



SPECIAL EDUCATION SURROGATE PARENT PROGRAM

July 20, 2011

Dear Colleagues:

The EDCO Collaborative and the Federation for Children with Special Needs are pleased to announce a new partnership for operating the Special Education Surrogate Parent Program (SESPP). The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has awarded contracts for the SESPP to our two organizations to jointly implement the program. As a result, some substantial changes to the SESPP will occur effective August 1, 2011.

Each agency will be responsible for implementing certain aspects of the SESPP. The Federation for Children with Special Needs will be responsible for volunteer recruitment, training, and support of the SESP. The EDCO Collaborative will be responsible for student eligibility determination, SESP appointment, and case management.

Together, we will ensure that students eligible for the SESPP will be matched with knowledgeable adults who are willing to act in the role of “surrogate parents” for the purpose of special educational decision-making. Building on the strengths of our respective organizations, we look forward to a collaborative effort that will sustain the quality of volunteer appointments, communication with community partners, and positive educational outcomes for students.

What will this change mean for you?

For current SESPP volunteers, your appointments will continue uninterrupted. Case management will continue to be provided by EDCO (508-792-7679). You will be offered professional development training and support through the Federation.

For new or potential SESPP volunteers, you will complete the application process and orientation training through the Federation (617-236-7210).

For SESPP Consultants, you will continue to provide services through a Letter of Agreement with the EDCO Collaborative.

For the Department of Children and Families, student referrals for the assignment of an SESP will continue to be processed through EDCO.

For community partners, the Federation will build upon the relationships that have been developed by the SESPP to recruit and support new volunteers.

For school district personnel, both the Federation and EDCO will continue to work with SESPP volunteers to ensure that they are well prepared to work collaboratively as Team members to serve the best interest of our shared students.

We are excited to work in partnership with all of you as we embark on this new joint venture.

With sincere regards,

Dorsey Yearley  
Executive Director, EDCO

Richard J. Robison  
Executive Director, Federation

*The SESPP is a project of the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education under contract with the EDCO Collaborative and the Federation for Children with Special Needs*