



Parents on the IEP Team

A handout in CPIR's e-module *10 Basics of Special Education*

April 2022 | *Additional eLearning Hub Resource*
from the Center for Parent Information and Resources
<https://www.parentcenterhub.org/iep-parents/>

Parents have been recognized as vital members of the IEP Team since the passage of Public Law 94-142 in 1975.

Everyone agrees that parents have an enduring and passionate interest in the well-being and education of their child.

So it makes perfect sense that Congress would ensure that parents are represented on the IEP Team, front and center. **The school must invite the parents to the IEP meeting** early enough to ensure that one or both parents have the opportunity to attend and participate. The notice sent by the school to parents must include:

- the purpose of the meeting,
- its time, and location, and
- who will attend.

What Parents Bring to the IEP Table and Discussions

Typically, parents know their child very well—not just the child's strengths and weaknesses, but all the little qualities that make their child unique.

- Parents' knowledge can keep the team focused on the "big picture" of the child. They can help the team create an IEP that will work appropriately for the child.
- Parents can describe what goals are most important to them and to their child, share their concerns and suggestions for enhancing their child's education, and give insights into their son or daughter's interests, likes and dislikes, and learning styles.
- Parents have the right to add to all discussions, ask for explanations if something's not clear to them, and respectfully disagree with proposed strategies while suggesting others.
- By being an active IEP team member, parents can also infuse the IEP planning process with thought about long-term needs for the child's successful adult life.



Being actively involved in developing their child's IEP is a parent's **right** and a parent's **choice**. This means that the school system must:

- notify parents of the meeting early enough to ensure that one or both of the parents have an opportunity to attend;
- schedule the meeting at a mutually agreed on time and place; and
- take whatever action is necessary to ensure that the parent understands the proceedings of the meeting, including arranging for an **interpreter** for parents with deafness or whose native language is other than English.



Highly Rated Resource! This resource was reviewed by 3-member panels of Parent Center staff working independently from one another to rate the quality, relevance, and usefulness of CPIR resources. This resource was found to be of “High Quality, High Relevance, High Usefulness” to Parent Centers.



The CPIR is made possible through Cooperative Agreement Number H328R180005 between OSEP and the Statewide Parent Advocacy Network (SPAN). The contents of this document do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Department of Education, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.