

281—41.502(256B,34CFR300) Independent educational evaluation.**41.502(1) General.**

a. The parents of a child with a disability have the right to obtain an independent educational evaluation of the child, subject to subrules 41.502(2) to 41.502(5).

b. Each public agency must provide to parents, upon request for an independent educational evaluation, information about where an independent educational evaluation may be obtained and the agency criteria applicable for independent educational evaluations as set forth in subrule 41.502(5).

c. For the purposes of this division:

(1) “Independent educational evaluation” means an evaluation conducted by a qualified examiner who is not employed by the public agency responsible for the education of the child in question; and

(2) “Public expense” means that the AEA either pays for the full cost of the evaluation or ensures that the evaluation is otherwise provided at no cost to the parent.

41.502(2) Parent right to evaluation at public expense.

a. A parent has the right to an independent educational evaluation at public expense if the parent disagrees with an evaluation obtained by the AEA, subject to the conditions in paragraphs 41.502(2) “*b*” to “*d*.”

b. If a parent requests an independent educational evaluation at public expense, the AEA must, without unnecessary delay, either:

(1) File a due process complaint to request a hearing to show that its evaluation is appropriate; or

(2) Ensure that an independent educational evaluation is provided at public expense, unless the AEA demonstrates in a hearing pursuant to these rules that the evaluation obtained by the parent did not meet agency criteria.

c. If the AEA files a due process complaint notice to request a hearing and the final decision is that the AEA’s evaluation is appropriate, the parent still has the right to an independent educational evaluation, but not at public expense.

d. If a parent requests an independent educational evaluation, the AEA may ask for the parent’s reason why the parent objects to the public evaluation. However, the AEA may not require the parent to provide an explanation and may not unreasonably delay either providing the independent educational evaluation at public expense or filing a due process complaint to request a due process hearing to defend the public evaluation.

e. A parent is entitled to only one independent educational evaluation at public expense each time a public agency conducts an evaluation with which the parent disagrees.

41.502(3) Parent-initiated evaluations. If the parent obtains an independent educational evaluation at public expense or shares with a public agency an evaluation obtained at private expense, the results of the evaluation:

a. Must be considered by the public agency, if it meets agency criteria, in any decision made with respect to the provision of FAPE to the child; and

b. May be presented by any party as evidence at a hearing on a due process complaint under this chapter regarding that child.

41.502(4) Requests for evaluations by administrative law judges. If an administrative law judge requests an independent educational evaluation as part of a hearing on a due process complaint, the cost of the evaluation must be at public expense.

41.502(5) Agency criteria.

a. If an independent educational evaluation is at public expense, the criteria under which the evaluation is obtained, including the location of the evaluation and the qualifications of the examiner, must be the same as the criteria that the public agency uses when it initiates an evaluation, to the extent those criteria are consistent with the parent’s right to an independent educational evaluation.

b. Except for the criteria described in paragraph 41.502(5) “*a*,” a public agency may not impose conditions or timelines related to obtaining an independent educational evaluation at public expense.

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