

Crafting Your Parent Input Statement

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Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

Congress finds the following:

Almost 30 years of research and experience has demonstrated that the education of children with disabilities can be made more effective by... strengthening the role and responsibility of parents and ensuring that families ... have meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children at school and at home.

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Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

- Parent is a member of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) Team
- IEP team must consider:
 - Strengths of the child
 - Concerns of the parents for enhancing the education of their child
 - Results of the initial or most recent evaluation of the child
 - Academic, developmental, and functional needs of the child

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Why Write IEP Parent Input?

Your parent input in the IEP is your opportunity to make sure **all your child's needs** are considered by the team.



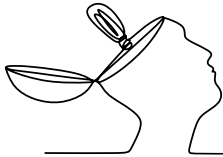
IEP is not based on medical diagnosis or eligibility category, but on your child's needs.

Your child's needs are documented in the present level of academic achievement and functional performance (PLAAFP). The PLAAFP drives the other parts of the IEP.



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What should be included?



- Priorities for the upcoming year
- Your child's strengths
- Areas of need
- What works well for your child
- What doesn't work
- Concerns (academic, social, behavior, medical, food, independence, etc.)



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Communication Tips


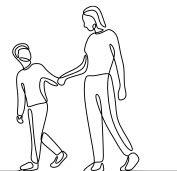
- Fact based statements
- Provide examples / data
- Use respectful language
- Prioritize – be concise
- Bullets are useful
- Keep it under one page
- Sleep on it



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Keep the focus on your child



Staff Focused	Child Focused
Ms. Peacock is always talking to my teen like a baby.	I would like staff/teachers to have age-appropriate interactions with my child to help build independence.
Mr. Green is scattered and disorganized.	For my child to be successful, they need clear expectations and concrete written steps to complete work.




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Helping the team know your child

- Strengths
- Preferences
- Interests
- Needs



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My Strengths

excellent sense of direction
great eye for photography and lighting
thoughtful and kind
Great shopper
good memory
make good choices
Determination -I know what I want
creative problem solver
pay attention to details

My Interests

My dogs
My favorite class is Science
Like to swim
I love movies
Going to the zoo and farmer's market
I like to read
Space
Picnics
Ice cream

My Preferences

I don't like to be the center of attention
I would rather use my voice than my talker
time to watch before trying something new
Let me know when I am doing something right
Use my talker to help spell on the computer

My Needs

to know what to expect
information read aloud
extra time, please wait for me to respond
Let me know you understand me- I like when you repeat what I said so I know you got it. Ask for help or to use my talker if you don't.
a fidget and to move my body


Student:

Today's Date:


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My child is good at:
Child is good at reading and memorizing.
Child also is good at learning with visuals and hands out tasks.




My child struggles with:
Sharing information (I don't know how the day goes or what they learned)
Making friends




I am concerned about:
Does child need an aide?
Are they understanding concepts?



Questions about my child's education:
How can we help my child improve in areas below grade level?



I would like to see my child make progress in:
We would like to see our child make progress in reciprocating conversations with peers and answering questions about their day.



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1. Our biggest concern for *Student* is always the development of social skills. We would like to see continuation and even an increase in peer-to-peer support, since the newest research has demonstrated that this is the single most effective intervention for students on the autism spectrum.


2. Will *Student* participate in all or part of the IEP? We would like to see at least one goal for self-determination or self-advocacy, and we value *Student*'s input to their IEP.

3. Ms. Geography has advised us that *Student* has a low comprehension of the social studies course content, and we see the same thing when helping with homework. Do they need further modifications to the curriculum?

4. As part of *Student*'s social skills development, can you suggest any extra-curricular activities or sports at school that may be a good fit? Is there a way to observe some of the extra-curricular activities before deciding?

5. We are open to suggestions regarding how we can help *Student* have the best school experience possible. We will be working with them all summer long, and we appreciate your guidance and support.

Thank you for making this a wonderful school year for *Student* - it's been an amazing period of personal growth for them.




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Here is an example of the parent input section in high school- note parent input emphasizes what student wants:

Student would like to work on his feelings, his language with social skills, and focusing in class for this upcoming school year.

Reading and language comprehension and soft skills were identified in a meeting with his MRS counselor recently.

Student feels that his strengths are Chemistry and Algebra.



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Strengths

- visual learning
- whole word reading
- follows one-step directions well
- sensitive to feelings of others
- resilient
- curious
- puts effort into making friends and keeping them
- great coping skills
- able to use words to express needs
- able to participate in conversations with family, friends and strangers at my own level
- can match sounds and letters
- loves drawing

It is our vision for our child is that she will be fully included with her nondisabled peers in the least restrictive environment. We want her to live a life of choice. We examine accommodations and modifications that can be put in place to help compensate for her challenges. Furthermore, it is our vision that everyone she comes in contact with holds her to a standard of high expectations and supports her shortcomings instead of limiting her due to them.

Weaknesses

- generalization of information
- low muscle tone
- planning and prioritizing
- organization
- paying attention
- working memory
- cognitive flexibility
- tracking time
- self esteem

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LIFE TRAJECTORY | EXPLORING

Enjoys spending time outdoors and growing things
Learns technology quickly
Strong preference to express personal style
Willingness to try new things that are interesting

Sometimes seems disengaged or uninterested
Will say "yes" because it is easy and expected
Often lets others help more than is needed

Vision for What I Want
Physical and financial security
Establishing and maintaining relationships with people of choice, not being forced
Expressing wants, needs, opinions and thoughts to people who respect them. Listening to others with respect
Know how to ask to help, when help is needed, and that everyone needs help

What I Don't Want
Being "babied" because of misconceptions about capabilities
Being alone, not engaging with others
Poor health

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Our student prepares to wrap her first year of high school, we wanted to take a moment to express our gratitude for many of the positive accomplishments we've seen over the past year and offer input for her upcoming sophomore year.

Some of the highlights we have noticed or are otherwise aware of are:

- Frequent and relevant communication from IEP Case Coordinator
- Student seems to have a solid understanding of where things are in the school and can get from place to place without substantial direction or assistance.
- A "secret life" where she is independently visiting people in the school, checking in, and getting candy.
- An overall increase in communication at home, extending beyond conveying wants / needs, or asking people to follow along with dialogue in videos / movies, (is this happening in school, as well?)
- Working with students and others in school for assistance in classes
- Unprompted singing at home when there are familiar songs on the TV or radio.

Some areas we would like to see more focus on:

- Working on decision making to increase independence. Potentially in the context of "Would you like A or B?" where C, D, and E are also options, and less in the context of "Would you like X? Yes, or no?"
- Potentially broader considerations of cause and effect in decision making. (Example: "Should I buy this thing? If I buy this thing, I won't have enough money to buy something else.")
- Increased engagement overall with peers to foster building relationships and friendships.
- Collaboration and appropriate modifications in general education classes to ensure that the class work is meaningful, challenging, and attainable.
- Color-coding has been working well, for example.
- Continuing to stay on top of speech services to reinforce verbal communication. (Example: Student still has tendency to shorten words when she is comfortable with people around her – even though she knows and is capable of verbalizing complete words.)
- When we first began the transition to high school, there was some discussion about use of a daily planner and being able to summarize what she did for the day. At the time, the team understandably wanted an opportunity to get to know her better. When can this begin?

Question / Concern:

- How can we make sure that our child is truly included in her educational program?

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My primary goals for *student* 2022-2023 school year are to

- successfully transition from Elementary School to Middle School, including planned visits and photos
- make progress within the general education classroom and curriculum
- move forward with using her augmentative communication device
- find more opportunities to participate in school and afterschool activities with peers
- have quality accommodations/ modifications to all classroom assignments to allow for full participation. When she is fully engaged in what everyone else in class is doing, there are fewer behavior concerns.

*Our dream is for *student* to become as independent as possible,
to be social and have friends, contribute to society,
to be an accepted member of the community, and to be happy and safe.*



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What are good surprises?

- Surprise all expenses paid vacation
- Surprise dinner is ready without you having to do anything
- Surprise information in a meeting you have never heard before



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Before the Meeting


- Share your input with the other members of the team
- Ask for a draft of the IEP to review
- If draft will not be ready, ask for their input
- Request copies of current evaluations to review in advance




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At the IEP Meeting

- Bring your concerns and take notes on the discussion





Concern	✓	Action	Who is Responsible	Next Update



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Questions for Understanding?



- What would that look like?
- How will we know if this plan is working?
- What are some other options?
- Would you please explain___?
- I think I heard you say____. Is that correct?
- I notice ____ at home. Are you seeing that at school?
- Can you give me a copy of the policy?



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After the IEP Meeting

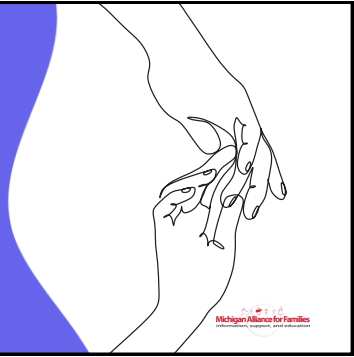
- Read the full IEP document
 - Is your parent input included?
 - Is everything from your notes reflected?
 - Notice – Options Considered, but not selected



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All Human

Be kind
Thank team members for
their time and input



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