

# Ready for the IEP Meeting

*What you should know to be an involved parent participant*

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## What we will learn about the Individual Education Program (IEP)

- Policies
- IEP Process
- IEP Document
- Participation in the IEP

## Policies of the IEP

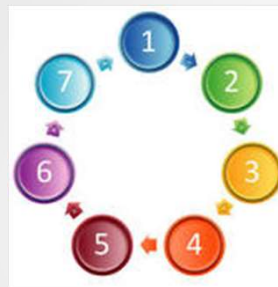


### Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

- IDEA is a Federal Law
  - Guarantees your child is entitled to a **Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)**
  - Your school district must provide **services** to eligible children with disabilities
  - Includes **specially designed instruction** to meet their unique needs (special education)
  - Guarantees you and your child **rights**

### State and Local Policies

- **Alabama Administrative Code (AAC)** provides law for how Alabama will comply with IDEA and provide special education services
- **Local policies** of your school district can be found in your district handbook/student handbook
- All AAC and Local policies must comply with IDEA
- Find information on [www.alsde.edu](http://www.alsde.edu)



## IEP Process

## What's Involved in Developing My Child's IEP

- Developing your child's IEP involves two main things:
  - The IEP **meeting(s)**, where you, your child (when appropriate), and school staff members together decide on an educational program for your son or daughter, and
  - The IEP **document**, which puts the decisions from that meeting in writing

## Where and When Do IEP Meetings Take Place?

- You and the school agree on **where and when** to have the IEP meeting.
- You will be told by the school in writing:
  - The **purpose** of the meeting,
  - The **time and place** of the meeting,
  - **Who** will be at the meeting, and
  - That **you may invite other people** who have knowledge or special expertise about your child.
- You must agree to the IEP in writing before the implementation of the IEP.
- IEP will be **reviewed** at least once a year or more often as needed.

## Who Attends the IEP Meeting

### Required Members

- You the parent
- School Administrator (Local Education Agency Representative)(LEA)
- General Education Teacher
- Special Education Teacher
- Evaluation Personnel
- Your Child (when appropriate)

### Other Members

- Translators or Interpreters
- Transition Personnel
- Others with Knowledge of Your Child or Special Expertise About Your Child

## Can Someone Be Excused From the IEP Meeting

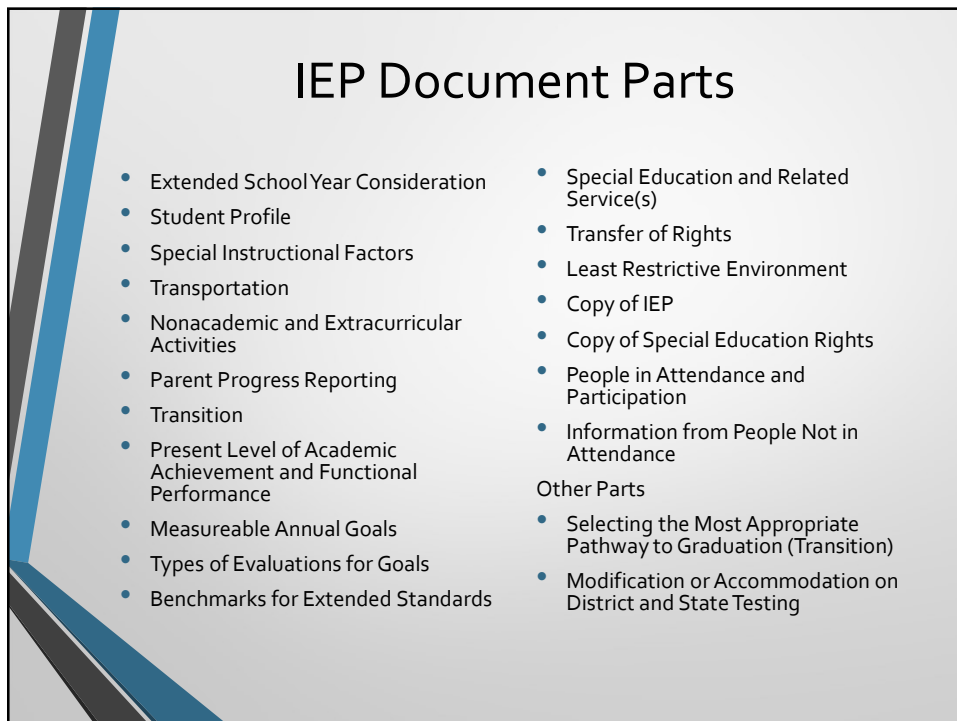
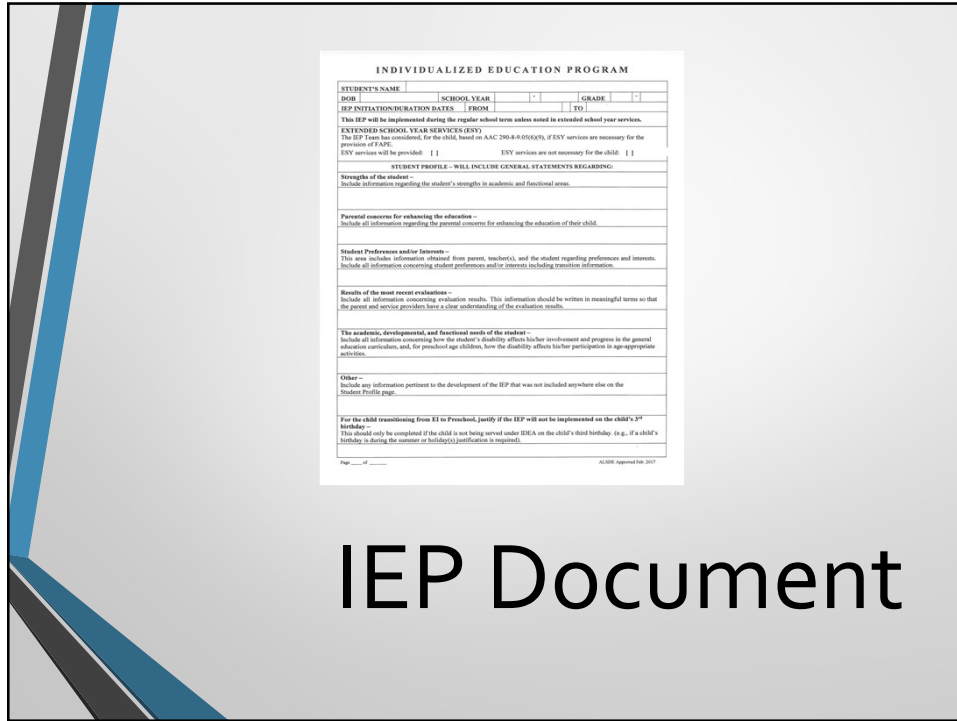
- **Yes**, but written permission is required from the parent and the school
  - **Yes** if their area of curriculum or related service is not going to be discussed or modified at the meeting
  - **Yes** if their area of curriculum or related services is going to be discussed they can provide written input prior to the meeting to members
- Members can also participate by phone if considered necessary.

## What Happens At the IEP Meeting

- The IEP team will develop, review, and/or revise the IEP document for your child.
- The IEP team will talk about:
  - Your child's strengths,
  - Your concerns for enhancing your child's education,
  - Results of the most recent evaluation or testing of your child, and
  - Your child's academic, developmental, and functional needs.

## What Happens At the IEP Meeting

- The team will talk about ***special factors*** or ***special consideration***:
  - Does your child have ***communication needs***?
  - Does your child need ***assistive technology and/or devices***?
  - Does your child have a visual impairment and needs instruction in or the use of ***Braille***?
  - Is your child deaf or hard of hearing and has ***language and other communication needs***?
  - Does your child have language needs related to his or her IEP because of ***limited English proficiency***?



# Participating in the IEP Meeting

## What To Do Before the Meeting

- Sign and return the meeting notice
- Review the information on your child
- Talk with your child about the upcoming IEP meeting
- Think about your child's involvement in general education classes
- Prepare your child to participate in the meeting
- Think and share about all the strengths of your child
- Be proactive and write a letter to your child's teacher about your requests and concerns
- Request a DRAFT IEP

## What to Do During the Meeting

- Stay focused
- Ask questions
- Be thorough

## What Can I Do If I Don't Agree

### If We Don't Agree

- If the team cannot agree after several minutes of discussion add the item to a parking lot and come back to it later during the meeting.
- Avoid getting stuck debating a particular point over and over.
- Be clear in your mind on where you can and cannot compromise.
- Communicate in a clear, calm, and reasonable way.

### If I Get Emotional

- Be respectful even if you don't agree.
- Take a break if you need one.
- Remind yourself of the purpose of the meeting; to develop an appropriate IEP for your child.





## What If We Still Don't Agree

### Refuse Permission to Implement the IEP

- Ask for written notice on the issue under disagreement; which includes:
  - Options the school considered and why they were rejected,
  - Evaluation procedures, tests, records, or reports used as a basis for the schools proposal or refusal,
  - Describe any other facts that are relevant to what the school is proposing or refusing.

### Formal IDEA Conflict Resolution Options

- Request Mediation
- Request Due Process
- Facilitated IEPs



## When the IEP is Completely Written

- You will be asked to sign the IEP
  - Your signature documents that you participated not necessarily that you agreed
- Get a copy of the IEP before leaving or clarify when you will receive the copy

## Final Words

Keep in mind that developing an IEP is a learning process. With time it gets easier. Maintain your sense of humor and try to relax. When parents and schools truly work together, the process works well, and the best results for your child can be realized.

## Resources

### Forms and Documents

- Information to Share About My Child (APEC)
- IEP forms (ALSDE)
- Student Assessment Program Policies and Procedures of Special Populations (ALSDE)
- Alabama Administrative Code (ALSDE)
- Curriculum and Standards Guides (ALSDE)

### Places to Get Information

- [www.alabamaparentcenter.com](http://www.alabamaparentcenter.com)
- [www.alsde.edu](http://www.alsde.edu)



# For Additional Help

Alabama Parent Education Center's  
AL Parent Training and Information Center

[www.alabamaparentcenter.com](http://www.alabamaparentcenter.com)

334-567-2252 or 866-532-7660

PO Box 118 \* Wetumpka, AL 36092



Alabama Parent Education Center



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