

**Oakland Special Education
Community Advisory Letter
3/2/2006**

To: Oakland Schools State Administrator & the Board of Education
From: The Oakland Community Advisory Committee (CAC) for Special Education

Re: Lack of Disaster Plans for Special Needs students at OUSD

CAC's for special education are mandated by California State Statute 30 EC 56190 et. al. The Oakland CAC is writing this letter to alert the Oakland Unified School District of the lack of necessary emergency planning for special needs students.

The Issue: The OUSD has no disaster preparedness plans for the approximately 4500 students served by Programs for Exceptional Children (PEC). Students, teachers, and aides do not have the resources and plans to maintain the safety of their students.

Why this is important: Unnecessary suffering and possible fatalities will result if special needs are not specifically addressed in district plans before the next disaster occurs.

Findings:

- The 100+ pages of plans on the OUSD emergency web page include virtually no mention of special needs (<http://webportal.ousd.k12.ca.us/emergencies.aspx>).
- Formal inquiries from Oakland CAC officers to OUSD staff (including the Risk Management Officer and Programs for Exceptional Children Executive Director), and to parents reveal no information on the existence of any district wide plans.

CAC Advisory Notice to OUSD:

- Create a general detailed plan as soon as possible to be followed and modified as necessary at all school sites.
- Include: PEC staff involvement in all planning; defined responsibilities; backup plans (e.g. guardians cannot make it to the school); student support networks; accessible evacuation routes; personal medication & medical supplies; 3 days of care supplies; other personal special needs.
- Issue plan through the State Administrator's office to emphasize its importance.
- Hold a disaster drill every year at every school, and notify guardians of special needs students in advance so that they may participate.

Thank you for your attention to our concern.

Sincerely,
Amelia Marshall and Tom Donovan
Oakland CAC co-chairs
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