

General Overview of Special Education Mediation Process

Sound Options Group (SOG) receives phone request from family or school district to participate in mediation. SOG obtains intake information, demographics (for family), discusses issues to mediate, the role of the mediator, suggested participants, and the mediation process. SOG will obtain the 2nd party's (family's or district) contact information.

SOG sends intake letters with brochures to family and district.

SOG contacts second party (family or district) regarding the request to participate in mediation. SOG obtains intake information, discusses issues to mediate, the role of the mediator, suggested participants, and the mediation process. SOG contacts first party (family or district) with second party's decision to mediate or to decline. If the second party declines, SOG will close the case and send a letter notifying the parties.

If both parties agree to mediate, SOG will contact the family and the district to further clarify issues to mediate and to reach agreement as to who will be attending the mediation. SOG will then confirm if the family and the district still want to move forward with mediation.

SOG discusses potential dates and location of mediation session with family and district.

SOG sends mediation confirmation letters to family and district and information on preparing for mediation. If advocates and attorneys will participate in mediation, SOG send them information on the mediation process.

SOG calls family and district two days in advance of the mediation session to confirm meeting. In certain situations, the mediator may contact the family and district prior to the meeting to prepare the parties to participate in the mediation session.

Family and district participate in mediation session. If an agreement is reached, both parties will receive a copy of the mediation agreement.* If an agreement is not reached, the parties can agree to hold a second session, which SOG will schedule.

*Mediation agreements are enforceable by OSPI through the special education community complaint (SECC) process, and in state and federal court.



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NOTE: At any point in the process, cases may be closed and not move forward. Reasons for this could be "unable to schedule", request "withdrawn", "conciliated", or "declined" by either party.