

ics, and bookkeeping through the Area Vocational Program at Pikes Peak Community College. Transportation to the campus is provided and some of the students receive an associate degree as a result of their studies. College instructors remain in close touch with transition staff to monitor student progress.

Students participating in the vocational program develop such skills as self-advocacy and the ability to ask for what they need to complete a task. Colleges do not refer to IEPs or other high school documents in assessing a student's capabilities.

Transition staff members meet with students as they leave the high school environment and ask them about their goals. They then determine a plan to meet the goals over the time allotted.

For those students who are unable to live independently at the end of the program, the Colorado State Resource Board may provide day services. Another local resource is Bright Future, an adult daycare facility.

Students who have met high school graduation requirements participate in the traditional graduation ceremony, but do not receive a diploma until they reach their goals or reach the age of 21.

**Group wants more effective use of funds**

Director for Exceptional Student Services Mary Anne Fleury reported that she had recently attended a meeting of the state Special Education Reinvented task force. The group said that a great deal of money has been spent on special education over the past decades with little result.

The group plans to apply to the federal Office of Special Education Programs for a waiver for the state of Colorado, which it says would allow it to spend federal resources in the most effective way. One of the group's proposals is to create individual growth plans for all students, not just those in the special education program. In this way, every student would work toward individual goals and the social stigma of an individual education plan (IEP) would be eliminated.

The group also discussed changing teacher certification requirements so that new teachers will receive more in-depth training in working with students with special needs.

Fleury said teachers are needed who will do whatever is necessary to allow all students to reach their individual potential. One current handicap is the inability to get general education teachers released from their daily responsibilities to attend special education training.

\*\*\*\*\*  
The Special Education Advisory Council meets at 6:30 p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month in the district's Learning Center, 146 Jefferson St., Monument.

The subject of next month's meeting is smooth transition for students moving from elementary to middle school and middle to high school in the district.

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