

A PEATC

Do You Know....



Fact Sheet for Virginia's Parents Parent & Student Input in Special Education Processes

You Have a Key Role in Your Child's Education

As a parent, you know your child best. Your expertise is critical to your child's success in school and it is even more important when you have a child with a disability. If your child receives special education and related services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), **you are, by law, an equal member of your child's Eligibility and Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams.** If your child receives accommodations under a 504 Plan, the **504 team should also consider your input, but there is no legal requirement that they include you on the team.**

It is important to participate in all meetings relating to your child. You provide input as well as continuity between teachers, between classrooms, between grades and between schools. You can provide feedback in areas such as the following.

- ✓ **Your child's physical, emotional, social, developmental, family history, and insights into your child's disability.**
- ✓ **Your child's strengths and challenges and how you have addressed these at home. (*This is especially important when developing the Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance [PLAAFP] for the IEP.*)**
- ✓ **The types of tests and evaluations that have worked with your child and those that have not provided accurate information.**
- ✓ **Whether or not an evaluation performed by the school represents what you are seeing at home or what you know your child can do.**
- ✓ **Situations that may affect your child's ability to learn or adjust (divorce, moving, medication changes, medical issues, etc.).**
- ✓ **Your dreams for your child and the goals and objectives you think are important for your child's success.**

Resources on Parent/Student Input

Center for Parent Information and Resources

<https://www.parentcenterhub.org/pa12/>

Understood.org

<https://www.understood.org/en/school-learning/special-services/ieps/playing-a-role-in-the-iep-process>

Very Well Family

<https://www.verywellfamily.com/parental-importance-special-education-2162701>



Contact Us:

8003 Forbes Place, Suite 310
Springfield, VA 22151

800-869-6782 / 703-923-0010

www.peatc.org

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Fact Sheet for Virginia's Parents

- ✓ **How your child learns best and if current strategies and instruction are helping your child learn.**
- ✓ **What you consider to be the least restrictive environment (LRE) in which your child's IEP can be implemented (*i.e., a regular classroom, a separate classroom, etc.*).**
- ✓ **The diploma you would like your child to receive when he/she graduates high school. (*Removing your child from Virginia's Standards of Learning Curriculum will mean he/she cannot obtain a Standard or Advanced Studies Diploma*).**
- ✓ **The types of technology that work best for your child.**
- ✓ **The types of behavioral strategies that work or do not work with your child.**
- ✓ **Your child's ability to transition from one setting to another and to best handle transitions.**
- ✓ **Your child's communication needs as well as effective strategies that you have used to aid communication.**
- ✓ **Other needs for reasonable accommodations or modifications to the environment or the curriculum.**

Sharing this type of information throughout your child's school career will help him receive the most appropriate services. While IEP decisions are made by consensus, you have the right to provide your input, to receive an explanation if your proposals or input are refused (Prior Written Notice), and to access dispute resolution mechanisms if necessary.

The Importance of Student Participation and Input

Students should be involved in their education program and decisions as soon as they are able. This helps build important life-long, self-advocacy skills. Your child can and should provide input into:

- ✓ His or her hopes and dreams for the future
- ✓ What he/she is good at and what he/she is not yet good at.
- ✓ The services, supports, and accommodations he/she needs to be successful.
- ✓ His/her desired plans after high school (community college, university, job) and how he/she hopes to get there.
- ✓ The challenges he/she is experiencing and how his/her teachers can help him/her succeed.
- ✓ How his/her team can best communicate with her.



PEATC's mission focuses on building positive futures for Virginia's children by working collaboratively with families, schools and communities to improve opportunities for excellence in education and success in school and community life.

For more information about us, please contact:

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Springfield, VA 22151
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