

Quick Tips

quick tips...

Essential information and/or interesting facts from Special Education Services, Alabama State Department of Education.

for Dispute Resolution

**Special Education Services
Alabama State Department
of Education
PO Box 302101
Montgomery, AL 36130-2101
334.694.4782
speced@alsde.edu**

UNDERSTANDING THE MEDIATION PROCESS

Mediation is an effective means that voluntarily brings people together to resolve a dispute. The following information was prepared to help Superintendents, Special Education Coordinators, and other pertinent staff make decisions to assist in a resolution of the dispute that appropriately benefits the student.

- **Decision to Mediate:**

Is the situation one in which this process would more likely lead to a positive outcome for both or all parties?

- **When to Mediate:**

The best time to settle a dispute is early on in the process;

Parameters regarding timelines for mediations only exist within the complaint and due process hearing processes.

- **Who Should Be At the Mediation Table:**

The mediator;

The complainant;

The respondent (the person who is involved in the complaint should be there. Also someone who is authorized to make decisions should be at the mediation);

Representatives (representation should not be denied to the parties involved but should be kept to a minimum).

- **Components of the Mediation Process:**

Mediator's opening statement;

Remarks by the parties;

Joint discussion;

Caucus;

Reconvening the parties;

Agreement writing.

This information is provided as a general guide to understanding Mediation, under IDEA, in the State of Alabama. It is not provided as specific legal advice.