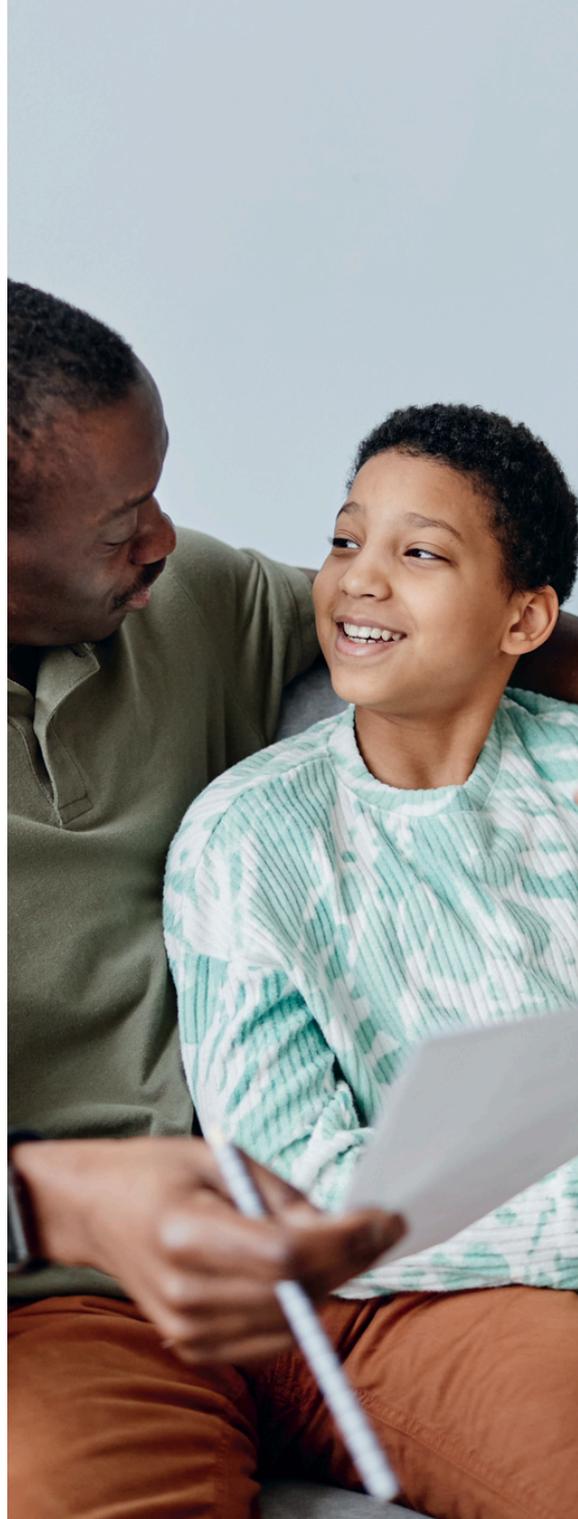


# 10 Tips For a Successful IEP Meeting



- 1. Know your rights as a parent.** It's essential to understand the IEP process, review your legal safeguards, and become familiar with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Many parents also benefit from working with an advocate to help navigate special education law and ensure their child receives the support they need.
- 2. Put all communication in writing.** Keeping a written record helps create a clear documentation trail for future meetings and requests—and can be referenced in IEP notes if needed. After any phone conversations, follow up with an email summarizing what was discussed.
- 3. Request all data relevant to the IEP meeting from the school district.** This should include assessments, progress toward existing goals, proposed goals, discipline reports, grades, and teacher feedback. It is best to request this information at least three days prior to the meeting to facilitate informed participation.
- 4. Organize all of your records.** It is best to have all records on hand and easily accessible during IEP meetings. Create a system of storing and updating all information in a way that makes sense to you and allows you to quickly find what you need.
- 5. Collaborate.** Arrive with the goal to build trusting relationships with your child's school team. Kindness always wins.



- 6. Formulate a list of questions before your IEP.** Preparation is key. Review all the data, documents, progress notes and proposed goals prior to the meeting. Highlight and make notes if you need further clarification.
- 7. Draft your own goals.** Compile a list of SMART goals (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound) based on your review of data and progress notes. Come prepared to discuss them as a vital member of the IEP team.
- 8. Draft a parental concern statement prior to the meeting.** This allows you to articulate your concerns in a proactive rather than reactive manner. Many families send a copy of the parental concern statement prior to the meeting so the IEP team has adequate time to respond and/or address concerns.
- 9. Bring a trusted friend and/or advocate.** The IEP process can be stressful and overwhelming. Bringing someone you trust—especially an advocate with expertise in special education—can help you feel supported and better navigate the process.
- 10. Review the IEP document thoroughly.** Ask for a copy of the IEP before leaving the meeting. If the team needs time to finalize it, you can wait or ask for it to be provided by the end of the business day. Ensure your discussion, concerns, and suggestions are adequately captured in the notes section.

