



760 Red Oak Lane
Highland Park, IL 60035
Phone: (847) 831-5100
Fax: (847) 831-5108

An initiative of the Illinois State Board of Education, Northern Suburban Special Education District and its Association of Parents and Staff

The Parent Mentor seeks to facilitate access to information and provide an opportunity to rethink or reframe an existing process.

The purpose of the Parent Mentor Program is to provide educational opportunities for parents and staff to learn effective communication skills as they work together to design and deliver programs for children with special needs. The program's intent is to build collaborative partnerships between parents, educators and administrators. An underlying principal of the program is to build trust between school staff and parents that will result in a non-adversarial approach to problem solving.

The Parent Mentor will provide parents and staff with training, networking opportunities, and resource information on the educational process or a specific disability. Parent Mentor services may also take the form of assisting individual parents with the various parts of their IEP process. Overall the Parent Mentor seeks to facilitate access to information and provide an opportunity to rethink or reframe an existing process or problem.

Funds for the program are provided by the Parent Mentor Project grant from the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE). 100% of the funds are from federal sources. The program and grant are in partnership with Northern Suburban Special Education District (NSSSED) and its Association of Parents and Staff (APS.)

Susan Hans, the NSSSED/APS Parent Mentor is the parent of four children, three with disabilities that require an Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

The Parents Mentor is available to:

- Provide workshops for parents, school personnel and community members
- Assist families in locating and accessing community resources
- Provide parents and school administrators resource information
- Assist parents in learning about the special education process, i.e. forms, evaluations, the IEP process, rights and safeguards
- Attend an IEP conference, or less formal meetings, when both parents and school personnel feel it would be beneficial to the process.

**Parent Mentor
Contact:
Susan C. Hans**

**(847) 831-5100 x228
shans@nssed.org
nssedparentmentor.org**