



# Network News

Your Arizona Parent School Connection



Summer 2010

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## Look What's New!

by Barb Ross

The Parent Information Network (PIN) is pleased to announce two new documents have been added to the PIN Clearinghouse (PINC): Behavioral Resources section *BR01 Managing Behaviors and the IEP* and *BR23 Discipline: Suspensions and Expulsions*. *BR01 Managing Behaviors and the IEP* gives parents a step-by-step guide on the process of obtaining a functional behavioral assessment (FBA) and examples of what is meant by looking at the function of a behavior and how this relates back to the individualized education program (IEP). *BR23 Discipline: Suspensions and Expulsions* provides parents with the essential information needed when their child has been suspended, what the process includes, as well as what parental rights are safeguarded under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) 2004.

New to the Special Education Resources section of the PINC is *SE23 Dispute Resolution: Filing a Complaint*. This document answers most questions parents have before filing a complaint with the Arizona Department of Education, Exceptional Student Services (ADE/ESS). The ADE/ESS Dispute Resolution unit has developed *SA04 Dispute Resolution Booklet* as a comprehensive overview of all the formal dispute resolution options. The booklet is available in the Self-Advocacy section of the PINC. All PINC resources can be accessed via the website: [www.azed.gov/ess/pinspals](http://www.azed.gov/ess/pinspals).

## What Kind of Day is It?

Calendar Day - School Day - Business Day - Instructional Day  
by Teri Rademacher

Parents of children with disabilities receive lots of information regarding their child's educational programming. From the initial evaluation until the time a student exits special education, parents will become familiar with many different timelines. All of them have one common measurement—a "day." So, it is important for parents to know what kind of day is associated with a particular part of the process.



The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) 2004 defines several types of "days":

(a) Day means calendar day unless otherwise indicated as business day or school day. (b) Business day means Monday through Friday, except for Federal and State holidays . . . (c)(1)

School day means any day, including a partial day that children are in attendance at school for instructional purposes. (2) School day has the same meaning for all children in school, including children with and without disabilities. 34 C.F.R. §300.11.

When schools conduct an evaluation to determine eligibility for special education services they must complete the process in 60 **calendar days** once they receive a parent's written consent. Arizona Administrative Code (A.A.C.) R7-2-401(E)(3). IDEA states that schools must conduct a meeting to develop an individualized education program (IEP) for a child within 30 days (calendar) of a determination that the child needs special education and related services. 34 C.F.R. §300.323 (c)(1).

A parent or school may request, in writing, a review of the IEP. Such review shall take place within 15 **school days** of the receipt of the request or at a mutually agreed upon time but not to exceed 30 school days. A.A.C. R7-2-401(G)(7).

Parents should be aware that when schools send students home for all, or even a portion of a day, it is considered a "school day." Even a partial day should be included when calculating the number of days a child with a disability has been suspended. If it is a day when children are in attendance for instructional purposes, it counts.

When researching issues in the law, whether it is federal (i.e., IDEA 2004) or state (Arizona Revised Statute) laws and there are specific timelines involved, it is important to note what type of "day" is meant.

Keeping your procedural safeguards notice (PSN) close at hand can be helpful to determine what your next steps might be should the school not adhere to the identified timelines. You can find your PSN online at: [www.azed.gov/ess/resources/forms/ProceduralSafeguardsNotice-English.pdf](http://www.azed.gov/ess/resources/forms/ProceduralSafeguardsNotice-English.pdf)

## Enhancing Arizona's Parent Networks (EAPN)

EAPN is the collaborative effort of parent groups, organizations and agencies that believe all children with special needs and their



families should have access to information, support, and training. EAPN offers parents and professionals disability-related information and support. Be sure to check out the Training and Events Calendar. Bookmark [www.azeapn.org](http://www.azeapn.org) and come back often to find out what's going on in Arizona!

## Summer Film Festival

by Teri Rademacher



With the arrival of summer, many things change for those of us who live in sunny Arizona. Some of those changes are welcome and others, not so much. For example, Arizonans are busy preparing for summer by working to get the proper pH level in their pools, checking out conditions on hiking trails, working on their yards now that the snow has melted, and making sure the inner tubes and rafts are fit for future trips to the lake. One of the entries on the “not so welcome” side of the summer comparison chart is the dreaded television rerun.

The Parent Information Network has the perfect solution for the black hole in your television viewing schedule created by summer reruns: the *Free Media Lending Library*. No, that is not a typo, it is free. There is no charge to check-out and view any of the videos or DVDs. The requestor does have to pay for the return postage and the additional few cents for a delivery confirmation.

The *Free Media Lending Library* catalog has forty-plus titles in seven categories: advocacy, assistive technology, behavior, disability specific, mental health, special education, and transition. So, be sure to put popcorn on the grocery list and log-on to our website at [www.ade.az.gov/ess/das/pinspals/downloads/AV01.pdf](http://www.ade.az.gov/ess/das/pinspals/downloads/AV01.pdf) to check our catalog.

You might want to consider a Rick Lavoie marathon and check out his presentations on learning disabilities (*F.A.T. City Workshop: How Difficult Can This Be?*), discipline (*When the Chips are Down*), social skills (*Last One Picked, First One Picked On*), and motivating children (*The Motivation Breakthrough*). Just in case you're missing *Project Runway* or *What Not to Wear*, you can pay close attention to the clothing styles and hairdos as his presentations span the late 1980s through 2009.

If you are an avid viewer of TLC (The Learning Channel) or HGTV (Home and Garden Television), you may want to check out *Writing Social Stories with Carol Gray*. This is a great summer project; once you view this amazing DVD you can begin to develop your own social stories to use to teach new skills or help to decrease the anxiety level of your child with a disability. Looking for ways to reinforce and continue to develop those communication skills, check out our DVD on the Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS). This DVD provides examples of each training phase within PECS in school, home, and community settings. Once you have viewed it, you will want to get out the craft materials box, Velcro®, picture icons and get busy developing an individualized communication system.

For the A&E channel fans, or those who subscribe to those premium movie channels, we have DVDs that provide a look into the life of individuals with disabilities. *Dr. Temple Grandin: On Visual Thinking, Sensory, Careers, and*

*Medications* looks at the life of a successful adult who was diagnosed with autism as a child. Jonathan Mooney didn't learn to read until he was 12 years old. In the video, *What the Silenced Say*, he outlines how he moved past feeling “stupid and crazy” to ultimately graduating with a 4.0 in English literature from Brown University. In the video *Teen Depression: Real Life Teens*, you hear from teens who talk about the causes of depression, warning signs, and getting the help that is needed.

*Dirty Jobs* on the Discovery Channel provides viewers with the inside details of the world of work. The Transition section of the catalog has some great videos and DVDs on preparing children with disabilities for life after high school. The *Mary on the Move* series is about a young woman with developmental disabilities and each installment highlights her “work” to acquire a variety of life skills. The series includes learning about personal grooming; how to keep house; menu planning; and much, much more. *My Future My Plan* highlights several students, each with a different life plan, as they begin the transition planning process.

Ready to schedule your very own Summer Film Festival? Then contact your regional Parent Information Network Specialist, listed on page 4, for a Reservation Request and Tracking Form or print page 21 from the online catalog. You can check out your favorite titles, two at a time, and keep them for up to two weeks. Once they arrive, lean back in that recliner with your popcorn and a cold beverage and enjoy.

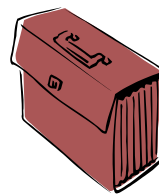
## Let's Get Organized!

By Barb Ross

Summer time is an excellent time to review your child's records and get organized for the upcoming school year. To keep and what not to keep...that is the question. It's important to purge documents occasionally, but be careful



not to throw away important historical documents like a former individualized education program (IEP) which showed supports and services that had been used successfully, or documents that could be relevant to your child in the future. Some agencies require documentation of your child's disability before the age of three when transitioning to adult programs after high school.



Choose a filing system that works for you. Many parents prefer a master three-ring binder. This keeps important documents portable when you need them and can be kept on a shelf and the spine labeled by years for easy access. Others use accordion files, a filing cabinet or even a box or tote bag. Use folders or dividers to separate different sections and subsections. Make a directory of names, phone and fax numbers, e-mail addresses and web sites of important school staff, related service providers, habilitation and respite personnel, relevant medical services, and day care providers for quick reference.

Keep official documents in a safe place and use copies for your files. Never mark on your original documents or give original copies to anyone! If you need to date documents, lightly mark the date in the upper right hand corner in pencil.

Typical documents for the Education Section could include:

- IEPs
- Progress reports and report cards
- Formal notices: meetings notices and/or prior written notices (PWN)
- Documents related to discipline and/or behavioral concerns, including notes from the teacher on your child's behavior or notes from conversations and meetings
- Standardized test results
- Correspondence between you and the school/district
- Samples of schoolwork
- Invoices and cancelled checks from services you provided for your child's educational development
- Evaluations by the school system and by independent evaluators

Other documents to include in additional sections are:

- Copies of official documents (i.e., birth certificate, Social Security card, guardianship papers)
- Other service plans: Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSP) or Child and Family Teams (CFT)
- Medical records: reports from physicians, consultants, diagnostic reports, immunization records, any hospitalizations, treatments and results, family medical history, and insurance information
- Resources regarding your child's disability(ies)

Consider developing a "Get to Know Me" section or update a one-page document annually that includes: a summary of your child's strengths and weaknesses; an outline of your child's daily routine; likes and dislikes; what works-what doesn't; and pictures of your child with family, friends and favorite activities.

If you discover you are missing documents, no problem. The Parent Information Network Clearinghouse (PINC) sample letter, *SE16 Education Records Request*, also describes your right to review and request copies of your child's educational records. PINC resources are available upon request from your Regional PIN Specialist listed on page 4 or can be downloaded from the PINC online at [www.azed.gov/ess/das/pinspals/documents](http://www.azed.gov/ess/das/pinspals/documents). PIN Specialists also offer a 'make it and take it' workshop on *Organizing Your Child's Records*. For more information on this workshop or other trainings contact your Regional PIN Specialist listed on page 4.

## Charter Schools and Special Education

by Teri Rademacher

Charter schools are public, state-funded schools which were created by legislation signed into law in 1994. According to Superintendent Horne's Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2008-2009, Arizona had 349 charter schools with an enrollment of 102,380 students. There are three sponsoring entities: 1) the State Board of Education, (2) the State Board for Charter

Schools, and (3) the governing boards of school districts. They are chartered for 15 years with a review every 5 years.

There are several misconceptions about charter schools. One is that they are not public schools and therefore they do not have to provide special education services. This is not true. Charter schools are public schools and are required by Arizona Revised Statutes (ARS) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) 2004 to provide special education and related services to eligible students. For example, they must adhere to the 60-day timeline for special education evaluations, highly qualified (HQ) teachers for the provision of special education services, and comply with all components of the procedural safeguards notice. They are monitored for compliance with special education laws by the Arizona Department of Education/Exceptional Student Services (ADE/ESS) just like school districts.

Charter schools do not have specific enrollment areas as their school district counterparts. Their boundaries are undefined. They do, however, set enrollment capacities and can deny enrollment once they meet that capacity. When parents of a child with a disability go to enroll their child in a charter school, their application should be handled according to the charter's policies and procedures. Parents may want to request a copy of their enrollment policies and capacity determinations when considering a charter school. Enrollment cannot be denied based upon the child's need for special education services.

IDEA 2004 outlines provisions for students who transfer to another public education agency (PEA) within the same state during the same school year. The PEA or school must provide a "free appropriate public education (FAPE) to the child (including services comparable to those described in the child's IEP from the previous public agency), until the new public agency either (1) adopts the child's IEP from the previous public agency; or (2) develops, adopts, and implements a new IEP that meets the applicable requirements in §§300.320 through 300.324." [§300.323 (e)]. Parents should be included in all aspects of this process. Visiting the charter school and observing their classrooms, including any special programs, enables parents to be fully informed participants in their child's IEP meetings.

Smaller charter schools may contract some or all of their special education services. They may contract with private vendors to do their evaluations, write IEPs and provide special education and related services. Therefore, it is important for parents to know and follow the chain-of-command when questions or issues arise. Requesting contact information at the first IEP meeting will ensure you can contact the appropriate person should the need arise.



For more information regarding charter schools, visit the Arizona Department of Education's website at [www.azed.gov](http://www.azed.gov) and click on Charter Schools in the menu on the left-hand side of the homepage. The Arizona Charter School Board's website has additional information and can be found at [www.asbcs.az.gov](http://www.asbcs.az.gov) or call 602-364-3080.



# Designing the Future

**Be Anyone You Want to Be!**

**September 20-22, 2010**

**Talking Stick Resort  
9800 East Indian Bend Road  
Scottsdale, Arizona 85250**

Register for the conference at [www.azed.gov/onlineregistration/calendar](http://www.azed.gov/onlineregistration/calendar) or to make hotel reservations call: (866) 877-9897.

Family and youth/young adult focused strands will only be held on Monday and Tuesday. Scholarships are available for youth, young adults and families needing assistance with registration costs and lodging! They will be awarded on a first come, first serve basis. For more information, contact Jeannette Zemeida at (602) 542-3855 or at [Jeannette.Zemeida@azed.gov](mailto:Jeannette.Zemeida@azed.gov). Plan to attend the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Transition Conference and design your future!

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