

ADDITIONAL SCHOOL RESOURCES

- **Family Resource/Youth Service Center Directors** provide a variety of programs and services to parents. They can be a valuable resource for community referrals and services. Many centers also host parent training and educational opportunities, and in some locations, host support groups. Contact your local director for more information.
- **The Director of Special Education** can address questions or concerns that have not been answered at the school level. They have knowledge and expertise in special education law, general education programs, and special education programs and services.



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Parent Involvement in Special Education

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Parent Involvement Leads to Student Success

From a parent's perspective, educating children identified with disabilities can be at times, overwhelming. One of the goals of the *Parent Involvement Project* is to provide parents with information and resources that will help them with educational decision-making. The likelihood of developing quality educational programs increases when parents and teachers are all informed and focused on meeting the individual child's needs.

As parents, you not only know your child better than others, you are also his/her greatest advocate. You have valuable information to contribute in determining the programs and services that will lead to your child's school success. You know your child's strengths, preferences and challenges. Sharing your expertise with school staff can lead to a quality and effective educational experience for your child.

HOW DO PARENTS HELP SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGE THEIR CHILD'S LEARNING?

- Prepare in advance for school meetings by making a list of your child's strengths, challenges, interests and goals.
- Speak up when you have a question or concern.
- Let your child's teachers and service providers know you want to be involved.
- Keep appropriate school staff informed of any issue including medical and social concerns that may impact your child.
- Ask your child's teacher how you can practice or reinforce learning at home.
- Encourage behavior that leads to school success, such as accepting responsibility, asking for help, following rules, and organizing materials.
- Talk with other parents of children with special needs. Ask about local parent groups available.
- If time permits, volunteer at school. This will help you see what activities and experiences your child has at school.
- Working together with school staff will help your child have an enjoyable, successful school experience.

RESOURCES AVAILABLE AT SCHOOL.

- **Teachers** can answer many questions regarding your child's day to day activities, and how they are getting along academically, socially and behaviorally. Ask your child's teacher how to best communicate regularly (ex. email, phone, notebook).
- **Related service providers** such as speech, occupational or physical therapists can make suggestions for things you can do at home to help maximize the benefit your child is getting from school-based activities.
- **School psychologists** can be a valuable resource in addressing any social-emotional needs your child may develop. They can provide counseling, assist with behavioral interventions, and provide consultation with teachers to help with your child's ever changing needs. They can also assist you with referrals to other professionals as needed.
- **School Principals** can answer programmatic and procedural questions you may have. Principals are responsible for disciplinary action regarding students, therefore they can also address questions regarding rules, behavioral expectations and discipline.