



## I have concerns about my child's educational progress or program. Who should I contact at the school?

### Your child's classroom teacher:

Call the school to set up a meeting with your child's teacher. Teachers are busy with students during the day and often have afterschool duties, so don't despair if the teacher is not available to meet on the day you call.

Prepare for the meeting by writing down your main questions or concerns (3 or less). Bring samples of schoolwork or tasks your child struggles to do. Take notes on the teacher's suggestions for how to support your child's learning at home and share ideas you think may help your child at school. Write down any follow-up tasks you need to complete after the meeting.

If you think your child has a disability and needs special education and related services, be sure to discuss referring your child for an initial special education evaluation.

### The special education teacher:

Your child's classroom teacher may encourage you to speak with the special education teacher about the educational concerns you have for your child.

Special education teachers are specially trained in adapting the content, method, and delivery of instruction to support student learning. They are also informed about community resources that may benefit your child; thus, they are excellent resources.

If your child has an IEP, you can request an IEP team meeting any time you have concerns about their educational progress or services. It is not necessary to wait for the annual review to make changes.

If your child doesn't have an IEP but you think they have a disability and need special education and related services, you can ask the special education teacher for an initial evaluation.

### The special education director:

Special education issues that haven't been resolved at the school/building level, including concerns about any matter pertaining to your child's IEP, may be brought to the special education director's attention.

Special education directors are typically responsible for supervising special education staff, ensuring program compliance with federal and state special education law, implementing local school district or special education cooperative policies and procedures, and overseeing special education budgets.

Parents who think their child has a disability and want to request an initial evaluation to determine if their child qualifies for special education and related services may also speak with the special education director about such matters.



## Additional Supports for Parents and Schools

### Montana OPI Special Education Family Resources

The Special Education Family & School Liaison (Liaison) provides technical assistance and resources to assist individuals in understanding special education processes and procedures, and supports effective communication, partnerships, and collaboration between families and schools.

The Liaison can also assist you in determining who to contact at your school district.

The Liaison is not an advocate and cannot provide legal advice.

### Montana Empowerment Center

The MEC is Montana's Parent Training and Information Center funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs. The MEC provides information, resources, and training to enable parents to advocate for their child's educational needs and make informed decisions as equal partners in their child's education.

Contact MEC by email:  
[info@mtempowerment  
center.org](mailto:info@mtempowermentcenter.org)

or by phone:  
1-877-870-1190