

### **Programs For Individuals With Exceptional Needs**

The Governing Board will provide in accordance with the law an equal educational opportunity for every child in the district by establishing and maintaining an appropriate educational program for individuals with exceptional needs from birth to 21 years of age.

The Board recognizes the district's special education programs and the concept of the least restrictive environment (LRE) for all students as an integral part of the educational process. Special education students will participate in a program that will maximize their exposure and interaction to the social, curricular and cocurricular experiences similar to their peers in the mainline program.

Resource specialist programs (RSP) should be available to each school and special day classes (SDC) should be located at strategically determined school sites. This will promote continuity in the students' educational experience, minimize the time spent in transporting students and result in an efficient use of the district's resources.

In keeping with the district's commitment to provide the most appropriate and effective programs and services possible to individuals with exceptional needs, within the financial means of the programs, the following items must be implemented:

1. Classroom facilities for special education programs will be appropriately designed and provided for each service unit.
2. Special education classes will be given equal consideration when plan utilization at each school is being determined.
3. With the availability of the RSP in each school, eligible students will be served in the LRE.
4. SDC's will be established in schools that are strategically located, addressing the large concentration of students in specific areas.
5. Placing special education programs of a speciality nature such as the mental health treatment, orthopedic, autistic and hearing impaired programs will require central locations to serve the students in these low incidence settings.
6. SDC and mainline programs that share a school site will each serve similar grades and/or age levels of students at that particular site with the exception of programs of a specialty nature and some preschool and kindergarten SDC's.
7. Coordination of special education curriculum with mainline curriculum will enhance academic mainstreaming.
8. Socialization skills of the special education students and those of the nonspecial education students will be enhanced by providing opportunities for all students to participate in academic and extracurricular activities.

Policy FRESNO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

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