

Resolving Special Education Issues:

Keeping Special Education Records

Question:

My child is in special education and has an 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:

- PACER Center's Special Education Record Keeping Folder (one free to Minnesota parents upon request)
- 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

**All references to IEP (Individualized Education Program) include IIP (Individual Interagency Intervention Plan) and IFSP (Individual Family Service Plan).*

Additional related resources available from PACER Center:

- Special Education Record Keeping Folder
- School Records and Parents' Rights
- IEP Team Meeting Planner
- Communication Log