

# Special Education—Lessons We Have Learned

Due to an unusual flurry of issues in recent months, Mitch Hettinger & the REA Special Ed Committee would like to summarize what we've learned and pass along our advice to you. Problems are better avoided if you're aware of the way things have been working at the District. CYA.

## 1. **Do Your Own Work**

If you need help with an IEP or other piece of work assigned to you, you have to ask someone who has the authority to grant that help.

If someone asks you to help him/her, you need to get written permission to do so before helping.

## 2. **Document the Work You Do**

Keep a short and sweet log of the work you do. If you spend hours trying to make the software work, write it down. If you make phone calls to parents, log those calls. Called for coverage; write down date and period.

## 3. **Maintain Confidentiality of Student Records (FERPA)**

Don't show your work with student-identified names, addresses, or parent/guardian names to others, unless the other person has a "need to know." Ask your questions without identifying the student.

Team members and authorized "helpers" have a "need to know" and parents/guardians and supervisors have a "need to know." Other REA members do not.

## 4. **Understand All the Rules**

Know when all of your IEPs are due, for real; and claim all the time available to you.

Caseload size is important for you to manage your work. Ensure that caseloads are properly distributed.

Please take the time to speak with your Building Rep in the event that there are concerns you have or problems that arise that keep you from completing your work. We can't help if we don't know.