

# The Special Education ConsultLine



Information for families and advocates  
of children with special needs

800-879-2301

TTY Users: PA Relay 711

## Help For Parents

The special education system can be confusing, and at times overwhelming. When new situations or disagreements arise, it may be difficult to determine what your rights are and what options are available to you.

To help parents with information about special education, the ConsultLine was established as a toll-free service for parents and advocates of children with disabilities and children who are thought to have disabilities.

If you have questions or concerns about special education, gifted education, Section 504, or your rights as the parent of a child with exceptional needs, ConsultLine specialists may be able to assist you.

You can contact the ConsultLine by calling 800-879-2301 or 717-901-2146, or you can request that the ConsultLine call you by filling out an online request form at [www.odr-pa.org/contact-consultline](http://www.odr-pa.org/contact-consultline).

The ConsultLine provides direct service in English and Spanish, and is able to serve callers in other languages with the help of an interpreting service.

The ConsultLine was established to serve parents and advocates of children with disabilities. Organizations and agencies that provide support to families of children with disabilities may also use the ConsultLine. School personnel who have questions should contact the Bureau of Special Education at 717-783-6913.

## The ConsultLine is...

A direct link to a specialist who will:

- Listen to your concerns and discuss options about your child's needs
- Answer questions and explain information about related federal and state laws
- Discuss options for resolving disagreements about your child's program including:
  - The state complaint process
  - Procedural safeguards
  - Other possibilities for formal and informal dispute resolution

- Identify agencies and organizations that provide other types of support
- Provide resources to help you learn more about special education and your child’s right to a free and appropriate public education

### **ConsultLine specialists do not...**

- Act as advocates
- Provide legal advice

### **Before you call about a school-related concern...**

Consider trying some of these options:

- Contact your child’s teacher, counselor, and/or principal
- Discuss concerns with your school’s special education director

### **When you call the ConsultLine...**

Please leave the following information. This will allow a ConsultLine specialist to contact you in a timely manner.

- Your name
- Home, business and/or cell phone number
- Good times during the next three business days (between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.) for a ConsultLine specialist to return your call
- A brief message about your concern or question

## Resources for Parents

### Technical Assistance and Dispute Resolution

#### **Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network (PaTTAN)**

800-360-7282 Harrisburg  
800-441-3215 King of Prussia  
800-446-5607 Pittsburgh

Website: [www.pattan.net](http://www.pattan.net)

PaTTAN serves as the training and technical assistance branch of the Pennsylvania Department of Education, Bureau of Special Education. PaTTAN consultants work collaboratively with intermediate units to provide services in the areas of professional development, technical assistance, and information dissemination to support school districts within Pennsylvania. The PaTTAN website includes a Parent Page for information, publications, and links to other agencies.

#### **Office for Dispute Resolution (ODR)**

Voice: 800-222-3353  
TTY Users: PA Relay 711  
Fax: 717-657-5983

Email: [odr@odr-pa.org](mailto:odr@odr-pa.org)  
Website: [www.odr-pa.org](http://www.odr-pa.org)

ODR coordinates and manages Pennsylvania's special education mediation and due process systems. ODR provides resources for parents and educational agencies to resolve educational disputes for children served by the early intervention system, students who are gifted (or thought to be gifted), and students with disabilities (or thought to have disabilities).

### Community Parent Resource Centers

#### **Hispanos Unidos para Niños Excepcionales (HUNE)**

(Hispanics United for Exceptional Children)

Voice: 215-425-6203  
Fax: 215-425-6204

Email: [huneinc@aol.com](mailto:huneinc@aol.com)  
Website: [www.huneinc.org](http://www.huneinc.org)

HUNE empowers parents of children with exceptionalities to obtain a free and appropriate quality education for their children. They provide training programs on all aspects of special education and support, including transition services. HUNE serves, but is not limited to, Hispanic parents in the American Street Empowerment Zone of Philadelphia.

## **Mission Empower**

Voice and Fax: 814-825-0788    Email: [advocate@missionempower.org](mailto:advocate@missionempower.org)  
Toll Free: 855-825-0788        Website: [www.missionempower.org](http://www.missionempower.org)

Mission – Through education, advocacy, empowerment and parent engagement we seek full integration of youth with disabilities into all aspects of life in their community.

Vision – Mission Empower envisions a community where all youth with disabilities use their gifts and talents to follow their dreams while changing their community for the better.

## **Parent Training and Information Center**

### **Parent Education & Advocacy Leadership (PEAL) Center**

Voice: 412-281-4404  
Toll Free: 866-950-1040  
TTY: 412-281-4409                                  Email: [info@pealcenter.org](mailto:info@pealcenter.org)  
Fax: 412-281-4408                                 Website: [www.pealcenter.org](http://www.pealcenter.org)

The PEAL Center is an organization of parents of children with disabilities reaching out to assist other parents and professionals. The PEAL Center provides workshops, training, and information about early intervention, special education, and inclusive education to the western and central regions of Pennsylvania. Parent advisors are available to assist the family with information about the special education process and problem-solving strategies.

The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) does not discriminate in its educational programs, activities, or employment practices, based on race, color, religious creed, ancestry, union membership, age, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, AIDS or HIV status, disability, or any other legally protected category. Announcement of this policy is in accordance with State law including the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act and with Federal law, including Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

If you have any questions about this publication, or for additional copies, contact: ConsultLine, 6340 Flank Drive, Harrisburg, PA, 17112; 800-879-2301; TTY Users: PA Relay 711.

The following persons have been designated to handle inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies:

Complaints regarding discrimination in schools:

Human Relations Representative  
Intake Division  
Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission:  
[www.phrc.state.pa.us](http://www.phrc.state.pa.us)  
Harrisburg Regional Office: Voice (717) 787-9780, Text (717) 787-7279  
Pittsburgh Regional Office: Voice (412) 565-5395, Text (412) 565-5711  
Philadelphia Regional Office: Voice (215) 560-2496, Text (215) 560-3599

Complaints against a Pennsylvania Department of Education employee:

Pennsylvania Department of Education  
Equal Employment Opportunity Representative  
Bureau of Human Resources  
11th Floor, 333 Market Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333  
Voice Telephone: (717) 787-4417  
Fax: (717) 783-9348, Text Telephone TTY: (717) 783-8445

Information on accommodations within the Department of Education for persons with disabilities:

Pennsylvania Department of Education  
Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator  
Bureau of Human Resources  
11th Floor, 333 Market Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333  
Voice Telephone: (717) 787-4417  
Fax: (717) 783-9348, Text Telephone TTY: (717) 783-8445

General questions regarding educational law or issues:

Pennsylvania Department of Education  
School Services Unit  
Director  
5th Floor, 333 Market Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333  
Voice Telephone: (717) 787-4860  
Fax: (717) 783-6802, Text Telephone TTY: (717) 783-8445

## Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Tom Wolf  
*Governor*



**pennsylvania**  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



### **OFFICE FOR DISPUTE RESOLUTION**

6340 Flank Drive  
Harrisburg, PA 17112-2764

**Call us . . .**

(800) 222-3353

(717) 901-2145

TTY users: PA Relay 711

**Visit us on the Web . . .**

[www.odr-pa.org](http://www.odr-pa.org)