

ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION

WHAT IS ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION (ADR)?

Alternative Dispute Resolution ("ADR") is an informal process of resolving families' and school district's concerns and/or disagreements related to the provision of special education services to students with special needs.

WHO SHOULD CHOOSE ADR?

ADR is designed for families and school districts who want to work together and preserve their relationship for the benefit of the student.

WHY CHOOSE ADR?

ADR keeps the decision making in the hands of the family and the school district. Special education agreements are more effective when families and schools develop their own solutions rather than abide by an agreement imposed by a third party.

BENEFITS OF ADR

Shape the Outcome

ADR allows parties in conflict to control and shape their own agreement, and it can be a much faster process in resolving disagreements. Most importantly, ADR can improve or create a collaborative working relationship between parents/guardians and school district personnel.

Confidential

All information shared through the ADR process remains confidential unless all parties agree otherwise.

Offered at No Cost to Parents

ADR options for member districts* and families with children in the member districts are provided at no cost.

Legal Protections Remain

Parties choosing to engage in ADR practices do not give up their rights to Due Process.

Outcome-Oriented

The process is focused on the student and the goal is to establish mutually agreeable solutions.



WHEN SHOULD I REQUEST ADR?

Parents and district personnel can request ADR services from the SELPA when special education disagreements are not resolved at the local level or at the IEP meeting. ADR is a two-way street. Parents and the district must mutually agree to pursue a facilitated IEP meeting or local mediation.





WHAT ARE THE ADR OPTIONS AVAILABLE FROM NW SELPA?

In instances where the team has not been able to reach consensus on matters concerning the student's education, the following ADR services are available from the North West SELPA office:

SELPA Engagement

SELPA engagement involves guiding and assisting parents and educational partners in navigating the special education process, brainstorming potential solutions, and increasing opportunities between parents and district personnel to meaningfully collaborate and search for solutions.

IEP Facilitation

IEP Facilitation is an IEP team meeting run by an independent and neutral facilitator who assists members of the IEP team to remain focused on the development of the student's IEP while addressing concerns and disagreements that may arise during the meeting. Both the district and the parents must agree to a facilitated IEP meeting.

Mediation

Mediation is a confidential, facilitated meeting run by an independent, neutral facilitator who assists the family and district in reaching a resolution when there is disagreement or unresolved concern related to the student's IEP, services, or assessment. Both the district and the parents must agree to having a mediation.

TO REQUEST ADR SERVICES, VISIT:

[North West SELPA ADR Request Form](#) (*translations available*)

FOR QUESTIONS, EMAIL:

Selpa-adr@sccoe.org

**North West SELPA includes the following member local education agencies: Cambrian, Campbell, Campbell High, Cupertino, Fremont Union, Lakeside, Loma Prieta, Los Altos, Los Gatos, Los Gatos-Saratoga, Luther Burbank, Moreland, Mountain View Whisman, Mountain View-Los Altos, Palo Alto, San Jose Unified, Santa Clara Unified, Saratoga, SCCOE, Sunnyvale, Union.*

ADR IS VOLUNTARY

- No cost to the stakeholders.
- Build trusting relationships between families and district staff.
- Encourage respect.
- Value the contributions of all participants.
- All ADR activities are voluntary and mutually agreed to by the parents/ guardians and school district.
- The goal is to reach local resolution for conflicts, maintain positive relationships, and ensure an appropriate education for the student.
- Parents/guardians and districts are free to withdraw from the process at any time.