

Preparing for and Participating in IEP Meetings

A Classroom Guide for Collaboration, Communication, and Student Voice

Purpose & Overview

This guide supports teachers in preparing for and participating effectively in Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings. Strong preparation ensures that meetings are collaborative, student-centered, and focused on meaningful educational progress rather than procedural requirements alone.

The purpose of this guide is to help teachers contribute clear data, informed insights, and collaborative communication that support effective decision-making for students with disabilities.

Instructional Outcomes

Effective use of this guide helps teachers:

- Understand their role before, during, and after IEP meetings
 - Gather meaningful academic and behavioral data
 - Communicate student progress clearly and professionally
 - Collaborate effectively with families and team members
 - Support student voice and participation when appropriate
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The Teacher's Role in the IEP Process

Teachers contribute essential information related to:

- Academic performance and classroom progress
- Behavior, engagement, and independence
- Effectiveness of accommodations and supports
- Strengths, needs, and learning patterns
- Recommendations for instruction and services

Clear teacher input helps teams make informed, student-focused decisions.

Preparing Before the Meeting

Effective preparation includes:

- Reviewing the current IEP and progress toward goals
- Collecting recent work samples and data
- Noting strengths, concerns, and growth areas
- Reflecting on accommodations and instructional supports
- Preparing clear examples to share with the team

Preparation ensures meetings remain focused and productive.

Key Information to Share During the Meeting

<i>Area</i>	<i>What Teachers May Share</i>	<i>Why It Matters</i>
Academic Progress	Current performance and growth	Guides goal development
Classroom Behavior	Engagement and regulation	Supports service decisions
Accommodation Use	What is effective or challenging	Ensures appropriate supports
Strengths and Interests	Areas of motivation or success	Promotes student-centered planning
Instructional Needs	Recommended supports or strategies	Aligns services with learning

Sharing clear information supports collaborative decision-making.

Communicating with Families

Effective communication is:

- Clear, respectful, and easy to understand
- Focused on student strengths and progress
- Honest about challenges and needs
- Open to family insight and questions
- Centered on shared goals for the student

Positive communication builds trust and partnership.

Encouraging Student Voice

When appropriate, students can:

- Share their interests and goals
- Describe what helps them learn
- Reflect on challenges or successes
- Participate in goal setting

Student voice strengthens self-advocacy and ownership of learning.

Teacher Reflection Checklist

After the meeting, teachers may consider:

- Were student strengths and needs clearly communicated?
- Did shared data support instructional decisions?
- Were family perspectives acknowledged?
- Are next steps for instruction and support clear?
- Is follow-through aligned with the updated IEP?

Reflection ensures meetings lead to meaningful classroom action.

Connection to Instruction and Student Progress

IEP meetings should directly influence:

- Daily instructional planning
- Accommodation implementation
- Progress monitoring practices
- Collaboration among educators
- Student independence and growth

Meetings are most effective when they result in clear instructional impact.

