

- Stay current with the student's educational progress during the school year
- Communicate regularly with the ESP/DOE office (provide updates, ask questions and/or share concerns).

Note: An ESP will not be held liable for actions taken in good faith on behalf of the child in protecting their special education rights.

Every child deserves to have a caring adult in his or her life - that caring adult could be YOU!



- There are over 1,500 children in foster care in Delaware.
- Over 17,000 students in Delaware receive special education services.

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RESOURCES

DE Department of Education

Find information, reports and profiles about Delaware's schools together with school closing information, DSTP results and much more!

www.doe.k12.de.us

Parent Information Center of DE

Stay current with events, news and workshops designed especially for parents around special education and disability-related issues.

www.picofdel.org or 1-888-547-4412

U.S. Dept. of Education: Building the Legacy: IDEA 2004

Watch videos and read fact sheets about the provisions of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

<http://idea.ed.gov>

National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities

Access numerous special education and disability-related fact sheets, booklets, training material and links to other resources.

<http://nichcy.org>

Delaware's Educational Surrogate Parent Program



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What is an Educational Surrogate Parent (ESP)?

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), or federal special education law, requires that the educational rights of children with disabilities are protected.

In Delaware, an Educational Surrogate Parent is a person appointed by the Department of Education (DOE) to represent an eligible child who receives, or may be in need of special education and related services. A child is eligible to have an ESP appointed to them when:

- *The child's parents cannot be located;*
- *Parental rights have been terminated;*
- *The child's parent voluntarily consents to the appointment of an ESP;*
- *The child is homeless and without parents; or*
- *The child is in the custody of DSCYF (Department of Services for Children, Youth and their Families)*

An ESP is not required for a child who receives, or may be in need of special education and related services when the child is living in the home of a relative who agrees to act in the place of a parent.

What does an ESP do?

The ESP is involved in all educational decision making related to the identification, evaluation and educational place-

ment of the student and the provision of a free appropriate public education.

What are the requirements to become an Educational Surrogate Parent?

An individual must:

- Be at least eighteen years of age;
- Be a legal resident of the United States;
- Be competent to represent the child;
- Not be an employee of the DOE, school/district, or any public or private agency responsible for, or involved in, the education or care of the child;
- Have no interest that conflicts with the interest of the child he/she may represent;
- Submit an application to the DOE; and
- Participate in training

Note: A child's DSCYF case worker may not act as an ESP.

What training is required of an individual interested in becoming an ESP?

The DOE requires that individuals interested in becoming Educational Surrogate Parents participate in a basic (2-3 hour) training about:

- Federal special education law entitled

*"To the world you may be one person, but to one person... you may be the world."
~Heather Cortez~*

the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

- Delaware special education regulations
- The role and responsibilities of an ESP

Training opportunities are offered on a regular basis for "new" ESPs and open as refresher courses for all ESPs.

The DOE also offers on-going technical assistance, information, support and resources.

Who might be interested in becoming an Educational Surrogate Parent?

- *Foster Parents*
- *Community members*
- *Anyone interested in making a difference in the life of a child*

What are the responsibilities of the Educational Surrogate Parent?

An Educational Surrogate Parent has the responsibility to work collaboratively with a school team to ensure that a child is receiving an education that is designed specifically to meet the child's unique educational needs. An effective ESP will:

- *Learn about the student's strengths and needs*
- *Review the student's school records*
- *Participate in school meetings to plan the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) - once a year or more*