



# *Parent Handbook*

Presented by  
the Community Advisory  
Committee



*This handbook was created by the El Dorado SELPA Community Advisory Committee (CAC) with the hope that it will serve as an informative resource for parents.*

# Parent Handbook

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## Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

As the nation's special education law, The Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) provides rights and protections to children with disabilities and to their parents. The Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) is a federal law that mandates and affirms the right of all children with disabilities to a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). The purposes of IDEA are to do the following:

- Ensure that all children with disabilities have available to them a Free Appropriate Public Education that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for employment and independent living;
- Ensure that the rights of children with disabilities and parents of such children are protected;
- Assist states, localities, educational service agencies, and federal agencies to provide for the education of all children with disabilities; and
- Assess and ensure the effectiveness of efforts to educate children with disabilities.

## Pre-Referral Process

Parents will be contacted whenever there is a concern about their child's academic or behavioral performance. Concerns may be addressed in a Student Study Team (SST) Meeting. This meeting may be initiated by school staff or parents/guardians/adult student. During the meeting, the Student Study Team can document concerns and which strategies are being implemented or will be implemented to attempt to address the student's concerns related to their learning. Areas that are important to discuss and document during the SST meeting are:

- Developmental/medical history
- Attendance/school enrollment history
- Review of vision, hearing, speech and language screenings
- Behavior
- Academics: Performance and results of interventions

Although a referral for special education assessment may be initiated by a Student Study Team (SST), parent, teacher, student or other person with knowledge of the student, current law requires that all options in the general program be implemented before referral to special education. These options may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Accommodations within the general education program
- Research-based instructional strategies and interventions, including universal screening, "tiered" interventions, progress monitoring and problem solving teams within the general education program (see page 10)
- Consultation with appropriate staff
- Referral to alternative programs within the Charter LEA
- Referral to professional and/or agencies outside of the Charter LEA (at cost to the Charter LEA)

All options are to be explored and documented by the general education staff prior to a referral for special education. The procedure to be followed when a student is first seen as having difficulty will be the responsibility of the general education staff.

When all of the resources of general education have been exhausted, the student may be referred for special education consideration.

### **Assessment Plans**

An Assessment Plan (AP) is a document that outlines the assessment tools and methods used to determine eligibility for special education services as well as present levels of performance, the types of measurements used to collect this information, and the individual(s) responsible for the collection/review of data. Assessments will be comprised of data from multiple sources and will require a multidisciplinary team of specialists to gather and interpret the data.

An assessment plan can be initiated for several reasons. Some examples may include:

- Upon parent request
- To initiate an assessment for an initial evaluation
- To initiate an assessment for a triennial evaluation
- If a student is identified as having a new possible area of need, such as behavior or speech and language

**PLEASE NOTE:**

Formal assessment cannot be conducted without the parent's written consent. It may also be appropriate to conduct formal assessment while the student is receiving interventions suggested through the SST process.

Parental consent is not required before reviewing existing data, or before administering a test or other assessment that is administered to all students, unless before administration of that test or assessment, consent is required of the parents of all the students.

**Parent Request for Assessment**

If a parent is requesting an assessment, the Charter LEA must respond within 15 days of the written request. A parent has a right to request an evaluation at any time.

The Charter LEA may deny the parent's request for an initial assessment or additional assessment using a Prior Written Notice (PWN) if the team feels that the student is receiving a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the Charter LEAs Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). The Charter LEA shall include data in the PWN to ensure that the student does not require assessment.

If a parent would like to refer his/her child to the Student Study Team, he/she should write a specific request to the attention of the child's principal, teacher or the Charter Special Education Administrator, asking for a Student Study Team meeting (see sample letter on page 11). Or, if a parent suspects a disability, he/she may write a letter requesting that a referral to assess for eligibility for special education services be initiated, including the reasons why the parent suspects that the child may have a disability. Parents should keep a copy of the request for the child's records (see the sample request for referral for assessment on page 12).

**Assessment Timelines**

Any time a referral to assess a student is proposed, an Assessment Plan (AP) will be developed and sent to the parent for review within 15 calendar days of receipt of the referral. The parent shall have up to 15 calendar days from the receipt of the proposed AP to either grant or decline the proposed assessment.

**Areas of Assessment**

The Assessment Plan must be comprehensive and allow for assessing the student in all areas related to the suspected disability, including, if appropriate:

1. Health and developmental history
2. Vision, including low vision, and hearing
3. Motor abilities
4. Speech and language function
5. General intelligence or cognitive level
6. Processing skills
7. Academic achievement
8. Adaptive skills
9. Orientation and mobility skills
10. Career and vocational interests (transition planning)
11. Social and emotional and behavioral status
12. Any other area of suspected disability

In order to be eligible under IDEA, a student must meet criteria and be identified under one of the following categories:

1. Autism

2. Deafness
3. Deaf-Blindness
4. Emotional Disturbance
5. Visual Impairment
6. Hard of Hearing
7. Speech or Language Impairment
8. Intellectual Disability
9. Multiple Disabilities
10. Orthopedic Impairment
11. Other Health Impairment
12. Specific Learning Disability
13. Traumatic Brain Injury

In addition to being identified under one of the above categories, the team must determine that the student requires special education services in order to receive educational benefit. The term “educational benefit” refers to a student making meaningful progress from instruction with supports and services in place through an individualized education program.

# Educational Benefit and the IEP

Assessment	Present Performance	Identified Needs	Goals	Services	Progress
<p><b>Results used to determine present levels, identify needs and develop goals.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All assessments are completed in each area of suspected disability.</li> <li>• Student educational needs are identified.</li> <li>• Student strengths are identified.</li> <li>• Can baseline data be established?</li> <li>• To determine whether a child is a child with a disability.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Present Level of Performance (PLOP) addresses each area assessed and identifies needs.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Areas not assessed or not a concern documented as such. Include what the student can do.</li> <li>• Educational concerns of parent documented.</li> <li>• The following are areas to be included:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Academic, Communications, Gross/Fine Motor, Social/Emotional/Behavioral, Health, Vocational Self-help.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Special Factors identifies further needs from assessment data and Present levels of performance.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identified needs may also include areas such as low incidences, blind/visually impaired, deaf/hard of hearing, assistive technology, EL related to IEP planning.</li> <li>• A goal/objective must be written for every identified need or the need must be addressed through accommodations.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Goal/Objective developed in each area of identified need.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Baseline: quantifiable description of classroom performance in the specified areas.</li> <li>• Goal/obj. contain:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Who:</li> <li>– Does what:</li> <li>– When:</li> <li>– Given what:</li> <li>– How much:</li> <li>– Measured:</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Progress monitored and reported to parents as identified in the IEP.</li> <li>• Goals/objectives are “linguistically appropriate” if a student is an EL Student.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Services and supports that would provide progress towards goals and receive educational benefit.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Services determined after goal/obj. have been finalized.</li> <li>• Decisions must be made considering less restrictive environment (LRE).</li> <li>• Allows student to the maximum extent appropriate, to be educated with typically developing peers and access to core curriculum.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Need to measure progress as defined in IEP.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine if you need an IEP meeting to adjust any of the goals/services.</li> <li>• Measurements will vary depending on goals.</li> <li>• May include informal and formal assessment results, classroom progress in academic and behavior, grades, progress on goals.</li> <li>• If no progress or insufficient progress is noted, how were goals/obj. or supports &amp; services changed. Changes can only be made within an IEP meeting.</li> </ul>

## Response to Intervention (RtI)

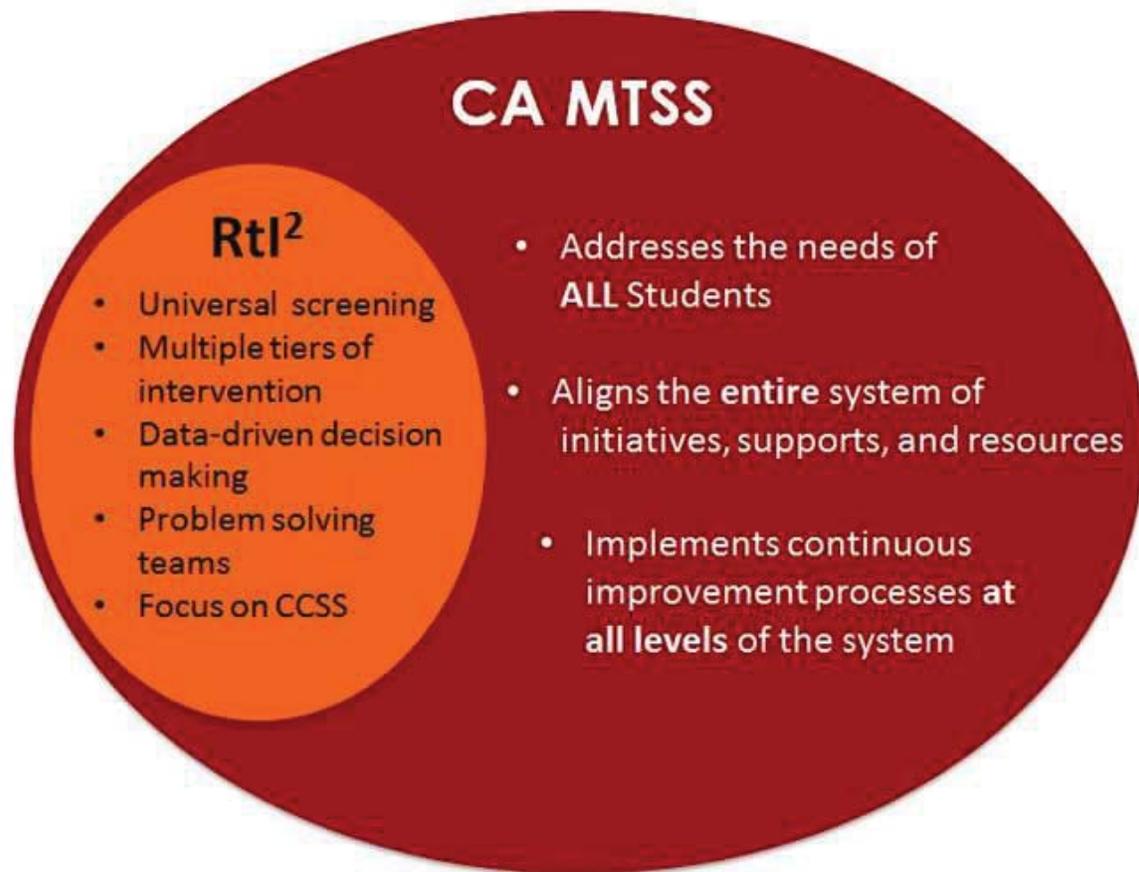
Response to Intervention (RTI) is a multi-tier approach to the early identification and support of students with learning and behavior needs. The RTI process begins with high-quality instruction and universal screening of all children in the general education classroom. Struggling learners are provided with interventions at increasing levels of intensity to accelerate their rate of learning. These services may be provided by a variety of personnel, including general education teachers, special educators, and specialists. Progress is closely monitored to assess both the learning rate and level of performance of individual students. Educational decisions about the intensity and duration of interventions are based on individual student response to instruction. RTI is designed for use when making decisions in both general education and special education, creating a well-integrated system of instruction and intervention guided by child outcome data.

For RTI implementation to work well, the following essential components must be implemented with fidelity and in a rigorous manner:

- *High-quality, scientifically based classroom instruction.* All students receive high-quality, research-based instruction in the general education classroom.
- *Ongoing student assessment.* Universal screening and progress monitoring provide information about a student's learning rate and level of achievement, both individually and in comparison with the peer group. These data are then used when determining which students need closer monitoring or intervention. Throughout the RTI process, student progress is monitored frequently to examine student achievement and gauge the effectiveness of the curriculum. Decisions made regarding students' instructional needs are based on multiple data points taken in context over time.
- *Tiered instruction.* A multi-tier approach is used to efficiently differentiate instruction for all students. The model incorporates increasing intensities of instruction offering specific, research-based interventions matched to student needs.
- *Parent involvement.* Schools implementing RTI provide parents information about their child's progress, the instruction and interventions used, the staff who are delivering the instruction, and the academic or behavioral goals for their child.

## Multi-Tiered System of Supports

A Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) is a term used to describe a model of schooling that uses problem-solving based on data. This model combines academic and behavioral instruction and intervention is delivered to ALL students in varying levels of intensities. The interventions are provided to students based on a multiple tiered system of supports and determined by student need. Students that need minimal academic and behavioral supports will receive the supports they need, while those with a higher level of academic and behavioral needs will get a higher level of interventions. “Need-driven” decision-making seeks to ensure that Charter LEA resources reach the appropriate students (schools) at the appropriate levels to accelerate the performance of ALL students to achieve and/or exceed proficiency.



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

*PLEASE NOTE: Before using a letter such as this, please be sure you have had the opportunity to communicate with your child's teacher or SST Team.*

Mr./Ms. Parent  
Address  
City, State, Zip Code  
Telephone Number

Date

Mr./Ms. Principal  
Charter LEA  
Address  
City, State, Zip Code

Dear Mr./Ms. Principal:

I am the parent of (Student name), who is currently enrolled at the (School Name) in the (XX) grade. (Student name) is not doing well in school and I am concerned about his academic performance.

I am therefore requesting a Student Study Team meeting to develop educational strategies and interventions for (Student name).

Sincerely,

Parent

## Sample Letter – Referral for Special Education

*PLEASE NOTE: Before using a letter such as this, please be sure you have had the opportunity to communicate with your child's teacher or SST Team*

Mr. /Ms. Parent  
Address  
City, State, Zip Code  
Telephone Number

Date

Mr. /Ms. Principal  
Charter LEA Address  
City, State, Zip Code

Dear Mr./Ms. Principal:

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

I am writing to make a referral for assessment to determine eligibility for special education services for (Student name). I am requesting that the school Charter LEA give (Student name) a comprehensive assessment in the following area(s) of suspected disability(ies): \_\_\_\_\_ to determine if s/he is eligible for special education and/or related services under IDEA and/or Section 504. I am requesting all written reports be provided to me prior to the meeting for my review.

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,

Parent

cc: Director of Special Education

## Assessment Plan Development

After a student is referred for special education assessment, a representative of the Charter LEA will contact the parent to develop or review an assessment plan. The Charter LEA representative will:

1. Review the reason(s) for referral;
2. Explain the evaluation process and the methods or tests which will be used to obtain more information about the student. Testing will be done in the student's native language or other means of communication, unless other provisions are necessary. Areas of assessment will be specified in the assessment plan and decided upon collaboratively with both Charter LEA and parent input. All areas of suspected disability should be assessed as part of this assessment.
3. Explain the rights of the parents to:
  - review all relevant information;
  - obtain an independent education evaluation, if the parent(s) disagrees with the assessment;
  - have an impartial due process hearing if they are not satisfied with the assessment results (including Alternative Dispute Resolution); (See page 29)
4. Ask the parents to provide written consent for an assessment to be conducted. This would be in the form of an Assessment Plan.

The evaluation process, parent rights and the assessment plan may be offered at an SST meeting in which the initial referral has been made. However, this process may happen afterward.

The assessment process has two major purposes:

1. To gather all information possible about the student and assess his/her needs through observation, testing, and gathering information from those who have worked with the student, including the parent, teachers, nurses, therapists and psychologists, and any other pertinent information written or otherwise; and
2. To determine if the student is eligible for special education programs and services.

The school has 60 calendar days (excluding days during school breaks of more than 5 school days) from the time of the receipt of the signed parent consent for assessment to complete all assessments, prepare assessment results, schedule and hold the initial IEP team meeting.

In order to gather as much pertinent information about the student as possible, the school may ask the parent to sign an Exchange of Information form. This form would allow the appropriate school personnel to contact outside service providers working with the student.

**EL DORADO COUNTY TRAINING SELPA  
ASSESSMENT PLAN**

Student Name StudentA, TrainingDate of Birth 1/1/2001

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

 Initial     Annual     Triennial     Transition     Interim     Other \_\_\_\_\_
To parent/guardian of: Training StudentADistrict Training #1School GOLDEN CENTER  
ELMDate of Birth 1/1/2001Grade Tenth gradeNative language EnglishEnglish proficiency/CELDLT Level  
\_\_\_\_\_

The student has been referred and/or recommended for an assessment by the following individual(s):

 Parent     Nurse     Teacher     Special Ed Teacher     Other \_\_\_\_\_
**This notice is to inform the parent(s) regarding the school district's proposal to initiate or change the** **Identification  Evaluation of the above named student:**

This prior written notice includes a description of the proposed evaluation, an explanation of why the district proposed to take this action, a description of any other options that were considered and the reasons why those options were rejected, and other factors that are relevant in this proposal. Your written permission must be given before we assess your child to determine initial or continued eligibility for special education services. You have the right to be familiar with the assessment procedures and type of tests that may be given to your child. After the assessment is completed, you will be notified in writing of a meeting to discuss the results of the evaluation. If your child is found eligible for special education services, a full range of program options will be discussed.

**Description of the proposed assessment:**

The assessment will be conducted by qualified staff, and when appropriate, interpreters of the individual's primary language may be used. Tests conducted pursuant to these assessments may include, but are not limited to classroom observations, rating scales, one-on-one testing or some other types or combination of tests. No single procedure may be used as the sole criterion for determining appropriate educational program. Following the completion of the assessment, at the IEP meeting; you will receive a copy of the assessment findings. The results of this assessment may be a recommendation for special education services or maintenance or change of the current special education service(s). A student will not be placed in special education without consent of the parent or guardian. All information and assessment results are confidential.

**Reason(s) for proposed assessment:****Description of other options considered and reasons for rejecting them:****Other factors relevant to the proposal:****Description of evaluation procedures, tests, records, or reports used in deciding to propose this assessment:**

The district proposes to assess your child to determine his/her eligibility for special education services or continued eligibility and present levels of academic performance and functional achievement. Your child will be assessed in all areas of suspected disability as needed.\* To meet your child's individual education needs, this assessment will consist of an evaluation in only the areas checked by the local educational agency (LEA)/district. \*Tests and procedures conducted pursuant to these assessments may include, but are not limited to, classroom observations, rating scales, interviews, record review, one-on-one testing, or some other types or combination of tests.

**Evaluation Area**

**Examiner Title**

- Academic Achievement** - These assessments measure reading, spelling, arithmetic, oral and written language skills, and/or general knowledge.
- Health** - Health information and testing is gathered to determine how your child's health affects school performance
- Intellectual Development** - These assessments measure how well your child thinks, remembers, and solves problems.
- Language/Speech Communication Development** - These assessments measure your child's ability to understand and use language and speak clearly and appropriately.
- Motor Development** - These assessments measure how well your child coordinates body movements in small and large muscle activities. Perceptual skills may also be measured.
- Social/Emotional** - These assessments will indicate how your child feels about him/herself, gets along with others, takes care of personal needs at home, school and in the community.
- Adaptive/Behavior** - These assessments indicate how your child takes care of personal needs at home, school and in the community.
- Post-Secondary Transition** - These assessments related to training, education, employment and where appropriate independent living skills.
- Other**
- Alternative Means of Assessment** - (Describe alternative methods of assessing the child, if applicable)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*Parents/Guardians have protections under state and federal procedural safeguard provisions. Please refer to the enclosed NOTICE OF PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS for an explanation of these rights. If you would like further information about your rights or the proposed action and/or referral please contact:*

\_\_\_\_\_ Print Name of \_\_\_\_\_ Position \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail  
 District Contact \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

- I consent to the assessment. I understand that the results will be kept confidential and that I will be invited to attend the IEP team meeting to discuss the results. I also understand that no special education services will be provided to my child without my written consent.
- I do not consent to the proposed assessment described above.
- I would like the following assessment information to be considered by the IEP team:

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 Parent  Guardian  Surrogate  Adult Student

If my child is or may become eligible for public benefits (Medi-Cal): I authorize the LEA/District to release student information for the limited purpose of billing Medi-Cal/Medicaid and to access Medi-Cal: health insurance benefits for applicable services.

- Yes  No
- Signature \_\_\_\_\_  
 Parent  Guardian  Surrogate  Adult Student

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian/Student has received written notification of protections available to parents when LEA requests to access Medi-cal benefits

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone number \_\_\_\_\_

Comments \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date Received by District/LEA: \_\_\_\_\_

## IEP Team Meeting

Once assessments are completed, a meeting will be held within the 60-day timeline, to review the results and determine special education eligibility. If the student is found eligible, the team will develop an Individualized Education Program (IEP) which is designed to identify what areas will be targeted for intervention and how such an intervention will actually be carried out. Before the student receives any special education services, this program must be developed at the IEP team meeting, and parents must provide written consent. Parents have the right and are encouraged to present information during the IEP team meeting, or prior to, for use in developing the most appropriate IEP for the student. Parents may request, in writing, the assessment results and draft IEP forms to become familiar with the documents, as well as other information pertinent to the IEP, such as drafted reports or drafted goals prior to the IEP team meeting. As a reminder, the parent may invite someone to attend the meeting with them, such as a CAC representative or other support person of the parents choosing.

A number of items make up the Individualized Education Program (IEP). They include:

- Statements of the student's level of educational performance and needs provided by parents and staff;
- Statements of yearly goals;
- Lists individuals responsible for helping to accomplish the goals;
- Criteria and evaluation procedures for measuring the achievement of the educational goals;
- A statement of the specific special education program, the related services needed by the student, and the degree of participation anticipated in the general education program;
- The date that special education service(s) will begin and how long the service(s) should continue; and
- Determination of participation in state and Charter LEA -wide assessments.

The parent(s) or guardian will be asked to give written approval of the newly developed IEP at the IEP team meeting. Parents are not required to sign the IEP at this time. The parent(s) or guardian must give permission before a change in educational placement or program of the student is implemented.

The student's program is a cooperative effort between the school, the home, and the student. Communication between home and school should be continued after the IEP team meeting takes place. Requests for informal conferences with the student's teachers, requests to visit the student's classroom, notes or phone calls are all ways of learning about the student's program and performance.

It is the team's right and responsibility to request an IEP team meeting or review at any time. An IEP meeting will be held at least annually to review the IEP and the student's educational progress. In addition, the student will be re-evaluated no less than every three years to determine continued eligibility for special education services.

If the student does not qualify for special education services, he or she may still be eligible for services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. For additional information regarding Section 504, please contact your Charter LEA. See page 40 in this handbook that discusses 504 plans further or you may contact your Charter LEA representative.

### **IEP Team Membership**

The following individuals are required members of an IEP team for purposes of developing, revising or reviewing the IEP, determining eligibility, and/or recommending placement for a student:

1. An administrator or an administrative designee (other than the student's teacher) who is knowledgeable of program options appropriate for the student. This person must be authorized to make decisions and allocate resources.
2. Not less than one general education teacher. It is recommended that the student's current general education teacher attend the meeting. If the student does not have a general education teacher, the teacher with the most recent and complete knowledge of the student and who is qualified to teach a student of his or her age should attend.
3. The student's special education teacher(s).
4. The student's parent(s)/legal guardian(s)/surrogate parent, or an individual selected by the parent. It is important to note that no individual or agency is authorized to sign with consent to an IEP unless they possess educational rights for the student.

When appropriate, the IEP team may also include:

- The student.
- Other persons who possess expertise or knowledge necessary for the development of the IEP.
- Any assessor(s) who conducted an assessment and is presenting his/her report for the IEP team or an individual with the appropriate qualifications to present the assessment report on behalf of an assessor.

For students with suspected learning disabilities, at least one member of the IEP team, other than the student's general education teacher, shall be a person who has observed the student's educational performance in an appropriate setting.

# Sample IEP Agenda

Agenda for (student's name) Annual (or triennial) IEP on (date)

## **1. Welcome/Start Up**

Introductions  
Purpose/Expected Outcomes  
Agenda Overview  
Child/Parent Rights  
Establish Time Parameters

## **2. Present Levels of Performance/Eligibility and Transition for Students 16 Years and Older**

Complete Transition Paperwork in conjunction with Present Levels, Goals and Services  
Student Strengths/Preferences/Interests  
Parent Concerns  
Review of Reports (General Education, Specialists, and other agencies, if applicable) Review of Progress on Current Goals/Objectives  
Statement of Eligibility/Non-eligibility (if appropriate to this meeting)

## **3. Special Factors**

Assistive Technology?  
Low Incidence?  
Blindness or Visual Impairment?  
Deaf or Hard of Hearing? English Learner? Behavior?  
Areas of Need  
Participation in State/ Charter LEA -wide Assessments

## **4. New Goals/Objectives Based on Current Needs**

## **5. Offer of Program/Services Based on Goals/Objectives**

Service Delivery Options  
Supplementary Aids, Services and Other Supports for School Personnel, or for the Student, or On Behalf of the Student  
Accommodations/Modifications  
Special Education and Related Services  
Extended School Year?

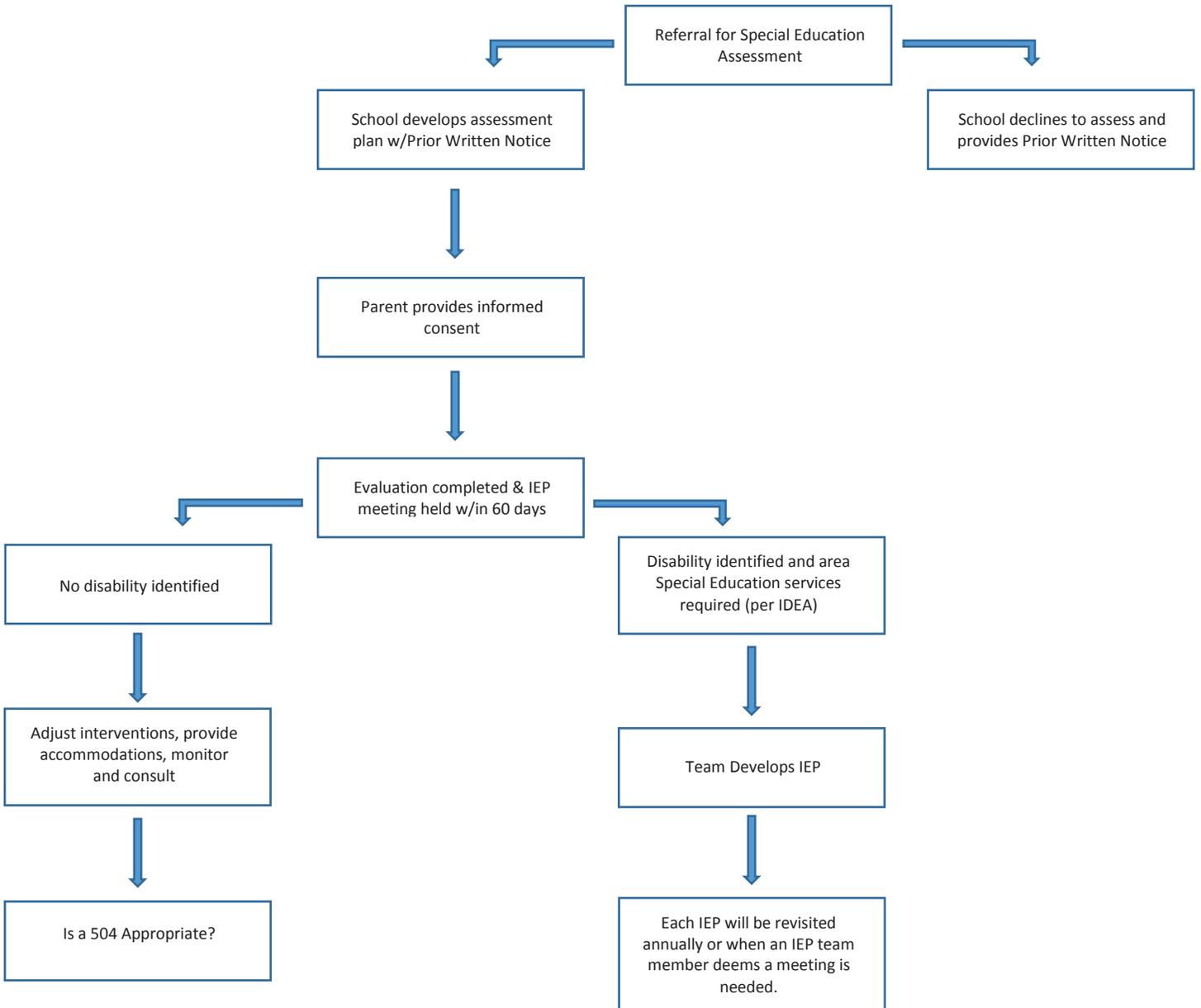
## **6. Offer of Educational Setting**

% of time in/out of general education classes/rationale for time out of general education  
Other Agencies including County Mental Health involved? Promotion Criteria  
Progress Monitoring/Progress Reporting Special Education Transportation? Graduation Plan (if appropriate)

## **7. Ending**

Confirm Agreements  
Signatures  
Follow-up

# Parent Request for Special Education



## Available Special Education Programs and Services

The Charter LEA provides a range of special education programs and services for eligible students in grades TK (transitional kindergarten) through twelfth grade. Please note: Eligible students are able to continue to receive special education and related services documented in the IEP until they receive a high school diploma -OR- they reach the age of 22.

Students receiving special education and related services will be educated with general education peers to the maximum extent appropriate. These students will be integrated as much as possible in school activities and general education classroom activities as determined by the IEP team.

Special education and related services will be provided on behalf of the student, without cost, except for those fees that are charged to general education students. Transportation may be considered as part of the IEP services.

### Least Restrictive Environment

“Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)” is the placement or program which can best meet an individual student’s needs and does so with a minimum loss of contact with general education curriculum, programs and typically developing peers.

Below lists suggested considerations for an IEP team when determining a student’s least restrictive environment:

*Please note:* Placement in the general education classroom is the first option the IEP team must consider for all students. If the IEP team decides that the student can be educated satisfactorily in the general education classroom, then the general education classroom placement is the LRE for that student.

- The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) has a strong preference for educating students with disabilities in the general education classroom with appropriate aids and services.
- What supplementary aids and services would ensure that the student’s IEP can be appropriately implemented in the general education classroom?
- The IEP team may decide that the student cannot be educated satisfactorily in the general education classroom, even when aids and services are provided. The IEP team must then consider other placements and/or services.
- A full continuum of program options must be available within the Charter LEA to the extent necessary to ensure the student receives a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). These might include: specialized academic instruction within general education classes, push-in/pull out service models, special day class, special schools, home instruction, and instruction in hospitals and institutions.
- The IEP team decides which services and programs are necessary for the student, given the student’s individual needs as identified through assessment and the importance of being educated to the maximum extent appropriate with students who do not have disabilities.

## Educational Setting

Charter LEA members offer a range of special education programs to meet the instructional needs of students with disabilities and are described below. For additional information regarding the special education programs that are offered at your Charter LEA, please contact the site directly.

### **Education Specialist/Resource Specialist Program**

The Education Specialist/Resource Specialist program provides a range of services to students with mild to moderate disabilities. The Education Specialist/Resource Specialist program focuses on assisting students in accessing the grade level academic curriculum. Each student receives specially designed instruction and support services in areas of specific need as indicated on his or her Individualized Education Program (IEP). These services may be provided through a push-in/pull out model.

### **Special Day Class (SDC)**

The Special Day Class program provides services to students who require a higher level of individualized support(s) and service(s) than can be provided in the general education and /or Educational Specialist/Resource Specialist program. The SDC program allows a student to receive core content instruction at a more individualized level.

### **State Special Schools**

State Special Schools and services are operated by the State of California for students who are deaf, blind, or have neurological impairments. The schools are available for complete diagnostic workups and may be considered as placement for certain individuals with extraordinary needs. For additional information, please visit the following website: [State Special Schools and Services Division \(CDE\)](#)

### **Non-Public, Non-Sectarian Schools Services**

A Non-Public School (NPS) means a private, nonsectarian school that enrolls individuals with exceptional needs as identified in an individualized education program and is certified by California Department of Education.

Any member of an Individualized Education Program (IEP) team, including the parent/guardian, may make a recommendation that the IEP team consider placement in a residential or non-public day school.

### **Home and Hospital Services**

The purpose of home and hospital instruction is to provide instruction to a student with a temporary disability in the student's home, in a hospital, or other residential health facility, excluding state hospitals. For additional information, please visit the following website: [Home and Hospital Instruction \(CDE\)](#)

### **Independent Study**

The purpose of independent study is to provide an alternative education program that is available to all students across all grade levels. Independent study programs are voluntary and use alternative instructional strategies that respond to individual student needs and learning styles. Instruction may be provided in the home, on a school site, or virtually. While a student is participating in independent study, the Charter LEA is responsible for the provision of general education as well as special education and related services as deemed appropriate by the IEP team.

### **Related Services**

Related services support students in benefiting from their special education program and accessing the general education curriculum. Based on a student's individual assessed need(s), the following services may be specified in a student's Individual Education Program (IEP):

- Instruction and services in language and speech development and remediation
- Audiological services
- Interpreters for the deaf
- Instruction and services in mobility and orientation
- Adaptive Physical Education (APE)
- Physical therapy (PT) or occupational therapy (OT)
- Low vision services and therapy
- Counseling and guidance services
- Psychological services
- Parent counseling and training
- Health and nursing services
- School social work services
- Specially designed vocational education and career development
- Transportation
- Specialized services for low-incidence disabilities

## Transition

Parents play an important role in their student's transition from the school setting to the world of adult living and working. Although the formal process of transition planning is not required of a school until after the student turns 15, prior to the student's 16<sup>th</sup> birthday, it is helpful for parents to begin exploring the topic much sooner.

Transition, in reference to individuals receiving special education services, is defined as a coordinated set of activities for a student with a disability that:

- Is designed to be within a results-oriented process that is focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of the student to facilitate the student's movement from school to post-school activities. These would include postsecondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment); continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation;
- Is based on the individual student's needs, taking into account the student's strengths, preferences, and interests; and
- Includes instruction, 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.

As a student with disabilities moves into the teen years, the Individualized Education Program (IEP) focuses more on the interests of the student and what he or she hopes for the future. According to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), it is the responsibility of the IEP team, including the parent, to create a Transition Individualized Education Program (Transition IEP) to support those interests. IDEA requires that parents and students be involved in all aspects of transition planning and decision-making.

The Transition IEP must:

- State the student's postsecondary goals (what he or she hopes to achieve after leaving high school);
- Be broken down into annual IEP goals that represent the steps along the way that the student needs to take while still in high school to get ready for achieving the postsecondary goals after high school; and
- Detail the transition services that the student will receive to support his or her achieving the IEP goals.

The areas listed below may be explored by the IEP team to determine what types of transition-related supports and services a student with a disability needs. Planning ahead in each of these areas, and developing annual goals and corresponding services for the student, can greatly assist that student in preparing for life after high school.

### **The Domains of Adulthood to Consider**

- Postsecondary education
- Vocational education
- Integrated employment (including supported employment)

- Continuing and adult education
- Adult services
- Independent living
- Community participation

### **Types of Activities to Consider**

- Instruction
- Related services
- Community experiences
- The development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives
- If appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and provision of a functional vocational evaluation.

Part of the IEP team’s responsibility is to determine the agencies from which a student may receive support or services as an adult. The team may request their attendance at the IEP meeting. An agency may or may not choose to attend:

- Community College or University Representative
- County Mental Health Services
- Department of Rehabilitation
- Employment Development Department
- Medicare
- Regional Disability Support Centers
- Regional Occupational Programs
- Social Security Administration
- Community or State Department of Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities
- Disability Support Organizations (e.g., CHADD, The Arc, UCP)
- Community Home Based Service agencies (group home agencies, transportation services)

### **The Transition IEP must:**

- Actively involve the student, the family and representatives from whatever post school services, supports or programs will be necessary in order for the student to be successful when he or she exits school.
- Include an Individual Transition Plan (ITP) that is a “coordinated” effort between the student, family, school, and the necessary post school services and supports, adult agencies, or programs.

### **Remember the transition plan:**

- Is a long-range plan for your student’s adult life
- Is person-centered with direct input by the student
- Is not to be completed in one year
- Is not completed only by school staff
- Includes all the activities that will prepare the student to make his or her dreams for the future a reality.

### **Ways to be involved in the Student’s Transition**

- Participate in parent workshops on how to parent or help an adolescent with a disability during the transition years.
- Participate in events at school where students with disabilities share their experiences (example a high school student telling middle school students what to expect in high school).
- Participate in general school meetings such as back to school night or meetings for a parent-teacher organization.

- Participate with the school in encouraging the student to make his/her own decisions and develop self-advocacy skills (for example selecting courses to take; making career choices).
- Participate in parent/teacher discussions about how a student learns best at home so the student can practice good learning habits in school and home (for example: memory tricks).
- Participate in parents-helping-parents sessions that provide experienced parents as mentors for those beginning the high school transition process.
- Participate in transition workshops at school on transition topics for parents (for example postsecondary planning, financial planning, financial aid for students with disabilities, guardianship).
- Read the school newsletters about transition activities.
- Participate as a volunteer to help find community opportunities for students with disabilities (for example: community service or work sites).
- Participate in school-parent partnerships by serving on an advisory board, making decisions about program development, improvement and use of resources.
- Participate in informal family school events such as social events that build communication and relationships (for example: open houses).
- Utilize the school web site that offers information for parents (including special education and transition information).
- Participate in school field trips to adult service providers and community agencies (for example: Department of Rehabilitation, group homes, and work support agencies).
- Have regular home to school communication with staff and teachers to provide unified support for the student's learning (for example: writing notes or email, daily calendar).
- Be a volunteer in school or school-related activities (for example: chaperoning school events, being a PTA member).
- Complete a family questionnaire for the school that provides information about the student's current performance and the dreams for the student's future.
- Participate in family learning activities such as class assignments that the student does at home with the family (example: survey 3 people about their jobs or plans for college).
- Participate in informal preliminary planning sessions with the student and the school to discuss progress and future plans before writing IEP goals (for example: person-centered-planning, conversation on your dreams for the future).
- Participate in groups that come together to discuss the needs of families during high school transition, their views of what works, and offer advice for schools.
- Attend an adult services fair/forum where parents are able to speak with representatives of service providers to get information about future options for local adult services, services at local colleges, and/or support groups for adults with disabilities.
- Participate in college fairs/forums where parents/students are able to speak to representatives from those colleges or universities and/or hear what college life will be like for the student.

There are many other resources available within the community that will enhance the life of a student as he or she moves into adulthood. The student's school and the transition team will assist with referrals and resources

Taken from: Heath Resource Center at the National Youth Transitions Center

<https://heath.gwu.edu/parents-guide-transition>



## **NOTICE OF PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS AND PARENTS' RIGHTS**

### ***Special Education Rights of Parents and Children Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Part B 2004 Reauthorization (H.R. 1350)***

#### **INTRODUCTION**

This information provides you as parents, legal guardians, persons authorized to make educational decisions, and surrogate parents of children with disabilities from 3 years of age through age 21 with an overview of your educational rights, sometimes called procedural safeguards. This notice is also provided for students who are entitled to these rights at age 18. (20 USC 1415; EC 56321) A copy of these safeguards will be given to you once a year. Additional copies may be given upon an initial referral or parent request for evaluation, upon the first occurrence of the filing of a complaint under Section 615(b) (6) of H.R. 1350, upon provision of an assessment plan to parents and at your request. If your charter school has a website, a copy of these procedural safeguards may be made available to you through that website. [615(d) (1) (A-B)] You may elect to receive this notice and other notices required under this section by an electronic mail (e-mail) communication, if your charter school makes such an option available. [615(n)]

#### **Participation in making decision about your child's education**

You have the right to refer your child for special education services. You must be given opportunities to participate in any decision-making meeting regarding your child's special education program. You have the right to participate in an IEP meeting about the identification (eligibility), assessment, educational placement of your child and other matters relating to your child's free appropriate public education. [20 USC 1414(b)(c)(d) and (f); EC 56341(b), 56343(c)]

You also have the right to participate in the development of the IEP and to be informed of program options, and the availability of free appropriate public education.

Additionally, you have the right to electronically record the meeting on an audio recorder. The law requires that you notify the charter school at least 24 hours prior to meeting if you intend to record the proceedings. (EC 56341.1)

#### **Additional Assistance**

When you have a concern about your child's education, it is important that you call or contact your child's teacher or administrators to talk about your child and any problems you see. Staff in the Special Education Department can answer questions about your child's education, your rights and procedural safeguards. When you have a concern, this informal conversation often solves the problem and helps maintain open communication. Additional resources are listed at the end of this document to help you understand the procedural safeguards.

#### **Prior Written Notice**

### **NOTICE, CONSENT, ASSESSMENT, AND ACCESS**

You have the right to receive a written notice from the charter school before decisions affecting your child's special education are put into place. These include decisions to:

- identify your child as a child with a disability, or change your child's eligibility from one disability to another;
- evaluate or reevaluate your child;
- provide a free appropriate public education to your child, or change a component of your child's free appropriate public education;
- place your child in a special education program; or,
- change your child's special education placement. (20 USC 1415[b]; EC 56500.4)
- acknowledge receipt of a parental request to revoke consent for all special education and related services.

You also have the right to written notice from the charter school if the charter school refuses your request to take these



actions. The Prior Written Notice must include the following:

- a description of the actions proposed or refused by the charter school;
- an explanation of why the action was proposed or refused;
- a description of other options considered and the reasons those options were rejected;
- a description of each assessment procedure, test, record or report used as a basis for the action proposed or refused;
- a description of any other factors relevant to the action proposed or refused; and
- a statement that parents of a child with a disability are protected by the procedural safeguards.

If the notice is not in regard to an initial referral for assessment, the notice must provide a statement that you have protection under procedural safeguards, information on how you can obtain a copy of described procedural safeguards, and sources of additional assistance in understanding the procedural safeguards. (20 USC 1415[c])

### **Parent Consent**

**Parents' written approval is required for:**

- **First Evaluation:** The charter school must have your informed written consent before it can evaluate your child. You will be informed about the evaluations to be used with your child. Your charter school must make reasonable efforts to obtain your informed consent for a first evaluation.
- **Re-evaluation:** The charter school must have your informed written consent before reevaluating your child. To avoid confusion, you should inform the charter in writing if you want to refuse consent to a reevaluation. The charter school reevaluate your child without your written consent if the charter school has taken reasonable measures to get your consent and you have not responded.
- **Initial and Continued Placement in Special Education:** You must give informed written consent before the charter school can place your child in a special education program. You can refuse consent for an evaluation, a reevaluation or the initial placement of your child in special education. The charter school may seek to evaluate or continue your child's placement in special education through a due process hearing, if it believes that it is necessary for your child's education. You and the charter school may agree to first try mediation to resolve your disagreements. (EC 56321[c], 56346, 56506[e]; 20 USC 1414[a][c])

Consent forms must describe the activity for which consent is sought and list the records (if any) that will be released and to whom. You can revoke consent at any time, except that revocation is not retroactive (does not negate actions that occurred after consent was given and before consent was revoked). (34 CFR 300.300)

### **Surrogate Parent Appointment**

In order to protect the rights of the child, charter schools must ensure that an individual is assigned to act as a surrogate parent for the parents of a child with a disability when a parent cannot be identified and the charter school cannot discover the whereabouts of a parent. A surrogate parent may be appointed if the child is an adjudicated dependent or ward of the court under the state Welfare and Institutions Code and the child is referred to special education or already has an IEP. A charter school must make reasonable efforts to appoint a surrogate within 30 days after determining that a surrogate is needed. (20 USC 1415[b]; EC 56050)

### **Age of Majority**

When your child reaches the age of 18, all rights under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) will transfer to your child. The only exception will be if your child is determined to be incompetent under State Law. (34 CFR 300.517 30; EC 56041.5)

### **Parent Revocation of Consent for Student to Receive all Special Education and Related Services**



Changes to the federal regulations for the Individuals with Disabilities Act give parents (or the adult student) the right to revoke their consent for the student to receive special education and related services. You can revoke your consent without any recourse from the charter school. You must submit this statement of revocation in writing and you are not required to state a reason. The charter school may inquire as to the reason, but you are not obligated to respond. Revocation may not be effective retroactively.

Upon receipt of your written request revoking consent for special education and related services, the charter school is required to provide you with Prior Written Notice acknowledging your revocation of special education and related services and must include the date on which all services will cease. This date must be within a reasonable time and the charter school may not postpone ceasing services. The charter school may not require the parent to attend a meeting to discuss the revocation. The charter school may not file for due process or dispute resolution to delay your request. Under the regulations, the charter school will not be considered in violation of FAPE by this revocation. Upon the cessation of services, your child will be considered a general education student for all purposes, including discipline, graduation and state testing requirements; procedural safeguards (with the exception of Child Find requirements provided under IDEA) will no longer be available to your child. Accommodations and modifications provided to your child under the IEP process will also be discontinued. The charter school is not required to amend your child's records to remove any references to your child's prior receipt of special education and related services. If your child attended a school other than his or her neighborhood school through the IEP process, there may be implications for your child's enrollment.

You may not choose to reinstate the consent for your child to receive special education and related services. However, you, or the charter school, may re-refer your child for special education at any time. In this case, the referral will be treated as an initial request for an evaluation, including timeline and assessment requirements.

## **Assessment**

### **Nondiscriminatory Assessment**

You have the right to have your child assessed in all areas of suspected disability. Materials and procedures used for assessment and placement must not be racially, culturally, or sexually discriminatory. Assessment materials must be provided and the test(s) administered in your child's native language or mode of communication, unless it is clearly not feasible to do so. No single procedure can be the sole criterion for determining eligibility and developing an appropriate education program for your child. (*20 USC 1414[a][b]; EC 56001[j] and 56320*)

### **Assessment Plan**

When the charter school is seeking to assess your child, you will be given a written, proposed assessment plan. Along with that plan you will receive a copy of this Procedural Safeguards document. When the assessment is completed, an individualized education program team meeting, which includes you, the parent or guardian, and/or your representatives, will be scheduled to determine whether the student qualifies for special education services. The IEP Team will discuss the assessment, the educational recommendations, and the reasons for these recommendations. A copy of the assessment report and the documentation of determination of eligibility will be given to you. (*EC 56329 (a)*)

### **Independent Educational Evaluation**

If you disagree with the results of the assessment conducted by the charter school, you have the right to ask for one independent education evaluation (IEE) for your child, per evaluation conducted by the charter school, from a person qualified to conduct the assessment, at public expense. The charter school must respond to your request for independent educational evaluation and provide you information, upon request, about where to obtain an independent educational evaluation. Alternatively, the charter school must request a due process hearing to prove that its assessment was appropriate. If the charter school prevails, you still have the right to an independent assessment but not at public expense. The IEP Team must consider independent assessments.

The charter school assessment procedures may allow in-class observation of students. If the charter school observed your child in his or her classroom during an assessment, or if the charter school would have been allowed to observe your child, an individual conducting an independent educational assessment must also be allowed an equivalent opportunity to observe



your child in the classroom. If the charter school proposes a new school setting for your child, an independent educational assessor must be allowed to first observe your child in the proposed new setting. (ED 56329(b)and(c))

### **Access to Educational Records**

All parents of a child enrolled in the charter school have the right to inspect records under the Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), which has been implemented in California under Education Code sections 49060-49079. Under IDEA, parents of a child with disabilities (including noncustodial parents whose rights have not been limited) have the right to review all educational records regarding the identification, evaluation and educational placement of the child and the provision of a free appropriate public education and to receive an explanation and interpretation of the records. Under California statutes, the parents have the right to review and to receive copies of educational records. These rights transfer to a non-conserved pupil who is eighteen years old or attending an institution of post-secondary education.

Parental consent, or the consent of an adult student, is required before personally identifiable information is released to officials of participating agencies providing or paying for transition services related to post-secondary goals.

“**Education record**” means those records that are directly related to a pupil and maintained by an educational agency or a party acting for the agency or institutions, and may include (1) the name of the child, the child’s parent or other family member; (2) the address of the child; (3) a personal identifier such as the child’s social security number, student number, or court file number; (4) a list of personal characteristics or other information that would make it possible to identify the child with a reasonable certainty. Both federal and state laws further define a pupil record as any item of information directly related to an identifiable pupil, other than directory information, which is maintained by a charter school or required to be maintained by an employee in the performance of his duties whether recorded by handwriting, print, tapes, film, microfilm, and computer or by other means. Pupil records do not include informal personal notes prepared and kept by a school employee for his/her own use or the use of a substitute. If records contain information about more than one student, a parent can have access only to that portion of the record pertaining to his/her child.

Pupil records may be kept at the school site or charter school office, but a written request for records at either site will be treated as a request for records from all sites. The charter school custodian of records will provide you with a list of the types and locations of pupil records (if requested).

The custodian of the records shall limit access to those persons authorized to review the pupil record, which includes the parents of the pupil, a pupil who is at least sixteen years old, individuals who have been authorized by the parent to inspect the records, school employees who have a legitimate educational interest in the records, post-secondary institutions designated by the pupil, and employees of federal, state and local education agencies. Unauthorized access will be denied unless the parent has provided written consent to release the records or the records are released pursuant to a subpoena or court order. The charter school shall keep a log indicating the time, name and purpose for access of those individuals who are not employed by the charter school.

You have a right to inspect and review all of your child’s educational records without unnecessary delay, including prior to a meeting about your child’s IEP or before a due process hearing. The charter school must provide you access to records and copies, if requested, within five business days after the request has been made orally or in writing. A fee for copies, but not the cost to search and retrieve, may be charged unless charging the fee would effectively deny access to the parent. (20 USC 1415[b]; EC 56501, 56504, and 49069)

Parents who believe that information in the education records collected, maintained or used by the charter school is (among other things) inaccurate, misleading or violates the privacy or other rights of the pupil, may request in writing that the charter school amend the information. If the charter school concurs, the record will be amended and the parent will be informed. Should the charter school refuse to make the amendment requested, the charter school shall notify the parent of the right to and provide a hearing, if required, to determine whether the challenged information is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the privacy or other rights of the pupil. If it is decided by the governing board after the hearing that a record will not be amended, the parent shall have the right to provide what he/she believes is a corrective written statement to be permanently attached to the record. The charter school has policies and procedures



governing the retention and destruction of records. Parents wishing to request the destruction of records, which are no longer necessary to the charter school, may contact the charter school's Custodian of Records. However, the charter school is required to maintain certain information in perpetuity. (*34CFR99; CFR300.561—573; 20USC 1415 [b](1); 34 CFR 500.567; EC 49070*)

## **INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP)**

The public education agency initiates and conducts meetings for the purpose of developing, reviewing and revising the individualized education program of each child with a disability. The IEP documents the child's eligibility for special education services and parents receive a copy of each IEP for their child. These meetings are conducted by the individualized education program (IEP) team.

When the IEP has been completed and appropriate parental consent has been provided, it is implemented as soon as possible following the IEP team meeting. A copy of the IEP is provided to the parents at no cost and if necessary, a copy of the IEP will be provided in the primary language of the parent(s), at the request of the parent(s). An individualized family service plan (IFSP) for a child aged three through five may serve as the IEP after a full explanation of the difference and written parent consent. The IEP team must consider the concerns of the parents for enhancing the education of their child.

### **IEP Team Members and Responsibilities**

The IEP team includes:

- An administrator or a representative designated by administration who is knowledgeable about program options appropriate for the child and who is qualified to provide, or supervise the provision of special education;
- At least one general education teacher of the child, if the child is, or may be participating, in the general education environment
- At least one special education teacher of the child, or if appropriate, at least one special education provider of the child; and,
- One or both of the child's parents, individuals selected by the parent, or both.

When appropriate, the IEP team will also include:

- The child, including when the team will discuss transition services;
- Other persons who possess expertise or knowledge necessary for the development of the IEP;
- When the child has been assessed for purposes of developing, reviewing or revising the IEP, a person who has conducted an assessment of the child or who is knowledgeable about the assessment procedures used to assess the child and is familiar with the results of the assessment; and,
- When the child is suspected to have a learning disability, at least one member of the IEP team, other than the child's regular teacher, will be a person who has observed the child's educational performance in an appropriate setting. If the child is younger than five years or is not enrolled in a school, a team member will observe the child in an environment appropriate for a child that age.

A member of the IEP team may be excused from an IEP team meeting, in whole or in part, when the LEA and the parent agree that the attendance of the member is not necessary because the member's area of curriculum or related services is not being modified or discussed at the meeting. When the member's area of curriculum or related services is being modified or discussed at the meeting, a required member of the IEP team may be excused, but only when the LEA and the parent consent to the excusal in writing, and the member submits, in writing, input into the development of the IEP prior to the meeting. The excusal provisions do not apply to parents, the student, or persons with special knowledge or expertise.

If the child does not attend an IEP team meeting where transition services will be discussed, the charter school will ensure that the child's needs and preferences are considered. The charter school may invite representatives from other agencies that are likely to be responsible for transition services.



## HOW DISPUTES ARE RESOLVE

### Due Process Hearing

You have the right to request an impartial due process hearing regarding:

- The identification of your child for special education eligibility.
- The assessment of your child.
- The educational placement of your child.
- The provision of a free appropriate public education (FAPE) for your child.

The request for a due process hearing must be filed within two years from the date you knew or had reason to know of the facts that were the basis for the hearing request. [H.R.1350 §615(f)(3)(C)]

There is an exception to this timeline if you were prevented from requesting the hearing earlier because:

- a) the charter school misrepresented that it had resolved the problem
- b) the charter school withheld information that should have been provided to you. [H.R.1350 §615(f)(3)(D)]

### Mediation and Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)

You may ask the charter school to resolve disputes through mediation, which is less adversarial than a due process hearing. Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) may also be available in your charter school. Mediation and ADR are voluntary methods of resolving a dispute and may not be used to delay your right to a due process hearing. The parents and the charter school must agree to try mediation before mediation is attempted. A mediator is a person who is trained in strategies that help people come to agreement over difficult issues. (20 USC 1415[e]; EC 56500.3)

### Due Process Rights

You have a right to:

1. Have a fair and impartial administrative hearing at the state level with a person who is knowledgeable of the laws governing special education and administrative hearings (EC 56501[b]);
2. Be accompanied and advised by an attorney and/or individuals who have knowledge about children with disabilities (EC 56505[e]; 20 USC 1415[h]);
3. Present evidence, written arguments, and oral arguments (EC 56505[e]
4. Confront, cross-examine, and require witnesses to be present (EC 56505[e]);
5. Receive a written or, at the option of the parent, an electronic verbatim record of the hearing, including findings of fact and decisions (EC 56505[e]; 20 USC 1415[h];
6. Have your child present at the hearing (EC 56501[c]);
7. Have the hearing be open or closed to the public (EC 56501[c]);
8. Be informed by the other parties of the issues and their proposed resolution of the issues at least ten calendar days prior to the hearing (EC 56505[e] and 56043[s]; 20 USC 1415[b]);
9. Receive a copy of all documents, including assessments completed by that date and recommendations, and a list of witnesses and their general area of testimony within five business days before a hearing. (EC 56505[e];
10. Have an interpreter provided at the expense of the California Dept. of Education (CCR 3082[d]);
11. Have a mediation conference at any point during the due process hearing (EC 56501[b]; and
12. Receive notice from the other party, at least ten days prior to the hearing that it intends to be represented by an attorney. (EC56507[a])

In any action or proceeding regarding the due process hearing, the court, in its discretion, may award reasonable attorneys' fees as a part of the costs to you as the parent of a child with a disability if you are the prevailing party in the hearing. Reasonable attorneys' fees may also be awarded following the conclusion of the administrative hearing with the



agreement of the parties. (20 USC 1415[i]; EC 56507[b])

Fees may be reduced for any of the following:

1. The court finds that you unreasonably delayed the final resolution of the controversy;
2. The hourly attorneys' fees exceed the prevailing rate in the community for similar services by attorneys of reasonable comparable skill, reputation and experience;
3. The time spent and legal services provided were excessive; or
4. Your attorney did not provide to the charter school the appropriate information in the due process complaint.

Attorneys' fees will not be reduced, however, if the court finds that the state or the charter school unreasonably delayed the final resolution of the action or proceeding or there was a procedural safeguards violation. (20 USC 1415[i])

Attorneys' fees may not be awarded relating to any meeting of the IEP team unless an IEP meeting is convened as a result of a due process hearing proceeding or judicial action. Attorney fees may also be denied if you reject a reasonable settlement offer made by the charter school/public agency ten days before the hearing begins and the hearing decision is not more favorable than the settlement offer. (20 USC 1415[d])

### **Filing a Written Due Process Complaint**

To file for mediation or a due process hearing, contact:

**Office of Administrative Hearings  
Attn: Special Education Division  
2349 Gateway Oaks Drive, Suite 200  
Sacramento, CA 95833-4231  
Phone: (916) 263-0880; Fax: (916) 376-6319  
(916) 274-6035 after hours settlement line**

You need to file a written request for a due process hearing. The written notice shall be kept confidential. You or your representative needs to submit the following information in your request:

1. Name of the child;
2. Address of the residence of the child;
3. Name of the school the child is attending; and
4. A description of the nature of the problem, including facts relating to the problem(s) and a proposed resolution of the problem(s).

State law requires that either party filing for a due process hearing must provide a copy of the written request to the other party. (20 USC 1415[h]; EC 56502[c])

### **Child's Placement While Due Process Proceedings Are Pending**

According to the "stay put" provision of the law, a child involved in any administrative or judicial proceeding must remain in the current educational placement unless you and the charter school agree on another arrangement. If you are applying for initial admission to a public school, your child will be placed in a public school program with your consent until all proceedings are completed. (20 USC 1415[j]; EC 56505[d]and [i])

### **Opportunity for Charter School to Resolve the Complaint**

If you choose to file a due process complaint as explained in the section entitled "Filing a Written Due Process Complaint," a meeting must be scheduled by the charter school within 15 days of receiving the notice of your due process complaint. The purpose of the meeting is to give you opportunity to discuss your due process complaint and the facts on which you based your complaint so that the charter school has a chance to address your concerns and work with you to reach a resolution. This meeting must be held before the initiation of a due process hearing unless you and the charter school agree in writing to waive the meeting and use the mediation process. The meeting must include the parents and other



members of the IEP team who have specific knowledge of the facts. The charter school has 30 days from the receipt of the due process complaint to resolve the due process complaint or the due process hearing may occur. These timelines are expedited if you request a hearing regarding pending disciplinary action.

If you fail to participate in the resolution session, the charter school may (after 30 days) seek dismissal of your complaint.

If the charter school fails to convene or participate in a resolution session meeting within 15 days of receiving your complaint, you may ask a hearing officer to begin the due process timeline.

If the parents and the charter school are unable to resolve the due process complaint and it goes to hearing, the hearing decision is final and binding on both parties. Either party can appeal the hearing decision by filing a civil action in state or federal court within 90 days of the final decision. (20 USC 1415[l]; EC 56505[g] and [i]; EC 56043[u])

## **SCHOOL DISCIPLINE AND PLACEMENT PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Children with disabilities may be suspended or placed in other alternative interim settings or other settings to the same extent these options would be used for children without disabilities.

If a child exceeds ten days in such a placement, a meeting must be held to determine whether the child's misconduct is caused by the disability. This meeting must take place immediately, if possible, or within ten school days of the charter school's decision to take this type of disciplinary action. (20 USC 1415[k])

As a parent, you will be invited to participate as a member of the team. The charter school must provide you with a written notice of the required action. The charter school may be required to develop an assessment plan to address the misconduct or, if your child has a behavior intervention plan, review and modify the plan, as necessary. If the team concludes that the misconduct was not a manifestation of your child's disability, the charter school might take disciplinary action, such as expulsion, in the same manner as it would for a child without disabilities.

If you disagree with the team's decision, you may request an expedited due process hearing from the Office of Administrative Hearing. (20 USC 1415[k])

### **Placement in an Interim Alternative Educational Setting**

Under Federal law, a charter school may place a child in an appropriate interim alternative placement for up to forty-five school days under certain circumstances. Those circumstances are when the child has a weapon, or has knowingly possessed or used illegal drugs or sold controlled substances at school or a school function, or has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person. (20 USC 1415[k])

If you request a hearing or an appeal regarding disciplinary action or manifestation determination, your child will stay in the interim alternative setting or disciplinary setting unless the maximum time for that setting is reached, or the parents and charter school agree to another placement. (34 CFR 300.526)

Alternative educational settings, when permissible, must allow the child to continue to participate in the general curriculum and receive services designed to address the behavior so it does not recur. (20 USC 1415[k])

## **STATE SPECIAL SCHOOLS**

The State Special Schools provide services to students who are deaf, hard of hearing, blind, visually impaired, or deaf-blind at each of its three facilities: the California Schools for the Deaf in Fremont and Riverside and at the California School for the Blind in Fremont. Residential and day school programs are offered to students from infancy to age 21 at both State Schools for the Deaf and from ages five through 21 at the California School for the Blind. The State Special Schools also offer assessment services and technical assistance. For more information about the State Special Schools, please visit the California Department of Education Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/ss/> or ask for more information from the members



of your child's IEP team.

## CHILDREN ATTENDING PRIVATE SCHOOL

The charter school is responsible for the full cost of special education in a nonpublic, nonsectarian school, when the charter school, together with the IEP Team, recommends that this would be the appropriate placement for the student. (20 USC[a][10][B]; CFR 300.401; CFR 300.349[c]; EC 56361)

### **Observation of Your Child at a Nonpublic School**

If you unilaterally place your child in a nonpublic school and you propose the placement in the nonpublic school to be publicly financed, the charter school must be given the opportunity to first observe the proposed placement and your child in the proposed placement. The charter school may not observe or assess any other child at the nonpublic school without permission from the other child's parent or guardian. (EC 56329(d))

### **Unilateral Parent Placement in Nonpublic or Private School**

If you unilaterally place the student in a private or nonpublic, nonsectarian school without charter school consent or referral of a court or hearing officer, the charter school may only be required to reimburse the parents if their child received special education and related services under the authority of a public agency before enrolling in the private school and the court or hearing officer finds that the charter school did not make a free and appropriate education available in a timely manner.

A court or hearing officer may not reduce or deny reimbursement to you if you failed to notify the charter school for any of the following reasons:

- Illiteracy and inability to write;
- Giving notice would likely result in physical or serious emotional harm to the child;
- The school prevented you from giving notice; or
- You had not received a copy of this Notice of Procedural Safeguards or otherwise been informed of this notice requirement. (20 USC 1412[a]; 34 CFR 300.403)

The court or hearing officer may reduce or deny reimbursement if you did not make your child available for an assessment upon written notice from the charter school. You may also be denied reimbursement if you did not inform the charter school that you were rejecting the special education placement proposed by the charter school and did not give notice of your concerns and intent to enroll your child in a private school at public expense.

### **Notifying the Charter school**

You must notify the charter school of your intent to place your child in a private school:

- At the most recent IEP meeting you attended before removing your child from the public school; or
- In writing to the charter school at least ten business days (including holidays) before removing your child from the public school. (20 USC 1412[a]; 34 CFR 300.403)

The charter school is not obligated to offer a free appropriate public education to a child whose parent(s) have voluntarily enrolled that child in a private school. In such cases, the charter school will propose an Individual Services Plan for Private School Students. (20 USC 1412(a)(10)(A)(i))

## COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

### State Appeal Process

**Note:** Complaint procedures in this section are related specifically to the California State Appeal Process and are not the same as the due process complaint procedures covered earlier in this document. If you wish to file a complaint with the California Department of Education, you should submit your complaint in writing to:



**California Department of Education  
Special Education Division  
Procedural Safeguards Referral Service  
1430 N Street Suite 2401  
Sacramento, California 95814  
Attn: PSRS Intake**

Within 60 days after a complaint is filed, the California Dept. of Education will: carry out an independent investigation, give the complainant an opportunity to provide additional information, review all information and make a determination as to whether the LEA has violated laws or regulations and issue a written decision that addresses each allegation.

For complaints involving issues not covered by IDEA, consult your charter school's Uniform Complaint Procedures.

**The Charter school would like to work with you to resolve all complaints at the local level whenever possible. We invite you to meet with the administrator who has been designated to work with compliance issues and attempt to resolve your concern informally before a complaint is filed. S/he will maintain confidentiality as permitted by law. If your complaint cannot be resolved, a formal investigation will be initiated or you will be referred to the appropriate agency for assistance.**

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**For questions regarding information contained within this document, please contact:**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Position:** \_\_\_\_\_

**School/LEA:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Parents' Record Keeping

The parent of a child with special needs will gather a tremendous amount of information about the child from various professionals and service agencies. Record keeping is not mandatory for parents of children with disabilities, but good records prove to be helpful in day-to-day contacts.

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

Family History: May include child's birth date, place of birth, parent(s) name(s), address, phone number and family history.

Developmental History of the Child: May include mother's health during pregnancy and any unusual circumstances at the birth of the child. May also include milestones and at what age the child reached them.

Medical History and Reports: May include information on the child and family health history, nature of serious illnesses and operations, record of the child's immunization, and medications taken.

Educational History: May include names and dates of schools attended, copies of IEPs, test results and progress reports.

Services Received from Other Agencies: May include copies of records from any other agencies which may have had contact with the child.

Correspondence: Keep copies of all correspondence written by parent and received by parent.

## Section 504

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

### **Definition of Disability**

A person is considered to have a disability within the definition of Section 504 if he or she:

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

School staff should consider the potential existence of a disability and possible Section 504 protection if the student has been diagnosed, for example, with:

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

### **Definition of Major Life Activity**

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

### **Charter LEA Responsibility**

If a Charter LEA has reason to believe that, because of an impairment as defined under Section 504, a student needs special accommodations or services in the general education setting in order to participate in the school program, the Charter LEA must evaluate the student. If it is determined that a student has a disability under Section 504, the Charter LEA must develop and implement the delivery of all needed services and/or accommodations. Section 504 falls under the responsibility of the *general education program*.

### **Reasonable Accommodations**

Section 504 requires a written plan describing placement and services. Placement decisions must be based upon information drawn from a variety of sources and all information must be considered. The placement decisions must be made by a group of persons knowledgeable about the student, about the meaning of the evaluation data, and about placement options. All members of the group or assistance team, including parents, must sign the "educational accommodation plan." Some examples of reasonable accommodations are:

- Untimed or extended time for assessment and/or assignments;
- Provision of readers;
- Provision of audio textbooks,
- Changes in the way tests are given; and/or
- Allow for verbal response.

## What Is the Role of the CAC?

The purpose of the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) is to act in support of individuals with disabilities by representing broad interests in the community and promoting maximum interaction of parents and community members with the Department of Special Education and the LEA Charter Schools in accordance with the Education Code and the El Dorado Charter SELPA Local Plan.

Parents comprise a majority of the membership of the Community Advisory Committee, and of these members, the majority must be parents of children receiving special education services.

Members of local parent/teacher groups (PTAs), special education teachers, general education classroom teachers and other school personnel, students with disabilities, and/or representatives of related public and private agencies may also be represented.

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

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

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

The El Dorado Charter Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) office hosts the Community Advisory Committee meetings online using the web-based Adobe Connect platform. If you would like to request meeting log-in information, please contact the El Dorado Charter SELPA office at 530.295.2462.

CAC meetings are open to anyone and we encourage your participation.

### **Meeting Times and Locations**

Regular meeting times and locations shall be established by the CAC, with all meetings open to the public. The CAC shall meet as frequently as necessary, though not less than three times between September and June. Special meetings of the CAC may be scheduled when necessary. A notice and agenda of all regularly scheduled meetings shall be posted for review prior to the meeting.

### **Voting**

A quorum shall exist when the majority of the Charter LEAs who have appointed members have representatives present. A quorum is defined as a minimum number of members in an assembly, society, board of directors, etc., required to be present before any valid business can be transacted.

A simple majority of a quorum is necessary to conduct usual business.

### **Implementation of CAC Responsibilities**

Members of the Community Advisory Committee have the responsibility to assist in the development and implementation of the Local Plan and to set priorities for special education programs by:

- Actively participating and providing input at regularly scheduled CAC meetings;
- Maintaining contact with the Charter LEA special education staff regarding special education programs provided by the Charter LEA to gain insight of local needs;
- Periodically reporting CAC activities to Charter LEA Governing Boards; and
- Serving on standing and special committees of the CAC.

Community Advisory Committee members assist with parent education by:

- Organizing and participating in parent support groups;
- Developing and distributing informational materials of interest to parents (e.g. CAC Parent Handbook);
- Organizing, attending and participating in local, regional and state CAC workshops and conferences.

Community Advisory Committee members promote community involvement activities by organizing and participating in community events and participating in public relations efforts.

### **CAC Representatives**

For information regarding the El Dorado Charter SELPA Community Advisory Committee (CAC), please call the El Dorado Charter SELPA office at 530.295.2462 or contact your Charter LEA.

## Local Resource List for Families

Agency	Expertise	Website	Contact
<b>Accessibility Resource/ Telecommunications</b>	Telecommunications access for people w/disabilities		(800) 772-3140
<b>Alta California Regional Center</b>	Autism Serves families/ individuals w/developmental disabilities	<a href="http://www.altaregional.org/">http://www.altaregional.org/</a>	(530) 626-1353
<b>Big Brothers Big Sisters of El Dorado County</b>	Mentors for at-risk and disadvantaged children	<a href="http://www.BBBS-EDC.org">http://www.BBBS-EDC.org</a>	(530) 626-1222
<b>Bipolar Insights</b>	Mental health education center aimed to remove misconceptions around mental illness	<a href="http://bipolarinsights.com/">http://bipolarinsights.com/</a>	(530) 642-0859
<b>California Children's Services</b>	Healthcare and services	<a href="http://www.dhcs.ca.gov/services/ccs/Pages/default.aspx">http://www.dhcs.ca.gov/services/ccs/Pages/default.aspx</a>	(530) 621-6128
<b>California State Department of Rehabilitation</b>	Employment & Independent living	<a href="http://www.dor.ca.gov/">http://www.dor.ca.gov/</a>	(530) 626-0900
<b>CHADD- The National Resource on ADHD</b>	Helps improve the lives of those affected by ADHD	<a href="http://www.chadd.org/">http://www.chadd.org/</a>	Carolyn Brooks <a href="mailto:carolyn.brooks@edcgov.us">carolyn.brooks@edcgov.us</a>
<b>Child Abuse Prevention Council (CAPC)</b>	Prevention of child abuse	<a href="http://eldoradocapc.org/">http://eldoradocapc.org/</a>	(530) 295-2312
<b>County Mental Health</b>	Mental health support for students & adults	<a href="https://www.edcgov.us/mentalhealth/">https://www.edcgov.us/mentalhealth/</a>	(530) 621-6200
<b>County Office of Education</b>	Child development program	<a href="http://edcoe.org/">http://edcoe.org/</a>	(530) 295-2256
<b>Individual with Disability Act</b>	Early intervention services	<a href="http://idea.ed.gov/">http://idea.ed.gov/</a>	
<b>Infant Parent Center</b>	Therapeutic services from preconception to 5 years old	<a href="http://infantparentcenter.com/index.html">http://infantparentcenter.com/index.html</a>	(530) 676-2899
<b>Lilliput Children Services</b>	Therapy services created to meet the unique needs of adoptive children, kinship	<a href="http://www.lilliput.org/">http://www.lilliput.org/</a>	(916) 941-8799
<b>UC Davis Mind Institute</b>	Comprehensive resources for neurodevelopmental disorders	<a href="http://www.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/mindinstitute/">http://www.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/mindinstitute/</a>	(916) 703-0280
<b>UCP of Sacramento &amp; Northern California</b>	Programs and services	<a href="http://www.ucpsacto.org/">http://www.ucpsacto.org/</a>	(916) 565-7700
<b>Warmline Family Resource</b>	Resources, support, training and consultation to families with special needs children	<a href="http://www.warmlinefrc.org/">http://www.warmlinefrc.org/</a>	(916) 455-9500

## State Resource List for Families

Agency	Expertise	Website	Contact
<b>American Society for Deaf Children</b>	Information for families with deaf children	<a href="http://deafchildren.org/">http://deafchildren.org/</a>	(800) 942-2732
<b>Blind Babies Foundation</b>	Specializes in early intervention, providing in-home services to help increase visual functioning, sensory awareness and communication skills.	<a href="https://www.juniorblind.org/web/index.php/programs/south/children-s-services/blind-babies-foundation">https://www.juniorblind.org/web/index.php/programs/south/children-s-services/blind-babies-foundation</a>	(323) 290-6289
<b>California Community Parent Resource Centers</b>	List of California agencies providing resources for families of children w/disabilities	<a href="http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/se/qa/caprntorg.asp">http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/se/qa/caprntorg.asp</a>	(916) 319-0400 <a href="mailto:StPerez@cde.ca.gov">StPerez@cde.ca.gov</a>
<b>California Council of the Blind</b>	Helps increase the independence, security, equality of opportunity and quality of life for all blind & visual impaired people	<a href="http://www.ccbnet.org/">http://www.ccbnet.org/</a>	(916) 441-2100
<b>California Department of Education/Family Involvement and Partnership</b>	Provides information and resources for parent of procedural safeguards regarding students (3-21)	<a href="http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/se/fp/">http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/se/fp/</a>	(800) 926-0648
<b>California Department of Mental Health</b>	Non-crisis mental health programs	<a href="http://www.dhcs.ca.gov/services/Pages/MentalHealthPrograms-Svcs.aspx">http://www.dhcs.ca.gov/services/Pages/MentalHealthPrograms-Svcs.aspx</a>	(916) 322-7445
<b>California Early Start Program</b>	Early intervention services to infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families.	<a href="http://www.dds.ca.gov/earlystart/index.cfm">http://www.dds.ca.gov/earlystart/index.cfm</a>	(916) 654-1690
<b>California Speech – Language – Hearing Association</b>	Advancing the profession of speech-language pathology	<a href="http://www.csha.org/">http://www.csha.org/</a>	(916) 921-1568 <a href="mailto:csha@csha.org">csha@csha.org</a>
<b>California State Federation, Council for Exceptional Children</b>	Assists in improving educational outcomes for individuals with exceptionalities	<a href="https://calstatecec.org/">https://calstatecec.org/</a>	<a href="mailto:info@calstatecec.org">info@calstatecec.org</a>
<b>Center for Autism and Related Disorders (CARD)</b>	Uses applied behavior analysis in the treatment of Autism spectrum disorder	<a href="http://www.centerforautism.com/home.aspx">http://www.centerforautism.com/home.aspx</a>	(855) 345-2273
<b>Center for Early Intervention on Deafness</b>	Provides audiology services, Early-intervention & family support for parents of deaf children	<a href="http://ceid.org/">http://ceid.org/</a>	(510) 848-4801 <a href="mailto:info@ceid.org">info@ceid.org</a>
<b>Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities</b>	Comprehensive resources for neurodevelopmental disorders	<a href="http://www.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/mindinstitute/centers/cedd.html/">http://www.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/mindinstitute/centers/cedd.html/</a>	(916) 703-0300
<b>Clearinghouse for Specialized Media and Translations (CSMT)</b>	Produces accessible versions of textbooks, workbooks and literature books adopted by the State Board of Education Products and Services.	<a href="http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/pn/sm/">http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/pn/sm/</a>	(916) 445-5103 <a href="mailto:csmt@cde.ca.gov">csmt@cde.ca.gov</a>
<b>Communication Technology Education Center (CTEC)</b>	Provides services in Augmentative & Alternative Communication (AAC) using the personalized methods or devices to increase a person's ability to communicate	<a href="http://www.supportedlife.org/ctec/">http://www.supportedlife.org/ctec/</a>	(916) 921-5639

<b>Agency</b>	<b>Expertise</b>	<b>Website</b>	<b>Contact</b>
<b>Disability Rights California</b>	Services for disabled children and families on advice, training, legislative advocacy, investigative, and mental health and support services.	<a href="http://www.disabilityrightsca.org/index.htm">http://www.disabilityrightsca.org/index.htm</a>	(916) 504-5800
<b>Down Syndrome Connection of the Bay Area</b>	Provide resources, technology & education for with Down Syndrome and their families.	<a href="http://www.dsconnection.org/index.php">http://www.dsconnection.org/index.php</a>	(925) 362-8660 <a href="mailto:dscha@dsconnection.org">dscha@dsconnection.org</a>
<b>Down Syndrome Information Alliance</b>	Provides support and resources to empower individuals with Down Syndrome, their families and our community	<a href="http://downsyndromeinfo.org/">http://downsyndromeinfo.org/</a>	(916) 658-1686 <a href="mailto:info@downsyndromeinfo.org">info@downsyndromeinfo.org</a>
<b>Family Resource Center Network of California</b>	Support services & resources in many languages including newsletters, resource libraries, websites parent-to-parent groups, sibling support groups, warmlines and information & referral for parents.	<a href="http://www.frcnca.org/">http://www.frcnca.org/</a>	(916) 993-7781
<b>Family Voices of California</b>	Working to ensure quality healthcare for children/youth w/special health care needs	<a href="http://www.familyvoicesofca.org/">http://www.familyvoicesofca.org/</a>	(415) 282-7494
<b>First 5 California</b>	Comprehensive system of education, health services, & childcare for children 0 to 5.	<a href="http://www.cafc.ca.gov/">http://www.cafc.ca.gov/</a>	(916) 263-1360 <a href="mailto:info@ccfc.gov">info@ccfc.gov</a>
<b>Foundation for Fighting Blindness</b>	Drives research that will provide preventions, treatments and cures for people affected by retinitis pigmentosa, macular degeneration, Usher syndrome and the entire spectrum of retinal degenerative diseases.	<a href="http://www.blindness.org/">http://www.blindness.org/</a>	(800) 683-5555
<b>GoDandelion</b>	Connects parents raising special needs children, supports them in caring for their children and in overcoming obstacles.	<a href="http://www.sacramentoparent.com/special-needs.html">http://www.sacramentoparent.com/special-needs.html</a>	(530) 888-0573
<b>Head Start</b>	Provides family focused child development & school readiness services including education, health, nutrition and mental health.	<a href="http://headstart.seta.net/">http://headstart.seta.net/</a>	(916) 263-3804
<b>Hearing and Speech Center of Northern California</b>	Provides life-long professional services to support all people with hearing loss or communication difficulties in achieving their goals.	<a href="http://www.hearingspeech.org/main/">http://www.hearingspeech.org/main/</a>	(415) 921-7658

<b>Agency</b>	<b>Expertise</b>	<b>Website</b>	<b>Contact</b>
<b>Learning Disabilities Association of California</b>	Provides information & training to parents children with learning disabilities, teachers and other professionals who with this individuals with learning disabilities.	<a href="http://www.ldaca.org/">http://www.ldaca.org/</a>	(909) 621-1494
<b>Parent's Link</b>	Information, resources, networking and mentoring for families of deaf and hard of hearing children.	<a href="http://www.myparentlinks.com/">http://www.myparentlinks.com/</a>	
<b>Parents Helping Parents</b>	Provides information, training and resources to build strong families and improve systems of care for families of children with special needs	<a href="http://www.php.com/">http://www.php.com/</a>	(408) 727-5775
<b>Positive Environments, Network of Trainers</b>	Provides information and resources for educators striving to achieve high educational outcomes through the use of proactive positive strategies.	<a href="http://www.pent.ca.gov/">http://www.pent.ca.gov/</a>	
<b>Sacramento Area Speech and Hearing Association (SASHA)</b>	Provides education to Speech Language Pathologists and Audiologist in the greater Sacramento Area.	<a href="http://www.sacasha.org/">http://www.sacasha.org/</a>	<a href="mailto:info@sacasha.org">info@sacasha.org</a>
<b>Society for the Blind – Sacramento</b>	Provides services and classes to blind or low vision people.	<a href="http://societyfortheblind.org/">http://societyfortheblind.org/</a>	(916) 452-8271
<b>Special Olympics</b>	Year-around sports training and athletic competition	<a href="http://www.sonc.org/">http://www.sonc.org/</a>	(925) 944-8801
<b>Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology and Hearing Aid Dispensers Board</b>	Regulates the practices of speech-language pathology, audiology, and hearing aid dispensing in California by licensing	<a href="http://www.speechandhearing.ca.gov/">http://www.speechandhearing.ca.gov/</a>	(916) 263-2666 <a href="mailto:speechandhearing@dca.ca.gov">speechandhearing@dca.ca.gov</a>
<b>Supporting Early Education Delivery Systems (SEEDS)</b>	Creates avenues and tools to increase improvement of partnerships.	<a href="http://www.seedsofpartnership.org/">http://www.seedsofpartnership.org/</a>	(916) 228-2379 <a href="mailto:rryan@scoe.net">rryan@scoe.net</a>
<b>Team of Advocates for Special Kids</b>	Parent training & information for early intervention, educational, medial or therapeutic support services for children.	<a href="http://www.taskca.org/index.html">http://www.taskca.org/index.html</a>	(866) 828-8275 <a href="mailto:task@taskca.org">task@taskca.org</a>
<b>The Special Edge Newsletter</b>	Develops & supports partnerships with schools & families by providing training, technical assistance and resources.	<a href="http://www.calstat.org/specialEdge.html">http://www.calstat.org/specialEdge.html</a>	(707) 586-2735
<b>Via Services</b>	Provides recreational, therapy, and respite care for special needs children.	<a href="http://www.viaservices.org/">http://www.viaservices.org/</a>	(408) 243-7861 <a href="mailto:info@viaservices.org">info@viaservices.org</a>

## National Resource List for Families

Agency	Expertise	Website	Contact
<b>ADDitude Magazine</b>	Magazine with ADHD/LD strategies & Support	<a href="http://www.additudemag.com/">http://www.additudemag.com/</a>	(646) 366-0830
<b>Administration on Developmental Disabilities</b>	Ensures individuals with developmental disabilities & their families are able to fully participate in the community.	<a href="http://www.acl.gov/programs/aidd/index.aspx">http://www.acl.gov/programs/aidd/index.aspx</a>	(202) 401-4634
<b>Alexander Gram Bell Association for the Deaf</b>	Early diagnosis and intervention of childhood hearing loss.	<a href="http://www.agbell.org/">http://www.agbell.org/</a>	(202) 204-4700
<b>American Academy of Audiology</b>	Promotes quality hearing & balance care by advancing the profession of audiology.	<a href="http://www.audiology.org/">http://www.audiology.org/</a>	(800) 222-2336
<b>American Council for the Blind</b>	Increases the independence, security, equality or opportunity and quality of life.	<a href="http://www.acb.org/">http://www.acb.org/</a>	(800) 424-8666
<b>American Foundation for the Blind</b>	Assists students with vision loss to equal access & opportunity to excel at school.	<a href="http://www.afb.org/default.aspx">http://www.afb.org/default.aspx</a>	(212) 502-7600
<b>American Speech-Language – Hearing Association</b>	Resources to help you understand communication disorders	<a href="http://www.asha.org/">http://www.asha.org/</a>	(800) 638-8255
<b>ARC of the United States</b>	Promotes & protects the human rights of people w/disabilities	<a href="http://www.thearc.org/">http://www.thearc.org/</a>	(800) 433-5255
<b>Argumentative and Alternative Communication Connecting Young Kids (YAACK)</b>	Guidance for families with children w/special communication needs	<a href="http://cehs.unl.edu/documents/secd/aac/YAACK.pdf">http://cehs.unl.edu/documents/secd/aac/YAACK.pdf</a> Website is a downloadable PDF	
<b>Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps</b>	Works toward inclusion for people with significant disabilities through advocacy, research, professional development, policy.	<a href="http://tash.org/">http://tash.org/</a>	(202) 540-9020
<b>Association to Benefit Children</b>	Early childhood education, youth, family and mental health programs.	<a href="http://www.a-b-c.org/">http://www.a-b-c.org/</a>	(212) 845-3821
<b>Autism Society</b>	Latest information on Autism including treatment, education, research and advocacy.	<a href="http://www.autism-society.org/">http://www.autism-society.org/</a>	(800) 328-8476
<b>Autism Speaks</b>	Funds research into causes, prevention, treatments and cure for autism.	<a href="https://www.autismspeaks.org/">https://www.autismspeaks.org/</a>	(888) 288-4762
<b>Beginnings</b>	Emotional support & access to information for families with deaf or hard of hearing children (0-21)	<a href="http://www.ncbegin.com/">http://www.ncbegin.com/</a>	(919) 850-2746
<b>Center for Early Literacy Learning</b>	Promote the adoption & sustained use of evidence-based early literacy learning practices.	<a href="http://www.earlyliteracylearning.org/">http://www.earlyliteracylearning.org/</a>	<a href="mailto:info@puckett.org">info@puckett.org</a>

Agency	Expertise	Website	Contact
<b>Center for Effective Collaboration and Practice</b>	Extensive web links related to emotional & behavioral problems	<a href="http://cecp.air.org/">http://cecp.air.org/</a>	<a href="mailto:center@air.org">center@air.org</a>
<b>Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning</b>	Strengthens capacity of Head Start and child care programs to improve the social & emotional outcome of young children	<a href="http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/">http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/</a>	(615) 322-8150
<b>CHADD- The National Resource on ADHD</b>	Helps improve the lives of those affected by ADHD	<a href="http://www.chadd.org/">http://www.chadd.org/</a>	Carolyn Brooks: <a href="mailto:carolyn.brooks@edcgov.us">carolyn.brooks@edcgov.us</a>
<b>Hallowell Center</b>	Balanced treatment for children with emotional and learning disabilities	<a href="http://www.drhallowell.com/">http://www.drhallowell.com/</a>	(415) 967-0061
<b>Individual with Disability Act</b>	Early intervention services	<a href="http://idea.ed.gov/">http://idea.ed.gov/</a>	
<b>Junior Blind of America</b>	Provides children with vision loss the skills needed to reach their greatest potential.	<a href="https://www.juniorblind.org/">https://www.juniorblind.org/</a>	(323) 295-4555
<b>LD Online</b>	Information / advice for children with learning disabilities and ADHD.	<a href="http://www.ldonline.org/">http://www.ldonline.org/</a>	
<b>Learning Disabilities Association of America</b>	Leading programming, research & advocacy for people with brain-based learning and attention issues.	<a href="http://www.nclid.org/">http://www.nclid.org/</a>	<a href="mailto:info@nclid.org">info@nclid.org</a>
<b>National Association with Down Syndrome</b>	Support and resource referrals for families of Down Syndrome children	<a href="http://www.nads.org/">http://www.nads.org/</a>	(630) 325-9112
<b>National Autism Center</b>	Evidence-based information on the treatment of Autism Spectrum Disorder	<a href="http://www.nationalautismcenter.org/">http://www.nationalautismcenter.org/</a>	(877) 313-3833
<b>National Down Syndrome Congress</b>	National resource of support & information for anyone touched by or seeking to learn about Down Syndrome.	<a href="http://www.ndscenter.org/">http://www.ndscenter.org/</a>	(888) 232-6372
<b>National Down Syndrome Society</b>	National Advocate for people with Down Syndrome	<a href="http://www.ndss.org/">http://www.ndss.org/</a>	(800) 221-4602
<b>National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases</b>	Support research into the causes, treatment, & prevention of arthritis, musculoskeletal & skin diseases.	<a href="http://www.niams.nih.gov/">http://www.niams.nih.gov/</a>	(877) 226-4267
<b>National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders</b>	Research in the normal & disordered processes of hearing, balance, taste, smell, voice, speech and language	<a href="https://www.nidcd.nih.gov/">https://www.nidcd.nih.gov/</a>	(800) 241-1044
<b>National Organization for Rare Disorders</b>	Patient advocacy for patients w/rare diseases	<a href="http://rarediseases.org/">http://rarediseases.org/</a>	(203) 744-0100
<b>National Organization on Disability (NOD)</b>	Focuses on increasing employment opportunities for disabled persons.	<a href="http://www.nod.org/">http://www.nod.org/</a>	(646) 505-1191
<b>National Speech/Language Therapy Center</b>	Family friendly practice working w/children who have a variety of speech language, motor and cognitive disorders & difficulties.	<a href="http://www.nationalspeech.com/">http://www.nationalspeech.com/</a>	(202) 470-4185
<b>Office of Special Education &amp;</b>	Education & rehabilitation to improve	<a href="http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/osep/index.html">http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/osep/index.html</a>	(202) 245-7468

<b>Agency</b>	<b>Expertise</b>	<b>Website</b>	<b>Contact</b>
<b>Rehabilitation Services</b>	the outcomes of people with disabilities		
<b>Parenting Special Needs Magazine</b>	Information & inspiration for parents of children w/special needs	<a href="https://parentingspecialneeds.org/">https://parentingspecialneeds.org/</a>	(772) 532-4423
<b>Perkins Scout</b>	Online resources on all aspects of visual impairments and blindness	<a href="http://www.perkinselearning.org/scout">http://www.perkinselearning.org/scout</a>	
<b>Positive Behavioral Intervention &amp; Support</b>	Implementing positive behavioral intervention on the social, emotional and academic outcomes for students w/disabilities	<a href="http://www.pbis.org/">http://www.pbis.org/</a>	<a href="mailto:support@pbis.org">support@pbis.org</a>
<b>Shriner's Hospitals for Children</b>	Provides highest quality care for special healthcare needs of children	<a href="http://www.shrinershospitalsforchildren.org/">http://www.shrinershospitalsforchildren.org/</a>	(813) 281-0300
<b>Center for Parent Information and Resources – Formerly NICHCY</b>	Central resource of information for parents of children w/disabilities	<a href="http://www.parentcenterhub.org/ptacs/">http://www.parentcenterhub.org/ptacs/</a>	Debra Jennings <a href="mailto:debra@parentcenterhub.org">debra@parentcenterhub.org</a>
<b>The Division for Early Childhood</b>	Support for families to enhance the optimal development of developmental delayed, disabled and at risk children (0-8).	<a href="http://www.dec-sped.org/">http://www.dec-sped.org/</a>	(310) 428-7209
<b>The National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center</b>	Improves state early intervention & early childhood special education service systems.	<a href="http://ectacenter.org/">http://ectacenter.org/</a>	(919) 962-2001 <a href="mailto:ectacenter@unc.edu">ectacenter@unc.edu</a>