**ARISE RECOMMENDATIONS 2014**

**Methodology**

It is ARISE’s goal to promote the successful development and education of our children through parent training and by working positively and collaboratively with our school district.

To that end, over several meetings during the 2013-2014 School Year, the members of ARISE discussed their experiences in the Holmdel schools. We deliberately did not focus our discussions on dissecting problems. Rather, we paired issues of concern raised by members with examples of more positive member experiences that constructively addressed such concerns.

These discussions provided our members with valuable information that would enable them to self-advocate. Additionally, we believe that there is merit in sharing the outcomes of said discussions with the school district. Thus, please find below a list of recommendations that incorporate common concerns with successful practices currently used by district staff. Our desire is to encourage more universal application and sharing among staff of such successful practices.

**Recommendations**

1. **Curriculum and Instruction:**
	1. The use of multiple outcome measures throughout the school year to produce a more comprehensive and thorough understanding of the performance of students, in particular as to educational outcomes in reading and math. Such information should be used to assess—and possibly modify—the current methodology and resources used to implement the curriculum/IEP.
	2. More transparent and better defined preplanning (training and materials largely set before students begin a new class/school year; e.g., curriculum and modifications specific to each student's needs, continuity of specialized learning programs (e.g., reading program, Wordly Wise, Touch Math) to transfer with students from year to year.
	3. Study guides aligned to the ability of the student.
	4. Increased and better defined modifications to specials curricula; for example, health, PE, foreign language, and art.
	5. Develop an age-appropriate life skills curriculum that incorporates the modern needs of students and prepares them for college and career.
	6. Increased use of multi-sensory techniques in instruction.
	7. Increased collaboration between special education and general teachers.
	8. Increased use and instruction of technology to facilitate instruction.
		1. Increased collaboration with and involvement of Technology Coach in creating programming for students with special needs.
		2. Provide parent training to ensure a successful transition of such technology to the home.
	9. Develop districtwide disability education initiatives/curricula that promote long-term awareness, understanding and acceptance.
2. **Inclusion-Related**:
	1. More meaningful inclusion opportunities in all subjects and extracurricular offerings for students during the school year and ESY.
	2. Develop a buddy-system with typical peers to encourage transition into such settings as specials, lunch and recess in all district schools.
	3. Increase districtwide staff, parent and student awareness, involvement and support for Project Unify, and related sports programs/teams and efforts throughout the school year.
3. **Professional Development:**
4. Increased training for teachers **and** monitors prior to working with a new student population/special need.
	* Outreach to/survey of parents prior to commencement of school year.
5. Study guides modification.
6. Encourage more universal application and sharing among staff of peer-developed successful practices.
7. Increased training on how to create a more inclusive general education classroom.
8. **Communication:**
	1. Update department and teacher websites.
	2. More detailed, concise and concrete reports to parents of student progress; based on multiple outcome measures; parent-friendly, incorporating real-life examples.
	3. Notice of school activities, especially those only communicated orally by the teacher or via the school PA system.
	4. Include special education students in communications from general education teachers, e.g., class parties notices, weekly newsletters, etc.
9. **Long-Term Planning:**

Trajectory and vision to better address the long-term goals of our children;:

* 1. Jobs training/Transition coach in the district.
	2. Develop an age-appropriate life skills curriculum that incorporates the modern needs of students and prepares them for college and career.
1. **Parental Involvement:**

Increased transparency and parent involvement/collaboration prior to the implementation of new programs, new or revised curriculum, etc. For example, outreach can be realized by:

* 1. Providing updates to ARISE.
	2. Surveying parents (e.g., Survey Monkey).
	3. Forming *ad hoc subgroups* to address issues of commonality.
	4. Parent education workshops.
1. **Annual IEP Meeting:**
	1. Input from the monitors.
	2. More timely provision to parents of draft IEPs prior to annual IEP meeting.
	3. Consultation as to the scheduling of said meeting.