

**FINAL CONTENT OF**

**GUIDEBOOK FOR PARENTS OF**  
**CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

**DISTRICT 39**  
**COMMUNITY REVIEW COMMITTEE**

**June 2001**

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Welcome to Wilmette Public School District 39 Special Services Guidebook.

This Guidebook has been prepared for the parents (both new and existing residents) of District 39 to orient you to the Special Services offered by District 39. Understanding that navigating through a maze of interlocking programs and overlapping services can be stressful, this Guidebook has been written to help ease your frustration.

This Guidebook has been prepared by a subcommittee of the 2000–2001 District 39 Community Review Committee (CRC). Specifically, the purpose of this Guidebook is to provide you with:

1. Answers to Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ"s) about District 39 Special Services
2. Description District 39 Special Services programs
3. A glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms
4. A brief introduction to the Federal and State laws that impact Special Services

Members of the CRC subcommittee met with parents, staff and administrators of District 39 to compile this Guidebook. The subcommittee would like to extend a special thank you to Dr. Ray Lechner and his staff for providing many of the documents contained in the Guidebook.

For more information about District 39, please visit the web site at <http://www.wilmette.nttc.org>.



## **Student Services Abbreviations**

**ADA - Americans with Disabilities Act**

**ADD/ADHD - Attention Deficit Disorder/ Attention Deficit with Hyperactivity Disorder**

The student with ADD/ADHD is one who seems to have average or better ability, health, vision, hearing, and intelligence, but is still unable to learn things as easily or quickly as most other students his age. The concern is due to a severe inability to stay on task or pay attention (distractibility) and/or inability to control behavioral impulses (hyperactivity).

**APE - Adaptive Physical Education**

Physical Education adapted to meet the unique physical needs and challenges of students with identified disabilities and medical conditions that prohibit their ability to fully benefit from a general physical education curriculum.

**AT - Assistive Technology**

A related service providing a device or service that helps a student function in the educational setting. These services may include evaluating the student's needs, providing a device and/or service to match student needs, and training for the student, family, and school personnel in using the selected device. An Assistive Technology device can be provided as special education services, related services or as supplementary aids and services to the general education program. An example of an Assistive Technology device would be a Touch Talker. This device verbally says the words of pictures that a non-verbal student would touch from an array of pictures on a computer.

**AUT - Autism**

A developmental disability significantly effecting verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction, generally evident before age three, that adversely affects a child's educational performance. Other characteristics often associated with autism are engagement in repetitive activities and stereotyped movements, daily routines, and unusual responses to sensory experiences. The term does not apply if a child's educational performance is adversely affected primarily because the child has an emotional disturbance.

**BMP - Behavior Management Plan**

A comprehensive plan designed to target and change specific inappropriate behaviors that interfere with a student's ability to benefit from his/her educational program, develop and maintain relationships.

**CAPD - Central Auditory Processing Disorder**

CAPD is an auditory processing disorder characterized by difficulty in attending to, discriminating, recognizing, and understanding what is heard, even though hearing and intelligence are normal. CAPD creates difficulty in developing speech and language skills. These children are often thought to have hearing problems. Treatment includes speech and language therapy, modifications in the environment, and computerized therapy.

**CP - Cerebral Palsy**

A general term for a group of permanently disabling symptoms caused by damage to the developing brain before, during, or after birth. People with cerebral palsy may have poor balance, difficulty in walking, movement, speech impairment, cognitive limitations.

**CSE - Case Study Evaluation**

A method of collecting information about a student's special learning needs, strengths, and interests. An assessment may include giving individual tests, observing the student, looking at records, and talking with the student and/or his parents. Assessment is an ongoing process by which qualified professionals, together with families, through standardized tests and observation, look at all areas of a child's development: motor, language intellectual, academic achievement, social/emotional, and adaptive/self-help skills. Eligibility for

special education services is determined through the evaluation process, and an individualized education plan developed as appropriate.

**DD - Developmental Delay**

A term used to describe infants and toddlers who need early intervention services because they: (1) are experiencing developmental delays, such that the child has not achieved skills and abilities which are expected to be mastered by children of the same age. Delays can be in any of the following areas: physical, social, emotional, intellectual, speech and language, and/or adaptive development (self-help skills), *or* (2) have a diagnosed physical or mental condition which has a high probability of resulting in a developmental delay. Children may only be eligible for special education services under this criterion through the age of five years. *Caution:* The term developmental delay may be used loosely and is occasionally used incorrectly, giving the false impression that the student will “catch-up.”

**ECE - Early Childhood Education**

Educational programs and support services available to meet the needs of the young learner from three through five years of age. Students must be eligible to receive these supportive services which are to be delivered in the least restrictive manner. Students become eligible for Early Childhood through the Case Study Evaluation process.

**ED - Emotional Disturbance**

A condition exhibiting one or more of the following characteristics over an extended period of time and to a marked degree that adversely affects a child's educational performance:

- An inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors;
- An inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers;
- Inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances.
- General pervasive mood of anxiety or depression

**ESL - English as a Second Language**

**ESY - Extended School Year**

Special education and related services that are provided to a child with a disability beyond the typical school year, in accordance with the child's Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Students are eligible for ESY services when the educational team determines that the child's educational skills will significantly regress over the summer months if no educational program is provided.

**FAPE - Free Appropriate Public Education**

Federal law mandates that students have the right to a free, appropriate public education, including special education and related services. The public school provides these services at the preschool, elementary, and secondary levels at no cost to parents. Students with visual and hearing impairments may receive services from birth. The programs and services must follow goals and objectives stated in the student's IEP.

**HI - Hearing Impairment**

An impairment in hearing, whether permanent or fluctuating, that adversely affects a child's educational performance, but that is not included under the definition of *deafness*. (Definition of deafness - A hearing impairment that is so severe that the child is impaired in processing linguistic information through hearing, with or without amplification, that adversely affects a child's educational performance.)

**IDEA - Individuals with Disabilities Education Act**

This federal law, enacted in 1990 and reauthorized in 1997, amends and renames the Education of the Handicapped Act (EHA). The law ensures a free appropriate public education to students with one of thirteen disabilities. A portion of special education funding is dependent upon compliance with this law and its subsequent amendments.

**IEP - Individualized Education Plan**

The individualized education plan is developed by the IEP team including parents, general educators and special educators. The IEP includes educational goals and objectives for the student. It documents the services the student needs, how services will be provided, and how progress will be measured.

**ISAT - Illinois Standards Achievement Test**

The Illinois Standards Achievement Test provides a view of student performance in relation to the state standards. Third, fifth and eighth grade students are administered reading, writing, and mathematics assessments. Fourth and seventh grade students are administered science and social study assessments. These assessments are written at the state level and are scored by the state. Individual student scores and school scores are returned to the district. Only students with significant learning difficulties may be exempt from taking the ISAT. This decision is made by the IEP team.

**ISBE - Illinois State Board of Education**

**LRE - Least Restrictive Environment**

The special educational setting or program that best meets the needs of the student with a disability. The intent is to provide as much access to the general education program as possible.

**MD - Multiple Disabilities**

Concomitant impairments (such as mental retardation-blindness, mental retardation-orthopedic impairment, etc.), the combination of disabilities which causes severe educational needs (does not include deaf-blindness).

**MR - Mental Retardation**

Significantly below average general intellectual functioning, existing concurrently with deficits in adaptive behavior and manifested during the developmental period, that adversely affects a child's educational performance.

**NSSSED - North Suburban Special Education District**

A special education cooperative that exists to meet the individual and unique needs of students with identified disabilities from the member districts. By joining together, districts are able to provide appropriate and programs for students with low-incidence disabilities. NSSSED provides the framework for mutual support about the school districts, families, the community, and NSSSED. Professional services are available to member districts on a contract basis.

**OHI - Other Health Impairment**

Limited strength, vitality or alertness, including a heightened sensitivity to environmental stimuli, that results in limited alertness with respect to the educational environment, that: is due to chronic or acute health problems such as asthma, attention deficit disorder or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, diabetes, epilepsy, a heart condition, hemophilia, lead poisoning, leukemia, nephritis, rheumatic fever, and sickle cell anemia; and- adversely affects a child's educational performance.

**OI - Orthopedic Impairment**

A severe orthopedic impairment that adversely affects a child's educational performance; includes impairments caused by congenital anomaly (e.g., clubfoot, absence of some member, etc.), impairments caused by disease (e.g., poliomyelitis, bone tuberculosis), and impairments from other causes (e.g., cerebral palsy, amputations, and fractures or burns that cause contractures).

**OT - Occupational Therapy**

Facilitates the development of self-maintenance tasks including feeding, eating, dressing, and hygiene. Areas of assessment and intervention also include motor performance (manipulation of school related materials and educational tasks), neuromusculoskeletal components (movement and postural control), sensory awareness and attending skills. Intervention is integrated within the student's total educational experience and closely coordinated with other aspects of the student's program.

**PT - Physical Therapy**

Facilitates the development of functional movement skills including adapting equipment for mobility and positioning. Areas of assessment and intervention also include motor performance (safety and alternative positions), neuromusculoskeletal components (movement and postural control), architectural accessibility, utilization of appropriate assistive devices (wheelchairs, walkers, adapted seating and work spaces), transfers and transportation (school and community). Intervention is integrated with the student's total educational experience and is closely coordinated with other aspects of the student's program.

**S/L - Speech and/or Language Impairment**

A communication disorder, such as stuttering, impaired articulation, a language impairment or a voice impairment that adversely affects a child's educational performance.

**SLD - Specific Learning Disability**

A disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or do mathematical calculations, including such conditions as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia. The term does not include learning problems that are primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor disabilities, of mental retardation, of emotional disturbance, or of environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage.

**SLP - Speech and Language Pathologist**

**SST - Student Support Teacher**

In District 39, teachers with special education certification are referred to as Student Support Teachers.

**SW - Social Worker**

**TBI - Traumatic Brain Injury**

An acquired injury to the brain caused by an external physical force, resulting in total or partial functional disability or psychosocial impairment, or both, that adversely affects a child's educational performance. The term applies to open or closed head injuries resulting in impairments in one or more areas, such as; cognition, abstract thinking, judgment, problem-solving, sensory, perceptual, and motor abilities, psychosocial behavior, physical functions, information processing, and speech. The term does not apply to brain injuries that are congenital or degenerative or to brain injuries induced by birth trauma.

**VI - Visual Impairment**

An impairment in vision that, even with correction, adversely affects a child's educational performance (includes both partial sight and blindness).



## Frequently Asked Student Services Questions

1. How do I know if my child needs services? If so, what can I expect from District 39?

*If parents are concerned about their children needing special services, they should contact their school principal. Parents can expect a meeting to review their concerns. The school will recommend additional follow-up if needed.*

2. Are there any milestones I should be looking for to be sure my child is "on target" in his/her development?

*Delayed attainment of developmental milestones is one early indicator of future learning problems. The school offers a developmental screening for preschool-aged children. For school-aged children, a Student Assistance Team (SAT) is available to screen concerns about typical development*

*Additionally, most child care texts contain a variety of milestones.*

3. What does the Student Assistance Team do?

*This team of teachers and teacher specialists meets at school weekly. It is during these meetings that the team schedules to meet with parents when there is a school concern about their child. The team may make recommendations to parents and classroom teachers, suggest some short-term interventions, or may even ask permission for further assessment. A follow-up meeting is scheduled when needed.*

4. What does short-term intervention consist of?

*Short-term intervention includes a wide variety of options under what is known as "Flexible Services Delivery."*

5. What is Flexible Service Delivery?

*Flexible Service Delivery is a series of steps that support students who are struggling academically. The services begin with consultation with classroom teachers. Other steps might include providing a student with curriculum modifications (e.g. reduced workload, extended time), or flexible grouping (grouping children with similar instructional needs). The final service option involves specialized instruction from a special education teacher. This occurs in a small group or individually.*

6. Under Flexible Service Delivery, can a child receive specialized instruction as long as she/he needs it?

*No, if a student's academic needs can not be met after 10 weeks of specialized instruction, then a referral is made for a special education evaluation. The evaluation data will assist the team in deciding what type of support is needed. However, flexible services may continue during the completion of the evaluation.*

7. What tests/screening is given for a flexible-delivery type of service?

*No formal testing is required for flexible service delivery. The need for flexible service is based on teacher recommendation or as a result of a student assistance team (SAT) meeting. The SAT at your school reviews the needs of individual children and recommends specific support as needed.*

8. When does a child need an evaluation for special education?

*When the parent or school suspects that a child has a disability. The evaluation usually occurs after flexible delivery supports have been thoroughly explored.*

9. What special education options are available to my child?

*Before special education options are available to children, the school must conduct a thorough evaluation. After the evaluation is complete, the educational team at school will make*

**recommendations. To receive services, the student must present diagnosable concerns that impact his/her education at school.**

10. Does every child get an evaluation?

**No, every child does not need an evaluation. The school has a student assistance team, which reviews the needs of children who struggle at school.**

11. What types of counseling does District 39 provide?

**Schools offer small group counseling. Students are grouped according to their common needs (e.g. assistance with social skill development, problems associated with divorce, etc.)**

12. What type of health care does District 39 provide?

**The district provides nurses in each of our buildings. The nurses are available for a wide variety of health needs (e.g. injuries at school, administration of medication, formulation of health plans). Parents should contact the school nurse if their child has special health needs.**

13. How can I access the services that District 39 has to offer?

**For a complete description of the services that District 39 provides, please visit our web site at <http://www.wilmette.nttc.org>**

14. Whom do I contact at each school--what are the positions there? How do I reach them?

**A complete listing of school service providers can be found on the web site at <http://www.wilmette.nttc.org>, or inside**

15. What preschool screenings are available? When are they available and what are they looking for?

**Preschool screenings are available for children between the ages of 3-5. The screenings are available to parents who have concerns about their child's development. The screenings address speech, cognitive and motor development. The schedule of preschool screenings can be found in the school calendar.**

16. What is the role of paraprofessionals in the school?

**Paraprofessionals assist teachers in the implementation of special programs. Teachers provide instruction and paraprofessionals reinforce teaching.**

17. Are there different types of paraprofessionals?

**Yes, most paraprofessionals are "classroom" assistants serving a small cluster of special education students in the classroom. There are also "individual" paraprofessionals assigned to a single student. Individual paraprofessionals are provided for students who require personal assistance (e.g. help in the lunch room or behavior monitoring).**

18. Is there consistency among the schools in terms of what should be learned at each grade level?

**Yes, the district has a specific curriculum established at each grade-level. Each teacher is provided a curriculum guide for her/his grade-level and/or subject**

19. What type of transition is provided for my child as they move from one school to the next?

**Transition planning is provided for children as they change buildings. The level of planning is based on individual student needs. As a minimum, a staff member from the receiving school meets with teachers from the sending school to share important information. A few children have such extensive special education needs that an individual transition plan is developed.**

20. Do parents need to ensure a continuum of services at every building or does the district oversee this?

**The district must make a continuum of services available to all children with disabilities. However, a continuum can not be provided at each building. The district endeavors to make as many programs, services and supports available at each school as is possible.**

21. Are teachers and administrators at each school fully informed about all of the available services in the district?

***Teachers are continually notified of supports and services available. It is recommended that parents of children with special needs make every effort to educate themselves regarding available services and how these services may be obtained.***

22. Where can a parent get information concerning various disabilities and all of the physical, mental, and emotional factors that can be associated with them, so families can know what to expect now and in the years to come?

***An exhaustive list of "all factors" is not possible. However, much information can be obtained by visiting our web site at <http://www.wilmette.nttc.org> and talking with your school's staff and other special services professionals.***

23. Can the standards or criteria for IEPs be posted on the website?

***Please refer to <http://www.wilmette.nttc.org> for a sample of an IEP.***

24. How can parents find out about state and local educational laws, especially from out of state?

***Our web site, at <http://www.wilmette.nttc.org> provides links to sites pertaining to Illinois educational laws. Information about educational laws is also included in the Special Services Brochure.***

25. What services are available from District 39 for children ages 0-3?

***District 39 does not directly identify or service children aged 0 to 3. These children are identified and supported through a State agency called Child and Family Connections of Cook County.***

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION IN WPS39**

Wilmette Public Schools District 39 offers a full continuum of Special Education services. Special education is instruction and related services provided by special education personnel. Or Special education can be a general education program that has been modified through the use of special education support services, supplementary aids, or other special arrangements. Students who are eligible need special education services to progress through school and who have one or more disabilities. The following disabilities are recognized according to state and federal criteria: autism, deaf-blindness, deafness, emotional disturbance, hearing impairment, mental retardation, multiple disabilities, orthopedic impairment, other health impairment, speech or language impairment, traumatic brain injury, and visual impairment. Services are available to students beginning on their third birthday and continue until students reaches their twenty-second birthday.

### **Questions**

If you have questions about the Special Education programs provided by District 39, please visit our web site at <http://www.wilmette.nttc.org> or contact the School Psychologist in your school.

## **UNDERSTANDING FEDERAL LAW THAT PROTECTS THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES**

There are primarily three bodies of federal law that protect the rights of children with disabilities. The first, IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) governs "Special Education" as schools know it today. This law, while quite comprehensive, only provides protection for children with one of thirteen disabilities, when in fact there are literally hundreds of disabilities.

The second body of law, which protects the rights of children with disabilities, is the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The ADA primarily provides for accessibility of the physical structure of a school. This includes washrooms, access to playgrounds, lift buses, etc.

The third body of disability law is Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The Federal Government developed Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act as a way to address the many disabilities not covered under IDEA. Section 504 is a far-reaching law that extends protections to individuals with disabilities in most aspects of their lives. The procedures outlined in this report address Section 504 as it applies to schools.

### **Full Implementation**

Once a disability has been identified and a plan developed, Section 504 requires full implementation. If any part of the plan is not implemented the district and the individuals identified as responsible for the adaptations and modifications can be held accountable. If any part of a 504 Plan is unreasonable or ineffective, the plan must be modified and cannot simply be dismissed as too time consuming or inconvenient.

### **Student Identification**

Section 504 defines an individual with a disability as anyone who experiences a "mental, psychological or physiologic disorder that interferes with an individual's civil right to one or more major life activities." The list of major life activities includes: caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning and working.

Identifying students who qualify for a 504 Plan is usually not complicated. Some children, even though a disability can be documented, are not eligible for special education services under IDEA. These students could be evaluated to determine the need for a 504 Plan. Some examples may include students with health needs, communicable diseases or drug and alcohol dependency, who have been dismissed from or do not qualify for special education due to a lack of discrepancy, and those with ADD/ADHD. (Attention Deficit Disorder/Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder)

The Office of Civil Rights indicates that if a parent can document, "either through testing by the school or outside professionals that the child has difficulties which interfere with his ability to learn in the classroom," the classroom teacher and school must make whatever accommodations can be ruled to be appropriate.

This law requires schools to make reasonable accommodations, through the use of a 504 Plan. Reasonable accommodations are those that are not considered unduly expensive and/or do not interfere with the learning of others.

#### **When Should A 504 Plan Be Considered?**

There are three primary cases when a 504 Plan should be considered:

- When a special education team has conducted a case study and a student is found ineligible for special education.
- When there is an identified disability not covered by special education. It is important to remember that while there are literally hundreds of different types of disabilities, special education law only covers thirteen specific disabilities.
- When a parent approaches a teacher with concerns that his/her child may have a disability that requires special classroom accommodations or program modifications.

#### **The Plan**

The actual accommodations provided for a particular student will be determined based on the student's individual needs. The general education teacher(s), parent and principal/designee make the determination. If the general education teachers and principal/designee are unsure whether an accommodation being requested is reasonable, they may contact the building psychologist or the Student Services Coordinator for consultation.

#### **Review**

To be in compliance with 504 legislation, all plans are reviewed annually. This review may be informal, where the principal/designee reviews the established plan and calls the parents to reiterate that the plan will continue as written. If a child's individual learning needs change, then a meeting is held with the parent, general educational teachers, and principal/designee to adjust the plan.

#### **Questions**

If you have questions, please contact your school principal or visit our web site at <http://www.wilmette.nttc.org>.

### **WPS39 Early Childhood Education**

Wilmette District 39 offers a continuum of special education services to meet the unique educational needs of the three to five year old students with disabilities. The range of available services is designed in compliance with the federal and state guidelines supporting the least restrictive environment in which services can be provided.

Preschool children are found eligible to participate in district services through an identification and assessment process. The assessment of preschool children focuses on the expectations and growth of the preschool child and the evaluation of developmental skills that are the foundation for academic learning. The assessed skill areas relate to academic functioning and are divided into five developmental domains: cognitive skills, fine and gross motor skills, self-help skills, social skills, and speech and language skills.

## **Identification Procedures**

District 39 provides preschool screenings on a regular basis throughout the school year. Three, four and five year old children, who have not entered kindergarten, may participate in the district screening. The child must be registered for the screening through the District 39 Student Services office (847-256-2450, ext: 253). Screenings are free of charge. The screening process provides basic information about the child in the areas of cognitive, motor, social, and speech and language development. A vision and hearing screening is also completed by a certified nurse. The preschool screening is designed to identify developmental lags or areas of concern and is not a tool to determine eligibility for advanced placement in school. Further assessment in one or all of the domains may be indicated from the results of the screening.

When further assessment is indicated, parents are contacted and a meeting is held to discuss concerns and determine appropriate components of the evaluation. After permission to evaluate is obtained, the district has sixty school days to complete the assessment and meet with parents to discuss results. If the child qualifies for special education services as a result of the evaluation and team meeting, goals and objectives are written. An Individualized Education Plan (IEP) for providing services is developed, and program placement is determined. The IEP is reviewed on an annual basis, adjusted, and revised as necessary.

District 39 is responsible for providing services to preschool children who have been identified and received support through a birth to three early intervention agency or program. A transition plan is established between the early intervention agency and District 39 in order to provide appropriate services without interruption when the child turns three.

The Early Childhood Education team reviews records and meets with the family of the preschool child who has participated in Early Childhood Education services in another district and is transferring to District 39. After the family establishes district residency, the existing IEP is reviewed and implemented as written by the previous district. Further assessment and changes may be recommended at the initial IEP meeting.

Finally, a preschool child may be brought to the attention of the Early Childhood Education team by parent referral. Parents may contact the District 39 Student Services Department (847-256-2450) to discuss concerns and determine an appropriate response.

## **Early Childhood Education Service Options**

Wilmette District #39 offers a continuum of special services to meet the unique needs of three to five year old children with identified disabilities while supporting least restrictive environment options. Program determination is made by the educational team, which includes the parents, in an Individualized Education Plan meeting. The appropriate level of support necessary to meet established goals and objectives is the primary consideration when determining placement.

Students exhibiting mild to moderate delays in speech and language skill development may participate in Itinerant Speech and Language Services. Itinerant services are provided at a district school by a certified Speech and Language Pathologist. The child is brought to the therapy sessions by his parent. Therapy is generally provided from thirty to one hundred twenty minutes weekly.

For students exhibiting difficulties across more than one developmental domain, several program options may be considered. District 39 offers classroom placements through the Inclusion Preschool Program, and through District 39 and North Suburban Special Education District (NSSD) Early Childhood Programs. District 39 is piloting an Inclusion Preschool Program in cooperation with area preschools. Students are registered and participate in the preschool with typically developing peers. Support is provided to the child and preschool team by an early childhood educator. In addition, related services, such as speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, and physical therapy are provided at the preschool site.

The Early Childhood Programs (ECP) provide half-day or full-day classroom options for students exhibiting significant delays in more than one developmental domain. The early childhood classroom is a language rich environment. Students participating in an ECP class generally need and benefit from smaller class size and multiple related services. Related services may be integrated into classroom instruction, and goals and objectives are addressed by all classroom personnel.

**Resources/Questions**

- Additional questions or concerns about a child who is three, four or five years old and not in kindergarten may be directed to Andrea Brockmeyer, 847-256-2450, ext 272.
- To register a child for a preschool screening, contact Julie Baumann at 847- 256-2450 ext 253.
- Concerns for a child under the age of three years should be directed to the NSSD Early Intervention Program, 847- 291-7905.

## **READING INTERVENTION IN WPS39**

District 39 formally introduced a reading services program in the 1999-2000 school year. A committee of teachers and administrators met throughout the 1998-1999 school year to define and develop the program. At the committee's recommendation, four Reading Services Teachers (RSTs) were employed to implement early reading intervention services for students in grades K-2.

The main focus of the program is addressing the needs of young readers whose scores on two reading screening devices indicate a need for early intervention. Reading screening tools are also administered at various times in the year to monitor student improvement. Students targeted for support will receive instruction in small groups, individually, or within the classroom setting.

### **The Early Intervention Program**

The Reading Improvement Program involves two main intervention models. One model focuses on developing emergent reading skills, particularly phonemic awareness, and is an extension of the work of Roland Good from the University of Oregon. The second provides direct services to first and second grade children and is adapted from the Project Prevent Model from National Louis University.

The emergent reader model includes implementing phonemic awareness instruction for Kindergarten and targeted first and second grade students in small group settings or through whole classroom presentations. To implement the second model, first grade children are removed from the classroom for a specific program of instruction. The session involves reading and rereading books, word study, and writing. Both of these intervention models have demonstrated that they are effective in helping young children who are struggling to improve their reading and writing.

As 2000-2001 is the pilot year for the Reading Improvement Program, the delivery model will be closely monitored and revised as needed. The implementation continues to be an evolving process.

### **Reading Services Teachers (RST) and Reading Teacher Assistants (RTA)**

The role of these teachers includes:

- Providing direct reading instruction to certain kindergarten, first, and second grade students in an individual or small group setting. This instruction is in addition to the classroom instruction provided by the student's primary classroom teacher.
- Co-teaching and collaborating with classroom teachers to support struggling readers. For example, RSTs or RTAs may go into a regular classroom and work with a selected group of students to improve phonemic awareness, while the classroom teacher works with other students.
- Conducting a parent night on reading.
- Acting as a resource on reading methods and theory for parents, administrators, teachers.

### **Questions**

If you have questions about the program, please contact Marilyn Crow, Reading/Language Arts Facilitator at the Mikaelian Education Center via e-mail at [crowm@nttc.org](mailto:crowm@nttc.org), or phone 847-256-2450. You may also contact the Reading Services Teacher at your child's school.



## **HEALTH SERVICES IN WPS39**

Parents have the primary responsibility for the health of their children. The efforts of the school are directed to help parents recognize and assume their responsibility. A trained staff provides quality care to the children in the Wilmette schools. The District employs registered nurses or licensed practical nurses for the full-time health paraprofessional positions.

According to the School Code of Illinois, physical examinations are required of all students prior to their initial entrance into school and upon entrance into fifth grade. In addition, all children entering kindergarten and all children new to the District must submit a recent physical examination form. Physical and dental examination forms are available from the school health office or secretary. All health examination forms must be dated. Children are not permitted to enter school until this requirement is met.

### **Questions**

If you have questions about Health Services in WPS39, please visit our web site at <http://www.wilmette.nttc.org> or contact the health services provider at your school.

