



San Mateo  
County  
SELPA

# Special Education Local Plan Area

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Dear Parents and Caregivers,

The San Mateo County SELPA, along with your Resource Parent Council, has prepared this handbook as a resource guide for parents of children with special needs. SELPA stands for Special Education Local Plan Area. In 1977, all school districts and county school offices in California were required to belong to a SELPA office, which is advisory to parents, school districts, and agencies that provide services to students with disabilities. The San Mateo County SELPA is comprised of the 28 school districts located in San Mateo County. These school districts and the County Office of Education cooperatively provide a continuum of programs and services for individuals with disabilities from birth through 21 years of age.

With your child now in special education, you are probably experiencing the stress of coping with these new complicated procedures, meetings, and service providers who are new to your child's team. At times, it can be overwhelming. It is our hope that this handbook will guide you in sorting through the confusion so that you can feel comfortable expressing your vision of your child's education and life plan to your child's education team. We encourage you to contact your district's Resource Parent, who is trained to help support you by giving you clear explanations for anything that seems puzzling. We also encourage you to visit the Resource Parent Council website ([www.scmel.org](http://www.scmel.org)) frequently, to learn about upcoming events, what's new with your Special Education District Advisory Council (SEDAC), and any trainings the SELPA is providing.

Our hope, once again, is that this resource guide will answer any questions you may have. But, if you need help in finding other resources, please know the SELPA is here to support you, and that you can call the Program Coordinator at any time at 650.802.5473 so that you can be directed to a local resource for the specific information you are seeking.

The San Mateo County SELPA  
[www.scmel.org](http://www.scmel.org)