

TA Tuesday: Parent Input, January 17th, 2023

Purpose

Every Tuesday, the AOE will be sending an email to update LEAs on available Technical Assistance (TA) for a particular topic. Today's TA topic is Parent Input.

Parent input is one of the areas with changes related to the new rules that went into effect on July 1, 2022. The Agency of Education created guidance and resources to support implementation. The following are excerpts from documents that have been shared and should serve as a reminder of the information that is available to LEAs.

Annotated Rule Change

"The IEP shall contain a section for parents to provide written comments regarding their child's IEP (1). Following an IEP meeting to write or amend an IEP, the LEA (Local Education Agency) shall send the IEP to the parent together with prior written notice of decision. The parent shall be provided up to 10 days (2) to complete and return the parent input section of the IEP (3). The purpose of the parent input section is to facilitate feedback from families to ensure they have an opportunity to express any opinions about the IEP or the IEP process. Upon receipt of the parent input, the LEA may, but is not required to, schedule a meeting to discuss parental concerns (4)." ([34 C.F.R. § 300.320](#))

- This is not meant to suggest that the parent should not have input prior to and during the IEP process. Parents should be encouraged to share their thoughts, concerns, questions, and suggestions on all sections of the IEP.
- Whenever 10 days is referenced, it is understood to mean 10 calendar days, rather than school days.
- The purpose of the parent input section is to facilitate feedback from families to ensure they have an opportunity to express any opinions about the IEP or the IEP process.
- Best practice will be to schedule a meeting to discuss the parents' concerns and consider additional supports or services to address the parents' thoughts in an effort to build a collaborative, trusting relationship. Regardless of the LEA's decision to hold such a meeting, the parents' written input must be accurately represented in the parent input section of the IEP form.

The above rule change has two primary impacts: adjustments to the IEP process, and an emphasis on successful parent engagement.

Contact Information:

If you have questions about this document or would like additional information, please contact:
Cassandra Santo, Special Education Division, Cassie.Santo@Vermont.gov

How can parents participate?

Developing and revising a child's IEP includes parent input throughout the process, including specific input regarding their child's present levels of educational and functional performance. Parental input is included via the Parental Input Section or Page located within the IEP or as an attachment via the Parent Input Form (Form #12 or other method for collecting Parent Input) with a statement referring to the Form within the IEP document. The Parent Input Form becomes a part of the student file. Parents providing written input have the right to complete and send to the IEP team within ten (10) days of receiving the IEP, after an IEP meeting was held to write or amend the IEP. Parent(s) will be informed to return the form (or other method for collecting Parent Input) within 10 days if they have additional feedback or input.

It is appropriate and encouraged for parents to provide verbal input during the IEP meeting, for the district to include in the written IEP. The Parental Input Page described above provides another means for parents to provide input, but this should not be interpreted as preventing verbal input from being documented. Further, parents may waive their right to provide parent input if they choose. If the parent declines or does not provide feedback, the LEA should indicate this circumstance within the Parent Input section of the IEP.

The IEP will be considered 'in place' from the date referenced as the implementation date in the Prior Written Notice. A later meeting to review input that amends the IEP, if held, would result in a new IEP and Prior Written Notice.

If a parent disagrees with the IEP Team or provides new input that necessitates further IEP Team deliberation, the LEA should convene an additional meeting if the substance of parent feedback warrants such. This will usually take the form of new information not already addressed within an IEP meeting, or concerns about the IEP process that need to be addressed. In this case the LEA will confirm receipt of the feedback and may either schedule an additional formal IEP meeting for the IEP team to consider the input provided, or a specific meeting with the case manager or the special education administrator. The LEA should grant a full IEP meeting if requested by a parent. Any amendments may be created using form 5B, as per the typical process of amending an IEP between annual meetings.

Please see [Special Education Rights of Parents of Students With Disabilities](#) for more information.

Available Resources

[Family Engagement for IEP Team Members](#): This resource provides strategies for continued engagement with parents in throughout the IEP process.

[Guidance Document for Parent Input](#): This document provides additional information about parent input expectations within the IEP process and several resources to support engagement with families.

[Parent Input Case Studies](#): The following document provides case studies and guiding questions for engaging parent input during the IEP process as it relates to the rule changes that became effective in July, 2022.

[Pre Recorded Webinar: Parent Input](#): The parent input webinar reviews the special education rule change on parent input and reviews highlights from Parent Input Guidance Document.

[Rule Change: Parent Input Slide Deck](#): This slide deck accompanies the pre-recorded webinar for parent input.

[Sample Parent Letter](#): This document includes a cover letter, a present levels of performance section, and an example feedback template. This document can be edited by individual SU/SDs and utilized to share the rule change with families.

Happy Tuesday,

Special Education Program Team