INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP)
TIPS FOR PARENTS

EVALUATION

Making a Referral and Request for Initial Evaluation:
 ✓ Ask in writing for evaluation; keep a copy of your request.
 ✓ Explain the child’s problem(s) and why the evaluation is needed.
 ✓ Parental consent is required for evaluation.
 ✓ Parents have the right to an Independent Educational Evaluation of the student if they disagree with the school’s evaluation.

Evaluation Questions to Ask:
 ✓ What is the test measuring?
 ✓ What is the average or normal on this test?
 ✓ Where is my child in comparison to the normal?
 ✓ What does this mean in terms of teaching my child?

ELIGIBILITY

 ✓ Based off of assessments and IEP team input.
 ✓ Student must meet one of the 13 classifications and require specialized instruction. (See IEP Handbook for more information.)

PREPARATION FOR THE IEP MEETING

IEP Meeting Preparation:
 ✓ Gather information to share: medical, psychological, other assessments.
   ➢ Keep a file of all important information related to your child’s educational record.
   ➢ Review your child’s school records and current IEP if there is one.
 ✓ List what you see as your child’s strengths and needs.
 ✓ Write down your priorities and long range goals for your child.
 ✓ List services that you believe your child needs to attain the goals you have identified.
 ✓ Write down your questions.
 ✓ Communicate with your team prior to the meeting:
   ➢ Ask for and review evaluation data.
   ➢ Share your ideas for IEP goals with the team.
   ➢ Ask for a copy of the draft IEP goals prior to the team meeting.

Inviting Individuals to the IEP Meeting:
 ✓ Parents may invite anyone who will be helpful to the IEP meeting.
 ✓ Inform the school who you invite to the IEP meeting prior to the meeting.
 ✓ Students are encouraged to participate in the IEP meeting where appropriate.
 ✓ Key members of the IEP Team: Parent(s), LEA (Local Education Agency), Special Education Teacher, General Education Teacher.
**Participation in the IEP Meeting**

- Use good communication skills throughout the meeting.
- LEA representative should conduct the meeting.
- Have IEP team members introduce themselves and their roles.
- Parents must be given a copy of Utah’s **Procedural Safeguards Notice** outlining specific parent rights under IDEA.
- Make sure the concerns about your child as well as the child’s strengths are listed on the IEP.
- Communicate your priorities and suggestions for goals. Consider how they fit with the goals proposed by the rest of the team.
- Be prepared to negotiate. See if there are alternative ways to meet goals.
- Ask for clarification of any information or statements that are unclear to you.

**What Your Signature Means:**

- All participants should sign the IEP.
  - All signatures on the IEP show participation and attendance.
  - Parents may note on the IEP that they “disagree” or have concerns.

**Follow-Up on the IEP Meeting**

- Express appreciation for the efforts of school personnel.
- Monitor your child’s progress.
  - Know how often progress reports will be sent home and know how best to communicate with the IEP team.
- IEP can be changed as needed.
  - Parents may request an IEP meeting if there are concerns or problems with the IEP or if the child is not making satisfactory progress.
- IEP teams are to meet annually.

**Problem Solving in the IEP Process**

Proceed thoughtfully! Seek to resolve difficulties at the lowest possible level.

**When It Just Doesn’t Work:**

- Communicate with your school team.
- Follow the chain of command which is typically:
  1. Teacher
  2. Principal
  3. School District Special Education Director/Supervisor
  4. Utah State Office of Education, Special Education.

*All provisions of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA 2004) also apply to Charter Schools.*

For more detailed information see the Utah Parent Center’s “Parents as Partners in the IEP Process” handbook at [www.utahparentcenter.org/publications/handbooks](http://www.utahparentcenter.org/publications/handbooks)