

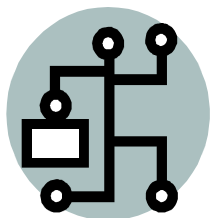


Steps in Solving Problems

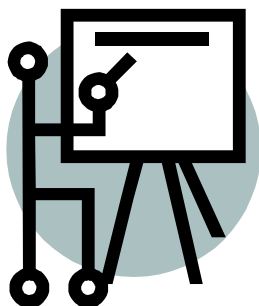
If you and the school district are still not able to solve the problem, you may decide to take one of these steps, depending on the type of problem:

- If you and the school district cannot resolve a disagreement about your child's evaluation, eligibility, placement, services, or IEP, you or the school district may ask for a due process hearing.
- If you believe that the school district has violated a *law* related to the education of children with disabilities, you may file a formal **complaint**.

Mediation can be used to resolve either type of problem. Mediation, due process hearings, and formal complaints all have the same purpose- to solve problems. They are not designed to punish the school or anyone else. They are designed to ensure that children with disabilities receive a free appropriate public education.



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Where can I go for help?

FDLRS/Westgate

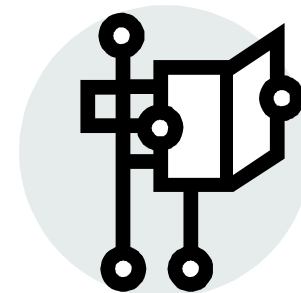
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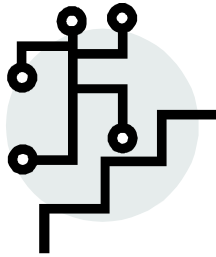


Excerpted from: An Introduction to Exceptional Student Education

Florida Department of Education



Steps in Solving Problems



What do I do first?

From time to time you and the school staff may disagree about what is fair or best for your child. Some problems can be solved quickly. Others will take more time and effort.

The **first** step in solving a problem is to make sure that everyone understands the problem. Asking for a meeting is often the best thing to do when you don't understand something or think the school doesn't understand you. Knowing whom to call or talk to is very important. Many times talking to the right person will help.

If the problem has to do with something in the classroom, take these steps:

- First, talk to your child's teacher
- Then, talk to the principal of the school
- Next, call the ESE administrator in your local school district office

If the problem has to do with finding appropriate services for your child, evaluation, or eligibility, take these steps:

- First, talk to the guidance counselor or principal of the school
- Then, contact the person in charge of evaluations or eligibility staffings in your local district office
- Next, call the ESE administrator in your local school district office
- Then, contact the superintendent of your school district

If the problem has to do with the IEP or changing your child's services or placement, take these steps:

- First, talk with your child's teacher.
- Next, talk with the principal of the school
- Then, ask for an IEP meeting

- Next, contact the ESE administrator in the local school district office
- Then, contact the superintendent of the school district

If other problems come up, find out who has the power to make decisions about those problems and talk to that person. Taking a complaint to someone who cannot make decisions is a waste of time for both you and your child.

If talking to people and attending meetings do not solve the problems, here are other steps you can take:

- If your child's evaluation or service has not begun yet, you may revoke (take back) your consent to it.
- You may ask for another evaluation or an independent educational evaluation
- You may ask for free mediation services.

It usually helps to take these actions in writing. Be sure to give your reasons and to ask for a written answer.