

## What if My Child Has a Disability? Parent Guide #2

### **A kindergarten class should support ALL children.**

- For children with special needs, there is a federal law called the "Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act" (**IDEA**).
- There is also a Michigan law called "Michigan Administrative Rules for Special Education."
- Each of these laws is about the rights of children with special needs and their families.
- For more information on IDEA, please visit the following website: <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/osep/index.html>.

### **IDEA says that all children with special needs should be included in regular classes as much as possible. For more information on including all children in the classroom, please visit the following website:**

<http://www.nichcy.org/Trainpkg/traintxt/8txt.htm>.

- School districts are required to teach children with special needs in regular classes whenever possible. Sometimes supports and services are needed for this to happen.
- When ALL children learn together, they ALL benefit.
- A child with a special need may not need to work at the same grade level as the other children. He/she may not need to behave like the other children in class either.

### ***All services, supports, and goals for a child receiving special education services are developed by the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team.***

- IDEA requires that the IEP tell what supports, programs and services are provided to the child.
- The IEP will also include the amount of time the child will spend in the regular class.
- Parents are members of the IEP team.

### ***During spring before your child's kindergarten school year, you begin to get ready.***

- A team should be created that includes parents and all the adults and teachers who are in your child's life.
- The team should focus on **the strengths and needs** of your child.
- The team should set goals and timelines for each service and support.

### ***Other questions you may have:***

- Does the staff need any training to work with your child?
- What is the rule on parent visits?
- Does your child take any pills or medicine?
- Does your child need specialized equipment?
- Do you have any concerns?
- Does your child have any movement needs?

- Does your child have a special diet?
- Do you have any social concerns?
- Does your child need specialized transportation?
- Does your child need assistive technology?
- What do you want from parent-teacher communication?
- Does your child need changes to the classroom itself or the teaching material?

Parents should receive a brochure about their rights. This will explain how your child's transition should be handled by your school district. You may request a parent handbook from your school.