



**RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SPAN PARENT ADVOCACY NETWORK (SPAN)
ON
IMPROVEMENTS TO SECTION 504 REGULATIONS**

I am writing on behalf of the SPAN Parent Advocacy Network (SPAN) to indicate our strong endorsement of the recommendations of the National Center for Parent Leadership, Advocacy, and Community Empowerment (National PLACE) regarding how to strengthen the Section 504 regulations regarding education.

SPAN is New Jersey's federally-designated Parent Training and Information Center and Family to Family Health Information Center, providing information, support, training, and advocacy for tens of thousands of families, youth and professionals regarding how to partner with professionals in decision-making and advocating for the services and supports their children and youth with disabilities and special healthcare need. SPAN is also the New Jersey affiliate for the National Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health and Parent to Parent USA. SPAN also houses the National Center for Parent Information and Resources, providing support to 96 parent centers around the country; the National RAISE Transition TA Center, providing support to the 8 regional RSA Parent Centers; the Region A Parent TA Center and the Region A-1 and A-2 Transition Parent TA Center, providing support to the 26 parent centers in Region A. SPAN is also a founding member of National PLACE.

Our support for the National PLACE recommendations is based on direct experience of our own staff and the families we serve, as well as with parent centers around the country, with the regulations as they currently stand – insufficient detail or specificity to let parents and schools know what Section 504 requires, who it covers, and how parents must be involved in the process. Further, we know the negative consequences of not requiring parents to be involved every step of the way, not requiring a written Section 504 plan, and not specifically including the Office for Civil Rights' interpretations of Section 504 related to discipline, access, and other important issues that are addressed in National PLACE's recommendations.

Thank you for your consideration of our – and National PLACE's – recommendations to strengthen and improve Section 504 regulations. Please contact me at diana.autin@spanadvocacy.org with any questions or to discuss our support for the National PLACE recommendations in greater detail.

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