



Listen to learn more even if you don't agree.

Benefits of a Facilitated IEP Meeting

A facilitated IEP meeting:

- may build and improve relationships among IEP team members and between parents and schools;
- enhances effective communication and listening within the group;
- provides opportunities for team members to resolve conflicts, if they arise;
- clarifies points of agreement and disagreement;
- encourages all team members to share in the responsibility of developing the IEP; and
- maintains focus on the needs of the child.

Visual Listening
 Collaboration
 Communication
 IEP Free
 Student-focused
 Facilitator
 Voluntary

“The facilitator developed a written agenda and group meeting norms for the IEP meeting. Being the visual person I am, referencing your charts as we moved through the discussion was extremely helpful to me.”
 - parent feedback

“It was the most productive IEP meeting I have ever attended. Now I understand my role and the roles of each of the IEP team members.” - parent feedback

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*Facilitated
 IEP Meetings*

*Promoting Collaborative
 Individualized Education
 Program (IEP) Meetings
 as a Preventative Measure.*



IEP Facilitation

Facilitation is a free service.

State-sponsored facilitation is a **voluntary process** in which a third party (facilitator) guides the Individualized Education Program (IEP) meeting to help maintain open communication and keep the IEP team members focused on developing a mutually acceptable IEP.

Parents of children with known or suspected disabilities and/or school personnel have the right to request facilitation services from the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE).

District Responsibilities

The school district retains responsibility for following special education requirements under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the Illinois Administrative Code.

“Having a facilitator guide a process where everyone is on the same page is invaluable. Using visual agendas, getting consensus along the way, and building relationships as a team was dynamic. We are all here for the same reason ... to support the student.”

– school staff feedback

Preparing for the meeting

- Be prepared to talk with the facilitator prior to the IEP meeting.
- If requested, email the current IEP or draft, as well as any recent evaluation data to assist in discussion and planning.
- Prepare a list of issues to discuss and questions to ask, as needed.

Parent Rights

All parent rights, notifications and procedural safeguards are still applicable – as with any other IEP meeting.

The IEP document is enforceable through the state complaint process or a due process hearing.



Be open to consider other ideas/solutions.

The facilitator will maintain the focus of the IEP meeting on what really matters – the student’s individual needs.

Role of the IEP Facilitator

The state-sponsored facilitator is a neutral third party trained in facilitation techniques, but is not an employee of the school district.

- *Some school districts may choose to train their own staff members as facilitators – these individuals would not be considered state-sponsored facilitators.*

The main goal of the state-sponsored facilitator is to support all parties in the development of a mutually acceptable IEP.

The facilitator:

- proposes group norms to provide structure and focus for the meeting;
- promotes dialogue and encourages whole team participation for decision making, but does not impose a decision on the group;
- acknowledges and addresses differing opinions in a respectful and neutral manner; and
- is **not** a member of the IEP team or an advocate for any person on the team.