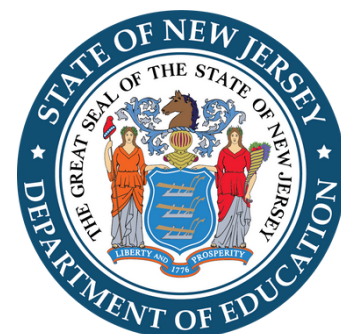




FACILITATED IEP MEETINGS

What Parents and Schools Can Do Before the FIEP Meeting

**New Jersey Department of Education
Office of Special Education**



Facilitated IEP Meetings

What is IEP Facilitation?

IEP facilitation is a process that helps foster effective communication between parents and school districts as they develop a mutually agreeable IEP. This process may be used as a preventive measure in which a trained facilitator promotes whole team participation, acknowledging and addressing differing opinions in a respectful and impartial manner. IEP facilitation enhances partnerships between school districts and parents in order to effectively plan services to meet student needs.



Benefits of IEP Facilitation

- Defines roles and responsibilities of IEP team members
- May build and improve relationships among the IEP team members and between parents and schools
- Models effective communication and listening
- Clarifies points of agreement and disagreement
- Provides opportunities for team members to resolve conflicts if they arise
- Encourages parents and professionals to identify new options to address unresolved issues
- Is typically less stressful than formal proceedings
- Supports follow-through and follow-up
- IEP can be developed at this meeting

Preparing for the Meeting

Families can do the following:

- List your child's strengths and interests;
- Prepare a written list of issues you want to discuss and questions you want to ask;
- Organize your documents.
- Record dates and notes on them.
- You may want to make copies of some of the information to share with the team;
- Be willing to listen carefully and consider possible solutions and options;
- Consider how your child's strengths, as well as his or her deficits, affect his or her education and think about your child's educational progress;
- Make a list of what you think has and has not been working for your child; and
- Attend a workshop or training to learn about your role and responsibilities as a member of the IEP team.

Districts can do the following:

- Provide the current data (IEP or current evaluations);
- Discuss and encourage student participation with the parent when appropriate;
- Be willing to consider other possible program options;
- If available, bring an electronic copy of the IEP, a laptop, and a projector to the meeting so that the IEP can be projected for all participants to see; and
- If available, make a printer accessible so the IEP can be printed and distributed at the end of the meeting.

