



October 15, 2009

Dear Impartial Hearing Officer:

State regulations require each impartial hearing officer (IHO) to successfully complete a training program, which provides information regarding State and federal law and regulations relating to the education of students with disabilities, the needs of such students and the procedures involved in conducting a hearing and reaching and writing a decisions; and to attend such periodic update programs as may be scheduled by the Commissioner. I am writing to inform you that, beginning in the spring of 2010, the New York State Education Department (NYSED) will be scheduling mandatory 12-hour annual update sessions, which will include:

- six hours of instructor-led training; and
- two three-hour courses via video or web-based presentations.

The annual sessions will be provided through the University of Buffalo Law School. To provide input on the specific topics to be covered in these sessions, see <http://www.law.buffalo.edu/IHO>. The six-hour instructor-led sessions are currently being planned for the spring 2010 in New York City and Albany. When available, dates and registration materials will be posted at the website listed above. Please note that you will not receive an individual letter announcing this training as you have in the past. Each IHO must participate in the annual sessions as a condition of certification as an IHO.

As you know, State regulations require that each IHO have access to the support and equipment necessary to perform the duties of an IHO. Consistent with policy established in 2001, each IHO must have access to a telephone, voice mail or telephone answering machine or service, facsimile equipment, an e-mail account, a computer, internet access and a printer. Access to an email account, computer with internet access and a printer are essential for participation in the annual training sessions and for access to the Impartial Hearing Reporting System (IHRS). In January 2010, NYSED will confirm that each IHO has the necessary equipment as stated above as a condition of continued certification by the Commissioner as an IHO.

I thank you for your continued and dedicated work on behalf of students with disabilities. If you have any questions regarding information contained in this letter, please contact Charlene Gurian at 518-486-7462.

Sincerely,

Patricia J. Geary

cc: Erlinda Rejino  
Melinda Saran  
Charlene Gurian

