**Quick Guide to Preparing for Your Child’s Individualized Education Program (IEP) Meeting**

**Parent Preparation**

* Keep a notebook, or some type of organization system, to help track your notes, questions, your child’s work samples, progress notes, evaluations, previous IEPs, and other information relevant to your child’s disability and educational needs.
* Ask someone you trust to attend a meeting with you if you feel you need support.
* Read *a Guide to Parent Rights in Special Education* and take a copy to the meeting with you for reference.
* Share with the school your goals, priorities and future hopes for your child.
* Share things that work with your child at home that can be implemented at school.
* Share with the school relevant information from outside sources, such as therapists, doctors, etc.
* If your child will attend the meeting, prepare him/her for what the meeting is about, who may be there, and what will be discussed.
* In advance of the meeting:

~ Share safety concerns, medical issues, medication lists, motivators, needs, strengths/challenges, situations that are difficult for your child, and written statements from medical professionals

~ Request a DRAFT copy of the IEP if one has not already been provided.

* Reschedule the meeting if you cannot attend.

**Questions to Consider with the Team**

* What skills does my child need to perform academically, socially, or functionally?
* What skills does/doesn’t my child demonstrate in the classroom compared with typical peers?
* What are the prioritized needs of my child and are they addressed through the IEP goals? (Communication, technology, mobility, etc.)
* What data does the team have (classroom skills, tests, etc.) that shows how my child is doing with regard to achieving goals, instructional objectives and skill development?
* Is my child making progress toward achieving the IEP goals and making progress in the general education curriculum? How will that be communicated to me?
* Would my child benefit from participating in the general education classroom all or part of the day? What would that look like?

**Terms To Know**

* **Accommodations** – Changes in the way materials are presented or in the way students respond to the materials, as well as changes in setting, timing and scheduling.
* **Evaluation** – Procedures used to determine whether your child has a disability and the special education and related services that your child needs
* **Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)** – Special Education and related services provided at public expense, under public supervision and direction, and at no cost to parents.
* **Individualized Education Program (IEP)** – A written statement for your child that is developed, reviewed and revised in accordance with federal and state regulations
* **Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)** – As much as possible, children with disabilities (including children in public or nonpublic schools or other care facilities) are educated with children who do not have disabilities.
* **Modification** – Any change that is made in the amount and complexity of the instructional material taught.
* **A Guide to Parent Rights in Special Education (NEW)** – Also known as “procedural safeguards notice” and summarizes Ohio’s special education rules
* **Prior Written Notice (PR-01)** - written statements from the school district that inform the parent about recommendation relating to the initiation or change in the identification, evaluation, educational placement of the student or the provision of a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to the student.
* **Special Education** – Specially designed instruction, at no cost to the parents, to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability, including instruction conducted in the classroom, in the home, in hospitals and institutions and in other settings

**Resources**

* **Region 14/Hopewell** – www.sst14.org
* **Ohio Department of Education** – [www.education.ohio.gov](http://www.education.ohio.gov)
* **Ohio Coalition for the Education of Children with Disabilities** – <http://www.ocecd.org>
* **Ohio Center for Autism and Low Incidence (OCALI)** – [www.ocali.org](http://www.ocali.org)
* **Regional Parent Mentors**

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