

## Team Meetings

The start of the school year is typically a time when many Team meetings are held. It is important to know the legal requirements surrounding IEP Teams and Team meetings, especially since some important changes were made to the governing regulations with the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in 2004.

The regulations concerning IEP Teams and Team meetings are found at **34 CFR 300.321**  
[http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=ecfr&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title34/34cfr300\\_main\\_02.tpl](http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=ecfr&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title34/34cfr300_main_02.tpl)

### REQUIRED

A student's IEP Team must include all of the following individuals:

- At least one of the parents.
- At least one of the child's regular education teachers (if the child is currently, or may be in the future, attending regular education classes.)
- At least one of the child's special education teachers, or where appropriate, at least one of the child's special education providers.
- A school district representative who meets all of the following criteria:
  1. Is qualified to provide or supervise the provision of special education services;
  2. Is knowledgeable about the general education curriculum; and
  3. Has the authority to commit the resources of the school district (i.e., can approve services that cost money.)
- Someone who understands the results of evaluations and how they impact the way in which the student must be taught.
- Whenever appropriate, the student.

### OPTIONAL

The parent or the school may also invite other individuals who have knowledge or special expertise regarding the child to participate as a Team member<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Note: If the parent wishes to invite someone to the Team, the parent must pay for the cost of that person's participation, unless the school has agreed to cover the cost.

## New Attendance Flexibility

New regulations give Team members more flexibility regarding their attendance at Team meetings.

### **When a Team member's area of the IEP will not be discussed or modified at a Team meeting**

If the parent and the school district agree in writing that the Team member's attendance at a Team meeting is not necessary because the Team member's area of the curriculum or related services is not being modified or discussed in the meeting, that Team member may be excused from attending the meeting (in whole or in part.)

### **When a Team member's area of the IEP will be discussed/modified at a Team meeting.**

If a Team member's area of the curriculum or related services will be modified or discussed at a Team meeting, that Team member may be still be excused from attending the meeting (in whole or in part,) but only if

1. The parent and the school district agree, in writing, to the excusal; and
2. The Team member submits input into the development of the IEP, in writing, to the parent and the IEP Team, prior to the meeting.

It is most important that parents understand that *Team members cannot be excused from attending a Team meeting unless the parent agrees to it*. Parents should never feel pressured to excuse a Team member if they feel doing so is not in the best interest of their child.

### **Making subsequent changes to an IEP.**

After an IEP has been developed at an annual Team meeting, subsequent changes to that IEP can be made without convening a Team meeting *if* the parent *and* school agree that a Team meeting is not necessary. In this case a document amending or modifying the IEP may be developed.

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