



Remote Meetings: Tips for Parents

In our experiences, most individualized education program (IEP) meetings are held in person. However, parents and the school district can agree to use alternative methods for parents to participate in an IEP meeting, such as having a conference call or a virtual meeting. During the COVID-19 pandemic, many school districts started utilizing virtual platforms to hold IEP meetings rather than meet in person to address health and safety concerns. Given the increase in use of virtual IEP meetings, here are a few meeting tips to use when attending IEP meetings virtually.

There are a few things to know about remote IEP meetings

1. Parents of minor students are required members of the IEP team, and school districts should work with you to schedule IEP meetings at a mutually agreeable time and place. If you would like to virtually participate in an IEP meeting, then ask the school district about this option. The school district needs to make sure that you can participate meaningfully.
2. Virtual meetings take place on a virtual platform (Skype, Zoom, Teams, etc.). The platform used should be secure and it is ok for you to ask about this. There is typically an option to dial into the meeting by phone if your internet connection is not available or you have trouble logging into the virtual meeting. Ask your IEP team for the dial-in option before the meeting, just in case you are unable to login to the virtual meeting.
3. Parents, guardians, and students 13 and older should still receive a notice of meeting in person, by mail, or by email before the meeting. Make sure you respond to that notice about your attendance at the meeting.

Tips for making the most out of remote IEP meetings

1. Prepare to meet in a quiet location with limited distractions. Make sure to ask the school district about the platform the virtual meeting will be hosted on, and if the link is secure. In the event of an emergency, ask the district for a telephone number to dial just in case you lose connection.
2. As you prepare for the virtual IEP meeting, DRSC has a fact sheet on "[Advocacy Tips for IEP Meetings](#)" that we suggest you review before the meeting.

3. Ask the school to send you copies of any documents they plan to go over at the meeting within a reasonable time. Have these documents in front of you ready to go when the meeting begins. Here are some examples of what you might ask for:
 - Draft IEP (if the district does this)
 - Evaluation reports
 - Progress monitoring data
 - Behavioral data
4. Before the meeting, review all documents, make a list of your concerns, questions, and anything else you want to talk about with the team. Examples of questions are:
 - What goals are new?
 - How can this goal be measured?
 - Where exactly is preferential seating located? (It is ok to be specific)
5. Ask the district for a meeting agenda and share your thoughts on any items you think the agenda should include.
6. Let the school district know if you need any accommodations for the virtual IEP meeting. You can start with whomever schedules the meeting. We suggest you put your request in writing and keep a copy of it for your records. School districts need to make sure that parents understand IEP meeting. For instance, this means providing an interpreter at a virtual IEP meeting if one is needed for the parent to understand the meeting.
7. You can always invite a family member to the meeting if you need support. You can also invite people outside your family to join. That person should be someone who knows your child (a private therapist, advocate, or even a friend). Make sure anyone you invite knows how to join the meeting. We also suggest you let your school district contact know if you invite someone to the meeting. You can share their contact information as some school districts may include them in the virtual meeting invitation information.
8. Ask the IEP team to share their screen during the meeting. It is important that everyone can see exactly what is being written on the IEP and other forms.
9. Ask that you be sent the final IEP documents before you leave the meeting.

10. Make sure the Prior Written Notice lists all decisions made by the IEP Team. That means you should see a statement of each proposal the team talked about (including your own requests). You should also see which proposals were accepted or rejected during the meeting and a reason for each decision. If your school district keeps minutes of IEP team meetings, you should also ask for a copy of those. You can ask to have them shared on the screen or read aloud so that you have a chance to check them for corrections before they are finalized. We have a factsheet called "[Prior Written Notices](#)", that we suggest you review before the meeting.

This publication is funded at taxpayer expense by the US Social Security Administration and other US government agencies. It was reviewed on 09/21/2021 for technical accuracy by the Social Security Administration (SSA). However, it should not be considered an official SSA document and does not necessarily represent the official views of any government agency.

Last updated: 2021

Disability Rights South Carolina

 1-866-275-7273

 1-866-232-4525

 www.disabilityrightssc.org

 info@disabilityrightssc.org