



# Facilitated Individualized Education Program Team Meetings

*A Collaborative Dispute Prevention & Resolution Option*

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## FACILITATORS

In 2014, the GaDOE, Division for Special Education Services and Supports joined a national technical assistance workgroup for IEP facilitation. After training and collaborating with other states who have implemented IEP Facilitation, the GaDOE surveyed Georgia’s parents, local school district staff, advocates, attorneys, and others to gain their input on the benefits of IEP Facilitation in Georgia. The survey results indicated that the overwhelming majority of respondents believed that IEP facilitators would be beneficial in Georgia. Next, the GaDOE convened a team of internal stakeholders from the Legal Department and Special Education Compliance, Professional Learning, and Dispute Resolution units to start the initial planning phase of the IEP Facilitation project. Then, a diverse group of external stakeholders convened to provide input on various aspects of the project, including the selection of pilot districts, FIEP processes and procedures, public awareness and outreach, and facilitator qualifications and solicitation. In March 2016, the GaDOE began offering FIEP Team meetings in four pilot school districts. Internal and external stakeholder input is ongoing.

Our facilitators represent a diverse group of individuals with backgrounds including:

- ✓ **parents of students with disabilities**
- ✓ **attorneys**
- ✓ **mediators**
- ✓ **former special education teachers and administrators**
- ✓ **college professors**

All facilitators participated in an intense three-day professional training on Conflict Prevention and Resolution through the IEP Team Meeting Facilitation process developed and facilitated by **Doug and Joyce Little of Key2Ed, Inc.** IEP Facilitators also participated in additional days of training by the GaDOE on IEP process and development, GaDOE required assessments, Georgia Standards of Excellence, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Georgia’s Special Education Rules, and more.



- ↘ Parents or district personnel may initiate the process by completing an IEP Team Meeting Facilitation Request form located on a participating district’s website\*
- ↘ Both the parties (district and parents or student, if 18 years or older) must agree to participate
- ↘ A complete and signed request form and notice of meeting must be submitted to the GaDOE
- ↘ Upon approval, a facilitator will be provided at no cost to the parent or district



\*A list of school districts participating in the GaDOE’s IEP Team Meeting Facilitation program is located at <http://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Special-Education-Services/Pages/IEP-Facilitation.aspx> .

For additional information, please contact: **Belinda Tiller, Director of Student Services, Pierce County Schools, 912-449-2091, [btiller@pierce.k12.ga.us](mailto:btiller@pierce.k12.ga.us)** or

**Jamila C. Pollard, Program Manager/Legal Officer, Dispute Resolution, Division for Special Education Services and Supports, 1870 Twin Towers East, 205 Jesse Hill Jr. Drive SE, Atlanta, Georgia 30334 Office: (404) 657-7329 Email: [jpollard@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:jpollard@doe.k12.ga.us)**