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# CES MEMBER NEWSLETTER October 2024

## The TAP Program: A Resource for ALL Teachers

As educators, we know that professional development is key to enhancing our teaching practices and supporting our students effectively. One valuable resource available to New Mexico teachers is the Technical Assistance Program (TAP), an initiative created to provide targeted professional development and support in critical areas of education, particularly for those working with students with disabilities.

TAP, now in its tenth year, was developed in 2015 in response to the growing need for special education support across the state. It is funded by the New Mexico Public School Insurance Authority (NMPSIA), which sought assistance from CES to create a program aimed at reducing special education litigation and improving outcomes for students with diverse learning needs.

Today, TAP is a versatile program that offers a range of resources and professional development opportunities for educators. TAP's services are designed to meet the varied needs of teachers, administrators, and support staff, particularly those in smaller districts where educators may wear multiple hats.

### TAP's Services and Topics

TAP employs about 15 consultants who are experts in fields like autism, behavior management, reading strategies, transition planning, and special education compliance, to name just a few. Over time, the program has expanded to cover more

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topics relevant to all educators, not just those working in special education. This includes subjects like co-teaching and inclusion, classroom management, social-emotional learning, and structured literacy.

One of TAP's core strengths is that it offers complimentary services to all public and charter schools in New Mexico. These services include:

- Virtual and in-person professional development workshops
- A webinar library with on-demand access to recorded presentations
- Regional workshops
- Phone and email consultations
- Monthly guidance articles covering special education compliance, reading strategies, and more

These resources are available at no cost to educators, making TAP an invaluable tool for those looking to enhance their skills and knowledge without adding to their district's budget.

## How to Access TAP Resources

TAP's resources are easily accessible through the CES website ([www.ces.org](http://www.ces.org)). Educators can scroll through the announcements section to find upcoming workshops, webinars, and archived resources. One of TAP's highlights is its Hot Topic on Demand Webinar Library, which is available 24/7 via [www.cestap.org](http://www.cestap.org), allowing educators to learn at their convenience. Whether it is a quick refresher or in-depth training, TAP offers a flexible approach to professional development.

## Additional Support for Educators

Beyond professional development workshops, TAP provides a series of monthly guidance articles, written by experts, covering key educational topics. These articles are a terrific way to stay informed about current trends and strategies in areas like special education compliance, structured literacy, and autism support. Archived articles are also available for educators to refer to when needed.

## Empowering Educators Across New Mexico

At its core, TAP's mission is to empower educators with the tools and knowledge they need to excel. Whether you are a general education teacher, special education director, or support staff member, TAP's resources are designed to provide practical strategies that can be applied in any classroom.

Moreover, TAP consultants stay up to date with changes in IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) and New Mexico Administration Code (NMAC) to ensure the guidance they provide is current and relevant. This is particularly important for teachers working with students with disabilities, where understanding the legal framework is crucial.

## Why TAP Matters

In a world where educators are often stretched thin, TAP offers a practical solution for professional growth. The program not only supports special education needs but also provides strategies that benefit all students. At the end of the day, good teaching is good teaching, whether you are working in a general education or special education setting.

To take advantage of these complimentary services or to learn more about customized in-person training options, visit [www.ces.org](http://www.ces.org) or reach out directly to TAP Director Loretta Garcia for guidance. TAP is here to support you, and with its wealth of resources, you will find valuable tools to enhance your teaching and better serve your students.

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by Jared Bomani



**TAP HOT TOPICS  
LIBRARY ON-DEMAND**

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (TAP) New MEXICO

**74 current recorded webinars (& growing)  
Available for viewing 24/7/365**

[www.cestap.org](http://www.cestap.org)

# Calendar of Events

- 10/1 NMRECA Fall Retreat
- 10/1 TAP: The Intersection of English Language Learners and Special Education Within Our Diverse Classrooms
- 10/2 National Custodial Worker Day
- 10/2 TAP: The Gifted Individual Education Plan
- 10/2 NMSBA Fall Region I Meeting - Zuni
- 10/3 TAP: Transition Planning 101 Developing Quality Transition Plans
- 10/8 TAP: Effective Data Collection in the Special Education Classroom
- 10/9 NMSBA Fall Region IV Meeting - Moriarty-Edgewood
- 10/14 Columbus Day; Indigenous People's Day
- 10/14 NMSBA Fall Region III Meeting - Cimarron
- 10/14-16 CES Facility Managers Training and Leadership Symposium
- 10/15 NMSBA Fall Region VII Meeting - T or C
- 10/15-17 NMSBO Bootcamp
- 10/16 TAP: Inclusion Part 1 Creating Opportunities for students with special needs to learn alongside their nondisabled peers
- 10/16-18 LESC Interim Meeting
- 10/17 TAP: ASD Toolbox Series Visual Schedules... Demystified!
- 10/21-22 NM PreK-12 Principal Annual Conference
- 10/22 TAP: Research-Based Approaches to Prevent Bullying Relevant & Timely Information for ALL Educators
- 10/22-24 LFC Interim Meeting
- 10/23 TAP: Overview of the IEP From A-Z
- 10/23-25 NMPPA Conference
- 10/24 TAP: Mindfulness Based Practices to Manage Stress & Frustration for Educators and Students
- 10/28-10/30 NM Infrastructure Finance Conference
- 10/29 CES Principal Learning Insititute
- 10/29 TAP: Supporting Students Mental Health Part 1 Identifying Needs and Positive Strategies
- 10/31 Halloween
- 10/31 TAP: Special Education Discipline Rules & Behavioral Interventions to Prevent the Need for Discipline

October						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

# Procurement News

**1) Contract Expirations:**

**2021-13 General Office, Classroom & Vocational Supplies, Equipment, Furniture** – expires 10/27/2024.

2021-13 was re-issued on 5/20/2024, as two RFPs:

- 1) Office/Classroom/Vocational Products, Services and Related
- 2) Furniture and Related.

**2) Contract Extensions:**

None

**3) Name Changes/Change of Ownership:**

None

**4) New Contract Awards:**

RFP	Awardee	Contract Number
<b>2024-27</b> <b>Office Products &amp; Related and Classroom &amp; Vocational Products and Related</b> <b>Category 1- Office Products</b>	Sewco, Inc., dba Officewise Staples Business Advantage Indoff, LLC (A Global Industrial Company) Spectrum Paper Co., Inc. School Specialty, LLC Sparks Office Supply, Inc. Lakeshore Learning Materials, LLC Sandia Paper	2024-27-C111-3567 2024-27-C112-ALL 2024-27-C113-6 2024-27-C114-ALL 2024-27-C115-ALL 2024-27-C116-ALL 2024-27-C117-ALL 2024-27-C118-ALL
<b>2024-27</b> <b>Office Products &amp; Related and Classroom and Vocational Products and Related</b> <b>Category 2 – Classroom and Vocational &amp; Related</b>	School Specialty, LLC Sewco, Inc., dba Officewise CLARO Consulting, LLC The OrganWise Guys, Incorporated Lakeshore Learning Materials, LLC Schmoop University, Inc.	2024-27-C211-ALL 2024-27-C212-3567 2024-27-C213-ALL 2024-27-C214-ALL 2024-27-C215-ALL 2024-27-C216-ALL
<b>2024-28</b> <b>Furniture Products and Services</b> <b>Category 1 - Business</b>	Beck Total Office Interiors Atmosphere Commercial Interiors School Equipment, Inc. Creative Interiors, Inc. Hertz Furniture Systems School Outfitters AK Sales & Consulting Inc. Kay-Twelve LLC Sandia Paper School Specialty LLC Blockhouse Company, Inc. Virco Inc. Spectrum Paper Co., Inc. Lakeshore Learning Materials, LLC Bluum USA, Inc. Meteor Education Sparks Office Supply, Inc. Sewco Inc dba: Officewise AmTab Manufacturing Corporation	2024-28-C111-ALL 2024-28-C112-ALL 2024-28-C113-ALL 2024-28-C114-ALL 2024-28-C115-ALL 2024-28-C116-ALL 2024-28-C117-ALL 2024-28-C118-ALL 2024-28-C119-ALL 2024-28-C1110-ALL 2024-28-C1111-ALL 2024-28-C1112-ALL 2024-28-C1113-ALL 2024-28-C1114-ALL 2024-28-C1115-ALL 2024-28-C1116-ALL 2024-28-C1117-ALL 2024-28-C1118-3567 2024-28-C1119-ALL

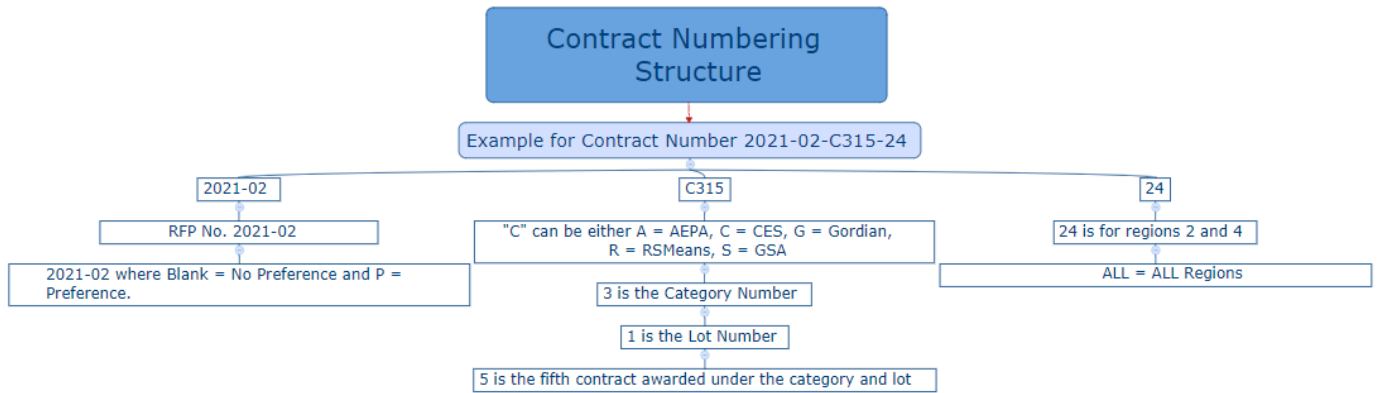
<p><b>2024-28</b>  <b>Furniture Products and Services</b>  <b>Category 2 - School</b></p>	<p>Beck Total Office Interiors  Atmosphere Commercial Interiors  Creative Interiors, Inc.  School Equipment, Inc.  School Outfitters  Hertz Furniture Systems  AK Sales &amp; Consulting, Inc.  School Specialty, LLC  Sandia Paper  Virco, Inc.  Blockhouse Company, Inc.  Kay-Twelve LLC  Spectrum Paper Co, Inc.  Meteor Education  Lakeshore Learning Materials, LLC  Bluum USA, Inc.  AmTab Manufacturing Corporation  Sparks Office Supply, Inc.  Sewco Inc. dba: Officewise</p>	<p>2024-28-C211-ALL  2024-28-C212-ALL  2024-28-C213-ALL  2024-28-C214-ALL  2024-28-C215-ALL  2024-28-C216-ALL  2024-28-C217-ALL  2024-28-C218-ALL  2024-28-C219-ALL  2024-28-C2110-ALL  2024-28-C2111-ALL  2024-28-C2112-ALL  2024-28-C2113-ALL  2024-28-C2114-ALL  2024-28-C2115-ALL  2024-28-C2116-ALL  2024-28-C2117-ALL  2024-28-C2118-ALL  2024-28-C2119-3567</p>
<p><b>2024-28</b>  <b>Furniture - Products and Services</b>  <b>Category 3</b></p>	<p>Beck Total Office Interiors  Creative Interiors, Inc.  Hertz Furniture Systems  Atmosphere Commercial Interiors  School Equipment, Inc.  School Outfitters  AK Sales &amp; Consulting Inc  School Specialty LLC  Sandia Paper  Kay-Twelve LLC  Blockhouse Company Inc  Virco Inc  Spectrum Paper Co., Inc  Lakeshore Learning Materials, LLC  Meteor Education  BLUUM USA, Inc.  Sparks Office Supply, Inc.  AmTab Manufacturing Corporation  Sewco Inc dba: Officewise</p>	<p>2024-28-C311-ALL  2024-28-C312-ALL  2024-28-C313-ALL  2024-28-C314-ALL  2024-28-C315-ALL  2024-28-C316-ALL  2024-28-C317-ALL  2024-28-C318-ALL  2024-28-C319-ALL  2024-28-C3110-ALL  2024-28-C3111-ALL  2024-28-C3112-ALL  2024-28-C3113-ALL  2024-28-C3114-ALL  2024-28-C3115-ALL  2024-28-C3116-ALL  2024-28-C3117-ALL  2024-28-C3118-ALL  2024-28-C3119-3567</p>
<p><b>2024-29</b>  <b>Fire, Security, Monitoring and Related</b></p>	<p>N.C.I.  Coyote Cabling, LLC  Southwest Specialty Systems, LLC  J &amp; G Electric Co., Inc.  A-Com Technologies, LLC  APIC Solutions, Inc.  Great Western Specialty Systems, Inc.  Audio Visual Integration Systems  Conti Energy Control, LLC  Voyageur Security, Inc.  Intraworks, Inc.  L.E.M. Systems  Iris Group Holdings, LLC.</p>	<p>2024-29-C111-ALL  2024-29-C112-ALL  2024-29-C113-ALL  2024-29-C114-567  2024-29-C115-ALL  2024-29-C116-ALL  2024-29-C117-ALL  2024-29-C118-ALL  2024-29-C119-ALL  2024-29-C1110-ALL  2024-29-C1111-ALL  2024-29-C1112-1234  2024-29-C1113-ALL</p>
<p><b>2024-30</b>  <b>Electronic Device Repair and Related</b></p>	<p>iRepairNM  Educational Device Services, LLC</p>	<p>2024-30-C111-ALL  2024-30-C112-ALL</p>
<p><b>2024-31</b>  <b>eCommerce / Online Retailer for</b>  <b>Public Sector</b></p>	<p>Amazon.com Services LLC  (Still in negotiations)</p>	<p>2024-31-C111-ALL</p>

**5) Current & Upcoming Solicitations:**

Work has begun toward the next round of AEPA bids. The legal ad was published on August 1, 2024. Award date is October 23, 2024. However, contracts won't go into effect until the Spring of 2025.

AEPA Bid 025 - A Athletic Field Lighting	AEPA Bid 025 - E Security Solutions
AEPA Bid 025 - B Hardwood & Synthetic Flooring	AEPA Bid 025 - F Cyber Security & Training
AEPA Bid 025 - C Copiers, MFPs, Printers	<b>AEPA Bid 025 - G Portable &amp; Modular Classrooms</b> → CES-led
AEPA Bid 025 - D Roofing & Related Services	AEPA Bid 025 - H Playgrounds & Equipment

**Composition of CES Contract Number**



**\*CES Procurement awards contracts, by default, without “Preference”. In very few cases, you may see a “P” for preference in the composition of the contract #.**

**Notes from Business Office**

With very few exceptions, all your POs will be uploaded to CES via the applicable contract-specific button found in the CES Bluebook. Even for “Direct Purchase” POs, our contracts with the vendors require that approval come from our office, as we check your PO and the vendor’s quote for possible issues of compliance that could otherwise cause your organization to have problems related to the purchase.


We've significantly improved our PO processing speed over the past few years. Now, most

traditional POs are processed within 2-3 days, and nearly all direct POs are processed within about one day.

We understand that even these short delays can be a slight inconvenience, but they allow us to provide thorough compliance checks and additional services that add real value—services you won't find with out-of-state cooperatives. We appreciate your patience and cooperation as we work to keep your procurement running smoothly. Thank you for your continued support!

# Order Corner

When using a “Gordian” or an “RS Means” contract to order construction services, you should expect your quote from the CES Vendor to be in the appropriate format. If it’s a “letterhead quote” from the Vendor, there will be a delay in processing. The Vendors have been informed, and you can help expedite the process by helping set this expectation for their quote.

SAMPLE GORDIAN QUOTE					
					
<b>Job Order Contract</b> <b>Price Proposal Summary - CSI</b>					
Date: June 27, 2022					
Contract Number:	2020-11N-G162-56				
Job Order Number:	220622-2-00				
Job Order Title:					
Contractor:					
Proposal Value:	\$431,761.12				
Proposal Name:					
Detailed Scope:	Will be cleaning surface "existing hot mix", applying seal coat on top of existing surface some striping as well.				
Category - 01 - General Requirements:	<b>\$27,537.72</b>				
Category - 32 - Exterior Improvements:	<b>\$404,223.40</b>				
<b>Proposal Total</b>	<b>\$431,761.12</b>				
<small>This proposal total represents the correct total for the proposal. Any discrepancy between line totals, sub-totals and the proposal total is due to rounding of the line totals and sub-totals.</small>					
The Percent of NPP on this Proposal: 0.00%					
-----					
<b>Job Order Contract</b> <b>Price Proposal Detail - CSI</b>					
Date: June 27, 2022					
Contract Number:	2020-11N-G162-56				
Job Order Number:	220622-2-00				
Job Order Title:					
Contractor:					
Proposal Value:	\$431,761.12				
Proposal Name:					
Adjustment Factor(s) Used:	1.0000 No Adjustment, 1.2750-NWH Reg State Wage Rates (Outside Tribal Land) > \$60,000				
Req#	CSI Number	Unit	UCM	Description	Line Total
<b>CSI - 01 - General Requirements</b>					
1	01 22 16 00 0004	EA		New Mexico Gross Payroll Tax - Varies by County	\$27,537.72
		Quantity	Unit Price	Factor	Total
		27,537.72	\$1.00	1.0000	\$27,537.72
<b>Subtotal for CSI - 01 - General Requirements:</b>					
<b>\$27,537.72</b>					
<b>CSI - 32 - Exterior Improvements</b>					
2	32 01 13 01 0014	BT		105,000 BT, Type III Sturry Seal Asphalt Coating, Per CoatSP (NCH, 25 to 30 lbs/5Y	\$387,686.12
		Quantity	Unit Price	Factor	Total
		88,868.00	\$34.52	1.2750	\$387,686.12
3	32 17 23 13 0006	LF		Single 4" Wide Solid Line, Painted Pavement Striping For Parking Areas	\$10,627.28
		Quantity	Unit Price	Factor	Total
		18,800.00	\$0.56	1.2750	\$10,627.28
<b>Subtotal for CSI - 32 - Exterior Improvements:</b>					
<b>\$404,223.40</b>					
<b>Proposal Total</b>					
<b>\$431,761.12</b>					

SAMPLE JOC-CORE (RS MEANS) QUOTE						
<b>GORDIAN</b> Job Order Contract Core						
Price Proposal - Cooperative Educational Services - JOC General Contract 2021 <small>This proposal was prepared exclusively for Cooperative Educational Services</small>						
<small>Job Number: 0102            Job Name: CoreWork            Date Created: 07/19/2022            User Created: 07/19/2022            Proposal Value: \$14,805.61            Construction Procurement Calendar: Year 2022 Quarter 3 - LMS CRUCES, NM</small>						
<b>Summary By Division</b>						
Division					Line Total	
01 General Requirements					\$919.61	
10 Specialties					\$6,812.52	
30 Earthwork					\$2,317.92	
32 Exterior Improvements					\$4,755.66	
<b>Non-Proprietary Items</b>						
Item Name	Division	QTY	Unit Price	Factor	Line Total	
Tax	01 General Requirements	1.000000	\$919.61	1.0000	\$919.61	
Demolition of Lineback Curbs	10 Specialties	12.000000	\$57.60	1.2075	\$8,476.25	
Installation of Lineback Curbs	10 Specialties	12.000000	\$35.88	1.2075	\$5,336.27	
<b>Detailed Price Proposal</b>						
Sl#	Division	Line Item #	Unit	UCM	Description	Line Total
1	General Requirements	Non-Proprietary	EA	Tax		\$919.61
			QTY	Unit Price	Factor	Total
			1.000000	\$919.61	1.0000	\$919.61
2	Specialties	Non-Proprietary	EA	Demolition of Lineback Curbs		\$5,476.25

For assistance with RS Means orders and understanding construction procurement through CES, please contact

- Regions 1, 2, 3, & 4  
 John King  
 CES Construction Analyst  
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 505.344.5470 x150
- Regions 5, 6, 7, & 8  
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 505.344.5470 x154

# Construction Corner

## TRAINING

- CES provides quarterly member training on the use of JOC. We truly appreciate the time taken by those who have been attending! The better we understand how the process works, and the more opportunities we have for Q&A conversations, the easier the process becomes for all involved.

- New and updated information will be presented in upcoming trainings. Be “in the know!” Training will be in person at the CES offices and streaming via ZOOM. Emails will be sent out closer to the dates with the starting time and sign-in link.
  - **Wednesday, November 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

## ASSISTANCE

- **John King**, Construction Analyst  
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## Compliance Corner

October 2024

By Cindy Soo Hoo, TAP Consultant

### The IEP: Both a Product and a Process- Tips for Making It a Success! (Part 1 of 3-Preparing for the IEP)

Over the last two years, I've written articles about various components of the IEP (Individualized Education Program) and the rules and regulations that specify what school districts must follow to be in compliance. The articles focus on the contents of the IEP, namely what must be included according to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the New Mexico Administrative Code (NMAC) and other sources that govern the field of special education.

Knowing the IEP is both a product and a process, perhaps it's time to discuss the importance of the factors to consider regarding the meeting itself. Work needs to be done prior to the meeting to

assist parents and staff in conducting an IEP that allows for meaningful and informed discussions among all IEP Team members. Doing your homework and devoting time and energy to federal and state requirements as well as addressing any anticipated concerns can stave off many surprises and issues.

Whether you are prepping for the meeting, conducting the meeting, or following up with tasks after the meeting, it's important to think about the people involved, the processes to be implemented and any problems that may arise. There are important tasks to consider with each phase of the process before the IEP has been developed as well as after the IEP has concluded.

#### People:

IDEA specifies role groups that must be represented at IEPs. Parents are required members. They are invited to discuss their child's needs, concerns, and ways in which to enhance their child's education. Their input is invaluable in helping others learn more about their child from various perspectives. This can allow members of the IEP Team to make informed decisions



regarding the services and supports the student may need.

At times, however, some parents may be hesitant to offer their views, ideas, and opinions in an IEP meeting. For some parents, the process is new. Others may feel overwhelmed by the document, the special education terminology or the number of participants represented by the Local Education Agency (LEA). As a result, school personnel may find it difficult to obtain valuable information from the parent.

For those parents who may have difficulty expressing their thoughts and concerns during a meeting, the New Mexico Public Education Department (NM PED) has a parent questionnaire that could be given to a parent ahead of an IEP. This form gathers much needed information from the parent while allowing them to gather their thoughts to later be considered and discussed during the meeting. Once the parent has completed the form, it can be provided to the school to be inputted into the IEP document.

[\(See Appendix A: Parent Report Questionnaire, Developing Quality IEPs. Technical Assistance Manual, 2011, pp. 81-82\).](#)

For those parents who are new to the process or for those parents who may need more information about the process, the NM PED also provides a guidance document that contains information to help understand what an IEP is, who to expect to be involved in developing the IEP, what they can do to prepare for the IEP and what to expect both during and after the IEP. Sharing this document with each child's parent(s) will not only provide parents with important information involving the IEP process but also helps reinforce your commitment to involving them as crucial members of the IEP Team and valuing their input.

[\(See Appendix A: Parents' Guide to an IEP, Developing Quality IEPs. Technical Assistance Manual, 2011, pp. 83-84\).](#)

In addition to ensuring parents have the opportunity to attend, school personnel need to ensure the required and other appropriate members

are able to participate as well. IDEA 34~~CFR~~ §300.321(a)(b) specifies who must be in attendance. For more information, please refer to the March 2022 edition and the April 2022 edition of Compliance Corner regarding the requirements, including instances when required members cannot attend, in whole or in part. However, aside from the requirements under the IDEA, school personnel attending the IEP, especially the facilitator, should be familiar with the IEP process, the IEP document and many of the requirements under federal and state regulations. The designee, usually the facilitator, in addition to being able to provide or supervise services to students in special education, be knowledgeable about the general education curriculum and be knowledgeable about the availability of resources should also possess other characteristics and skills that would prove beneficial in the special education process. These characteristics will be discussed in Part 2 of the November edition of Compliance Corner when we discuss facilitating the IEP meeting.

Consideration needs to be given to the logistics of the room and equipment. Will the IEP meeting be held in an area that would allow for the confidentiality of the information or will it be located in an area that will experience a lot of foot traffic? It's important to ensure that conversations will not be overheard by other students and staff. Also important is ensuring that all equipment, such as the projector and printer, are working and documents such as the parent's procedural safeguards are available. Finally, it's important to consider the room arrangement. Will everyone be able to see one another? Will the parent be seated in such a way to avoid creating an "Us vs. Them" atmosphere? Having the parent seated alongside staff members will create a welcoming environment and make the parent feel a part of the team.

#### **Process:**

Prior to the IEP, school personnel must provide the parent with a Prior Written Notice (PWN) of IEP Meeting. This is a formal invitation for the parent to attend. This invitation should inform parents of the date, time, and location of the meeting as well as the purpose of the meeting and who will be in attendance. The IDEA specifically states that this

meeting must be at a mutually agreeable time and place. It should also occur early enough so that parents have an opportunity to prepare for the meeting. Parents may need this time to invite someone to attend who is knowledgeable about their child or possibly can provide guidance regarding the IEP process. This perhaps may not occur on a day of the week when schools normally set aside time for IEPs. School personnel need to be flexible in working with parents when scheduling an IEP that will work for both the parent and school staff. The IDEA requires the following when providing a PWN of the meeting:

34 CFR §300.322(b):

- 1) *The notice required under [paragraph \(a\)\(1\)](#) of this section must—*
  - i) *Indicate the purpose, time, and location of the meeting and who will be in attendance; and*
  - ii) *Inform the parents of the provisions in [§ 300.321\(a\)\(6\)](#) and [\(c\)](#) (relating to the participation of other individuals on the IEP Team who have knowledge or special expertise about the child), and [§ 300.321\(f\)](#) (relating to the participation of the Part C service coordinator or other representatives of the Part C system at the initial IEP Team meeting for a child previously served under Part C of the Act).*
- (2) *For a child with a disability beginning not later than the first IEP to be in effect when the child turns 16, ~~Age 16 in the State of New Mexico~~ or younger if determined appropriate by the IEP Team, the notice also must—*
  - (i) *Indicate—*
    - (A) *That a purpose of the meeting will be the consideration of the postsecondary goals and transition services for the child, in accordance with [§ 300.320\(b\)](#); and*
    - (B) *That the agency will invite the student; and*
  - ii) *Identify any other agency that will be*

*invited to send a representative.*

Should there be a need for interpretation services for the parent due to the inability in understanding English or to hear spoken language, school personnel must secure an interpreter to ensure the parent has the opportunity to understand the provisions of the meeting. Failing to do so could prevent the parent from participating meaningfully and could result in a denial of a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to the child.

### **Problem:**

Prior to the meeting, it would be prudent to review the IEP to ensure that those who provide services for the student have had the opportunity to input their information. This would allow any last-minute additions to take place so as not to delay the meeting. Some school districts, as a matter of practice, provide the parent with a draft copy of the IEP ahead of the meeting. This practice would require school personnel to prepare the document sooner so that parents are familiar with the contents of the IEP prior to the meeting.

It's important to investigate whether there is any unfinished business that needs to be taken care of prior to the meeting. Are there custodial issues that might make the meeting more contentious with both parents attending? If so, what plans are in place to address this? Did an evaluation take place for which information needs to be reviewed? It is imperative to make sure any loose ends are taken care of prior to the meeting.

### **Conclusion:**

It is important to think about the IEP as not just the document to be filled out indicating what services and supports the student is to receive but to also think about it as a process. The composition of the IEP Team will be diverse as will the issues that need to be considered. The better prepared participants are, the smoother the IEP meeting will flow. Join me for next month's edition when we will discuss tricks of the trade when it comes to facilitating the meeting.

*The information included herein is not intended to provide legal advice. Should you need legal advice*

*or guidance on any issue involving special education, please contact the appropriate person for your district.*

## TAP Guidance Article October 2024



### **DEAR MS. M**

**Gifted Education Questions Answered**

Dear Ms. M,

**Why is it important for gifted students to interact and learn with their intellectual peers? Isn't this inequitable?**

In every classroom, students have different strengths and learning needs. Some students grasp concepts quickly and are ready for more challenging work. These high-achieving and gifted students benefit significantly from a method called cluster grouping. This approach allows teachers to group gifted students together, which provides them with an environment where they can thrive and achieve their full potential.

Cluster grouping involves placing a small group of gifted students in the same classroom. This setup creates a unique learning environment where teachers can tailor lessons to meet the specific needs of these students. When gifted students learn together, they can engage in deeper discussions, explore advanced topics, and collaborate on projects. This type of interaction not only enhances their understanding but also encourages creativity and critical thinking.

Quality education is essential for all students, and it becomes even more important for those who are gifted. When gifted students are clustered together,

they receive appropriate challenges that keep them engaged and excited about learning. This approach allows teachers to design lessons that are both rigorous and relevant, which helps gifted students develop advanced skills that are not always accessible in a mixed-ability classroom.

Moreover, it is inequitable to prevent gifted students from receiving an appropriately challenging education simply because other students may need additional support. Every student deserves the opportunity to learn at their level. When gifted students are not challenged, they may become bored, disengaged, or underperform. This not only affects their learning but can also impact their self-esteem and motivation.

By using cluster grouping, educators can ensure that all students receive the education they deserve. Gifted students can pursue their interests and passions while still being supportive of their peers who may need more time to master certain skills. This balance creates a positive and inclusive classroom environment where everyone can learn from each other.

In conclusion, cluster grouping is an effective strategy for meeting the needs of high-achieving and gifted students. It provides them with the opportunity to engage with challenging material, collaborate with like-minded peers, and develop critical thinking skills. By embracing this approach, educators can create a more equitable and effective learning experience for all students.

Kate Morris, MEd Gifted Education

*Kate Morris is CES's Gifted TAP Consultant. She has been in gifted education for 10 years as a gifted educator and gifted instructional coach. She works for Central Consolidated School District in northwest New Mexico serving gifted and talented students in CCSD's Gifted, Talented, and Creative Program.*



## **The Reading Room: Reading & the Brain October 2024**

We are going to explore the fascinating and complex processes of what our brain does when we read. For skilled readers, it seems simple. We look at the text, “read” it and understand what it’s telling us, all this happening in a nanosecond. If any of you have ever worked with struggling readers, you have experienced the heart-breaking challenges these individuals face every day. These processes in the brain are anything but simple and anything but instantaneous. I must admit that I am totally captivated by what our brains can do, particularly when it comes to reading. In this article, we will be looking at what areas of the brain are involved in reading and how they integrate with one another. The evidence is very strong and overwhelmingly clear. Because of all this brain research, we know what to do to help our struggling readers learn to read.

We know so much about reading and the brain because of the amount of research conducted in the last 30 plus years using fMRIs (Functional MRIs) that show us in real time, the areas of the brain that are activated during the task of reading. One of the pioneers in this type of brain research is Dr. Sally Shaywitz who is a professor at Yale Medical School. She has written over three hundred and fifty scientific articles and chapters as well as a very well received book, “Overcoming Dyslexia.” She and her husband, Dr. Bennett Shaywitz co-founded *The Yale Center for Dyslexia and Creativity*. Her early fMRI research compared the

brain scans of skilled readers to those of struggling readers, and the findings were quite remarkable. What they showed was that skilled readers use several areas in the left hemisphere of the brain that work in conjunction with each other using neural pathways called white matter tracts. In contrast, the struggling readers' brains showed much less activation in those areas as well as weaker white matter tracts, thus causing them to be much less efficient and unable to connect to these essential areas. Dr. Shaywitz found that the primary underlying difficulty was weakness in the phonological processor where we hear and manipulate sounds and, in many cases, orthographic mapping.

Keep in mind that our brains are not hardwired to read. We are not born knowing how to read. We are hardwired to speak and understand spoken language. Reading the written word is a relatively new skill that has developed in the human brain. The Sumerian Language is the oldest written language in existence. First attested about 3100 BCE in southern Mesopotamia, it flourished during the 3rd millennium BCE. Modern Humans have been around about 200,000 years and our early ancestors, about six million years. Our brains had to adapt to learn this new skill.

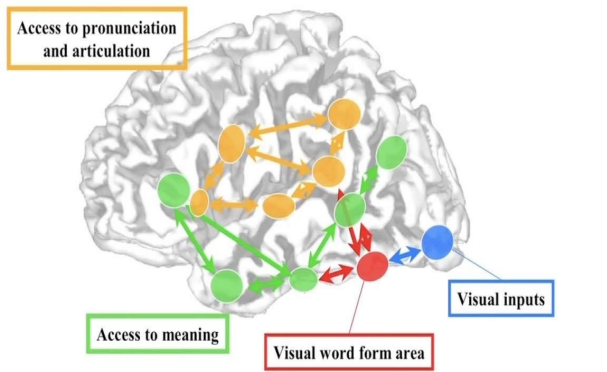
Enter French neuroscientist, Dr. Stanislas Dehaene, who is the director of *NeuroSpin*, a research center in France which now has the largest fMRI magnet in the world. His work has been centered around how the brain reads as well as how the brain learns, and he has authored books on both subjects.

Dr. Dehaene explains that we use the same areas in the left hemisphere of the brain, that we use to understand spoken language and to recognize faces, to read the written word. He calls this neuro recycling. We access words and text visually, but from there, that input travels to the brain’s “letterbox” or visual word form area. This area is called the fusiform gyrus (gyrus refers to a ridge or fold between two clefts of cerebral matter). This is where orthographic mapping occurs and where we map familiar sound strings onto the letters and words. Once the words are mapped, they

will be stored permanently. There is another part of the brain called the primary auditory cortex, which is where we process auditory input, including sounds. The angular supramarginal gyri helps us to manipulate the sounds. Meaning is attached in the inferior frontal gyrus. All of these processes work together instantaneously so that we are not conscious of them. The image below is of the left hemisphere of the brain.

### The brain architecture for reading

Learning to read consists in:  
- creating an **invariant visual representation** of written words  
- **connecting it** to brain areas coding for **speech sounds and meaning**



<https://wordsmart.app/the-brains-letterbox/>

As I mentioned before, all these areas are connected by white matter tracts. Remember that in struggling readers all these areas do not activate, and the white matter tracts are not as strong as in skilled readers. The good news is that with proper instruction, brain activation can be changed, and neural pathways can be strengthened.

The overwhelming majority of top-notch world researchers agree that Structured Literacy, based on the Science of Reading, is the way to teach students who struggle with reading, students

who have been diagnosed with Dyslexia, and most would also agree that this kind of instruction benefits all students.

### Resources:

Eyes on Reading: Dr. Stanislas Dehaene with Emily Hanford:  
[https://youtu.be/\\_4NwATw36i8?si=yFHsC\\_lNhBFUAZ5N](https://youtu.be/_4NwATw36i8?si=yFHsC_lNhBFUAZ5N)

How We Learn to Read:  
<https://youtu.be/LhILoStzOTM?si=KUK09rRjgOMjZXEo>

<https://www.apmreports.org/episode/2023/03/30/rerelease-at-a-loss-for-words>

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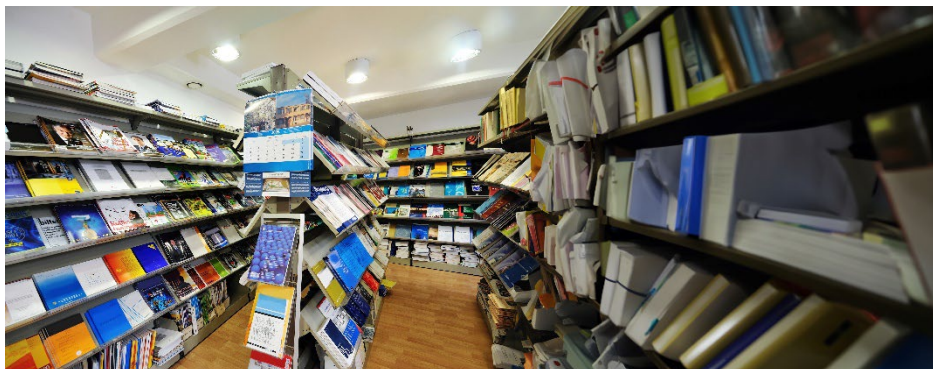
Gaab, Nadine. Harvard Medical School:  
<https://www.gse.harvard.edu/directory/faculty/nadine-gaab>

Planet Word:  
<https://planetwordmuseum.org/learning-resources/>

Emily Hanford - "Hard Words:"  
<https://www.apmreports.org/episode/2018/09/10/hard-words-why-american-kids-arent-being-taught-to-read>

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# Teacher Toolbox



## Teacher Toolbox – October 2024

By Margaret Wood, Speech-Language  
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[mwood@ces.org](mailto:mwood@ces.org)



### *Transition Tips: Strategic Supports for Smoother Switching*

Let's be honest... transitions are TOUGH! From the moment we wake up until we lay down our heads at night, we all are faced with countless transitions. Some transitions require switching thoughts between tasks, while others involve switching the place or even the people within the environment. One may wonder, how many transitions do students encounter in their average day... 10? 20? 50? More likely, the frequency numbers in the hundreds. In the school setting, students transition from the school bus to the playground – to lining up with their class – to entering the school hallway – to their classroom to put their backpack away – to sitting in a chair and starting on their morning assignment – all within the span of 30 minutes and each of those contexts involving a completely different set of expectations. The length of time transitioning in school also contributes to the transition challenges. [Differentiatedteaching.com](http://Differentiatedteaching.com) reports that, “This means that from the moment students enter the middle or high school classroom until they leave, at least a third of their instructional time is spent on moving from place to place within

the classroom or between rooms. This means that out of an hour-long class period only 40 minutes are left for learning activities.”

Transitions disrupt all staff and students so often that it has become an expected part of classroom culture. However, some of our students with neurodevelopmental conditions such as autism spectrum disorder, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, or specific learning disabilities often experience extreme reactions to moments of transition that others accept as a typical part of their day. Their “Fight-Flight-Freeze” center frequently becomes activated when faced with a transition that they perceive as unexpected or challenging, triggering the dreaded escalation through the crisis cycle resulting in derailed moments, hours, or at times, even the entire day. One autistic individual explains, *“Switching between tasks requires a change in thinking; a change in established routine and the risk of a new uncertain activity, especially when a change is imposed upon me.”*

Strategic steps to smoother switching between tasks, environments, and people all begin with the same foundations and involve creating your own unique classroom culture, such as:

1. **Referring to the posted classroom schedule:** The implementation and consistent use of a variety of schedules are a crucial part of managing transitions throughout the school day. Starting the day by reviewing the whole class schedule of what is expected to happen throughout the day is a worthwhile investment in preparing students. Individual student-specific schedules are an evidence-based practice for autistic students and frequently can prevent anxiety and unexpected behavior. Students with various needs benefit from schedules that incorporate more specific information than what is usually included in a whole class schedule. See below for information regarding the **NEW *Autism#Toolbox#Series*** live-virtual complimentary TAP professional development workshop entitled ***Visual#Schedules#DEMYSTIFIED#Dependable#Directions#Create#Calmer#Classrooms*** for a full-day of learning to create and

implement a wide variety of visual schedules in all classroom contexts for all ages and developmental levels!

- 2. Gaining students' attention:** The purpose of this step is to get students to stop what they are doing and attend to the person about to give them directions. Educators may consider sounding a gentle chime, a hand gesture such as raising one hand above your head, and/or using a call and response, like "Class-Yes" used in Whole Brain Teaching. The key is teaching the meaning behind the attention signal and what response you are expecting from the students (e.g., stop what you are doing and look at the speaker to get their next directions).
- 3. Preparing the students for endings and beginnings:** This simple step involves giving students a specific and direct statement about what activity is ending and when, followed by which activity is about to happen next. For example, the "ending statement" could sound like "Math will be ending in five minutes." However, this language is sometimes too abstract for some individuals. Multi-sensory cues are necessary for many of our students, such as pointing to a projected timer for those students who need visual supports. The "starting statement" would then follow, such as "Reading buddies will be next."
- 4. Give the direction using simple and direct language and signal the transition:** After regaining the students' attention as needed, give the next set of instructions, such as "When I say go, I want you to quietly put your math notebooks away, get your reading book, and sit beside your reading buddy. Go." Using the visual timer during this moment of task-switching may again be helpful for those who need visual support to help them maintain attention to this transition. Depending on the complexity of the directions, some students may need staff

supervision and/or a peer buddy (i.e., additional verbal and visual prompting) to help them follow the directions. Monitor and redirect students as needed, while encouraging calm behaviors.

A variety of additional strategies are often necessary for many of our students who process information differently, so consider implementing a few of the following ideas to the above transition routine:

- 1. Visual Timer and Countdowns:** A timer that shows in a distinct color how much time is left. When the color disappears, the student needs to transition to the next activity. A visual countdown may be used by providing students with a list of tasks that are removed until they are gone, which automatically signals the time to transition. Check out [www.online-stopwatch.com](http://www.online-stopwatch.com) for many useful visual timer and countdown options.
- 2. Student-specific or Task-specific Visual Schedule:** An actual schedule so the student can see the sequence of activities that will occur for a given period (e.g., the morning), enabling them to transition better to the next activity or environmental setting. Here's another shameless plug for the NEW and COMPLIMENTARY **Autism Toolbox Series** workshop on Thursday October 17<sup>th</sup>! Go to <https://www.ces.org/september-2024-25-technical-assistance-program-updates-and-offerings/> to register for *Visual# Schedules#DEMYSTIFIED#Dependable# Directions#Create#Calmer#Classrooms* for a full-day of learning to create and implement a wide variety of visual schedules in all classroom contexts for all ages and developmental levels!
- 3. Use of Objects, Photos, Icons, or Words:** An actual object or a photo of an image or words the student can hold that explains the transition or provides comfort during anxiety-provoking transitions to a different location. For example, some students experience anxiety as they anticipate the transition to the noisy cafeteria, which can

be decreased by providing a small comfort item to hold or keep in their pocket. Other students may choose to use noise cancelling headphones.

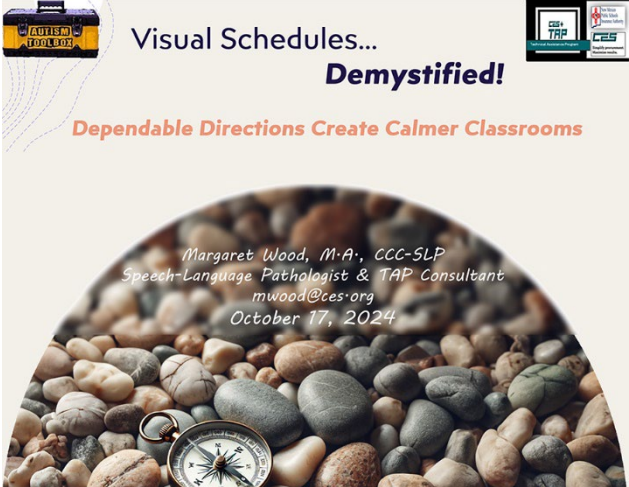
4. **Use of Transition Cards:** The card represents what the student will be transitioning to next, with a word spelled out or an image of the transition displayed for the student to refer to. These are very helpful to concrete learners.
5. **Finished or “All-done” Container/Box:** It is beneficial to have a container in a certain location where the students can put their finished work and materials before transitioning to the next location or activity. Teaching students to put away materials after completing an activity may also function as a natural queue in which one activity ends and another begins.

As our dear friend, Mr. Rogers once said, *“Transitions are almost always signs of growth, but they can bring feelings of loss. To get somewhere new, we may have to leave somewhere else behind.”* (<https://www.facebook.com/FredRogersProductions>) Autistic students have the tendency to become very engaged in the activity that they are doing and feel a sense of loss when they must “leave it behind” before they are finished. It can be hard to “switch gears,” especially when they thrive on consistency and routine. When autistic children are

forced to switch gears without support, it can cause extreme stress and anxiety, resulting in loss of control and challenging behaviors. Fostering smoother transitions requires consistent and patient application of strategic supports. This wise investment of your time and energy is sure to produce smoother transitions and a calmer classroom environment for all!

### Resources and References

- <https://www.differentiatedteaching.com/>
- <https://inclusiveteach.com/2017/07/29/the-ultimate-guide-to-transitions/>
- [www.online-stopwatch.com](http://www.online-stopwatch.com)
- <https://wholebrainteaching.com/wbt-basics-2/>



**Visual Schedules...  
Demystified!**

*Dependable Directions Create Calmer Classrooms*

Margaret Wood, M.A., CCC-SLP  
Speech-Language Pathologist & TAP Consultant  
mwood@ces.org  
October 17, 2024

## New CES Employees



Hi! My name is Angela Valadez. I was the Chief Procurement Officer/Accounting Specialist for the City of Rio Communities, for 5 years. Prior to that I was a banker for 19 years. I was born and raised in Southern California, but I have been in New Mexico for 18 years. I call this beautiful place my home. I love to play golf, spend time with my 7 children, 4 grandchildren and my wonderful husband of 25 years. I am grateful to be here and am excited to be joining the CES team!





Greetings from Jeanne Rayburn. I look forward to being the receptionist at CES. I have decades of experience with public entities involving finance, procurement, and contracting. Raised in South Dakota, I stopped in Albuquerque for the Balloon Fiesta while heading to California and never left. I enjoy spending time with my family and friends, game nights, camping, and planning trips to visit our large extended family spread across the US. I'm excited to be part of the CES team.



Hello, I am Mohamed Al-Hussaini and have recently joined CES as a Procurement & Contracts Specialist. I have extensive experience in management, with over 15 years in procurement and contract management, alongside many years dedicated to strategic planning. I hold a Doctorate in Business Administration with a focus on Multi-cultural Leadership, an MBA in Public Administration, and a Bachelor's in Computer Science. I am excited to leverage this broad background and education to contribute to CES and work closely with the team.

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- Certified Orientation Mobility Specialist/TVI – Region 4
- Diagnostician (bilingual) – Region 2
- Occupational Therapist – Regions 2, 3, 4
- Physical Therapist – Regions 1, 2, 3, 4, 8
- Recreational Therapist – Region 4
- Registered Nurse – Region 4
- School Psychologist – Regions 4, 7
- Social Worker – Regions 1, 2, 4, 7
- Speech/Language Pathologist – Regions 1, 2, 3, 4, 7

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Watch for CES job postings on [www.indeed.com](http://www.indeed.com).

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Philip B. Warrick, EdD, is an author and presenter and has worked globally in the areas of school leadership, instruction, collaborative practices, and grading.



Jan K. Hoegh has been an educator for over 35 years. She has served as a classroom teacher, building leader, professional development specialist, high school assistant principal, curriculum coordinator, and assistant director of statewide assessment.

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