



## Special Education Ombudspersons

The **Ombudsperson Program** is unique to San Diego City Schools (SDCS) and operates within the Parent Support and Board Services Department. The Office of Ombudsperson was created to facilitate resolution of special education and Section 504 issues. Ombudspersons are not parent advocates or district decision-makers, but work impartially with all parties to assist in the resolution of concerns related to students' special support needs. This normally occurs within the Individualized Education Programs (IEP) process.

An Ombudsperson is available to assist families and staff with the following:

- Responding to parent and staff inquiries;
- Informing parents of their rights;
- Investigating complaints;
- Assisting parents with regard to the Individualized Education Program/Individualized Family Service Plan (IEP/IFSP) and 504 Individualized Service Plan meetings, filing complaints and hearing requests; and
- Acting as a liaison between district, parents and community organizations.

Compliance with special education laws is a priority of the ombudsperson. The ombudsperson investigates concerns and promotes compliance by monitoring systemic issues.

The vision of the Office of Ombudsperson is to ensure children with special needs receive all services and supports needed to benefit from public education by fostering an environment where collaboration and cooperation exist between parents, staff and administration.

### SUMMARY

- ❖ Ombudspersons investigate individual concerns and promote compliance by monitoring systemic issues.
- ❖ Ombudspersons assist families and staff in the following ways:
  - ❖ Responding to parent and staff inquiries
  - ❖ Informing parent of their rights
  - ❖ Investigating complaints
  - ❖ Assisting parent with IEP/IFSP and 504 Individualized Service Plan meetings, filing complaints and hearing requests
  - ❖ Acting as liaison between district, parents and community organizations
- ❖ Bilingual (English and Spanish) Ombudspersons are available to assist families.
- ❖ To contact an Ombudsperson: call (619) 725-8186 or (619) 725-8187, or by visiting them at the Eugene Brucker Education Center, 4100 Normal St., Room 3134.

*Published with support from the Annie E. Casey Foundation*

Contact Information: Parent Support and Board Services: (619) 725-5525  
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revised 2/1/06

Serving nearly 136,000 students, San Diego City Schools is the second largest school district in California, with 202 educational facilities and more than 14,500 full-time equivalent positions (representing more than 15,800 employees). SDCS is improving student achievement by focusing on challenging instruction in reading, writing and mathematics in pre-kindergarten through Grade 12. The district is committed to supporting schools and enhancing the classroom learning environment through modernized facilities and resources and through parent, teacher and community involvement in the educational process.