



Your Parent Rights Before, During, and After the IEP Meeting

You as a parent have the right to meaningful participation in your child's IEP, in the IEP Meeting (Meeting), and on the IEP Team. Sometimes it is hard to know what your rights are, how to participate in the Meeting, and even what information is needed from you to help your child. Don't worry; we've got you covered!

It is important to know your rights when it comes to IEPs. **These are your rights:**

- ***You have a right to be invited to your child's Meeting.*** If the meeting date and time doesn't work for you or it is hard for you to go at the suggested time, let the school know and suggest dates and times that work best for you. Schools are supposed to work with parents on making sure they can come to the Meeting if parents are being reasonable. The date and time of the meeting has to be agreeable to both the school and parents. You can also participate via phone or virtually if it is better for you.
- ***Schools have to notify you of the date and time of the agreed upon Meeting and the names and roles of the people who will be at the Meeting in writing.*** If school staff bring anyone to the meeting that they didn't let you know about, they must get your permission to allow that person to stay for the Meeting. Schools may invite anyone that has knowledge of the child or expertise to help the child/IEP Team to the Meeting but good news, you have the same right to bring anyone you think has knowledge or expertise as well! For anyone the school wants to bring to the Meeting you do not know, you can ask who they are, their role, why they were asked to come to the Meeting, and how their attendance will help you or your child. It is important and good for you to know who is providing information and support for your child!
- ***You can bring anyone you want to your child's IEP Meeting.*** Bring anyone who can support you such as an advocate, friend, any person who provides services for your child who might be helpful at the IEP, or any other person. You do not have to tell the school who you are bringing unless you are bringing an attorney as the school has a right to bring legal representation if you do. However letting the school know who you are bringing helps the school add the person to the paperwork and can help the school ensure that person's feedback is encouraged during the Meeting. If someone you want to come to the Meeting is unavailable, you can ask them to write out the information they would have shared with the IEP Team and send it to your child's special education teacher or bring it to the Meeting. It can be included in the IEP or attached to the IEP under the subject of Parent Input in the Present Levels section of the IEP.

- ***You have a right to participate in your child's IEP Meeting by sharing your opinions and suggestions about your child and about how you feel about what the school is recommending for your child.*** Schools do not always have to agree with you or do what you are asking for but they must consider your opinion and discuss your opinion/concerns. They cannot ignore your concerns. Schools should add your concerns to the IEP document under Parent Concerns Section or Parent Input Section of the IEP. You can add anything you say to be added in whatever words you want to put in the IEP.
- ***You can agree to something the school is recommending and try it and later change the IEP if (1) something you originally agreed with isn't working for your child or (2) you want to recommend something different after trying something the school recommended.*** You can request a meeting to discuss your concerns or other recommendations with your child's special education teacher or request an official IEP Revision Meeting to open up the IEP and consider adding your recommendations to the IEP.
- ***You can disagree with your IEP Team and with your child's IEP if you disagree with anything in it or if you disagree with the decisions made by the rest of the IEP Team.*** If you disagree with the IEP or Team, the IEP still gets implemented and you will need to file for mediation or file a complaint to resolve the disagreement. You can work with an attorney or file yourself. There are model forms on the Nevada Department of Education or any state Department of Education to help you file. If you file, a mediator or hearing officer will be assigned to your case and will hear both your side and the school's side of the issue you disagreed about. You can also negotiate with your school and see if you can reach a mutual agreement. Most cases get settled between the parent and school district and don't go to hearing. Also you may be entitled or can ask for attorney's fees from the school district via your attorney. You can also try the plan or school's recommendation you disagreed with and see how it goes before you file. You have 2 years from your signed disagreement in the IEP to file a complaint unless you want to stop what you disagreed about from being put into place quickly. If what you disagreed about isn't harming your child or you don't feel like it must be stopped right away, you don't have to rush and do what is best for your child.