States and entities receiving IDEA Part B funds are required to offer four processes to resolve disagreements arising under the IDEA: Written State Complaints, Mediation, and Due Process Complaints, which include Resolution Meetings. Since 2006, more adversarial processes (i.e., Written State Complaints, Due Process Complaints) have been on the decline, while optional, collaborative approaches to resolving disputes, such as Mediation and IEP Facilitation, are on the rise.

### Trends in the Use of Mandated IDEA Dispute Resolution Processes
- **Written State Complaints and Complaint Reports Issued** have remained relatively steady over the past 7 years despite a slight increase this year. Activity is broad-based across states, as compared to Due Process Complaint activity.
- Although *Mediation Requests* have decreased significantly this year, *Mediations Held*, and *Mediation Agreements* have continued to show a steady increase during the last 10 years. The 2015-16 national average mediation agreement rate is 68%.
- *Due Process Complaints* filed showed a significant uptick in 2015-16 which is attributable to activity in 1 state. Despite the increase in hearing requests, the number of hearings held is the lowest is has been in 10 years. Overall, 3 states account for 70% of *Due Process Complaints* filed and 3 states account for 76% of *Due Process Hearings Held*.
- From 2009-10 to 2014-15 *Resolution Meetings Held* and *Resolution Meeting Agreements* had both declined. 2015-16 shows a spike in both areas with the overall resolution meeting agreement rate increasing to 21% from 19% the previous year. The number of *Resolution Meetings Held* experienced a 9% increase over the previous year.
- Within the last 10 years, 85% of *Due Process Complaints* filed are either withdrawn, dismissed, or resolved without a hearing (about 66%), or pending at the end of the school year (about 19%).

### Support for More Collaborative Dispute Resolution Approaches
- CADRE contends that collaborative approaches can lead to a decreased use of formal dispute resolution processes and may foster better school-family relationships.
  - Some states that offer facilitators for *Resolution Meetings* higher agreement rates than the national average, reinforcing the belief that third party neutrals assist participants in reaching agreement.
  - Some states that offer facilitators for IEP meetings have experienced a decrease in the use of formal dispute resolution processes available under IDEA.
- States continue to make investments in early conflict resolution activities that are not required by the IDEA, such as local capacity building, stakeholder training, ombudspersons, stakeholder councils, and other innovative approaches.
- Currently, 43 states and D.C. are providing or developing IEP facilitation by offering statewide or local programs/pilots.