



THE IEP CHECKLIST

HOW TO HAVE A FANTASTIC IEP MEETING

Compiled By the HTH Ed Specialist Mentor Community

BEFORE THE SCHOOL YEAR STARTS

- ❑ The best way to ensure an efficient meeting is to talk with parents and other team member **prior** to the meeting. Regularly **call** the family hear out any concerns they have, share goal ideas and ask for input before any meetings.
- ❑ Meet with teachers and administration to ensure that they understand when and how often they will need to attend IEP meetings. Please resist the urge to allow teachers and admin to walk in and out of your IEP meetings. They are required to be there the whole time. When admin leaves it sets the tone that these meetings are not important and this trickles into school wide attitudes that makes it feel like inclusion is not important. Make your meetings meaningful, efficient, and ***quick*** by doing the below and they will most likely be ok with staying the whole time. :-)
- ❑ Create a google doc that allows teachers and related service providers to share when they are available for IEPs./ Schedule IEPs with the whole team.

- ❑ *If you have meetings that go more than an hour you can excuse teachers... work with admin to make sure this is the exception not the rule. The majority of your annual meetings should take 45 minutes to an hour. You must get parent permission to excuse a team member. The parent must sign that a team member was excused. This should also be documented in the notes.

BEFORE THE MEETING

48 hours-1 week before

- ❑ Call (don't email) parents prior to the meeting to discuss concerns, hopes, fears, and dreams for their child and their child's IEP
- ❑ Draft your IEP- Use this [fantastic resource](#) to see sample language, checklists and reminders
- ❑ Provide a draft copy of the IEP and or any reports to the parent **at least 24 hours- 1 week** prior the meeting, follow up by **calling** them to discuss concerns or major program changes prior to the meeting
- ❑ Meet with the student prior to the IEP meeting to explain the IEP process in age appropriate language, to co-design goals and supports and to discuss any hopes, fears, and dreams they have for their IEP and education.
- ❑ Meet with teachers to discuss accommodations, modifications, and co-designing goals
- ❑ Meet with teachers/admin/coaches about meeting expectations (time they will be expected to be there, what they should bring, work samples, etc)
- ❑ Send a meeting notice and procedural safeguards home to parents
- ❑ Have your mentor or another pair of eyes check your draft for typos
- ❑ IF it is an initial or a tri have school psychologist (and other service providers) send home a draft assessment report and/or meet with the family ahead of time to answer any questions or discuss any concerns... by doing this you can avoid lengthy meetings or part one and part twos- it also helps the family feel less rushed and more cared for.

24 hours before

- ❑ Send reminders (email, fun little notes or stickers.. with candy) to teachers, coaches service providers, and student about meeting time and place
- ❑ Send the parent and student a reminder as well (use their preferred communication method)
- ❑ Print (**before the meeting**) enough copies of the completed draft, number the pages so everyone has a numbered copy, staple the pages together

- ❑ Assign a note-taker for your meetings (your mentor, a coach, administration, another ed specialist)- try to avoid leading and note-taking- I like to provide a template to my notetaker and edit and update as soon as I am finished. Here is a [template](#).
- ❑ Ensure the room you will use is clean, ready, and available (this small step makes a huge difference)
- ❑ Go over an IEP “script” if you are unsure of what to say when- [Sample IEP Scripts](#), and/or hold a practice IEP with your mentor.

DURING THE MEETING

- ❑ Provide a handout with a meeting agenda- go over the agenda after introductions to set the tone for the meeting. Here are [sample agendas](#) for 30 day interims, Tris, and Annuals.
- ❑ Have water, tissues, and even snacks available- *dress professionally* and walk out to meet parents so they don’t have to walk in alone.
- ❑ Make sure all participants know each other by beginning with introductions
- ❑ Utilize [active listening](#) strategies during the IEP to ensure all parties felt heard
- ❑ Provide all documents in the family's home language
- ❑ Provide a translator when applicable. Click on this resource to [find a translator](#).
- ❑ Provide a copy of the draft to everyone at the table (hand them out at the beginning *not the end...* typing a draft during the meeting is completely unprofessional- you can make edits to the draft but should not be filling in an IEP)
- ❑ Provide the procedural safeguards
- ❑ Begin the IEP with celebrations of the student and the student’s achievements- have teachers and coaches share work samples that celebrate the student.
- ❑ Go over all the necessary parts of the IEP. Try to avoid reading it line by line. You should have summarized the main points during your communication with participants *prior to the meeting*.
- ❑ Ask for feedback and ask if participants need clarification as you move through the document.
- ❑ If possible work with the student to have him present his/her goals, accommodations, and strengths- consider working to create a [student led IEP](#)
- ❑ Utilize this [handout as guide](#) to ensure that you covered all necessary parts of the IEP
- ❑ Remain the leader of the IEP meeting, when folks get off track or long winded gently and kindly redirect the meeting back to the agenda... everyone will appreciate you for keeping the meeting on time and moving. Make sure you [get to your point](#) quickly too!
- ❑ Make eye contact and smile at participants, do not hide behind your papers or your computer- speak with confidence and kindness.

AFTER THE MEETING

- ❑ Sign all necessary pieces of the IEP
- ❑ Print the meeting notes and finalized IEP for the family
- ❑ Write down any details you need to follow up on (Example- apply to college board with new assessment results, or talk to coach about implementing a rewards system)- follow up with the family in writing after each item is completed
- ❑ *Meaningfully* thank the family, student, admins, and the teachers for being there!

