

Get Support with Special Education Questions

Introduction

IEP teams are responsible for making many significant decisions related to the education of students experiencing disability. In most cases, these teams are able to successfully come to consensus on an Individualized Education Program (IEP) that enables the student to receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE).

However, there are times when teams cannot reach consensus and disputes arise. ODE encourages parents and educators to work together to resolve concerns related to a student's special education program, but understands there are times when additional support is needed. ODE [offers multiple options to help parents and school districts navigate disagreements](#) related to special education. ODE also has specialists assigned to each school district who are available to help you understand your rights and these processes if you need help navigating your options.

Getting Help

1. Talk to Your Child's Teacher

Although each school district in Oregon has its own unique context, generally, parents and family members should first talk with your child's teacher in order to get help. Most often, the child's teacher is best equipped to resolve concerns as they arise.

2. Work with the Case Manager

Many students who receive special education services also have a case manager assigned by their school. This person is often the child's special education teacher. Case managers are responsible for working through the IEP process with the IEP teams for their students. If your child's classroom teacher is unable to resolve your concerns, the special education case manager may be able to help.

3. Problem Solve with School Administration

Schools also typically have school-based administrators (e.g., principals, vice principals) who are responsible for ensuring the effective day-to-day operations of the school. In cases where teachers cannot resolve family concerns, school based leadership can often help.

4. Seek Support from the District Office

When the school-based staff has been unable to resolve your concerns, typically there is another level of district oversight through the central office. Both the special education office, which may be called student services or another similar name, and the superintendent's office

of your local school district will often be able to help you resolve your concerns when school based staff has been unable to do so.

5. Work with Oregon's Parent Training and Information Center

Oregon maintains a Parent Training and Information Center (PTI) via [FACT Oregon](#). FACT Oregon provides peer support, trainings, and resources to equip and empower families, transform how they see disability, and help them have high expectations and dream big dreams for their children. Staff from FACT Oregon provides support to families to navigate disability and special education. Oregon's PTI maintains multiple ways for parents and families to receive support, including calling or texting 503-786-6082 or 541-695-5416, emailing support@factoregon.org, [scheduling a call via their website](#).

6. Contact the Office of Enhancing Student Opportunities at the Oregon Department of Education

Please also feel free to reach out to staff in the Office of Enhancing Student Opportunities to receive support. You can reach us via email at ode.specialeducationquestions@ode.oregon.gov or via phone at 503-947-5600. Please make sure to include your child's school district to help us connect you with the appropriate staff member. Alternatively, you can [submit a request for help from ODE here](#).

More Information

Additional information about the rights of a parent of a student experiencing disability is available in the [Procedural Safeguards](#).

Additional information about dispute resolution options is also available at ODE's [Dispute Resolution site](#).