

CADRE and JAMS Foundation Present:
Voices from the Field
Interview Clip #3 Transcript – Jim Gerl

Marshall: You've been a special education mediator, as well as a hearing officer, for a long time. Do you favor one or the other procedure or have opinions with regard to them?

Jim: Yea, that's again a good question. I think that they both have their place. I mean, there are times when you're making a legal point where you absolutely have to have a due process hearing and the parties have to have the right to be able to do that. But I do feel strongly that mediation is the way to go. I think that mediation is the only, of the various dispute resolution mechanisms, where you can repair the damaged relationship between the parents and the school district, and again, because we're talking about the education of a child, if you don't repair the damage to the relationship, you can go through a due process hearing and win and the child can really lose. So I think it's, mediation is the one technique that really has potential to work on repairing that relationship, so that's the one that I, my personal opinion is that's the best one.