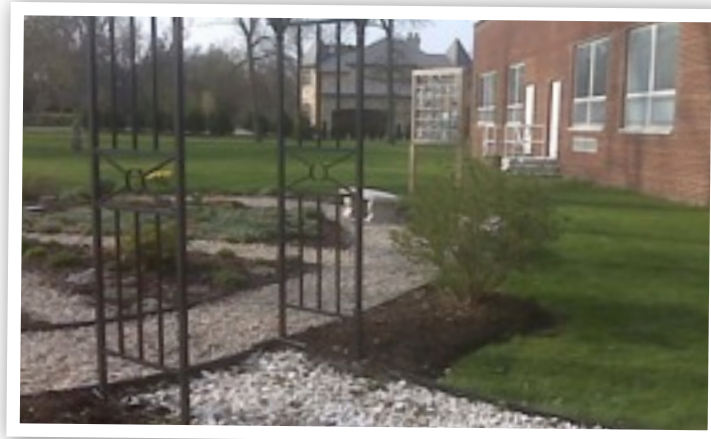




PUPIL SERVICES
PARENT HANDBOOK
Avoca School District 37

WELCOME



The purpose of this handbook is to help you understand the special education process at Avoca District 37 and to explain how the Pupil Services Department functions. Our goal is to provide you with resources to support your child at school and to foster a strong home-school connection.

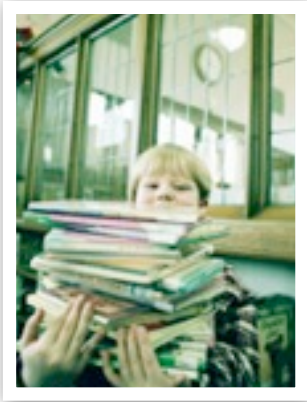
District 37's mission is "To Maximize the Unique Potential of Each Student." This mission along with Avoca's educational philosophy of inclusion forms an integral support system within the regular educational programs. The Pupil Services Department provides a wide range of programs, services and supports for children and families. All are designed to assist students in the school district with educational challenges and other factors that may impact their learning in school.

Services offered through the Pupil Services Department may be delivered in a variety of ways depending on student need and classroom dynamic. These range from consultation with teachers and parents to special instructional classes. Diagnostic services to assist in educational planning are provided when specific testing evaluations are necessary to provide support. All services are coordinated with the regular classroom program and parents are an important part of this process.

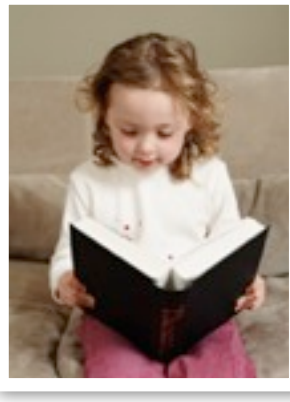
Avoca District 37 and The Pupil Services Department welcome and encourage your input into your child's education plan. See the staff page for a contact list.



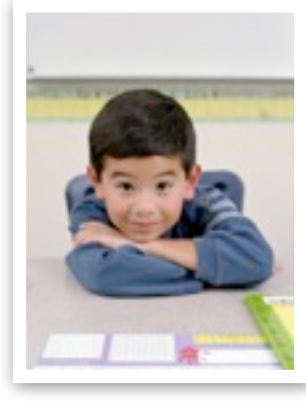
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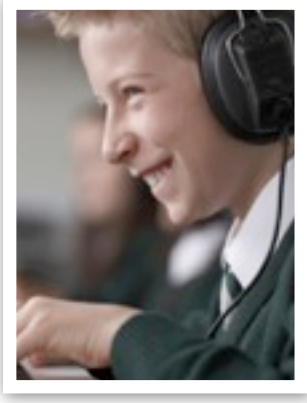
Problem Solving



The IEP Process



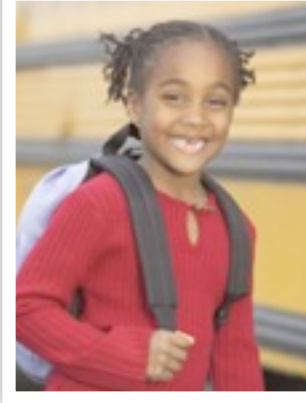
Resource/Inclusion



Speech Language Services



Intervention Specialist



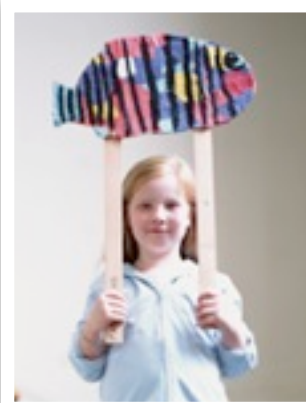
School Nurse



English as a Second Language and English Language Learners



Gifted Services



Preschool



Staff List
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Problem Solving

The problem solving process is used so schools can more effectively provide services and/or interventions for all students in need of extra academic or behavioral support within the general education classroom. The focus of problem solving is on identifying a specific academic or behavioral area, setting goals in that area, and monitoring progress. For many children, focusing on the area of concern both at home and at school will have a positive impact and be all that is needed. The intent of problem solving is promoting and ensuring the educational best interest, well-being, safety, and quality of life for all students regardless of educational placement.

The Problem Solving Process:

Step 1: *Problem Identification* focuses on determining the difference between the child's performance and peer performance in the area of concern.

Step 2: *Problem Analysis* involves reviewing existing data and collecting additional information (records, observations, interviews, brief assessments) to determine reasons why the problem may be occurring.

Step 3: *Plan Development* involves designing an intervention to address the student's individual area of concern. Some examples of interventions are previewing academic material, utilizing a motivational contract, providing social skills training, etc.

Step 4: *Plan Implementation* involves starting the intervention plan and applying it as it was designed by the team. During this phase, progress monitoring data is collected.

Step 5: *Plan Evaluation* is the final phase of the problem-solving process. Once sufficient progress monitoring data has been collected, the team will reconvene to examine the student's progress. Based upon the student's progress toward his or her goal and team's discussion the plan may be discontinued, faded, modified, or problem-solved with additional resources.

Level 1 Problem Solving

Each grade level team (PreK-8) will have their own team consisting of all teachers at that grade level plus one Intervention Specialist, Speech and Language Pathologist and Learning Resource Teacher. Team meetings are held during the school day. The goal of the team is to assist students in being successful in the classroom environment. If the intervention is effective, the plan will be phased out or discontinued. If interventions are ineffective, more team support/resources may be needed, so Level 2 Problem Solving is initiated.

Level 2 Problem Solving

Level 2 Problem Solving involves recycling through the problem-solving process with parents and additional staff members. The goal of the meeting is for the team to develop new intervention(s) or revise the current intervention(s). If the revised intervention is effective, the plan is phased out or discontinued. If the interventions continue to be ineffective or if a significant degree of support is needed for the student's success, referral for a special education evaluation may be made.

Response to Intervention

Response to intervention integrates assessment and intervention within a multi-level prevention system to maximize student achievement and to reduce behavior problems. With RTI, schools identify students at risk for poor learning outcomes, monitor student progress, provide evidence-based interventions and adjust the intensity and nature of those interventions depending on a student's responsiveness, and identify students with learning disabilities or other disabilities.

The IEP Process

The IEP Meeting

It is at the IEP meeting where the Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) is developed. The team meets to discuss and plan for the educational needs of the student. Members of the IEP team typically include the pupil services director, building principal, classroom teacher, parents, student (if appropriate), and other staff that are involved in the education of the student, such as the learning resource teacher, intervention specialist, and/or speech therapist. Parents have the option to bring outside consultants to the meeting if they wish. The meeting begins with team members signing in and introducing themselves. Each team member will update the team with the progress the student has made and any areas that are a struggle for them. Goals are developed and shared with the team. All decisions that are made for the IEP are team decisions.

The IEP Document

During the meeting, the written IEP will be filled out by the pupil services director. The meeting typically follows the format of the paperwork, where educational decisions are documented. The components of the paperwork are typically as follows; however, this can slightly vary from student to student depending on their needs.

- * **Demographic Information / Sign In**
- * **Evaluation Results / Eligibility**
- * **Present Levels of Academic Achievement (Strengths / Areas Needing Improvement)**
- * **Transitional Services (For students age 14 1/2 and older)**
- * **Functional Behavior Assessment and Plan (If appropriate)**
- * **Goals and Objectives (Updated and mailed to parents each trimester)**
- * **Accommodations and Modifications (both classroom and assessment)**
- * **Educational Services and Placement**

The Reevaluation Meeting

Every three years, the student is reevaluated to review and determine eligibility of services. Parents will be notified by school personnel when their child is due for a reevaluation and asked to come in for a domain meeting. At this meeting, parents, the intervention specialist, classroom teacher, and other staff who work with the student will meet to determine what information is necessary to collect for the reevaluation. The reevaluation is to be conducted within sixty days after parents sign off on the domain sheet. Once the evaluation is complete, the team reconvenes at the reevaluation meeting to review the evaluation and the IEP.

THE ANNUAL REVIEW

Each year, the IEP is reviewed and updated by the educational team. This meeting is called the annual review. The IEP may be reviewed at any time, but, legally, it must be reviewed at least annually. The format of this meeting is very similar to the IEP meeting. The team reviews the previous IEP, the progress the student has made toward his/her goals, and what areas are a struggle for the student. New goals are written for the student and all IEP information is reviewed and modified as necessary. Teachers from the next grade level also attend this meeting to learn about the student's individual needs and how to best address them the next school year.



Resource / Inclusion

The services provided by the learning resource teachers in Avoca District 37 are based on the needs of the child. Learning resource teachers provide a number of services, from consulting with the regular classroom teacher to individual or small group instruction outside of the regular classroom. The learning resource teachers use a problem-solving approach to meet the student's needs. This approach is a team process of identifying needs, providing appropriate interventions, and monitoring student progress. Students may be referred for evaluation by parents, classroom teachers, the principal, or the learning resource teachers.

- * In support of students with disabilities, the learning resource teachers may provide diagnostic or standardized testing, develop specialized or modified curricula and offer direct instruction with the regular or resource classroom.
- * In support of students with academic concerns, the Pupil Services problem-solving team may assess the student's needs and provide strategies and materials.
- * In support of classroom teachers, the learning resource teachers may collaborate with the regular classroom teachers about instruction, strategies and materials or co-teach classes to facilitate the education of students.
- * In support of the school community, the learning resource teachers, in conjunction with the speech and language pathologist and school psychologist, have developed processes to monitor student progress in early literacy skills, reading and writing fluency and math calculation .

Inclusion Programming

Inclusion refers to a philosophy of education whereby students participate to the maximum extent appropriate to their needs with their age peers in the regular classroom. For students with disabilities, this means providing necessary programs and accommodations so that those students may profit from the instructional program. Traditionally, programs for students with significant disabilities consisted of separate classrooms — often in separate “special” schools. Within the last ten years, there has been an increased interest in providing for the education of students with disabilities within a regular school environment. This type of programming is often called inclusion. An inclusion program is but one type of program along a whole

continuum of options of services for students. The Avoca School District generally prefers inclusive programs over more restrictive options. The decisions regarding appropriate services are made by staff members knowledgeable about the student and the parent(s). All students' programs are determined individually; there is no one type of inclusion program. Services are more accurately described as inclusive programming rather than an inclusion program. Inclusive programming can sometimes involve many people working with a particular student. Frequently, an individual instructional assistant is required for part or all of a student's day, depending on the student's educational needs.

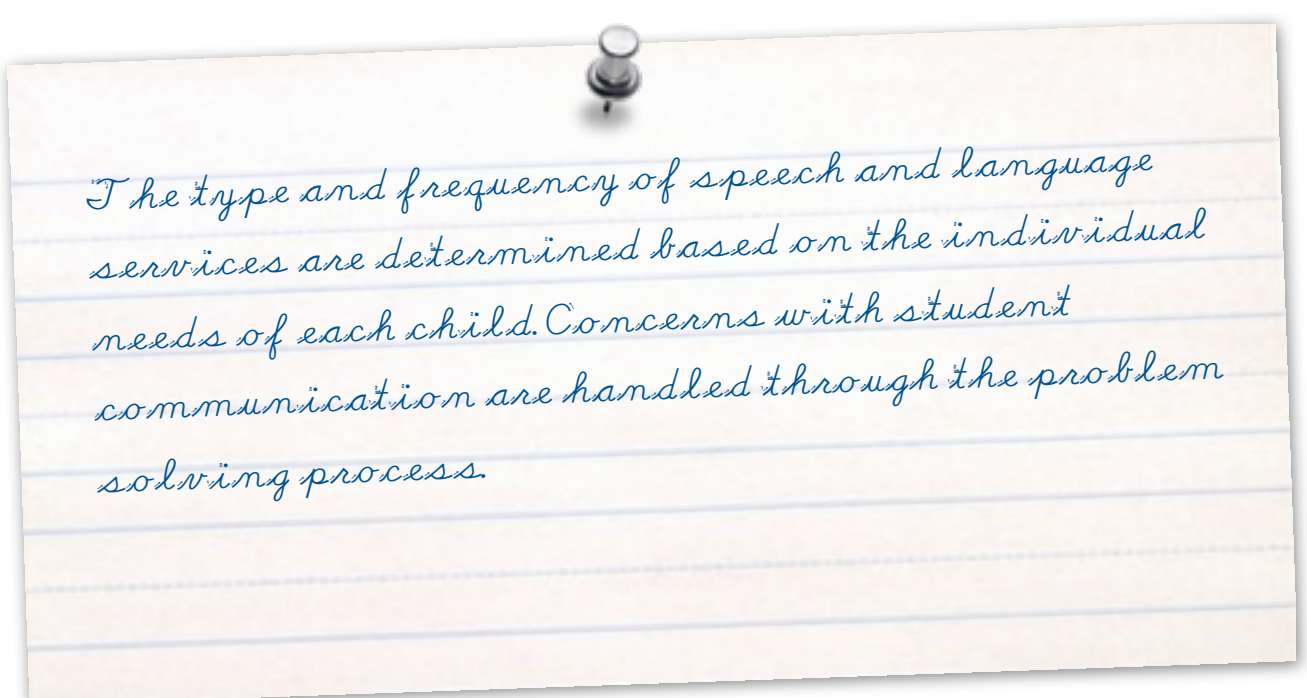
Benefits of inclusive programming extend beyond the academic interests of an individual student. Social and behavioral advantages are realized as well, since much of the student's learning occurs from watching and interacting with other classmates. Other students in the class learn the personal challenges faced by individuals with disabilities and have an opportunity to interact with individuals with significant disabilities.



Speech - Language Services

Speech and language services are provided for students who experience a communication delay or disorder that negatively impacts the student's academic or social functioning. Communication difficulties that would necessitate intervention include:

- * Speech delays/disorders: developmentally inappropriate sound errors that negatively impact the student's ability to be understood by peers and adults;
- * Receptive language delays/disorders: language comprehension difficulties that impact the student's ability to understand directions and concepts in the classroom;
- * Expressive language delays/disorders: difficulties in language formulation that negatively impacts the student's ability to express himself verbally or in writing;
- * Stuttering disorders: abnormal interruptions in the flow of speech characterized by repetitions, prolongations, and/or blocks that negatively impacts a student's ability to communicate with peers and adults;
- * Voice disorders: abnormal quality, pitch or intensity of vocal production that interferes with successful communication;
- * Social language difficulties: an inability of a student to appropriately conduct social interactions with peers and adults.



The type and frequency of speech and language services are determined based on the individual needs of each child. Concerns with student communication are handled through the problem solving process.

Intervention Specialists

Intervention Specialists are trained school psychologists whose primary role is to collaborate with parents, teachers, students, support staff and administrators in promoting and ensuring the educational best interest, well-being, safety, and quality of life for all students. This is often accomplished by working with teams to problem solve individual student needs, develop and implement intervention plans, and monitor and evaluate student progress toward goals. Examples of some areas in which the Intervention Specialist may offer service(s) include:



- * *Facilitation of problem solving with grade level teams*
- * *Management of Marie Murphy and Avoca West referral process*
- * *Staff development*
- * *Special education evaluations and re-evaluations*
- * *Crisis screening, prevention, and intervention*
- * *Analyzation of school-wide early literacy, reading, writing, and math performance data*
- * *Classroom behavior plan development*
- * *Maintenance of District Crisis Plan*
- * *Individual / Small Group / Class-Wide Skill Building*
- * *Preschool Screening*

School Nurse Health Information



If a child is not feeling well, please keep him or her at home. A child should not be brought to school if he or she has vomited, had diarrhea the previous day, or had a fever in the past 24 hours. The child should not come to school if he or she has a sore throat, unidentified rash, fever, heavy nasal discharge, or a constant cough. A child should not return to school until he has been fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication or until his physician has provided medical clearance.

A **Student Emergency/Medical Information** form must be completed online by the first day of school.

A **State of Illinois Certificate of Child Health Examination** form must be completed by a physician.

A **School Medication Authorization** form must be completed by a physician and a parent for **prescription** and **over-the-counter medication** to be administered at school. Students are not permitted to carry medication on school premises.

***All above forms may be downloaded online.

Annual vision screening is done on all preschool, K, 2nd, and 8th grade students. Annual hearing screening is done on all preschool, K, 1st, and 3rd grade students. If you do not want to have your child participate in these programs, please notify the school nurse.

When a child has special health issues, including allergies, it is important to communicate them to the school and provide with all relevant documentation from the child's doctors including the physical forms. In some cases this information may simply be general. If there are special exceptions that need to be made, please contact the school nurse to discuss any concern.

Administrative Procedure - Communicable and Infectious Disease

The administration shall observe all rules of the Illinois Department of Public Health regarding communicable and chronic infectious disease. The Superintendent shall develop and implement procedures for the District to report the the local health authority, where appropriate, known or suspected cases of a communicable and chronic infectious disease involving a District student. The determination of whether the student with a communicable and chronic infectious disease shall be permitted to attend school in a regular classroom setting or participate in school activities with other students shall be made on a case-by-case basis by the Communicable and Chronic Infectious Disease Review Team, the student's personal physician and local health authorities, and the Multi-Disciplinary Committee.

ESL / ELL Programming

The English Language Learner(ELL) program is a support service for students whose first language and culture is not English. The purpose of this program is to develop and/or improve students' English skills in the areas of speaking, listening, reading and writing so they may participate more fully in the academic, social and cultural activities of our school, community, and nation. During this process, our staff is especially sensitive to and understanding of the student's native language and culture.

The ELL students are "English immersed" in all classrooms. This program is distinct from a bilingual one where subject matter is taught (at least in part) in the student's first language until the student's English is adequate for participation in a regular all-English classroom.

- * It usually takes a second language student 7-10 years to achieve age-and grade- level performance if they have had no schooling in their first language, and 5-7 years if they have at least 2-3 years of schooling in their first language.
- * Students may make rapid progress, particularly in the elementary grades, but can have increasing difficulty in using the language required in content area classes of middle school.
- * Students may have oral language proficiency, but not have a solid foundation in reading and writing, particularly as the content becomes more challenging.
- * Students who are exited early from the ESL program in the elementary grades can experience academic failure when they reach middle or high school.

Program Goals and Objective

- * Students will use English to participate in social interactions and to establish and maintain personal relationships in a variety of settings and contexts.
- * Students will use English to obtain, process and provide information in spoken/ written form on a variety of topics of personal, academic, cultural and historic interest.
- * Students will gain knowledge of American culture so they may participate more fully in the academic, social, and cultural activities of our school, community, and nation.
- * Students will use English to reinforce and further knowledge of other academic areas.
- * Students will develop insight into their own language and culture by recognizing that different languages use different patterns to communicate and that cultures view situations from varying perspectives.

ESL / ELL Programming

We consider our district ELL program successful because it meets the Illinois goal and performance standards through resultant student goals, objectives and outcomes. It ensures that all students:



- * Build a strong academic foundation
- * Develop the desire to pursue knowledge
- * Grow in self-confidence and compassion;
- * Learn to think critically and creatively, to communicate effectively, and to become productive, ethical citizens

Gifted Services

The mission of the Avoca School District 37 gifted program is to recognize the unique social, emotional and intellectual needs of gifted and talented students, provide them with stimulating and challenging opportunities, and enable them to realize their greatest potential to contribute to self and society. Differentiation continues to be an important component in gifted services. To support the differentiation initiative, both the Math and Language Enrichment teachers work with small groups of high achieving students at Avoca West in K-5 classrooms.

Following is a breakdown of gifted programming by grade levels.

4th - 8th Grade language arts - Formal identification is conducted for students at these grade levels, who then participate in weekly pullout sessions. Instruction during these sessions is aligned with the regular classroom curriculum.

4th - 8th Grade math Formal identification is conducted for students at these grade levels, who then, beginning in fourth grade, participate in an accelerated math class. The Math Enrichment Teacher supports differentiation in all 4th and 5th grade math classes. In 7th and 8th grade, selected students have the opportunity to participate in the New Trier Math program .

Flexible Enrichment Services

1st, 2nd, and 3rd Grade - Students at these grade levels are selected for participation in the flexible enrichment pullout program based on a combination of the following criteria: standardized test scores, teacher recommendation, performance data collected during a whole class lesson, and performance in prior enrichment sessions. Students selected will receive services separately for language arts and math. Services are delivered weekly at each grade level. Students participating in flexible enrichment are reassessed every trimester. No formal gifted identification is done at these grade levels.

Avoca Community Preschool



The District 37 goal to maximize each child's individual potential is realized by creating an inclusive environment where all different types of learners are welcome.



Avoca Community Preschool offers an environment for children that is safe, stimulating, loving and supportive, thus enabling a child to explore the world at his or her own pace and engage in meaningful learning. The schedule reflects the developmental needs of young children, a daily balance of active/quiet, large motor/fine motor, cognitive/social and structured/unstructured activities. Classroom design and instruction are tailored to provide differentiated instruction. Avoca Community Preschool promotes inclusion while integrating typically developing and children with special needs. The purpose of the Avoca Community Preschool program is to optimize the unique potential of each child while nurturing diversity in an inclusive, developmentally appropriate program delivered with a strong home-school connection.

The program is staffed by a full time early childhood teacher and a full time speech and language pathologist along with a program assistant. Other service providers are available as needed.

Avoca Community Preschool

Enrollment Process

A \$100 non-refundable processing fee is required at time of application. The application deadline is January 15. Placement is done by lottery. Avoca Community Preschool may place students after the deadline until a full enrollment is reached.

Tuitions Fees and Schedules

Four and 5 day per week options are available during the District 37 School Year

Morning classes meet Monday through Thursday from 8:50AM to 11:10AM

Afternoon classes meet Monday through Friday from 12:25PM to 2:45PM

4 day program costs \$3,100

5 day program costs \$3,600

Tuition is paid on August 15th and December 15th. You will receive notice by mail that your payment is due. You will also have the option to auto-charge your credit card for the second half tuition payment. Questions about tuition payments can be directed to Kat Cetrone at cetronek@avoca37.org or by phone at 847-251-3138

Preschool Screening

Avoca District 37 and Wilmette District 39, under the legislation of the State of Illinois, provide free educational screenings for preschool-age children that reside in either the District 37 or District 39 communities.

The purpose of the screening is to identify developmental delays in children. Developmental delays can be observed in a child's speech and language, fine and gross motor skills, learning ability, or emotional and social growth. Nurses also complete a brief vision and hearing screening.

This screening is not for advance placement in school or for kindergarten readiness.

Three, four and five-year-old children, who have not entered kindergarten, are eligible for the preschool screening. In order to participate, a child must be registered in advance. Parents are asked to complete and return several necessary forms before their child's screening appointment.

The screening is conducted by District 39 staff and held at Romona School, 600 Romona Road, Wilmette. To schedule your child's preschool screening appointment, please contact Kathy Hughes at 256-2450 x 265 if you reside in Wilmette District 39. If you are a resident of Avoca District 37, please contact Kat Cetrone at 847-251-3138.

Avoca School District 37

Staff Contact List

Avoca School District 37 Pupil Services Department
2921 Illinois Road
Wilmette, IL 60091
office 847-251-3138 fax 847-251-7742

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Links

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Illinois State Board of Education / Special Education <http://isbe.net/spec-ed/Default.htm>

Individuals With Disabilities Education Act <http://isbe.net/spec-ed/html/idea.htm>

Special Education Reports and Resources <http://isbe.net/spec-ed/html/resources.htm>

Notice of Procedural Safeguards http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/pdfs/nc_proc_sfgrds_34-57j.pdf

Early Childhood Special Education Transition http://www.isbe.net/earlychi/html/ec_speced_intervention.htm

Special Education Parents Rights http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/html/parent_rights.htm

Special Education Parent Resources <http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/html/parents.htm>

<http://avoca37.org/pupilservices/>

