

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE IEP MEETING?

After the **first** IEP has been written, you will be asked to give written consent for your child to receive ESE services. If you give your consent, the school will begin implementing the IEP by providing specially designed instruction and services. Check that all the plans are being carried out and that your child is making progress. Continue to look over your child's school work, keep in touch with your child's teachers, and visit your child's class. (Call the school first.) The IEP must be updated at *least* once every 12 months. However, you may ask for an IEP meeting at any time if you believe it is important to consider changes in your child's IEP.

If you disagree with the IEP, the law provides a process for resolving differences. You may schedule another meeting. You may seek mediation, ask for a due process hearing, or file a formal complaint with the Florida Department of Education. For more information, talk to the ESE administrator in your local school district office.

RESOURCES

"What Is Exceptional Student Education for Children with Disabilities?"

For Parents of Florida's Students with Disabilities: An Introduction to Exceptional Student Education

Developing Quality Individual Educational Plans: A Guide for Instructional Personnel

"Summary of Procedural Safeguards for Students with Disabilities"

To order these publications, contact the **Clearinghouse Information Center** at

- 850-488-1879
- cicbiscs@mail.doe.state.fl.us
- www.firn.edu/doe/commhome

REFERENCES

Families and Advocates Partnership for Education. (2001). "Planning Your child's individualized education program (IEP): Some suggestions to consider." Minneapolis, MN: PACER Center.

Learning Disabilities Association of America. (n.d.). "How to participate effectively in the IEP process." Pittsburgh, PA: Author.

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GETTING READY FOR YOUR CHILD'S IEP MEETING

Every child with a disability who is eligible for exceptional student education (ESE) will have an individual educational plan (IEP). An IEP is a written plan for the special education of a child with a disability.

The IEP is like a road map. It describes what the child can already do and what the child needs to learn in order to reach his or her goals. The IEP also identifies the kinds of help the child needs in order to learn.

*Your child's IEP will be written by a team of people at an **IEP meeting**. The **IEP team** will decide which special services and supports your child needs in order to make progress.*

You are an important member of the IEP team. This guide will help you know what to expect during the IEP meeting, so that you will feel more comfortable and be able to participate effectively in the process.

KEEP IN MIND...

- ✓ The IEP is written for your child only.
- ✓ There is only one IEP at a time for your child.
- ✓ The IEP is a plan for up to 12 months of your child's education.

WHO COULD BE ON THE IEP TEAM?

The following people could be at the IEP meeting:

- you (both parents if possible)
- your child, if appropriate
- at least one exceptional student education (ESE) teacher who provides or may provide services to your child
- your child's general education teacher
- someone who understands and can explain the evaluations that have been done for your child (This may be one of the people who is already on this list.)
- a person from the school system who can make sure that your child gets the services listed on the IEP
- other people invited by you or the school

HOW CAN I GET READY FOR THE IEP MEETING?

- ✓ Think about your goals for your child's long-term future.
- ✓ Make a list of what your child can do, likes to do, and needs to learn.
- ✓ Make a list of types of help your child needs.
- ✓ Ask to look over your child's school records and evaluations. Read them carefully.
- ✓ Talk with your child about the IEP process and what he or she wants from it.
- ✓ Ask the school for a blank IEP form so you can become familiar with it.
- ✓ Let the school know in advance if you will need a translator during the meeting.
- ✓ Let the school know in advance if you need to change the meeting time or place.
- ✓ Talk to other parents about their IEP experiences.
- ✓ Ask a friend, another parent, or an advocate to attend the meeting with you. (You may want to let the school know if you have invited someone.)
- ✓ Ask who the school is sending to the meeting.

HOW CAN I PARTICIPATE IN THE MEETING

Bring paper, a pen, and any records or evaluations of your child.

At the meeting, the IEP team is counting on you to

- ✓ share your vision for your child for this school year and for the years to come
- ✓ talk about what your child can do and what your child needs help with
- ✓ talk about any services your child has received in the past
- ✓ listen and ask questions to make sure you understand
- ✓ have a positive attitude—even when you disagree

At the end of the meeting, review the proposed IEP. If you wish, let the team know you would like to take the IEP home to think about it before signing. If you think the IEP is not finished, ask for another meeting. Once the IEP is complete, the school will give you a free copy. Keep it in your records.

MAKE SURE THE IEP COVERS...

- What your child knows and can do now
- What your child needs help with
- How your child's disability affects his or her success in school
- What your child should learn by the end of the year
- The special education services, supports, accommodations or modifications, and assistive technology your child will receive during the year
- Percentage of time your child will spend in general, exceptional, and vocational education
- How your child's progress will be measured
- If your child is age 14 or older, information about the type of diploma your child is working toward and your child's goals for life after high school