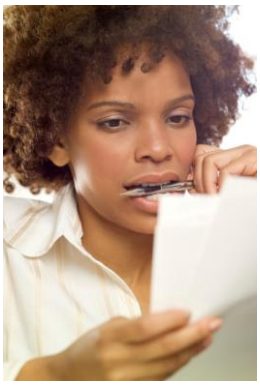
Draft IEP Tips

As parents or guardians of a child with a disability, you should receive a "draft" copy of the IEP from the school district prior to your child's scheduled IEP meeting, or in some cases when you arrive at the IEP meeting. It is an acceptable practice for the school district to prepare a draft IEP prior to the meeting. However, you may be under the impression that the draft IEP cannot be modified. It is important to recognize that the draft IEP is not the final document and is subject to change. Having a draft IEP simply provides your child's IEP team with the structure to begin the work of addressing your child's educational needs.

It is a good practice for you to request a copy of the draft IEP several school days prior to the scheduled meeting. This allows you the opportunity to become familiar with what the school district is proposing, and to decide if you agree or disagree. It also enables you to consider if there are additional items that need to be addressed. Having the draft ahead of time allows you to be better prepared on the day of the IEP team meeting, and to more fully participate in the IEP process for your child.

The draft IEP becomes a final IEP only after the team has met and had the opportunity to review it a section-at-a-time. An IEP should never be the work of one individual, but should be a team effort to address your child's special education needs. All team members, including you, the parents or guardians, should have an opportunity to participate in the IEP process.

There may be situations when it is important to keep a copy of your child's draft IEP. If you decide to keep the draft copy, be sure to label it as a draft and to record the date it was reviewed by the IEP team.



Information provided by Ohio Coalition for the Education of Children with Disabilities, 165 W. Center St., Suite 302, Marion, Ohio 43302; 1-800-374-2806.

Disclaimer: This publication is intended to provide information only, and is not intended as legal advice. You should consult a lawyer if you need legal advice.