

Self Advocacy and building a better culture for people differently abled in our schools and community



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Self Advocate

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What is “Special” about “Special Education”?

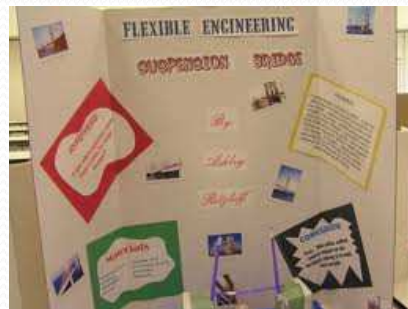


- “Special Education” is a term that refers to people with special needs getting educated.
- Special Education sometimes allows people to receive additional supports or services that others may not receive due to their special needs.
- Some Common Supports:
 - Test Accommodations
 - Curriculum Changes
 - Additional Therapies such as speech, OT, PT, social etc
 - Use of “assistive technologies”
 - Communication in a different way if a person cannot speak or write
 - Adaptive PE
 - Transportation Supports
 - Extended School Year

Self Evaluation of your Academic Environment



- Do you believe you are **achieving and learning the content**?
- Are you **achieving your IEP goals**?
- Are you making **adequate academic progress**?
- Are you **comfortable or uncomfortable** while in school?
- What are you **good at** and what could you **use some improvement on**?



Leading your own IEP Meeting



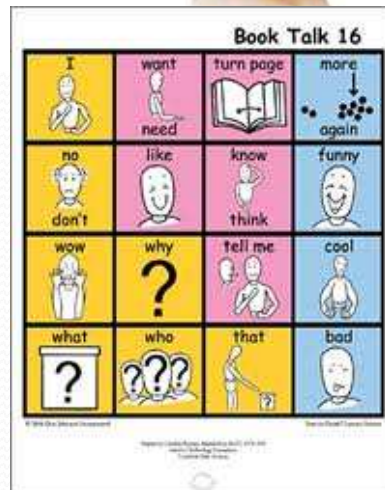
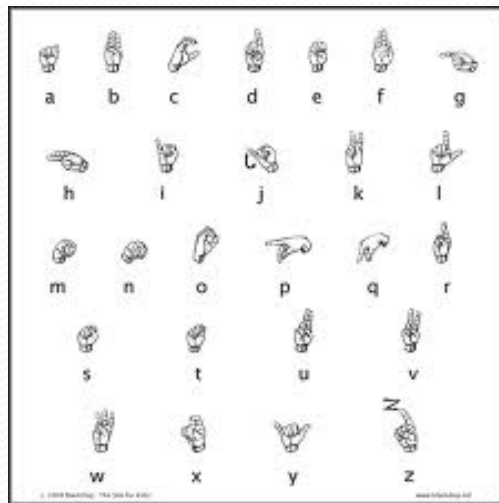
- **Student should choose his/her own team** (at minimum you must have at least one of each of the following at the meeting):

- General Ed Teacher
- Special Ed Teacher
- Parent
- Administrator / PEA Rep
- Individual to interpret Results



You can invite others to your IEP meeting such as **peers, advocates, specialists**, and others!

Alternative Communication Etiquette



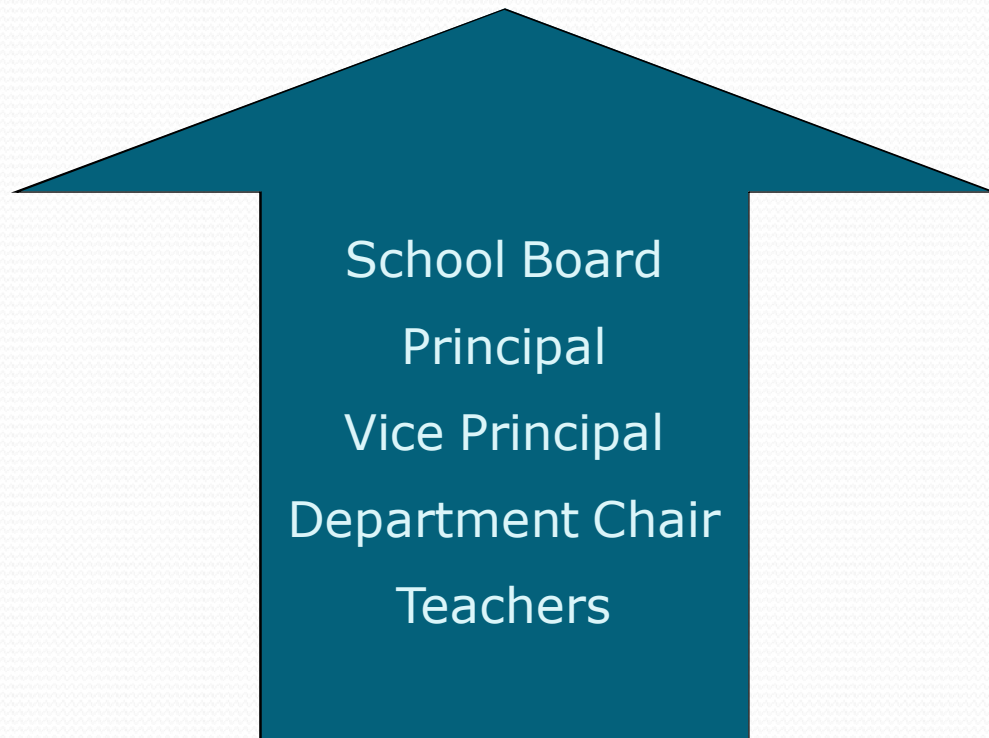
- When someone uses an **alternative communication system**, learn how to understand it and even sometimes respond back using it.
- Sometimes people with special needs will take **longer to respond** and the **answers given may be simpler**.
- When interacting or doing certain activities, one may have **to adapt what they are doing** to accommodate a person who may have movement differences or a different brain functioning level.

Disability Etiquette in School



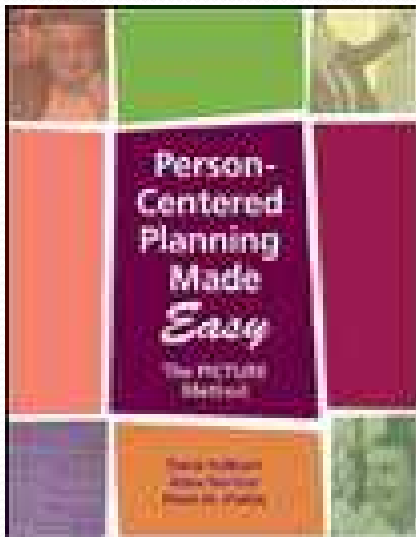
- How is your schools general knowledge of **disability etiquette** among the students and how well is it **practiced by students and staff** in the classrooms, hallways, cafeterias, etc?
- Are the **students who have special needs** well respected citizens in your school?

The Chain of Command



- There is a hierarchy in most schools in how the staff are organized and whom reports to whom
- When there is an issue with a policy that is not being resolved, sometimes it is best to go to the person higher up.

Persons with Disabilities can chose their path in Life



- Break down “Low Expectations Barriers”
- End the culture of poverty and unemployment among people with disabilities
- Allow persons with disabilities to choose their path in life