

## **Special Education Board Report**

Jill Mattingly Special Education Director

This school year has flown by; it is hard to believe we only have a few months left. I attended the Montana Council for Exceptional Children in Missoula in February. It was nice to meet the staff from the Office of Public Instruction and to learn more about the resources that they have to help ensure compliance and also for staff training. Many of the training opportunities they offer are free and some are online so that staff do not have to take time off of work. Two staff members also attended this conference focusing on early childhood education.

We have had to shift a couple of staff members into new positions. We had a teacher at the high school resign and we will be filling that position with a teacher from the Middle School. Also, in order to get special education preschool services in place we moved a teacher from Napi Elementary. I appreciate the building principals working with the special education department so these changes could take place.

We have increased the amount of time that Diane Black will be working for the remainder of this school year. Diane is a consultant who specializes in working with Autistic students and also students who have severe behavior issues. She will be training staff throughout the district on how to work with Autistic students in the regular classroom and training for special education teachers. We are in the planning stages for the implementation of services for students who have severe emotional needs. Diane will be conducting functional behavioral analysis and writing behavior intervention plans. Mr. Rouse has been very supportive along with the leadership team in recognizing the need to provide services for students in our district who have severe emotional needs. We hope to have two additional teachers hired for the next school year so we can provide the special education services that these students need.

At our next department meeting we will be focusing on collaboration between classroom teachers, paraprofessionals, and personal care attendants. I have purchased an online training program for paraprofessionals and for personal care attendants. These courses will provide staff with information and tools that will improve our services to special education students. These staff members will work on these classes during extended Wednesday meetings.

Child Find is scheduled for the month of March. This is an outreach that special education provides to the community. The purpose of Child Find is help identify all students in the community from birth to age 21 who are in need of special education services.