

May 2026

# FEC Family Empowerment Center for Disabilities NEWSLETTER



## May Brings School Transitions

May brings changes, beautiful weather, and blooming flowers. May also brings the end of the school year, which also brings transitions, whether it's moving to a new grade or stepping into a new school. For parents of children with disabilities, these changes can feel monumental, bringing valid worries about adjustment, continuity of support, and success in a new environment. While transitions are not always seamless, proactive planning can turn them into opportunities for growth, new connections, and success. Talking with your child about expectations, connecting early with the new school, reviewing IEPs or 504 plans, and taking simple steps, such as visiting the campus or meeting teachers, can help ease anxiety. Explore our parent tips on the next page for more strategies and, remember, that your FEC Navigator is here to support you every step of the way.



### Upcoming FEC Events



**Special Education Navigation Training:** Join us on Zoom on Wednesday, May 20<sup>th</sup> for an IEP Deeper Dive. Learn about your top 10 IEP rights!  
**Sessions are: 9:30 AM–10:30 AM or 6:00 PM–7:00 PM.**  
**Parent/Caregiver Support Group:** Join us on Zoom on Wednesday, May 27<sup>th</sup>, to share understanding, encouragement, and support with other parents and caregivers of neurodiverse children.  
**Sessions are: 9:30 AM–10:30 AM or 6:00 PM–7:00 PM.**  
Email [fec@changingtidesfs.org](mailto:fec@changingtidesfs.org) for Zoom links to the training or support group.

**Specially Designed Instruction (SDI)** is at the heart of special education. Based on a child's individual goals and guided by ongoing progress, it ensures each student can access the curriculum, build skills, and participate meaningfully alongside their peers. Under IDEA, SDI is the individualized instruction provided through an IEP to help a child make meaningful progress. It focuses on how a child is taught by adapting instruction to meet their unique needs. Think of it as custom-made teaching. This may include breaking tasks into smaller steps, using visual aids, adjusting the instructional pace, or teaching lessons in different ways. SDI is delivered by trained staff, including special education teachers, related service providers, and, under supervision, paraprofessionals.



Visit our Family Empowerment Center for Disabilities Resource Padlet for helpful information on Special Education, Parenting, Early Start services, training opportunities, and both local and virtual Events. Check back regularly to stay informed and up to date!



Click or Scan for FEC Resource Padlet

Open Monday-Friday 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM  
Closed 12:00 PM to 1:00 PM

2249 Myrtle Avenue  
Eureka, CA 95501

Phone (707) 444-8293  
[FEC@changingtidesfs.org](mailto:FEC@changingtidesfs.org)  
[www.changingtidesfs.org](http://www.changingtidesfs.org)

Founded locally in 1938, the Boys & Girls Club of the Redwoods is a proud member of Boys & Girls Clubs of America and has been serving our community for generations. The Club provides a safe, supportive space for kids and teens during out-of-school hours. Through caring mentors, healthy meals, and engaging programs such as Art Club, Garden Club, and Girl Space/SMART Girls, they help youth build academic skills, leadership skills, and healthy habits. With nearly a century of youth development, the Boys & Girls Club of the Redwoods is a trusted community resource that empowers young people to grow, succeed, and thrive. For more information on how to sign up, call 707-441-1030 or [visit: https://bgcredwoods.org](https://bgcredwoods.org)

## Parenting Tip ~ 5 Tips for Helping Your Child Through School Transitions

Moving from one school level to the next (such as elementary to middle school) is a major transition for any child. Each step comes with its own set of challenges. For students with disabilities, these can feel especially overwhelming as students navigate new buildings, new classrooms, different teachers, changing classes, increased expectations, and shifting social dynamics. With thoughtful preparation and strong collaboration between families and schools, students with disabilities can build confidence and feel ready to succeed as they move into the new school year. Here are a few tips to help ease the transition.

- 1. Start Early and Talk Often**- Ask the team what supports your child may need in the new school. Ensure that representatives from both schools attend any transition IEPs.
- 2. Review the Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan for the New Setting**- Review services, accommodations, and supports to ensure they will still fit the new school setting (e.g., multiple teachers, moving between classes, etc.). Consider whether your child will need different kinds of support in their new setting.
- 3. Build Self-Advocacy Skills**- Talk to your children about their strengths, needs, and what helps them learn. Practice with them on how to ask for help or explain an accommodation. Encourage your children to participate in their IEP meetings in a way that is appropriate and comfortable for them.
- 4. Connect with Staff**- Find out who your child's case manager or special education teacher(s) will be. Introduce yourself and ask how best to communicate with them (e.g., email, daily log, phone, etc.).
- 5. Ask About Transition Supports**- Arrange for your child to meet their teachers before the start of the new school year. To help your child build rapport, gain familiarity with the surroundings, and ease anxiety.

### We Value Your Feedback!



Please Click or Scan the Code to visit our FEC Virtual Suggestion Board and let us know what you would like to see more of at the Family Empowerment Center for Disabilities

Not on our mailing list?  
Join by sending a request to  
[FEC@changingtidesfs.org](mailto:FEC@changingtidesfs.org)

### Local Events for Kids & Families

**FREE ~ Blooming Smiles Playdate (The Dental Van) ~ Friday, May 15th, 8:00 AM - 12:30 PM, Jefferson Community Center Park, 1000 B St., Eureka.** Dental screenings and outdoor fun for ages 0-6. Accepts Medi-Cal/Partnership and private insurance. Supports available for families without coverage.

**FREE ~ Redwood Coast Kite Festival ~ Saturday & Sunday, May 16 & 17th, 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM, Halvorsen Park, Eureka.** Professional flying demonstrations, free kids' kites, food vendors, artisan fair, music, and more.

**FREE ~ Kinetic-Fest ~ Saturday, May 23rd, 2:00 - 8:00 PM, Halvorsen Park, Eureka.** It will be an interactive experience for all. There will be live music, arts, cultural vendors, food, and beverage offerings.

**FREE ~ Forest Moon Family Day ~ Sunday, May 31st, 1:00 PM - 5:00 PM, Sequoia Park, 3550 W St. Eureka.** There will be games, activities, and a themed costume contest. Visit: <https://www.eurekaca.gov/855/Forest-Moon-Festival-at-Sequoia-Park> or call 707-441-4080 for information.