

FACILITATED INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION/504 PROGRAM (FIEP)

MARCH 2024- MARCH 2025

On March 1, 2024, the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) launched the Facilitated Individualized Education/504 Program (FIEP). The RIDE FIEP team is trained to guide families and school districts through collaborative discussion, mutual understanding and shared decision-making to resolve conflicts and misunderstandings related to student IEP or 504 Plans. The FIEP program continues to show promising results in resolving disputes between families and schools through this alternative dispute resolution option.



101

formal requests received

*72% of facilitation requests are made by parents

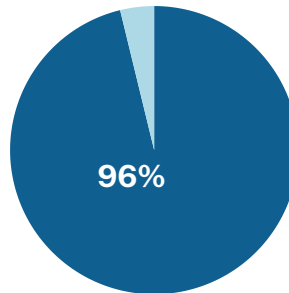
96% success rate

45 requests that moved forward with a facilitated meeting; consensus was achieved successfully **preventing** formal dispute resolution

*56 requests did not move forward as the facilitators were able to reach consensus with the parents and/or districts toward an agreeable next step

159 participants surveyed

immediately after a facilitated meeting resulted in **an overall satisfaction average rating of 96%**



What Parents and Districts Are Saying

"...this saved us many meetings and many steps -- allowing for the team to devote our time equitably and productively... -- and for that I am very appreciative of the facilitative process." (Educator)

"...ensured that all voices were heard... the meeting fostered genuine collaboration. I hope the district continues to adopt this approach for future meetings, as it demonstrates how much can be achieved when everyone works together with a shared commitment to the student's success." (Parent)

"The multi-meetings to get consensus were necessary. The outcomes and re-establishing trust between the parents and the school were worth the time dedicated. I recommend facilitated IEP/504 meetings to my colleagues AND family members." (Director)

The Latest

- The program continues to be funded by state general revenue
- The Center for Appropriate Dispute Resolution in Special Education selected the RIDE FIEP team for a two-year project to enhance local-level early dispute resolution strategies through a Collaborative State TA Workgroup
- The FIEP Team offers a two-hour training on Facilitative Strategies to improve communication and collaboration between parents and schools, designed for LEA representatives, related service staff, and educators
- To build a continuum of early dispute resolution strategies, including district-level facilitators, RIDE provides intensive targeted technical assistance to select school districts and parents

Did You Know?

Approximately 35,865 or 1 in 4 Rhode Island students have an IEP, 504 plan, or both (Source: RIDE Data).

RIDE has developed a dedicated FIEP page that provides information and procedures for schools and families to access the new service. Visit www.ride.ri.gov/FIEP to learn more.



RIDE Rhode Island Department of Education