

# The IEP Parent Guide

*A simple tool to prep before, stay grounded during, and follow up after your child's IEP meeting.*

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You already know the feeling: a room full of professionals, one of you, and a stack of paper you didn't have time to fully read. This template won't make the experience fun, but it will make sure you walk in with a plan and walk out with something in writing. Print it, fill it in by hand, or copy it into your notes app before your next meeting.

## Part 1: Before the Meeting

Fill this out a few days ahead, while you still have time to think clearly.

**What has changed for my child since the last meeting (academically, socially, emotionally)?**

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**What questions do I want answered today? (Write them as actual questions, not just topics.)**

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**What outcome would make this meeting a success for me?**

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### Before you walk in

Confirm in writing that you're attending, and if you're bringing a support person or advocate, say so ahead of time. It's your right, and it removes any surprise from the room.

## Part 2: During the Meeting

Keep this page open. Jot things down as they happen, not after.

**What was said vs. what's actually being put in writing?**

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**Anything that felt like a red flag (vague answers, rushed pace, pressure to sign, no data offered)?**

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**New school personnel names, titles, or roles I need to remember:**

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### **A phrase to keep handy**

"What data supports this recommendation, and has my child been evaluated recently?" You can ask this as many times as you need to.

## Part 3: After the Meeting

Do this the same day, while it's fresh. This is the step most parents skip, and it's the one that protects you most.

**Follow-up email sent? What did it say, and to whom?**

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**Action items and who owns them**

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**Deadlines to track (evaluations, follow-up meetings, written responses owed to me)**

### A rule worth keeping

If it was said in the room but not written down, it didn't happen. Send a short recap email the same day: "Confirming what we discussed today: [restate it]. Please let me know if anything here is inaccurate."

## Before You Go

This template helps you stay organized inside a single meeting. My ebook, [Afraid to Ask, Ashamed to Fight](#), goes further: understanding your child's actual rights under federal law, requesting an evaluation the district has to respond to, writing letters that get read instead of dismissed, and building the kind of case that holds up over an entire school year, not just one meeting.

Nancy Perkins, LMSW, is a licensed social worker and special education advocate, and the mother of a now-adult son with autism. She wrote this guide for parents who are afraid to ask and ashamed to fight, so they don't have to stay either.

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