

Preparing for a Virtual IEP Meeting: A Resource for Families



DURING THE IEP MEETING

WHAT TO EXPECT DURING THE MEETING



- IEP team members will **introduce themselves** and how they work with your child.
- You are an important part of the meeting and an expert on your child. You will be asked to **share thoughts about your child**, and this information should be captured by a note taker. This is a good time to share concerns and the documentation that you have gathered.
- The educators share information about your child, and you are encouraged to listen openly and actively. You can **comment and ask questions** at any time, such as:
 - « Can you give me an example of ?
 - « Can you share some positive examples about how my child learns, interacts, plays, etc.?
- You may be asked to sign electronically that you attended the IEP meeting but your signature is not required to approve an IEP unless it is your child's **first IEP**. If you disagree with the IEP you can call another meeting or consult the Parental Rights/Procedural Safeguards Booklet.

MEETING TOPICS THAT SHOULD BE COVERED



The rules and regulations for a virtual IEP meeting are the same as face-to-face IEP meetings.

For an **annual IEP meeting** the following topics must be **reviewed and discussed**:

1. Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance.
2. Special Considerations and Accommodations:
 - Special Considerations include: Assistive Technology (AT), Blind or Visually Impaired, Behavioral Intervention Plan, and English Learners
 - Instructional and Assessment Accommodations
 - Supplementary Aids, Services, and Supports.
 - Extended School Year (ESY)
 - Secondary Transition (if applicable)
3. Goals
4. Related Services
5. Least Restrictive Environment and Placement Summary

TECHNOLOGY TIPS



- **Speak a little slowly** so that everyone can hear clearly.
- If you don't want to interrupt a speaker, you can **type your comment** or question in the chat – or if you're on video, just hold up your hand.
- Make sure you can **see and read** the area of the IEP that the team is discussing as well as edits made during the meeting.
- Technology glitches can sometimes happen.

QUESTIONS TO ASK



- Ask questions** as needed to make sure you understand aspects of the IEP and the services that will be provided to your child.
- How will these services be implemented and supported virtually?
 - How will the IEP team handle goals that cannot be addressed remotely?
 - How frequently and in what manner will teachers and service providers you report progress and share how my child is doing?

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DURING THE IEP MEETING

WHAT TO EXPECT DURING THE MEETING



Participate actively in the meeting by sharing, listening, and asking questions for understanding.

Remember your role as **an important and equal member** of the IEP team and an expert on your child. It is important that you are engaged in the meeting.

- There should be an **official introduction** of all IEP team members. If the meeting does not begin with introductions, you can ask the team to share their names, roles, and how they work with your child.
- Ask the IEP team to re-state the **purpose and agenda** of the IEP meeting if you need to hear this information.
- **Share your thoughts** about your child (their strengths, unique learning needs, motivators, etc.) early in the meeting. You will want to share the documentation you have collected about your child's progress or lack of progress, missed services, or new concerns. Make sure you see your thoughts captured in the IEP notes. If you do not see your comments in the notes, you can ask for something specific to be included.
- When educators share, you share too. **Take turns speaking** and be sure to share your thoughts and feedback after each school team member talks. If it is hard to find a chance to speak, you can type your questions and thoughts into the chat feature.
- **Listen openly and actively** to what the team members are sharing. The school team might have a different perspective of your child than you have, or they may have observed different skills and behaviors. If there is a disconnect between what is being reported and what you see your child do at home, or if you need help to better understand, ask questions during the meeting such as:
 - « Can you give me an example of?
 - « Can you explain what that acronym means?
 - « Can you tell me what happened before, during, or after?
 - « Can you share some positive examples about how my child learns, interacts, plays, etc.?
- You may be asked to sign electronically that you attended the IEP meeting but your signature is not required to approve an IEP unless it is your child's **first IEP**. If you disagree with the IEP you can call another meeting or consult the Parental Rights/Procedural Safeguards Booklet for dispute resolution options. To sign the IEP, your district may use an electronic signature feature where you are emailed a link to sign and a copy of the IEP. If this is the case, follow the instructions.

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DURING THE IEP MEETING

MEETING TOPICS THAT SHOULD BE COVERED



Understand the topics that should be covered in the meeting.

The rules and regulations for a virtual IEP meeting are the **same** as face-to-face IEP meetings.

At the start of the meeting, you will receive a copy of the Procedural Safeguards Parental Rights document. You will be asked to sign that you have received the document and that you understand it. It may be helpful to review it prior to the meeting.

For an **annual IEP meeting** the following topics must be **reviewed and discussed**:

1. Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance.
2. Special Considerations and Accommodations:
 - Special Considerations include: Assistive Technology (AT), Blind or Visually Impaired, Behavioral Intervention Plan, and English Learners
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In addition to an Annual IEP Review, IEP meetings may also take place for a **variety of purposes**:

- Determining eligibility for special education services.
- IEP development.
- Reevaluation to determine need for additional data, determine services and/or determine continued eligibility.
- Transition Planning where IEP team members may discuss the unique needs of a child when transitioning from preschool to kindergarten.
- Transition planning and transition goals become a mandatory part of the IEP process when a student turns 14 and must be documented in the IEP.
- Parents can request an IEP meeting at any time if there are concerns or issues to discuss.

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TECHNOLOGY TIPS



*Use **technology** to help you be a full and active participant in the meeting.*

- **Speak a little slowly** because sometimes audio is hard to hear during virtual meetings.
- Type a question or comment in the chat feature if you need **clarification** about what the teacher is saying and are unable to (or don't want to) interrupt. If you are using video, you can also hold up your hand.
- Use **icons** such as Raise your Hand and/or Thumbs Up/Down (if available in the platform) to indicate that you have a question or your agreement.
- Make sure you can **see and read** the area of the IEP that the team is discussing, as well as any edits being made in real time. You can request the team to enlarge the text size if needed.
- **Be patient** because technology glitches will happen and may take time for the team to fix the issue.

QUESTIONS TO ASK



***Ask questions as needed** to make sure you understand all aspects of the IEP and the services that will be provided to your child.*

Here are some examples of questions you might ask in the meeting:

- How will these services be implemented and supported virtually?
- What if my child cannot access these services?
- What are the contingency plans if my child cannot receive these services remotely?
- How will my child's aide or adult support help during instruction?
- How will the IEP team handle goals that cannot be addressed remotely?
- How frequently and in what manner will you report progress and share how my child is doing?
- What is the best way to contact teachers and service providers if I have questions or concerns?

Share the **communication strategies** that work best and are most convenient for you. For example, you can request phone calls, notes, and/or to review data sheets regularly.

Note: There is a **family support coordinator** in every jurisdiction that can help families to understand the IEP process and prepare for meetings.