

Suggestions for Involving Students in IEP Meetings

It's a great idea to involve most students in their IEP meetings as early as 4th grade, but thoughtful routine practices will make it more meaningful and successful. Students who participate in their IEP meeting will have a better understanding of their specialized education.

Elementary Students (4th or 5th grade)

It's intimidating for most students to be "drilled" by a group of adults at the meeting. A more thoughtful approach is to prepare them to answer ahead of time, or discuss the questions and speak for them (with their permission) at the meeting.

- ❖ Prepare students by discussing the following questions before the meeting.
 1. What do you like about school?
 2. What do you think you are good at doing?
 3. What is hard at school for you? What don't you like?
 4. What works for you in class?
 5. What would you like to work on during the next year?
- ❖ Ask the student for comments and agreement as you work through the IEP, and be complimentary about the value of his/her comments.
- ❖ Redirect if he/she is being pressured by anyone. This is not the time or place to put them on the "hot seat". We want to develop a positive attitude.
- ❖ Think ahead about how to individualize his/her participation for maximum benefit. Tell the IEP team at the start of the meeting how the student will participate.
- ❖ Allow elementary students to leave early or come later. Usually 20 -30 minutes is enough.

Middle School Students

Most Middle School students should attend the entire meeting, but others may leave early. Again this isn't the time to drill them with questions that can be discussed better before the meeting. Ask the same questions as above, along with:

1. What do you think is a barrier to you doing better?
2. Do you ask teachers for the things that help you, or to provide assistance?
3. Have you thought about what you might like to do after HS graduation?

High School Students

High School students are expected to participate in their IEP meeting and discuss their plans for transition to post secondary activities. Transition interviews and assessments are expected practice each year.

- ❖ Use San Juan BOCES Transition Assessment web page for guide.
http://www.sjboces.org/transition_assessment.htm