

IEP Tips for a Successful Meeting

INTRODUCTION

As a parent, hearing the words “IEP Meeting” might cause you to feel nervous, overwhelmed or even experience a feeling of dread. We know from life, that if we are prepared, our anxiety level goes down. The following tips are designed to help you prepare for your child’s IEP meeting while developing a collaborative relationship with your school district.

PARENT TIPS

1. Respond to the meeting notification and let them know you will be attending. If you plan on inviting others such as friends, family, specialist, or advocate, let the district know ahead of time. If you cannot attend, ask to reschedule. Let the district know that the meeting is important to you.
2. Organize, review, and bring all important documents to the meeting. Important documents may include report cards, school correspondences regarding your child, progress reports, medical information, or specialist reports from outside professionals working with your child.
3. You have a right to request and review all educational records of your child prior to the IEP meeting. It is always a good idea to request a draft of the IEP prior to the meeting so that you may review proposed goals and services and make suggestions at the meeting. Review your parental rights prior to the meeting. You may request a copy prior to the meeting.
4. Write down all questions, concerns, or suggestions that you have prior to the meeting. IEP meetings may be slightly rushed so the more prepared and organized you are the better chance that all your concerns and questions will be addressed.
5. You may visit possible program options for your child prior to the meeting. Ask for a visit to be arranged prior to the IEP meeting taking place.
6. You may record the meeting. It is a good idea to inform school staff in advance of your intent to record as they also will record the meeting.
7. You are an equal partner of the IEP team so be an active participant. Ask questions, offer suggestions and bring ideas to the table. Remember you are your child’s voice.
8. If you don’t understand or agree with the IEP plan you can request for a continuation meeting prior to signing the IEP.

APEC IS HERE TO HELP

APEC provides free training, information, and consultation to families. Visit our training calendar for more information about learning opportunities at www.alabamaparentcenter.com or call our center.

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