



“Parents have a Right to become involved in their Child’s Education”

By: Laura S. Nata

Parents have a right to become involved in their children’s educational *planning*, as some rights are based on the U. S. Constitution, federal or state laws, or Supreme Court rulings. Others might more accurately be defined as “expectations” or “fundamental human rights.”

Given the power that family involvement has to influence how our children achieve in school and in life, it’s not surprising that the nation’s special education law, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), strongly supports parents’ right to be involved in the special education their child receives.

One of IDEA’s foundational principles is the right of parents to participate in educational decision making regarding their child with a disability. The law is very specific about what school systems must do to ensure that parents have the opportunity to participate, if they choose to.

And did you know that you have the right to participate in meetings related to the evaluation, identification, and educational placement of your son or daughter?

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Yes, as a parent/guardian you have the right to participate in meetings related to the provision of a free appropriate public education (FAPE) for your child year to year.

As a parent/guardian you are entitled to be a member of the group that decides whether your child is a “child with a disability” and meets eligibility criteria for special education and related services. You’re also entitled to be a member of the team that develops, reviews, and revises the individualized education program (IEP) for your child.

If at any given time you cannot attend your son/daughter’s IEP meeting, the school must use other methods to ensure your participation via conference call or another way. Just make sure to have a draft copy of the IEP so you can have something to follow. Don’t forget to ask for your complete copy so that you can once again review before signing off.

Speaking from experience it is so rewarding to be a voice for your child’s future and know step by step they are being prepared for adult life. With that being said don’t allow anyone to stop what is rightfully your human right. To read more on this topic click on this link: <http://www.parentcenterhub.org/repository/parental-rights/>, and read in English and Spanish. It is worth to have it as a reminder. Why? Many times we forget *WE HAVE RIGHTS!*



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