

**“As a Taxpayer, I Pay Your Salary
and You Work for Me!” :
How to Effectively Deal with
Challenging Parents**

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The parent is sending several harassing emails to the teachers. What can be done?

It is the administrator's obligation to protect its staff from harassment. In these situations, the parent needs to be informed that from this point forward, any parental concerns need to be emailed to the administrator. A response will be provided by the end of the week, unless it is an emergency.

Can a parent video record an ARD meeting?

No. It is the district's discretion as to whether a parent can video record.

Can a parent choose not to give his/her child medication?

A parent's decision to not give a child medication cannot be reported to CPS unless it poses a substantial risk of harm to the child or has resulted in an observable and material impairment in the function of the child...

Does a parent have the right to visit the child's classroom every day?

No. The principal has the right to maintain order on the campus and prevent the disruption of instruction. Time limits and restrictions on when the visits can occur can be imposed. Failure to comply with restrictions can be the basis for denying the privilege of visiting the class.

A parent is obsessed with the e-mail process, to the point where he typically sends several e-mails to teachers at 2:30 a.m. How should this be handled?

- Never respond when angry.
- Respond in a reasonable amount of time.
- If several e-mails have been sent, address them all in one response.
- You do not have to address every item.
- If the issue has been addressed before, refer back to your previous response.

The parent is demanding a copy of the IEP at the end of the meeting. Do we have to provide it?

No. The district has a reasonable amount of time to provide a copy. Also, the district can charge for additional copies.

Can a parent insist on recording his/her meetings with teachers or administrators?

Nope.

Can a parent insist on a specific methodology, e.g., ABA?

No. Methodology is within the discretion of the educational professional.

Can the parent bring someone to the ARD meeting?

Yes, and if they do ...

Can the parent bring someone to the ARD meeting?

- Have everyone sign in and give their position.
- If the parent brings an attorney, postpone to give the district the opportunity to bring its own legal counsel.
- If someone refuses to identify him/herself, that person can be excluded.

What happens if the parent disagrees with the IEP?

The district must offer a reconvene. It is the parent's discretion as to whether to reconvene.

The parents are divorced and hate each other. Mother does not want Dad to attend with his new girlfriend, who used to be the kid's babysitter. Can Mom stop Dad from coming to the ARD?

No. Unless the divorce decree indicates that the father's educational rights have been altered, the father still has the right to attend.

The father is a registered sex offender who wants to come onto the campus for the ARD meeting. What can be done?

A registered sex offender can be precluded from coming onto campus. Meetings can take place at the administration building

A parent is seeking copies of the teacher's evaluations and any reprimands. Can the parent get them?

Nope.

A parent is seeking the teacher's home e-mail address. Can the parent get it?

Nope.

**The parent wants daily communication as part of the IEP.
Does the school have to provide it?**

Ask these three questions:

- Is the accommodation educationally necessary?
- Will it be a detriment to the child?
- Will it be a hardship on the teachers?

**The parent wants the ARD meeting scheduled after her yoga
class at 4:30. Do we have to accommodate?**

No. The ARD meeting needs to be during school hours, at a mutually convenient time.

A parent wants her child to have a miniature donkey to serve as a service animal and accompany the child at school. Does the district have to allow it?

No. Under 28 C.F.R. 35.136, “Service animal” means any dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability. Other species of animals, whether wild or domestic, trained or untrained, are not service animals for the purposes of this definition.

The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the individual’s disability. Examples of work or tasks include, but are not limited to, assisting individuals who are blind or have low vision with navigation and other tasks, alerting individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing to the presence of people or sounds, providing non-violent protection or rescue work, pulling a wheelchair, assisting an individual during a seizure, alerting individuals to the presence of allergens, retrieving items such as medicine or the telephone, providing physical support and assistance with balance and stability to individuals with mobility disabilities, and helping persons with psychiatric and neurological disabilities by preventing or interrupting impulsive or destructive behaviors.

The parent is seeking for her private therapist to observe the classroom. What should the school do?

When a parent is seeking for outside professionals to observe, the district can limit the time and choose the date when the observation will occur. It is a privilege, not a right, for an outside professional to observe at the school. Consequently, the outside professional needs to submit to a criminal background check and sign a confidentiality statement. Additionally, the district should have a school employee with similar credentials be present when the observation occurs.

The parent is seeking for their child with autism to attend two days a week and go to an outside program for the remainder of the week. What should the school do?

Under Texas Education Code §25.087, a district shall excuse a student from attending school for a temporary absence resulting from an appointment with a health-care professional for the student or the student's child if the student commences classes or returns to school on the same day of the appointment. The appointment must be supported by a document such as a note from the health-care professional.

“Temporary absence” includes the temporary absence of a student diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder on the day of the student’s appointment with a health-care practitioner to receive a generally recognized service for persons with autism spectrum disorder, including applied behavioral analysis, speech therapy and occupational therapy. Consequently, the student needs to attend every day for a portion of the day.

The parent has been asserting that the student is coming home with bruises even though nothing has happened at the school. What should the school do?

Have the student checked by the nurse at the beginning of school and the end of school and document the checks.

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