

MERKEL INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

SPECIAL EDUCATION PUBLIC MEETING INVITATION

WHAT The purpose of this public meeting is to gather public input on the effective operation and performance of the Merkel ISD special education program through one or more community focus groups that address a set of predetermined questions. This district public meeting is a required component of the new performance-based Texas Education Agency's Special Education Monitoring system.

The meeting will be conducted in a structured format over approximately 2 hours.

Your assistance in sharing this invitation with others in your community who may be interested in attending is appreciated.

WHEN	Meeting Date	Meeting Time
	<p align="center">DECEMBER 8, 2008</p>	<p>Registration/Meal: 5:30 P.M. Meeting: 6:00 P.M.</p> <p>Note: All participants should plan to arrive 15 to 30 minutes before the meeting to sign in. Your early arrival for registration will help ensure the meeting can begin on time.</p>

WHERE	City	Location	Phone (for location or registration information)
	<p align="center">Merkel, Texas</p>	<p align="center">MHS Cafetorium, 2000 S. 7th</p>	<p align="center">325-692-3809 325-928-4667</p>

RSVP Although RSVPs are not required, your RSVP is requested by December 1, 2008 to help us make arrangements for the meeting space, facilitation and organization needed to allow sufficient opportunity for all to participate. You can RSVP to the meeting by:

1. Sending in the enclosed RSVP form, OR
2. Calling Gayle Maxey at 325-692-3809.

If you are unable to register in advance, you are still welcome to attend the meeting. However, please plan to arrive 30 minutes early to the meeting to sign-in.

Special Accommodations

If you will need accommodations for a disability in order to participate in the meeting (e.g. interpreting services, assistive listening devices, materials in alternate format), please indicate this need when submitting your RSVP. **Requests for special accommodations are required by December 1, 2008.** We will attempt to meet requests received after this date, but cannot guarantee availability of the requested accommodation. The meeting sites are accessible to individuals with disabilities.

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MEETING QUESTIONS

During the meeting, your input will be requested on the following questions, which have been developed by the State to gather information on the effective operation and performance of special education programs throughout the State. **Input will focus exclusively on these questions:**

1. **Topic: Effective Communication with Parents** *The special education program is most successful for students when those involved in the students' education are well-informed about the special education process and its focus on results for individual students. Where do you get most of the information you receive regarding special education?*
2. **Topic: Student Participation** *A goal of the IDEA is to have high expectations for students with disabilities and include them in the same opportunities available to all students in the Merkel I.S.D. Describe how students with disabilities participate and achieve in the school setting in the same ways as students without disabilities.*
3. **Topic: Student Support Services** *An effective school program has supports in place to meet the needs of all students. What are the options available in Merkel I.S.D. to support the needs of struggling students?*
4. **Topic: Graduation and Transition Planning** *The goal of education is to prepare students to live productive, independent adult lives. In what ways does Merkel I.S.D. ensure that students with disabilities are prepared to live as productive adults after leaving school?*

Written input in response to these questions will not be accepted.

For more information on the special education monitoring process, please visit:
<http://www.tea.state.tx.us/pmi/spedmon/>

Please Note: The meeting is NOT intended as a forum to resolve specific, individual complaints regarding services you have received. In order for TEA to investigate alleged violations of federal regulations and/or State rules, the complaint must be written and signed.

If you wish to speak to someone at the TEA about a complaint, you can leave a message on the Parent Information Line (1-800-252-9668). Your message will be responded to by a staff member from the TEA Division of IDEA Coordination. More information about the State's complaint process can be found on the web at:

<http://www.tea.state.tx.us/special.ed/medcom/compinfo.html>