

Education advocates should know that Susan Batson, Acting Director, Educational Improvement & Assistance, La. Dept of Education (acting director of special education in Louisiana) expressed concern about the reports from the LaPTI Center that parents are told in IEP meetings that services can not be provided because of a lack of funding. Ms. Batson encouraged the LaPTI Center to have parents and advocates report directly to her when a lack of funding is cited as a reason for why a requested IEP service(s) will not be provided by the district. You can call Susan Batson's office toll free at 877 453 2721 or at susan.batson@la.gov

Parents and advocates should be aware that money is NEVER to be raised as a barrier to a student with an IEP receiving services. If this is done during an IEP meeting parents should document that the student is being denied a service based on a school district's perceived lack of funding by asking that it be listed in the Parent Concerns section of the IEP document that you requested the service and that the district is refusing to provide it because they claim to be lacking funds. Or the parent could be supported to write a letter to the district following the meeting citing concern over the excuse of a lack of funds used.

Typically, I would advise parents to then go up the chain of command, ensuring that the special ed director/supervisor for the school district is aware that the school members of the IEP team claimed the service was unavailable because they said there was no money to pay for the service.

But Susan Batson is adamant that we inform her, not just Abie Dupont, when \$\$ are used to deny services. She can help the district consider their budget & can suggest budget amendments if needed.