(ii)   "Parent" does not include a social worker or other employee of a public agency who is responsible for the education or care of the child.

(6)   "Parent surrogate" means a person who is appointed by the local school superintendent to act in place of a parent of a child in the educational decision making process.

(7)   "Public agency" includes the State Department of Education, local education agencies, and other agencies that are responsible for providing education to a child with a disability, including the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Mental Hygiene Administration, the ~~Mental Retardation~~ **DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES** Administration, the Department of Juvenile Services, and the Maryland School for the Deaf. For the purpose of this section the Maryland School for the Blind shall be considered a public agency.

(8)   "Unaccompanied homeless [child] YOUTH" means a [child who is considered homeless] HOMELESS YOUTH, as defined by the McKinney–Vento Homeless Assistance Act, WHO IS NOT IN THE PHYSICAL CUSTODY OF A PARENT OR GUARDIAN.

(9)   "Unavailable" means that a public agency, after reasonable efforts, cannot discover the physical whereabouts of a child's parent.

(10)   "Unknown" means that a public agency, after reasonable efforts, cannot identify the child's parent.

(11)   "Ward of the State" means a child for whom a State or county agency or official has been appointed legal guardian, or who has been committed by a court of competent jurisdiction to the legal custody of a State or county agency or official with the express authorization that the State or county agency or official make educational decisions for the child.

(b)   Public agency personnel shall request that the local school superintendent appoint a parent surrogate to represent a child at any point in the educational decision making process if it is suspected that the child may be disabled and if:

(1)   The child is a ward of the State;

(2)   The child is an unaccompanied homeless [child] YOUTH; or

(3)   (i)   The parents of the child are unknown or unavailable; and