

**ALBUQUERQUE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SPECIAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT**

*Autism Resource
Services*

*Aztec Complex
2611 Eubank Blvd. NE
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Students with autism present unique challenges to school teams. Regardless of whether this is your first or fiftieth experience with one or more students with autism, it may be helpful to share your concerns, frustrations and triumphs with other professionals who are trained to consult with you regarding students with autism. The recent increase in the number of students diagnosed with autism has led to continuing research concerning the most effective instructional strategies. Methods that are effective for other students with or without disabilities are often not effective for students with autism. The Autism Resource Team has a variety of resources to share, expertise in areas related to quality programming and a readiness to help school teams meet the challenges of working effectively with students with autism. In addition to consultation, the Autism Resource Team provides a variety of training opportunities throughout the school year. Schools can also request autism-related staff development.

The Autism Resource Team is here to help you put the pieces together.

**Your Student with Autism -
Quality Programming for Students with
Autism**

The following areas are critical in providing quality programs for students with autism:

- Development of the IEP
- Curriculum
- Instructional activities, methods and environments
- Family involvement and supports
- Inclusion

- Planning moves from one setting to another
- Addressing challenging behavior
- Staff development
- Program evaluation

Accessing Autism Resource Services

Please call or e-mail the team at Aztec Complex. Families are also encouraged to contact the Autism Resource Team about concerns related to educational programming. Please fill out a request for services form and return it to us at Aztec Complex. In order to serve students with autism and their educational teams as efficiently as possible, please note the following:

1. Please access available resources within the school and/or cluster before contacting the Autism Resource Team.
2. If possible, notify the parent of the request. A member of the Autism Resource Team may contact the family.
3. Following an observation, a meeting with the educational team will be requested.
4. Written reports will be provided to the teacher, principal, and evaluation specialist. An additional copy will be sent to the teacher to be sent to the parent at the school's discretion. If the parent has requested the service a report will be sent to the parent after it is sent to the school.
5. Requests to attend IEP meetings should be made at least 2 weeks in advance and be accompanied by a copy of the current IEP.

Additional Services

The Autism Resource Services Library, consists of books, videos and periodicals and is located in the office of the Autism Resource Team — Room P-15 at Aztec Complex. The Library and Materials Center will be open every Wednesday afternoon from 3:00-5:00 and by appointment. Please call to reserve a space at least 1 day in advance. The Materials Center is available for any member of an educational team working with a student with autism to construct materials (schedules, tasks, etc) and receive related consultation. Items available to use in the materials center are Velcro, corrugated plastic, foam board, glue guns, tape, file folders, a computer, laminating machine, etc. You must bring any other needed items—start saving those plastic tubs and cardboard boxes!

Autism Review Panels

The National Research Council of the National Academy of Sciences makes the following recommendation: “Identification of autistic spectrum disorders should include a formal multidisciplinary evaluation of social behavior, language and

nonverbal communication, adaptive behavior, motor skills, atypical behaviors, and cognitive status by a team of professionals experienced with autistic spectrum disorders. An essential part of this evaluation is the systematic gathering of information from parents on their observations and concerns.” It goes on to suggest that this evaluation is the responsibility of the local education agency. (*Educating Children with Autism*, National Research Council, 2001, p. 214)

As the Albuquerque Public Schools continue to work to provide effective services for students with autism, four Autism Review Panels have been formed to assist schools’ multi-disciplinary teams in determining whether autism is appropriate special education eligibility for specific students. Members of the panels come from all over the district and include evaluation specialists, occupational therapists, speech/language pathologists, social workers, psychologists and teachers.

The panels meet once a month and review individual cases with school evaluation specialists.

Accessing Autism Review Panels

The Autism Review process must be initiated by the school Evaluation Specialist. Upon receiving a request for services, the following process will be initiated.

- An autism resource teacher will make an observation of the student in one or more settings.
- An observation report will be submitted to the evaluation specialist along with a detailed list of required information for the Evaluation Specialist to collect.
- The school Evaluation Specialist collects the information and calls the Autism Resource Team to make an appointment to present the case to an Autism Review Panel.
- The Autism Review Panel completes a case review with the Evaluation Specialist and provides a recommendation concerning whether or not autism is an appropriate eligibility for a student.
- The Evaluation Specialist schedules and conducts the Multi-disciplinary Team meeting at the school. This team is responsible for determining eligibility and may consider autism at the recommendation of the Autism Review Panel.