

# TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL IEP 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 our anxiety level goes down if we are prepared. 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 MEETING NOTIFICATIONS**  
Respond to the meeting notification and let them know you will be attending. If you plan on inviting others such as friends, family, specialists, or advocates, 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 GET ORGANIZED**  
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 GET INFORMED**  
You have a right to request and review your child’s educational records before the IEP meeting. It is always a good idea to request a draft of the IEP before the meeting so that you may review proposed goals and services and make suggestions at the meeting. Review your parental rights before the meeting. You may request a copy before the meeting.

- 4 WRITE DOWN YOUR QUESTIONS**  
Write down all questions, concerns, or suggestions that you have before 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 EXPLORE YOUR OPTIONS**  
You may visit possible program options for your child before the meeting. Ask for a visit to be arranged before the IEP meeting takes place.
- 6 RECORDING IS ALLOWED**  
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 BE AN ACTIVE PARTICIPANT**  
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 ONLY SIGN WHEN COMFORTABLE**  
If you don’t understand or agree with the IEP plan, you can request a continuation meeting before signing the IEP.