



Parents Rights in Special Education: At a Glance

Consent is required before evaluations or services are provided

You can bring family members or advocates to all meetings

Schools must provide procedural safeguards yearly and on request

You can challenge decisions through mediation, complaints, or hearings

Your voice matters.

As an Indigenous parent, caregiver, or family member you carry deep knowledge, wisdom, and love for your child. You are not only a participant in your child's education—you are their first teacher, greatest advocate, and most vital partner. The law affirms and protects your role, ensuring that your voice is heard and respected throughout the special education process.

Essential Special Education Family/ Caregiver Rights



Schools Must Inform You of Your Rights

Before any meeting about your child's individualized education program (IEP), the school must give you a copy of your procedural safeguards.

Think of these as a clear guide to your legal rights as a parent or caregiver throughout the special education process.

TIP: Don't attend an IEP meeting unless you've received a copy of this guidance and the school has reviewed these rights with you.



Your Permission Is Required

The school **cannot begin** any special education services or evaluations **without your written consent**. This includes the very first evaluation and any support services that follow.



You Are an Equal Member of the Team

As a parent or caregiver, you have the right to be involved in all special education meetings, and you have the right to invite anyone you wish to join you at the meetings. The school must schedule meetings at a time and place that works for you—and they must give you advance notice so you can arrange to be there. Meetings can also be held virtually if that's more convenient.



You Have the Right to Disagree

If something does not feel right for your child—whether it's a plan, a placement, or a decision —you can say so. Ensuring your opinions are heard is an important way to advocate for your child's needs and strengths.

Caregivers can file a complaint or request dispute resolution at any time.

For more information, visit the Oregon Department of Education Dispute Resolution website

