

# Advocacy Tips for an Effective IEP Team Meeting

By Miho Murai, Esq.

<b>Before an IEP Meeting...</b>	<b>At the IEP Meeting...</b>	<b>After the IEP Meeting...</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Request a copy of your child's school records in writing (including grades, attendance, prior IEPs, assessments, and any disciplinary records)</li> <li>• Review the school records and organize them chronologically in a binder</li> <li>• Request a copy of the assessments and testing protocols at least five days in advance in writing and review them prior to the IEP meeting. If possible, speak to the assessors</li> <li>• Review previous IEPs and identify areas of need where there is a lack of progress</li> <li>• Request a copy of the service provider logs to verify frequency of services</li> <li>• Talk to your child regarding their current services, IEP goals, placement, teacher(s)/service provider(s), and any other concerns that your child may have</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be proactive and ask questions</li> <li>• Make sure that all the necessary people are at the IEP meeting (parent/educational rights holder, regular education teacher, special education teacher, educational agency representative, assessors, and student, if appropriate)</li> <li>• Make sure that the educational agency representative who knows the program options and can encumber funds is present for the entire meeting</li> <li>• Advocate for appropriate annual IEP SMART goals - make sure that they are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Results oriented/Relevant, and Time limited and that the goals can be objectively measured and are appropriate for your child</li> <li>• Identify and advocate for appropriate placement and related services, including extended school year and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review the IEP document carefully and make sure that it accurately reflects what was discussed at the meeting</li> <li>• Do not sign and consent to the IEP if you do not agree with the services, placement, assessments, and/or eligibility</li> <li>• If you agree with parts of the offer of FAPE, you can consent to those parts and disagree with the other parts</li> <li>• Make sure to include your disagreements and concerns in an addendum if they are not accurately reflected in the IEP summary notes</li> <li>• Monitor the implementation of the services outlined in the IEP document</li> </ul>

- Review the common core state standards  
(<https://www.cde.ca.gov/re/cc/>) and bring a copy with you to the meeting
- Advise the IEP team that you will be bringing an attorney/ advocate with you, if applicable
- Advise the IEP team in writing that you will be electronically recording the IEP meeting at least 24 hours before the IEP meeting
- Talk to your child's teacher(s), school counselor, service providers, and school administrator, if appropriate
- Research the disability and related services
- Observe your child in the classroom (if appropriate)
- Request in writing for an interpreter, if applicable
- Make sure that your child's teacher has the proper credentials to teach your child
- Never waive your presence at the IEP meeting

- transportation - be sure that you are able to support your requests with specific information about your child
- Request for appropriate accommodations/modifications
  - Advocate for a behavior support plan, if appropriate
  - Make sure all oral promises are in writing in the IEP document.
  - Make sure the pages of the IEP document are accurately numbered, i.e. 1 of 12, 2 of 12, 3 of 12.
  - Make sure that the IEP team considers your child's unique needs
  - Do not sign the IEP document on the spot. Advise the IEP team that you would like to review it at home.
  - Observe the proposed placement before consenting to the IEP
  - Request for a copy of the IEP document in your primary language, if applicable

- Request quarterly progress reports and work samples
- Monitor your child's progress in their IEP goals - if your child is not making adequate progress in their IEP goals and there has been sufficient time to implement the services, request for another IEP meeting in writing
- File a compliance complaint, if necessary, if the school is not providing the agreed upon services
- File a due process hearing request, if necessary, if you do not agree with the district's offer of FAPE.
- If the IEP team determines that your child is not eligible for special education, request for an independent educational evaluation ("IEE") and consider requesting a Section 504 plan