

### **Learner Outcomes**

Participants will learn strategies to

- Assist disputing parties to better communicate
- Identify issues of conflict
- Understand the underlying needs surrounding conflict
- Diffuse angry situations
- Help parties build consensus

### **Training Outcome**

This training is being sponsored by the Office for Dispute Resolution and Central Susquehanna Intermediate Unit 16 in a joint effort to provide an alternative method for school districts and parents to resolve disputes regarding special education issues. After completing this training, it is hopeful that participants will agree to enter into a Solutions Panel session in districts within the Central Susquehanna IU 16 when called upon to do so.

### **WHO TO CONTACT**

#### **To register for the training...**

Shirley Bastian,  
Central Susquehanna IU 16  
570-523-1155, ext 2250

#### **To find out more about the Solutions Panel Training...**

Linda McKay or Dixie Rider,  
Office for Dispute Resolution  
717-541-4960, ext 3424 or 3302

### **SAVE THE DATES!!**

*There is a 2-day follow-up Solutions Panels Training tentatively scheduled for **Tuesday, April 6, and Wednesday, April 7, 2004.** More details will follow.*

# **SOLUTIONS PANEL TRAINING**

An informal alternative for resolving special education disputes.

**Monday, March 22, 2004—  
Wednesday, March 24, 2004**

Country Cupboard  
Best Western  
Lewisburg, PA

Sponsored by

The Office for Dispute Resolution  
&  
Central Susquehanna Intermediate  
Unit 16

## **Solutions Panel Training**

### **What is a Solutions Panel?**

The Solutions Panel model is an informal process to support IEP teams in special education dispute resolution. As a form of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR), a Solutions Panel encourages parties to problem solve and reach a mutually beneficial agreement. Each panel consists of a parent and an educator, both trained in mediation skills.

### **What happens when a Panel is convened?**

The parties have a chance to state their positions, share concerns and listen to the other party's position. Panel members assist the parties in reaching an acceptable agreement. It is an informal, no-pressure environment which allows parents and schools to design their own resolution.

## **Why use a Solutions panel?**

- **Mutually Satisfying Resolution**

Rather than living with a decision made by a third party, such as a hearing officer, the parties craft their own agreement.

- **Maintain Positive Relationship**

The process builds a foundation of trust between parents and district personnel which enhances future interactions.

- **Fast**

Panels are scheduled at a mutually convenient time, usually within two weeks.

- **Confidential**

All participants and Solutions Panel members are bound by agreement to maintain confidentiality.

- **No Cost**

Panels are provided at no cost and do not involve the use of attorneys.

### **Format for training**

Each day will include lecture, discussion, activities, role-playing situations and a question/answer time.

### **Tentative Schedule**

#### **Day One**

The focus for this day is Negotiation Training. This day also includes topics such as conflict, needs, interest and issues, satisfaction necessary to resolve conflict, and communication.

#### **Day Two**

Role play will also be used extensively on this day to teach mediation skills and assist the parties with the skills necessary to diffuse angry situations.

#### **Day Three**

Mediation skills training continues role-play Solution Panel sessions, which are lengthy and require that the participants have attended the preceding two days of training. This day also includes an emphasis on consensus building.