What is Special Education?

Special Education is a broad term used by federal law to describe the "specially designed instruction" necessary to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability. This means that an individualized plan is developed to address the needs that result from the specific disability of the child in order for them to access their education in public schools.

FYI - The Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) 2004 is the law that defined Special Education as "specially designed instruction" at no cost to parents.

How is eligibility for Special Education established?

To be eligible for special education a student must have **1)** a disability (see the 13 IDEA categories below) and **2)** a need for specially designed instruction. This means the student needs special education to make progress in school and to benefit from general education. With this 2 prong test, it is possible for a student to have a disability (prong 1) but not be in need of special education (prong 2).

FYI: It does not mean that the student has a need only for related services such as counseling, OT, PT, etc.

What areas are evaluated for Special Education and related services?

All Students who receive special education services must be evaluated. The law defines several categories of disabilities under which a child may be found eligible for special education and related services. The categories are:

- autism
- deaf-blindness
- deafness
- emotional disturbance
- hearing impairment
- multiple disabilities
- orthopedic impairment
- other health impairment
- specific learning disability
- speech or language impairment
- traumatic brain injury

FYI - The Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) 2004 section 300.304 defines how a child qualifies for special education.

What is an ARD?

"**ARD**" is an acronym for **Admission, Review and Dismissal**. An ARD meeting is a meeting of a group of people who help to determine whether or not a student is eligible for special education and develops the **Individual Education Program (IEP)** for eligible students.

What is an IEP?

An **Individualized Education Program (IEP)** is a educational plan that addresses the individual needs of a child. It takes into consideration the child's strengths and weaknesses, parent concerns, assessment results and areas of academic and developmental needs in order to develop goals and objectives for the school year . The **IEP** is created through a team effort at an **ARD** meeting and reviewed at least once a year.

FYI -."**An IEP, Individualized Education Program**, is the heart ❤️ of **IDEA** and measurable annual goals are at the heart of each **IEP**".

Why is the IEP Important ?

The Individualized Education Program (IEP) outlines the school's plan for providing specially designed instruction and related services.

What is the parent's role in the IEP development ?

IDEA establishes that parents are equal members of the ARD committee team. Good communication between parents and teachers are encouraged prior to the ARD committee meeting in developing draft IEP's. The ARD gives the parents a voice in determining their child's IEP. Parents are encouraged to actively participate in the ARD process by asking questions, sharing their concerns, and speaking on their child's behalf. It is important for parents and school staff to remember that this is a collaborative process.

What are some words or terms I need to know in the ARD Meeting?

Individualized Education Program (IEP): A written statement for each child with a disability that is developed, reviewed and revised according to the requirements of IDEA.
General Education Curriculum: The body of knowledge and range of skills that all students throughout a state are expected to master. In Texas, in the general education curriculum is the
Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS)

Who attends the ARD meetings?

The **ARD** committee is usually made up of a special education teacher, a general education teacher, the assistant principal or principal of the school, the diagnostician, (a person qualified to interpret evaluations and the instructional implementations), a staff member representing any related services the child might require and of course and most important of all the parents and the student (s) when appropriate.

Where is an ARD meeting held?

An **ARD** meeting is typically held at the school that the child is attending. It usually lasts about an hour.

When is an ARD meeting held?

An **ARD** is held for initial placement or any time the school staff or parents feel a change is needed in a student's special education program. The **IEP** must be reviewed at least once a year, but an **ARD** meeting may be held at other times. For example, an **ARD** will need to be held to review additional assessment. Many concerns can be addressed through parent–teacher conferences and do not require a formal ARD committee meeting.

FYI: "**Rule of Thumb**" - If your concerns for your typically developing child are addressed through parent teacher conference then the same process is appropriate for a child with a disability. If in doubt contact the principal of the school to obtain additional information.

What happens if I disagree with the ARD Committee?

If as a parent or guardian you do not agree with the decision of the ARD committee, a 10 day recess is given before any further plans will be discussed and parents are provided with procedural safeguards. At this time a **LISD Parent Navigator** might be helpful in assisting parents navigate through the ARD process. Parents are also encouraged to contact their special education director to assist in resolving conflicts.

FYI -Information on **LISD Parent Navigators** can be found in the Parent Navigator Section of this manual.

Acronyms in Special Education

ABA Applied Behavior Analysis
ADA Americans with Disabilities Act of 2008
ADHD Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder
AEIS Academic Excellence Indicator Systems
AI Auditory Impairment
AIP Accelerated Instruction Plan
ALS Academic Life Skills
APE Adapted Physical Education
ARD Admission, Review and Dismissal Committee
ASL American Sign Language
AT Assistive Technology
AU Autism
AVLS Academic and Vocational Life Skills
AYP Annual Yearly Progress
BIC Behavior Intervention Classroom
BIP Behavior Intervention Plan
CTE Career and Technical Education
CFR Code of Federal Regulations
CLASS Comprehensive Learner Adapted Scope and Sequence
COSF Child Outcome Survey Form
CPI Crisis Prevention Intervention
CPS Child Protective Services
CSR Confidential Student Report
DAEP Disciplinary Alternative Education Program
DB Deaf/Blind
DNQ Did Not Qualify
DSM-IV-TR Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders - 4th Ed., Text Revision
EC Early Childhood - see PPCD
ECI Early Childhood Intervention
EE Early Education
ELL English Language Learner
ED Emotional Disturbance
EOC End of Course
ESC Education Service Center
ESL English as a Second Language
ESY Extended School Year

FAPE Free Appropriate Public Education
FBA Functional Behavior Assessment
FERPA Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act
FIE Full Individual Evaluation
FLS Functional Life Skills
FOF Focus on the Future
GPC Grade Placement Committee
HB Homebound Program
HI Hearing Impairment
HLS Home Language Survey
ID Intellectual Disability
IDEA Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
IEE Independent Educational Evaluation
IEP Individualized Education Program
IFSP Individual Family Service Plan
IHT In-Home Training
ITP Individual Transition Plan
JJAEP Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program
LEA Local Education Agency
LEP Limited English Proficient
LPAC Language Proficiency Assessment Committee
LRE Least Restrictive Environment
LSSP Licensed Specialist in School Psychology
MD Multiple Disabilities
MDR Manifest Determination Review
NCEC Non-Categorical Early Childhood
NCLB No Child Left Behind
OCR Office of Civil Rights
OHI Other Health Impairment
OI Orthopedically Impairment
O&M Orientation & Mobility
OSEP Office of Special Education Programs
OSERS Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services

Acronyms in Special Education

OT Occupational Therapy
PBS Positive Behavioral Supports
PEIMS Public Education Information Management System
PDD-NOS Pervasive Developmental Disorder - Not Otherwise Specified
PGP Personal Graduation Plan
PLAAFP Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance
PPCD Preschool Program for Children with Disabilities
PSC Purnell Support Center
PT Physical Therapy
REED Review of Existing Evaluation Data
RPTE Reading Proficiency Test in English
RTI Response to Intervention
SAPP School Age Parenting Program
SEAS Special Education Automation Software
SI Speech Impairment
SITP Student Intervention Team Planning
SLD Specific Learning Disability
SSI Student Success Initiative

STAAR State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness
TAC Texas Administrative Code
TAKS Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (formerly TAAS) Skills Accommodated
TBI Traumatic Brain Injury
TBSI Texas Behavior Support Initiative
TEA Texas Education Agency
TEAMS Teaching for Emotional, Academic and Motivational Success
TEC Texas Education Code
TEKS Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills
TELPAS Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment Summary
TSBVI Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired
TYC Texas Youth Commission
VAC Vocational Adjustment Coordinator/Class
VB-MAPP Verbal Behavior Milestones Assessment and Placement Program
VI Visual Impairment

School Year:

20____ — 20 ____

Contact Teacher (works directly with the student and is responsible for implementing the student's IEP and communicates progress on IEP goals):

Name _____**Contact Info:**_____

Lead Teacher (Provides instructional and behavioral leadership for the special education staff on a campus)**:**

Name _____**Contact Info:**_____

Para Professional (works under the supervision of the special education teachers and provides support to students in the classroom):

Name(s) _____

Itinerant Staff

FYI - What is Itinerant Staff? Itinerant staff are staff members who are assigned to more than one campus and travel from place to place.

Diagnostician: (The diagnostician evaluates the child and may make recommendations based on their testing. They also manage timelines for the ARD paperwork)

Name _____**Contact Info:**_____

Additional **Related Service/Itinerant** staff working that may be with your child this year if your child qualifies (see next section) **:**

Name: **Contact Info:**

Communication Flow Chart for Special Education

If you have questions about your child's educational program or progress, the teacher would be your first point of contact for information.

1) Teacher:

Email:

Phone:

If you do not get the answers you need from the teacher, your next point of contact would be the principal of your child's school.

2) Principal:

Email:

Phone:

FYI: If you have only been communicating with the vice principal you need to contact the principal of the campus is you feel your concerns are not being addressed.

If you do not get the answers you need from the principal, your next point of contact would be the special education director assigned to your child's school.

3) Special Education Director:

Email:

Phone:

If you do not get the answers you need from the special education director, your next point of contact would be the special education executive director.

4) Special Education Executive Director:

Email:

Phone:

If you do not get the answers you need from the special education executive director. your next point of contact would be the Associate Superintendent tor teaching and learning.

5) Associate Superintendent:

Email:

Phone:

Instructional Settings

The law (IDEA) states that each student must be provided an education in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) appropriate for the student and that the first consideration must be given to the general education classroom and curriculum. Special Education services and placements are based on identified student needs and not on categories of disability. LISD takes steps to ensure that the students with disabilities have available to them the variety of educational programs and services available to non-disabled students served by the district. The following are just a few of the examples of service delivery models provided through a variety of instructional setting.

> **FYI: Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)** - means that a student who has a disability should have the opportunity to be educated with non-disabled peers, to the greatest extent appropriate. They should have access to the general education curriculum, or any other program that non-disabled peers would be able to access. The student should be provided with supplementary aids and services necessary to achieve educational goals if placed in a setting with non-disabled peers.

Mainstream-The Mainstream setting is an instructional setting where students with disabilities receive instruction in a core content area or other curricular area in the general education classroom. The student does not receive any push in or pull out services for instruction form the campus based special education teacher in that particular content. The student may receive IEP accommodations and /or modifications. These are provided by the general education teacher in consultation with the special education contact teacher.

Inclusion Support Setting- In the inclusion support setting the special education teacher or paraprofessional, under the direct supervision of a special education teacher, provides direct support for students with disabilities in the general education classroom. Inclusion services are individualized according to the needs of the student, and based on ARD committee recommendations. Special Education Teachers will collaborate with their general education teachers in order to   effectively implement the necessary supports for students that this setting requires.

Resource Instructional Setting - A Resource Instructional Setting is any amount of time that a student receives intensive direct instruction from a special education teacher, in a separate setting from the general education classroom, to address the specific goals in their IEP. These are typically goals related to reading, writing, or math objectives in their IEP. Resource must be intensive accelerated instruction aligned with the students' enrolled grade level TEKS. Students must have specific goals related to the instruction they are receiving in the pull out resource time.
Each elementary campus will provide an option of services that allows for pull out time that does not replace the entire core content area. Services will be provided as necessary for the student to make progress in the enrolled grade level curriculum. The only time the Resource services should replace the core content instruction for the entire class period is when the students' assessed instructional level is significantly below the enrolled grade level (at least 2 years or more) and the student has modified academic achievement IEP goal (s) for the core content area.

Each secondary campus will provide Resource classes which will replace the general education class for the core content areas of English/Lang Arts, Reading or Math. The students' assessed instructional level must be significantly below the enrolled grade level (at least 3 or more) and the student has modified academic achievement IEP goal (s) for the core content area.

Life Skills -Life Skills classes are designed to provide a structured instructional program for students whose functional and academic needs cannot be met in other settings. Students participate in the general education classroom or in general education activities to the maximum extent possible to meet their academic, social/ emotional and vocational needs. There are 3 different Life Skills settings.

- **Academic Life Skills (ALS)** instruction focuses on 1) assisting each student in experiencing success in academic and/or elective subjects at his/her ability level. (* Students in Academic Life Skills exhibit significant academic needs which are pervasive in all core academic areas. These needs cannot be met in the resource setting.) 2) assisting each student in securing functional/self-help, vocational and job-related skills as appropriate. 3) assisting each student in obtaining socialization skills to be used in daily and community living, 4) increasing skills that lead to independence within the community.

- **Academic and Vocational Life Skills (AVLS)** classes provide a more intensive functional-based instruction in areas of academic, self-help, vocational, socialization and daily community living that promote independence. Instruction in this setting includes components of both the academic life skills and functional life skills programs that focus on vocational and prevocational development. Like the ALS classroom the AVLS classroom focuses instruction on 1) assisting each student in experiencing success in academic and/ or elective subjects at his/her ability level and integrating academic instruction into mean- ingful age appropriate functional activities, 2) assisting each student in securing functional/self-help, vocational and job-related skills as appropriate. 3) assisting each student in obtaining socialization skills to be used in daily and community living and 4) increasing skills that lead to independence within the community.

- **Functional Life Skills (FLS)** provide instruction for students whose educational needs cannot be met in other settings. Students have severe to profound delays in the area of cognition and are generally non ambulatory and/or medically fragile. Educational programs emphasize basic life skills with the integration of functional prerequisite academics. The focus of instruction in the Functional Life Skills classes are 1) establishing skills in tolerating environments, choice making, visual and/or auditory stimulation and the use of appropriate forms of communication, 2) independence in daily living skills, social interactions, emotional development and recreation/leisure activities. 3) tolerance in fine and gross motor develop- ment and environmental awareness. 4) assistive technology as a necessary related services/accommodation for students in order to meet individual educational goals, and 5) the provision of positive behavioral supports and interventions when needed.

Behavior Intervention Class (BIC) Behavior Intervention Classes are for students with severe emotional/behavioral concerns that adversely affect the student's, or others', educational performance, and whose needs cannot be met appropriately in other settings. The Behavior Intervention Class provides a higher level of structure and individualization for student success. Behavior Intervention Class will provide a self-contained setting for students who cannot be educated in a less restrictive setting, such as a combination of general education classes, as well as other special education settings.

- An individualized **Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)** may be implemented in any of these settings based on student need to ensure success.

Instructional Settings

Communication (COMM) classes are designed to provide a highly structured instructional program for students with an Autism Spectrum disorder, or other disorder (s) whose academic, communication and behavioral needs cannot be met in other settings. The focus of the Communication class is to provide class instruction with the following: 1) verbal language approach to language acquisition 2) high degree of classroom structure 3) the development of effective communication skills through specialized, direct instruction based on the principles of applied behavior analysis and Skinner's analysis of verbal behavior 4) management of behavior through an individualized Behavior Intervention Plan and 5) social skills development .

Teaching for Emotional, Academic and Motivational Success (TEAMS) classes located at the Purnell Support Center will focus on the instructional and behavior management/social adjustment needs of those students who have become persistently disruptive of the educational process in spite of reasonable attempts in less restrictive settings to help them learn behaviors appropriate for school. These students will require very high levels of structure and very restrictive behavior management procedures with a concentration on learning to function positively in social situations requiring cooperation, compliance with rules and directions, and ability to control impulses.

Focus on the Future (FOF) - FOF is a community-based transition program for students with disabilities who are between 18 and 21 years of age. Individual supports for a successful transition to adult life are provided in the areas of employment, recreation activities, social relationships and independent living. Each young adult's schedule is based on IEP goals and objectives that have been developed after extensive coordination and collaboration with the student, his/her parents, agencies and other stakeholders.

Homebound—Homebound is a setting for providing special education and related services to eligible students who are served at home or hospital beside. The students are expected to be confined for a minimum or four (4) consecutive weeks as documented by a physician who is licensed to practice in the United States. Homebound instruction may also be provided to chronically ill patients who are expected to be for any period of time confined totaling at least four (4) weeks throughout the school year. The students ARD/IEP Committee shall determine the amount of services to be provided in this instructional arrangement/setting in accordance with federal and state laws, rules and regulations. Homebound services may also be provide to infants and toddlers (age birth through 2) and young children (ages 2 –5 years) when deter-mined by the child's Individual Service Plan (IFSP) ARD committee or IEP/ARD Committee. Homebound students are generally unable to participate in extra curricular or co-curricula activities, work programs, outside jobs and other activities away from home and under normal circumstances. Ability to participate in activities outside the home could affect the ARD determination of the need for homebound instruction.

Preschool Program for Children with Disabilities (PPCD) Classroom Setting
PPCD is a program for students with disabilities ages 3, 4 and some 5 year olds. These classes are designed to provide instruction for students with delays in cognition, communication, psychomotor, self-care and social-emotional areas. Options for the PPCD program include self-contained, Inclusive/blended classrooms, and kindergarten with Special Education support through inclusive supports or resource.

Related and Instructional Services

**The following service providers will work with your child
if they qualify for the services:**

Instructional Services

Speech Therapist: In most states speech is a related service, in Texas speech is an instructional service. This means children qualify for speech services must meet the criteria for speech eligibility. A speech therapist (speech-language pathologist) assesses diagnoses and provides therapeutic interventions for students who are experiencing speech, language, and communication difficulties.

Music Therapist: Music Therapy is a program that provides specific methods of learning enhanced by music. Students who receive this therapy require the components of music therapy in order to make progress in their previously determined goals and objectives.

Adaptive PE: Adapted physical education teachers promote appropriate participation in a physical education program for students with physical/intellectual disabilities. They work with students, teachers, and paraprofessionals, to create a program that ensures physical and motor fitness, as well as social improvement for students

 Special Ed. Counselor: Based upon individual evaluations counseling services may be recommended for specific students if necessary for the student to progress on their educational IEP. These services are direct or consult and are implemented by the special education counselors.

Auditorially Impaired (AI): The AI program serves hearing impaired students elementary through high school, who qualify for services. Services are provided by either consult or direct services and are directly related to the students hearing loss. A qualified teacher for the Auditorially Impaired works with the classroom teacher to supplement, modify and reinforce materials as needed, but does not replace teaching in the classroom.

Visually Impaired (VI) : The VI program serves blind and visually impaired children aged birth to twenty-one years with visual impairments. An itinerant vision teacher travels to the student's assigned school or home (for infants 0-3 years) to provide direct and/or consultative Special Education services relating to vision loss. Teachers provide supplementary services that are disability specific for children who may have only a visual impairment or additional disabilities. The VI teacher supplements, reinforces and modifies materials when necessary, but does not replace classroom teaching. VI teachers work closely with the student's teacher(s) to ensure a successful education program.

Related Services

Transportation as a related service is included in an eligible student's IEP if the IEP team determines that such a service is needed in order for a student to access education. Transportation includes: travel to and from school

Occupational Therapist (OT) : An occupational therapist works with students to facilitate full access and success in their learning environment. Occupational Therapists work with children who have fine motor delays, handwriting issues, self care deficits, and sensory difficulties which interfere with their access to the school curriculum. This often includes working with the teacher to modify the classroom and/or adapt learning materials to help the student successfully participate.

> **FYI: "Sensory Diet Plan"** – An Occupational Therapist is the person who designs a sensory diet plan. A "sensory diet plan" is an individualized list of sensory strategies and activities designed to help the student with sensory difficulties stay focused and organized throughout the day.

Physical Therapist: A physical therapist provides services to students to facilitate their ability to participate in the educational setting. Physical therapy services focus on providing a student with the motor sills and assistive technology necessary for functional mobility and positioning in all areas of the school building, as well as safe access to the playground setting. Services are provided using either a direct or consult model. Direct services allow the physical therapist to work on the development of specific gross motor skills, e.g. walking. Consult services allow the physical therapist to assist the classroom staff, through training and with recommendations, with the implementation of IEP objectives. Physical therapists have knowledge of and access to a wide variety of positioning and mobility options to meet student needs. Successful physical therapy outcomes are the result of collaboration between the physical therapist, the classroom staff and the parents.

In Home Trainer: In-home trainers work with parents and classroom teachers to provide the transition of mastered skills from school to the home and community.

Agency Notes

Date:_____   Time:_____

Type of Discussion (phone, meeting, other): _____

Discussion with: _____

Name: _____

Title: _____

Agency: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Reason for discussion: _____

Summary of discussion: _____

_____

Agreements/Conclusions: _____

Follow-up needed: _____

Notes:

LISD Resources

- LISD's web site on transition found at **http://www.lisd.net/Transition** is a great resource for all parents with children of all ages. It contains information on agencies, waiver programs, guardianship and much more.

- Information on **Special Education Services** in LISD can be found in the section on Special Education under Parents on LISD's main page. There are links to information on staff, programs and resources within the district.

- **SEPTSA** is a PTA devoted to parents and children with special needs. Their web site is a very comprehensive resource for parents designed to help them connect not only with each other but with valuable local resources. Their site can be found at: **http://lisdseptsa.txpta.org**

Texas Parent Resources

- This web site created by TEA (**Texas Education Agency**) helps to assist educators, parents, and other stakeholders to better understand the federal regulations (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act), State Law (Texas Education Code), and State Rules (Texas Administrative Code: Commissioner's and State Board of Education Rules concerning Special Education). The site can be found at:
- **http://www.tea.state.tx.us**

- On the **Texas Project First** web site you will find helpful tools that explain the special education process. The goal in developing Texas Project FIRST was to provide families with accurate and consistent information, understanding the process and knowing where to find more information when needed. Their web site can be found at: **http://www.texasprojectfirst.org/index.html**

- **Texas Parent to Parent (TxP2P)** is committed to improving the lives of Texas children who have disabilities, chronic illness, and/or special health care needs. TxP2P empowers families to be strong advocates through parent-to-parent support, resource referral, and education. In addition, TxP2P educates professionals about the unique needs of our children with the goal of improving care and opportunities for our children. Lastly, TxP2P is dedicated to championing the efforts of a diverse set of parent support groups and advocacy on behalf of our children's well-being. Their web site can be found at: **http://txp2p.org/index.html**

- **Partners Resource Network (PRN)** is a non-profit agency funded by the US Department of Education. PATH, provides training, education, information, referral, emotional support, and individual assistance in obtaining appropriate services. **Procedural Safeguards** for parents can be found here.

Agencies/Waiver Programs

Medical waiver Programs help to ensure that people with intellectual disabilities receive the services and supports they need to lead self– determined and valued lives within their communities. Services are based on the income of the person with a disability and provide funding for a personal attendant, respite, therapies, adaptive aids, home and vehicle modifications, etc. The demand for community –based services and support is greater than the allocated services, therefore there are long lists for those interested in receiving services. These lists are up to 10 to 12 years, it is important to get on the lists as soon as possible!
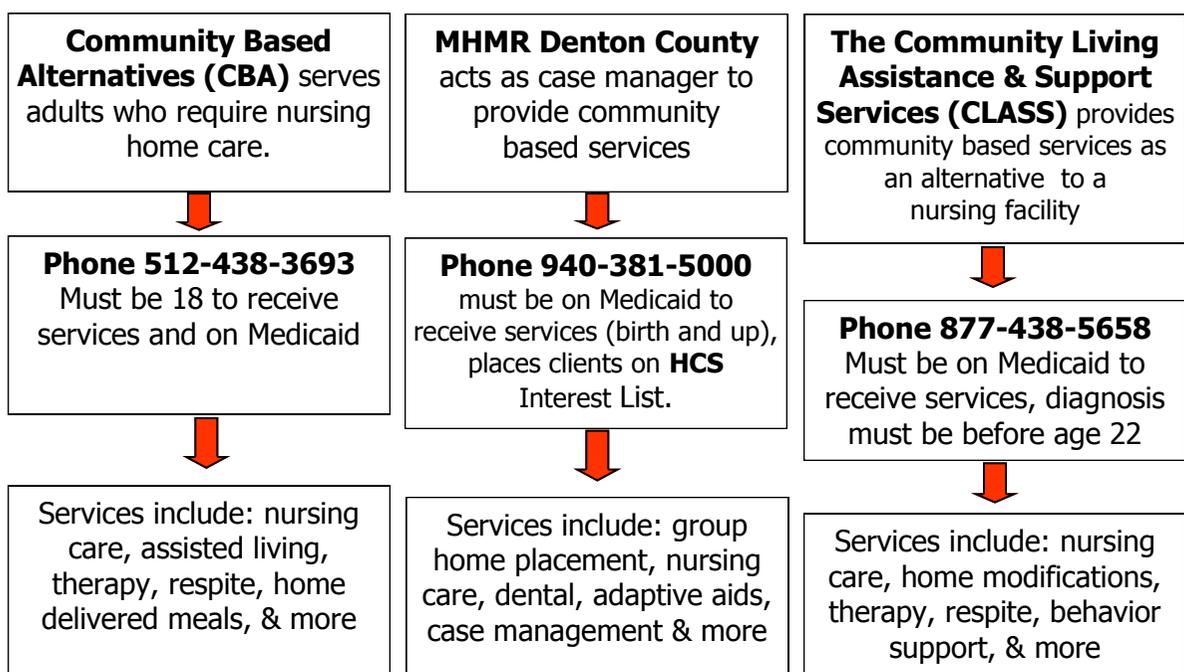
- **Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS)** is administered by the Texas Health and Human Services Commission. DADS coordinates an array of aging and disability services, supports, and opportunities in local communities to provide the following; respite, vocational, habilitation, In-Home & Family Supports, Residential Services and addition Community Based Services. More information can be found on their web site at: **http://www.dads.state.tx.us/**

- **Mental Health & Mental Retardation (MHMR)** is a local agency that is administrated through **DADS** and offers services to individuals who have an intellectual disability or a related condition that occurred prior to age 18, (IQ below 75). Services cannot be refused due to an inability to pay. If a person is deems eligible MHMR will assist in applying for Medicaid. To apply you must go to your local agency for an intake evaluation. A case worker will be assigned and help with applying for or scheduling the following services; respite funds, supported employment, group homes, HCS waiting lists, and other supports. The Denton County MHMR agency's web site is: **http://www.dentonmhmr.org/**

- The **Home and Community-based Services (HCS)** program provides individualized services and supports to people with intellectual disabilities who are living with their families, in their own homes or in other community settings, such as small group homes where no more than four people live. To sign up for the HCS list, parents should contact MHMR. There is no age limit. Individuals must be Intellectually Disabled or have a related condition that results in deficits in adaptive behavior, a full scale IQ of 75 or below and be eligible for Medicaid. More information can be found on their web site**: http://www.dads.state.tx.us/providers/HCS/**

- **The Community Living Assistance and Support Services (CLASS)** program provides home and community-based services (i.e.. respite, home modifications, adaptive equipment, behavioral supports) to people with related conditions as a cost-effective alternative to a care facility for individuals with an intellectual disability. A related condition is a disability, other than an intellectual disability, that originated before age 22 that affects the ability to function in daily life. More information can be found on their web site**: http://www.dads.state.tx.us/services/faqs-fact/**

- **The Community Based Alternatives (CBA)** program provides home and community-based services to people who are older or who have disabilities as a cost-effective alternative to a nursing home. More information can be found on their web site**: http://www.dads.state.tx.us/services/faqs-fact/cba.html**

Agencies/Waiver Programs

- **Supplemental Security Income (SSI)** is a federally funded income supplement program that provides cash in the form of a monthly check to meet the basic needs for food clothing and shelter for people with disabilities. Any person who receives at least $1.00 of SSI will receive full benefits from **Medicaid** which provides for health services and medications. More information can be found at: **http://www.socialsecurity.gov/pgm/ssi.htm**

- **Department of Assistive and Rehabilitation Services (DARS)** is an agency that works with people who have physical or mental disabilities to prepare for, find, or keep employment. Services may include medical, psychological, and vocational testing, counseling and guidance, job skills training, hearing exams, medical treatment, assistive devices, training in work behaviors, job placement assistance, and follow-up after job placement. More information can be found on their web site at: **http://www.dars.state.tx.us**

Where to start………..

When your child is diagnosed with a disability that might prevent them from living independently in the future, it can be very overwhelming to know where to start to get help. It is important to start early and learn what is available in your area. Services are on a first come first serve basis and eligibility is based on income and disability. Before the age of 18 services are based on the parents income but after 18 they are based on the income of the person with the disability. In order to qualify for most services the person with the disability must be on Medicaid. To receive services the person with a disability must be on an **Interest List.** To get on the interest list you must contact the agency and go through the intake process. Below are the 3 agencies to contact and their contact information:

Community Based Alternatives (CBA) serves adults who require nursing home care.	**MHMR Denton County** acts as case manager to provide community based services	**The Community Living Assistance & Support Services (CLASS)** provides community based services as an alternative to a nursing facility
Phone 512-438-3693 Must be 18 to receive services and on Medicaid	**Phone 940-381-5000** must be on Medicaid to receive services (birth and up), places clients on **HCS** Interest List.	**Phone 877-438-5658** Must be on Medicaid to receive services, diagnosis must be before age 22
Services include: nursing care, assisted living, therapy, respite, home delivered meals, & more	Services include: group home placement, nursing care, dental, adaptive aids, case management & more	Services include: nursing care, home modifications, therapy, respite, behavior support, & more

Transition Services

What Are Transition Services?

Transition Services refers to a coordinated set of activities for a student with a disability, designed within an outcome oriented process, which promotes movement from school to post-school activities including, but not limited to:

- Post-Secondary Education
- Vocational Assessment and/or Training
- Integrated Competitive Employment (including supported employment)
- College/Adult Education Support Services
- Work and Volunteer Experience
- Independent Living Skills
- Linkage to Community Agencies

When Does Transition Begin?

While children and families experience many transitions over the years, three predictable transitions occur when:

· Reaching school age,
· Approaching adolescence,
· Moving from public school toward adulthood.
The law mandates that the school focus on transition must begin by the age of 16, but preparing for successful transition actually begins the moment a student starts school

When Does Transition End?

Students with disabilities can remain in school through age 21, if there are continuing transition needs. These may include the need to acquire skills necessary for independent living or employment. These needs must be stated in the IEP and must include community-based instruction, learning experiences, and other adult objectives.

Who Is Involved With Transition?

Various individuals such as the student, parents, family members, school staff, and agency personnel, work together as a team to develop an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) based on the student's interests and preferences as outlined in the student's transition plan.

Who Is Involved With Transition?

The purpose of transition services is to incrementally prepare students with disabilities to live, learn and work within the community by providing them with career and life skills, knowledge and experiences. Transition planning focuses attention on how the student's educational program can be planned to help the student make a successful transition to his or her goals for life after high school, including:

- Providing instruction and courses of study that are meaningful to the student's future and will motivate the student to complete his or her education;
- Teaching students the skills and knowledge needed in adult life (including career development and occupational skills); and
- Providing contacts (linkages) with adult agencies to provide a smooth transition.

What are Transition Activities?

Some of the activities LISD staff will use to support, encourage and assist students as they make the transition into adulthood are:

- Conducting strength and interest- based aptitude and career assessments
- Coordinating and conducting transition planning meetings that include the student, parents, agencies and other stakeholders
- Conducting classes and activities that promote self-advocacy and self-determination
- Taking students on college tours
- Providing job shadowing opportunities, resume and interviewing skills, training experiences, and additional work-based learning opportunities
- Taking parents on group home, sheltered workshop and day program tours
- Advocating for student and parent's needs
- Aiding students and parents in the completion of necessary forms to obtain services
- Informing parents and students of training and employment opportunities
- Holding parent workshops for college bound students to provide information regarding accommodations and access
- Hosting the Transition Open House

Where can I get more information on Transition?

LISD's web site on transition found at **http://www.lisd.net/Transition.** It is a great resource for all parents with children of all ages. It contains information on agencies, waiver programs, guardianship and much more.

What is a Parent Navigator?

LISD Parent Navigators provide support to parents by guiding them through the Special Education experience. The Parent Navigator provides assistance to parents of children with disabilities at no cost. Parent Navigators are objective and neutral parties and they may be helpful facilitating solutions to parent concerns.

Who are Parent Navigators?

LISD Navigators consist of a group of volunteer parents who have a child with a disability and who have a understanding of the LISD Special Education process. Parent Navigator have experience and training in issues relating to special education, disability, communication and conflict resolution.

When should I contact a Parent Navigator?

Parents may contact a Parent Navigator if they have questions or need help navigating through the special education process. Parent Navigators may also be helpful in situations when a conflict or disagreement occurs between the parent and school.

What are the benefits of working with a Parent Navigator ?

Parent Navigators may be beneficial by:
- Providing parents with the opportunity to speak with another parent about experiences within LISD Special Education.
- Helping increase communication between parents and schools
- Assisting with questions, and resources
- Providing options for solving problems.

FYI: Working with a Parent Navigator is an informal, time limited process and does not limit a parent's right to use formal processes such as the help of an advocate, filing a complaint, requesting mediation or filing a due process hearing.

How do I contact a Parent Navigator?

Choose a Parent Navigator to email from the list found in this booklet and the most current list can be found online at http://www.lisd.net/ParentGuide

LISD Parent Navigators

Buck, Mary Beth	marybalex@me.com
Turner, Amy	amy@texasturners.net
Silvas, Sherrie	Sherrie_2@hotmail.com
Blaine, Molly	Molly.blaine@sbcglobal.net
Thomas, Biju	biju101010@yahoo.com
Wilson, Kirstin	KirstinWilson28@hotmail.com
Amick, Stacey	Stacey.amick@verizon.net