



Parents' Bill of Rights

Why does Missouri have a Parents' Bill of Rights?

The Missouri legislature passed a bill in 2009 (Senate Bill 291) that created a new state requirement for the Parents' Bill of Rights. During testimony on the bill, supporters indicated that the Bill of Rights is needed to provide parents of children with disabilities a concise and easy to understand summary of important special education rights.

What is the difference between the Parent's Bill of Rights and IDEA Procedural Safeguards?

The Parents' Bill of Rights is much shorter and only highlights certain special education rights while the IDEA Procedural Safeguards provide a full description of all federal special education rights. In addition, the provision of IDEA Procedural Safeguards is a part of a free appropriate education as mandated by IDEA. The Parents' Bill of Rights is an informational document and does not confer any right or rights beyond existing state or federal law.

When must the Parent's Bill of Rights be provided?

Beginning January 1, 2010, schools must provide the Bill of Rights to parents upon determination a student qualifies for an IEP and any time IDEA requires provision of procedural safeguards. Practically, schools may want to establish procedures that deliver the Bill of Rights at all times Procedural Safeguards are provided to keep the process as simple as possible for staff. However, the two documents should NOT be "packaged" together as one document. They should be provided as separate documents as their purposes and the associated legal requirements they fulfill are distinctly separate.

How do I get copies of the Parent's Bill of Rights?

The Parents' Bill of Rights is available on the DESE Special Education website for download and printing at <http://dese.mo.gov/divspeced/Compliance/parentbillofrights.html> . It is available in multiple languages and a video version in American Sign Language. DESE will periodically update the content to ensure it remains consistent with current state and federal law and regulations.

What other resources are available to help parents understand their rights?

DESE has produced the Parent's Guide to Special Education which is available online at <http://dese.mo.gov/divspeced/Compliance/specedguidance.html> and can be downloaded and printed. This booklet provides parents with information to assist in their participation with the identification process and provision of educational services for children with disabilities and is in a user-friendly format. Public agencies may request hard copies at no cost via email to Craig Nichols at capitolprojects@hotmail.com or Capital Projects, 2001 E. McCarty, Jefferson City, MO 65101, phone 573-634-3660.

Missouri Parents Act (MPACT) is the IDEA funded parent information and training center for Missouri. MPACT provides a wide array of supports that assist parents to advocate effectively for their children's educational rights and services, see <http://ptimpact.org/>.