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STUDENT-LED IEP MEETINGS: *A Parent Guide*

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Student-Led IEP Meetings: *A Parent Guide*

What is a student-led IEP meeting?

It is an Individualized Education Program (IEP) meeting where the student takes the lead in planning their own education. Instead of adults leading most of the conversation, students actively participate and sometimes run parts of the meeting themselves.

Why is it important for students to lead their IEP meetings?

When students lead, they learn to speak up for themselves (self-advocacy) and make decisions about their future (self-determination). This can help them succeed in school and prepare for jobs or college after graduation.

How is a student-led IEP different from a regular IEP?

In traditional meetings, students usually speak only about 3% of the time. In student-led meetings, the student shares more, helps guide decisions, and takes an active role rather than being a quiet participant.

Can all students participate in student-led IEP meetings?

Participation can be adjusted based on the student's age, needs, and strengths. Younger students might just share their work or talk about what they enjoy learning. Older students might lead the entire meeting and help the team make decisions.





How can students prepare to lead their IEP meetings?

Preparation is key. Teachers and parents can help students:

- Understand themselves: what they are good at, what challenges they face, and how their disability affects learning.
- Understand their IEP: what it says and what rights they have.
- Plan for the meeting: practice what to say, create an agenda, and get ready for questions. They can also use presentations or other technology to help.

What role do parents play in student-led IEP meetings?

Parents can support by:

- Talking with their child about the IEP and the meeting process.
- Encouraging their child to lead parts (or all) of the meeting.
- Staying in communication with teachers and school staff to support the student's participation.

Are student-led IEP meetings flexible?

There is no single way to do them. Each student can participate in a way that fits their abilities and comfort level, from sharing a little to leading the full meeting.

What are the long-term benefits of student-led IEP meetings?

Students who participate actively become more motivated, confident, and skilled at advocating for themselves. These skills help them in school, work, and life after graduation.

