

Preparing for Your Child's IEP Team Meeting

1. The first question to ask yourself; what type of meeting is it?
 - a) Initial Meeting;
 - b) Annual Review;
 - c) Or a 3-year re-evaluation.

Once you know the type of meeting that will help you prepare. If this is an initial evaluation or a three-year re-evaluation, there are evaluations that you will need to review before the meeting. You are entitled to copies of all evaluations done by the District at least two (2) days in advance of the Team meeting. You need to ask for copies of the reports, and you need to do it in writing. You cannot expect to be able to participate well in a meeting to go over evaluations that you have not had the chance to read. You need to read the evaluation, highlight areas you agree with; highlight areas you disagree with, write down questions you have about the evaluations, and review the recommendations.

603 CMR 28.04 “(c) **Reports of assessment results.** *Each person conducting an assessment shall summarize in writing the procedures employed, the results, and the diagnostic impression, and shall define in detail and in educationally relevant and common terms, the student's needs, offering explicit means of meeting them. The assessor may recommend appropriate types of placements, but shall not recommend specific classrooms or schools. Summaries of assessments shall be completed prior to discussion by the Team and, upon request, shall be made available to the parents at least two days in advance of the Team discussion at the meeting occurring pursuant to 603 CMR 28.05(1).“*

Tip: The easiest way to ensure this is to write it directly on the evaluation consent form, at the time that you consent to the evaluations.

“I request copies of all the evaluations at least two days in advance of the Team meeting.”

If you request copies of evaluations and you do not receive them two days before the meeting you can reschedule the Team Meeting.

If this is an annual meeting or a three-year evaluation, you also want to review your child's IEP and the progress reports for the last year.

- Did your child make progress?
- Did your child achieve their annual goal(s)?
 - If yes, what's next thing for them to address in that area?
 - If no, why not, what needs to be changed in the IEP to address this lack of expected progress?

2. Parent Concerns

Now that you have reviewed the evaluations and/or IEP and progress reports, you want to write down your parent concerns. This is a section of the IEP that belongs to you and your child.

- What are your concerns?
- Where is your child struggling?
- Does your child have weaknesses that go beyond academics?
(Such as; social skills, behavior, communication)
- What are your priorities for your child for the next year?
(Is it to improve your child's reading skills? Is it to address interfering behaviors?)

3. Vision Statement

Next write down your thoughts for your child's vision statement.

- Where do you see your child in the next one-five years?
- Reading on grade level?
- Making friendships that extend into the community?
- Being able to attend and do their work?
- With specialized instruction or related services I see my child....

Your IEP meeting should be scheduled at a date and time that is convenient for you and the Team. Be reasonable. Contact your Special Education Coordinator and arrange the date and time. You are an important and equal member of your child's Team and your participation counts! Arrange to bring someone with you who will be able to take notes while you are discussing your child and the IEP with the Team, you can't expect to be able to do it all alone.

Write down questions that you want to be addressed during the Team meeting, it is easy to get distracted by the conversation and forget to address the questions you had, if they are written down this will help to remind you of the things you wanted to address while you are at the meeting.

All of these steps will help you be better prepared and better able to advocate for your child.