

# Participants and Facilitation of the IEP Meeting



# Did I Say Something Wrong?



“Sorry, I’m an hour late, but the principal just told me I needed to be here because I’m the only general education teacher in the building. Can I go now?”

From “Top Ten Fatal IEP Meeting Quotations”, by Julie Weatherly, Esq.



# Who should be Invited? The law says

- ▶ The **child's parent(s)** shall be members of the IEP team.
- ▶ At least **one General Ed. teacher** if the child is participating or may participate in the general ed. environment. This should be the teacher who is or may be responsible for implementing a portion of the IEP, so that the teacher can participate in discussions how best to teach the child.



# Who should be Invited? Teacher responsibilities...

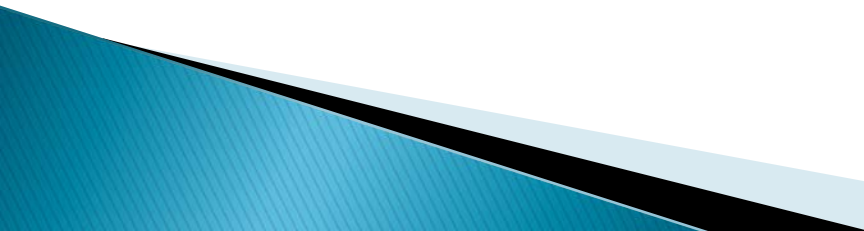
- The responsibilities of this teacher shall include assisting in: determining appropriate positive behavior interventions and strategies and/or identifying supplementary aids and services, program modifications and supports for school personnel during the school day and during extra-curricular activities that the student participates in.

# Who should be Invited? The law says ...

- ▶ **At least one special education teacher** and if the child is receiving only speech services, the speech/language pathologist can fulfill that role.

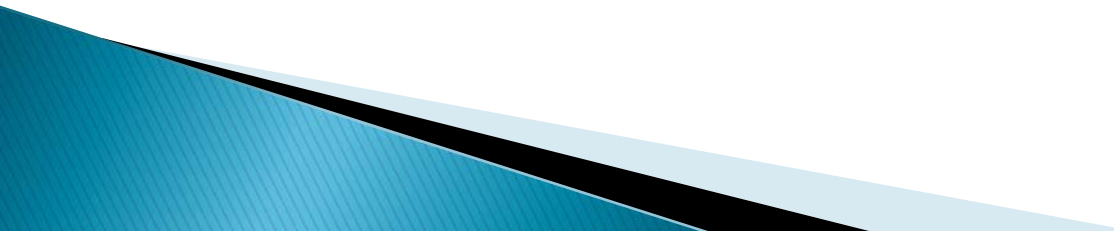


# Who should be Invited? The law says ...

- ▶ **A representative or LEA of the local school district** who is qualified to provide or supervise the provision of specially designed instruction to meet the unique need of children with disabilities, is knowledgeable about the general curriculum and district resources, able to interpret the instructional implications of evaluation results, and has the authority to commit and ensure that services set out in the IEP will be implemented.
- 



## Others that may be invited under certain circumstances ...

- ▶ If a preschool child – then the team **shall** include an individual qualified to teach preschool children with identified disabilities.
  - ▶ If the child is bilingual – then the team **may** include a qualified bilingual specialist or bilingual teacher to assist in decision making and understanding the child's cultural and language factors as they relate to instructional needs.
- 



## Others that may be invited under certain circumstances ...

- ▶ If there are behavioral concerns regarding the child's learning or the learning of others – then the team **may** include a person knowledgeable about positive behavioral strategies.



## Others that may be invited under certain circumstances ...

- ▶ In the case of a child who was previously served in Early Intervention (Birth to 3 services), an invitation, at the request of the parents, **should** be sent to the Early Intervention Coordinator at the initial IEP meeting where the child transitions to Early Childhood (3 to 5) services. This will assist with the smooth transition of services. (P.L. 108-466, December 3, 2004)

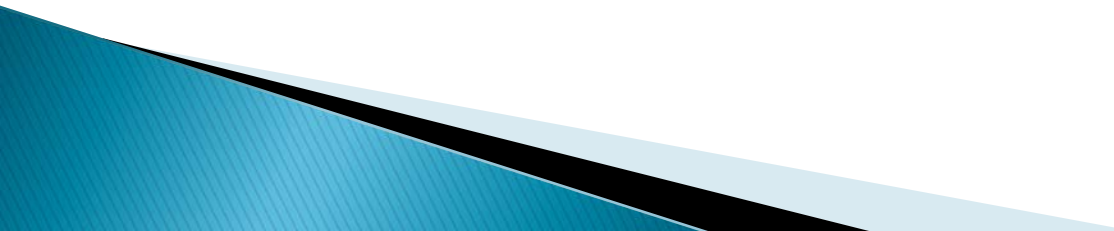
## Others that may be invited under certain circumstances ...

- ▶ If there are any other persons that may have some information that could be beneficial in the IEP meeting, they **should** be invited. Reminder: parents can exclude anyone not listed on the official notice to the meeting.
- If an evaluation is required – then the IEP team **shall** include an individual who is qualified to interpret the instructional implications of the evaluation results.

# Others that may be invited under certain circumstances ...

- In the case of a student for whom transition services must be planned – the IEP team **shall** invite a representative of any other agency that is likely to be responsible for providing any of the transition services. Complete Parent Consent for Agency Invitation to Transition Meeting, found in netIEP Document Library.
  - If the adult service agency does not attend, then the IEP team **must** document other steps taken to obtain participation of that agency in the planning of any transition services.

# Others that may be invited under certain circumstances ...

- At the discretion of the parent, the student or the district – then the IEP team shall invite other individuals with knowledge or special expertise regarding the child including providers of related services.
  - ▶ The student may be invited at any time at the discretion of the parent(s) or district.
- 



# Others that may be invited under certain circumstances ...

- ▶ The student **shall** be invited when the purpose of the IEP is transition planning. The student must receive a formal notice.
  - If the student does not attend, the IEP team must take other steps to ensure that the student's preferences and interests are considered.

# Others that may be invited under certain circumstances ...

- If the student has reached the age of majority or is an emancipated minor, then all rights of the parent apply to the student.

( 23 Illinois Administrative Code 226.530 and 226.690)

Remember: understanding information does NOT mean everyone agrees.

Be willing to discuss different points of view.

End the meeting by summarizing what was accomplished and reviewing the next steps.



- (A) Treat information as confidential
- (B) Immediately plan and schedule any follow-up activities
- (C) Share the IEP information with all involved staff members
- (D) Provide any training and support families and staff may need to implement the IEP
- (E) Make follow-up contact, thanking family for attendance, and check on suggestions

# (A) Families who feel valued and respected by educators are more likely to:

- ▶ Feel confident in assisting and supporting learning in the class and at home
- ▶ Encourage cooperative attitudes and behaviors by students
- ▶ Support educators by enforcing rules and expectations
- ▶ Turn to school staff as a resource for solving problems
- ▶ Hold positive opinions of educators

**(B) Educators who establish and maintain positive relationships with families are more likely to:**

- ▶ Experience higher morale
- ▶ Be perceived more positively by parents
- ▶ Observe higher student achievement and improved classroom behavior
- ▶ Assist students in gaining access to valuable community resources

# Successful partnership IEPs:

1. Separate the people from the problem.
2. Focus on interest, not positions
3. Generate a variety of possibilities before deciding what to do
4. Insures the result is based on objective criteria/information



# What should happen if an IEP team member cannot attend?

- ▶ A required member of the IEP Team shall not be expected to attend an IEP meeting, in whole or in part, if the parent of a child with a disability and the local educational agency agree that the attendance of such member is not necessary because the member's area of the curriculum or related services is not being modified or discussed in the meeting.

# What should happen if an IEP team member cannot attend?

- ▶ Excusal: A required member of the IEP Team may be excused from attending an IEP meeting, in whole or in part, when the meeting involves a modification to or discussion of the member's area of the curriculum or related services, if the parent and the local educational agency consent to the excusal and the member submits in writing to the parent and the IEP team, input into the development of the IEP prior to the meeting (ISBE 34-57H or Form 20 in netIEP).
  - A parent's agreement must be in writing.

Public Law 108-446 (December 3, 2004)



## ▶ During the meeting:

- Consider the seating arrangements.
- Have someone greet the parents and bring them to the meeting room if possible.
- Begin with introductions and explain the roles of the required and other participants.
- Always begin with positive statements and emphasize the strengths of the child to help everyone be at ease.



## ▶ During the meeting:

- Follow the IEP process as the order of decisions is very important.
- It is helpful in difficult staffings to send the signature page around after introductions explaining that signatures solely designate attendance and participation.
- **NOTE:** If eligibility for a learning disability is determined at the meeting, participants will need to check whether they agree or disagree with the eligibility decision beside their signatures at the end of the meeting.

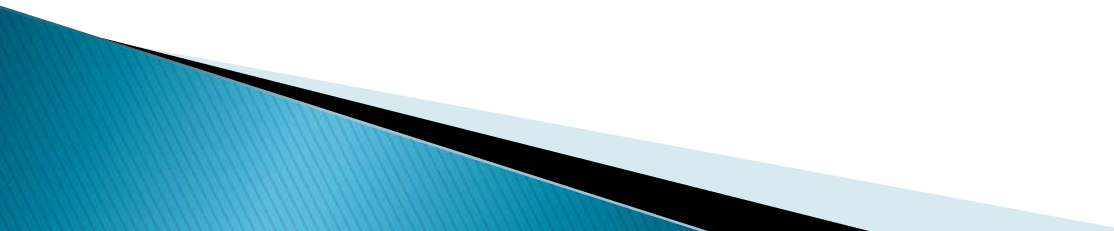




## ▶ During the meeting:

- Make sure all participants have an opportunity to share and discuss their information including the parent. If necessary, call on each member in an orderly fashion. (Discuss with staff prior to the meeting, that it is not necessary to read their reports but rather summarize the reports and discuss the impact of the information on the student's educational programming.)

## ▶ During the meeting:

- Check with the parents periodically during the meeting to see if they understand the information given or have any input about the information presented.
  - When information is needed in order to proceed with the IEP meeting, the meeting can be recessed for a few minutes, while the facilitator attempts to gather the needed information so the meeting does not have to be rescheduled.
- 

## ▶ Finally during the meeting:

- If difficult issues arise during the meeting, attempt to summarize what is being said, check for understanding with all participants and work towards consensus.
  - If this is unsuccessful, recommend reconvening the meeting to gather new information and schedule while everyone is there. Before adjourning, document what will be discussed at the next meeting.
- 