Child Advocacy and the IEP Process

Resource and Adoptive Parent Training Conference

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Road Map for this Session

• Special Education Overview
• Who is a Parent Under Article 7?
• Parental Participation in Special Education
• Advocacy Resources
Section 1

Special Education

Overview
• The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)


• Article 7

  511 I.A.C. 7
The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) (2004) outlines 6 critical provisions to ensure students with disabilities can access public education in a way that is meaningful and empowering.
ARTICLE 7 REVIEW
Six Principles of IDEA 2004

I. Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)
II. Appropriate Educational Evaluation
III. Individualized Education Program (IEP)
IV. Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)
V. Procedural Safeguards (NOPS)
VI. Parent’s Participation (CCC)
The Sixth Principle – Parent Participation

• Parents and students are afforded procedural safeguards
• These safeguards are intended to give parents a meaningful opportunity to participate in the decision-making process of their child’s education

20 USC § 1400 through 20 USC § 1450; 350 CFR § 300
ARTICLE 7 REVIEW
Rule 32: Definitions

- **FAPE**: Special education & related services that are provided at public expense & in accordance with an IEP

- **Student with a Disability**: Student who has been evaluated in accordance with Art. 7 and determined eligible for special education & related services by a CCC
ARTICLE 7 REVIEW

Rule 32: Definitions

• **Special Education**: specially designed instruction provided to students who have been determined eligible through an educational evaluation

• **Related Services**: Services that are necessary to allow the student to benefit from her special education
ARTICLE 7 REVIEW
Rule 32: Definitions

• **At No Cost**: Parent does not have to pay for special education & related services

• **Case Conference Committee**: group of individuals that determines if the student is eligible for SPED & determines appropriate services to provide
ARTICLE 7 REVIEW
Rule 32: Definitions

• **Individualized Education Program**: Written document developed by CCC that describes how student will participate in general education curriculum & SPED

• **Least Restrictive Environment**: Student with a disability is educated with students without disabilities to the extent possible
Who Shall Receive a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)?

- Eligibility:
  - at least 3 years of age; through the school year when student turns 22 years of age
ARTICLE 7 REVIEW
Rule 40: Identification & Evaluation

• To be eligible for special education and related services, the CCC must determine that the child is a student with a disability

• An Educational Evaluation is used to assess specific areas of educational need
ARTICLE 7 REVIEW
Rule 40: Identification & Evaluation

STEP ONE: REFERRAL

• A party must request that a student be evaluated for a suspected disability
• Requester may be a parent or a school representative
• Need written parental consent
ARTICLE 7 REVIEW
Rule 40: Identification & Evaluation

**STEP TWO: NOTICE OF EVALUATION**

- School must provide parent with written notice within 10 instructional days of request
- School must provide parents with a copy of the *Notice of Procedural Safeguards*
STEP TWO: NOTICE OF EVALUATION

School Agrees:
- Evaluation Timeline
- Description of Evaluation Procedures
- How parent may obtain a copy of report; schedule meeting to discuss results before CCC

School Disagrees:
- Notice must outline actions parent can take if they disagree with school’s denial
- Parent can request mediation or due process hearing
ARTICLE 7 REVIEW
Rule 40: Identification & Evaluation

STEP THREE: MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAM

• Conducts educational evaluation
• Reviews existing information
• Identifies suspected disability
• Determines what additional information is necessary to determine student eligibility
ARTICLE 7 REVIEW
Rule 41: Eligibility Criteria

- Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Blind/Low Vision
- Cognitive Disability
- Deaf/Hard of Hearing
- Deaf-Blind
- Developmental Delay
- Emotional Disability
- Language/Speech Impairment
- Multiple Disabilities
- Other Health Impairments
- Orthopedic Impairment
- Specific learning Disability
- Traumatic Brain Injury
ARTICLE 7 REVIEW
Rule 40: Identification & Evaluation

STEP THREE: MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAM
The Report

• Development
• Cognition
• Academic Achievement
• Functional Performance/Adaptive Behavior
• Communication Skills
• Motor Skills & Sensory Responses
• Social & Developmental History
• Medical & Mental Health Information
• Any Other Assessments
ARTICLE 7 REVIEW
Rule 40: Identification & Evaluation

STEP FOUR: CASE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

• Meeting held with school personnel and parents to:
  • review educational evaluation
  • Determine eligibility for SPED & related services
• Must occur within 50 school days from date of written parental consent
STEP FIVE: INDEPENDENT EDUCATIONAL EVALUATION (IEE)

- If parent disagrees with the results of the school’s evaluation, they may request an IEE
- At public expense
- Independent, private evaluator
ARTICLE 7 REVIEW
Rule 40: Identification & Evaluation

STEP SIX: REEVALUATION

- School must consider need for reevaluation once every three years
- CCC may decide that reevaluation is needed at any time
- Parent or teacher may request a reevaluation, but need parental consent
ARTICLE 7 REVIEW
Rule 40: Identification & Evaluation

STEP SIX: REEVALUATION

• Timeline
  • One year to reestablish student’s eligibility under current disability category
  • 50 instructional days to determine if student’s eligible under a different/additional disability category
Early Intervening Services & Response to Intervention

• Schools may implement comprehensive & coordinated early intervening services
  • Provided to students who have not been identified but need additional academic & behavioral support: Response to Intervention (RtI)
ARTICLE 7 REVIEW
Rule 42: Determination of Special Education Services

Who is a Part of the Case Conference Committee?

• Public Agency Representative
• Teacher of Record
• General Education Teacher
• Instructional Strategist
• Parents
• Student (required after age 14 or earlier per parent request)
When does a Case Conference Committee convene?

• Within timeline for initial evaluation or reevaluation
• At least annually
• When requested by parent or school personnel
• Within 10 school days of date a student enrolls from another school district or state
• Within 10 school days of disciplinary change of placement
• To determine IAES
• Every 60 schools days when student on full-time homebound services
ARTICLE 7 REVIEW
Rule 42: Determination of Special Education Services

Responsibilities of Case Conference Committees

• Review educational evaluation to determine eligibility
• Review present levels of performance & educational progress
• Develop, review & revise IEP
• Determine appropriate SPED & related services
• Determine where, when & duration of services
• Address other matters relating to the provision of FAPE
Decision-making in a Case Conference Committee

• Is the student eligible as a student with a disability?
• If so, what disability category/ies?
• If eligible, what are the student’s educational needs, and what SPED & related services are appropriate?
ARTICLE 7 REVIEW
Rule 42: Determination of Special Education Services

THE IEP

Factors to Consider:
• Student’s Strengths
• Concerns of the Parent regarding education
• Results of educational evaluations or assessments
• Student’s academic, developmental, communication & functional needs
ARTICLE 7 REVIEW
Rule 42: Determination of Special Education Services

THE IEP

Special Factors:

• Positive supports & interventions for behavior that affects learning
• Supports to provide school personnel with skills to implement the IEP
• Language needs of a student with limited English proficiency
• Instructional & communication needs for vision/hearing impaired
ARTICLE 7 REVIEW
Rule 42: Determination of Special Education Services

IEP Development, Contents

• Present levels of academic achievement & functional performance (PLOP)
• Measurable goals that CCC expects the student to achieve in the next year
• Information on how to measure student progress
• Information on reporting progress to parent
• Description of SPED services & supports provided
• Projected dates of services, length, frequency, and location
ARTICLE 7 REVIEW
Rule 42: Determination of Special Education Services

IEP Development, Contents

• Information on participation in local & statewide assessments
• Participation with non-disabled students
• Need for Extended School Year (ESY)
• Placement in Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)
• Written notes documenting CCC
• Information on transfer of rights when student turns 18
ARTICLE 7 REVIEW
Rule 42: Determination of Special Education Services

Transition IEP

• Created when student will be 14 or entering 9th grade
• Added element of goals for post-secondary life
ARTICLE 7 REVIEW
Rule 42: Determination of Special Education Services

Related Services
• Development, corrective or other supported service
• Includes speech therapy, counseling, physical therapy, etc.
• Helps student benefit from SPED program
Accommodations v. Modifications

- **Accommodation**: Changes how a student completes academic work; intended to reduce or eliminate the effects of a student’s disability.
- **Modification**: Changes what is being taught or tested; Alteration of curriculum.
ARTICLE 7 REVIEW
Rule 42: Determination of Special Education Services

Positive Behavioral Interventions, Strategies and Supports

• **Behavioral Intervention Program**: addresses behavior that hinders student from learning
  • Student’s behavior & why behavior occurs
  • Positive interventions, strategies and supports necessary to address behavior & implement intervention strategies
  • Supports/technical assistance for staff to implement BIP
  • Skills to be taught to change student’s behavior
ARTICLE 7 REVIEW
Rule 42: Determination of Special Education Services

IEP, Post-Development

• Copy must be provided to parent with 10 business days of CCC meeting being held
• Parental consent must be obtained before school can implement IEP
• If CCC revises IEP, the school must provide parent with written notice before the revised IEP can be implemented
ARTICLE 7 REVIEW
Rule 42: Determination of Special Education Services

Case Conference Committees, Post-CCC Responsibilities

• Provide written notice to parent of changes
• Parent may contest proposed IEP (10 instructional days)
  • Meeting with school
  • Mediation
  • Due process hearing
ARTICLE 7 REVIEW
Rule 43: Related Services; Transitions; Transfer of Rights

Transitions—Transition IEPs

- University, community college, vocational school
- On-the-Job training
- Getting a specific job or exploring career options
- Applying for adult services from state/community agency
- Living independently

Includes:

- Age-appropriate transition assessments; measurable post-secondary goals; courses of study; transition services needed
ARTICLE 7 REVIEW
Rule 42: Determination of Special Education Services

Revocation of Consent for Services

• Parent may revoke consent at any time
• Must give written request to the school
• School must provide written notice explaining consequences of request for revocation of services
ARTICLE 7 REVIEW
Rule 43: Related Services; Transitions; Transfer of Rights

Transfer of Rights:

• Upon turning 18 years of age, educational rights transfer from parent to student
• Court may appoint guardian; school may appoint educational representative
• Written notice must be provided at CCC before student turns 17 years of age
ARTICLE 7 REVIEW
Rule 43: Related Services; Transitions; Transfer of Rights

Summary of Performance

• Provided when a disabled student graduates, receives certificate of completion, or turns 22 years of age
• Written summary of student’s academic achievement & functional performance
ARTICLE 7
Rule 44: Student Discipline

REMOVAL

• Any situation in which a student is removed from her placement for any period of time

• Examples: Detention, suspension, expulsion
ARTICLE 7 REVIEW
Rule 44: Student Discipline

REMOVAL

• School can remove student with a disability for up to 10 consecutive school days per disciplinary action

• Once student is removed for more than 10 cumulative days:
  • Principal must decide if the removal is a change of placement
  • School must provide SPED services to student during change of placement & any other future days of removal (doesn’t have to provide services during first 10 days student is removed)
ARTICLE 7 REVIEW
Rule 44: School Discipline

REMOVAL

• Change of Placement
  • Student removed for more than 10 consecutive school days
  • Student is moved to interim alternative educational setting for 45 school days for misconduct involving weapons, drugs or serious bodily injury
  • Principal determines that series of removals constitutes a pattern
ARTICLE 7 REVIEW
Rule 44: Student Discipline

Removal, Change of Placement

• Procedure
  • Notify parents
  • Provide procedural safeguards
  • CCC convenes within 10 days of change of placement date to decide if student’s misconduct was a manifestation of disability
ARTICLE 7 REVIEW
Rule 44: School Discipline

Removal, Manifestation Determination

• Was the student’s behavior caused by, or does it have a “direct and substantial relationship to”, the student’s disability?

• Was the student’s behavior caused by the school’s failure to implement the IEP?
ARTICLE 7 REVIEW
Rule 44: Student Discipline

Removal, Manifestation Determination

• If YES:
  • CCC must conduct an FBA and implement a BIP
  • Review BIP and make changes to address student behavior
  • Student cannot be removed or disciplined for behavior; student must go back to regular placement

• If NO:
  • Student may be removed or disciplined in accordance with school policy
  • School must provide student with educational services while removed
ARTICLE 7 REVIEW
Rule 44: Student Discipline

Removal, Manifestation Determination

• Disagreement
  • Parent may request mediation or due process if the parent does not agree with the determination of the school
ARTICLE 7 REVIEW
Rule 44: Student Discipline

Protections for non-SPED students

- If school is deemed to have knowledge that student may have a disability before student violated school rules, then student is entitled to Article 7 protections
- If parent requests an evaluation during time of change of placement, school must conduct initial evaluation within 20 school days
Nonpublic Schools or Facilities

- Students determined eligible for SPED services are entitled to such from the school corporation where the nonpublic school is located.
- Students receive a service plan:
  - Does not provide all of the same services available under an IEP.
ARTICLE 7 REVIEW
Rule 38: Confidentiality of Information

• FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act), IDEA & Article 7

• Require parental consent before releasing personally identifiable information from the student’s educational record

• Parent has the right to inspect and review the educational record
ARTICLE 7 REVIEW
Rule 43: Resolving Disagreements

3 Formal Dispute Resolution Options

• Mediation
  • Dispute over student’s identification and eligibility for special education & related services
  • Dispute over the appropriateness of the educational evaluation or student’s services or placement
  • Any dispute involving the provision of a FAPE
  • Dispute over reimbursement for services obtained by the parent
ARTICLE 7 REVIEW
Rule 43: Resolving Disagreements

3 Formal Dispute Resolution Options

• Complaints
  • Claim that school violated special education rules
  • Claim that school failed to comply with IHO order
  • Investigated by the IDOE

• Due Process Hearing
  • Administrative law proceeding before an IHO
  • Issues: eligibility; appropriateness of evaluation, level of services, or placement; anything related to provision of FAPE; reimbursement for services obtained by parent
ARTICLE 7 REVIEW
Rule 49: Provision of Special Education and Related Services by Choice Schools

• Choice Scholarship Schools
  • Are nonpublic schools
  • Provides special education and related services to eligible students under a Choice Scholarship Education Plan (CSEP)
  • CSEP requirements are much less stringent than IEP requirements

• Parents of choice school students choose whether the choice school or the public school corporation within whose boundaries the choice school is located will provide services
Section 2

Who is a “Parent”? 

Indiana Department of Education
Who is a “Parent” under Article 7?

511 IAC 7-32-70 "Parent" defined

Sec. 70. (a) "Parent" means one (1) of the following:

(1) Any biological or adoptive parent whose parental rights have not been terminated or restricted in accordance with law.

(2) A guardian generally authorized to act as the student's parent, or authorized to make educational decisions for the student, including a court-appointed temporary guardian.

(3) A foster parent.

Continued on next slide…
Who is a “Parent” under Article 7?

511 IAC 7-32-70 "Parent" defined (continued)

(4) An individual with legal custody or an individual acting in the place of a biological or adoptive parent, including a grandparent, stepparent, or other relative, or other adult who accepts full legal responsibility for the student and with whom the student lives.

(5) An educational surrogate parent appointed in accordance with 511 IAC 7-39.

(6) Any student of legal age, which is defined in section 91 of this rule to mean a student who:
   (A) is eighteen (18) years of age; and
   (B) has not had a guardian appointed by a court under IC 29-3.

(7) An educational representative appointed under 511 IAC 7-43-6.
Parents Don’t Always Agree

- Married parents
- Separated parents
- Divorced parents
- Never-married parents
- Other persons acting as parents
OSEP

“OSEP acknowledges that disputes between parents who share the right to make educational decisions for their child, and who disagree about the provision of special education and related services for their child, may place an LEA in a difficult situation.”

Letter to Cox, 54 IDELR 60 (OSEP 2009)
Presumptive Parent Under Article 7

511 IAC 7-32-70 "Parent" defined (continued)

(b) Except as provided in subsection (c), the **biological or adoptive parent**, when:

(1) attempting to act as the parent under this article; and
(2) more than one (1) party is qualified under subsection (a) to act as a parent;

must be presumed to be the parent for purposes of this article unless the biological or adoptive parent does not have legal authority to make educational decisions for the student.
Exception to Presumptive Parent: Judicial Order

511 IAC 7-32-70 "Parent" defined (continued)

(c) If a judicial decree or order identifies a specific person or persons under subsection (a)(1) through (a)(5) to:

(1) act as the parent of a student; or
(2) make educational decisions on behalf of a student;

then such person or persons shall be determined to be the parent for purposes of this article.
Educational Surrogate Parents
511 IAC 7-39-1(b)

(b) The public agency shall protect the rights of a student by assigning an educational surrogate parent under any of the following circumstances:

(1) When no parent . . . can be identified.
(2) When, after reasonable efforts, the public agency cannot locate a parent.
(3) When the student is a ward of the state under the laws of the state, unless as follows:

(continued on next slide)
Educational Surrogate Parents
511 IAC 7-39-1(b) (continued from last slide)

(A) The court order creating the wardship:
   (i) permits the student to remain in the home; or
   (ii) expressly reserves to a parent the authority to make decisions regarding the student’s education or upbringing.

(B) The student is a ward of the department of correction who has a parent as defined by 511 IAC 7-32-70.

(4) When the student is a homeless student . . . who is not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.
Educational Surrogate Parents

511 IAC 7-39-1(c)

(c) The public agency shall appoint an educational surrogate parent, if needed:

(1) at the time the student is referred for an initial educational evaluation; and

(2) any time the public agency determines that a student who has been identified as disabled under this article is in need of an educational surrogate parent.
Educational Surrogate Parents

511 IAC 7-39-1(d)

(d) The public agency must make reasonable efforts to ensure the assignment of an educational surrogate parent no more than 30 calendar days after the public agency determines that a student needs an educational surrogate parent.
Educational Surrogate Parents

511 IAC 7-39-1(e)

(e) If a student is a ward of the state, the educational surrogate parent may be appointed by the judge overseeing the student’s case, provided that the educational surrogate parent meets the requirements of this rule.
Educational Representative
(Students 18+ years only)

511 IAC 7-43-6 Appointment of an Educational Representative

Sec. 6. (a) Any student eligible for special education and related services who has become 18 years of age and has not had a guardian appointed under IC 29-3 may have an educational representative appointed to make educational decisions on the student’s behalf if the student:

(1) requests in writing that an educational representative be appointed; or
(2) is certified as unable to provide informed consent under subsection (f).
Educational Representative
(Students 18+ years only)

511 IAC 7-43-6 Appointment of an Educational Representative

(b) A student’s parent must be appointed to act as the educational representative under this section. If the parent is unavailable, a person trained as an educational surrogate under 511 IAC 7-39-2 must be appointed by the public agency to serve as the educational representative.
Educational Representative
(Students 18+ years only)

511 IAC 7-43-6 Appointment of an Educational Representative

(c) An appointment of an educational representative under this section may be made as early as 60 calendar days prior to the student’s eighteenth birthday.

(d) The public agency is not responsible for the cost of appointing an educational representative.

(e) A student who requests that an educational representative be appointed under subsection (a)(1) may request, in writing, that the appointment be revoked.
Educational Representative
(Students 18+ years only)

511 IAC 7-43-6 Appointment of an Educational Representative

(f) For an educational representative to be appointed under subsection (a)(2), two persons described in subsection (g) must, based on personal examination or interview, certify in writing that the student is incapable of providing informed consent and that the student has been informed of this decision. As used in this section, “incapable of providing informed consent” means that the student is unable to do the following:

1. Understand on a continuing or consistent basis the nature, extent, and probable consequences of a proposed educational program or option.
2. Make a rational evaluation on a continuing or consistent basis of the benefits or disadvantages of a proposed educational decision or program as compared with the benefits or disadvantages of another proposed educational decision or program.
3. Communicate such understanding in a meaningful way.
Educational Representative
(Students 18+ years only)

511 IAC 7-43-6 Appointment of an Educational Representative

(g) Persons who certify in writing that a student is incapable of providing informed consent must be 1 of the following:
   (1) A physician with an unlimited license.
   (2) A licensed nurse practitioner.
   (3) A licensed clinical psychologist.
   (4) A licensed psychologist.
   (5) A licensed school psychologist.
   (6) A licensed clinical social worker.

(h) Persons providing certification described in subsection (f) cannot be related to the student.

(i) At least 1 of the persons providing certification described in subsection (f) cannot be employed by the public agency serving the student.
Section 3

Parental Participation in Special Education
Parent Participation: Referral & Evaluation

• May request an educational evaluation
• Must provide written consent for:
  • Educational evaluations
  • Initial Placements

What to Expect:
• After requesting an evaluation, the school has 10 instructional days to provide written notice that it is proposing or refusing to evaluate;
• If the school agrees to evaluate the student, the parent then has to provide signed written consent in order to start the actual evaluation;
  On the consent form, the parent may check boxes to request one or both of the following:
    • copy of the educational evaluation, at no cost to the parent, prior to the CCC meeting
    • A meeting with an individual who can explain the results of the evaluation prior to the CCC meeting
• Once the School has received parental consent, it has 50 instructional days to conduct the evaluation and convene the CCC to determine eligibility.
A case conference committee (CCC) is a group of individuals, including the parent and school personnel, that determines if the student is eligible for special education and if so, determines the special education and related services to be provided to the student.
Parent Participation: CCC

- The parent is a required participant
- The school must provide timely notice of the meeting and make attempts to schedule the meeting at a mutually agreed upon date time and place so the parent can attend
- The parent may request to participate by phone or virtually
- The parent may bring other individuals that the parent deems to have knowledge or special expertise regarding the student.
- The parent will be part of the CCC decision-making
Parent Participation: CCC

CCC DECISION MAKING

Information about the student is shared with and by all CCC members. Each member can offer input into and participate in the discussion about the decisions to be made, such as:

- Is the student eligible as a student with a disability?
- If so, under what disability category or categories?
- If eligible, what are the student’s educational needs, and what special education and related services are appropriate to meet the student’s needs?

A CCC meeting is not a meeting controlled by a vote of ‘majority rule’. Ultimately, decisions of the CCC should be based upon the input of all members of the CCC, including considering the parental participation and input.
Parent Participation: CCC

ADVICE FOR PARENTS

Being a CCC member may seem intimidating or overwhelming to a parent. The following are some tips that have been offered to help the student’s parent feel more comfortable during CCC meetings:

- Make a list of questions so you don’t forget them during the CCC meeting;
- If there is an evaluation report, talk with someone who can explain it in easy to understand terms;
- Talk with the student’s teacher or other school personnel before the meeting;
- Talk to other parents who have participated in CCC meetings;
- Take someone with you who knows the student; and
- Take a copy of “Navigating the Course” and/or Article 7 with you for reference.
INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAMS (IEPs)

If the case conference committee (CCC) decides the student is eligible for special education and related services, the next step is for the CCC to develop an individualized education program (IEP). An IEP is the written plan that describes how the student will participate in the general curriculum (if appropriate) and identifies the special education and related services that the school will provide to the student.
Parent Participation: IEP Development

The CCC develops the IEP after considering all of the information about the student and must consider the following general factors:

- The student’s strengths;
- Parental concerns;
- The results of any recent educational evaluations or assessments; and,
- The student’s academic, developmental, communicative, and functional needs.
Parent Participation: IEP Development

• In addition, the CCC must consider special factors (when applicable) such as:
  • Positive supports and interventions when a student’s behavior affects the student’s learning;
  • Supports to provide school personnel with knowledge and skills to implement the student’s IEP;
  • Language needs of a student with limited English proficiency; or,
  • Instructional and communication needs for a student whose vision or hearing is impaired.
Parent Participation: IEP Implementation

• The school must give the parent a copy of the student’s IEP, at no cost, within 10 business days after the date of the CCC meeting. **Written parental consent must be obtained for the school to provide special education services for the first time.** Once the parent has given initial written consent for the school to provide special education services, the school must continue to provide special education services included in the most recently agreed upon IEP unless the parent revokes consent for services.

• IEPs subsequent to the first IEP do not have to be signed by the parent in order to be implemented. If the parent does not sign, the IEP is deemed implemented on the 11th instructional day after being provided to the parent.
  • A parent may challenge an unsigned IEP prior to the 11th instructional day.
Parent Participation: IEP Implementation

• The IEP must be implemented as written.
• The CCC must convene at least annually to review and revise the IEP.
  • The parent may request a meeting prior to the annual review to revise the IEP to meet the student’s needs

• Practical pointers
  • If you think the school is not implementing the IEP as written – ask questions and keep data / notes in a “home file”
  • Make a list of your specific questions & concerns
  • Bring your data and notes to the CCC meeting to assist with the review and revision
Parent Participation

The “Home File”

Many parents keep a file at home that contains the following:

• Copies of evaluations
• Copies of IEPs
• Report Cards
• State and Local Assessment Results
• Samples of Homework
• List of Medications
• Notes sent between you and the school
• Notes of phone conversations
• Any reports / letters from doctor / psychologist / psychiatrist

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Parent Participation: Advocacy

• One of the most important roles a parent plays in education is serving as the student’s advocate.

• Communicate concerns to school staff in a timely and polite manner.
  • Contacting your school principal or local director of special education can often help you resolve a small problem before it becomes a big problem.

• Request additional CCC meetings to discuss progress or issues.

• Discuss with the school the use of a facilitated IEP (FIEP) meeting.

• If you need additional help advocating for your student, seek help from an outside source.
Section 4

Advocacy Resources
Advocacy

• Advocacy is about working with people to support them in ways that are responsive to their own needs and best interests.

• Successful advocacy efforts for children with disabilities include understanding rights, entitlements, and responsibilities and knowing what to do if your advocacy efforts are not working.

*The content of this slide was shared for use by IN*SOURCE.
Advocacy

Community Resources

• About Special Kids (ASK), (800) 964-4746 www.aboutspecialkids.org

• Indiana Resource Center for Families with Special Needs (IN*SOURCE), (800) 332-4433 www.insource.org

• Indiana Disability Rights (IDR), (800) 622-4845, https://www.in.gov/idr/
Advocacy

IDOE Resources

https://www.doe.in.gov/specialed

For General Inquiries please contact specialeducation@doe.in.gov or (317) 232-0570
Advocacy

Formal Dispute Resolution

Sometimes, the parents(s) and school personnel are not able to resolve their disagreement by the methods above. As a result, three other conflict resolution options are available:

• Mediation
• Complaints
• Due Process Hearings
Complaints, Mediation, Due Process

I-CHAMP

• I-CHAMP portal is used to file complaints, requests for mediation, and requests for due process hearings electronically.

• It also has tabs with resources and additional information about the complaint, mediation, and due process hearing processes.

• Available at: https://ichamp.doe.in.gov/

• Need tech support / help getting started? Contact: ichampHelpDesk@doe.in.gov
QUESTIONS?

If you have any questions or would like more information, feel free to contact me!

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