



Resolving Special Education Issues: Keeping special education records

Question

My child is in special education and has an Individualized Education Program (IEP)*. I receive many papers and reports from the school, but I cannot decide which special education records I should keep or how to organize them. Can you help?

Answer

Special education records are an essential part of the special education process, which is based upon federal and state laws and rules. Parents should save these important records in an organized way to use for IEP planning and to keep track of their child's educational progress.

Special education records to keep include:

- IEP (advocates recommend keeping the current IEP and at least the past two IEPs)
- Evaluation Summary Report (advocates recommend keeping all of them)
- IEP progress reports
- Behavior reports (including bus reports, detentions, suspensions)
- Procedural Safeguards Notice
- Signed release of information forms
- Annual student handbook
- Standardized test scores
- Your notes from IEP meetings and conversations with team members
- Your record of telephone calls you made and meetings you attended
- Outside (not school) evaluations
- Communication notes between home and school
- Meeting notices

Regular education records to keep include:

- Report cards
- Awards and samples of schoolwork
- Attendance and health records

Methods of organization

Parents have many different ways to organize their child's special education records. The key is to find a system that works best for their lifestyle. Suggestions include:

*All references to IEP include IIEP (Individual Interagency Intervention Plan) and IFSP (Individual Family Service Plan).

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- PACER Center’s Special Education Record Keeping Folder
 - A box or drawer where all education records are kept
 - A three-ring notebook (and a three-hole punch)
 - File folders labeled with the topics listed above

Additional related resources available from PACER Center

- Special Education Record Keeping Folder which includes a communication log
- School Records and Parents’ Rights
- IEP Team Meeting Planner

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