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Special Education Help

Building Meaningful Special Education Plans
with Special Needs Parents & Schools



Hi Special Needs Parents, Teachers & Teams!

I'm excited to take the first step in digging into Special Education with you. The first important thing to know is that there is only one rule in Special Education that is true for all teams and that is... let's keep the child's needs first.

Emotions run high, exhaustion hits and before we know it, sometimes our IEP meetings can be a hot mess. I'm going to help you stop the madness and get back to being able to do what you want to do most... help the child.

Whether the child you are thinking about while going through this checklist is your child or your student, we know that if we can all take a deep breath and focus on the big picture, everything WILL work out!

Now let's get started...

Note: Use these questions to open up the conversation between the entire team before, during and after the IEP meeting. Remember, we don't have to accomplish everything in one stressful meeting. We can work together and discuss these details ongoing... as a team.

IEP Touchpoints for Team Discussion	Yes or No
Has an IEP meeting been scheduled for a date and time that everyone is available, including a support person for the parent, if needed?	
Have draft updates, goals and reports been shared between ALL team members so nobody is shocked or surprised at the meeting?	
Does any further testing or data collection need to happen before the IEP meeting to make sure we can make smart decisions?	
Is everybody ready to report on the child's present levels of performance, in their area of expertise, including the parent?	
Has everyone, including the parent, participated in creating meaningful IEP goals for long term success?	
Have all areas of the education experience been addressed, including environments both inside and outside of the classroom?	
Have you fully discussed the supports needed in each environment to ensure the child is set up for success?	
Have all service minutes been reviewed and clearly defined on how they will be used by each provider?	
Has data collection been discussed and how will it be shared with the entire team, including the parent?	
Has a school to home communication plan been put in place?	
Has assistive technology or standard technology been discussed?	
Has the child's schedule for a typical school day been examined to ensure it is as simple as possible with minimal transitions?	
Has the child participated in the IEP process to the best of their ability, including choosing their rewards/motivators?	

IMPORTANT: This list is NOT all inclusive of what needs to be discussed for a full IEP meeting. It is focused on talking points that are often forgotten about when going through a formal IEP meeting. When these topics are brought into the open for discussion between team members, everyone can be ready for a positive IEP meeting experience!



Thank you for taking this first step in working together in Special Education with me. I've been working for 20+ years in Special Education, wearing many professional hats. After experiencing the system from the "inside" as a certified special education teacher, I began coaching parents on how they could become more involved in their child's education by being both positive and strong.

While coaching parents, the district administrators and teachers started to inquire about the strategies I was using to help build IEPs. They couldn't believe that I was able to get everyone on the same page, keep the child first and eliminate the overwhelming stress at the table. They asked me to train their teachers and teams on how to find solutions that worked for everyone.

I could've never imagined that having a brother with Down syndrome who inspired me to become a teacher would have led to this path, helping YOU. From Professional Development Speaker to Inclusion Specialist to Leading Parent Workshops... I love it all. **I feel completely grateful every time a parent, teacher and team trust me to guide them through the special education process.**

Next, there are two ways we can continue to work together:

1. **Let me teach you to do what I do... Learn to Become an IEP Coach!** Parents, teachers, therapists, admins, can all be IEP Coaches. Our special needs community needs more IEP Coaches! [Click here to learn more.](#)
2. **Join me in the Online IEP Help Center** - get access to your own Special Education Library, weekly Q&A, monthly virtual coffee talks and a private FB group with me. [START HERE with a \\$1 trial.](#)

With Hope & Determination Always,

Catherine Witcher, M.Ed