

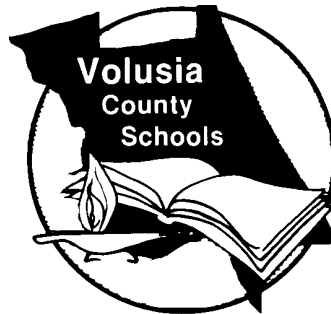
Please note:

A Department of Children and Families (DCF) or Community-Based Care (CBC) case worker, or any other person employed by an agency providing for the care or education of the student, may NOT sign as a parent for education issues for students who are suspected of, or identified as having, a disability under IDEA.

However, a caseworker from DCF or CBC may sign for other things, such as medical and legal issues for these students. Schools should continue to invite them to meetings regarding the student. They may have information critical to the decision-making process.

Please direct questions regarding Educational Surrogate Parents to:

**ESE Compliance Office
Volusia County Schools
Herbert Street Center
1290 Herbert Street
Port Orange, FL 32129
(386) 255-6475 Ext. 33252
ESECompliance@volusia.k12.fl.us**



Volusia County Schools

**Educational
Surrogate
Parents**



*A Guide for
Schools
and
Community Partners*

When are Educational Surrogate Parents Needed?

If a student currently receives Exceptional Student Education (ESE), or is under consideration for ESE by the Problem Solving Team, they may need an Educational Surrogate Parent if:



- The whereabouts of the parent are unknown.
- The student is not living with a person “acting as a parent”.
- The student is a ward of the state.
- The parental rights have been terminated.
- The student is in a foster home for less than 3 months or living in a group home run by a community agency.
- The foster parent is unable or unwilling to advocate for the child.

Assigning an Educational Surrogate Parent

The District will use criteria to determine if a surrogate parent is warranted. If assignment of an Educational Surrogate Parent is appropriate, the school district will appoint a surrogate for the student. An official letter will be sent to the surrogate with a copy to the school, appropriate agency representative, and ESE contact. The surrogate will contact the school to arrange a time to review the students’ file, meet with the student and/or teachers, and become familiar with the case. Please remember that the Educational Surrogate Parent maintains the same rights as a parent, including such things as:

- receiving copies of the student’s files.
- being invited to all meetings.
- signing for educational placement.
- signing for evaluations.
- requesting IEP meetings.

Duties & Responsibilities of Educational Surrogate Parents

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) gives Educational Surrogate Parents the same rights and responsibilities as a natural parent with regard to educational decisions. They do not exercise any other rights. The duties of an Educational Surrogate Parent generally involve:

- A visit to the child’s school to meet the student and review the educational records
- Participating in any meetings regarding the child’s education
- Arranging for classroom observations or consulting with school staff regarding the child, as appropriate
- Advocating for the child in educational matters (general and/or special education needs, services, placement, program decisions, etc.)