

IEP Improvement Task Force- Agreed Upon Recommendations To Date

- Schools should be required to provide specific, clear guidance to parents as soon as their child is either (a) diagnosed with a disability or (b) identified by the parent as needing evaluation for a potential disability that they can receive assistance from both the Parent Information Center, Community Legal Aid Society, or private legal counsel. Such guidance should be provided to parents each time an IEP meeting is scheduled.
- The state should provide sufficient resources to the Parent Information Center and Community Legal Aid so that those organizations can provide appropriate levels of assistance to parents who seek their help. This should include the ability to send representatives to IEP meetings.
- Each school district should be required to establish and maintain a special education parent council, in order to provide peer assistance to parents seeking to navigate the IEP process.
- Schools should use written questionnaires to try to elicit suggestions and information from parents prior to the IEP meeting.
- Schools should provide draft IEPs to parents prior to each IEP meeting, with clear and prominent notice to parents that those documents are discussion drafts and not final documents.
- Parents should be asked to acknowledge in each section of an IEP that contains any material content that the section has been discussed with them and that they understand it.
- Parents should be explicitly informed that no IEP meeting is limited to a particular time frame and that parents are aware that the meetings can be continued if not completed within the time initially set aside.
- Parents should be asked in advance who they would like to have at IEP meetings, with a particular emphasis on having paraprofessionals who work directly with their children present.
- Schools and districts should make good faith efforts to have all relevant personnel, particularly those identified by the parent, present for as much of the IEP meeting as possible, understanding that scheduling for teachers and paraprofessionals must be balanced against their obligations to other children in the school.
- Teachers should be given specific preparation time to prepare for IEP meetings.
- * Although the task force recognizes the advantages of electronic records in the preparation of IEP plans, the state should not require the use of IEP Plus or other computer-based IEP preparation systems until it has established that schools have the necessary connectivity and hardware to use the programs.
- * Specific equipment used by students should be enumerated in IEPs so that those IEPs can be transferred between schools without disruption in services to children.