

IEP MEETING QUESTION BANK FOR PARENTS

A comprehensive guide to asking the right questions to advocate for your child

How to Use This Question Bank

Before the Meeting:

- Review your child's current IEP and progress reports
- Select relevant questions based on your concerns and priorities
- Write down your top 5-10 questions to ensure they get addressed
- Don't feel obligated to ask every question - choose what's most important

During the Meeting:

- Take notes on responses
 - Ask for clarification if you don't understand something
 - Request specific examples when needed
 - Ask for written documentation of any promises or commitments
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1. Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP)

Understanding Current Performance

- What specific data was used to determine my child's current performance levels?
- How do these levels compare to grade-level expectations?
- What assessments were conducted, and when?
- Can you show me examples of my child's work that demonstrate these levels?
- How does my child's performance vary across different settings (classroom, small group, one-on-one)?

Data Collection

- How often is data collected on my child's progress?
- Who is responsible for collecting this data?
- Can I see the raw data, not just summaries?
- What methods are used to track progress?
- How do you account for good days versus bad days in the data?

Functional Skills Assessment

- How was my child's functional performance assessed?
 - What adaptive behaviors were evaluated?
 - How do my child's functional skills impact their ability to access the curriculum?
 - What social/emotional factors affect my child's learning?
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2. Goals and Objectives

Goal Development

- How were these goals developed, and what data supports them?
- Are these goals based on my child's individual needs or grade-level standards?
- How do these goals address my child's most significant areas of need?
- Can you explain how each goal will help my child access the general curriculum?
- Why were certain areas not addressed in the goals?

Goal Specificity

- How will we know when this goal has been met?
- What does "mastery" look like for each goal?
- Can you give me specific examples of what my child will be able to do?
- How realistic are these goals given my child's current performance?
- What is the timeline for achieving each goal?

Measurability

- How will progress toward this goal be measured?
- How often will progress be monitored?
- What criteria will be used to determine success?
- Who will be responsible for taking data on this goal?
- What happens if my child isn't making progress toward a goal?

Parent Input on Goals

- How can I support these goals at home?
 - Are there goals I've suggested that aren't included? Why?
 - Can we add a goal for [specific area of concern]?
 - How do these goals prepare my child for post-secondary life?
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3. Special Education and Related Services

Service Provision

- What specific special education services will my child receive?
- How many minutes per week of each service?
- Will services be provided individually, in small groups, or both?
- Where will services be provided (general classroom, resource room, etc.)?
- Who will provide each service, and what are their qualifications?

Service Justification

- Why does my child need this amount of service time?
- What data supports the recommendation for these services?
- How do these services address my child's specific needs?
- Why isn't my child receiving [specific service]?
- How will you know if my child needs more or fewer services?

Service Delivery

- What will a typical session look like?
- How will services be coordinated between different providers?
- What happens if a service provider is absent?
- How will services be integrated with general education instruction?
- Can I observe my child receiving services?

Related Services

- Does my child need occupational therapy, physical therapy, or speech therapy?
 - What assessments determined the need (or lack of need) for related services?
 - How will related services support my child's educational goals?
 - Can related services be increased if needed during the school year?
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4. Accommodations and Modifications

Classroom Accommodations

- What specific accommodations will be provided in the general education classroom?
- How will teachers know what accommodations my child needs?
- Who is responsible for ensuring accommodations are implemented?
- How will you monitor whether accommodations are being used effectively?
- Can accommodations be adjusted if they're not working?

Assessment Accommodations

- What accommodations will my child receive during state testing?
- How do these accommodations match what my child uses daily?
- Who determines which accommodations are appropriate for testing?
- Will these accommodations affect how my child's scores are reported?
- Can my child practice with these accommodations before testing?

Technology and Assistive Technology

- Would assistive technology help my child access the curriculum?
- Has an assistive technology evaluation been conducted?
- What training will my child and teachers receive on any technology?
- Who is responsible for maintaining and updating technology?
- Can assistive technology be used at home?

Modifications vs. Accommodations

- Are these modifications or accommodations, and what's the difference?
 - How will modifications affect my child's ability to earn a regular diploma?
 - What is the long-term impact of these modifications?
 - Can we try accommodations before moving to modifications?
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5. Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

Placement Decisions

- Why is this the most appropriate placement for my child?
- What other placements were considered?
- How much time will my child spend in general education classes?
- What supports are needed for my child to be successful in general education?
- How often will placement be reviewed?

Inclusion Support

- What training have general education teachers received to support my child?
- How will my child be included in non-academic activities?
- What happens if problems arise in the general education setting?
- How will you ensure my child is socially included with typical peers?
- What supplementary aids and services are provided in general education?

Justification for Restrictive Settings

- Why can't my child's needs be met in a less restrictive environment?
 - What specific attempts have been made to serve my child in general education?
 - What additional supports could be tried to make inclusion successful?
 - How often will we reconsider less restrictive options?
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6. Transition Planning (Age 14+)

Post-Secondary Goals

- How were these post-secondary goals developed?
- Do these goals reflect my child's interests and preferences?
- How realistic are these goals based on my child's current performance?
- What assessments were used to determine these goals?
- How often will these goals be reviewed and updated?

Transition Services

- What specific transition services will be provided?
- How do these services connect to the post-secondary goals?
- Who will provide transition services?
- How will progress on transition goals be measured?
- What community agencies are involved in transition planning?

Self-Advocacy and Independence

- How is my child being taught self-advocacy skills?
- What independence skills are being addressed?
- How is my child involved in their own IEP planning?
- What decision-making skills are being taught?
- How is my child learning about their disability and needs?

Work and Life Skills

- What vocational training or job experience opportunities are available?
 - How are daily living skills being addressed?
 - What community-based instruction is provided?
 - How is my child being prepared for adult responsibilities?
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7. Behavioral Supports

Behavior Assessment

- Has a functional behavior assessment (FBA) been conducted?
- What behaviors are of concern, and how often do they occur?
- What triggers have been identified for problematic behaviors?
- What functions do these behaviors serve for my child?
- How do behaviors impact my child's learning and that of others?

Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)

- What strategies will be used to address behavioral concerns?
- How will positive behaviors be reinforced?
- What will staff do when problematic behaviors occur?
- How will the effectiveness of the behavior plan be monitored?
- How often will the behavior plan be reviewed and updated?

Crisis Management

- What procedures are in place if my child has a behavioral crisis?
 - Who is trained to handle crisis situations?
 - How will I be notified if a crisis occurs?
 - What de-escalation techniques will be used?
 - Are there any restrictions on interventions that can be used?
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8. Progress Monitoring and Communication

Progress Reports

- How often will I receive progress reports?
- What specific information will be included in progress reports?
- How detailed will the progress information be?
- Who is responsible for writing progress reports?
- What should I do if I have concerns about the progress reported?

Communication Between Home and School

- What is the best way to communicate with my child's teachers?
- How often should we expect to communicate?
- Who should I contact if I have concerns?
- How will important information be shared between home and school?
- Can we set up regular check-ins beyond formal progress reports?

Data Sharing

- Can I see the actual data collected on my child's goals?
 - How is data being used to make instructional decisions?
 - What happens if my child isn't making expected progress?
 - How quickly will instruction be adjusted if data shows lack of progress?
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9. Service Coordination and Implementation

Team Coordination

- How will different service providers coordinate their work?
- Who is the case manager or point person for my child's IEP?
- How often does the IEP team meet informally to discuss my child?
- What happens if team members disagree about services or approaches?
- How are substitute teachers informed about my child's needs?

Implementation Monitoring

- How will you ensure the IEP is being implemented as written?
- Who monitors compliance with the IEP requirements?
- What happens if services aren't provided as specified?
- How can I verify that my child is receiving the services listed in the IEP?
- What should I do if I think the IEP isn't being followed?

Staff Training and Qualifications

- What training have staff received to work with children like mine?
 - Are all service providers appropriately licensed and qualified?
 - What ongoing professional development is provided to staff?
 - How are new staff members oriented to my child's needs?
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10. Advocacy and Rights

Parent Rights

- What are my rights as a parent in the IEP process?
- How can I request changes to the IEP during the school year?
- What should I do if I disagree with the IEP team's decisions?
- How can I request an independent evaluation?
- What dispute resolution options are available?

Second Opinions and Evaluations

- Can I request additional evaluations or assessments?
- How often can my child be reevaluated?
- Can I bring in reports from outside professionals?
- What happens if outside evaluations contradict school evaluations?
- Who pays for independent evaluations?

Documentation and Records

- Can I get copies of all documents discussed in this meeting?
 - How can I access my child's educational records?
 - What should be documented in my child's file?
 - How long are records kept?
 - Can I request amendments to my child's records?
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11. Questions for Specific Situations

If Your Child is Struggling

- Why do you think my child is struggling despite having an IEP?
- What changes can be made immediately to help my child?
- Should we consider more intensive services or a different placement?
- Are there additional evaluations that might help us understand my child's needs better?
- What interventions have been tried, and what were the results?

If Your Child is Succeeding

- Is my child ready for less restrictive services or settings?
- Can we reduce service minutes or fade some supports?
- How can we maintain this progress?
- Are there opportunities for my child to challenge themselves more?
- Should goals be made more challenging?

For Students with Multiple Disabilities

- How are my child's various needs being coordinated?
- Are there any conflicts between different therapeutic approaches?
- How do you prioritize when there are competing needs?
- What is the primary disability affecting my child's education?

For Students with Autism

- What autism-specific strategies are being used?
- How are sensory needs being addressed?
- What social skills instruction is provided?
- How are communication needs being met?
- Are there peer interaction opportunities?

For Students with Learning Disabilities

- What specific learning strategies are being taught?
 - How is my child learning to advocate for their needs?
 - Are accommodations helping or creating dependence?
 - What remediation versus compensation approaches are being used?
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12. Follow-Up Questions

After Receiving Answers

- Can you give me a specific example of that?
- How will we know if this is working?
- What's the timeline for implementing this?
- Who is responsible for making sure this happens?
- What should I do if I don't see this happening?
- Can you put that in writing?
- What data will show us whether this is successful?

If You Don't Understand

- Can you explain that in simpler terms?
- What does that look like in practice?
- Can you show me an example?
- How does this help my child specifically?
- What's the research behind this approach?

If You Disagree

- What other options are available?
 - What would need to change for you to consider my suggestion?
 - Can we try this for a specified period and then review?
 - What data would convince you to change this decision?
 - Who else can we consult about this?
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Tips for Effective Questioning

Do:

- Ask for specific examples and data
- Request clarification when you don't understand
- Ask how decisions were made
- Inquire about alternatives that were considered
- Ask for timelines and responsible parties
- Request written documentation of important points

Don't:

- Feel pressured to agree to everything immediately
- Be afraid to ask "Why?" or "How do you know?"
- Accept vague answers without follow-up
- Worry about asking "too many" questions
- Assume everyone understands your child the way you do

Remember:

- You are an equal member of the IEP team
- Your input and questions are valuable and necessary
- It's okay to ask for time to think about recommendations
- You can request another meeting if needed
- The goal is to create the best possible program for your child

Keep this question bank handy during IEP meetings and don't hesitate to refer to it. Your advocacy makes a difference in your child's education.