

# IEP Meetings

## Tips for Parents



West Virginia DEPARTMENT OF  
**EDUCATION**

- 1. Be Prepared to Feel Uncomfortable**
  - a. It is okay to not know what will happen
  - b. Talk with others you trust about what to expect
- 2. Bring Support**
  - a. Ask trusted, caring adult who knows the process and/or your child
  - b. Spouse, Family Member, Friend, Retired Teacher
  - c. Let school know you plan to bring someone to help you through the meeting
  - d. Ask a friend/family member to take notes during the meeting for you
- 3. Find Out Who's Going to Be There**
  - a. Prior Written Notice includes invitees and their roles
  - b. Feel free to ask why certain people are invited
  - c. Know how many people might be in the meeting
- 4. Get the Report in Advance and Write Notes on It**
  - a. Ask for the draft/report before the meeting
  - b. Go through the entire draft/report
  - c. Highlight your questions
  - d. Use sticky notes to make notes
- 5. Focus on Your Child's Strengths**
  - a. The "numbers" or data are not your child
  - b. Weaknesses are a part of everyone's existence
  - c. Write strengths down to focus on in meeting
  - d. Bring a picture of your child at their best to the meeting
- 6. Remember...There are No Stupid Questions**
  - a. Ask the team to explain things more simplistically when you do not explain
  - b. The rest of the team needs to know what you are thinking or do not understand
- 7. Know that It's Okay to Cry**
  - a. It is okay to be human during the meeting
  - b. Focus on what your child can achieve
- 8. Get Support from People Who "Get It"**
  - a. Talk with other parents before the meeting
  - b. Talk with a teacher(s) who worked well with your child
- 9. Give Grace**
  - a. Educators are also human, we all make mistakes
  - b. Everyone is going through something
  - c. Breathe

## *Before the meeting – Get Prepared*

### **1. Share information with the team**

- a. My child's strength
- b. New Information
- c. My concerns
- d. What my child needs

### **2. Ask for documents to review before the meeting (evaluations, data, examples of assignments, etc.)**

### **3. Request specific teachers, staff, others attend the meeting or speak with them before the meeting.**

### **4. Ask your child if they want to attend the meeting, even if only for a short time? (If appropriate.)**

## *During the meeting – Provide Your Input*

- » My child is good at ...
- » My child learns best when...
- » My goal for my child this year is ....
- » My child does well in class when teachers ...
- » My goal for my child's career is ...
- » Our family ...
- » This is how I would like to stay informed ....

## *During the meeting – Ask Questions*

- » How is my child doing in math, reading, writing, science, social studies, all classes?
- » How is my child doing socially and emotionally?
- » What are the accommodations that are working best for my child in each class?
- » How will I know if my child is not reaching their goal so that we can adjust the IEP before it is too late?
- » If there is something you do not understand, ask them to explain.
- » Ask all the team members for their email address and share your contact information.

## *After the Meeting*

- » Contact your child's teachers periodically just to check-in.
- » Talk about accommodations that are working best for your child in class.
- » Explain how important it is that the two of you stay in contact to monitor your child's progress so that adjustments can be made early if needed.
- » Send teachers and administrators thank you notes when things are going well.
- » Let the school and the IEP team members know if your contact information changes.



