational placement; consider a need for change, by the end of the planned placement in alternative educational setting, from the placement the child was in at the time of the misconduct. If the parents disagree with the IEP team's findings that the expulsion process can proceed because the behavior subject to the disciplinary action was not a manifestation of the child's disability, they can file for a due process hearing. Even if the district does expel the child, they must provide a free, appropriate public education during this time.

Manifestation Determination (MD)

The IEP team may determine that the misconduct was not a manifestation of the disability only if they first consider all relevant information relating to the behavior subject to disciplinary action. This includes evaluation and diagnostic results supplied by the parent, observation of the child, and the child's IEP and placement. Then they must find that 1) the conduct in question was caused by or had a direct and substantial relationship to the child's disability and 2) the conduct in question was the direct result of the LEA's failure to implement the IEP. If the IEP team determines the child's disability was not a manifestation of their disability, the school may proceed with the proposed disciplinary action.

What Are My Legal Rights as a Parent?

What Am I Entitled To?

- Receive written notice from the school asking for your consent to assess your child
- Participate in the planning and development of your child's Individualized Education Program and to receive a copy
- Receive a full explanation of your rights
- Written notice before any proposed changes to your child's IEP
- Review your child's school records with a school administrator
- Participate in the annual review and revision of your child's Individualized Education Program
- File a complaint with the district and/or the state if you believe a law has been violated relative to special education services for your student
- Request a Due Process Hearing when you and the school cannot agree on what type of program will be most helpful for your child

Due Process

The intent of special education law is to provide a free appropriate public education for each child that will meet his or her unique needs. School personnel will try their best to make changes in your child's program that you feel are needed. Sometimes, however, the school may not agree with you or may not be able to meet your request. If this happens, and you and the school are not able to agree over how to meet your child's educational needs, you have the right to use the Due Process procedures provided for by law.

Before considering Due Process, it is helpful to ask to meet with any of the following three individuals, to see if they can support you. You can ask to meet with them individually and/or with others present. These people are:

1. Director of Special Education
2. Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) Executive Director
3. Parent Liaison

Most problems can be resolved through discussion with the school team, program specialists, or special education administrators. If, after working closely with the school and district special education personnel the matter is not resolved, you may exercise the Due Process procedures guaranteed by State and Federal law.

Overview of Special Education Laws & Regulation

Public Law 94-142, The Education for all Handicapped Children Act, 1975

This law guarantees:

- a FREE and appropriate education for all children with disabilities.
- education to occur in the least restrictive environment.
- an Individualized Education Program (IEP) prepared by a team which includes the parents.
- necessary related services will be provided from special education.
- fair assessment procedures will be used to determine a student's abilities and educational requirements; and
- due process and complaint procedures to ensure that the student's rights are met.

IDEA and Transition

P.L. 100-476 - Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (formerly P.L. 94-142, Education of the Handicapped Act) made some important changes in special education. One area was the expansion of transition services and their relationship with the IEP.

IDEA states: Transition services means a coordinated set of activities for a student, designed with an outcome oriented process, which promotes movement from school to post-school activities, including post-secondary education, vocational training, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation. Activities shall be based upon the individual student's needs, considering the student's preferences and interests and shall include instruction, community experiences, the development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives and when appropriate, acquisitions of daily living skills and a functional vocational evaluation.

IDEA Reauthorization 1997

IDEA's purpose is to ensure that students with disabilities receive special education and related services tailored to their unique needs and prepare them "for employment and independent living." The IDEA Reauthorization included revisions or changes to discipline; inmate services; funding;

early childhood programs for disabled children; the IEP; mediation; transition (see IDEA); attorney's fees; parental rights and requirements; and private schools and charter schools. For more information on IDEA Reauthorization please contact your school district's special education office.

IDEA Reauthorization 2004 and AB 1662 2005 (California's Conformity Legislation)

Parental Consent

Required before conducting an individual evaluation or before providing special education and related service. Not required for "screening" (example: vision, hearing screening conducted with all children) or curriculum-based assessments.

Evaluation Timelines

Sixty (60) day timeline for completion of assessments from receipt of signed assessment plan to IEP meeting to discuss results.

Summary of Performance

Summary of Performance is provided to the student by the District upon graduation with a diploma or before aging out of special education.

IEP-related changes

Benchmarks or Short-Term Objectives are only required for students who take alternate assessments aligned to alternate achievement standards (CAA: California Alternate Assessment & English Language Learners/ELL). They continue to be permissive for all.

Transition: Statement of transition services must be in place beginning now at age 16 or earlier as appropriate.

IEP team attendance: Team member excusal is permissible under certain conditions and must be agreed to by parent. Parents and District may agree to alternative means of meeting participation, such as video conferences and conference calls.

Children in Private Schools

Districts have search and serve and evaluation requirements as well as the responsibility to offer FAPE in the public schools if parent has any intention of enrolling in public school. If parents continue to choose private school placement, some special education services are available to the private school from the district utilizing the required "proportional amount of federal funds." Student's special education services are identified through an ISP "Individual Service Plan" which is reviewed annually.

Ed Code Section 56425.5 - Early Interventions (Part H)

The Legislature hereby finds and declares that early education programs for infants identified as individuals with exceptional needs, which provide 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.

Early education programs funded pursuant to Sections 56427, 56428, and 56728.8 shall provide a continuum of program options provided by a Trans disciplinary team to meet the multiple and varied needs of infants and their families. Recognizing the parent as the infant's primary teacher, it is the legislature's intent that early education programs shall include opportunities for the family to receive home visits and to participate in family involvement activities pursuant to sections 56426.1 and 56426.4. It is the intent of the legislature that, as an infant grows older, program emphasis would shift from home-based services to a combination of home-based and group services.

Public Law 99-372, Handicapped Children's Protection Act

This law provides that in any action or proceeding brought under the Education Handicapped Act (EHA), may award reasonable attorney's fees to the parents or guardian of a disabled child or youth who is the prevailing party. Fees are based on the rates prevailing in the party's community for the kind and quality of services performed.

Public Law 98-524, Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act

Public Law 98-524 has two broad themes. First, the Act is intended to make vocational programs accessible to all persons including disabled and disadvantaged persons, single parents and homemakers, adults in need of training and retraining, persons participating in programs designed to eliminate sex bias and stereotyping in vocational education, and incarcerated persons. Second, the Act is intended to improve the quality of vocational education programs to give the nation's workforce the marketable skills needed to improve productivity and promote economic growth.

The Lanterman Act

The Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Services Act established the Regional Center system which purchases services for persons who are developmentally disabled.

The legislation lists specific rights:

- to treatment and rehabilitation.
- to live a normal, productive, and independent life.
- to be provided a full measure of dignity, privacy, and human care; and
- to participate in an appropriate, free educational program.

Resources

Listed below are resources which provide services, support, or cash benefits to families with a child with a disability. They are divided into sections for ease of reference.

Mandated Programs

California Children Services (CCS)	925-313-6100	Provides specialized medical care, therapy and treatment, and equipment for families eligible through residency, medical condition and financial situation.	https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/services/ccs/Pages/default.aspx
Child Health & Disability Prevention Program (CHDP)	800-696-9644 or 925-313-6150	Provides preventive health care for children of low-income families or in foster care.	https://cchealth.org/chdp/
Contra Costa County Department of Employment & Human Services	510-262-7700 (Hercules) 510-412-3000 (Richmond)	Financial assistance, food stamps, Medi-Cal, IHSS for low-income families.	https://ehsd.org/
Contra Costa Regional Medical Center	925-370-5000	County hospital required to provide medical care to any resident regardless of ability to pay.	https://cchealth.org/
Regional Center of the East Bay Concord Office, Oakland Office (new intakes)	925-798-3001 (Concord) 510-383-1200 (Oakland)	Evaluation, case management and purchase of services for clients with developmental disabilities.	https://www.rceb.org/
Social Security Administration	800-772-1213	Cash benefits (through Supplemental Security Income [SSI] program) for children with diagnosed disabilities. If you receive cash benefits through the County Department of Employment & Human Services, you will probably be eligible.	https://www.ssa.gov/
Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)	800-414-4942	Vouchers for food supplements for low-income women who are pregnant, breast-feeding, or have children from birth to age three.	http://www.cchealth.org/services/wic/

Special Programs

Blind Babies Foundation	510-446-2229	Consultation & home visits.	www.blindbabies.org
California SIDS Program (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome)	800-369-7437	Support groups for families who have lost babies to SIDS.	https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CFH/DMCAH/SIDS/Pages/Default.aspx
CARE Parent Network	800-281-3023	Information, resources, training, and parent-to-parent support.	https://www.careparentnetwork.org/
Center for Accessible Technology	510-841-3224	Technology resources, hardware and software loans, newsletter, workshops.	https://cforat.org/
Crisis Center Hotline	800-833-2900		https://www.crisis-center.org/
Deaf Counseling, Advocacy and Referral (DCARA)	510-343-6670	Resources, counseling, advocacy, and referral for individuals with hearing impairments.	https://dcara.org/
Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund (DREDF)	510-644-2555	Law and policy center dedicated to advocacy, technical assistance, education, and training to protect the civil rights of people with disabilities.	https://dredf.org/
Down Syndrome Connection	925-362-8660	Information, referral and support for parents, and services for children.	https://www.dscba.org/
East Bay Learning Disabilities Association	510-433-7934	Monthly meetings, workshops, and newsletters.	https://ldacalifornia.org/
Easter Seals	925-849-8999	Early intervention services.	https://www.easterseals.com/connect-locally/service-center-locations/easterseals-northern-california-dublin.html
Epilepsy Foundation Northern California	800-632-3532	Information, referral, and support groups.	https://www.epilepsynorcal.org/
George Mark Children's House	510-346-4624	Provides palliative care to children and support their families.	https://georgemark.org/
Hydrocephalus Foundation	800-598-3789	Information and referral.	https://www.hydroassoc.org/
Parents Helping Parents	408-727-5775	Provides information, training, resources, technical assistance, and advocacy for parents of children with disabilities.	https://www.php.com/
Prader-Willi Support Group	800-400-9994	Quarterly support group.	
Support After Neonatal Death (SAND)	888-908-4263	Monthly support group meeting.	http://handonline.org/en/events/?location_id=4
Through the Looking Glass	510-848-1112	Parent training, counseling, and support groups; adaptive equipment for parents with disabilities.	https://lookingglass.org/
United Cerebral Palsy (UCP)	510-832-7430	Programs for individuals with cerebral palsy.	https://ucp.org/

Counseling

Catholic Charities of the East Bay-Counseling Services	510-234-5110 Richmond	Support groups, individual and family counseling. All religions.	https://www.cceb.org/mentalhealth/
Contra Costa County Children's Mental Health Services	888-678-7277 925-646-5122 Family Involvement Coordinator	Counseling for children and families. Parent support groups available.	https://cchealth.org/mentalhealth/
Family Stress Center	925-827-0212	Therapy for families and individuals; respite and nursery.	
John F. Kennedy University Community Counseling Center	800-696-5358	Counseling by advanced graduate students under the supervision of licensed therapists.	
East Bay Agency for Children	510-531-7551	Support groups for children living with a family member with chronic illness or disability; or who have experienced a death in the family.	www.ebac.org
Touchstone Counseling Services, Inc	925-932-0150	Support groups, workshops, and therapy.	http://touchstonecounseling.com/
West Coast Children's Clinic	510-527-7249	Outpatient mental health services for children and their families. Sliding scale, accepts Medi-Cal and some insurances.	www.westcoastcc.org

Child Care/Respite

Family Stress Center	925-827-0212 x106	Provides short-term on-site respite for families who need relief, four hours per week for up to two months; can care for medically fragile infants.	
Bay Area Crisis Nursery	925-685-8052	Residential care for children in time of family crisis. Can leave children from 24 hours to three weeks.	https://bayareacrisisnursery.org/

Recreation

Aquatics (SNAP)	510-495-4102	Individual and small group sessions ranging from 30 to 60 minutes. Contact Dori Maxon.	https://alamedakids.org/resource-directory/view-program.php?id=1063
Baseball	510-758-4715	Challenger Little League, for boys and girls 6-17 years. Call Pinole-Hercules Little League	
Special Olympics Northern California	925-944-8801	For children six and over. Activities include swimming, soccer, track and field, bowling, basketball.	www.sonc.org
Bay Area Outreach and Recreation Program (BORP)	510-849-4663	For children five and over with physical disabilities. Activities include basketball, tennis, track and field, power soccer, skiing, and other outdoor activities. There is no charge except for special events and trips. Call Tim Orr or Kathryn Black.	www.borp.org

Financial Assistance

Utilities

Pacific Gas and Electric	800-743-5000	PG&E has a program called "Medical Baseline Rate" for individuals who require a life-support device, or special heating or air-conditioning needs. Call to obtain application; must be certified by physician. Also, "Balanced Payment Plan" for individually metered customers. Contact the number shown on your bill for further information.	
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ACRONYMS

Special Education Acronyms

AE	Age Equivalency
APE	Adaptive Physical Education
AB	Assembly Bill (state legislation), Adaptive Behavior
ADD	Attention Deficit Disorder/Auditory
ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder
ADE	Average Daily Attendance
AUT	Autism
BIP	Behavior Intervention Plan
CAC	Community Advisory Committee
CAA	California Alternate Assessment
CBA	Curriculum-Based Assessment
CBI	Community-Base Instruction
CBM	Curriculum-Based Measurement
CCS	California Children Services
CDE	California Department of Education
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
COE	County Office of Education
DB	Deaf/Blind
DHH	Deaf and Hard of Hearing
ELL	English Language Language
ESY	Extended School Year
FAPE	Free and Appropriate Public Education

HI	Hearing Impaired
HOH	Hard of Hearing
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
IEP	Individualized Education Program
IFSP	Individualized Family Service Plan
ID	Intellectual Disability
ISP	Individual Service Plan
ITP	Individual Transition Plan
LCI	Licensed Children Institution
LD	Learning Disabled;
LEA	Local Educational Agency
LH	Learning Handicapped
LPA	Local Plan Area (same as SELPA)
LRE	Least Restrictive Environment
MS	Multiple Sclerosis
NPS	Non-Public School
OCR	Office of Civil Rights
OHI	Other Health Impaired
O1	Orthopedically Impaired
OSEP	Office of Special Education Programs (US)
OSERS	Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Service
OT/PT	Occupational Therapy/Physical Therapy
PE	Physical Education
PH	Physically Handicapped
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
ROP	Regional Occupational Program

RS	Resource Specialist
RSP	Resource Specialist Program
RTI	Response to Intervention
SDC	Special Day Class
SELPA	Special Education Local Plan Area
SLD	Specific Learning Disability
SLI	Speech and Language Impaired
SSI	Supplemental Security Income
SST	Student Study Team
TB	Tuberculosis
TDD	Telecommunication Device for the Deaf
TTY	Teletypewriter (connected to a telephone)
VI	Visual Impairment, Visually Impaired

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

If I think my child has a learning problem, what should I do?

First discuss your concerns with your child's classroom teacher. If your child has a demonstrated problem which prevents him/her from functioning in a regular school program without special help, then your child may be eligible for special education services. As a first step you may request that your child's teacher make a referral to the Student Success Team, or you may send a request for an assessment to the Special Education Department.

What is a Student Success Team (SST)?

The SST is a regular education function. It is comprised of teachers and other school personnel based at your local school site. This team reviews a student's problem(s) and plans alternative strategies to be used in the regular program.

What is Response to Intervention (RTI)?

RTI is a three-tiered intervention model available to all students in general education. It is not a special education function. Students identified for additional interventions are identified through a wide variety of measures including STAR testing, teacher assessments, observation, and consultations with parents. RTI is designed to work with the SST for students who may need more intensive supports for a longer period. At the first level, interventions are typically those implemented in the general education classroom by the classroom teacher. These interventions are for specific, targeted periods of time and may include accommodations and modifications to the general education program. Students who demonstrated a continued need for more interventions are placed at Level Three. At that point, the SST may discuss a possible referral for assessment for Special Education. However, even at Level three, school site interventions may preclude a special education referral.

If my child is eligible for special education, who decides what services my child will receive and what program he/she will be in?

The appropriate services and programs will be based upon your child's individual special education needs, which are based on an assessment of all areas of the suspected disability. The planning of your child's program and services is done by the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team. The parent is an important member of this team.

What is the Resource Specialist program?

This program provides special instruction and other services to students with special needs who remain in the regular class. Students receive most of their instruction in the regular classroom with some special small group instruction from the Resource Specialist.

What is an Individualized Education Program (IEP)?

The IEP is a written document developed for each student eligible for special education, which is based on the educational needs of the student as specified by the IEP team (professionals

and parents).

What are Related Services?

Related Services, formerly called Designated Instruction and Services (DIS), are provided in addition to class placement, when needed. They include Speech, Physical and Occupational Therapy, Vision, Orientation & Mobility, Hearing and Audio-logical Services, Counseling, Assistive Technology, and Transportation.

What is Due Process?

Due Process refers to procedures established to ensure that the rights of students and parents are protected.

Will my child be able to participate in an extended year program?

Yes, if the IEP team has determined a need for an extended year program. Generally extended year is available to those students who require a continuation of services to benefit from FAPE.

What should I do if I don't agree with everything in the IEP?

You may give consent to those parts of the IEP with which you agree, and they will be implemented, thus preventing a delay in services. You will be asked to write a dissenting statement that will then be attached to the IEP. The parts with which you don't agree may become the basis for additional IEP meetings. If an agreement cannot be reached, the disagreement may become the basis for a Solutions Panel, Mediation, or Fair Hearing.

If I have a problem with my child's IEP or services, what should I do?

First, discuss the problem with your child's teacher and any other school personnel who are familiar with your child's special needs and who may be able to help resolve the problem for you. You may contact your child's Program Specialist/ Administrator and/or request that the IEP team meet to review and/or develop a new IEP.

For how long will my child receive special education services?

As long as the IEP team, including the parents agree that special education services are needed. This will be based on an on-going evaluation of your child's eligibility needs.

How will my child's IEP be affected if we move out of this school district?

Your child's IEP will still be valid and he/she will be placed in a comparable program for a period of 30 days if you should move. During that time an IEP review should take place in your new school district.