YOUR MEETING, YOUR VOICE

IEP Meeting Preparation Checklist

A practical, parent-centered workbook to prepare before the meeting, take clearer notes during the conversation, and organize next steps afterward.

BEFORE / DURING / AFTER

Use on screen or print and bring to the meeting.

Start with the meeting details

Child name (optional)

Grade / school year

Meeting date

School / district

Meeting type (IEP / review / other)

School contact / case manager

How to use this packet

- [ ] Before: gather records, list priorities, and write a five-part Parent Input Statement.
- [ ] During: ask for plain-language explanations and record decisions, responsibilities, and unresolved questions.
- [ ] After: confirm what was agreed, track dates, and keep copies of communications.

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01 / BEFORE THE MEETING

Prepare with purpose

Bring the records and questions that help the team understand your child, including what works well and what remains difficult.

Your pre-meeting checklist

- [ ] Confirm the meeting time, location or video link, and purpose.
- [ ] Request relevant evaluations, draft goals, progress reports, and other materials in advance; ask what is available.
- [ ] Gather previous IEPs or 504 plans, work samples, and school communications.
- [ ] Write the three priorities you want the team to address.
- [ ] Prepare questions about how progress is measured and how supports are delivered.
- [ ] Consider whether a support person or note-taker would help.

Top priorities for this meeting

What are the three most important outcomes you want to discuss?

Records to request or review

List specific evaluations, scores, reports, goals, or work samples.

02 / PARENT INPUT STATEMENT

Your perspective belongs here

Use your own observations. Describe what you see, what helps, and what you want the team to understand. These five parts come from the approved source checklist.

Part 1 / Current situation

Describe the learning concern or educational need factually. What is happening at school and what support is currently provided?

My child is currently experiencing...

Part 2 / Observations at home

Share examples of homework, communication, frustration, confidence, or independence. Focus on observable patterns and specific examples.

At home, we notice...

Part 3 / Strengths and perseverance

What motivates your child? What talents, interests, personal strengths, and efforts should the team recognize?

My child does well when... / My child is proud of...

02 / PARENT INPUT STATEMENT

Build your complete statement

Continue the five-part statement. This is a preparation tool; discuss with the school team how parent concerns are documented in the IEP record.

Part 4 / Home supports and emotional safety

Which routines, tools, strategies, or accommodations help at home? What protects your child's confidence and reduces unnecessary stress?

What helps my child participate and feel successful...

Part 5 / Goals for the meeting

State your questions, requested discussions, and desired outcomes. Keep requests connected to your child's individual needs.

At this meeting, I hope we can discuss...

One-sentence summary

The most important thing I want the team to understand is...

03 / DURING THE MEETING

Ask, listen, document

You are part of the team. Ask for plain-language explanations and examples of how proposed goals and supports will work in everyday school activities.

Questions to bring to the table

- [ ] Who is participating today, and what is each person's role?
- [ ] What do the evaluation and progress data mean for my child's daily learning?
- [ ] How will each proposed goal be measured and how often will progress be reported?
- [ ] Which services, instructional supports, or accommodations are proposed, and when will they begin?
- [ ] What should happen if progress is slower than expected?

My own questions

What do you want clarified or demonstrated?

Notes: explanations and important observations

Capture explanations, data discussed, and examples shared.

03 / DURING THE MEETING

Decisions and follow-through

Record what was proposed, what was agreed, what remains open, and who will provide the next update. Separate facts from impressions.

Key decisions and proposals

What decisions or proposed changes were discussed?

Open questions or areas of disagreement

What still needs clarification, supporting data, or another meeting?

Responsibilities and follow-up dates

Who will do what, and by when?

Documentation tip: Ask for copies of relevant documents and verify the applicable consent and signature rules with your school and state parent-support center. Do not rely on a universal signing deadline.

04 / AFTER THE MEETING

Turn notes into next steps

A brief factual follow-up can help everyone confirm the same understanding of decisions, timelines, and responsibilities.

After-meeting checklist

- [ ] Review your notes while the conversation is fresh.
- [ ] Request or organize copies of finalized documents and relevant communications.
- [ ] Send a courteous summary of decisions and remaining questions.
- [ ] Record the dates and people responsible for the next actions.
- [ ] Track future updates and your child's progress against agreed goals.

Follow-up email planning notes

Thank the team; summarize agreements; identify open questions and requested responses.

Next check-in

Follow-up date

Person / team to contact

One action I will take next

REFERENCE / SUPPORT

Keep the conversation clear

Use these reminders when terminology or process feels unfamiliar. This worksheet is educational and does not replace individualized professional advice.

Plain-language reminders

IEP	Individualized Education Program: a written plan for an eligible student under IDEA.
504 plan	A plan used to document disability-related supports for equal access under Section 504.
FAPE	Free Appropriate Public Education: a central legal principle in disability education.
LRE	Least Restrictive Environment: the IDEA requirement for education with nondisabled peers to the maximum extent appropriate.
PLAAFP	Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance: the IEP's description of current performance and needs.

Helpful national resources

Center for Parent Information and Resources	parentcenterhub.org
U.S. Department of Education / IDEA	sites.ed.gov/idea
National Center for Learning Disabilities	ncld.org
Wrightslaw	wrightslaw.com

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Content basis: SpecialEdCEO approved Interactive IEP Meeting Checklist & Advocacy Guide; Helping Parents Advocate - SLD research; and SLD Parent Advocacy Master Agent planning framework. Adapted for accessible plain-language parent use; sources require final legal-content review before public distribution.