

Dispute Resolution Process Comparison

	AEA Resolution Facilitator Process	Mediation <i>No request for hearing</i>	Mediation <i>Request for hearing</i>	Due Process Hearing	Complaint
What are the main features in this option?	Voluntary process, impartial AEA person trained in mediation, resolve issues at the earliest level	Voluntary process, impartial state-assigned person trained in mediation, less formal than a hearing, legally binding agreement	Voluntary process, impartial state-assigned person trained in mediation, less formal than a hearing, legally binding agreement, timelines enforced	Formal event, attorneys typically involved, occurs after mediation and a resolution meeting have been offered, timelines enforced, resembles going to court, administrative law judge makes a decision	Written complaint by parent to state when a perceived violation of special education rules has occurred, investigated by the State, timelines enforced, corrective action plan required within one year if violation is proven.
Why choose this option?	Resolves issues at earliest level with AEA help.	Resolves issues early with state assigned mediator, goal is a legally binding agreement	Resolves issues prior to going to hearing, specified timelines, attorneys are often used, goal is a legally binding agreement	Alleged violations occurred within past 2 years. When mediation is not successful and resolution cannot be reached, final decision is made by an administrative law judge	Alleged violations occurred within past 1 year and an investigation is desired with the possibility of a corrective plan
What are the timelines once a process begins?	No specific timeline to complete	No specific timeline to complete	30 day resolution period, followed by a 45 day period to complete a hearing and get decision	45 days from the end of the resolution session - unless specific extensions to the timeline are granted	60 days from receipt of the complaint unless extended for unusual circumstances
Who makes the decision?	Parent and school district, both parties must agree to the solution in writing.	Parent and school district/AEA , all parties must agree to the solution in writing, decisions are legally binding.	Parent and school district/AEA , all parties must agree to the solution in writing, decisions are legally binding.	Administrative Law Judge	Iowa Department of Education
If I disagree with the outcome, what else can I do?	Request a mediation, request a hearing or file a complaint	Request a hearing (mediation included) or file a complaint.	Go to hearing.	Appeal the decision in state or federal court.	Request a hearing (mediation included) or appeal to state court.