

Send e-mails to: jlyons@lyonslaw.net; fredbramante@daddys.com; tomraffio@nedelta.com; bwalker@dhhs.state.nh.us; hhonorow@barrylawoffice.com; dkenyon433@aol.com; s.lheureux@comcast.net; mmayo@ed.state.nh.us; tbrune@ed.state.nh.us

November 28, 2009

John Lyons, Jr., Chairman
State Board of Education
N.H. Department of Education
101 Pleasant Street
Concord, N.H. 03301

Dear Chairman Lyons,

Thank you for this opportunity to provide the State Board of Education with testimony on the proposed revisions to the *NH Rules for the Education of Children with Disabilities* [while it is important to include a “thank you”, it can be anywhere in your letter], My name is _____, and I am [include a sentence about your role – i.e. parent of a child who receives special education, parent of a young child with disabilities, educator, service provider, community member – whatever you believe helps the State Board to understand why you care about these proposed changes]. [You may want to end this first paragraph with something to the effect that the current *NH Rules* have provided you with opportunities to be actively involved in supporting and monitoring your child’s special education / or / enabled you to be a full and equal member of your child’s IEP Team / or / helped you to work with your child’s teachers and service providers to provide your child with the services he needs. If you have a 1 or 2 sentence success story or cautionary tale, you could include that in the first or second paragraph]

[A second paragraph should focus on keeping the critical rights and protections afforded by the current *NH Rules*. You may want to include some of the following. If you testified during the last round of revisions, you can reference how pleased you are that the State Board heard how important these rights are to parents.]

I appreciate the rights and protections provided to children with disabilities and their parents by the current *NH Rules*. I believe that it is essential that we maintain all of those rights and protections that were included in the current *NH Rules* by a unanimous vote of the State Board less than 2 years ago. [You may want to add a follow-up sentence that highlights some of those requirements that are most important to you – something like, I believe that requirements, such as short-term objectives for all children with disabilities, parental consent at each step in the special education process, the 45-day evaluation timeline, the ability of parents to have access to evaluation records and other relevant educational materials 5 days before the IEP meeting (include whichever of the rights are most important to you) are extremely helpful to parents / or / enable parents to more effectively work with the school staff / or / provide clarity to the process.] The current *NH Rules* comply with the requirements in the Federal special education law, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) of 2004, while also meeting the unique needs of NH children with disabilities. In many areas, the *NH Rules* are clearer and much more supportive of parent-school partnerships than the Federal IDEA.

[In the following paragraph or two, you should give your opinion on a few of the issues from the attached alert that you find to be most important. If you can include anything in your letter about what these issues will (or do) mean for your child and family, that is helpful. You may want to have one paragraph on the proposed changes that you support, another on those with which you disagree, and if applicable, a third that offers wording for any suggested changes or additions you would like to see in the revised *NH Rules*.]

Thank you again for this opportunity to provide input on the proposed revisions to the *NH Rules for the Education of Children with Disabilities*. If you have any questions, or I can provide any additional information, I would be happy to speak with any member of the State Board.

Sincerely,

Your Name
Complete Address
Telephone Number(s)
E-mail address

cc: Members of the State Board of Education and Representatives of the NH Department of Education