

PFA Tips

Understanding the Different Types of IEP Meetings

When a parent receives an invitation to an IEP (Individualized Education Program) meeting, most of the time it is assumed that the purpose is an annual review to discuss progress on IEP goals. However, there are several other types of IEP meetings. Simply knowing what options exist will help parents be prepared and empower them to best advocate for their child.

This guide will give you a brief description of each one, but the exact names (Screening, etc.) of the meetings may vary slightly from district to district. This is not an exhaustive list; however, these are the most typical types of IEP meetings.

Screening Meeting

The IEP team meets to evaluate data, including report cards, attendance, and behavior concerns. The team discusses areas of suspected need and decides which evaluations, if any, will be done to determine if the student has a disability that impacts their education. Parent consent would be obtained at this time to proceed with conducting assessments.

Eligibility

Assessment results and any other data (classroom observation, grades, teacher reports, attendance information, behavior reports, parent input, etc.) are discussed to determine if a child qualifies (or not) as a student with an educational disability.

Initial IEP

The draft IEP document is presented. This meeting can be lengthy as each IEP section is proposed and possibly agreed upon line by line. This document provides information on goals/objectives, accommodations, etc. The recommended Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) where the child will receive services is also reviewed.

Re-evaluation Planning

This should occur every three years at a minimum in preparation for the re-evaluation meeting to determine if a child continues to qualify as a student with an

educational disability and receive special education services.

Annual Review

Conducted yearly, before the anniversary date of the prior annual review or the initial IEP, to discuss new IEP goals and objectives and other changes to the IEP such as testing accommodations, etc., based on the new present levels of performance.

Periodic Review

A parent (or school staff) can request a periodic review anytime throughout the school year so they don't have to wait for their annual review to raise concerns, ask questions, or seek clarification. Changes to the IEP are not typically made during these reviews.

Periodic Review /Amendment

Sometimes a change needs to be made to the IEP after an annual review has already taken place. This could be due to a clerical error or to a service provider's report to change service hours. Only a specific section of the IEP is adjusted. These meetings are sometimes held by phone to save the parent the time and trouble of coming in for a meeting where very little is being changed in the IEP.

30-day Review

Held 30 days into a new grade, at a new school, or new placement for the IEP team to become familiar with the parent and the child. Typically, no changes are made to the IEP document itself. This meeting serves as a check-in to make sure everyone is on the same page for the child's educational programming.



Manifestation

A manifestation determination meeting must be held within 10 school days if a child with a disability: has been suspended for 10 days in a row; has been suspended for more than 10 total days in the same school year for similar behaviors; or if the school district is considering expulsion. The IEP team will try to determine if the behavior is caused by the student's disability, and whether the behavior is a result of the IEP not being followed.

Placement

These meetings can be held at the local school or local board of education/central office, especially if placement outside the home school is being discussed. Team members that are not based at the child's current school often attend placement meetings.

Extended School Year (ESY)

ESY is typically discussed during the annual review, depending on when the annual review occurs. Determining whether the child is eligible for ESY services is based on a specific list of questions, the first being whether the child has "critical life skills" as part of their IEP goals. That discussion is student specific.

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Transition

Transition meetings can be triggered because the child turns a certain age, is in high school or is approaching the end of high school. There are specific guidelines for transition goals, and they should be specific to the child. Sometimes transition issues are addressed during the annual review.

Exit

When a child is perceived to no longer require services, or when a parent requests special education services to end for their child, the child is formally exited from special education during a meeting. Typically, this is done over the course of two meetings. The first meeting is to discuss data, or review any updated reports, or to determine if any additional data is needed. During the next meeting, the team completes the paperwork stating the reason(s) the child will no longer be considered eligible for special education.

“Accepting” an IEP

This meeting is held as a formality to transfer an out of state or out of jurisdiction IEP into the format of the IEP system used by the student’s new local school system.

Additional Resources

PFA Tips: Communicating with Your Child’s Teacher

<https://pathfindersforautism.org/articles/education/parent-tips-communicating-with-your-childs-teacher/>

Understanding FBAs and BIPs

<https://pathfindersforautism.org/articles/education/fbas-bips/>

PFA Education Articles

<https://pathfindersforautism.org/articles/education/>

Autism By Age (includes age-specific education resources)

<https://pathfindersforautism.org/autism-by-age/>

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