

*Educational Surrogate Parents (ESPs) are educational advocates for children who may be eligible for or are receiving special education services and do not have a legal guardian that can make decisions at their individualized educational program (IEP) meetings. ESPs also advocate for children who are considered youths in care of the Department of Children and Family Services, are living in a residential facility, or are unaccompanied homeless youths.*

*ESPs help ensure the students have access to a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).*



## Family Matters Parent Training & Information Center

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**Illinois  
State Board of  
Education**

**Educational  
Surrogate  
Parent  
Training**



[www.fmptic.org](http://www.fmptic.org)

An ESP's responsibilities include the following activities:

- Act as an advocate for students receiving or who are under evaluation for special education services.
- Attend and actively participate in IEP meetings.
- Provide consent for assessment/evaluation for special education.
- Work with school staff to develop an IEP which includes appropriate services.
- Develop a working relationship with school staff.
- Learn about the student's educational needs.
- Ask questions and provide input.
- Keep and review records.
- Visit the student in school and observe.
- Request conflict resolution procedures if necessary.
- Maintain confidentiality.
- Respond to communications from the school/district in a timely manner
- Submit reports of services twice a year to ISBE and request reimbursement if preferred.

## How to Become an Educational Surrogate Parent

- Once interest is indicated, you will be put in contact with the training entity, Family Matters.
- You must complete training, pass the final assessment, and submit to a background check.

Upon completion of the activities above, you will be entered as eligible to carry a caseload of students based on the maximum number of students you are able to serve and the geographical area in which you are willing to travel. ISBE staff will complete appointments as requests are received and you will be notified.



## Family Matters Provides Training for the Illinois State Board of Education's Educational Surrogate Parent Program

An Educational Surrogate Parent is an individual who has been appointed to represent the educational interests of a child with disabilities when:

- No parent (as defined under 34 CFR 300.30) can be identified;
- The child is a youth in care; or
- The child is an unaccompanied homeless youth.

