

School Board Governance and Special Education Needs



Welcome

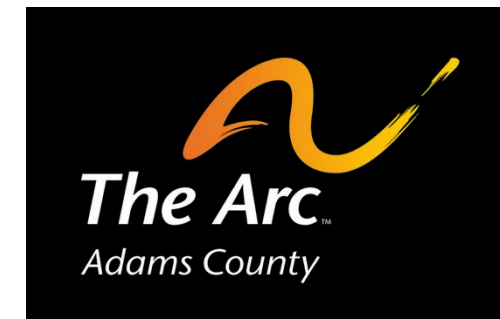
The role of the school board is crucial in overseeing the special education needs of students. Boards are responsible for ensuring all students receive a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Learn how decisions regarding the allocation of resources and the implementation of educational programs play a vital role in assuring that students with disabilities receive the supports they require to succeed in their educational journey.



ADVOCACYDENVER

providing active voice and supporting civil rights
for people with disabilities



Meet Your Speakers

Elizabeth Moran

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Stephanie Garcia

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A Brief History of Disability Rights in Education

- 1975: Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EHA)
- 1990: Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
- 2001: NCLB / ESSA reinforced accountability

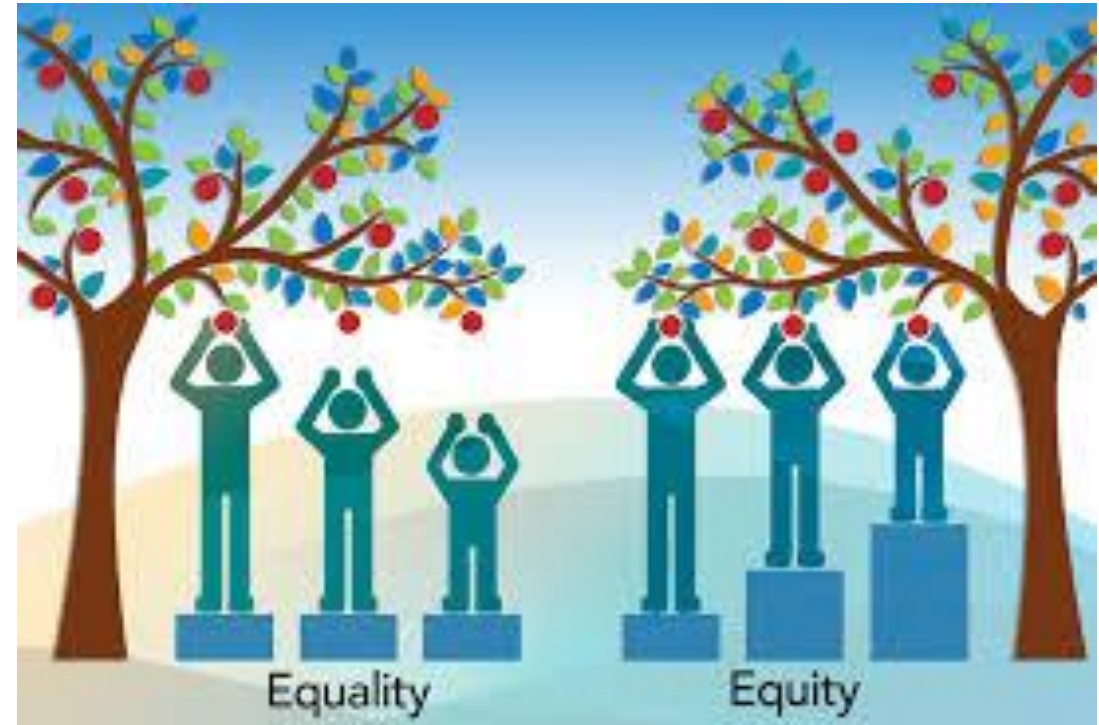


Equity vs. Equality



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- Equality = same support for all
- Equity = support based on individual needs
- *Inclusive leadership means equitable decision-making*



Why school boards are important for the success of students with disabilities?

- **Every** policy affects **every** student
- Challenging budget shortfalls
- Federal instability
- Dismantling of OCR and DOE
- Local accountability is growing



Why This Matters

- Legal Obligations ADA, Section 504 & IDEA
- Beyond Compliance:
 - Education
 - Equity
 - Outcomes
 - Dignity
- Disproportionate impact when budgets are tight



Why This Matters

1 in 7 students in public schools has a disability.

Staff reductions /Service gaps

Outdated assumptions = harmful practices



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Real Stories: When It Works / When It Doesn't



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Annie's Story

The Cost of Restraint and Seclusion



Pam's Story

Finding Her Voice



Your Role

- **Budget priorities:** *What gets funded reflects what we value*
- **Policy and oversight:** *What you approve guides district practices*
- **Accountability:** *Protecting civil rights starts locally*



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Your Role

- Data mining
- Finding your district's data
- Discipline, expulsion, and graduation rates



- *You shape the culture: Equity means meeting the needs of all students — including those with disabilities.*



The Numbers



The Numbers



The Arc

The Numbers





Sample Policy Review & Discussion

Inclusion commitment

Accountability Mechanisms

Budget Alignment

Community and Stakeholder
Engagement



Sample Policy Review & Discussion

What can this look like in your district?

Barriers and opportunities?

How to adapt and adopt?



What Does “Legacy” Mean to You?



*“What you leave behind is not what is engraved in stone monuments, but what is woven into the lives of others.” --
Pericles*

Legacy is the impact you leave behind through your actions, policies, and values.

What kind of difference will you make?



Resources



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