What to Know Before Your Child's IEP Meeting

Information for Parents of Preschool Children

TN Department of Education

If your child is eligible for special education and related services, an Individualized Education Program (IEP) needs to be written. The IEP team writes the IEP and will meet to talk about your child and the educational program he or she needs. An IEP meeting may seem formal or even intimidating. ***Know that a parent is an equal member of the team. You are a part of each decision made by the IEP team because you know your child best.***

Who is part of the IEP Team?

- The **parent(s)/guardian**
- A **special education teacher** of your child
- A **general education teacher** of your child
- A **school representative**, such as a principal
- A **person who can explain results** from your child's evaluation

What will be talked about?

- Your child's evaluation and eligibility for special education
- Your child's strengths, needs, interests, abilities, and history
- Learning goals for your child
- The type and amount of special education services your child needs
- Where your child will attend school
- Questions you still have about your child's educational program

When and where do we meet?

- You and the school agree on the time and place to meet. The school will send a written invitation to the meeting at least 10 days ahead of time.
- Meetings are usually held at the school, during or after the school day.
- A meeting can be held by phone or video conference.
- If parents are divorced, both parents must be invited. It does not matter which parent has custody.

How you can get ready for the IEP meeting?

- Ask the school for a draft IEP if one was written.
- Write down information you want to share about your child.
- Write down questions you want to ask the school during the meeting.
- Invite someone who knows your child well to attend the meeting.
- Visit preschool and childcare programs that could meet your child's needs.

Other IEP meeting information:

- You must sign the first IEP for your child before services can be provided.
- An IEP is reviewed and updated at least annually.
- You may request an IEP meeting at any time you feel changes need to be made.
- The school must provide an interpreter if you need one.

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