

# Things I Wish I'd Known...

*(as a parent of a student with Special Education services\*)*

## STUDENT RECORDS

Parents have the right to review ALL of their student's educational records. <i>It is helpful to review a student's records before an Individual Education Program (IEP) meeting. Always put your request in writing.</i>  (Portland Public Schools (PPS) Policy & Procedure Manual, Section 12, Student Records, pages 3-8)	"ALL educational records" can include the: special education "green" file (kept in district office); cumulative folder (kept in school office); discipline file; entries in "ESIS" (Electronic Student Information System); and any notes, emails or records kept by teachers, counselors, special education providers, administrators, speech therapists, and consultants.
--	---

## INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP)

Families should receive quarterly reports on IEP goals at the same time that report cards are received. <i>These reports help you monitor the student's progress and are to be provided by the student's Case Manager.</i>	Parents and students can tape IEP meetings with advance notice to school. <i>This will allow you to review what was said at the meeting and help you to avoid misunderstandings.</i>
Parents and students have the right to request an "IEP Review" at any time they want to make adjustments or changes to the student's educational services.	Parents and students can invite other people to attend the student's IEP meeting. <i>Advance notice is expected.</i>

## TESTING & EVALUATIONS

Parents have the right to request an Independent Education Evaluation (IEE) at the school district expense, if you disagree with the school's evaluation of your student. <i>You do not have to justify why you disagree with the evaluation; just state that you disagree.</i>	You have the right to ask for a "Prior Written Notice" form if the school district refuses to evaluate your child in areas of concern that you request. "Prior Written Notice" forms are filled out by school staff to document why the school is refusing your request.
---	--

## CREDITS

"Literacy Standards" are set at each grade level. Copies of the standards are kept in the school office. <i>Your student's IEP goals need to align/correlate to these standards if your student is going to pass benchmark testing and graduate with a regular diploma on schedule.</i>	In 8 <sup>th</sup> grade, "high school forecasting" begins. <i>Find out what classes your student needs to graduate with a regular diploma on schedule. Make sure that any assigned special education classes count toward graduation credit requirements.</i>
---	--

\*Comments in *italics* are the voice of Portland Schools Alliance Coalition of Concerned Parents: Special Education

## SUPPORT SERVICES

<p>Students must be provided with equal access to extra-curricular school-based activities. <i>Ask for this support at the IEP meeting.</i></p> <p>IDEA 2004 Regulations Section 300.107(a)</p>	<p>Students may qualify for free Extended School Year (ESY) during the summer, if regression is predicted, or to prevent regression (forgetting what they have already learned). <i>It is important to document evidence of regression and how long it takes to re-learn after school breaks.</i></p>	<p>Students ages 16 – 21 may qualify for Transition Services to help prepare them for independent adult life, employment, and further education.</p>
---	---	--

## RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

<p>Parents can visit a classroom to observe, with advance notice. <i>Contact the school principal to make arrangements (at least 24-hours in advance). When possible, do this before there are problems, to build positive relationships with faculty.</i></p>	<p><i>When you are quoted a school “policy”, ask to be given a copy of that policy for your review and notebook documentation.</i></p>
--	--

*Make ALL requests in writing, date the request, and keep a copy for your own notebook. Notebooks should contain school district correspondence, notices, IEP papers, etc. Email and written dated communications are better than phone call discussions. Be sure to write and date notes of phone calls or discussions to document them, and put them in the notebook as well.*

## ADVICE

*Find and get to know other family members of students receiving special education at your student’s school. Share information, resources, and support.*

## ON-LINE INFORMATION & RESOURCES

- Wrightslaw - [www.wrightslaw.com](http://www.wrightslaw.com)
- Reed Martin - [www.reedmartin.com](http://www.reedmartin.com)
- LDOonline - <http://www.ldonline.org/>
- Schwab Learning - <http://www.schwablearning.org/>
- NICHCY - <http://www.nichcy.org/>
- CEC - <http://ericec.org/faqs.html>
- IDEA 2004 Final Regs - <http://www.ed.gov/legislation/FedRegister/finrule/2006-3/081406a.pdf>
- PPS Special Education - <http://webtest.pps.k12.or.us/depts/speced/index.shtml>
- PPS Policy and Procedure Manual - <http://webtest.pps.k12.or.us/depts/speced/manuals/policies.shtml>
- Oregon Parent Training & Information Center - <http://www.orpti.org/>