

# Returning to School: Advocacy Tips



While we always encourage students to advocate for themselves, sometimes parents need to advocate for their children. In order to be effective advocates, parents must be informed of their child's rights. Under federal law, you and your child have the following rights:

- To free, appropriate public education for all children with disabilities
- To education in the least restrictive environment
- To receive a full explanation of your rights and how you are protected under the law
- To a completed evaluation (when consent is given) within 60 days of the initial referral
- To receive notification and to provide written consent whenever school authorities plan a special evaluation or a significant change in school placement for your child
- To a completed IEP within 30 days of the completion of the evaluation
- To participate in the IEP meeting and planning
- To an impartial hearing within 30 days if you do not agree with the school's decisions for placement and IEP goals and choose not to sign the IEP
- To an annual evaluation by each service provided. This is especially important for students rehabilitating from injury, as their needs can change quickly over time.