



**Newport-Mesa**

Unified School District

*Inspire. Educate. Elevate.*

# Community Advisory Committee (CAC)

February 12, 2026

# Welcome from your CAC Officers



Emily Norton  
Chairperson



Melissa Winberry  
Vice Chairperson



Leila Cesario  
Secretary

A  
special thank you  
to CAC Chairperson Emily Norton  
for the generous donation that  
made these refreshments  
possible.



# Special Education Administrative Team



Sara Jocham, Ed.D  
Assistant Superintendent,  
Special Services



Heather Cash, Ed.D  
Director, Special Education  
Elementary



Rob Nichols  
Director, Special Education  
Secondary



Juliana Sauvao  
Director, Special Education  
SELPA

# Special Education Coordinators



Elke Day  
Preschool Coordinator,  
Special Education



Gina Kasper  
Elementary Coordinator,  
Special Education



Amy Nagy, Ph.D.  
Elementary Coordinator,  
Special Education



Ellen Thomas  
Elementary Coordinator,  
Special Education



Clara Valdez  
Elementary Coordinator,  
Special Education



Kim Doyle  
Secondary Coordinator,  
Special Education



Mike Tincup, Ph.D.  
Secondary Coordinator,  
Special Education

# Parent Introductions

Who do we have in the room?

Name

Grade

School Site

Thank you for joining us tonight!





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# Stepping Forward Together

## Navigating Transitions in Special Education with Confidence and Partnership

### CAC Meeting

# Purpose

## Today's Goals:

- Reduce anxiety and build confidence
- Share what to expect at each transition
- Provide ways families can support success
- Strengthen school-family partnerships

# Why Transitions Matter

- Transitions (TK/K, Middle School, High School, and Adult Transition Program) are important milestones.
- Transitions bring new opportunities, routines, expectations, and growth.
- It is normal for families and students to feel excited, nervous, and uncertain.
- Our goal is to work together so every student feels supported, safe, and successful.

# NMUSD Transition Process

- Preschool to Transitional Kindergarten/Kindergarten
- Middle School
- High School
- Adult Transition Program (18-22)

# Elementary - TK/K

## PK/TK or Kindergarten?

Age by September 11, 2026

- 3 yrs - Preschool
- 4 yrs - TK
- 5 yrs - Kindergarten

## Key Shifts from Preschool to Elementary

- Playground shared with all TK/K students
- Structured schedules and shared school-wide environments (attending assemblies, lining up)
- Exposure to different teachers and learning environments (music, library, science, PE)

## Ways to Help Your Child Get Ready

- Visit or drive by the school to build familiarity and comfort
- Fade out naps over the summer to prepare for longer TK/K days
- Practice increasing independence skills (unpacking backpack, opening snack/lunch item, restroom use)

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# Middle School

NMUSD has 4 middle school campuses:

- TeWinkle & Ensign - Grades 7-8
- Corona Del Mar & Costa Mesa -Grades 7-12

## Key Shifts:

- Multiple teachers
- Larger campus
- Changing classes
- Organization demands
- Extracurricular Activities

# High School

NMUSD has 6 high school campuses:

- Corona Del Mar & Costa Mesa -Grades 7-12
- Newport Harbor & Estancia
- Early College & Back Bay

## Key Shifts:

- Graduation Planning
  - Career Exploration
  - College Awareness
  - Individualized Transition Plan (ITP)
- 

# High School Diploma Pathways



## A–G Diploma College-Ready Pathway

- Prepares students for 4-year college eligibility.
- This is the most academically rigorous pathway.
- Students with IEPs *can* earn an A–G diploma with supports.

## Traditional California High School Diploma

- Meets state graduation requirements, but not automatic 4-year college eligibility.
- Provides flexibility and multiple post-secondary options.
- Students with IEPs can receive accommodations and adaptations.

## California Alternative Pathway to Diploma (CAPD)

- Designed for students with significant cognitive disabilities.
- Student must be recommended to take the CAA
- Focuses on functional academics, life skills, and transition readiness.
- Students may continue receiving IEP services until age 22.

# Adult Transition Program (18-22)

For students completing the Alternative Diploma Pathway, they can receive IEP supports and services through age 22, focusing on:

- ★ Employment training
- ★ Independent living skills
- ★ Community access
- ★ Functional academics

**Goal:** Prepare students for adult life.

# What is an (ITP) Individualized Transition Plan?

The ITP is a required part of the IEP that is developed annually starting before entering high school.

## Purpose of the ITP:

- Prepare students for life after high school
- Support planning for:
  - Employment
  - Education or training
  - Independent living

## The ITP includes:

- Student strengths, interests, and preferences
- Measurable postsecondary goals
- Transition services and activities

**Goal:** Build skills for independence, self-determination, and meaningful adult outcomes.

# What to Expect at the Transition IEP meeting

The following participants will attend your child's Transition IEP meeting:

1. Parent
2. Current Case Carrier
3. Receiving School Special Education Representative
4. General Education Teacher
5. Administrator

During your child's transition IEP meeting, the IEP team will:

- Review current IEP programming, goals, progress and supports
- Discuss the continuum of services
- Discuss parent & IEP team members questions & concerns
- Add/Change Goals, Supports, Accommodations and Services, as appropriate
- Make an Offer of FAPE

**Purpose:** Ensure meaningful educational progress

*Be Prepared!*

*Review the school websites regarding general information for ALL students.*

*Attend school information sessions & Fall orientations.*

# How Parents Can Participate in the IEP

## Before

- Review Reports and Draft Documents
- Write Questions & Priorities
- Respond to School Communication

## During

- Ask questions
- Share priorities
- Attend all IEP meetings

## After

- Monitor progress
- Communicate concerns early



# Advocacy & Productive Partnerships

## What Schools Need from Families

- Communication
- Partnership
- Trust
- Shared problem-solving

**Strong collaboration = Strong outcomes**



# Preparing Your Child at Home

## For All Ages:

- Build consistent routines
- Encourage independence
- Support communication skills
- Celebrate effort and growth

## For Younger Students:

- Practice self-help skills (dressing, toileting, cleaning up)
- Read together daily
- Build play and social skills

## For Middle & High School Students:

- Practice organization and time management
- Encourage self-advocacy
- Build independence in daily tasks

## Post High School:

- Practice community skills
- Support job readiness
- Teach money management and life skills

Monitor School Communication and Website.  
Participate in School Activities available to ALL families.

# Need further assistance?

## **Elementary (TK/K) Transitions**

Krista, Early Learning TOSA

(714) 424-7930

[kstafford@nmusd.us](mailto:kstafford@nmusd.us)

## **Elementary (6/7) Transitions**

Amy Nagy, Coordinator

[anagy@nmusd.us](mailto:anagy@nmusd.us)

Clara Valdez, Coordinator

[cvaldez@nmusd.us](mailto:cvaldez@nmusd.us)

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[ethomas@nmusd.us](mailto:ethomas@nmusd.us)

Gina Kasper, Coordinator

[gkasper@nmusd.us](mailto:gkasper@nmusd.us)

## **Middle School and High School Transitions**

### **Corona Del Mar & Costa Mesa Middle/High School**

Kim Doyle, Coordinator

(949) 515-6773

[kdoyle@nmusd.us](mailto:kdoyle@nmusd.us)

### **Ensign, Newport Harbor, TeWinkle, Estancia, Back Bay & Early College**

Mike Tincup, Coordinator

(949) 515-6621

[mtincup@nmusd.us](mailto:mtincup@nmusd.us)

## **Adult Transition Program (STEP) Transitions**

Kim Doyle, Coordinator

(949) 515-6773

[kdoyle@nmusd.us](mailto:kdoyle@nmusd.us)

**We welcome your  
questions**

**Your voice matters!**



## Parent Transition Workshop

Saturday, March 14, 2026 8am - 12pm

The Special Education Department is excited to host a *Parent Transition Workshop at Costa Mesa High School*. This informative workshop is designed to support families of students with IEPs as they plan for life after high school. Parents will learn about transition planning and explore a wide range of options, including career and technical education pathways, college opportunities, and post-secondary vocational training programs.

Look out for the flyer soon with a QR code for parents to register to attend.

## Next CAC meeting

April 30, 2026 6:30-8:00 pm

Please fill out topic card to share your thoughts for the next meeting.

