

[Resolving Special Education Disputes \(Virginia Department of Education\)](#)

Overview

Special education disputes are better resolved at the local level, if possible. Parents and school administrators are encouraged to work together to come to an understanding of mutual concerns and come to an agreement in the best interest of children with disabilities. VDOE offers several resolution options to disputes.

Options for addressing issues & concerns

[Ombudsman for Special Education](#) is an informal source of information and referral, aids in answering individuals' questions and assists in the resolution of concerns and issues. The ombudsman serves as a resource to parents in non-legal special education matters.

[Special Education Mediation](#) can assist parents and school staff when they are in negotiations. A mediator can convene and conduct a meeting to clarify issues, focus on the needs of a child, and explore and evaluate possible solutions in a confidential setting.

[Facilitated IEPs](#) use a facilitator to assist with communication in developing an IEP.

[Complaints](#) are generally expressions of some disagreement with a procedure or a process regarding special education programs, procedures or services.

[Due Process](#) uses an informal administrative hearing process before a hearing officer to resolve disagreements over such issues as related to a child's eligibility for special education and related services, evaluation of a child with a disability, appropriateness of a child's services and/or placement, or any other matter under free, appropriate public education, including disciplinary matters.

For more information go to: www.doe.virginia.gov/programs-services/special-education/resolving-disputes

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