

Parent Rights in Special Education

Parents and children have many rights under the special education law, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). It is important that parents and children understand their rights to a *free and appropriate public education (FAPE)*. The term “appropriate” is based on the educational needs of the individual child which are outlined in his/her Individualized Education Program (IEP).

The IEP is deemed to be a working document created by a team of educators, student and the family to set goals for the student in order to succeed. While it is the responsibility of the school to provide parents with notice of their rights in understandable language, parents also have a responsibility to participate in the education of their student. Parents do so by participating in meetings and by providing consent to allow the school to provide the support and services that both the parents and school agree are necessary for the student to be successful. For more information on parent rights please click on the above title to access the Georgia Department of Education Special Education Rules and Implementation Manual.

The Parent Rights notice provides parents with the opportunity to understand their rights, the rights of their child, and the procedures for resolving differences. This document should also help facilitate communication between parents and district personnel. The Parent Rights notice outlines all of the rights and safeguards available to parents and students with disabilities and children who are decision makers.

Parent Rights should be given to parents at the following times:

1. at least one time per year,
2. at the time of the initial referral or parent request for evaluation,
3. any time the parent requests a copy,
4. receipt of the first state complaint;
5. receipt of the first due process hearing request;
6. notification by the school district to the parent of a disciplinary removal of a student from school that would constitute a change of placement; and
7. parental request.

Georgia Department of Education Exceptional Education Parent Rights
<http://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Special-Education-Services/Pages/Special-Education-Rules.aspx>

Georgia Department of Education Implementation Manual: Parent Rights
<http://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Special-Education-Services/Pages/Implementation-Manual.aspx>

[Georgia Exceptional Education Parent Rights](#)

[For a summary of the Georgia Parent Rights click here](#)

[Georgia DOE Parent Rights Brochure](#)

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The state has specific definitions for “parent”, “person acting as a parent”, “surrogate parent”, and “guardian”. Please see the link above entitled “Georgia Exceptional Education Parent Rights and the Implementation manual for this specific information.

Update: July 31, 2013