

# TIPS FOR PARENTS FROM PARENTS

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## Before the IEP Meeting:

1. Always ask questions when you do not understand the evaluation process, the IEP process, the full range of services available or how they can support your child. Also ask about resource organizations and parent councils which can provide support and information to parents. *\*Note the parent coordinator may not be the person to answer your questions, but they can direct you to the appropriate person. Use the DOE Family Guide to Special Ed Services as a Resource.*
2. If you believe your child only needs accommodations, rather than special education or related services, ask the school about a Section 504 plan instead of an IEP. If you are not sure, ask the school to explain the difference between the two documents.
3. Parental consent for evaluation is required. For the three-year re-evaluation, a request for consent is sent to the parents and parents must respond within 10 days. If the parents do not respond within that time, the IEP team may conduct the evaluation. If the parents indicate that they do not want a re-evaluation (within the 10 days) it will not take place. If parents want a re-evaluation before the required three-year re-evaluation, they must request it in writing. Parents can request that the DOE pay for an independent evaluation if they are not satisfied with the evaluation done by the school. If the DOE denies the request, the parents may request a due process hearing.
4. If you would like a foreign language interpreter at the IEP meeting, make the request at least three business days before the meeting.
5. You may request that a parent member (a trained parent of a student with a disability) accompany you to the IEP meeting. You may also invite anyone else with knowledge of your child, such as a tutor, outside therapist, etc.
6. Ask for a copy of all your child's evaluations, observations and progress reports. Review these documents before your IEP meeting. If you do not have access to a computer, ask where you can get copies of other material/information needed.

## During the IEP Meeting:

7. At the IEP meeting you will be asked to sign the attendance sheet. Your signature does not mean that you agree with the IEP or everything said during the meeting, but only that you were present at the meeting. If you disagree with anything during the IEP meeting, you should request that it be included in the "parent concerns" section of the IEP.
8. Ask about interventions such as Response to Intervention (RTI), Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS), and Academic Intervention Services (AIS) and whether they were provided to your child before he or she was evaluated for special education.
9. Notify the IEP team if your child is a flight risk. Ask about the safety protocols at your school and for a specific plan for your child. Discuss with the school staff what you find works best with your child.
10. Ask whether your child is offered the same academics as his or her non-disabled peers.
11. Students should receive services in the least restrictive environment where their needs can be met, which may include more than one setting. If the IEP team recommends a program other than general education

for some or all of the school day, ask what opportunities there will be for your child to interact with her/his non-disabled peers.

12. If your child is 14 or older, ask the IEP team how your child will participate in planning his/her transition to adult services. If he/she is planning to go to college, ask about the supports that will be available and how to get them. If your child will need additional training and/or is planning to look for work, ask about how to register and get services through Adult Career and Continuing Education Services (ACCESS-VR).
13. Find out what kind of ongoing communication you can expect from the school team working with your child. Find out what the school expects from you in terms of how you can best support your child.
14. Take notes at the meeting to refresh your memory for your review of the final IEP.

#### **After the IEP Meeting:**

15. The DOE cannot implement special education programs and services for the first time without parental consent. After that, parental consent for special education programs and services is not required.
16. Keep a copy of your original IEP so you can determine whether it is fully implemented and compare it to subsequent IEPs.
17. Ask the teacher how many times your child is receiving services each week and whether the services are conducted inside or outside the classroom. If your child is not receiving the services recommended on the IEP, discuss with the school. If the issue is not resolved by the school, email the DOE at [specialeducation@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:specialeducation@schools.nyc.gov). The DOE may assign a DOE provider, contract with an outside agency or perhaps issue a related services authorization so you can find a therapist outside of school.
18. If your child is in an integrated co-teaching (ICT) class, make sure there is a general education and a special education teacher at all times for every subject indicated on the IEP.
19. If your child's IEP recommends a 1:1 paraprofessional, that paraprofessional should be with your child and not working with other students or on other school duties. If necessary, ask that the paraprofessional receive training in working with your child's particular disability.
20. If you have a busing concerns, speak to the busing coordinator at your school and then call the Office of Pupil Transportation (OPT) at 718-392-8855.
21. If your child has a full time 1:1 paraprofessional for busing written on the IEP, and the paraprofessional does not transport your child to school but meets them at the bus at the school, notify the school.
22. If your child is transitioning from elementary school to middle school, you must go through the middle school application process even if you have a zoned school. Ask the Parent Coordinator (PC) about deadlines for school tours
23. You can request mediation or an impartial hearing if you disagree with the DOE about your child's special education-program, services, evaluations, classification, or eligibility for special education.