

Preparing for the Annual Review/IEP Meeting

Notice: The parent must be notified of the proposed date, time and location of an IEP meeting to give him or her sufficient time to make arrangements to attend or contact the school to reschedule the meeting. The notice should include the purpose of the meeting (including transition, if appropriate) the proposed date, time, and location of the meeting as well as the titles of the people that the system will invite or have invited to attend. If a person from an outside agency is being invited, the parent's permission must first be obtained. The IEP meeting should be scheduled for a time, date and location that is mutually agreeable to the parent and the system. The parent may request to reschedule the IEP meeting or to participate by telephone or videoconference if attending in person is not possible. Parents must be provided with at least 2 notices and it is recommended you use various methods of contact (e.g. mail, email, telephone); however, best practice is to make a 3rd attempt.

Team Members: At a minimum the IEP Team must include:

- **the parent** (or the person acting as the parent under the IDEA)
- **the student** (Regardless of the age, it is a good idea to include the student so he can participate in his educational planning; however, it is mandatory to invite the student when discussing transition.)
- not less than one of the student's **general education teachers**, if the student is or may be participating in the general education environment (for preschool students, this is someone who is currently providing preschool services to nondisabled preschool students)
- not less than **one of the student's special education teachers** or providers
- **a system representative (LEA)** who meets the following requirements:
 - is qualified to provide or supervise the provision of specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of the child
 - knows about the general education curriculum
 - knows about the availability of resources in the system
- ****No one can serve in two roles.** For example, a resource teacher cannot serve as a LEA and as a special education teacher. If the student receive resource services only and not speech, then the SLP can serve as the LEA. If the student receives both speech and resource services, then you should have someone else serve as the LEA. This could be either a building administrator or Special Education Administrator.
- Other members required under certain circumstances:
 - someone who can interpret how evaluation results relate to classroom instruction and settings (this person may be one of the persons already listed above)
 - other individuals who have knowledge of the child or special expertise, such as related services personnel, based on the discretion of the parent or system
 - if appropriate and with consent of the parent or student, if age 18, a representative of any agency that is likely to provide or pay for any transition services
 - ****If you have included someone's name who is under the required team member section on the Notice of the IEP meeting and that person is not at the meeting, you must get parent permission, in writing, for excusing that team member and complete an excusal form. If the parent does not agree to excuse the member and if that person is unable to attend the meeting, then you will need to reconvene the meeting.**

Things to do in order to prepare for the meeting:

- At a minimum of 3 weeks before IEP is due to expire, send an IEP notice to the parents. The notice should be sent no later than 7 days prior to the date the IEP is due to expire. Be sure to list all required participants: LEA, Exceptional Education Representative, General Education Representative, student if transition is to be addressed, related service providers if appropriate, and agency representatives if appropriate. Document attempt in contact log. (It is a good idea to touch base with parents via phone, email, or personal contact to arrange a time convenient for parents prior to sending home the IEP notice.)
- If no response is received, attempt a second contact with parent. Be sure to document each contact attempt. Best practice is to make a 3rd attempt if no response is received.
- There are times that a parent indicates that she/he will be present for the meeting but doesn't arrive at the time agreed upon. In that case, you should attempt to make a contact by phone to see if the parent is still planning to attend. If parent forgot but can be at the meeting in a reasonable amount of time, wait for the parent to arrive before beginning the meeting. If the parent is no longer able to attend the meeting as previously planned, ask if the team may proceed with an explanation that a copy of all IEP paperwork will be provided. If the parent is unwilling to allow the team to hold the meeting until she/he can attend, offer to reschedule the meeting unless you have reached the IEP expiration date. If the IEP will expire before a meeting can be rescheduled with the parent, you must explain to the parent that an IEP meeting must be held before the IEP expires so that there is no interruption of services. You must document the multiple good faith attempts that were made to involve the parent. You may then conduct the IEP meeting without the parent present. You should offer to meet with parent at a later time to review the IEP and assure parent that the IEP may be amended if she/he has concerns. If the parent indicates that she/he will attend but doesn't arrive at the time agreed upon and you are unable to reach the parent by phone, you may move forward with the meeting if you have previously made at least 2 prior contacts. Remember that sending a notice home by a student might not be an actual contact if the parent never received the notice. Be sure to document contacts made using multiple formats.
- If the parent responds to the notice indicating that they wish to participate in the development of the IEP but need to reschedule the meeting to a date after the IEP is due to expire explain to the parent that an IEP meeting must be held before the IEP expires so that there is no interruption of services. You must document the multiple good faith attempts that were made to involve the parent. You may then conduct the IEP meeting without the parent present. You should offer to meet with parent at a later time to review the IEP and assure parent that the IEP may be amended if she/he has concerns. Be sure to send the parent a copy of the IEP paperwork. Remember that implementation of IEP should be dated as 7 days after the meeting to allow the parent a chance to review the IEP.
- If multiple documented attempts to contact a parent using varying formats (e.g. written notice, phone calls, and home visits, etc.) have been made and

documented without the parent responding, you may have the meeting without the parent present. Be sure to send the parent a copy of the IEP paperwork. Remember that implementation of IEP should be dated as 7 days after the meeting to allow the parent a chance to review the IEP.

- If transition will be discussed, complete a parent interview, student interview, and a teacher questionnaire. Consult with the student's counselor to make sure that an Individual Graduation Plan (IGP) has been developed. Review information from IGP including career testing that should have been completed annually beginning in the 6th grade. If aptitude and interest testing have not been completed, assess the student in these areas. Use this information to write a draft Individual Transition Plan (ITP) that supports the student IGP. *An ITP must be developed prior to a student entering high school or by the age of 16, whichever comes first. Remember, a student must be invited to the IEP meeting any time transition is discussed.*
- The IEP team should consider the appropriateness of developing a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) if the student displays behaviors which impede his/her learning or the learning of others. If a (BIP) is likely to be needed, have teachers provide information to complete the appropriate parts of the Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA). Be sure to gather input from parents and student. Analyze data obtained. Write a partial rough draft of the BIP focusing on problem areas identified in the FBA process. In some cases, it is sufficient to address behavior concerns through a goal in the IEP; however a BIP should be developed if the student displays significant behaviors which impede his/her learning or the learning of others, especially if there are concerns that the behaviors could possibly lead to disciplinary procedures that could result in a recommended change of placement.
- Gather and analyze data needed to write a clear present level of performance to be used to develop goals. Data should include but is not limited to progress monitoring data, checklists, assessment data, course grades, and teacher observation. Graphs depicting data help parents and other team members easily see performance trends.
- Using the draft ITP, draft BIP, and data as a guide, write an IEP draft. Be sure to document the meeting date on the draft using the scheduled IEP date. Services may be initiated the day of the meeting if the meeting is held early enough in the day for services to be provided; otherwise services should be initiated the following day. If parent does not attend the meeting, you will need to remember to change initiation date to 7 days following the meeting to allow parent sufficient time to review the IEP before implementing new IEP. The IEP ending date should be one year minus one day later than the IEP meeting date. If faced with a challenging meeting, send home a copy of the draft IEP and a meeting agenda prior to the meeting. Be sure that exceptional education services have not been predetermined by not listing any services on the draft. Be sure paperwork indicates draft status. (See Things to Remember During the IEP Meeting section for additional information regarding required IEP components.)