



Building a
New Tradition
of Excellence

Englewood Schools Special Education Handbook for Parents 2023-2024



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Englewood Schools

Mission:

Preparing all students for future success through learning, leading, engagement and action.

Vision:

Graduating the leaders, thinkers and explorers of tomorrow.

Core Values:

- High Expectations
- Accountability
- Integrity
- Respect
- Community

Englewood Schools Purpose Statement:

Englewood Schools has a moral imperative and unwavering commitment to ensure extraordinary outcomes for each student. Diversity is an asset. We are committed to honoring students' identities, cultures, and abilities, while breaking down barriers to a safe and equitable learning experience. In service of this, we maintain high expectations and nurture all aspects of the whole child.

Handbook Purpose

The purpose of this booklet is to provide parents, guardians, and school personnel with information, and to help them as they continue to work together in developing the best education for children.

The information will familiarize you with the following:

1. Terminology you will encounter.
2. Definitions of parent and student rights and responsibilities within special education and related services procedures.
3. An overview of special education and related services process.
4. Programs and services available in this district.

School District Information

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Duane Tucker, President
Caty Husbands, First Vice President
Steve Leflar, Second Vice President
Gary Manfre, Secretary
Julie Hoag, Treasurer

CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION

Joanna Polzin, Superintendent of Schools
Ryan Cowell, Deputy Superintendent
Callan Ware, Executive Director of Student Services
Mary Cooper, Chief Financial Officer
Mandy Braun, Director of Safety and Security
Dr. Rana Razzaque, Director of Opportunity, Access and Inclusion

<u>PRINCIPAL</u>	<u>SCHOOL</u>	<u>PHONE (303)</u>
Kara Blanchard	Maddox ECE	781-7585
Sheri' Spenhoff	Bishop Elementary	761-1496
Dr. Laura Harringa	Cherrelyn Elementary	761-2102
Matt Hoganson	Clayton Elementary	781-7831
Keely Rochford	Charles Hay Elementary	761-2433
Annessa Hart	Englewood Middle School	781-7817
Annessa Hart	Englewood Leadership Academy	806-7150
Ryan West	Englewood High School	806-2266
Cindy Chick	Colorado's Finest High School of Choice	934-5786
Dr. Beth Davis	Child Find Coordinator (Parochial Schools)	806-2398

Support for Parents



Special Education Director Designees

These individuals understand the special education process and are a resource for parents and professionals. They can help by answering questions, addressing concerns, and by providing information and support to parents and professionals around Special Education issues.

Representatives from this team and the schools they represent are as follows:

Director Designees

Megan Kurmin
303-806-2490

Clayton Elementary

Cassie Neslin
(303) 806-2454

Cherrelyn Elementary

Ana Alicia Ramirez
(303) 806-2431

Charles Hay Elementary

Kim Fickas
(303) 806-2493

Bishop Elementary

Mikayla Malabanan
303-806-6853

Englewood Middle School

Patrick Maschka
(303) 781-5573

Englewood High School

Beth Davis
(303) 806-2510

Early Childhood Education



Parental rights and responsibilities come from three laws:

1. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act

The Rehabilitation Act makes it illegal for any agency or organization that receives federal funds to discriminate against a person with a disability solely on the basis of his or her disability.

2. Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA)

- A free and appropriate public education
- In the least restrictive environment
- Development of an individual educational program
- Due process procedures

3. Colorado School Laws (C.R.S. 22-20-102) – Legislative Declaration

“(2) It is the intent of the general assembly, in keeping with accepted educational principles, that children from three to twenty-one years of age with disabilities shall be educated in the least restrictive environment to the maximum extent appropriate. To this end, the services of special education personnel shall be utilized within the general school programs to the maximum extent permitted by good educational practices, both in rendering services directly to children and in providing consultative services to general classroom teachers.”



Overview of Special Education Process

Referral –

Any person, association or agency that believes a child may have a disability may refer the child to their school.

The first step is to contact your child's teacher if your child is in school.

If your child is not in school and is between the ages of 3-21 please contact the closest school to your home for more information.

** New starting July 1, 2023 -Child Find screenings for children 0-3 years of age will be conducted by the [Colorado Department of Early Childhood](#)

Complete the [online referral form](#)

Call 833-733-3734 (833-REFER-EI)

Email*: GetStartedwithEI@state.co.us

[Download the referral form](#) and fax to 303-866-5944

Parents must be informed and give written consent before the individual assessment or evaluation process can begin.

Assessment – Testing to determine the individual student's current level of functioning.

Steps:

- 1) Counseling of parents; notification of referral; parent consent for assessment, parent receives procedural safeguards notice.
- 2) Background information obtained; vision/hearing screen.
- 3) Summary of educational functioning.
- 4) Psychological and speech/language assessments as appropriate.
- 5) Specialized assessments as required.

Staffing – A meeting is held to determine individual student's eligibility for special education and/or related services, to determine the child's specific educational needs in the least restrictive environment.

Individual Educational Program (I.E.P.) – A written Program is developed for each child determined to qualify as a student with a disability and is rewritten at least annually. The I.E.P. takes into account the child's skill levels and identified needs, establishes Annual Goals and Short Term objectives, determines who will provide services, when and where the services will be provided and identifies any Special Provisions required.

Placement – Before Special Education placement can occur, parents must sign Consent for Initial Provision of Special Education and Related Services. Once written consent is received the services will then be decided upon by the I.E.P. team.

Annual Review – Review of Annual Goals and progress toward those goals.

Review Staffing – A review staffing is held to verify the child's eligibility for continued Special Education and related services. Review staffings occur every three years at a minimum and are held to determine:

- continuing eligibility
- disability determination
- placement

Parent consent for re-evaluation must be obtained, unless the district can demonstrate that it has taken reasonable measures to obtain such consent and the parent has failed to respond.



Disability Categories in Colorado

Students with disabilities shall mean those persons between the ages of three and twenty-one who are unable to receive reasonable benefit from regular education without additional supports in the public schools because of specific disabling conditions. It is important to remember that the disability categories below are descriptors of a child and do not define a child, as each individual is unique and has their own strengths and areas of need. As Stephen Hawking once said, "Disability need not be an obstacle to success."

In Colorado students who are going through the identification process, either initially or as a review, will be identified as having one of the following disabilities, as defined by Exceptional Children's Educational Act (ECEA).

- **Autism Spectrum Disorder:**

A child with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a child with a developmental disability significantly affecting verbal and non-verbal social communication and social interaction, generally evidenced by the age of three. Other characteristics often associated with ASD are engagement in repetitive activities and stereotyped movements, resistance to environmental changes or changes in daily routines, and unusual responses to sensory experiences.

- **Deaf Blindness:**

A child with deaf-blindness has concomitant hearing and visual impairments, the combination of which causes such severe communication and other developmental and educational needs that he or she cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for children with deafness or children with blindness.

- **Hearing Impairment, including Deafness:**
A child with a hearing impairment, including deafness, shall have a deficiency in hearing sensitivity as demonstrated by an elevated threshold of auditory sensitivity to pure tones or speech where even with the help of amplification, the student is prevented from receiving reasonable educational benefit from general education.
- **Infant/Toddler with a disability:**
An Infant/Toddler with a Disability shall be a child from birth through two years of age meeting the definition and criteria described in 2 CCR 503-1, 16.920 D.
 - An infant or toddler, birth through two (2) years of age, shall be eligible for Early Intervention Services if he or she has a developmental delay as defined in Section 16.920, D, 1, or, an established diagnosed physical or mental condition as defined in Section 16.920, D, 2, or lives with a parent who has a developmental disability as defined in Section 16.920, D, 3.
- **Intellectual Disability:**
A child with an Intellectual Disability shall have reduced general intellectual functioning existing concurrently with deficits in adaptive behavior and manifested during the development period, which prevents the child from receiving reasonable educational benefit from general education.
- **Multiple Disability:**
A child with Multiple Disabilities shall have two or more areas of significant impairment, one of which shall be an intellectual disability. The other areas of impairment include: Orthopedic Impairment, Visual Impairment including Blindness, Hearing Impairment including Deafness, Speech or Language Impairment, Serious Emotional Disability, Autism Spectrum Disorders, Traumatic Brain Injury, or Other Health Impaired. The combination of such impairments creates a unique condition that is evidenced through a multiplicity of severe educational needs which prevent the child from receiving reasonable educational benefit from general education.
- **Orthopedic Impairment**
A child with an Orthopedic Impairment has a severe neurological/skeletal abnormality that impedes mobility, which prevents the child from receiving reasonable educational benefit from general education.
- **Other Health Impairment:**
Other Health Impaired (OHI) means having limited strength, vitality, or alertness, including a heightened alertness to environmental stimuli, that results in limited alertness with respect to the educational environment due to a chronic or acute health problem, including but not limited to asthma, attention deficit disorder or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, diabetes, epilepsy, a heart condition, hemophilia, leukemia, kidney disease, sickle cell anemia or Tourette syndrome.
- **Developmental Delay:**
A child with a Developmental Delay shall be three through eight years of age and who is experiencing developmental delays in *one or more* of the following areas: physical development, cognitive development, communication development, social or emotional development, or adaptive development and as a

result is unable to receive reasonable educational benefit from general education and requires special education and related services.

- **Serious Emotional Disability:**

A child with a Serious Emotional Disability shall have emotional or social functioning which prevents the child from receiving reasonable educational benefit from general education.

- **Specific Learning Disability:**

Specific Learning Disability means a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself in the imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell or do mathematical calculations, including conditions such as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia.

- **Speech or Language Disability:**

A child with a Speech or Language Impairment shall have a communicative disorder which prevents the child from receiving reasonable educational benefit from general education.

- **Traumatic Brain Injury:**

A child with Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) is a child with an acquired injury to the brain caused by an external physical force resulting in total or partial functional disability or psychosocial impairment, or both, which impairment adversely affects the child's ability to receive reasonable educational benefit from general education.

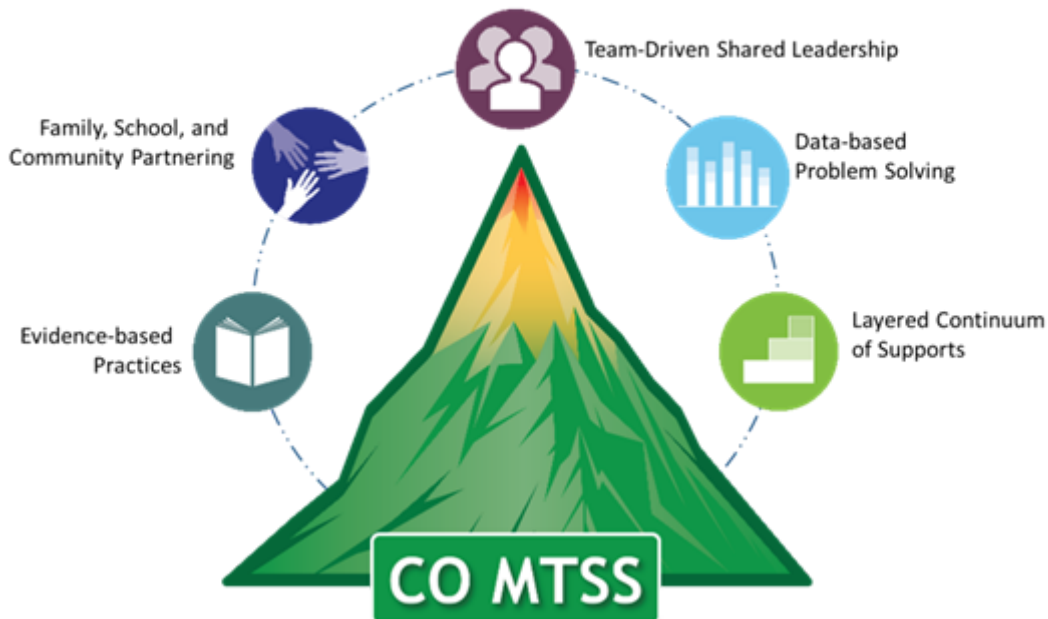
- **Visual Impairment, including Blindness:**

A child with a Visual Impairment, including Blindness shall have a deficiency in visual acuity and/or visual field and/or visual functioning where, even with the use of lenses or corrective devices, he/she is prevented from receiving reasonable educational benefit from general education.

Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)

MTSS, or Multi-Tiered System of Supports is an approach that helps schools support students in different ways depending on their needs. It's like having different levels of support to help your child succeed in school. Teachers and specialists work together to provide various layers of support, such as personalized instruction, interventions, and resources. The goal is to make sure your child gets the right help at the right time to reach their full potential. MTSS helps create a supportive environment where every student can thrive and succeed academically and socially.

MTSS and Essential Components



In Colorado, a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) is defined as: a prevention-based framework of team-driven data-based problem solving for improving the outcomes of every student through family, school, and community partnering and a layered continuum of evidence-based practices applied at the classroom, school, district, region, and state level.

Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS):

Essential Components:

Team-Driven Shared Leadership



Teaming structures and expectations distribute responsibility and shared decision-making across school, district, and community members (e.g. students, families, generalists, specialists, district administrators, etc.) to organize coordinated systems of training, coaching, resources, implementation, and evaluation for adult activities.

Data-Based Problem Solving and Decision-Making



A consistent process is used by stakeholder teams and applied at multiple levels to analyze and evaluate relevant information to plan and implement strategies that support sustainable improved student and system outcomes.

Family, School, and Community Partnering



The collaboration of families, schools, and communities as active partners in improving learner, classroom, school, district, and state outcomes.

Layered Continuum of Supports



Ensuring that every student receives equitable academic and behavioral support that is culturally responsive, matched to need, and developmentally appropriate, through layers that increase in intensity from universal (every student) to targeted (some students) to intensive (few students).

Evidence-Based Practices



Approaches to instruction, intervention, and assessment that have been proven effective through research indicating improved outcomes for students.

Description of District Services

Individuals who have been identified as having a disability that require specialized instruction and potentially related services, require support along a continuum from consultative services to full-time support. An Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is written for each student to address the specific needs of that student. Englewood provides a range of services based on a student's needs and each team works to provide as much support within the general education setting as possible. The following are the programs provided within Englewood Schools:

Early Childhood Education:

The Englewood Early Childhood Program is licensed for both preschool and child care services. The caring and professional staff is sensitive to the individual needs of students with disabilities. Each classroom has children of varying ages and abilities. The program offers developmentally appropriate activities that emphasize school readiness skills and the process of learning. Students with disabilities are fully integrated into these classrooms with appropriate support as written in the IEP.

Learning Support Program:

This program will serve students with disabilities that have mild to moderate academic delays (generally 1-2 years below grade level). Typically these students in this program are able to be independent in a school setting and their academic support can be provided in class, via a team taught class, or in a skills-based pullout group. Students in the Learning Support Program will participate in district and state assessments with or without accommodations, based on the individual's IEP. Students in this program typically have adequate adaptive and life skills.

Moderate Academic Support Program:

This program will support students who display moderate/severe academic delays (generally 3-4 years below grade level). Students in this program may need support in some school settings and a modified curriculum or significant accommodations to access the general education curriculum. Often the student's IEP indicates that academic needs can be met in and outside of the general education setting. Students in the Moderate Academic Support Program will participate in district and state assessments with or without accommodations, based on the individual's IEP. Students in this program typically have some adaptive skill building needs.

Significant Support Program:

The Significant Support Program will serve students with disabilities that display significant academic delays (generally more than 5 years below grade level). Students in this program are typically unable to be independent in one or more life skills (including but not limited to: completing a task, toileting, feeding, accessing the school setting). These students require a modified curriculum with accommodations and their core academics are typically taught using a modified curriculum outside of the general education classroom. Students in the Significant Support Program typically qualify for the alternative state and district assessments. Students in this program typically have very impacted adaptive skills.

Speech and Language Program:

When a student with a Speech and Language Impairment (SLI) does not display skill deficits significant enough to qualify for the Moderate Academic Support or Significant Support programs, they may receive the majority of their support from the Speech and Language Program. Typically these students in this program are able to be independent in a school setting and their specialized support can be provided in class, or in a skills-based pullout group. These students may qualify in Language, Articulation, Voice, or Fluency alone. Students in the Speech and Language Program will participate in district and state assessments with or without accommodations, based on the individual's IEP.

Affective Needs Program:

Students who access the Affective Needs Program typically display behavioral and/or emotional characteristics that seriously interfere with their learning or the learning of others. These students demonstrate one or more of the following characteristic to a marked degree: lack of emotional regulation, an inability to utilize coping strategies, difficulty with interpersonal skills, aggression, an inability to identify feelings/emotions (in self and/or others), a lack of stress tolerance, and/or extreme difficulty attending to task. Many of the students in this program have been identified as having a Serious Emotional Disability (SED) or a mental health disorder, but they are not a student whose sole diagnosis is Social Maladjustment Disorder. Students in this program may need to access individualized support, small group pullout or academic instruction in a separate environment in order to learn. Students in the Affective Needs Program typically participate in district and state assessments with or without accommodations, based on the individual's IEP.

Autism Program:

Students in the Autism Program are diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder but typically have average to above average cognitive abilities. They thrive in a consistent and predictable environment and are more able to access the general education environment with the support of adults that understand their disability. Students in this program may need to access individualized support, small group pullout or academic instruction in a separate environment in order to learn. They may benefit from sensory breaks, visual schedules, discrete teaching and behavioral support that falls under the theory of Applied Behavioral Analysis or something similar.

Itinerant Services:

Services provided by staff members who move from school to school are available for students with special vision, hearing, motor and health needs.

Additional Supports:

SWAAAC: Statewide Assistive Technology Augmentative and Alternative Communication: Provides consultation and access to assistive technologies.

Related Services



If you have a child with a disability, you are likely to be using the services of specialists in education and related services. Besides your child's classroom teacher, school counselor, school principal, and special educators, you and your child may have contact with some of the following persons, depending on your child's needs and how their disability impacts their ability within the educational setting.

School Psychologist:

The school psychologist is skilled in observing and measuring how a child learns. This person is a specialist in supporting students' social and emotional needs as they relate to education.

Speech/Language Specialist:

The speech/language specialist is a specialist in identifying and serving children with speech and language difficulties.

Occupational Therapist:

The occupational therapist is skilled in helping a disabled child develop skills for daily living activities. This specialist facilitates skill development in areas of self-care, vocational interests, leisure, environmental management/adaptation

Vision/Orientation Mobility Specialist:

The vision specialist provides assistance to visually disabled students including pre-Braille and Braille as appropriate.

Hearing Specialist:

The hearing specialist provides assistance to hearing disabled students through direct service to the student, consultation to the teacher and assessment as required.

Nurse:

The nurse specializes in identifying health problems in children. This person is skilled in planning health education activities and in the development of Health Care Action Plans as needed.

Parent Resources



Parent to Parent of Colorado / EMPOWER CO

Parent to Parent of Colorado (P2P-CO) is a network of families across Colorado who understand! We connect families to each other and to the resources they need. We offer encouragement to each other on the journey of parenting by providing emotional and informational support. In 2020, Empower Colorado joined our program to meet the needs of families with children & youth experiencing mental health challenges. Parent to Parent of Colorado is celebrating 20 years of supporting families.

[Ability Connections Colorado](#)



For People with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

The Arc Arapahoe, Douglas & Elbert Counties uses advocacy and education to include all children and adults with disabilities in their communities.



PEAK Parent Center is a nonprofit that works every day to ensure that all people with disabilities are fully included in their neighborhood schools, communities, employment, and all walks of life.

PEAKPARENT.ORG



The Colorado Department of Education's [guide for parents and family members of students on IEPs](#).

