A CAREGIVER'S CONVERSATION GUIDE

You are an equal partner in your child's education. These talking points can support you in better understanding your child's IEP.

ASKING FOR CLARIFICATION

School meetings use many confusing words. Make sure you understand everything before you agree.



- "What does that goal mean for my child in the classroom?"
- "I do not understand that term. Can you explain it using different words?"

UNDERSTANDING SCHOOL SERVICES

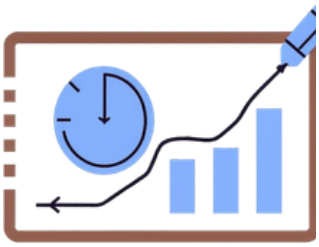


Be sure you know exactly what help your child will receive to do well in school.

- "What specific extra help or changes will my child get in class?"
- "How many days a week will they get this help? How many minutes each time?"
- "Which teacher or staff member will give them this help?"

MONITORING PROGRESS

Make a clear plan for how the school will track your child's success over the year.



- "How exactly will you measure my child's progress on this goal?"
- "How often will you send me updates about their progress?"

ADVOCATING FOR YOUR CHILD



You know your child best. Share what you know from home to help make a good plan.

- "My child does these things well at home. Let's use this to help them learn."
- "Can we write this into the IEP document?"
- "I need more time to read this before I sign."

General information, not legal advice. Rules differ by state; see your school's procedural safeguards notice. Reviewed October 2026.

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Use these additional talking points to advocate for your child's unique needs and ensure you feel confident before signing

BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

Focus on how school goals translate to real life.

- "I would like to learn more about what this means in everyday contexts for my child."
- "Can we structure a goal that meets my child's developmental goals as well?"



VALUING YOUR CHILD'S IDENTITY

The IEP should reflect your child's identity and what makes them unique



Think about some ways to build your child's complete identity into the IEP.

- "How can we use my child's specific passions **(like their love for [Interest])** to make these goals more engaging and successful for them?"

PROCESS & REVIEW

Remember to take the time you need before agreeing to your child's IEP

You may request an additional meeting if you need something explained further

- "I would like to schedule a time to review the IEP with you before signing the form."



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