



**A Project of:
Vermont Legal Aid
The Vermont Poverty Law
Fellowship**

Help and Additional Information

- **VT Family Network**
1-800-800-4005
vermontfamilynetwork.org
- **VT Federation of Families**
1-800-639-6071
vffcmh.org
- **VT Agency of Education**
1-802-828-5114
education.vermont.gov

For information, advice, or to seek representation, call Vermont Legal Aid or visit our website:

1-800-889-2047
www.vtlawhelp.org

Can schools suspend or expel students with disabilities?

Yes, but...

- Students with disabilities **cannot** be suspended or expelled for more than **10 days** in a row or in a school year, unless the school:
 - ⇒ Reevaluates the student
 - ⇒ Conducts a hearing to figure out if the behavior is related to the disability
- If a student with disabilities is suspended, request better 504 and specialized services!
- Contact Vermont Family Network, Vermont Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health, or Vermont Legal Aid

English Language Learners

- If your ELL student may have a disability and there is no English progress made after one year, request verbal and non-verbal tests that consider language differences

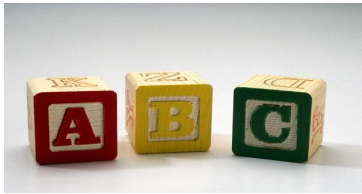
EDUCATION FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES



VERMONT STUDENTS AND FAMILIES HAVE RIGHTS!

What is Special Education?

- Specialized instruction and related services that help students with disabilities access an equal education
- **Every** school-age child has a legal right to an equal education



How does a student qualify for special education?

1. Student has a disability under Vermont educational rules
2. Disability has adverse effect on educational performance
3. Evaluation team believes there is a need for special education

These are complicated issues! Ask for help!

Parents have the right to:

- Request evaluations for Special Education and receive the school's response within 15 days
- Participate in IEP meetings and have their opinions considered
- Bring any person with knowledge of the child or the child's disability, **advocates, and lawyers** to IEP meetings
- Review and receive copies of their child's educational records
- Consent to or refuse/revoke consent for specialized services
- Receive prior written notice when school wants to change child's placement or refuses a parent request to take a specific action
- Ask for an independent evaluation, paid for by the school, when there is disagreement over the school's evaluation results
- Disagree with part or all of the Special Program and appeal decisions that parents dispute

My Child Does Not Qualify

- If a student is denied special instruction based on a school's evaluation, parents can request an independent evaluation
- If the student has a disability, but is not eligible for special education, you may request **Section 504** accommodations



Section 504

- Federal law that requires schools to make education accessible for students with disabilities
- **Examples:** Providing aides, adjusting testing time limits, changing class locations