

The Facts

The facilitated IEP meeting is a process that is voluntary.

The facilitator has no authority to act as a legal representative, counselor, advocate, judge or arbitrator.

The decision making power rests with the parties and not the facilitator.

The facilitated IEP meeting is intended to be non-adversarial in nature.

The facilitated IEP meeting's primary goal is to find reconciliation and mutuality between different parties.

Neither the school, parent or students are bound by anything said or done at the IEP meeting unless a written plan is reached and signed by both parties.

Who Are The Facilitators?

The facilitators are experienced and trained professionals in meeting facilitation and successful IEP development. The facilitators possess knowledge and skills in understanding group dynamics, group decision-making, and effective communication skills. The facilitator identifies underlying communication issues that disrupt group decision-making processes. The facilitator has the ability to apply facilitation tools in order to thoroughly explore issues and come support productive decision making.

To request a facilitator and for more information, contact:

**The Resolution Project @
Advocates for Justice and Education, Inc.
25 E. Street, NW, 4th Floor
Washington, DC 20001
Phone: (202) 469-3485
Fax: (202) 678-8062
Email: fiepmeetings@aje-dc.org**

To learn more about Dispute Resolution Processes in Special Education and Facilitated Individualized Education Program Meetings, visit:

- **The National Center on Dispute Resolution in Special Education (CADRE)**
Website: www.directionservice.org/cadre
- **Advocates for Justice and Education, Inc. (AJE)**
Website: www.aje-dc.org



Facilitated Individualized Education Program (IEP) Meetings

Improving Parent-School Collaboration



This project is funded and supported by the Office of the
State Superintendent of Education (OSSE).

What are Facilitated Individualized Education Program meetings?

A facilitated Individualized Education Program (IEP) meeting is a voluntary, student-focused process led by a neutral third-party to help facilitate communication and the successful development of a student's IEP. Facilitated IEPs have been found to be an effective means to keep IEP teams focused on the development of IEPs for students while addressing some of the conflicts and disagreements that may arise.

The facilitator's primary goal is to assist team members with the thoughtful, productive creation of a quality IEP. The facilitator's role is to:

- Keep the meeting focused on the student,
- Ensure everyone at the table has a voice,
- Encourage active listening by all participants, and
- Keep the group from getting stuck on just one aspect of the IEP.

A facilitated IEP meeting provides an opportunity for early conflict prevention and resolution and is available to District of Columbia Schools, Public Charter Schools, parents of children with disabilities and Adult students with disabilities.

Who can request a facilitated IEP meeting?

Parents and guardians of a child with a disability, an adult student with a disability (18 years or older), school personnel, or an LEA representative, may all request a meeting.

Facilitated IEP meetings may be requested when:

- There is disagreement about any matter pertaining to a child's special education placement and/or IEP special education.
- There is a lack of trust or communication challenges between parents and school personnel.
- School personnel want to focus on parent concerns and IEP content while receiving assistance with the IEP meeting process.
- Parents and school personnel are becoming apprehensive about the next IEP meeting.
- The IEP team wants to minimize distractions and conflicting interests, and require assistance focusing on the needs of the student.



**Change always
comes bearing gifts.**

– Price Pritchett

Facilitated IEP meetings are beneficial because:

- Builds and improves relationships among the IEP team members.
- Ensures that the meeting is student-focused.
- Improves communication among IEP team members by modeling effective communication and listening skills.
- Clarifies points of agreement and disagreement.
- Provides opportunities for team members to resolve conflicts.
- Encourages parents and professionals to identify new options to address unresolved problems.
- Typically less stressful than formal complaint proceedings.
- Supports better IEP implementation by establishing roles and responsibilities for follow-up action.
- Roles and responsibilities can be discussed and planned.
- Takes place during the IEP meeting and does not require a separate meeting to formalize agreements reached in the IEP facilitation.
- Supports full engagement and participation by all parties.

How do I request a facilitated IEP meeting?

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