

**Anne Marie Ophus, High School Special Education Teacher**

If the high school is renovated and the space for special education is carefully designed, I could have both an instructional space and a testing space which would better meet the needs of my students. A better classroom design would take into consideration my students' need for grouping - special education is based on individualized instruction but frequently I have a mix of students (such as those needing reading, writing or math) all in the room together. While I have an aid who assists with the various groups, our difficulty is finding ways to adequately separate the groups to avoid distractions. Add to that students who need to come to the Resource Room to test for another class, and we find there is no good way to provide the quiet environment many of these students must have in order to learn. A well-designed classroom with a separate area for testing would improve student learning by offering a better environment in which to concentrate. For my students, the most important issue is having a large enough space to be effective and to be located within the school building, not across the road in a portable.