

## How to Write Public Comment

Mailing Address:

Your Name:

Return Address:

Date:

Reference:

Personalizing your letter with information about your situation will help create interest.

### **Opening paragraph**

Here you will want to identify yourself and your interest as a stakeholder:

“I am the mother/father/parent/grandparent/friend of a beautiful/fun-loving/challenging/ child/daughter/son/individual who has a disability and attends school in Vienna/Fairfax County/Alexandria City, Virginia.

### **Second paragraph**

Write a brief description of the individual with the disability

“My daughter/son/niece has a variety of needs – educational, functional and behavioral. Her Individualized Education Program was done through IEP Team consensus, with parental input and consent. My involvement has had a direct impact on her/his level of services and participation in the general education curriculum.”

### **Third paragraph**

Look at the suggested issues we have supplied or find others in the “Draft Regulations Governing special Education Programs for Children with Disabilities in Virginia”. Choose one that is the most meaningful to you and which will have a direct impact on your child/friend/nephew’s education and explain how it will effect their education and their future.

“I *oppose* the elimination of the current requirement for parental consent for the termination of special education eligibility and related services. I reject the position that Virginia’s guarantee of the parental right of consent to the termination of services is particularly burdensome or costly to schools and, therefore, should be eliminated from the regulations. Without the right of consent to the partial or full termination of services, I have no ability to prevent the school from ending services when it is not in the best interest of my child. The IEP process will become a farce.

### **Fourth paragraph**

Choose other issues that are damaging to the student’s education

“I also *oppose* permitting the development of a Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) to be a merely a review of existing data that does not require input of the parent. This provision should clearly state that an FBA is an evaluation that consists of a systematic collection and analysis of direct and indirect data, and may include a

review of existing data. My daughter's behaviors have had to be addressed on multiple occasions. Without my input and a systemic collection of data we would never have been able to develop such a targeted Behavior Intervention Plan for her and she would not be the student she is today."

### **Fifth paragraph**

Find some positive proposals to support

I support the continued allowance in the proposed regulation that directs transition services be put into effect when the child turns 14, two years younger than the federal guideline.

### **Closing**

Address your child's future

"Virginia has been in the forefront of promoting and protecting the necessary parent-school partnership that ensures children with disabilities are properly identified and effectively served by our local schools. The proposed regulations represent a step backwards in Virginia's historic guarantee of parental rights in special education. The Virginia Board of Education must not allow the roll back of these important civil rights for parents of children with disabilities in Virginia."

or

"A child's education is the key to their future. To become productive citizens we must guarantee the supports and services necessary to educate our children. It is up to each and every one of us to look out for these children and to focus on what is best for them."

## **WHERE TO SUBMIT PUBLIC COMMENT**

### **Public Comment:**

Written comments regarding the revision of the Virginia Regulations may be submitted via one of the methods outlined below.

- EMAIL – [ReviseSpedRegs@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:ReviseSpedRegs@doe.virginia.gov)
- FAX – (804) 786-8520
- MAIL –

Special Education Regulations Revision Process  
Office of Dispute Resolution and Administrative Services  
Virginia Department of Education  
P.O. Box 2120  
Richmond, Virginia 23218-2120

Oral public comment may be submitted during the public hearings. Locations and dates to be determined.

Individuals and organizations who submit public comment are entitled to receive a summary of all public comment received by the Virginia Department of Education during the revision process, and the agency's response to the comments submitted. If you are interested in receiving this document at the end of the revision process, please include either an email or standard mailing address with your comments.

**Contact Information at the Virginia Department of Education:**

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