OK TO TRY AND RESOLVE DISPUTES IN-HOUSE, HOWEVER, DISTRICTS/CHARTER SCHOOLS MUST ENSURE, THAT PARENTS KNOW THEY CAN FILE FOR DUE PROCESS OR CONTACT THE OFFICE FOR CIVIL RIGHTS (OCR) AT ANY TIME DURING THE INFORMAL RESOLTION

Be aware: Regardless if your district or charter school(s) has resolved a complaint satisfactorily, remember, if OCR finds your written procedures noncompliant, your district/charter school may find your school(s) out of compliance.

- > No informal action is ever necessary prior to filing a formal grievance
 - The grievance process is NEVER a prerequisite to contacting OCR.
 - Schools must provide "prompt and equitable resolution".
- > OCR states the "Key" is to write grievance procedures within the letter of the law but in a way that the district/charter school(s) are NOT encouraging parents to go [the due process or OCR complaint] route before trying to resolve at the lowest local level.
- **➤** Tips for resolving disputes in-house:
 - Provide due process rights, but also offer opportunities to resolve the issues in-house.
 - Verify that your 504 manual includes complaint grievance procedures
 - Review your current grievance procedures to ensure that it clearly states *OCR is NOT* the level parents can obtain *only after* all other options have failed.
 - Train building-level coordinators to discuss all appeal options during any and all meetings.
 - Train coordinators to use language that lets parents know of the due process and right to contact OCR at anytime but the district/charter school is hopeful they will first consider working with the school to try and resolve the dispute.
 - Include OCR in early resolution process
 - o OCR does not engage in formal mediation
 - o OCR will facilitate mediation, according to a revised FAQ
 - OCR will offer mediation to both parties, which includes, facilitating resolution by providing each an understanding of pertinent legal standards and possible remedies.

