



# Extended School Year for 2004!



NEWPORT-MESA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

# EVERY CHILD IS SPECIAL

A Publication of the NMUSD Special Education Department

Extended School Year for Special Education will begin 7/1/04 and go through 7/29/04. Five school sites will be hosting our Extended School Year program this summer. Harper will have the Preschool program, Eastbluff and Rea will have the elementary programs, and TeWinkle and Estancia will host the secondary programs.

The hours for ESY are below:

Harper 8:00 am-12:30 pm

Eastbluff 8:30 am-12:30 pm

Rea 8:30 am-12:30 pm

TeWinkle 7:30 am-11:30 am

Estancia 7:30 am-11:30 am

The following staff will be providing support at the site level throughout the ESY program:

School	Principal Office Manager
Harper	Kathryn Hofer Kari Burke
Eastbluff	Candy Barela Cheryl Lowry
Rea	Laura Rydell Barbara Littrell
TeWinkle	Sandra Kipsful Aurora Wood
Estancia	Guy Olquin Denise Bauermeister

All EYS staff will be attending a mandatory, though "brief" meeting on Wednesday, June 30<sup>th</sup> beginning at 8:00 a.m. in

the Rea Elementary Multi-Purpose Room.

Students are currently receiving postcards at their home informing them of their ESY placement.

Transportation will be sending out postcards on June 25<sup>th</sup> notifying parents of transportation pick up and drop off times. Congratulations goes out to both the special ed and transportation staff for working collaboratively to get our ESY program up and running for 2004! If you or a parent have a question regarding a child's placement for ESY have them contact Debbie Kerwin at (714) 424-7561 or Terrilee Stevenson at (714) 424-5021.

## Site Visits are Happening District-wide

A HUGE "Thank You" goes out to the administrators and special education staff at the schools below for taking the time to give me a tour of the many wonderful programs existing on their campus! It is evident each of you has devoted enormous amounts of time and energy to create such outstanding learning

environments for our special needs population. I have also appreciated the positive and supportive comments and ideas that you have shared with me during my short tenure in the Special Education program. I am looking forward to a busy summer and a smooth and hopefully "uneventful" start to the 2004- 2005 school

year. Have a relaxing and restful vacation; you've earned it!

- Harper Pre-School and Assessment Center**
- Lincoln Elementary**
- Paularino Elementary**
- Victoria Elementary**
- Kaiser Elementary**
- Eastbluff Elementary**

# The Special Education Task Force

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As a result of the May Talk Shop, the Special Education Task Force was created. The purpose of the task force is to provide a forum where site level staff can work collaboratively with administrative staff to address issues that have negatively impacted the Special Education Program. This is a solution-oriented group whose purpose will be to prioritize issues that need to be addressed and develop solutions to resolve these issues. Site level members were selected by their job-alike group, whose initial contact came from NMFT President, Jim Rogers.

Members of the task force include: Barry MacPherson, Brenda Shirley, Ted Williams, Gale Kirk, Debra Foosner, Karen Nedza, Jan Potter, Jim Rogers, Jan Marquardt, Lisa Ferig, Sharon Calvo, Margaret Porter, Charlene Hommerdig, Melinda Overton, Gail Routledge, Amy Morgan-Rogers, Denise Knutsen, Terrilee Stevenson.

The initial organizational meeting was held on Thursday, June 10<sup>th</sup> from 3:30 p.m. to 5:20 p.m. in the H.O.P.E. Resource Room at Harper. Introductions were made and group norms were established. A few of the items the task force discussed included:

Defining the role of this group in comparison to the CELDT committee. A concern that ideas and action items have follow through.

Equity between regular Ed staff and special ed staff, especially in the area of technology and equipment. Itinerant staff wanted to be sure they

are included as they are not tied to a site.

Staff development should be evaluated and a needs assessment should be done to gather input from those being trained. Special Education staff is mandated to go to Houghton-Mifflin training, and in turn miss the opportunity to attend staff development that pertains to their specific job. How can we accomplish both?

Instructional aides are in need of training, especially in the area of Autism. Group discussed the pros and cons of differential pay for aides in Autism classrooms. The timeline for hiring aides was also discussed and the need to expedite the process. Autism Partnership is tentatively scheduled to provide training the summer. Regular education staff and those in RSP programs are also in need of training in Autism in order to support these children as they transition.

Staffing, especially in the areas of speech and language and psychologists was discussed. Methods of caseloads distribution were shared. This is an area where equity continues to be an issue.

Genesea, a new special education database and IEP program is currently under evaluation. The goal is to reduce the time completing IEPs and more importantly ensure they are compliant. The program is web-based and has high levels of security. Capo is currently using the

program and has given it high marks. One area of concern was whether the State would be mandating a standard IEP format? The item is being researched.

One manner in which to address the need for support at the site level is to restructure how services are being provided and increase staffing to align with ratios found in other local Districts. A Zone Concept is currently being examined. 5 Coordinators would be responsible for covering each of the zones, with one assigned to the Preschool/Assessment Center. Each would be supported by an office clerk and possibly a TOSA and/or inclusion specialist. Each zone would in essence be a "family". All special ed staff working within a particular zone would work with the coordinator assigned to their zone. It was felt that the CDM zone may need additional support due to the high levels of need in that zone. Coordinators and their staff would be housed at a site in their respective zone in order to be more assessable to the site level staff and parent community.

These are a few of the many items that were discussed. Minutes of the meeting are being emailed to site administrators and will be posted at each site. If you have questions or items you would like to share contact your rep and or email Denise Knutsen at [dknutsen@nmusd.k12.ca.us](mailto:dknutsen@nmusd.k12.ca.us).

The Task Force will reconvene in the fall to continue addressing these issues.

# GENESEA: Meets the Need for Single Database

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The Special Education staff and site administrators have shared their concerns about the current IEP Writer program and the dual databases. In response to that concern a new IEP program and database are being closely researched for possible implementation for Fall 2004. Last December, a cadre of Special Education administrators, coordinators, teachers and DIS personnel attended a presentation by Edupoint Educational Systems the developer of Genesea. The Genesea database has been developed to simplify the IEP process and accurately track students and their services. It addresses the following issues:

- Management of the IEP process
- Creates and tracks IEPs
- Provides required reports and necessary forms
- Makes information available in a secure environment
- Maintains student confidentiality
- ENSURES COMPLIANCE

The program is currently being used successfully in the Capistrano School District. The NMUSD Special Education Department is looking to adopt the program and begin staff development in late August. An Informational Tech TOSA is being brought on board to assess the hardware and staff development

needs of all special education staff. Over the summer months special education classrooms will be checked for Internet access, as well as computer and printer availability. Staff will also be assessed as to their proficiency in the area of technology so that staff development meets the needs of individuals. Our goal is to have the program up and running on DAY 1 of the 2004-2005 school year. The tech TOSA will offer support to the Special Education staff as they familiarize themselves with the new program and begin navigating the new system. Ultimately, the goal of this implementation is to improve communication, simplify the IEP forms and process and ensure compliance at all levels.

## Zone Feedback from Site Administrators

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Meetings have been held over the course of the past two week to gain feedback from site administrators as to the special education needs they see at the site level. Their time and input was greatly appreciated! They offered insight in areas that impact not only students identified with special needs but those attending the regular education program as well. Commonly shared issues included:

- All Principals need a mini-tape recorder and set of tapes to use at high profile IEPs. (\$)
- They expressed a need for training so that they feel confident when leading IEPs where advocates and/or lawyers are in attendance.
- Aides need to be trained. A sub list is needed as well. Would be great to have two "floaters" that are on payroll and can cover class when an aide is out ill.
- Look at caseloads for DIS staff. Don't simply look at "bodies" consider the type of cases (students) they are servicing and time they are spending in IEP meetings.
- Provide staff development for Principals and case carriers about norms for IEP meetings and strategies on how to reduce the length of meetings.

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*Every Child . . . Every Day*

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## Continue . . . Zone Feedback from Site

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- There needs to be a clear and systematic plan developed to ensure service (both internal and external) are acquired in a timely manner. Often times, following the IEP, services are not implemented according to the IEP. The parents call the school and are angry when follow through does not occur.
- Principals want to be involved in the hiring of staff for their site; even if it occurs during the summer months.
- Children often arrive to the school site on the first day without paperwork. They want to be brought into to the loop so that there is a smooth and positive

transition for the child and their family.

- They were very interested and positive in regards to the possible Zone concept. They believe TOSA support would be effective with the implementation of IEP outcomes

and in providing training in the regular education classroom.

- Hoping to see training for our aides by Autism Partnership. Want ESY aides to be trained at the end of June. Other aides should be trained prior to end of school year.

