

## ***“Take It or Leave It” ... Avoiding Predetermination***

Even if the above statement is not explicitly stated, the conduct of the balance of the Team may give parents the impression that they have few, if any, options. Statements such as *“district policy requires such a placement”* could prove costly to the district. Remind your staff to avoid intimidating actions such as sighing, yawning, eye rolling or throwing up their hands in frustration.

Reminders:

- ✓ ***Parent input is important and meaningful*** ... Parent opinions regarding placement, student needs and student services is meaningless if there is some form of predetermination. Parental input must be seriously considered by the balance of the Team. Parent input about placement or objections should be given serious consideration at the meeting. Discussion should focus on placements that provide “meaningful” benefit to the child.
- ✓ ***Document discussion regarding potential placements*** ... Team meeting notes should reflect placements considered, discussions about benefits/drawbacks of such placements, and parent opinion specific to any proposed placement.
- ✓ ***Ensure that any placement decisions are based on the child’s needs*** ... placements should not be considered until the child’s present levels of performance are determined, goals are developed and the type and amount of specialized instruction the child will receive is determined. Placement should not precede any of these items.
- ✓ ***Provide a description of programs under development*** ... There is no regulation in IDEA that requires that a proposed placement be in existence at the time of the IEP meeting. However, the district must ensure that parents have sufficient information about the proposed placement in order to discuss the appropriateness of such a proposed placement.

