



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A Memo from the New Jersey Department of Education

Date: December 3, 2025
To: Local Education Agency Leads
Route To: District Directors of Special Education
From: Kathy Ehling, Assistant Commissioner
Division of Educational Services

Lunch and Learn with the Special Education Ombudsman

The Office of Special Education (OSE) is committed to strengthening partnerships between families, school districts, and the New Jersey Department of Education to support positive outcomes for students with disabilities. In accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:14-1.2(h), each Local Education Agency (LEA) is required to maintain a Special Education Parent Advisory Group (SEPAG) to provide input to the LEA on issues concerning students with disabilities.

Purpose

To strengthen collaboration and promote a shared understanding of special education processes, the Special Education Ombudsman will host a Lunch and Learn for interested SEPAG groups. This session is specifically designed for family members of students with disabilities to help ensure they have a meaningful voice in the development and delivery of special education programs and services. Participants will receive information on key topics such as the meaning of a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE), parental rights, and ways to address and resolve differences. The session will also highlight proactive approaches, including Facilitated IEP (FIEP) meetings and local resolution strategies, to support effective communication and early problem solving.

Meeting Dates and Times

Virtual Meetings will be scheduled individually with each SEPAG group with availability beginning January 5, 2026.

Registration Link

If interested, please complete the [registration form](#). Please direct comments and questions to oseinfo@doe.nj.gov.

c: Members, State Board of Education
NJDOE Staff
Statewide Parent Advocacy Network
Garden State Coalition of Schools
NJ LEE Group