

# BRENDA VAN GORDER, M.ED.

944 Williamstown Court  
Park City, UT 84098

<b>EXPERTISE</b>	Preschool education, preschool special education, and educational administration, including legal foundations for special education and program compliance with various legal and educational standards for preschool instruction.
<b>ACADEMIC</b>	M. Ed., Educational Administration, Canyon College, 2003, Licensure: School Administrator
<b>BACKGROUND</b>	M. Ed., Special Education, Utah State University, 1984, Licensure: Severe/Profound K-12, Birth-5 B. S., Special Education, Utah State University, 1983, Licensure: Mild/ Moderate K-12

## WORK HISTORY

### ADMINISTRATIVE WORK EXPERIENCE:

#### **Granite School District, Director – Preschool Services, November 2003- Present**

- Develop, manage and balance \$7 million+ budget from multiple state and federal sources including Title 1, Even Start, Special Education, Tuition-based Community Preschool, federal grants, community and foundation grants.
- Developed, co-wrote and co-administered federal Early Learning Outcomes and preschool standards grant - \$225,000.00 – web based standards are used to develop standards-based IEPs.
- Direct Supervisor of 250 staff members – assistant director, teachers, related service providers, support staff, and paraprofessionals
- Developed, wrote and Administrator of federal Early Reading First Grant – 3 year total - \$4.8 million – independent research is showing marked student achievement which is sustained into elementary grades.
- Researches and adopts effective research based practices program wide.
- Outstanding recruitment record for securing staff in critical shortage areas – tripled the staff of speech language pathologists in 5 years, lowering case loads to manageable and appropriate levels
- Developed and administers Granite Preschool Evaluation Center – well planned, comprehensive evaluations for special education eligibility.
- Develops and implements training in federal IDEA and state special education laws/regulations/rules, curriculum, district policies and practices, and other early childhood related topics locally, state-wide, nationally and internationally – keeping staff informed of local and national research.
- Developed defensible and useable Policies and Procedures regarding all aspects of the preschool program.
- Develop and oversee interagency agreements with Head Start, Early Intervention, The Children’s Center (Behavior Disorders), Valley Mental Health (mental health services) and Carmen Pingree School (Autism Programs).
- Collaborate to secure services from Utah Schools for Deaf and Blind.

#### **University of Utah, Department of Special Education, Associate Professor, May 2005 - Present**

- Teach Legal Foundations of Special Education (SpEd 5040/6040) course to undergraduate, graduate, doctoral special education candidates, graduate and doctoral educational psychology candidates, school administration certificate candidates, and law students from the School of Law who are interested in the field of special education litigation
- Student evaluations consistently surpass department and college of education averages.

#### **Mountain Plains Regional Resource Center/Technical Assistance for Excellence in Special Education (TAESE)**

**Contract Monitor, Contract Complaints Investigator, Contract Accountability Specialist, March 2001- Present**

- Contract monitor and team leader for the Bureau of Indian Education (Bureau and Grant Schools) monitoring of Federal and Bureau IDEA/Special Education compliance. Develop comprehensive reports of findings.
- Contract state level complaint investigator for the following states: Bureau of Indian Education, Colorado, New Mexico, South Dakota, and Wyoming. Conduct investigations, and complete investigation findings reports for formal complaints filed under the IDEA.
- Contract Mediator for Bureau of Indian Education for formal complaints and due process hearing requests.
- Team leader and technical assistance provider for 5 New Mexico school districts who are at Level 3 status (Needs Intervention) under IDEA and State determinations.
- Provide technical assistance in early childhood - development of compliant Memorandums of Understanding, curriculum, IEP development, service delivery patterns and models

**Sopris West Educational Services/Cambian Learning Company, Consultant/Trainer, January 2010-Present**

- Develop We Can! Curriculum Program Guide for text book adoption process for the State of Texas.
- Presenter at Rocky Mountain Institute – *So Much More Than ABC's and 123's: Developing Appropriate Content for a High Quality Preschool Program.*
- Presenter for the Washington DC Public Schools Early Childhood Staff on effective practices and positive behavioral supports in preschool classrooms

**New York Department of Education, Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (VESID)**

**Consultant/Trainer, May 2003-Present**

- Assisted in developing New York State Special Education Complaint Investigators Manual, and provides on-going training and consultation to all 75 state investigators.
- Presenter/trainer on the use of birth-5 standards with developing standards based IEPs
- Education consultant to the New York Attorney General's office on behalf of the New York Department of Education regarding special education Least Restrictive Environment for a state special education court case.
- Reader for multiple state level special education discretionary grants.

**Utah State Office of Education, Education Specialist: State and Federal Compliance Officer, December 1999-November 2003**

- Provide statewide leadership and training in special education federal statutes, regulations and state rules.
- Coordinate and consult with Utah Attorney General's Office regarding special education issues and court cases.
- Interpret and provide guidance on Federal IDEA Regulations for Utah State Office of Education.
- Consult with Districts & Charter Schools regarding mediation, due process, and court cases.
- Developed and administered special education formal compliant investigation system.
- Redeveloped special education mediation and due process systems, including random, rotation for assignments, required trainings, and tests for mediators and hearing officers.
- Chairperson of the Utah State Special Education Finance Committee.
- Liaison to the Legislative Coalition for People with Disabilities, working with them in preparing requests for legislative funding.
- Developed Utah Special Education Rules – 2000 from the 1997 reauthorization when multiple major changes in the laws occurred.
- Developed sample policies and procedures manuals for districts and charter schools to use as a model to be in compliance with state and federal regulations.
- Provide technical assistance and statewide leadership in the area of severe disabilities.
- Provide technical assistance and trainings for Utah Charter Schools in multiple aspects of special education compliance.
- Review and approve special education licensure applications for out of state and ARL candidates.
- Collaborate with and conduct collaborative training with Utah Disability Law Center, changing the relationship between USOE and the law center.
- Co-trainer and collaboration with Utah State Office of Education Equity Department in the areas of Section 504, ADA and OCR complaints/issues

- Guest lecturer for multiple university and college pre-service courses, in the areas of compliance, state rules, federal regulations, programming, inclusion and transition.

**Utah State Office of Education, Education Specialist: Preschool Special Education/619 Coordinator, September 1997-March 2000 and July 2001-November 2003**

- *Honored by Utah Baby Watch Early Intervention Interagency Coordinating Council as Outstanding Administrator in Preschool Special Education in 2000 and 2003*
- *Honored by Utah Legislative Coalition for People with Disabilities as leader and advocate for people with disabilities 1998*
- Provide statewide technical assistance, and conduct in-service, workshops and conference session in all aspects of early childhood special education, including IDEA requirements, programmatic issues, compliance, curriculum, and parental involvement.
- Oversee preschool/619 discretionary projects and research, including Supporting Inclusion of Preschool Children (SIPC) and Preschool Behavior and Educational Strategies for Teachers (BEST).
- Provide technical assistance and collaborate with Utah Migrant Head Start.
- Co-chair statewide Access to the General Curriculum/LRE training initiative.
- Developed statewide EI to Preschool transition and IEP training guides/videos, DVD and training manual.
- Co-developed Parent version of the EI to Preschool training guide and video.
- Provide leadership, oversight, development and monitoring of state level Interagency Agreements and facilitation of local agreements.
- Chairperson, provide oversight of Statewide Preschool Conferences for 5 years (1200 participants annually).
- Developed State Least Restrictive Environment Technical Assistance Manual.
- Developed State Evaluation and Placement Technical Assistance Manual.

**Davis County School District, Family Enrichment Center – Early Childhood Programs  
Preschool Special Education Supervisor/Coordinator, August 1994-September 1997**

- *Honored by Davis Board of Education for Outstanding Service and Dedication, 1997.*
- Supervised and evaluated professional staff (21 special education teachers and related service providers).
- Trained professional and paraprofessional staff on preschool special education issues – including modifications, adaptations, teaching strategies, district guidelines, state and federal regulations, transitions (EI to Preschool and Preschool to Kindergarten), IEP development, and LRE.
- Enhanced and implemented district wide child find with community based outreach system, and regularly scheduled screenings.
- Team Leader of district wide Behavioral Assistance and Resource Team (B.A.R.T.).
- Coordinated with Head Start, community based and other regular education preschool programs.
- Planned and organized transitions from EI to Preschool and Preschool to Kindergarten ensuring smooth and seamless transitions for children.

**TEACHING EXPERIENCE:**

**Kenton County Board of Education, Erlanger Kentucky – August 1989-June 1994**

Teacher – Resource, mild/moderate and behavior disorders Grades 4-6 (2 yrs), and Preschool (3 yrs)  
*Honored by Kentucky Department of Education as Model Preschool Sight and Resource Teacher, 1993*

**Jordan School District, Sandy, Utah - August 1986-June 1989**

Preschool Special Education Teacher (Birth to Five)

**Ogden City School District, Ogden Utah – August 1984-June 1986**

Teacher – Special Education Autism K-5

**OTHER QUALIFICATIONS:**

- Monthly contributor to the Utah Special Educator regarding Special Education Rules and regulations implementation for 4 years, plus additional guest articles.
- Certified Grant Writer through Research Associates since 2007.

- Private consulting with attorneys regarding special education issues and implementation of IDEA (Florida, New York, Tennessee)
- Special Education representative on university and secondary schools accreditation teams.

**COUNCIL AND BOARD MEMBERSHIPS:**

- Governor’s Early Childhood Advisory Board Member
- UEN Preschool Pioneer Library Board Member
- Utah Parent Center Board Member
- Advisory Board – Utah State University – EC-ATP (alt teacher prep for EC)
- Multi-University Consortium Board
- Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)
- CEC – Division of Early Childhood (DEC) – Past state Secretary and Treasurer
- CEC- Council for Administrator of Special Education (CASE)
- National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)

**STATE LEVEL COMMITTEES:**

- Utah State Special Education Finance Committee (Chair)
- Least Restrictive Behavioral Interventions (LRBI)
- Access to the General Curriculum/LRE (Chair)
- State Title 1/Regular Education Preschool Committee
- Utah State Office of Education Preschool Evaluation/Eligibility (Chair)

**DISTRICT LEVEL COMMITTEES/WORKGROUPS**

- Minority Achievement Steering Committee
- Special Education Monitoring Committee
- Student Achievement School Accountability Committee (SASA)
- Numeracy Committee
- Literacy Committee
- Instructional Practices Team (IPT)
- Student & School Achievement Plan (SSAP) Review Committee member for Title 1 Schools

**PRESENTATIONS:**

Complete list of topics and dates for local, state, national and international presentations, trainings, and workshops available upon request.