

PARENT TIPS: Virtual IEP Meetings

School districts must make every effort possible to meet required timelines by scheduling and holding your child's Individual Education Program (IEP) meeting online or by phone conferences.

These are tips for parents who are attending virtual meetings!

1 BE READY FOR THE CALL

Do not be alarmed if your child's Special Education Teacher calls you. If your child's annual IEP or initial IEP is due during this time, you should be contacted. If you have recently changed your phone number or email address, be sure to let the teacher or the school know ASAP.



2 YOUR IEP MEETING WILL NOT BE IN PERSON

Requirements for IEP development, review, evaluations and eligibility are still in place. However, methods to meet these requirements may look different during this time as IEP meetings will be held online or by phone only. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) already had provisions in place to use alternative means of meeting participation, such as video conferences and conference calls.



3 PREPARE FOR YOUR MEETING

If you are joining the meeting through a video platform, you may want to email the team and ask them to set up the screen, so you can see the IEP pages during the meeting. If desired, you can also request a Parent Member 72 hours before the meeting.



You can elect to have special education records sent to you electronically via email. Special education records include any meeting notices, prior written notices, IEPs, assessments, progress reports, or other materials that you are requesting. Once you have these records, review them before the meeting, so that you can write down questions that you may want to ask during the meeting.

Review last year's IEP, including goals and progress notes, or contact each provider for an update. This will prevent you from being caught off guard by any changes to recommendations they might be suggesting.

4 WHAT WILL YOUR IEP MEETING BE LIKE

The only thing that has changed about your IEP meeting is the location. It is now being held online or by phone instead of in-person. Everything else should remain the same. All the same people are required to attend. All the same paperwork will be provided (and ahead of time) so you can look over it. Be sure to prepare like you would for any other IEP meeting.



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5 HOLDING YOUR IEP MEETING

Make sure that you charge your phone or device to 100%. Make sure that you have good cell or wifi service. Make sure that you have your Parent Concerns ready to address. Make sure that you have received the documents from the school that you are going over. Find a quiet place, dress like you would for an in-person meeting, and be open to this new adventure!

When the meeting is over, ask for a copy of the program recommendation page to confirm your understanding of what has been recommended. Ask when the IEP will be available and how it will be shared with you.

As with any meeting, if there are problems that were not resolved, plan for further discussion.



6 AFTER YOUR IEP MEETING

Within 48 hours after your IEP meeting, sit down and write a letter or email to your IEP Teacher of Record. This is usually the person who scheduled the meeting. Make sure to include your understanding of everything that happened during the meeting, a way for the teacher to contact you and discuss things if you have forgotten or misunderstood anything, and when you are expecting to receive the final IEP document.



7 WHAT IF I NEED HELP

That is where we come in! The Parent Network of WNY is here to help you with all your IEP needs. You can call us 716-332-4170 and we will provide you one-on-one individual assistance that fits your needs, on your time! And all of our services are free of charge! Parent Network of WNY is here for you!



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