



Maine Parent Federation

Since 1984 . . . because every family matters

Guide to Educational Advocacy in Maine

Here are some tips to help you choose a resource that best fits your advocacy needs. When inquiring, you might want to ask ...

- * What is your special education training and experience?
- * How do you keep up-to-date with special education laws and regulations?
- * Does anyone provide you with supervision and oversight?
- * How will you get to know my family's priorities?
- * Do you have any experience with situations similar to my child's?
- * Can you provide references?
- * Do you charge for services, and can I have a copy of your fee structure in writing?
- * Do you have a plan about how and when you will assist me?
- * Does this plan of action include my goals for my child?
- * What is your relationship with schools?
- * Do you have any experience with my child's school district?
- * Is there any reason you feel you should not work with or represent my child or me?
- * What is your confidentiality policy?

The following resources can assist you with your questions about special education, such as your child's IEP, testing information, and options and requirements for your child's educational needs.

Maine Parent Federation (MPF)

(207) 588-1933 or (800) 870-7746, www.mpf.org

MPF is Maine's Parent Training and Information Center funded through the Federal Office of Special Education Programs. MPF provides information, referral, support and training, including tips for self-advocacy, to families of children with special needs.

Disability Rights Maine (DRM)

(207) 626-2774 or (800) 452-1948, www.drme.org

DRM is Maine's Protection and Advocacy agency for people with disabilities. DRM provides training on educational rights and self-advocacy and may be able to represent families of children with disabilities in legal proceedings.

Legal Representation

Kids Legal

(207) 774-8246 or (866) 624-7787, www.kidslegal.org

Kids Legal, a project within Pine Tree Legal Assistance, provides free civil legal aid for Maine's children and their caregivers.

Maine Bar Association

(207) 622-7523, www.mainebar.org

The Lawyer Referral Service at the Maine Bar Association can help find the right person for your specific situation.

Kid's Legal and the Maine Bar Association may be able to offer legal representation.

Parent Advocates & Attorneys

Good advocates should empower you, understand disabilities, and act professionally with you, schools, and providers. Advocates are usually not lawyers but should be able to advise you when you need to connect with a lawyer.

This document is a collaboration between the State of Maine Department of Education and Maine Parent Federation, Inc.