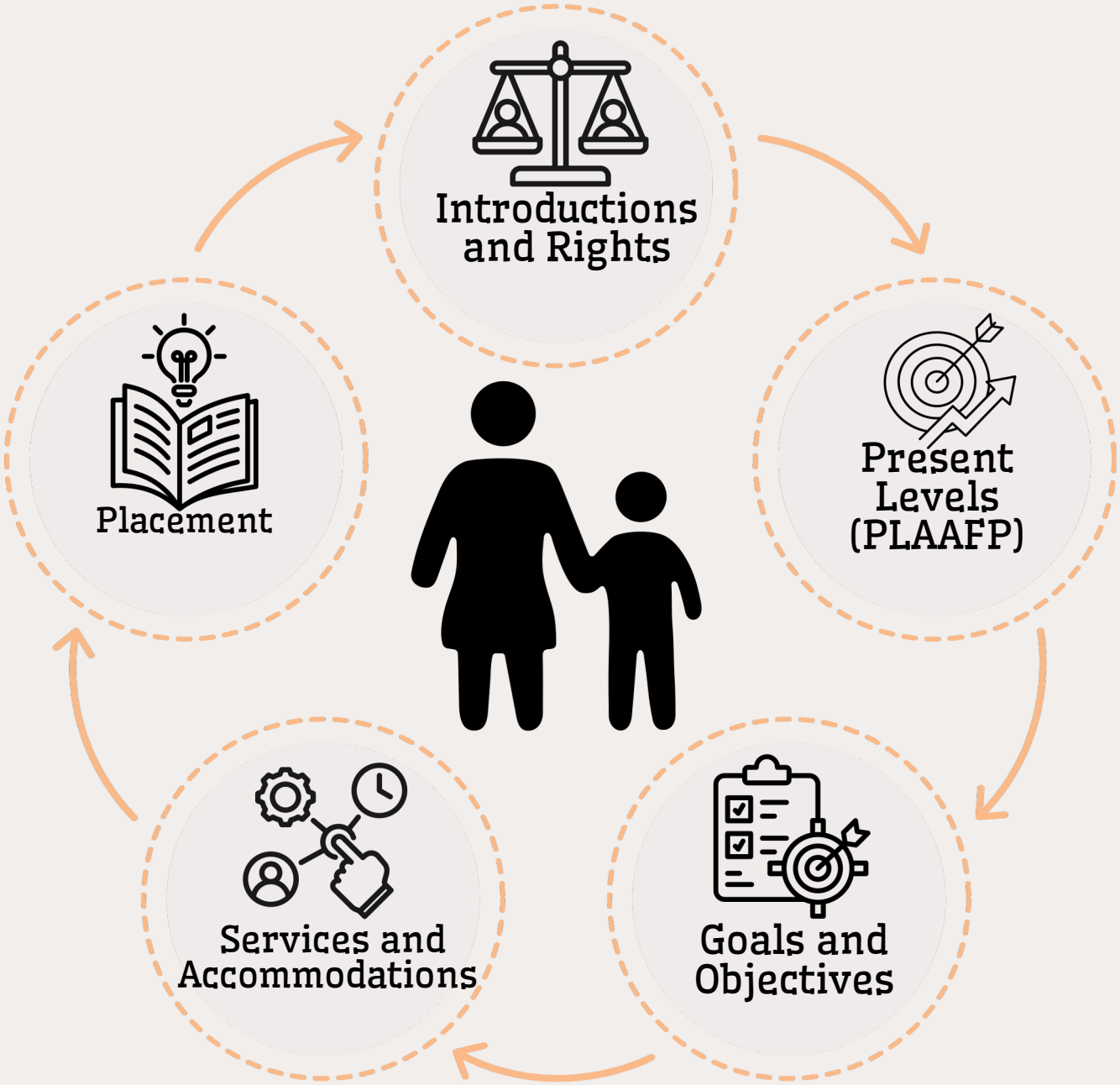
THE IEP MEETING:
A SOCIAL WALKTHROUGH FOR PARENTS



Your Guide to Understanding and being an Active Member of the IEP Team

Purpose of the social script

This social script is to help caregivers stay organized and confident during their child's IEP meeting. The goal of this resource is to help you follow the process, remind you of your rights, and participate as an equal partner on the team.

Key terms you should know

- **IEP: Individualized Education Program**, a written plan for a student's learning needs, services, and goals.
- **FAPE: Free Appropriate Public Education**, the legal right to a free and appropriate education.
- **IDEA: Individuals with Disabilities Education Act,** federal law that protects special education rights.
- **LRE: Least Restrictive Environment**, students should learn with non-disabled peers as much as possible.
- **PWN: Prior Written Notice**, written notice when the school proposes or refuses a change.
- **IEE: Independent Educational Evaluation**, an outside evaluation parents can request.
- **FBA: Functional Behavioral Assessment**, identifies why a student has behavior challenges.
- **BIP: Behavior Intervention Plan**, a plan to support student behavior.
- **ESY: Extended School Year**, services provided during summer if needed.
- **SDI: Specially Designed Instruction**, teaching adapted to meet a student's needs.
- **OT: Occupational Therapy**, support for fine motor and daily skills.
- **PT: Physical Therapy**, support for movement and physical skills.
- **SLP: Speech-Language Pathology**, support for speech and communication.
- **AT: Assistive Technology**, tools that help students learn.
- **504 Plan**: a support plan that provides accommodations in general education.

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Key terms you should know

Term	Definition
Individualized Education Program (IEP)	A legal plan that explains a student's goals, services, and supports at school.
Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)	A student's right to a free education that meets their individual needs.
Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)	Students should learn with their peers as much as possible while getting needed support.
Evaluation	A process where the school gathers information to understand a student's needs.
Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)	A developmental condition that affects communication, behavior, and social interaction.
Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)	A condition that affects focus, self-control, and activity levels.
Specific Learning Disability	Conditions that make it harder to learn skills like reading, writing, or math.
Emotional disturbance	Ongoing emotional or behavioral challenges that affect learning in school.
Intellectual disability	A condition involving challenges with learning, reasoning, and everyday skills.

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Preparing for the IEP Meeting



INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP)

Student Information

Name: Agency: IEP Team Meeting Date: / /

STUDENT AND SCHOOL INFORMATION

EXIT INFORMATION

IEP TEAM PARTICIPANTS

I am getting ready for my child's IEP meeting. In Maryland, I get a draft of the IEP 5 business days before.

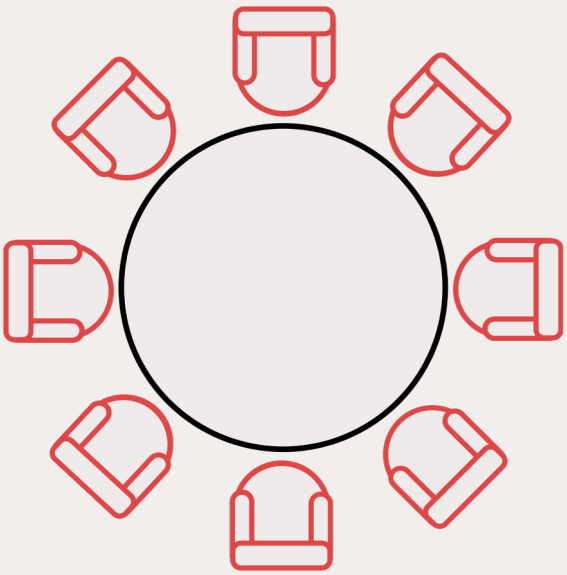


I do not have to go to the meeting alone. I can invite people I trust (friends, therapist, advocates) to support me.



I have the right to understand everything. I can ask the school for an interpreter at no cost to me, and ask for documents to be translated.

Entering the meeting



My meeting will happen at school or online. My team will tell me the exact day and time.



When I arrive, I will see a seat at the table for all the members of my support team. We find our seats and get ready to begin.

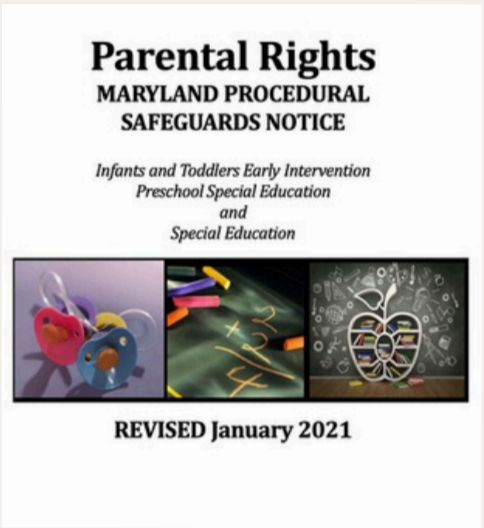


The school team is also sitting with us. This includes teachers, administrators, and facilitators.

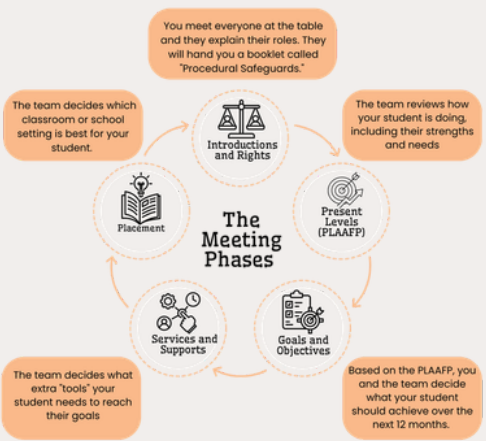
Phase 1: Introductions & Rights



We start the meeting by introducing ourselves. I share my name and my role as the parent.



The team gives me a copy of my "Procedural Safeguards." This document explains my legal rights. I can ask for clarification at any time.



The team explains the plan for our meeting today. We will follow the five phases to make sure we talk about everything my child needs.

Phase 2: Present Levels (PLAAFP)



We review how my child is currently doing at school, including their strengths and their needs. I also share what they are good at and what makes me proud of them.



The teachers share how my child is doing in their classes. They show me what my child is learning and where they might need more help.



I share my child's strengths and talk about what my child finds difficult. The team values my perspectives, and we agree on a "Present Levels."

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Phase 3: Goals and Objectives



Next, we set clear and measurable targets for my child to achieve over the next year. These goals focus on the skills my child needs to learn to be successful.



If I think a goal should be different, I share my ideas. We work together to adjust the goals until we all agree they are appropriate for my child's growth.



We also discuss how often I will get updates on these goals.

Phase 4: Services and Accommodations



Now we decide what my child needs to reach their goals. This includes specialized teaching and accommodations (supports).

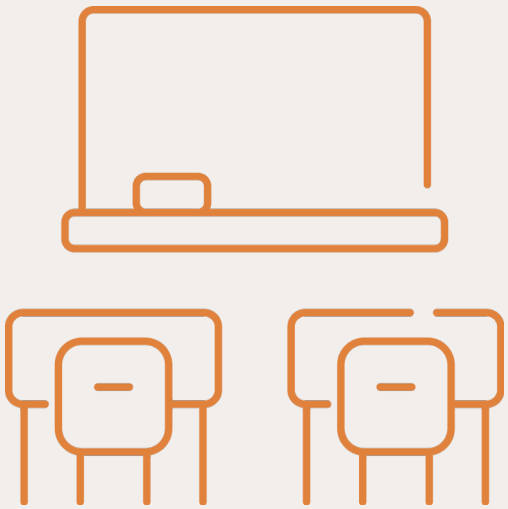


We may talk about "Related Services" that could help my child. The team explains how often my child will see these providers and how it will help them.

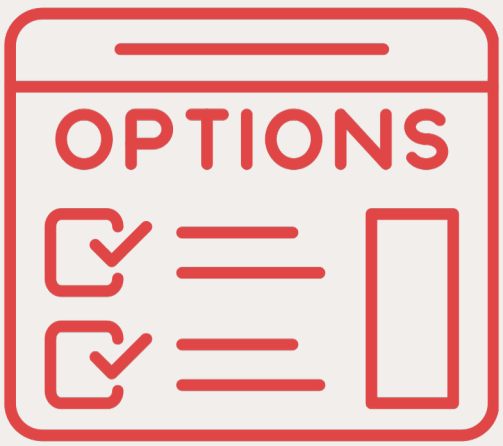


I make sure the supports we choose fit my child's unique needs, and we all agree on the services and supports.

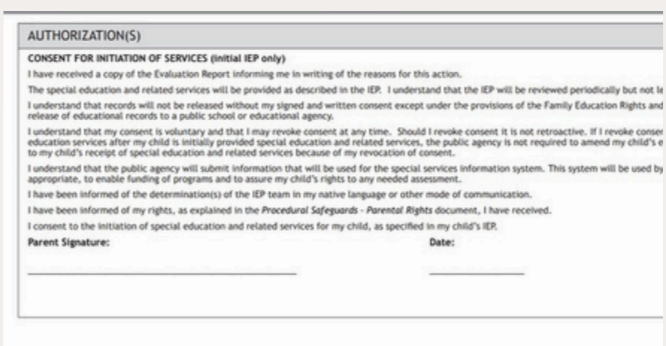
Phase 5: Placement



We all choose the best place for my child to learn. This is called "Placement." We want my child to be in the classroom that best fits their needs.



The team explains the different options available. We make sure that the place we choose is where my child will be most successful and supported throughout the school day.



AUTHORIZATION(S)

CONSENT FOR INITIATION OF SERVICES (initial IEP only)

I have received a copy of the Evaluation Report informing me in writing of the reasons for this action.

The special education and related services will be provided as described in the IEP. I understand that the IEP will be reviewed periodically but not le

I understand that records will not be released without my signed and written consent except under the provisions of the Family Education Rights and release of educational records to a public school or educational agency.

I understand that my consent is voluntary and that I may revoke consent at any time. Should I revoke consent it is not retroactive. If I revoke conse education services after my child is initially provided special education and related services, the public agency is not required to amend my child's e to my child's receipt of special education and related services because of my revocation of consent.

I understand that the public agency will submit information that will be used for the special services information system. This system will be used by appropriate, to enable funding of programs and to assure my child's rights to any needed assessment.

I have been informed of the determination(s) of the IEP team in my native language or other mode of communication.

I have been informed of my rights, as explained in the *Procedural Safeguards - Parental Rights* document, I have received.

I consent to the initiation of special education and related services for my child, as specified in my child's IEP.

Parent Signature: **Date:**

Once the placement is agreed upon, the IEP document is finished. Now, I take a moment to breathe and think about the plan we created.

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After the Meeting



I do not have to sign the IEP right now. I have the right to take the draft home and read it one more time. I can talk it over with my support team and my family before I make my final decision.



I can also schedule another meeting if I would like to go over the IEP before finalizing it.



I am proud of myself for being a strong voice for my child. I am a valuable member of the IEP team, and I have helped create a plan for my child's success.

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