

Effective IEP Meeting Structures

A Guide to Planning, Facilitating, and Following Up on Successful IEP Meetings

Purpose

IEP meetings are critical opportunities for collaboration between educators, families, and students. When meetings are well-structured, all team members leave with a shared understanding of the plan and a commitment to implementation. This guide outlines three common IEP meeting types, provides sample agendas, and includes strategies, scripts, and checklists to help you plan and conduct meetings that are productive, compliant, and student-centered.

Core IEP Meeting Types

| Meeting Type | Sample Agenda | Common Pitfalls & How to Avoid Them |
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| Initial Eligibility & 3-Year Reevaluation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team introductions and role clarification • Parent/student update on current progress and concerns • Review of evaluation results and recommendations • Eligibility determination using state/district criteria • If eligible, develop IEP: goals, accommodations, services, placement • Confirm timelines and next steps | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing evaluations without explaining terms — use plain language and check for understanding • Rushing eligibility determination — ensure all team members provide input • Starting IEP development without confirming eligibility — finalize eligibility first |
| Annual Review | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team introductions and review of meeting purpose • Parent/student update on progress and concerns • Review of progress data toward each goal • Update PLAAFP • Revise or develop new annual goals • Review accommodations, modifications, and services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spending too much time on minor updates; prioritize goal review • Not updating PLAAFP before writing goals; revise PLAAFP first • Ending without summary; review decisions before adjourning |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm placement and LRE considerations • Summarize decisions and next steps | |
| Progress Review or Amendment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarify reason for meeting and desired outcome • Share relevant progress data or concerns • Discuss potential changes to goals, services, or supports • Confirm changes and document in IEP amendment • Review implementation and follow-up plan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treating amendments as informal; always document changes • Not involving all relevant providers; invite needed team members • Making changes without data; base decisions on current evidence |

Role-by-Role Participation Guidance

| Role | Responsibilities/Key Actions |
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| Meeting Facilitator/Case Manager | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set agenda and share in advance • Guide discussion, ensure all voices heard • Keep meeting on time and topic |
| General Education Teacher | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share classroom performance insights • Discuss effective accommodations • Collaborate on goal development |
| Special Education Teacher | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide progress data on goals • Recommend goals, accommodations, services • Collaborate on PLAAFP updates |
| Related Service Providers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present data on service-specific goals • Recommend adjustments to delivery |
| Parents/Guardians | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share home observations and priorities • Ask clarifying questions |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share strengths, challenges, and goals • Participate in decisions on accommodations |

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| Student | |
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Pre-Meeting and Post-Meeting Checklists

| Pre-Meeting Preparation | Post-Meeting Follow-Up |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm meeting details with all participants • Send agenda and documents in advance • Review current IEP, evaluations, data • Prepare visual aids or handouts • Identify desired outcomes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send finalized IEP/amendment to parents • Update service schedules • Document meeting notes in student file • Follow up on agreed action items • Check in with family to address questions |

Sample Collaborative Language

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| • Can we pause to make sure we all have the same understanding of this recommendation? |
| • Let's review the data together so we can decide on the best next step. |
| • I hear your concern. Here's one way we could address it within the current plan. |

Action Starter: Try Tomorrow

- Review your next scheduled IEP meeting and prepare a tailored agenda based on the meeting type
- Share the agenda and relevant data at least three days in advance
- Use one new collaborative phrase during the meeting to promote problem-solving