

Educational Rights and Responsibilities: Understanding Special Education in Illinois

Illinois State Board of Education
Special Education and Support Services
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The Task Force for Accessible Special Education Parent Materials was charged to examine informational and guidance materials from Illinois and other states to determine the most appropriate materials for parents of students who receive special education services. The Task Force then offered recommendations to the Illinois State Board of Education for updates to the parents guide, web resources (online training and videos), and other print resources (brochures, fact-sheets and others).

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Foreword

Education Rights and Responsibilities: Understanding Special Education in Illinois was developed by the Illinois State Board of Education with assistance from the Parent Task Force on Accessible Special Education Materials. — The guide is for parents, teachers, administrators, and others to learn about the educational rights of children who have disabilities and receive special education and related services. — It has been revised to incorporate the changes made to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 and the Illinois special education rules and regulations which became effective June 28, 2007.

Special education laws and procedures are complicated and can be hard to understand. — This guide will clarify some of the procedures of special education; however, it is not a complete explanation of all the special education laws. — The guide does contain information about many of the most common things readers may want to know.

If you are a parent reading this guide, your child may have been identified as having a disability or may be experiencing difficulties in school. — All students possess differences, learn differently and demonstrate varied abilities. — This is what makes us unique. — Special education is more about ability than disability. What your child can do is far more important than any perceived or actual limitations he or she may be experiencing. Because you know your child better than anyone else, your involvement in the education process is critical. — Your school district wants and needs your involvement in your child's education. — This guide provides you with tips on how to work in partnership with your local school district on behalf of your child. — We hope this information will give you a better understanding of the special education process in Illinois.

This guide is not meant to replace the Explanation of Procedural Safeguards that districts must give to parents of eligible children at specific times during the school year. — If you have any questions about special education rules or regulations, call a consultant at the Special Education and Support Services Division of the Illinois State Board of Education at the toll-free number 1-866-262-6663. — The direct number of the Springfield office is 217-782-5589 and the direct number of the Chicago office is 312-814-5560. — If you have access to the Internet, the ISBE Special Education homepage has many resources and is located at <http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/default.htm>.



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