



WHAT IS SPECIAL EDUCATION?

Special Education is not a place! It refers to a range of services and supports that are put in place to support a scholar's academic growth. There is no "one size fits all" approach in Special Education. It is tailored to meet each scholar's individual needs.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is a four-part piece of American legislation that ensures scholars with a disability are provided with Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) that is tailored to their individual needs. This education needs to be provided in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). LRE is the requirement in federal law that scholars with disabilities must receive their education, to the maximum extent appropriate, with nondisabled peers and that special education scholars are not removed from regular classes unless, even with supplemental aids and services, education in regular classes cannot be achieved satisfactorily.

At Vibrant Minds Charter School, we put into action the societal ideology of inclusion. Inclusion gives scholars with disabilities the opportunity to learn alongside their non-disabled peers in General Education classrooms. That means if the scholar can receive the needed assistance in the general education classroom, s/he will stay there. When the services cannot be provided in the classroom, the scholar may go to another location for the duration of the services and then is returned to the General Education classroom.

VIBRANT MINDS



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**LEARNING
SHARING,
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CHARTER
SCHOOL**



VIBRANT MINDS CHARTER SCHOOL

VIBRANT MINDS CHARTER SCHOOL SPECIAL EDUCATION:

WHERE EVERY CHILD IS VALUED, AND EVERY CHILD IS A SCHOLAR!

At Vibrant Minds Charter School, we are dedicated to a strength-based philosophy and implement a whole child approach in our work with scholars. We not only care about our scholars' academic growth, but also their ability to communicate effectively, grow socially and emotionally, and function successfully in society as a whole.

Sometimes when working with scholars, we discover that they appear to have some challenges or delays in certain areas. Scholars may exhibit difficulties with learning and struggle to "keep up" with their classmates and the curriculum. They may struggle communicating with their peers or the adults in their lives. If a parent or a scholar's teacher has any concerns with his/her learning abilities, Special Education services may be the answer. Special Education services help children who may need additional support to be successful scholars.

Whatever the need, we are dedicated to work as a team to support all scholars on our campus and help them grow during the time they are under our care

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT SPECIAL EDUCATION

HOW CAN I FIND OUT IF MY CHILD QUALIFIES FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION?

If there is a concern about your child's ability to learn, there will be a series of assessments completed by qualified staff. The data from these assessments, as well as input from teachers and parents, will help the team determine if the scholar qualifies for Special Education services. There are 13 categories or ELIGIBILITIES that a scholar can qualify for under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). In order for a scholar to qualify for an IEP, the IEP team determines that the scholar falls under one of these categories. They are:

- Autism
- Deafness
- Hearing Impairment
- Orthopedic Impairment
- Specific Learning Disability
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- Multiple Disabilities
- Blindness
- Emotional Disturbance
- Intellectual Disability
- Other Health Impaired
- Speech or Language Impairment
- Visual Impairment

WHAT IS AN IEP?

IEP stands for Individualized Education Plan. It is a document put together by the IEP Team that contains information about the scholar's current educational performance levels and the plan for instruction and support. Typically, the IEP includes scholar's strengths, areas your child needs help with, the type of therapy or related services to be provided to your child, goals your child will work on, and how progress will be measured. An IEP is required by law for all children receiving Special Education services. As a parent, you have an important role in helping to write the IEP. When it is finished, you will sign the IEP to indicate that you have discussed the plan and understand and agree with its contents.

WHAT TYPES OF SERVICES CAN I EXPECT MY SCHOLAR TO RECEIVE?

If your child is found to be eligible for Special Education services after the assessment process, the services considered for your scholar may include many different supports such as therapy (for example speech therapy or occupational therapy), academic support, or counseling. The services provided to your scholar would be those required to help him/her make growth in the specified area of need.

RESOURCES SPECIAL EDUCATION

These links and references are a small sample of the information and resources available in case you are interested in learning more about Special Education law and supports.

Wrightslaw
www.wrightslaw.com

Individuals with Disabilities Act
www.sites.ed.gov/idea

El Dorado Charter SELPA Parent Resources
Charterselpa.org/parent-resources

California Department of Education:
Special Education
www.cde.ca.gov/sp/se

Wrightslaw: Special Education Law, 2nd Edition
by Peter W. D. Wright and Pamela Darr Wright

Wrightslaw: All about IEPs
by Peter W. D. Wright, Esq.,
Pamela Darr Wright, MA MSW,
and Sandra Webb O'Connor, M.Ed.

We have a responsibility to ensure that every individual has the opportunity to receive a high-quality education, from prekindergarten to elementary and secondary, to special education, to technical and higher education and beyond.

– Tae Yoo