

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
OFFICE OF OVERSEAS SCHOOLS

# TRANSITIONING

to & from a  
Foreign  
Assignment  
with a

CHILD  
WITH  
SPECIAL  
LEARNING  
NEEDS

*Prepared by the Advisory Committee on  
Exceptional Children and Youth*

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# INTRODUCTION

Every year, hundreds of United States Government families who have children with special needs must make career-related decisions about whether or not to go overseas, and if so, when and where. This guide is designed to help families think through such decisions and, in particular, to facilitate your child's transition to the most appropriate school setting possible. It is important to decide first what is right for your family, and then become proactive in developing a collaborative relationship with the Office of Overseas Schools and with international school leaders who are going to partner with you in this venture.

Private & independent international schools are not legally required to admit or accommodate students with special needs.



**BE CLEAR ABOUT  
YOUR CHILD'S  
NEEDS.**

However, many are striving to be

**INCLUSIVE**

& are happy to work with you.



## WHO IS A “CHILD WITH SPECIFIC AND/OR BEHAVIORAL NEEDS” IN THE INTERNATIONAL SETTING?

- While there is no official definition of a “child with special educational needs,” it can be a child who has some unique challenges with learning, school behaviors, or some combination of such conditions. If your child has encountered challenges with learning, or appropriate school behavior, requires specialized medical care, or needs therapies such as occupational, physical, or speech/language, has challenges with mobility, vision, or hearing, then it will be key to find out whether an international school can support these needs ahead of time.
- If your child needs educational interventions/accommodations/modifications because they struggle with learning or school behaviors, parents should understand that independent/private international schools are under no obligation to accommodate or to assess your child's special needs in the same way that your child's public school in the United States is required to do so. If your child has identified learning or behavioral needs, those needs may be understood differently in the international context.
- Most U.S. Government and private sector families abroad place their children in private, independent schools, not governed by the laws of the United States. While families are not limited to international/independent schools—and can consider host-country schools and home schooling—international schools are more likely be able to provide your child with continuity of support services.



## **WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT TO FIND FOR YOUR CHILD WHO HAS LEARNING CHALLENGES?**

There has been significant progress, especially over the last several years, in the willingness with which many international schools have embraced the concept of inclusive education and their capacity to support children with the range of special needs—mild, moderate, and more intensive. Many of these schools have added experienced/certified specialists in learning disabilities to their faculty. Virtually all schools offer special support to English language learners for children whose native language is not English. A growing number of international schools have also appointed related services staff such as speech and language therapists, physical and occupational therapists, as well as full- or part-time school psychologists. When there are no related services available in a school, parents need to ascertain whether these levels of specialized support are available in the community or if appropriate, via telehealth.

Remember these are private/independent schools, similar to mainstream private schools in the United States. Some schools do not see themselves as serving all children, although most generally attempt to give special consideration to dependents of U.S. Government employees. The more established, larger schools, while continuing a trend of being more selective and academically challenging, also have increasingly embraced an ethos of inclusive education, adding the programming and specialized staff to support their mission. Smaller, growing schools sometimes struggle with their ability to invest in the appointment of specialist learning support staff and other related services/personnel, resulting in a less robust capacity to support children with learning challenges.

## WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT TO FIND FOR YOUR CHILD WHO HAS LEARNING CHALLENGES? CONT.

Additionally, while the faculty is likely to include some trained American teachers, parents can expect a truly international mix of teachers who will bring an added level of richness to an international school. Upon acceptance to an international school, parents should proactively engage with school leaders and teachers to respectfully advocate for the supports needed for their child, recognizing that it may not be of the same level of services that exist in public schools in the United States.

It is important to share all of your child's academic and/or behavioral information with the prospective international school. Schools may request to review your child's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and/or psychoeducational evaluation in order to determine whether they have the resources to meet your child's needs. It is highly recommended that parents provide a prospective school with a letter from their child's current/previous teacher, or principal, that characterizes the child's academic strengths and areas for improvement as well as any specific learning and behavior issues. This recommendation letter can present a balance of a child's strengths and areas for growth.

## PROVIDE AN ACCURATE AND THOROUGH PICTURE OF YOUR CHILD'S LEARNING NEEDS



BE OPEN WITH  
SCHOOLS, MED, AND YOUR REO.

## TRANSPARENCY IS KEY

Everyone wants to make sure your child enrolls at a school that can support their needs.

The essentials: document a complete picture of your child's strengths and areas for improvement, and the interventions/accommodations needed for him or her to be successful. Then, be absolutely transparent about your child and about your own expectations. Clear communication will lead to an optimal and supportive school placement for your child.

- Organize an electronic portfolio for each of your children including, but not limited to, report cards, teacher comments/letter, results of any standardized testing, medical records, 504 Accommodation Plans, Individualized Education Plan (IEP), available psychoeducational testing, and relevant contact information for your child's current school.
- If your child receives special education services in the United States, as noted in the above section, be sure to secure copies of all reports from most recent psychoeducational and therapy (i.e., Speech Language Therapy (SLT), Occupational Therapy (OT), Physical Therapy (PT), Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA), etc.) assessments, and IEP to share with the prospective school. This information will enable admissions staff and school leaders to better understand your child's needs. If your child is admitted, the information will allow the school to develop an effective educational program.

## PROVIDE AN ACCURATE AND THOROUGH PICTURE OF YOUR CHILD'S LEARNING NEEDS CONT.

- If your child is receiving medication for a health or a behavioral challenge ensure that the dosage is current.
- Ascertain what special needs allowances are available through the Bureau of Medical Services Child and Family Program ([MEDCFP@state.gov](mailto:MEDCFP@state.gov)). Department of State families can reference the Department of State Standardized Regulations (DSSR), in the educational allowance provisions or directly contact/email the Office of Allowances ([GoAskAllowances@state.gov](mailto:GoAskAllowances@state.gov)) to determine the extent to which educational allowances can be provided. Parents are encouraged to reach out to the Child and Family Program to understand if they are eligible to receive additional funding through the Special Needs Educational Allowance (SNEA) ([MEDCFP@state.gov](mailto:MEDCFP@state.gov)).



## DO YOUR DUE DILIGENCE ABOUT PROSPECTIVE SCHOOLS

### EDUCATIONAL CONSULTATION

The Bureau of Medical Services Child and Family Program (CFP) recommends families begin the Medical Clearance process early and submit relevant supporting documentation which addresses your child's current special educational needs, as well as medical needs. For those children with special education needs, an educational consultation is required to complete the Medical Clearance process. During this consultation, families will be advised of their child's identified educational disabilities and educational services which would be eligible for the Special Needs Education Allowance (SNEA), as well as provided general information and resources for developing an educational plan for their child. Families will have the option to include educational resource needs in the Medical Clearance determination, which would allow the family to decline a proposed post that does not have educational resources available or include a proposed post as available for bidding regardless of educational resource availability. For those children with medical needs such as developmental, behavioral health, and mental health, CFP will be consulted to provide a review of medical conditions and related service needs. A review of available medical resources at proposed posts is required to complete the Medical Clearance process.



## DO YOUR DUE DILIGENCE ABOUT PROSPECTIVE SCHOOLS CONT.

### SPEAK WITH A REGIONAL EDUCATION OFFICER (REO)



Start early to understand the options on your bid list and what supports are available for your child. The Office of Overseas Schools is an excellent place to begin this important process. Regional Education Officers (REOs) will very likely have already personally visited the schools under consideration at each post. Another valuable resource is the Community Liaison Officer (CLO) and the Health Unit at the post(s) you are interested in.

- During the bidding process, contact the Office of Overseas Schools as the starting point. REOs will also encourage families to begin exploring the websites of the international schools, especially the [assisted school](#), if one exists, at the posts under consideration. REOs can assist with emphasizing posts where schools can meet students' special needs, and just as importantly, provide insightful feedback about which posts cannot deliver appropriate specialized services.
- The Office of Overseas Schools can provide a detailed overview of each of the school's academic and co-curricular programming key factors include special needs programming, its student and staff demographic data, accreditation status, facility overview, and other relevant information.

## DO YOUR DUE DILIGENCE ABOUT PROSPECTIVE SCHOOLS CONT.

- The Office of Overseas Schools maintains direct contact with roughly 200 Department of State assisted international schools, and, because families have school choice options, REOs can also provide invaluable information about alternative options, included other schools at post, known as “unassisted schools.”
- Special Needs Profiles are created annually for each assisted school and posted on the Office of Overseas Schools’ public website. For four decades, the Office of Overseas Schools has had a special interest in promoting education by helping Department assisted schools develop, review, and upgrade their services for students with special needs.
- Before families decide on a post, it is vital to begin an e-mail dialogue with the appropriate school admissions office immediately. At the appropriate time, during the admissions process, parents can and are encouraged to seek an opportunity to conduct a video meeting with the principal, counselor, or director/coordinator of learning support, as needed. Parents may also want to consider talking with other families at post whose children may be attending a particular school, and the CLO is a great resource to help facilitate this process.
- Be specific about which grade level(s) your child(ren) will be enrolled in when starting an overseas assignment. Special needs services are much more likely to be more readily available at the elementary and middle school levels than at the secondary level. While many overseas schools do provide some degree of special needs support at the high school level, parents should be aware that it is not usually at the same level that the earlier grades often provide.
- Only if it is appropriate and necessary for your child, parents may wish to investigate potential boarding school options in the United States, or abroad, for your child to attend while other family members fill an overseas assignment. The Global Community Liaison Office (GCLO) is an excellent resource for identifying prospective boarding schools generally and the Child and Family Program ([MEDCFP@state.gov](mailto:MEDCFP@state.gov)) can guide you on if the use of Special Needs Educational Allowance (SNEA) if appropriate.



## **BALANCING CAREER NEEDS OF PARENTS WITH THE NEEDS OF YOUR CHILDREN**

With all this information in hand, it is time for a serious family discussion. For parents choosing to serve at a post where some or all of their child's special education needs services are not available locally, it is important to carefully consider the impact to their child's development and if virtual services may be a viable option. Parents need to weigh carefully their career demands in light of the needs of their school age dependents. This is a huge issue for some families, especially for those in government agencies or departments in which overseas postings are essential for career advancement. Families must take into consideration whether prospective posts can provide specialized levels of support for your child.

There will be many entities eager to give parents advice about the matter, but no one can make this decision as wisely as the family. The special needs of some children may be so significant, or require such specialized services, that some overseas assignments are not possible. There are a limited number of posts that can accommodate students with more intensive needs. Review these posts with the REO.

However, more than likely, parents will be able to find a job and school that will work, if it is the right post. Initiate communications as early and as often as possible, with the Office of Overseas Schools and MED/CFP. REOs have the background and experience with schools at post and can provide frank opinions about best fit for your child educationally, very early on. Rely on their expertise to understand whether you should or should not consider a prospective post.

## THE APPLICATION PROCESS

Review application/admissions forms from the school(s) parents are considering (available on their web site). The biggest mistake that families make in going overseas with their child with special needs is to be less than transparent about their child's needs because they fear their child will not be admitted. Some parents hope that, once they have made the move, the school will somehow accommodate their child's needs. Schools want to be prepared appropriately so, take this approach: **BE FULLY TRANSPARENT**. Provide a full and comprehensive set of records when requested by the schools, as described earlier in this brochure.

Occasionally, especially for children who have challenges with behavior, parents truly hope that in a new setting, the concerns will disappear. They seldom do. Indeed, the move may temporarily exacerbate the behavior. If the school is given an accurate profile of your child's needs, there is a significantly better chance for your child to succeed, if they are admitted.

### Standard Portfolio

- ✦ Transcripts
- ✦ Report Cards
- ✦ Grade Level Projects
- ✦ Essays
- ✦ Standardized Test Results
- ✦ Grade Level Projects
- ✦ Recommendation letter from Teacher
- ✦ Art Projects
- ✦ Departing School Contact Information

@reallygreatsite

### Special Needs Portfolio Additions

- ✦ Medical records, including medications
- ✦ IEP/ILP/504 Accommodation Plan
- ✦ CURRENT psychoeducational evaluation
- ✦ Specific behavioral challenges with letter from the current teacher highlighting effective strategies for managing challenging behaviors
- ✦ Summarize concerns about development, learning, behavior, and/or mental health conditions

**BE FULLY  
TRANSPARENT!**



## GOING TO THE NEXT POST OR RETURNING TO THE UNITED STATES

Parents should understand and be prepared for each subsequent bidding process, at whatever interval that may occur. Take care in choosing where your family goes next and give as much time as possible to prepare the way. Now that parents have a better understanding of what it takes to create an effective transition, repeat all these steps with the new school. Even if it is a former school to which you are returning, be sure to follow these steps. Often personnel, especially school leadership, may have changed. If families are going to a new post in the United States, remember there may be several neighboring school districts from which to choose, some of which have more generous or more appropriate services for your child. Utilize the resources and expertise of the Global Community Liaison Office (GCLO) ([GCLOAskEducation@state.gov](mailto:GCLOAskEducation@state.gov)).

Be sure to maintain an electronic portfolio of all the documents for schools: report cards, memos after parent-teacher conferences, records of resource services, test reports, the IEP/ learning plan, psychoeducational evaluations, and samples of your child's work, so that the next transition can be made as smoothly as feasible. Give your child's current teachers and other relevant school staff ample time so that they can write summaries/profile letters which can help to create a more seamless transition.

If parents are returning to a public school in the United States, they should begin a dialogue with the office in the local school district that deals with special and/or gifted education regarding your child's needs. Overseas schools do not have the statutory requirement to write a legally valid IEP. Families who are posted abroad need to be aware that their child's IEP could expire while on the tour of duty. If the IEP expires, the child may likely need to undergo the determination of eligibility process again when the child returns to the United States in order to re-qualify for special educational services. Many overseas schools can write an educational plan that outlines goals and strategies for a child's education, but this is not the same legal document as an IEP written by a U.S. public school.

Although this process can be somewhat daunting, if families have a child with special needs, parents now have a better understanding of the process and resources available to make this a successful venture. Preparation, due diligence, transparency, capitalizing on the appropriate resources (Office of Overseas Schools, MED/CFP, and GCLO), optimism, and respect can more readily result in a more successful international school experience.

**ENJOY!**

# RESOURCES

You can find a rich set of resources to learn more about your child's special needs and available educational resources. Here are just a few websites, with additional resources available at [www.state.gov/special-needs-office-of-overseas-schools](http://www.state.gov/special-needs-office-of-overseas-schools) and [www.state.gov/bidding-office-of-overseas-schools](http://www.state.gov/bidding-office-of-overseas-schools).

## GENERAL INFORMATION

- [www.nichcy.org](http://www.nichcy.org) - National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities.
- [www.woodbinehouse.com](http://www.woodbinehouse.com) - Publisher of The Special Needs Collection, made up of books and other products on disabilities and related topics for parents, children, therapists, health care providers, and teachers.
- [www.autismspeaks.org](http://www.autismspeaks.org) - Non-profit organization that advocates and supports individuals and families with autism; increasing understanding and acceptance of people with autism; and advancing research into causes and better interventions for autism spectrum disorder and related conditions.
- [www.familyeducation.com](http://www.familyeducation.com) – Site for all children but contains a section on LD/Special Education issues such as reading challenges, homework strategies, skill building activities, and ADD and ADHD, including treatment and medication plans and behavior modification.
- [www.schwablearning.org](http://www.schwablearning.org) – Non-profit foundation that funds programs in learning differences and human services. Site addresses children with identified learning disabilities (LD), ADHD, and those who struggle with learning.
- [www.asha.org](http://www.asha.org) - American Speech-Language-Hearing Association.
- [www.ldanatl.org](http://www.ldanatl.org) – Learning Disabilities Association of America.
- [www.naspcenter.org](http://www.naspcenter.org) - National Association of School Psychologists.
- [www.cldinternational.org](http://www.cldinternational.org) – Council for Learning Disabilities.
- [www.ldonline.org](http://www.ldonline.org) – A parent resource with numerous articles and links to more information on disabilities and parent support groups.
- [www.understood.org](http://www.understood.org) - A website designed for parents and teachers of children with learning and attentional difficulties, with resources ranging from newsletters to teaching strategies.
- [www.iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu](http://www.iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu) - A resource on effective evidence-based practices and interventions for all children, especially those with learning difficulties.



# RESOURCES

## SPECIFIC LEARNING DISABILITIES

- [www.interdys.org](http://www.interdys.org) - International Dyslexia Association.
- [www.chadd.org](http://www.chadd.org) – Association for Children and Adults with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder.
- [www.nlda.org](http://www.nlda.org) – Nonverbal Learning Disabilities Association.
- [www.understood.org](http://www.understood.org) – This organization includes information and resources relevant to specific learning disabilities and difficulties in language, reading, attention, and mathematics.

## TWICE EXCEPTIONAL (2E)

- [www.2enewsletter.com](http://www.2enewsletter.com) - 2eNewsletter-A monthly e-newspaper for parents providing advice and resources for children who are twice exceptional.
- [www.hoagiesgifted.org/twice\\_exceptional.htm](http://www.hoagiesgifted.org/twice_exceptional.htm) - Huge website providing resources for parents of twice exceptional children.
- [www.nagc.org/twice-exceptional-special-interest-group](http://www.nagc.org/twice-exceptional-special-interest-group) - Network of researchers, teachers, and parents who share resources and strategies about 2e learners.
- [www.davidsongifted.org](http://www.davidsongifted.org) - Several articles for parents, providing tips for meeting the needs of children who are twice exceptional.
- **Trail, B. A. (2011).** Twice exceptional gifted children: Understanding, teaching, and counseling gifted students. Waco, TX: Prufrock Press.  
This book is a very practical book for teachers and parents about how to help twice-exceptional children set goals and get the education they need in today's schools.
- **Webb, J. T., Amend, E. R., Webb, N. E., Goerss, J., Beljan, P., & Olenchak, F. R. (2005).** Misdiagnosis and dual diagnoses of gifted children and adults. Tucson, AZ: Great Potential Press.  
This book shares much about the psychological issues of presenting with a variety of disabilities or disorders while also presenting with giftedness.
- **Weinfeld, R., Barnes-Robinson, L., Jeweler, S., & Shevita, B. R. (2006).** Smart kids with learning difficulties: Overcoming obstacles and realizing potential. Waco, TX: Prufrock Press.  
This book excels at suggesting teaching activities and parental strategies that help twice-exceptional children deal with their asynchronies.

# RESOURCES CONT.

## DYSLEXIA

- **Hall, S. L., & Moats, L.C.** (1999) *Straight Talk About Reading: How Parents Can Make a Difference in the Early Years.* Contemporary Books.
- **Moats, L.C., & Dakin, K.** (2007). *Basic Facts about Dyslexia and Other Reading Problems.* International Dyslexia Association.
- **Shaywitz, S.,** *Overcoming Dyslexia: A new and Complete Science-Based Program for Reading Problems at Any Level,* Borzoi, New York, 2003.

This book takes advantage of recent brain research that demonstrates the ways in which dyslexic children differ in their processing of language/reading from other children, explains developmental progressions, and provides abundant strategies for parents and teachers to help dyslexic children become successful.

## LANGUAGE

- **Gaulin, Cindy.** *Children's Language Processing Problems: A Guide for Parents and Teachers.* Xlibris Corporation, 2000.



# RESOURCES CONT.

## CHILDREN'S TEMPERAMENT

- **Carey, William B. with Jablow, Martha M.**, Understanding Your Child's Temperament, Simon & Schuster MacMillan, New York, NY, 1998.

William Carey, M.D., heads the Behavioral Pediatrics program at The Children's Hospital in Philadelphia. Based on his many years as a practicing pediatrician, he shows how understanding individual differences in temperament can help parents work with children with particular temperaments or behavioral styles. The book is written specifically for parents and contains useful and common sense suggestions.

- **Kristal, Jan**, The Temperament Perspective: Working with Children's Behavioral Styles, Paul Brookes, Baltimore, Maryland, 2005.

A comprehensive discussion of temperament theory and applications. Based on her own research and clinical experience, Kristal describes temperament from infancy through the school years, showing how temperament contributes to children's adjustment and behavior. There are many examples of temperament types and suggestions for parents.

- **Kurcinka, Mary Sheedy**, Raising Your Spirited Child, Harper Collins, New York, NY, 1998.

Practical suggestions and strategies for parents when interacting with a high active, intense, energetic, and "challenging" children. The book is based on Kurcinka's extensive experience working with parents, children, and families, and is filled with useful insights and recommendations.



# RESOURCES CONT.

## WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE

- [www.state.gov/m/a/os](http://www.state.gov/m/a/os) – Office of Overseas Schools. This site contains links to information and additional resources on special needs, to the Regional Education Officers, to one-page fact sheets for all the schools assisted by the Department of State with links to their e-mail and web sites, and to education associations and organizations with useful information on transitioning overseas.
- [www.state.gov/global-community-liaison-office/education-and-youth](http://www.state.gov/global-community-liaison-office/education-and-youth) – The Global Community Liaison Office, Education and Youth. This site contains a variety of information specifically related to educating the Foreign Service child, including gifted education, homeschooling, special educational needs, relocation, and third culture kids.
- [aoprals.state.gov](http://aoprals.state.gov) – Office of Allowances, Department of State Standardized Regulations (DSSR) on education. This site contains information on educational allowances available to civilian employees of the U.S. Government and their families.
- [www.state.gov/global-community-liaison-office/education-and-youth/special-needs-and-the-foreign-service-child](http://www.state.gov/global-community-liaison-office/education-and-youth/special-needs-and-the-foreign-service-child) – The Global Community Liaison Office has compiled numerous links to organizations that are helpful to the internationally mobile family.



## RESOURCES CONT. LIVING ABROAD

These resources do not deal with children with special needs but may help you anticipate some of the complexities you'll be facing as you prepare for the international move and in raising children in the overseas environment.

- **Gopnik, A.**, Paris to the Moon, Random House, New York, New York, 2000.

A personal, good-humored account of one young family living abroad. Much of this was originally published in the New Yorker.

- **Jehle-Caitcheon, Ngaire**, Parenting Abroad, Aletheia Publications, Putnam Valley, New York, 2003.

Written by an expatriate who lived abroad for twenty-six years, this guide provides useful insights on the many and complicated issues that arise as one raises children abroad.

- **Kalb, Rosalind and Welch, Penelope**, Moving Your Family Overseas, Intercultural Press, Inc., Yarmouth, Maine, 1992.  
<http://interculturalpress.com>

The authors of this book are Americans who draw on their personal experiences to balance general advice and detailed suggestions as they explore the major issues in raising children in the internationally mobile lifestyle.

- **McCluskey, Karen C., ed.**, Notes from a Traveling Childhood, Foreign Service Youth Foundation, Washington, D.C., 1994. [www.fsyf.org](http://www.fsyf.org)

This paperback is an anthology of writings by parents, children, educators, researchers, and mental health professionals about the effects of international mobility on children.

- **Meltzer, Gail and Grandjean, Elaine**, The Moving Experience: A Practical Guide to Psychological Survival, Multilingual Matters, Ltd., Cleveland, England, 1989.

This book gives practical suggestions for surviving the psychological stresses and challenges of moving for both local and international moves.

- **Parker, Elizabeth and Rumrill-Teece, Katharine**, Here Today There Tomorrow, A Training Manual for Working with Internationally Mobile Youth, Foreign Service Youth Foundation, Washington, D.C., 2001.  
[www.fsyf.org](http://www.fsyf.org)

This manual is designed to help facilitators provide a framework for mobile teenagers to interact with each other and to deal with relocation and cross-cultural issues that affect their identity and worldview.

## RESOURCES CONT. LIVING ABROAD

- **Pollack, David C. and Van Reken, Ruth**, *The Third Culture Kid Experience*, Intercultural Press, Inc., Yarmouth, Maine, 1999.  
<http://interculturalpress.com>

Based on both research and the personal stories of countless individuals, this book fully explores the various implications of growing up abroad as a “Third Culture Kid.” The authors are internationally considered to be leaders and experts in the field of TCK studies.

- **Seaman, Paul Asbury**, *Paper Airplanes in the Himalayas – the Unfinished Path Home*, Cross Cultural Publications, Inc., South Bend, Indiana, 1997. An autobiographical account by a “Third Culture Kid” of his journey from his childhood in Pakistan, to a boarding school for missionary kids to the struggle in his adult years to find a sense of belonging. Recounts one man’s struggles to find peace with the “Third Culture Kid” experience.

- **Taber, Sara M**, *Of Many Lands, Journal of a Traveling Childhood*, Foreign Service Youth Foundation, Washington, D.C., 1997. [www.fsyf.org/](http://www.fsyf.org/) A journal for people brought up in foreign countries. It is designed as a learning and exploration tool to help those of many lands in the long process of putting together the stories of their lives. It consists of excerpts that describe experiences the author had at different ages in different countries, followed by prompts or questions designed to evoke the reader’s own life experiences.

- **Westphal, C.**, *A Family Year Abroad: How to Live Outside the Borders*. Great Potential Press. [www.giftedbooks.com](http://www.giftedbooks.com), 2001.

This paperback book is part narrative of a family’s year abroad and part instruction manual for individuals and families considering spending an extended period outside their country.



# RESOURCES CONT.

## RETURNING HOME

- **Copeland, Anne (Ph.D.) and Bennett, Georgia**, Understanding American Schools: The Answers to Newcomers' Most Frequently Asked Question, The Interchange Institute, Brookline, Massachusetts, 2001. [www.interchangeinstitute.org/html/schools.htm](http://www.interchangeinstitute.org/html/schools.htm).

This book guides newcomers to the United States, or those who have been abroad for a long time, about the challenges of understanding the U.S. school system. Foreign born spouses might find this book especially helpful.

- **Eakin, Kay Branaman**, According to My Passport, I'm Coming Home. Family Liaison Office, Department of State, Washington, D.C., 1998.

This book addresses the challenges faced by children returning "home" from another country and discusses their transitional and reentry needs. It can be accessed at [www.state.gov/documents/organization/2065.pdf](http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/2065.pdf).

- **Smith, Carolyn**, Strangers at Home: Essays on the Effects of Living Overseas and Coming "Home" to a Strange Land. Aletheia Publications, Putnam, New York.

The editor of this book is a Foreign Service spouse who understands well the full implications of the internationally nomadic lifestyle. The compilations of essays by others who have been through it offer many insights, as well as practical suggestions for helping children – especially teenagers – to adjust.



# RESOURCES CONT.

## HOME AND SCHOOL ENRICHMENT

- **Michael Clay Thompson Language Arts Program** (Royal Fireworks Press).

There are 6 language arts strands (Vocabulary, Grammar, Literary Analysis, Academic Writing, Practice, and Poetics with separate materials for grades 1 –12. This program has also been written for online learning with strong pedagogical formatting.

- **College of William and Mary Jacob's Ladder series** (Kendall Hunt/Prufrock Press).

This program advanced reading comprehension with 16 different comprehension skills, applied on a series of short readings in all literary genre. Many activities are suggested for teaching these skills.

- **Beast Academy** (Art of Problem Solving Foundation).

These materials come in four booklets over the course of each grade from grade 1 -6. The graphic use of different beasts to teach extended mathematics is highly accessible to gifted as well as twice exceptional learners. There are multiple levels of extension for the skills taught, so all learners well beyond their current grade level math outcomes can benefit. The foundation also has materials that prepare learners for math competitions, including the math Olympics, and takes students more deeply into math for the middle school and high school years than regular math texts do.

- Additional units of instruction for gifted learners can be found in Prufrock Press and Royal Fireworks Press. The College of William and Mary math, science, social studies, and language arts (Prufrock Press) are extraordinary as are the Problem-Based science and math units at Royal Fireworks Press.
- For reluctant writers, a good motivational text is *Unjournaling*, a small book with hundreds of writing starters, such as write a paragraph without using the letter "t" or the word, "and."

# RESOURCES CONT.

## VIRTUAL SERVICE PROVIDERS

- **Behavior Solutions Lab** [www.behavioursolutionslab.com](http://www.behavioursolutionslab.com)

Provides services in General Behavior, Executive Function, Autism, and ADHD.

- **Conduit** [we-conduit.org/our-mission](http://we-conduit.org/our-mission)

Provides services in Dyslexia, Autism, and ADHD.

- **Global Education Therapy** [www.globaleducationtherapy.com](http://www.globaleducationtherapy.com)

Provides services in Speech Therapy, Occupational Therapy, and Learning Tutors.

- **Global Village Tutors** [www.globalvillagetutors.org](http://www.globalvillagetutors.org)

Provides services in Dyslexia and ADHD.

- **Hemispheres Academy** [hemispheresacademy.org](http://hemispheresacademy.org)

Provides services in Personalized Online Learning set to the state of Virginia learning standards.

- **International Diagnostic Solutions** [www.idsalliance.com](http://www.idsalliance.com)

Provides a range of services including psychological evaluations, mobile special needs services, and mental health.

- **Linden Global Learning & Support** [www.linden-education.com](http://www.linden-education.com)

Provides a full range of services, including professional development.

- **Tiny Eye** [tinyeye.com](http://tinyeye.com)

Provides services in Speech-Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, School Counseling, Social Work, and Educational Psychology within the US, Canada and Europe.

- **Winston Preparatory Academy** [www.winstonprep.edu](http://www.winstonprep.edu)

Provides services in Dyslexia, ADHD, and Autistic Spectrum.

- **Virtually ConnectEd** [www.virtuallyconnectedu.com](http://www.virtuallyconnectedu.com)

Provides a full range of services, including English as an Additional Language.

# OFFICE OF OVERSEAS SCHOOLS CONTACTS

The Office of Overseas Schools is staffed with a Director, Administrative Staff, and Regional Education Officers (REOs), each assigned oversight of a geographic region. All are well-informed about schools attended by U. S. citizen school-age dependent children. For information about overseas schools, you are encouraged to contact The Office of Overseas Schools as early in your bidding and assignment process as possible.

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U.S. Department of State  
Room H328, SA-1  
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## **Director**

Mr. Mark E. Ulfers

## **Strategic Initiatives**

Ms. Catarina Chen

## **Resource Center**

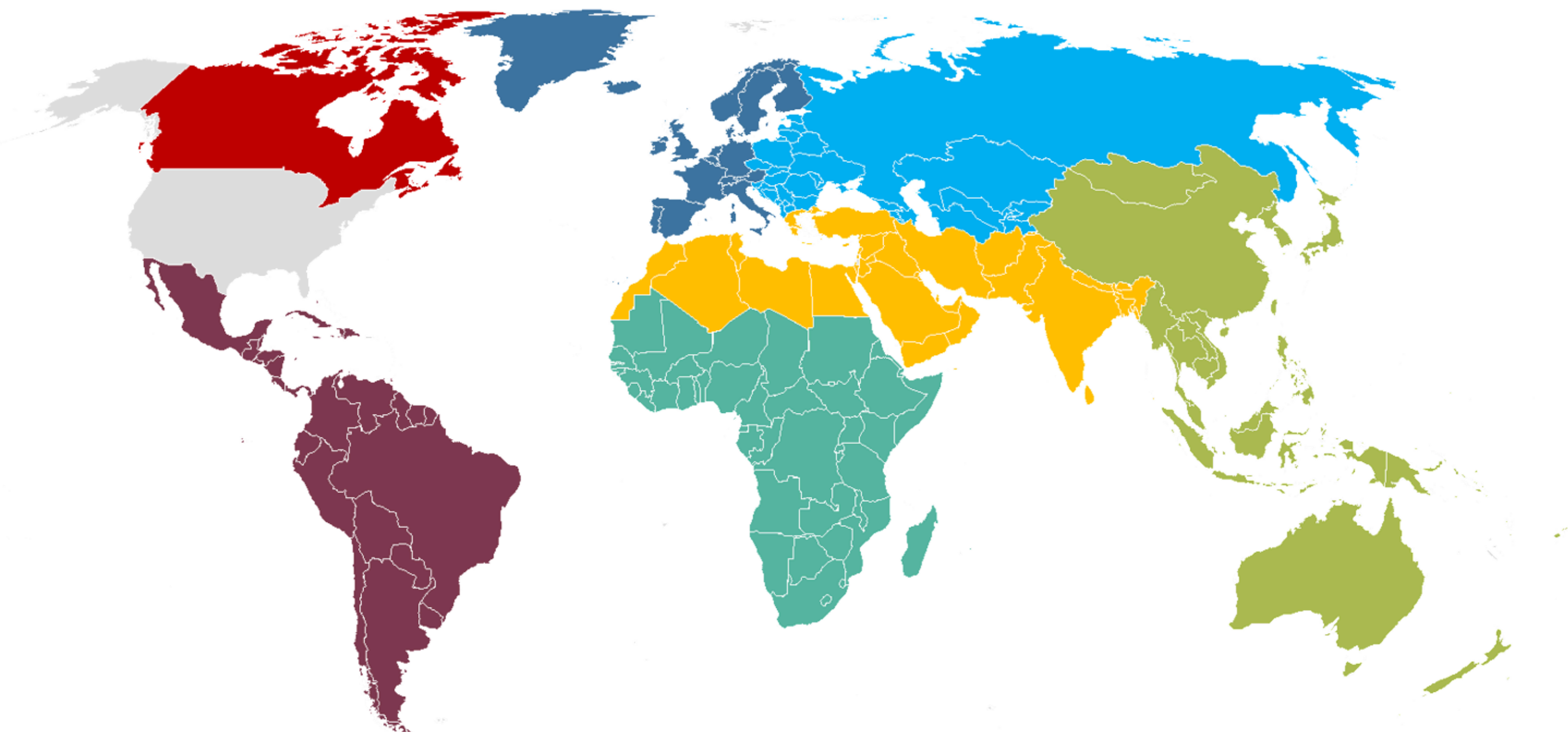
Ms. Elise N. Webb

Ms. Katharine Wakeley

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The Office of Overseas Schools is pleased to work with the esteemed group of experts in the area of special needs education who are members of the Advisory Committee on Exceptional Children and Youth. To learn more about this committee please visit [www.state.gov/transitioning-to-an-overseas-assignment-with-a-child-with-special-needs/advisory-committee-on-exceptional-children-and-youth](http://www.state.gov/transitioning-to-an-overseas-assignment-with-a-child-with-special-needs/advisory-committee-on-exceptional-children-and-youth).

## REO REGIONS



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### REGIONAL EDUCATION OFFICERS

**Eastern Europe,  
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**Africa**  
Dr. Bobbi R.  
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**East Asia Pacific**  
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