

IEP Meeting Tips

Parents are equal members of the IEP team. You hold knowledge about your child that no one else on the team does. Finding ways to effectively advocate for your child during IEP meetings can be difficult. These meeting tips will help prepare you.

Before the Meeting

- Review the meeting notice to confirm the purpose of the meeting (items that will be discussed) and who has been invited. Contact the school, in writing, to request items be added to the agenda and/or additional school staff be invited. You have the right to invite someone to attend who has special knowledge or expertise about your child. You can also invite someone to support you during the meeting.
- Notify the school, in writing, if you plan to audio record the meeting.
- Do your homework. Review your child's IEP, records, evaluations, work samples, etc.
- If you have reports or other information that you want the IEP team to review and consider, send the information to them prior to the meeting.
- Make a list of all the key points you want to discuss.

During the Meeting

- Arrive a few minutes early.
- If there are people in the room you do not know, ask for introductions and about their role.
- Start the meeting off on a good note by talking about what is working well.
- Ask questions about anything you don't understand. Don't be afraid or shy to ask people to explain words, terms, roles, and responsibilities, what is being asked of you, or what is being decided about your child.
- LISTEN to the other IEP team members. Ensure that you understand their opinion on an issue. It is ok to "agree to disagree!"
- If at any point you realize that you are emotional, ask for a break.
- Take notes or record the meeting.
- Provide the team with your Parental Input (this can be given during the meeting or provided at the conclusion of the meeting).

After the Meeting

- Send a Thank You note/email to the team!
- You should receive the final IEP, meeting notes/summaries and all Prior Written Notice (PWN) documents within 5 business days after the IEP meeting.
- Review all the documents as soon as you receive them. If you feel they do not accurately reflect the conversation that took place and/or the decisions made, document your concerns and forward it to the school. Ask that your documentation be included in your child's educational record.
- Note any follow-up that should occur and who is responsible for what. Make sure that you do whatever you said you were going to do.
- Monitor your child's progress by maintaining communication with your child's teacher(s) and carefully reviewing Progress Reports.