

# The Office for Dispute Resolution

Providing services to families of children with disabilities and families of students who are considered gifted, along with the educational agencies that serve them.

## **ConsultLine**

800-879-2301

(Toll-free in Pennsylvania)

or 717-901-2146

ConsultLine is a statewide toll-free help line serving families, advocates, and agencies that have questions about special education for students with disabilities. ConsultLine provides information about special education laws, parents' rights, the formal complaint process, and other dispute resolution options to address concerns so that students with disabilities and students who are considered gifted receive a free and appropriate public education (FAPE).

## **Individualized Education Program (IEP) Facilitation (Also IFSP and GIEP Facilitation)**

Facilitation is a voluntary option that is available when local educational agencies (LEAs) and parents agree to have a neutral person – the IEP Facilitator – attend the IEP meeting to assist in discussing concerns regarding the development of the IEP. IEP facilitation is more cost-efficient and less stressful than due process, and may prevent the need for a due process hearing.

## **Mediation**

If both parties agree to mediation, the Office for Dispute Resolution (ODR) will arrange for a neutral, specially-trained mediator to help parties resolve conflicts about the child's educational program. During mediation, parties share points of view and seek solutions that are documented in a legally binding mediation agreement.

## Resolution Meeting Facilitation

When a parent requests a due process hearing, the school and parents must hold a resolution meeting within 15 days unless both sides agree to waive the meeting or try mediation instead. If both parties agree to have a neutral person at the resolution meeting, ODR will send a facilitator to assist the parties in reaching agreement. If agreement is reached, the due process hearing might not be needed.

## Due Process

A due process hearing may be requested by either the parent or the LEA and may be requested with respect to matters relating to identification, evaluation, educational placement of a child, or provision of FAPE. The request can be made by filing a "Due Process Complaint Notice," which can be found on the ODR website at: [www.odr-pa.org](http://www.odr-pa.org).

## Creating Agreement in Special Education Training

Creating Agreement training, for conflict resolution at the local level, is available through ODR. The one-day training uses interactive activities involving relevant special education scenarios to help parents and educational agencies enhance their communication and problem-solving skills. Training is available at no cost to LEAs and parent groups.

## Additional Information, Training, and Materials

To receive information or materials about any of these services, go to: [www.odr-pa.org](http://www.odr-pa.org).

Speakers are available for presentations on any of the services provided by ODR. To schedule a presentation, contact ODR at 800-222-3353.

6340 Flank Drive, Harrisburg, PA 17112-2764  
717-901-2145, Toll Free 800-222-3353  
[www.odr-pa.org](http://www.odr-pa.org)

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