

# Special Education Parent Handbook

## A word of welcome from the Special Education Parent Advisory Council

Being a parent is the most incredible and important job. When we accept this role, we embark on a journey that will lead us to the highest thrills, the deepest burdens, and the greatest rewards. Parenthood also brings daunting challenges that will push the limits of our skills and abilities. This guidebook is intended to help you identify a team that will support you through you and your child's journey through special education. Whether you have just had your first Individualized Education Program (IEP) meeting within the Fountain-Fort Carson School District or have attended several, we hope this handbook serves as a reference and helps answer questions you may have along the way.

We would also like to take this opportunity to let you know that you are not alone on this journey and invite you to participate on the Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC). The SEAC partners with the Department of Special Education and consists of a dedicated group of parents/guardians of students with special needs as well as staff members from all schools in the district. The goal of the SEAC is for members to have a voice by contributing ideas and providing outreach to the Fountain-Fort Carson community regarding students with special needs and district programming.

Previous projects and activities that the Fountain-Fort Carson SEAC has engaged in include organizing open houses where community organizations related to youth and special education provide information to families, creating documents to support students with IEPs as they transition between grade levels, and providing trainings to parents and staff members on select special education topics.

Welcome to the Fountain-Fort Carson School District and to the world of exceptional children and exceptional parents.

Sincerely,

Special Education Advisory Council

# Welcome from Fountain-Fort Carson School District Special Education Director

Welcome to Fountain-Fort Carson School District! We are very excited to have you join our family, and I believe that our staff will provide an exceptional education and experience for students. As a district and as a department, we are making ongoing efforts to improve our services to children and families. Consistent with research, we believe that a partnership between families and the school district leads to stronger outcomes for children. To enhance this partnership, we recognize the importance of providing families with tools and information for clarity and understanding.

It is my hope that this handbook will serve as a useful resource to parents who are new to the special education process and/or are new to Fountain-Fort Carson School District. Through the exhaustive efforts of our district Special Education Advisory Committee, consisting of parents with children who have special needs and the staff who support them, this handbook has been assembled to provide other parents with information regarding the special education process, parent rights, and referral information. This will be a living document that will be reviewed, revised, and updated as necessary. Please feel free to provide suggestions or comments to Erika Zulkosky, Special Education Director, at [ezulkosky@ffc8.org](mailto:ezulkosky@ffc8.org), or by calling 719-382-1314.

Sincerely,

Erika Zulkosky

Special Education Director

## Should my student be tested?

You, or another caregiver, may have noticed your student is struggling with certain developmental milestones and have wondered where you can get help. In addition to private organizations, you can get help through your local school district and request that your student be tested to determine if they are a candidate for special education services.

Once a referral for an evaluation is made, a multi-disciplinary team (MDT), including a special educator, a general education teacher, and parents, must review the referral and any existing information regarding the student. Based on the review, the MDT will determine the appropriateness of the referral and proceed with an evaluation planning meeting.

Once the evaluation has been completed, it will be necessary to schedule a meeting to review the results and determine whether or not the student qualifies for special education services. If your student is eligible for services, an Individualized Education Program (IEP) will be developed.

## Parent Involvement tips

Parents are an important part of the IEP team. The IEP team includes school staff members, parents, and other professionals who know and support the student. It is not uncommon to feel overwhelmed as a parent at these meetings. It seems that the time goes quickly, and a significant amount of information is provided. It is important to remember that your participation and ongoing involvement are a crucial part of your student's success. No one knows your student like you!

Here are some tips for a successful IEP meeting to help your student reach his or her fullest potential:

- Be present! This is the most important step you can take in supporting your student. Check your calendars when meetings are scheduled to ensure you can attend.
- Find ways to be involved with your student's education throughout the year. (Volunteer, join a committee/Parent-Teacher Organization, attend special events, schedule time at home for working on school projects and homework, read to/with the student)
- Communicating with school staff on a regular basis via phone, e-mail, or communication log can help you be aware of the student's progress at school. Your student's case manager will likely be the most helpful point of contact. If your student is being initially evaluated for special education services, please refer to the contact information listed on the consent to evaluate form.
- Be prepared to talk to your team about your student's strengths and interests, the goals you have for your student, and tips for teachers regarding how to support your student's educational needs.
- Review the draft copy of your student's eligibility and/or IEP report. If you have questions, contact the case manager to clarify and gather additional information prior to the meeting. Mark any questions you have. There is no question too small!
- Share information from outside providers as appropriate, including copies of outside reports.

- Bring a person who can be a support to you. This individual can be a friend, relative, community-based service provider, advocate, or other important person. They can help you remember to ask important questions and help review what was said in the meeting. If you are going to bring an additional participant, it is nice to let the school know so that accommodations can be arranged
- During the IEP meeting, feel free to take notes and ask questions. Seek clarification about any unfamiliar terms used in the meeting.
- Ask to schedule a continuance of the meeting if time runs out.
- Remember, the overall purpose of this team IEP meeting is to be solution-focused in order to promote your student's success.
- If you have any other questions, please contact your case manager or school. Don't be afraid to ask for information that will help you become an effective partner in your student's educational program and to appropriately advocate for your student's educational needs.

## Parental Rights and Procedural Safeguards

- A student eligible for special education services has the right to receive a free appropriate public education as outlined in the Individualized Education Plan (IEP).
- Prior written notice is given to parents when the school district is initiating or changing a student's special education identification, evaluation, or educational placement; or if the district is refusing to initiate or make a change to the student's identification, evaluation or educational placement.
- Written consent is required in order to conduct an initial evaluation to determine whether your student is eligible for special education and related services or when conducting a re-evaluation. Additionally, when a student is found eligible for special education and related services, written consent is required before the school district is able to provide the identified services.
- If you disagree with the school district's evaluation, you have the right to request an independent education evaluation via written request to the Special Education Department.
- Confidentiality of student information will be maintained at all times. You may review and request copies of your student's educational records at any time. Written parental permission is required before information will be given to people outside of the school district.
- If you have concerns about your student's special education services, it is advisable, before seeking remedies outside of the school district, to contact the Special Education Department. If that does not resolve your concerns, you have the right to request mediation, to file a state complaint, and/or to file a due process complaint.
- If you have concerns that there has been a violation of special education rules and regulations, you have the right to file a state complaint with the Colorado Department of Education. A state complaints officer will resolve a state complaint within 60 calendar days.
- If you have concerns regarding your student's special education identification, the evaluation, the educational placement of your student, or the provision of a free appropriate public education, you have the right to file a due process complaint with the Colorado Department of Education.

- Should a student with an IEP violate a code of student conduct, the school district may remove a student with a disability to an alternative educational setting or enact suspension.
- If a student with an IEP has been suspended for a total of up to 10 school days, the school district must hold a manifestation meeting to determine if the behavior that led to the discipline was directly caused by the student's identified disability or if the behavior was a direct result of the school district's failure to implement the student's IEP.
- Regardless of whether or not a student's behavior is a manifestation of his or her identified disability, the school district may remove a student to an alternative educational setting if the behavior involved weapons, drugs, or inflicting serious bodily injury.

For a full copy of your parent and child rights in special education, please contact your student's school. You may also find them by clicking on the link below.

[https://www.cde.state.co.us/spedlaw/psn\\_eng\\_2024apr1\\_accessible](https://www.cde.state.co.us/spedlaw/psn_eng_2024apr1_accessible)

## What is an IEP?

The Individualized Education Program (IEP) is a plan, or road map, developed by parents and school personnel to help make the student's school journey a success. This yearly plan addresses goals, identifies services and ways to measure individual student progress.

The focus of the IEP meeting is to determine what strategies best meet the student's particular needs. The team discusses the student's strengths, as well as their weaknesses. The team determines what kinds of support and services are needed to bring about the best results. In addition, criteria is established for monitoring the student's progress. It is important to remember that this plan is adjusted according to each student's needs. Parents always have the right to ask for updates on the student's progress.

At this meeting, there may be unfamiliar terminology. If that happens, ask questions. Here are a few terms that are commonly used:

- Accommodation - changes made to teaching and testing that give the student an opportunity to show what they know.
- Modification - changes in what the student is expected to learn while keeping the subject the same as their peers.
- LRE (Least Restrictive Environment) simply stated, it means determining the best place for the student to learn and allowing them as much time with typical peers as possible.

Other terms that are frequently used are included in the glossary on page 15.

## Eligibility for Special Education Services

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that a multidisciplinary IEP team (a group of qualified professionals and the parents) determine if a student has a disability that requires special education services. Evaluation data and information from a variety of sources are used by the IEP team to determine if the student meets State eligibility criteria. All members of the IEP team, including parents, have the right to disagree with this determination. Eligibility requires that a condition prevents the student from receiving reasonable benefit from general education.

Areas of eligibility include:

- Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Hearing Impairment, including deafness
- Serious Emotional Disability
- Intellectual Disability
- Multiple Disabilities
- Orthopedic Impairment
- Other Health Impaired
- Specific Learning Disability
- Speech or Language Impairment
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- Visual Impairment, including Blindness
- Deaf-Blindness
- Developmental Delay

More information about Disability categories and eligibility can be found at the address and link below.

Office of Special Education  
Colorado Department of Education  
201 East Colfax Avenue  
Denver, CO 80203  
CDE Main Phone: 303-866-6600  
[www.cde.state.co.us](http://www.cde.state.co.us)

## Types of Meetings

There are four types of IEP meetings that may occur throughout the school year:

1. Eligibility Meeting - This is the initial meeting that takes place once a referral has been made and the testing has been completed. In this meeting the results are discussed and the team determines whether the child is in need of special education services. If the child is eligible, school personnel and the

parents develop an IEP by outlining services, specific goals, accommodations and modifications.

2. ANNUAL REVIEW MEETING - A Student must receive an annual review every year. This meeting takes place during the school year (within 12 months of the Eligibility Meeting) to determine how the student is progressing and what changes need to be made to the IEP. "Additional Meetings" may be scheduled by the parent or school staff if necessary, and in our district, they will be called Amendment Meetings.
3. TRIENNIAL ELIGIBILITY MEETING - Every three years the student's eligibility for special education services must be re-evaluated. Before the meeting, new testing will be done and new information gathered, unless the school district and parents agree no evaluation is necessary. From that information, the team will determine if the student continues to be eligible for special education services and, if so, what adjustments need to be made to their IEP.
4. AMENDMENT TO THE IEP WITHOUT A MEETING - Minor changes to an IEP may be made without a meeting, provided that parents and the school district agree with the changes. This process can save time for parents and staff when only minor changes to the IEP are being made. Amendments do not change the due date of the next Review/Annual Meeting.

## Educational Settings

When a student becomes eligible for special education services, the Individual Education Program (IEP) team develops a written plan for that student. This plan will include information about educational goals and will identify who is responsible for assisting the student in reaching each goal. Additionally, the plan will talk about the educational setting where the student will receive these services. Least restrictive environment (LRE) is an important concept to understand when a team is talking about how to meet the educational needs of a student. LRE means that the IEP team should design educational supports and services, to the maximum extent possible, so that the student can be educated with children who do not have disabilities. The IEP team should provide documentation and justification whenever education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. Following is a description of possible service options for students:

## Direct/Indirect Services

### **Direct Services**

Direct special education and/or related services are those services provided directly to the student in a one-on-one, small group, or large group setting by:

- An appropriately CDE-licensed and endorsed special education teacher or special education related services provider.
- A paraprofessional under the supervision of an appropriately licensed and endorsed special education teacher or related services provider;
- A speech language pathology assistant (SLPA) under the supervision of a CDE-licensed speech language pathologist who holds a national certification. SLPA's must possess a credentialing authorization from the CDE.

### **Indirect Services**

Indirect services are those provided by special education and/or related services on behalf of a student (but not directly to a student) to educators (who are appropriately licensed, endorsed or authorized), to parents, and to other agencies by an appropriately licensed and endorsed special education teacher or related services provider. Indirect services also include time spent by appropriate providers modifying materials.

### **Least restrictive Environment (LRE)**

The LRE requirement provides that to the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities must be educated with children who are nondisabled. The LRE requirement expects students with disabilities to be educated in regular classes with appropriate aids and services, but full access to the general education setting is not required for every student. If a student requires more intensive services than can be provided in a regular class with supplementary aids and services, then a more restrictive setting may be necessary to provide a free appropriate public education. While including students in the regular classroom as much as possible is undoubtedly a central goal of the IDEA, schools must attempt to achieve that goal in light of the equally important objective of providing an education appropriately tailored to each student's particular needs.

### **Neighborhood/Home School**

Services can be provided in the general education classroom with varying degrees of support from special education providers. Services may also be provided for varying amounts of time outside of the general education classroom. Services may be provided by multiple service providers based on individual student need.



### **Specialized Program in School District or in another School District**

In some cases, it is not reasonable to provide the support required by the student in a general education classroom. In these instances, an educational service may not be located at the student's neighborhood school and may necessitate that the student be transported by the school district to another neighborhood school. In some instances, the student's needs may be so specialized that the student may be transported by the school district to a school or facility in a neighboring school district.

## **Early Intervention Services**

Early Intervention Child Find is a process for identifying children 0-5 years of age that may have developmental delays. These difficulties could be in the areas of communication, motor, cognitive/play skills, or social-emotional development. The services in Fountain-Fort Carson School District include screening of all referred children and further evaluation of those children suspected of having a developmental delay.

For children 0-3 years of age with a qualifying disability, Fountain-Fort Carson School District staff works in conjunction with local agencies to provide a variety of early intervention services to children and their families in their natural environment as part of everyday routines.

For children 3-5 years with special needs, several options are available in Fountain-Fort Carson School District. Our Early Intervention Program includes children with and without special needs.

### **Early Intervention Options**

Fountain-Fort Carson School District Early Intervention Program

- Designed for children age 3-5 yrs.
- Operates four days per week, 3 hours per day for classes (Tues.-Fri.)
- Locations include Conrad Early Learning Center and Weikel Elementary
- Both locations have morning and afternoon sessions
- Each classroom is staffed by a teacher and an assistant.
- Transportation is available for students
- Call 719-304-3500 for more specific information about this program.

## **Transition**

Transition refers to the period of time when a student is preparing to leave school and enter the adult community. This change creates important considerations for students with special needs. All young people face a number of decisions about careers, living arrangements, and social life. For individuals with disabilities, these decisions may be more complex due to the need for additional support. Fountain-Fort Carson School

District is committed to providing necessary support and instruction for students who qualify for transition services so they can acquire an understanding of self-value and achieve personal success.

Under both the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA 2004), "Transition Services" are defined as a coordinated set of activities for a student, designed within an outcome-oriented process that promotes movement from school to post- school activities including:

- Post-secondary education
- Vocational training
- Integrated employment (including supported employment)
- Continuing and adult education
- Adult services
- Independent living
- Community participation

The coordinated set of activities shall be based upon the individual student's qualification for services and needs, taking in to account the student's preferences and interests and shall include:

- Community experiences
- The development of other post-school adult living activities
- The development of employment
- When appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and/or functional vocational education

The concept of transition is simple and generally has three major components

1. Coach every student, along with his or her family, to think about goals after high school and to develop a long-range plan to get there.
2. Design high school experiences to ensure that the student gains the skills needed to achieve his or her desired post-school goals.
3. Identify and link students and families to any needed post-school services, supports or programs before the student exits the school system.

Early and long-range planning are critical in order for the student to receive many post school programs or services whether they include support services in college or residential services from an adult provider. Students and families are often faced with much paperwork to meet eligibility requirements and some adult services have long waiting lists. Early, thoughtful planning will help ensure that the student will receive needed services in a timely manner when he or she exits the school system.

The following link below to CDE's Office of Special Education has good resources for additional information:

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped>

## 504's vs IEP's

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a federal anti-discrimination law that applies to qualified students with disabilities. To be eligible for the protections noted in Section 504, a student must be determined to have a disability that substantially limits a major life activity such as walking, speaking, or learning. Every school in Fountain-Fort Carson School District has a process to identify and provide supports to eligible students. A school counselor or administrator can provide you with more detailed information about Section 504 and 504 Plans.

There are many similarities between Section 504 and IDEA legislation, and there are some important differences. Both laws ensure a free and appropriate education (FAPE) to eligible students with disabilities. However, each act has unique and specific eligibility conditions which may result in a student being eligible for educational services through the IDEA but not through Section 504. A special educator, school counselor, or administrator at the student's school is available to answer any questions about these two laws.

## Who are all these people?

You may have contact with many of the following individuals at some stage of the special education process. The following information is intended to provide information about their role.

**Audiologist:** The audiologist tests the student's hearing to determine if the hearing is adequate for promoting the highest rate of learning. The audiologist also assists parents and teachers in managing hearing concerns.

**School Counselor:** The school counselor's role will vary across schools. The school counselor may share information on ways to help the student improve his or her self-concept and communicate more effectively. Some school counselors have responsibility for academic scheduling, academic assessment coordination, transition programs and postsecondary advisement.

**Occupational Therapist (OT):** An occupational therapist (OT) evaluates the small muscle functions (fine motor skills) used in feeding, dressing and coordination. The OT may work with students to help develop fine motor/perceptual motor skills and may also assist teachers and parents through consultation in developing activities and adapting equipment to improve the student's skills necessary to access the educational environment.

**Parent Guardian:** A parent or guardian is legally responsible for a student's education. The parent/guardian is the expert regarding the student and has more information about the student than anyone else. Thus, a parent/guardian plays an important role in the decisions made about goals and programming for the student.

**Physical Therapist (PT):** A physical therapist (PT) evaluates the large muscle functions (gross motor skills) such as sitting, standing, walking and how well the student can move his/her whole body. The physical therapist may work directly with a student and/or assist teachers and parents by developing activities and adapting equipment to improve the student's muscle strength and normal movement abilities so the student can access the educational environment.

**Assistant Principal:** The assistant principal or their designee will facilitate IEP meetings for the student, participate as a team member during the meetings, and provide oversight of the special education program in the building where the student attends school.

**General Education Classroom Teacher:** The classroom teacher will provide information about the daily social, emotional, and academic performance of the student in the general classroom. This information helps determine eligibility for special education services and reflects the progress of the student in a special education program.

**School Nurse:** The school nurse may contact parents/guardians regarding the student's health history and current health status. The school nurse may provide information pertaining to community resources to meet health needs and may make recommendations in regard to managing certain health related problems that impact on a student's school performance.

**School Social Worker:** The school social worker evaluates the social, emotional, and cultural/factors affecting the student's progress at school. The school social worker may work directly with the student or consult with parents, teachers, or community service providers in order to improve the student's performance at school.

**School Psychologist:** The school psychologist evaluates the cognitive potentials of the student and may also evaluate social, emotional and cultural factors affecting the student's progress at school. The school psychologist may work directly with the student or provide consultation to parents, teachers, or community service providers.

**Special Education Teacher:** The special education teacher helps to assess the academic functioning of the student and will design, implement, and evaluate the instructional programming to meet the student's special education needs. The special education teacher may provide instructional and/or consultation services in a general education classroom, a self-contained classroom, or in a center-based program other than the neighborhood school.

**Speech/Language Therapist:** The speech/language therapist evaluates the student's communication skills and provides direct services to the student to help improve speech, language, and social communication skills. The speech/language therapist may also assist teachers and parents in educational programming to improve communication skills.

**Teacher of the Hearing Impaired:** The teacher of the hearing impaired provides evaluation and special programming for students who have an educationally-significant loss of hearing which would affect the ability to communicate with others. The teacher of the hearing impaired may provide direct services to students and consultation services to parents and teachers.

**Teacher of the Visually Impaired:** The teacher of visually impaired provides evaluation and special programming for students who have significant vision impairment. The teacher of the visually impaired may provide direct services to students and consultation services to parents and teachers.

**Transition Coordinator:** The transition coordinator assists in developing transition strategies that may be appropriate for the student and family. The transition coordinator provides information to staff, students, and family members regarding school/community programs and may assist in the transition from school to adult/community living.

**Work Experience Coordinator:** The work experience coordinator assists in providing career/vocational experience for students through instruction, counseling, assessment, on-the-job training and other support activities.

## Glossary

**Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)** - A Federal law that prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in the areas of employment, public transportation, services provided by state and local government, services and accommodations offered by private businesses, and telecommunication access for people with communication impairments.

**Achievement Testing** - Measures what a student has already learned in areas such as reading, math, writing and oral language.

**Adapted Physical Education** - A physical education program designed to meet the special needs of individual students with disabilities who need modifications to the school's regular physical education program, or a specially designed program.

**Advocate** - A person who speaks on his/her own behalf or on behalf of others to protect their rights and ensure access to services.

**Annual Goal** - A measurable outcome that a student can reasonably achieve in one year and written in the Individualized Education Program (IEP). Progress toward meeting each annual goal must be documented and shared with parents at the end of each semester.

**Annual Review** - The annual meeting of the IEP Team to review a student's progress and revise the goals and services listed in the IEP.

**Appeal** - A written request to change an IEP decision or the act of making a request to change an IEP decision.

**Appropriate** - Able to adequately address/meet identified needs.

**Assessment** - Tests given to a student by qualified professionals to determine the student's current academic levels in such areas as math, reading, and writing.

**Assistive Technology** - Any device, product, or piece of equipment that improves functional capabilities of an individual with learning disabilities such as walking, hearing, seeing, speaking or learning.

**Assistive Technology Services** - Assist an individual or a family in selecting, acquiring, maintaining or using assistive technology.

**Behavioral Support Plan (Sometimes referred to as a Behavior Management Plan or a Behavior Intervention Plan)** - A BSP includes practical and specific strategies and positive supports designed to increase or reduce certain behaviors.

**Case Manager/Service Coordinator/Team Leader** - An individual who coordinates and facilitates IEP process/services for a student and family.

**Child Find** - A system of identifying children birth to 21 that may have a disability or be in need of special education services.

**Due Process** - A formal, legal way to resolve a dispute between parents and a school system regarding a student's IEP.

**Evaluation** - A review of assessments and other information, collected from a variety of sources, used to determine a student's eligibility for, and dismissal from, special education services. Evaluation also helps determine what kinds of support and services a student will receive.

**Extended School Year Services** - Services provided to children during lengthy school breaks from school when evidence shows that a student would otherwise require an inordinate amount of time to regain previously learned skills.

**Free appropriate Public Education (FAPE)** – Students have the right to a free appropriate public education which meets the specific educational needs of a student with a disability as guaranteed by IDEA.

**Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA)** - A process for gathering information that can be used to determine why a person is exhibiting unacceptable behavior and what is needed to change the behavior.

**Individuals with Disability Education Act (IDEA)** - The name of the federal law that guarantees qualified children with disabilities the right to a free appropriate public education.

**Independent Educational Evaluation** - Assessment procedures conducted by a qualified individual who is not employed by the public agency responsible for the education of the student.

**Individualized Education Program (IEP)** - The legally binding, annually revised document that describes what special education and related services a student is to receive.

**IEP Team** - A multidisciplinary team composed of regular and special education teachers, other professionals, and the parents of the student. The team is responsible for identifying and evaluating children with disabilities who are in need of special education services; developing services, reviewing progress, and revising an IEP; and determining that the student is no longer a student with a disability.

**Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP)** - A legal document that is developed in collaboration with the family and professionals to describe the services provided to an eligible infant or toddler (0 – 3 yrs.) and his or her family.

**Infants & Toddlers Program** - A statewide program that requires services for children from birth to three years of age, including an individualized family service plan (IFSP) and case management services. Each county administers this program differently.

**Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)** - All children with disabilities have a right to be educated in the least restrictive environment, with supports and services, in which their IEPs can be implemented. This means that a student can be in a class with his non-disabled peers unless the IEP team determines that a different educational setting better meets the individual needs of the student.

**Manifestation Determination** - A formal decision about whether a student's inappropriate and/or dangerous behavior is understood by the student and whether the student can control that behavior. A manifestation determination may be required if there is a significant change to a student's IEP placement (suspension of more than 10 days in a school year).

**Mediation** - This is the process of having a trained person try to help parents and the school system reach an agreement.

**Multidisciplinary** - Describes a team approach involving specialists in more than one area, to get a complete picture of a student's needs.

**Non-public Placement** - Parents may choose to pay for their student with disabilities to attend a private school yet still access some special education services from the local public school system through the IEP process. If appropriate public services as determined by the IEP can't be provided, the school system must attempt to secure services and pay for those services through a private program.

**Occupational Therapy (OT)** - Instruction in skills such as coordination and control of fine motor movements to access educational activities of daily living provided by an occupational therapist.



**Physical Therapy (PT)** - Instruction in skills and adaptation of equipment by a physical therapist to improve a student's muscle strength and normal movement abilities to increase access to the education environment.

**Present level of performance** - as applied to the goals and objectives in an IEP.

**Positive Behavioral Supports** - Interventions intended to reduce inappropriate behavior and teach a student appropriate behaviors/skills.

**Re-Evaluation** - Once a student becomes eligible to receive special education services, a mandatory re-evaluation occurs after three years in order to determine if the student remains eligible for special education services. A re-evaluation can occur earlier than three years if the student's needs change or if the student has made significant progress.

**Referral** - The process of requesting an assessment to determine if a student is eligible for special education services.

**Related Services** - Services (documented in the IEP) that must be provided for a student who qualifies for special education in order to benefit from his-her educational program, i.e. transportation, speech/ occupational/physical therapy/audiologist/social or emotional skill services, etc.

**Residential Student Care Facility Services** - Educational services provided to a student in a state licensed residential/school facility where a student is living due to the intensive needs of the student.

**Screening** - Screening is the process of reviewing a student's educational situation to see if interventions should be attempted before initiating a referral for special education.

**Section 504** - A federal anti-discrimination law that requires public schools to provide educational accommodations and curricular modifications to students with disabilities.

**Speech/Language Therapist/Pathologist** - A therapist who provides services addressing communication, language and/or voice disorders.

**Speech Therapy** - A planned program provided by a Speech and Language Therapist/Pathologist to correct or decrease problems with communication, language and/or voice disorders.

**Special Education** - Specifically designed instruction, related services, and supplementary aids and services provided for a student determined to have an educational disability in order to meet the student's unique educational needs.

**Supplementary Aids & Services** - Extra aids & services determined by the IEP team to be essential to a student who qualifies for special education services. This could include paraprofessional assistance, adapted curriculum, behavior modification program, assistive technology, etc...

**Transition Plan/transition Services (For infants & toddlers receiving Early Intervention Services)** - A written plan developed and included as part of the IFSP (Individualized Family Service Plan) usually by 24 months of age. It includes the steps to be taken for a smooth transition for all toddlers at 36 months out of the early intervention system and it helps to ensure continuity of services for those children who qualify for special education beyond three years of age.

**Transition Plan/Transition Services (For students with disabilities 16 year and older)** - Beginning at age 14 years, a Transition Team made up of parents(s), the student, special educator and individuals from community agencies, identifies appropriate services and programs to address areas of need such as communication, mobility, career awareness and preparedness, community access and recreation, to facilitate a smooth transition for students with disabilities when they leave the public school system at graduation.

# Acronyms

## **A**

ABA - Applied Behavior Analysis

ADA - Americans with Disabilities Act

ADD/ADHD - Attention deficit disorder/attention deficit hyperactivity disorder  
ALP - Advanced Learning Plan

ARC - Association for Retarded Citizens  
ASD - Autism Spectrum Disorder

AT - Assistive Technology

## **B**

BCBA - Board Certified Behavior Analyst  
BIP - Behavior Intervention Plan

BMHC - Behavior Mental Health Consultant

## **C**

CBA - Curriculum-Based Assessment  
CBM - Curriculum-Based Measurement  
CBP - Center-based Program

CCSS - Common Core State Standards  
CD - Conduct Disorder

CDE - Colorado Department of Education  
CEC - Council for Exceptional Children  
CFS - Community Family Services

CMAS - Colorado Measures of Academic Success  
COALT - Colorado Alternate COTA - Certified Occupational Therapist Assistant  
CP - Cerebral Palsy

## **D**

DD - Developmentally Delayed

DHS - Department of Human Services

DIBELS - Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early  
Literacy Skills DOD - Department of Defense

DOE - United States Department of Education

## **E**

ECE - Early Childhood Education

ECSE - Early Childhood Special  
Educator EFMP - Exceptional Family  
Member Program

EHCA - Education for all Handicapped Children Act, Public  
Law 94-142 EI - Early Intervention

ESY - Extended School Year

## **F**

FAPE - Free & Appropriate Public  
Education FBA - Functional Behavior  
Assessment FERPA - Family  
Educational Rights Privacy Act

## **H**

HI - Hearing Impairment, Including  
Deafness HRS - Health and  
Rehabilitative Services  
HI - Hearing Impaired

HIPAA - The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act

## **I**

ID - Intellectual Disability

IDEA - Individuals with Disabilities  
Education Act IEP - Individualized  
Education Program

ILP - Individualized Learning Plan

## **J**

JTPA - Job Training Partnership Act

## **L**

LDA - Learning Disabilities Association

LEA - Local Education Agency (School Districts or Boards of Cooperative Education Services) LRE - Least Restrictive Environment

## **M**

MD - Multiple Disabilities

MFLC - Military Family Life  
Consultant MTSS - Multi-Tiered  
Systems of Supports

## **N**

NASP - National Association of School Psychologists

NICHCY - National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities

## **O**

OCR - Office of Civil Rights

ODD - Oppositional Defiant  
Disorder OHI - Other Health  
Impairments

OI - Orthopedic Impairment

OSERS - Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative  
Services OT - Occupational Therapy/Therapist

## **P**

PARCC - Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and  
Career PCS - Permanent Change of Station

PIAT- Peabody Individual  
Achievement Test PT - Physical  
Therapy/Therapist  
PTA - Physical Therapist Assistant

## **R**

READ – Colorado READING to Ensure Academic Development

## **S**

SEAC - Special Education Advisory  
Council SED - Serious Emotional  
Disability

SID - Sensory Integration  
Disorder SLD - Specific  
Learning Disability

SLI - Speech and Language  
Impairment SO - Special  
Olympics

SLP - Speech and Language Pathologist

SLPA - Speech and Language Pathologist  
Assistant SRO - School Resource Officer

SSN - Significant Support Needs

SSS - Office of Student Support  
Services SST - Student Support  
Team

## **T**

TASH - The Association for Severe  
Handicaps TBI - Traumatic Brain  
Injury  
TRE - The Resource Exchange

## **V**

VAC - Vocational Adjustment Counselor

VI - Visual Impairment, including  
Blindness Voc Rehab - Vocational  
Rehabilitation

**W**

WISC-IV - Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children, Fourth  
edition WISC-V -Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children,  
Fifth edition WRAT - Wide Range Achievement Test

# Community Resources

## Advocacy Support

Parent Resource Center.....  
719-599-7772

PEAK Parent Center.....  
719-531-9400

Pikes Peak Partnership.....  
719-633-4601

Resources for Young Children & Families.....  
719-577-9190

The Arc of the Pikes Peak Region.....  
719-471-4800

## Funding/Waivers

Resource Exchange.....  
719-380-1100

## Legal

Colorado Legal Services.....  
719-471-0380

## Military

Exceptional Family Member Program – Fort Carson.....  
719-526-4590

## Other

Department of Human Services.....  
719-636-0000

Park and Recreation Department.....  
719-385-5940

Pikes Peak Library District.....  
719-531-6333

Ronald McDonald House.....  
719-471-1814



Shriners.....  
801-532-5307

YMCA – Fountain.....  
719-382-1561

**Medical**

Children’s Hospital – Denver.....  
303-861-8888

Colorado Student Health Care Plan.....  
800-359-1991

Developmental Pediatrics.....  
719-475-0477

Health Department.....  
719-578-3199

Memorial Hospital.....  
719-635-5000

Aspen Point (mental health).....  
719-572-6330

Visiting Nurses Association.....  
719-577-4448

**Services**

Student Development Center of Colorado Springs.....  
719-574-8300

Student Find – Fountain-Fort Carson School District.....  
719-382-1699

Board of Cooperative Educational Services – Pikes Peak (BOCES).....  
719-570-7474

Colorado School for the Deaf & Blind.....  
719-578-2100

Easter Seal Society.....  
719-574-9002

Epilepsy Foundation of Colorado.....  
888-378-9779

Head Start.....  
719-635-1536

Pikes Peak Therapeutic Riding Center.....  
719-495-3908

Shandy Clinic.....  
719-597-0822

The Student Development Center.....  
719-554-9572

The Family Support Center.....  
719-640-5445

**Supports Groups/Foundation**

Arthritis Foundation.....  
719-520-5711

Autism Society of America - Pikes Peak Chapter.....  
719-630-7072

Cerebral Palsy Association.....  
719-638-0808

Colo. Springs Down Syndrome Association.....  
719-633-1133

Colorado Springs Osteopathic Association.....  
719-635-9057

Cystic Fibrosis Foundation.....  
719-444-8966

Lending Library – PEAK Parent Center.....  
719-531-6333

March of Dimes.....  
719-473-9981

Muscular Dystrophy Association.....  
719-260-8777

Parents Encouraging Parents.....  
303-866-6846

Pikes Peak Center on Deafness..... 719-591-2777; TDD  
719-591-2333

**Transition**

Cheyenne Village, Inc.....  
719-592-0200

Goodwill Industries.....  
719-635-4483