IEP Checklist: *Prepare and Participate*

Your involvement...

in developing an effective and appropriate **I**ndividualized **E**ducation **P**rogram *or* **IEP** for your child is essential to your child's success.

While IEPs typically cover a 12-month period, they help to create the foundation for your child's future. Think of the adult your child will become. When planning, think well beyond just one year.

Get ready early, actively participate and stay connected throughout the year!

STEP ONE: Before The IEP Meeting:

Review! The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA) requires schools to give parents of students with disabilities adequate notice to participate in the IEP meeting. This notice is called ***Invitation to Conference/Prior Notice.*** The NC Department of Public Instruction considers "adequate" notice to be 7-10 calendar days. The notice must be given to you in writing and in your native language.

Carefully review the invitation/notice and consider the following:

- ❒ Is the *purpose* of the meeting clearly stated?
- ❒ Is my child 14 years old or turning 14 during the next 12 months? If so, did he/she receive their own written invitation to the IEP meeting as required when planning for their transition to adulthood?
- ❒ Who is attending? What are their roles in the meeting?
- ❒ Are there any team member excusal requests attached to invitation?
- ❒ Is the Date/Time/Location convenient for your schedule?

Respond! Read, sign and return the Invitation to Conference/Prior Notice as soon as possible and keep a copy for your records. Include in writing any of the following that apply:

- ❒ Suggestions for alternative meeting dates or times, if necessary
- ❒ A request to participate by conference call or other way if you are unable to participate in person
- ❒ A list of whom you are inviting, if anyone
  - consider inviting a friend, relative, outside professional or note taker
- ❒ A list of concerns or issues that you wish to discuss: this is your ***agenda***
- ❒ A request for a copy of any proposed IEP draft, well in advance of the meeting
- ❒ Your approval or disapproval of any team member excusal request
- ❒ A note, if you plan to audio record the meeting

Be sure enough time has been scheduled for the meeting to discuss:

- **Items listed on the Invitation to Conference**
- **Concerns or issues on your agenda**

Organize!

Carefully organize your child's records/files in an order that works well for you. If you notice that you are missing an important document, ask your child's school for a copy.

Your child's records/files should include *(as appropriate for your child)*:

- ❒ Current and past IEPs
- ❒ Report cards
- ❒ Work samples
- ❒ Evaluation/assessment results
- ❒ Progress reports on academics and IEP goals
- ❒ Notes/email/phone call logs of communication about your chil
- ❒ Functional Behavior Assessments (FBA)
- ❒ Behavior Intervention Plans (BIP)
- ❒ Other documents, such as Person-Centered Plan, tutor reports, behavior logs/reports, discipline referrals, medical records, therapy treatment reports, etc.

Prepare!

As you prepare for the IEP meeting, review your child's records/files and consider the following:

1. ***What has been accomplished?***
2. ***What has worked well?***
3. ***What needs more work?***
4. ***What are my concerns? What are my child's concerns?***

- ❒ Visit ECAC's web site, **www.ecac-parentcenter.org**, to download or review the following tools:
  - Positive Student Profile
  - Blank IEP documents and other worksheets or forms
  - NC Policies Governing Services for Children with Disabilities
  - NC Procedural Safeguards: Handbook on Parents' Rights
  - Select the **YouTube** icon and watch ECAC's IEP videos
- ❒ Write down and prioritize a list of any questions, concerns or requests that you have.
- ❒ Create a vision statement for your child's life both now and for the future.
- ❒ Make copies or ask the school to make copies of your agenda (*those topics or issues that you want to discuss and address)*.
- ❒ Gather supporting documents such as private evaluations, therapist notes, research-based fact sheets, records of past trials, etc.
- ❒ Ask your child about how things are going. What is working or not working?
- ❒ Prepare your child to participate in the meeting, if they are attending.
- ❒ Consider bringing pictures or a short video of your child to the meeting.
- ❒ Give or send a reminder note to anyone you have invited to the meeting.
- ❒ Ask the teacher(s) about your child's progress and any specific concerns or ideas they have for the upcoming year.