

Draft IEP's For Your Child in Special Education

Are you the parent of a child that has autism, and is receiving special education services? Are you a parent that would like to understand draft individual education plans (IEP), and how you can use them to benefit your child. This article will help you learn about draft IEP's, what the legal requirements are, and how to use them to help your child's education.

A draft IEP is an individual educational plan that is filled out, in advance, for your child. Many parents wonder if it is legal for special education personnel to do this. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is silent on draft IEP's.

The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), which is part of the Department of Education stated in the Federal Register Vol 71 August 12, 2006 We do not encourage public agencies to prepare a draft IEP prior to the IEP team meeting . . .

The public agency also should provide the parents with a copy of its draft proposals, if the agency has developed them, prior to the IEP team meeting. . .

So draft IEP's are not illegal, but are discouraged by OSEP. The Federal Register also states . . .if a public agency develops a draft IEP prior to the IEP meeting, the agency should make it clear to the parents at the outset of the meeting that the services proposed by the agency are preliminary recommendations for review and discussion with parents. Special education personnel rarely state this at the beginning of the meeting, so you may have to bring it up. The Federal Register goes on to say It is not permissible for an agency to have the final IEP completed before an IEP Team meeting begins.

The Federal Register comments from OSEP also state that parents should get a copy of the draft IEP before the meeting. You may have to request this in writing to school personnel, and I would quote the comments from the Federal Register. The request should include timelines; for example: I will expect to receive a copy of the Draft IEP at the same time as my 10 day written notice of the IEP meeting.

The Federal register also has OSEP as stating so as to give the parents an opportunity to review the recommendations of the public agency prior to the IEP team meeting, and be better able to engage in a full discussion of the proposals for the IEP.

One way to use draft IEP's to help your child, is to develop your own draft IEP. Go to your state board of education's Website, go to special education and then download an IEP form (Most states have an IEP form available for downloading). Fill out the form, with everything that you believe your child needs.

Take the form with you to your child's IEP meeting, and cross out each section as it is discussed. This will allow you to not only be an active participant in your child's IEP, but also to have your input heard.

You can use Draft IEP's to help your child. By requesting the school's Draft IEP in advance, you will be able to be an active participant in the IEP process. By bringing your own Draft IEP, you can have your opinions heard. Good luck!

About the Author

JoAnn Collins is the mother of two adults with disabilities, and have helped parents navigate the special education system for over 15 years. Her new book Disability Deception; Lies Disability Educators Tell and How Parents Can Beat Them at Their Own Game is filled with advocacy tips and resources to help parents. To sign up for a wonderful free E newsletter send an E mail to: JoAnn@disabilitydeception.com. For a link to more free articles go to: <http://www.disabilitydeception.com>

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