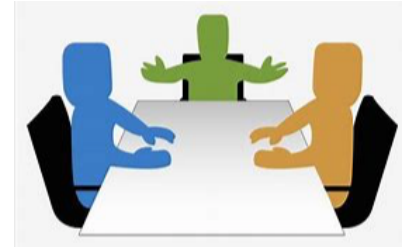


# Resolving Disagreements Through Mediation

## What is Special Education Mediation?

Mediation is an impartial and voluntary process that brings parents and school staff together to resolve their disagreements. A mediator is a qualified and impartial individual who helps each party to communicate their views and positions in confidence so that the dispute can be resolved in a way that is mutually agreeable.



IDEA promotes mediation as the first step to working out conflicts with your child's school over his or her special education services.

## Benefits of Mediation:



It can help preserve the parent/school relationship



It's free of charge to both parents & schools



It saves time. Most mediations take 1-6 hours.



Information shared is kept confidential.



Mediation agreements are enforceable in court.

## Formal vs. Informal:

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires school districts to offer mediation before and after formal disputes:

- 1 **Informally**, whenever parents and schools need help resolving a disagreement, and
- 2 **Formally**, after a parent files a written complaint or a request for a due process hearing. Mediation is available as an opportunity to find a solution to the complaint before a decision is issued by the Complaints Management Program or a hearing officer formally decides on a due process hearing matter.

## Where can you learn more information about mediation?



The Hawaii State Department of Education makes mediation available through the **Mediation Center of the Pacific**. Parents may call or visit their website for information about requesting a mediation session.



(808) 521-6767



<https://www.mediatehawaii.org/special-education>



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Resouces: Special Education Mediation Brochure  
CADRE IDEA Special Education Mediation Parent Guide