



Black Applied Behavior Analysts

# BABA CONFERENCE

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Due Process Decisions and Outcomes for Students  
with Autism Spectrum Disorder

## Abstract

School districts are forced to re-examine their practices as both substantive and procedural issues arise in special education due process hearings and court cases related to the influx of children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder. The purpose of this study is to review, analyze, and evaluate the special education due process hearing decisions involving students with autism (ASD) held in the state of Pennsylvania from a sampling of cases during the 2005-2018 school years. The guiding questions for this research were: 1.) What are the identified types of disputes that parents and school districts are filing for due process with students diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder? 2.) What are the identified outcomes of due process complaints? 3.) What were the Hearing Officers orders pertaining to the outcome?

Descriptive research methods were used to analyze 105 special education due process hearing decisions over the 14-year period. Due process is a key dispute resolution feature approved by Congress in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Due process has become a financial burden for school districts and for the families as well as having a negative impact on the relationships between the two parties. Its primary purpose is to facilitate resolution for disputes for families and school districts. Many states categorize the number of disputes, hearing decisions, and resolutions. Nevertheless, many states do not classify the categories in adjudicative due process hearings into a specific category, specifically for cases that involve students diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder.

## Learning Objectives

1. Describe types of disputes that parents and school districts file for due process with students diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder.
2. Identify outcomes of due process complaints and solutions to support family-school partnerships.
3. Reflect upon best practices when collecting data, utilizing evidence based teaching procedures, and using evidence based interventions for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder.



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