



Knowing What to Expect in Case Conference Meetings

Parents are important participants in school meetings. In fact, parental participation is guaranteed by federal and state special education law. This handout is designed to help parents participate in school meetings and develop their advocacy skills by highlighting key parental rights and reviewing typical meeting procedures.

Article 7 is Indiana's Special Education rule that complies with the federal special education law. Where applicable, you will see citations (beginning with the number seven) showing where supporting information can be found in Article 7. [Here is a link to a copy of Article 7.](#)

- School personnel, parents and sometimes students meet to discuss and develop a student's Individualized Education Program – IEP at a The Case Conference Committee (CCC) meeting.
- The parent and the school are equal partners of the CCC and both share decision-making authority. 7-32-12, 7-37-1 (f) (3) (A), 7-42-3 (b) (5) (A)
- Remember that as a parent, you know your child's needs and strengths best. The CCC is required to consider your concerns. Your input is valuable and you are an important member of the team. 7-42-6 (b) (2)
- CCCs are to be held at a "mutually agreed upon" day and time. If the date suggested by school does not work for you, please contact school immediately and offer alternative dates/times when you will be available. If necessary, you can attend by phone. 7-42-2 (a)
- There are usually several people from the school in attendance at a CCC meeting including at least one administrator in most cases. This is because special education law requires that people with different areas of expertise attend. 7-42-3 (e)
- You can invite a friend, family member or anyone knowledgeable about your child to the CCC meeting. It is best to let the school know if you plan on bringing someone with you. 7-42-2 (d)(4)(A). If an IN*SOURCE Liaison goes with you, this person will inform the school that they will be attending but will not share anything confidential about your circumstance unless you give expressed written permission for them to communicate with the school.
- Be sure to read the Notice of Procedural Safeguards that is provided by the school at your meeting. It provides a good summary of your rights.
- Prepare for the meeting by making a list of the issues you wish to discuss and prioritize them as "must haves" and "would be nice to haves." You may find IN*SOURCE's copy of ["Worksheet for Concerns"](#) helpful in preparing your thoughts.

- Gather and organize important information you have about your child (such as test results, report cards and samples of school work) to bring to the meeting. This information should support the concerns and/or services for which you may be advocating. Starting a Home File may be very helpful.
- At the beginning of the meeting, clarify who is the Public Agency Representative. This is the person who has the authority to dedicate resources to support your child.
- Be aware that schools are to dedicate as much time as needed to accomplish the goals of the meeting, but they have many students and may have in mind a particular amount of time that they have set aside. Use the time wisely by maintaining focus on the topic at hand.
- Ask questions about things you don't understand. You have the right to understand the information and air your concerns in an appropriate manner. Try to stay focused and positive.
- If English is a second language, be sure to request someone who can explain the content of the meeting in a language that is familiar to you.
- Keep notes of what transpires at the meeting in order to review them later and to be certain that the discussions were included in the report of the meeting. It is allowable to ask for the meeting to be recorded or to ask if you can record it yourself so that you can process what transpired at a later time.
- If you need more time to understand something or feel that the meeting is becoming too emotional, you can stop a case conference at any time and ask to continue the meeting at a later date.
- If you and school personnel disagree on key issues such as eligibility for special education, the provision of services, or placement, you can ask to reconvene at another time. You can bring additional information or someone to support you at the next meeting. You may also choose to request mediation and/or a due process hearing to resolve the disagreement.
- You don't have to sign the IEP at the meeting. You can take it home to read and compare to your notes of what transpired at the meeting. You can call IN*SOURCE with questions.
- If this is your child's **first IEP** meeting, the school cannot provide any services without your signature on the IEP.
- If this is not your child's first IEP, the IEP can be implemented without your signature 11 days after you receive a copy of it. If you challenge the IEP in **writing** and provide that challenge to the school within those 10 days, the new IEP cannot be implemented until the dispute resolution process is complete. Date and keep a copy of the written descent.7-42-8 (a) (2)
- Keep in mind that building a good relationship with the school is the best way to achieve good results during your student's school years. The potential is there for many future interactions with this staff.
- **Remember**, IN*SOURCE is dedicated to assisting you through this process. We can help you prepare and we can debrief with you afterwards. In cases that are complex or difficult, we may be available to go with you to the meeting to provide support. Please reach out to us and we will connect you to a trained Regional Liaison: 574.234-7101, insource@insource.org, www.insource.org