

What's the Difference Between Facilitation and Mediation?

IEP Meeting Facilitation

Goal: The outcome of a successful Individualized Education Plan (IEP) team meeting is a written plan that specifies how education, related services, and supports will be delivered to the student.

Who: The IEP team meeting involves the entire IEP team as dictated by state and federal laws.

Where: IEP team meetings are held at the school.

When: A facilitator usually works with the parties *before* they have reached an impasse.

What: The facilitator assists the team to work together to develop an IEP for the student.

How: The facilitator works within the IEP meeting process and creates an environment of open dialogue and understanding.

Decisions are made by the IEP team, not the facilitator.

Mediation

Goal: The outcome of mediation can be a resolution to the conflict documented in a legally binding written agreement, or no resolution.

Who: Mediation involves a limited number of participants, mutually determined by the mediator, family, and the school.

Where: Mediations are held in a neutral location at a time and place convenient to all participants.

When: A mediator works with the parties *after* they have reached an impasse.

What: The mediator assists the parties to discuss and resolve specific conflicts regarding a student's education.

How: The mediator establishes the mediation process which encourages open-dialogue, understanding, and joint problem-solving.

Decisions are made by the participants, not the mediator.

Contact SPARC Program staff in the Conflict Resolution Program (sparc-info@udel.edu) at the University of Delaware for more information.