



Advocates for Justice and Education, Inc.

The Parent Training and Information Center for the District of Columbia

Trainings for Parents and Caregivers

These trainings are offered free of charge to parents and caregivers, and are available in-person or via Zoom. Starred Sessions ☆ are particularly popular with families. Most sessions are also available in Spanish and interpretation is often available with notice.

About AJE - (15 min)

This is a short introduction to Advocates for Justice and Education (AJE) and covers who we are, what we do, and how we do it. This is a great training to offer at back-to-school night, community events, and for Parent/Teacher/Student Organizations.

Understanding Special Education

The Special Education Process - (60 mins) ☆

This overview will make sure that you understand the Special Education process from Referral to Evaluations and Eligibility and Exit in DC. We will also touch on the move from Part C (Strong Start) to Part B (Early Stages) and Secondary Transition.

Understanding Special Education - Early Intervention - (60 mins)

This training helps parents understand the importance of Early Intervention and the roles of the various agencies involved, mostly focusing on Strong Start (DC's Part C agency, housed within OSSE serving children aged 0 - 3) and Early Stages (housed with DCPS).

All about the IEP (60 mins) ☆

This is a deep dive into the central feature of Special Education, the Individualized Education Plan (IEP). We will review all parts of the IEP with examples from a real DC IEP.

Child Find - (30 or 60 mins)

This training is a deep dive into one of the most important partners of IDEA and its implementing regulations, the obligation of Local and State Educational Agencies to Identify, Locate and Evaluate all children suspected of having a disability including those who are not currently in public school. This also discusses parent consent, the referral process and the role of Response to Intervention (RTI) in Child Find. The shorter 30-minute version is often combined with another training.



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Secondary Transition - (30 or 60 mins) ☆

This is a deep dive into Secondary Transition Planning. Secondary transition is how IDEA prepares students for life after high school - including employment, further education/job training, independent living and participation in society. The shorter 30-minute version is often combined with another training.

Dispute Resolution - (60 min)

This training covers the options available to parents under IDEA when they have been unable to reach a consensus at the IEP table. It covers Mediation, Due Process, State Complaints and Resolution Meetings. There is also a short introduction to other dispute resolution options for issues that are outside of IDEA, including Section 504, Title IX, Office of Human Rights and the PCSB community complaint process.

Preparing for your Upcoming IEP Meeting - (60 or 90 mins) ☆

This training helps parents prepare for IEP meetings by introducing the Parent Agenda and the Parent Checklist and reviewing DC's timelines for special education, parent's rights under IDEA, DC specific procedural requirements and the parts of the IEP. The 90-minute version includes some role play and workshopping.

Supported Decision Making (SDM) at School - (30 mins)

This is an introduction to SDM and focuses on how to use the DCPS and OSSE SDM forms in the educational setting. This session also covers the basics of FERPA and the need for consent from adult students. Parents are introduced to the DC SDM form and other resources in the community related to SDM. This training is often combined with another training.

Know Your Rights Series

Laws Protecting Students with Disabilities in DC - (75 mins)

This training discusses the following laws - IDEA, section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act and the DC Human Rights Act. This training is NOT a deep dive into Special Education, but it does review the basics of IDEA.

School Discipline in DC - (60 mins)

This training is for parents of students in both DCPS and DC Public Charter schools. It covers the Student Fair Access to School Act, school exclusion, suspension, expulsion and appeal rights. It reviews the Manifestation Determination Review process that applies to students with disabilities facing school removals and discusses restraint and seclusion policy as well.



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Language Access Rights - (45 mins)

This training covers the Language Access Act, and helps parents understand what documents they are entitled to receive in their Native Language, when schools need to use interpreters and how to access interpretation services via the Language Line. We also cover how to file a Language Access complaint and what to expect if you file a complaint. This training is for parents of students in both DCPS and DC Public Charter schools and also covers some Language Access in the community.

Rights of English Learners in the Special Education Process - (30 mins)

This training covers what parents of students with disabilities (or who are suspected of having a disability) can expect from the Special Education Process. Includes a discussion of bilingual evaluations, IDEA's exclusionary factors and Response to Intervention for English Learners.

Home and Hospital Instruction in DC - (45 mins)

This training is for parents of students in both DCPS and DC Public Charter schools. This training covers DC's new laws and regulations covering a student's right to Home and Hospital Instruction (HHI). It includes information about the initial application, a family's appeal rights, and HHI process in relation to IDEA and Section 504.

Access to Childcare/Aftercare for Children with Disabilities - (30 mins)

This training is for parents of students in both DCPS and DC Public Charter schools who have questions about the rights of their children with disabilities to access out of school programming like enrichment clubs and aftercare. This training can often be combined with another training.

Advocacy Training

Effective Advocacy & Communication for Parents - (30 or 60 mins) ☆

This training discusses how parents can have more productive and effective meetings with schools and work together more effectively. It covers 1) pre-meeting planning 2) meeting etiquette 3) how to use I-Statements 4) reflective communication techniques and 5) how to remain child and outcome focused. This training, while it uses many examples from the Special Education Process, is very helpful for all parents who want better communication and relationship with their child's school.



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Compensatory Education - (60 min)

This training is designed to give parents the skills needed to have a conversation with their child's team about missed services, and compensatory education. This training discusses the Reid-standard for compensatory education, the FAPE standard articulated in Endrew F and the federal and state guidance on compensatory education, missed services and interim placements/service plans.

Telling your Story - (60 or 90 mins) ☆

This training is for individuals who are interested in exploring systemic and policy-focused advocacy. Participants will learn how to use the power of personal narrative to effectively advocate for policy positions. Basics of social media, creating talking points, providing testimony and meeting with policy-makers will be covered.

Working with Doctors - (45 mins)

This training helps parents prepare to have more efficient meetings with healthcare professionals. Includes suggestions about note-taking, formulating your questions and concerns in advance, and how to make sure you have enough time to discuss your concerns. This training also introduces ideas like the medical home, person-centered care and preparing youth for the move to adult systems of care.

Education Governance in DC - (30 or 60 mins)

If you have ever wondered what Mayoral control meant, or wondered what exactly the PCSB, OSSE or the Council did and were responsible for, this is the training for you! This shorter session is often combined with another training, or can be extended to include some advocacy elements. We review who does what in DC education governance.