

SPECIAL EDUCATION MEDIATION

Are you the parent of a child with a disability and need help with a problem at school?



WHAT IS MEDIATION?

Mediation offers the parents of a child with a disability and representatives of the school a chance to talk together in hopes of finding a way to solve a disagreement about the child's education. Parents and school representatives talk with the aid of a trained special education mediator from a local mediation center. Mediation is voluntary; it only takes place if both parties agree to meet.

WHO IS AT THE MEDIATION?

The parent, a representative of the school district and a mediator from a Community Dispute Resolution Center must be present. Other people may also be present, but the parent and school must agree about who attends. A lawyer is not needed.

WHAT HAPPENS AT MEDIATION?

Meet: Everyone meets at an agreed time and place.

Talk: The school representative will listen to your concerns and share the school's concerns with you. The parent and school search for ways to solve the problem by talking and listening to each other.

Agree: Any agreement reached is put into writing and signed. After the mediation, the Committee on Special Education (CSE) must accept the written agreement and the Individualized Education Program (IEP) is updated based on the agreement. The agreement is binding and can be enforced.

HOW DOES MEDIATION WORK?

- **Mediation is a free local service.** Mediation is supported by a highly trained mediator from a local community mediation center.
- **Mediation is confidential.** Everything discussed at mediation is confidential and can't be used at a impartial hearing.
- **Mediation is unbiased.** The mediator is neutral and does not represent any person. The mediator encourages all sides to talk and listen so everyone's view can be heard.
- **Mediation is supportive.** It offers a nonthreatening, safe environment, which encourages a respectful conversation between parents and schools.
- **Mediation is not a hearing.** There is no testimony or evidence at mediation. The mediator is not a judge who will decide what happens. Asking for mediation does not stop the parent from going forward with other ways to solve the problem, such as an impartial hearing or state complaint.

*Interested in learning more? Contact your local mediation center or the New York State Dispute Resolution Association (NYSRA).

MEDIATION CENTERS



THE BRONX

IMCR Dispute Resolution Center
384 East 149th Street, Room 330
Bronx, NY 10455
T: (718) 585-1190
Fax: (718) 585-1962
www.imcr.org

BROOKLYN

The New York Peace Institute
210 Joralemon Street, Suite 618
Brooklyn, NY 11201
T: (718) 834-6671
Fax: (718) 834-6681
info@nypeace.org

MANHATTAN

The New York Peace Institute
111 John Street, Suite 600
New York, NY 10038
T: (212) 577-1740
Fax: (212) 577-1748
info@nypeace.org

QUEENS

Community Mediation Services, Inc.
89-64 163rd Street
Jamaica, NY 11432
T: (718) 523-6868
Fax: (718) 523-8204
www.mediatenyc.org

STATEN ISLAND

NY Center for Interpersonal
Development (SI Dispute Community
Resolution Center)
130 Stuyvesant Place, 5th Floor
Staten Island, NY 10301
T: (718) 815-4557
Fax: (718) 876-6068

New York State Dispute Resolution Association (NYSdra)

4 Pine West Plaza
Albany, NY 12205
T: (518) 687-2240
www.nysdra.org