

# A PEATC

Do You Know....



## Factsheet for Virginia's Parents Having a Successful IEP Meeting

### IEP Meeting Requirements

Now that your student has been found **eligible for special education and related services (i.e. Speech/Language, OT, PT)**, it is time to develop their Individualized Education Program (IEP). The IEP guides your student's education and includes the services and supports they need to be successful in school. **IEP meetings can be stressful, but you can prepare** (See *How to Prepare for Your Student's IEP Meeting Fact Sheet*) so that you are best able to speak to your student's needs. **You are your child's best advocate!**

The **IEP meeting must take place within 30 calendar days** after your student is found eligible for special education services. The school must provide you with **advanced notice** of an IEP meeting and work with you to schedule it at a **mutually agreeable time**. **If you do not speak English**, the school must provide a qualified interpreter/translator.

**The IEP team** includes you, your student (when appropriate), at least one general education teacher (if your student is or may be participating in general classes), at least one special education or related service provider that is or will be serving your student, a school representative who is qualified to provide or supervise special education and knows about the general curriculum and available resources, a person who can interpret test results, and others that you or the school invite who have knowledge or expertise about your student. **You get to decide who you want to bring to the meeting, and you can ask who will be there from the school.** School staff can serve in more than one role.

### Tips for a Successful Meeting

- **Bring someone with you** (family member, friend, advocate, therapist) to the meeting. You'll be able to focus on the meeting and they can take notes.
- **Go in with a positive attitude**, believe everyone wants is there to help your student succeed. **Respect the team and expect them to respect you.**
- Dress in **clothing that makes you feel comfortable and confident.**
- **Sit next to someone from the school team.** It creates a friendlier environment and will make you feel less intimidated.

### Individualized Education Program (IEP) and IEP Team Definitions

**"Individualized education program" or "IEP"** means a written statement for a child with a disability that is developed, reviewed, and revised in a team meeting in accordance with this chapter.

The IEP specifies the individual educational needs of the child and what special education and related services are necessary to meet the child's educational needs. (34 CFR 300 .22)

**"Individualized education program team"** means a group of individuals described in 8VAC20-81-110 that is responsible for developing, reviewing, or revising an IEP for a child with a disability. (34 CFR 300 .23)

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# Factsheet for Virginia's Parents

- **Share your dreams for your student** --what you would like his/her life to be like now and in the future, as an adult. This will help the team develop goals to achieve your and your student's vision.
- Be sure your **student's strengths** (at home and at school), not just his/her challenges are discussed. This includes his **learning styles**.
- **Ask plenty of questions**, especially if you don't understand something or need something clarified. **Invite the team to ask you questions** as well.
- **Provide feedback on goals and objectives** and be clear about any changes you want and why.
- Ask **how your student's progress will be reported** to you and **how often**.
- Keep the meeting **focused on your student's IEP** and the team's role in making sure the plan will enable him to meet their goals.
- Remember **an IEP is a legal document** and a copy is to be provided to the parent no later than 10 calendar days of being signed. It needs to include **all of the services and supports your student will receive, including how often and for how long** (e.g., three, 45 minute per week speech therapy sessions). When appropriate, the IEP must also include needed assistive technology, behavior plans, transition goals, and extended year services. It must include **timelines** for accomplishing goals, describe how each goal will be **monitored/evaluated**, and state **who will be working with your student**.
- Be sure to **read the IEP**. **You do not have to sign it** at the meeting and can ask to take it home for review. If you wish, you can sign the IEP but note in writing areas that you don't agree on. You can schedule another meeting to discuss these areas and/or pursue dispute resolution options.

## After the IEP Meeting

- Keep a copy of the IEP handy so you can always find it.
- Send thank you notes to team members.
- If appropriate, discuss the IEP meeting and the plan with your student.
- Use the IEP to track your student's progress. Reach out to the team if you think progress is inadequate or if you have questions.

## Resources on IEP Meetings and Requirements

Virginia Department of Education  
[www.doe.virginia.gov/special\\_ed/iep\\_instruct\\_svcs/iep/index.shtml](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/special_ed/iep_instruct_svcs/iep/index.shtml)

### Parents Guide to Special Education

[www.doe.virginia.gov/special\\_ed/parents/parents\\_guide.pdf](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/special_ed/parents/parents_guide.pdf)

### U.S. Department of Education *A Guide to the IEP*

[www2.ed.gov/parents/needs/spec\\_ed/iepguide](http://www2.ed.gov/parents/needs/spec_ed/iepguide)

### Understood.Com

#### *Navigating IEP Meetings*

[www.understood.org/en/school-learning/special-services/ieps/navigating-iep-meetings](http://www.understood.org/en/school-learning/special-services/ieps/navigating-iep-meetings)



PEATC's mission focuses on building positive futures for Virginia's children by working collaboratively with families, schools and communities to improve opportunities for excellence in education and success in school and community life.

For more information about us, please contact:

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