

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
BUREAU OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

March 7, 2022

Subject: Call Resolution Process

TO: Intermediate Unit Special Education Directors
School District Superintendents
School District Special Education Directors and Supervisors

FROM: Carole L. Clancy, Director

The Bureau of Special Education sponsors a toll-free Special Education ConsultLine to serve families and advocates who have questions or concerns about their child's special education program or who are seeking information and resources related to special education. The ConsultLine can be reached via phone (1-800-879-2301), email (consultline@odr-pa.org), or through the Office for Dispute Resolution (ODR) website (<https://odr-pa.org/consultline-contact/>).

Many of the concerns relayed to ConsultLine specialists relate to problems families perceive they are experiencing with the delivery of special education services for their children. These concerns could eventually result in an official complaint or request for mediation or due process. The data collected by ODR reveals that these concerns are often the result of a communication breakdown between the parent and local educational agency (LEA).

This Penn*Link serves as a reminder that the Bureau of Special Education implemented a Call Resolution Process (CRP) in September 2000 to proactively deal with complaint issues and expedite solving communication issues between LEAs and families of eligible students. The CRP has been highly effective in reducing the number of formal complaints filed with the Bureau of Special Education.

Many LEAs have stressed during complaint investigations that if they had been aware of a concern by a parent, they would have solved the problem before it became adversarial. To that end, on behalf of the Bureau of Special Education, the ConsultLine specialists in ODR will contact the respective special education director or supervisor by email to alert them of potential problems identified by callers to the ConsultLine that appear to be resolvable at the LEA level.

The email is offered as a courtesy notification only and does not require a response to ConsultLine. The ConsultLine specialists are not acting as mediators or intermediaries between LEAs and families. The ConsultLine specialists have the parent or guardian's permission to alert the LEA of a concern and LEAs can determine whether to follow up with the parents after receiving the notice. The notification will also be provided to the Bureau of Special Education Advisor for the LEA, along with the assigned Division Chief.

On behalf of the Bureau of Special Education, I want to thank you for your cooperation with this process, which has been highly successful to date, and for your efforts in providing a free appropriate public education to all students with special needs in the commonwealth.

Penn*Link