

IEP Meeting Prep Guide

Walk in prepared. Walk out with a plan you understand and agree with.

School meetings can feel intimidating — a table full of professionals, forms, and acronyms. Remember this: **you are an equal member of the IEP team**, and you are the world's leading expert on your child. This guide helps you prepare like it.

Before the meeting

- [] Put your request in writing (email counts). Written requests start legal timelines.
- [] Ask for a draft of the IEP or any evaluation reports **before** the meeting, so you can read them calmly at home.
- [] Re-read the current IEP (if there is one), recent report cards, and teacher emails.
- [] Write down your top 3 concerns and what success would look like for your child this year.
- [] Invite a support person — a friend, relative, or advocate. This is your right.
- [] Need an interpreter? Request one in advance — the school must provide meaningful language access.
- [] Plan for enough time. If the meeting is cut short, you can ask to reconvene rather than rush.

Bring with you

- [] This guide, plus your written list of concerns and goals
- [] The current IEP / 504 Plan and most recent evaluation reports
- [] Work samples that show the struggle (and the strengths)
- [] A notebook — or a phone to record, if you notify the team in advance

Questions worth asking

- [] What do my child's present levels tell us — where are they now, specifically?
- [] How was each goal measured, and how will we know it's being met?
- [] Who delivers each service, how often, and in what setting?
- [] What accommodations will my child get in the regular classroom — and how will every teacher know about them?
- [] How and how often will progress be reported to me?
- [] What happens if this plan isn't working in 8–10 weeks?
- [] Can you explain that acronym in plain language, please?

Your rights — the short version

- You may take the IEP home to review **before signing**. You are not required to sign at the table.
- You may agree to some parts and disagree with others — in writing, on the IEP itself.
- You may request an Independent Educational Evaluation (IEE) if you disagree with the school's evaluation.
- Your concerns must be documented. Ask that your statement be added to the IEP's parent-concerns section.
- In California, schools generally have 15 days to give you an assessment plan after a written request, and 60 days after your consent to complete the evaluation. Timelines have exceptions — confirm with your district or a parent advocate (DREDF in Berkeley offers free trainings: dredf.org).

After the meeting

- [] Send a short thank-you email summarizing what was agreed — this creates a written record.
- [] Calendar a check-in 6–8 weeks out: is the plan actually happening in the classroom?
- [] File everything in one folder (paper or digital). Future-you will be grateful.

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