

School Closures and the Rights of Students with Disabilities

What Parents Need to Know



Every Student With a Disability Deserves a Champion



CHAMPIONS ★ FOR KIDS ★

Every Student With a Disability Deserves a Champion

Jenny Mullins



A large, stylized graphic of a trophy or award cup, rendered in shades of blue and orange, serves as a background for the logo. The trophy is composed of thick, rounded lines and is positioned on the left side of the slide.

CHAMPIONS ★ FOR KIDS ★

Every Student With a Disability Deserves a Champion

A **coalition of parents, advocates, and attorneys** working together to tackle some of the most **pressing issues** facing students with disabilities.



Introductions



Meeting Objectives

To help parents understand their rights, what questions to ask,
and resources to help them

Specific questions about why districts are closing schools are
outside the scope of this presentation





The Role of the IEP



- ★ Your IEP or 504 plan is the bridge from School A to School B
 - ★ The IEP or 504 plan will follow the student.
 - ★ You can request an IEP meeting with current team to update or add services and add member from new school team.
 - ★ For example: You may need to add transportation as a related service.
-

Programs, Placements, and Locations

Programs

What your child currently has (curriculum, services, accommodations, etc)

Placements

Where and when a student goes to school is called the placement. Levels A-D

Can only be changed by the IEP team

Locations

The actual school site



What Can You Do Now?



Visit the new school
(and bring your child if possible)

- Make sure it is an excused absence



Meet staff at new school

- Ask administration about the transition timeline and when staffing decisions will be made



Request an IEP meeting
before the end of the school year

- Make sure the IEP accurately reflects the needs of your child
- Present levels need to be up to date



**Talk to parents at the
new school**



**Put your requests for
your child's transition
in writing**

Did you know you can visit the new school?

School districts and charter schools must have policies to allow for visits, tours and observations of **ALL** classrooms by parents of enrolled pupils and parents who wish to enroll their child. The policies must be easily accessible from the home page on each school's website. (§15-341(A)(46))



The Unknowns



Staffing



Bus routes



Class sizes

**It's ok not to have
all the answers
right now.**



Advocacy Ideas for Parents



Attend your school board meetings

to learn more and ask questions



Meet staff members

(cafeteria, special area teachers, elective teachers, secretary, nurse)



Is current administration staying?

They set the tone for the building and the rest of the team follows. Administration might change.



Advocate for school transition activities

(Meet the Teacher, tours of the school, etc)



Transportation



Continuing Services

Transportation will continue if written into IEP



Updating the IEP

If new school is further away, call an IEP meeting to add transportation to IEP as a related service



Reimbursement Options

Option for reimbursement for transportation from district (If parent agrees and district is unable to provide it.)



Other Things to Consider



- ★ Curriculum
- ★ Disability-specific programs
- ★ Teacher-student ratios
- ★ Transportation
- ★ Related service provider availability
- ★ Physical accessibility of new campus
- ★ Safety- points of entry on campus, wandering considerations, staff between classes
- ★ Lunch policies, do they have a buddy program?



You Still Have Choices



**Open
enrollment**



**Charter
schools**



**Online
schools**



**Empowerment
Scholarship
Accounts**



Advice



Pick and choose your battles

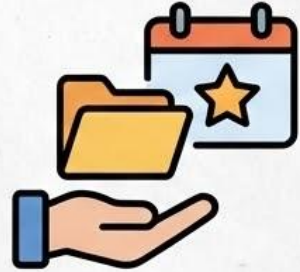
Patience and grace goes a long way

Be a team player



Make sure current IEP accurately reflects your child's needs

Make sure the current teacher updates present levels in the IEP and provides as much information about what works for your child



Make sure your new teacher has a copy of the IEP or 504 at Meet the Teacher night or before the first day of school

Still have questions? Reach out



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Disability
Rights
Arizona

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[https://disabilityrightsaz.org/
get-help/apply-for-assistance/](https://disabilityrightsaz.org/get-help/apply-for-assistance/)