



BRIGHTSIDE
LAW GROUP

IEP MEETINGS

What is the purpose of an IEP meeting?
How do you prepare? Should you
consent to the IEP at the meeting?

FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES ONLY
BASED ON CA SPECIAL EDUCATION LAW

www.brightsidelawgroup.com

THE IEP MEETING

The purpose of an IEP (Individualized Educational Program) meeting is to plan for a student's unique educational needs. The plan is created, reviewed, and revised, at least once a year, based on a team that must include a parent.

The school has an obligation to offer an IEP. This offer is referred to as a FAPE (Free Appropriate Public Education) in the LRE (Least Restrictive Environment). Think of a FAPE in the LRE as "what" they are offering to do and "where" they are offering to do those things.

A school cannot predetermine their offer but can create a proposed draft to discuss at the IEP meeting. Parents must have an opportunity to meaningfully participate in the process, which, at the most basic level, means notice of the IEP meeting and an opportunity to ask questions.

A parent must provide consent to the IEP before the school can implement it. If there is a disagreement the school must keep the last agreed upon IEP in place.



NOTICE OF AN IEP MEETING

You should receive notice of an IEP meeting within a reasonable time that you can schedule and prepare.

- **What should a meeting notice include?**

Notice of an IEP meeting should include the proposed date and time, where the meeting will occur, the purpose, and who will attend. It is not necessary for a school to identify specific individuals by name.

- **Does the date and time work for you?**

It is alright if you cannot make the proposed date and time. You can respond with alternative dates and times that work for you. Always tell the school you are still interested in meeting.

- **Sign and return the meeting notice.**

You should email the signed notice to the school. Make your written request to audio record the IEP meeting at the same time - at least 24 hours before the IEP meeting.



PREPARING FOR AN IEP MEETING

Review the current IEP before the meeting and familiarize yourself with its components: present levels, goals, services, and placement.

- **Organize your thoughts.**

Create a list of your questions and concerns about how your child is doing in school. Concerns may include things like academic progress or changes in behavior.

At the IEP meeting you can have your parental concerns included in the IEP document.

- **Prepare to share information!**

Gather any assessments, reports, or other records from outside providers, like a therapist or doctor, that may help the IEP team plan for your child's needs.

- **Connect with your support group.**

If you are bringing other people to the IEP meeting, make sure everyone is on the same page, with the same information.



ATTENDING IEP MEETINGS

Developing an IEP is considered a cooperative process between the school and parents who play an important role, because of their unique perspective.

- **Set the right tone for the IEP meeting.**

Go to the meeting with an open mind and collaborative approach. Avoid confrontation and move on from disagreements. Strive to be the most reasonable person in the room.

- **Provide information and ask questions.**

Make sure you give the IEP team the latest information from outside providers. Ask questions to fill gaps in your understanding about your child or the school's program.

- **Make sure you document everything.**

After giving the required 24 hours written notice, audio record your IEP meeting. Ask to have your concerns noted in the IEP document. Make sure you get copies of any documents discussed at the meeting.



CONSENTING TO THE IEP

There are no specific timelines for you to provide consent to an IEP. However, a school cannot implement an IEP until obtaining consent.

● Do you have to sign the IEP?

Before you provide consent to an IEP, you can take time to consider the offer and request another meeting if you have concerns. Signing in attendance is not the same as consenting to the IEP itself. If you attended the meeting you should sign that you were present.

● Review your IEP carefully before signing.

Make sure everything you agreed to is located somewhere in the IEP and clear to understand.

● What if you disagree with the IEP?

You can provide partial consent to the IEP while withholding consent to parts you disagree with. This way, you ensure the school can implement what you agree with while you continue to discuss your disagreements or get help.





BRIGHTSIDE

LAW GROUP

Still have questions about IEP meetings?
Give us a call, or send us an email, to
schedule a free consultation.

858-939-0380

info@brightsidelawgroup.com

www.brightsidelawgroup.com

FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES ONLY
BASED ON CA SPECIAL EDUCATION LAW