



Special Ed Regulation Changes

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When it comes to the education experience for special needs kids in Virginia, many parents say they have some big concerns over proposed new state regulations.



It has been a little over two months since the Virginia Board of Education released their proposed special education regulation changes. The suggestions were mandated by the Federal Education with Disabilities Improvement Act but some Virginia parents say the state board went too far.

Kimberly Lett said, "They made an exceptional amount of changes, changes that did not need to be made." Lett is the mom of a 20-year-old autistic son. She says even though her child is almost done with his education needs, other parents should not be subjected to new special education regulations the state board is proposing.

At the top of the list of concerns are proposals that will lower the age for when a child is identified as developmentally delayed and eliminating parental consent when special education services are terminated.

Lett is part of the Coalition for Disabled Students, a group that is looking to prevent these regulations from going into place.

Maureen Hollowell of the Coalition for Disabled Students stated, "It really has been a challenging process, because of the size of the regulations and the number of changes proposed to the regulations."

The state board says they are listening. To date, the board has already received a record breaking 38,000 comments about their proposals. Comments that Virginia Schools Superintendent Billy Cannaday says they are considering. "We're trying to balance the protection for children and families with also the increased accountability for student's learning" he stated.

The state board is expected to release their final proposal next Friday and then have another 30 day comment period before they vote on it.

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