

Notice of Procedural Safeguards

Special Education Rights of Parents and Children Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Part B, and the California Education Code.

Revised June 2022

Note: The term school district is used throughout this document to describe any public education agency responsible for providing your child's special education program. The term assessment is used to mean evaluation or testing. Federal and state laws are cited throughout this notice using English abbreviations, which are explained in a glossary at the end of this notification.

What is the Notice of Procedural Safeguards?

This information provides you as parents, legal guardians, and surrogate parents of children with disabilities from 3 years of age through age 21 and students who have reached age 18, the age of majority, with an overview of your educational rights or procedural safeguards.

The Notice of Procedural Safeguards is required under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and must be provided to you:

- When you ask for a copy
- The first time your child is referred for a special education assessment
- Each time you are given an assessment plan to evaluate your child
- Upon receipt of the first state or due process complaint in a school year, and
- When the decision is made to make a removal that constitutes a change of placement

(20 *United States Code [USC]* Section 1415[d]; 34 *Code of Federal Regulations [CFR]* Section 300.504; California *Education Code [EC]* Section 56301[d] [2], *EC* Section 56321, and *EC* Section 56341.1[g] [1])

What is the IDEA?

IDEA is a federal law that requires school districts to provide a "free appropriate public education" (FAPE) to eligible children with disabilities. A free appropriate public

Education California Parent Organizations web page at
<https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/se/qa/caprntorg.asp>.

Additional resources are listed at the end of this document to help you understand the procedural safeguards.

What if my child is deaf, hard of hearing, blind, visually impaired, or deaf-blind?

The State Special Schools provide services to students who are deaf, hard of hearing, blind, visually impaired, or deaf-blind at each of its three facilities: the California Schools for the Deaf in Fremont and Riverside and at the California School for the Blind in Fremont. Residential and day school programs are offered to students from infancy to age 21 at both State Schools for the Deaf. Such programs are offered to students aged 5 through 21 at the California School for the Blind. The State Special Schools also offer assessment services and technical assistance. For more information about the State Special Schools, please visit the CDE, State Special Schools web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/ss/index.asp>, or ask for more information from the members of your child's IEP team.

Notice, Consent, Assessment, Surrogate Parent Appointment, and Access to Records

Prior Written Notice

When is a notice needed?

This notice must be given when the school district proposes or refuses to initiate a change in the identification, assessment, or educational placement of your child with special needs or the provision of a FAPE. (20 *USC* sections 1415[b][3] and (4), 1415[c][1], and 1414[b][1]; 34 *CFR* Section 300.503; *EC* sections 56329 and 56506[a])

The school district must inform you about proposed evaluations of your child in a written notice or an assessment plan within 15 days of your written request for evaluation. The notice must be understandable and in your native language or other mode of communication, unless it is clearly not feasible to do so. (34 *CFR* Section 300.304; *EC* Section 56321)

What are the procedures when a parent does not provide consent?

If you do not provide consent for an initial assessment or fail to respond to a request to provide the consent, the school district may pursue the initial assessment by utilizing due process procedures.

If you refuse to consent to the initiation of services, the school district must not provide special education and related services and shall not seek to provide services through due process procedures.

If you consent in writing to the special education and related services for your child but do not consent to all of the components of the IEP, those components of the program to which you have consented must be implemented without delay.

If the school district determines that the proposed special education program component to which you do not consent is necessary to provide a FAPE to your child, a due process hearing must be initiated. If a due process hearing is held, the hearing decision shall be final and binding.

In the case of reevaluations, the school district must document reasonable measures to obtain your consent. If you fail to respond, the school district may proceed with the reevaluation without your consent. (20 *USC* sections 1414[a][1][D] and 1414[c]; 34 *CFR* Section 300.300; *EC* sections 56506[e], 56321[c] and [d], and 56346).

When may I revoke consent?

If at any time subsequent to the initial provision of special education and related services, the parent of a child revokes consent in writing for the continued provision of special education and related services, the public agency:

1. May not continue to provide special education and related services to the child, but must provide prior written notice in accordance with 34 *CFR* Section 300.503 before ceasing such services
2. May not use the procedures in subpart E of Part 300 34 *CFR* (including the mediation procedures under 34 *CFR* Section 300.506 or the due process procedures under 34 *CFR* Sections 300.507 through 300.516) in order to obtain agreement or a ruling that the services may be provided to the child
3. Will not be considered to be in violation of the requirement to make a FAPE available to the child because of the failure to provide the child with further special education and related services

Independent Educational Assessments

May my child be tested independently at the district's expense?

If you disagree with the results of the assessment conducted by the school district, you have the right to ask for and obtain an independent educational assessment for your child from a person qualified to conduct the assessment at public expense.

The parent is entitled to only one independent educational evaluation at public expense each time the public agency conducts an evaluation with which the parent disagrees.

The school district must respond to your request for an independent educational assessment and provide you information about where to obtain an independent educational assessment.

If the school district believes that the district's assessment is appropriate and disagrees that an independent assessment is necessary, the school district must request a due process hearing to prove that its assessment was appropriate. If the district prevails, you still have the right to an independent assessment but not at public expense. The IEP team must consider independent assessments.

District assessment procedures allow in-class observation of students. If the school district observes your child in his or her classroom during an assessment, or if the school district would have been allowed to observe your child, an individual conducting an independent educational assessment must also be allowed to observe your child in the classroom.

If the school district proposes a new school setting for your child and an independent educational assessment is being conducted, the independent assessor must be allowed to first observe the proposed new setting. (20 *USC* sections 1415[b][1] and [d][2][A]; 34 *CFR* Section 300.502; *EC* Section 56329[b] and [c])

Access to Educational Records

May I examine my child's educational records?

You have a right to inspect and review all of your child's education records without unnecessary delay, including prior to a meeting about your child's IEP or before a due process hearing. The school district must provide you access to records and copies, if requested, within five **business** days after the request has been made orally or in writing. (*EC* sections 49060, 56043[n], 56501[b][3], and 56504)

prehearing mediation conference by filing a written request with the Superintendent of the OAH shall provide the other party to the mediation with a copy of the request at the same time the request is filed.

The prehearing mediation conference shall be scheduled within 15 days of receipt by the Superintendent of the OAH of the request for mediation and shall be completed within 30 days after receipt of the request for mediation unless both parties agree to extend the time. If a resolution is reached, the parties shall execute a legally binding written agreement that sets forth the resolution. All discussions during the mediation process shall be confidential. All prehearing mediation conferences shall be scheduled in a timely manner and held at a time and place reasonably convenient to the parties. If the issues fail to be resolved to the satisfaction of all parties, the party who requested the mediation conference has the option of filing for a due process hearing. (EC sections 56500.3 and 56503)

Due Process Rights

What are my due process rights?

You have a right to:

1. Have a fair and impartial administrative hearing at the state level before a person who is knowledgeable of the laws governing special education and administrative hearings (20 *USC* sections 1415[f][1][A], and 1415[f][3][A]-[D]; 34 *CFR* Section 300.511; *EC* Section 56501[b][4])
2. Be accompanied and advised by an attorney and/or individuals who have knowledge about children with disabilities (*EC* Section 56505 [e][1])
3. Present evidence, written arguments, and oral arguments (*EC* Section 56505[e][2])
4. Confront, cross-examine, and require witnesses to be present (*EC* Section 56505[e][3])
5. Receive a written or, at the option of the parent, an electronic verbatim record of the hearing, including findings of fact and decisions (*EC* Section 56505[e][4])
6. Have your child present at the hearing (*EC* Section 56501[c][1])
7. Have the hearing be open or closed to the public (*EC* Section 56501[c][2])
8. Receive a copy of all documents, including assessments completed by that date and recommendations, and a list of witnesses and their general area of testimony

knowledge of the facts identified in the due process hearing request. (20 *USC* Section 1415[f][1][B]; 34 *CFR* Section 300.510)

What does a resolution session include?

Resolution sessions shall be convened within 15 days of receiving notice of the parents' due process hearing request. The sessions shall include a representative of the school district who has decision-making authority and not include an attorney of the school district unless the parent is accompanied by an attorney. The parent of the child may discuss the due process hearing issue and the facts that form the basis of the due process hearing request.

The resolution session is not required if the parent and the school district agree in writing to waive the meeting. If the school district has not resolved the due process hearing issue within 30 days, the due process hearing may occur. If a resolution is reached, the parties shall execute a legally binding agreement. (20 *USC* Section 1415[f][1][B]; 34 *CFR* Section 300.510)

Does my child's placement change during the proceedings?

The child involved in any administrative or judicial proceeding must remain in the current educational placement unless you and the school district agree on another arrangement. If you are applying for initial admission of your child to a public school, your child will be placed in a public school program with your consent until all proceedings are completed. (20 *USC* Section 1415[j]; 34 *CFR* Section 300.518; *EC* Section 56505[d])

May the decision be appealed?

The hearing decision is final and binding on both parties. Either party may appeal the hearing decision by filing a civil action in state or federal court within 90 days of the final decision. (20 *USC* sections 1415[i][2] and [3][A], and 1415[l]; 34 *CFR* Section 300.516; *EC* Section 56505[h] and [k], *EC* Section 56043[w])

Who pays for my attorneys' fees?

In any action or proceeding regarding the due process hearing, the court, in its discretion, may award reasonable attorneys' fees as part of the costs to you as parent of a child with a disability if you are the prevailing party in the hearing. Reasonable attorneys' fees may also be made following the conclusion of the administrative hearing,

School Discipline and Alternative Interim Educational Settings

May my child be suspended or expelled?

School personnel may consider any unique circumstances on a case-by-case basis when determining whether a change in placement is appropriate for a child with a disability who violates a code of student conduct from his or her setting to:

- An appropriate interim alternative education setting, another setting, or suspension for not more than 10 consecutive school days
- Additional removals of not more than 10 consecutive school days in the same school year for separate incidents of misconduct

What occurs after a removal of more than 10 days?

After a child with a disability has been removed from his or her current placement for 10 school days in the same school year, during any subsequent days of removal the public agency must provide services to enable the child to continue to participate in the general education curriculum and progress toward meeting the goals set out in the child's IEP. Also, a child will receive, as appropriate, a functional behavioral assessment and behavioral intervention services and modifications, which are designed to address the behavior violation so that it does not recur.

If a child exceeds 10 days in such a placement, an IEP team meeting must be held to determine whether the child's misconduct is caused by the disability. This IEP team meeting must take place immediately, if possible, or within 10 days of the school district's decision to take this type of disciplinary action.

As a parent you will be invited to participate as a member of this IEP team. The school district may be required to develop an assessment plan to address the misconduct or, if your child has a behavior intervention plan, review and modify the plan as necessary.

What happens if the IEP team determines that the misconduct is not caused by the disability?

If the IEP team concludes that the misconduct was not a manifestation of the child's disability, the school district may take disciplinary action, such as expulsion, in the same manner as it would for a child without a disability. (20 USC Section 1415[k][1] and [7]; 34 CFR Section 300.530)

proposed by the school district, including stating your concerns and intent to enroll your child in a private school at public expense.

Your notice to the school district must be given either:

- At the most recent IEP team meeting you attended before removing your child from the public school, or
- In writing to the school district at least 10 business days (including holidays) before removing your child from the public school. (20 *USC* Section 1412[a][10][C]; 34 *CFR* Section 300.148; *EC* Section 56176)

When may reimbursement not be reduced or denied?

A court or hearing officer must not reduce or deny reimbursement to you if you failed to provide written notice to the school district for any of the following reasons:

- The school prevented you from providing notice
- You had not received a copy of this Notice of Procedural Safeguards or otherwise been informed of the requirement to notify the district
- Providing notice would likely have resulted in physical harm to your child
- Illiteracy and inability to write in English prevented you from providing notice, or
- Providing notice would likely have resulted in serious emotional harm to your child

(20 *USC* Section 1412[a] [10] [C]; 34 *CFR* Section 300.148; *EC* Section 56177)

State Complaint Procedures

When may I file a state compliance complaint?

You may file a state compliance complaint when you believe that a school district has violated federal or state special education laws or regulations. Your written complaint must specify at least one alleged violation of federal and state special education laws. The violation must have occurred not more than one year prior to the date the complaint is received by the CDE. When filing a complaint, you must forward a copy of the complaint to the school district at the same time you file a state compliance complaint with the CDE. (34 *CFR* Section 300.151–153; 5 *CCR* Section 4600)

Organization	Counties Served	Website
Alpha Family Resource Center	Santa Barbara	https://alphasb.org/
Exceptional Family Resource Center (EFRC)	Imperial, San Diego	https://efrconline.org/
Exceptional Parents Unlimited (EPU)	Fresno, Kings	https://www.epuchildren.org/
Exceptional Parents Unlimited (EPU)	Madera	https://www.epuchildren.org/
Family Focus Resource and Empowerment Center	North Los Angeles (San Fernando, Santa Clarita, Antelope Valley)	https://csun.edu/family-focus-resource-center
Family Resource Navigators	Alameda	https://familyresourcenavigators.org/
Family SOUP	Colusa, Sutter, Yuba	http://www.familysoup.org/
H.E.A.R.T.S. Connection Family Resource Center and Empowerment Center	Kern	http://www.heartsfrc.org/
Heluna Health/Eastern Los Angeles Family Resource Center	Los Angeles (Alhambra, Arcadia, Boyle Heights, City Terrace, Commerce, East Los Angeles, East Pasadena, El Sereno, Eagle Rock/Highland Park, La Habra Heights, La Mirada, Lincoln Heights, Montebello, Monterey Park, Mount Washington, Pico Rivera, Rosemead, San Gabriel, San Marino, South Pasadena, Santa Fe Springs, Temple City, Whittier)	https://www.helunahealth.org/partners/eastern-los-angeles-regional-family-resource-center/
Matrix Parent Network & Resource Center	Napa, Solano, Sonoma	https://www.matrixparents.org/
Matrix Parent Network	Marin	https://www.matrixparents.org/
Parents Helping Parents, Inc.	Santa Clara	https://www.php.com/
Parents Helping Parents San Luis Obispo	San Luis Obispo	http://www.php slo.org/

Organization	Counties Served	Website
Team of Advocates for Special Kids, Inc. (TASK)	Los Angeles (Signal Hill, Long Beach, Catalina Island)	https://taskca.org/
Team of Advocates for Special Kids, Inc. (TASK)	Los Angeles (Lakewood, East Lakewood, Hawaiian Gardens, Bellflower, Norwalk/Little Lake, Artesia, Cerritos)	https://taskca.org/
Warmline Family Resource Center	Alpine, El Dorado, Nevada, Placer, Sacramento, Yolo	http://www.warmlinefrc.org/
Westside Family Resource Center	West Los Angeles	http://wfrec.org/

Glossary of Abbreviations Used in This Notification

ADR: Alternative Dispute Resolution

CFR: Code of Federal Regulations

EC: California Education Code

FAPE: Free Appropriate Public Education

FEC: Family Empowerment Center on Disability

IDEA: Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

IEP: Individualized Education Program

PTIC: Parent Training and Information Center

OAH: Office of Administrative Hearings

SELPA: Special Education Local Plan Area

USC: United States Code