

Event Planning Question Checklist

This checklist serves as a starting point for the Family Access Advocate to consider potential areas of need when planning inclusive school events. However, it's important to understand that every event, school, student, and family will have unique requirements. The goal is not necessarily to redesign or change events but rather to proactively identify potential barriers and communicate them effectively to ESE families.

For example, if an event has loud music or sensory stimuli, the checklist can prompt you to share that information ahead of time so parents can prepare accordingly by bringing noise-canceling headphones or making other accommodations. It's about increasing awareness and providing families with the details they need to participate fully.

Use this as a flexible tool to guide your questions and conversations with event organizers. Work collaboratively to find practical solutions that allow events to remain engaging while also being as inclusive as possible for your school community's diverse needs. Maintaining open lines of communication with ESE families is key to understanding their specific circumstances and making them feel welcomed and supported.

This checklist covers some key areas to consider, but the ESE Parent Rep should feel free to add any other pertinent questions based on the specific needs of their school's ESE students and families. Open communication with families is also crucial.

Accessibility and Mobility:

- Is the event venue wheelchair/mobility device accessible (ramps, elevators, wide doorways, etc.)?
- Are there designated accessible parking spots close to the entrance?
- Will there be accessible restrooms available?
- Are pathways clear of obstacles and tripping hazards?
- Will seating accommodations be available for those who may have difficulty standing for long periods?

Sensory Needs:

- What are the expected sound levels during the event? May need to provide noise-canceling headphones.
- Will there be flashing lights or visual stimuli that could trigger sensory issues?
- Will there be a designated quiet room/space for sensory breaks?
- Can adjustments be made for adjustable lighting levels in event spaces?

Information and Communication:

- Will information about the event be provided in multiple formats (print, digital, audio, etc.)?
- Will there be sign language interpreters available if needed?
- Can visual aids/projections be utilized to supplement audio information?
- Will instructions/directions be clear, concise, and multi-sensory?

Dietary Considerations:

- Will food be served? Are allergen-free options available?
- Can ingredient lists be provided for all food items?
- Will there be the ability to accommodate dietary restrictions (gluten-free, vegan, etc.)?
- Can students pack or bring safe foods?

General Inclusivity:

- Is the event scheduling time frame inclusive for families with varied schedules?
- Are family/caregiver supports in place to allow full participation?
- Have diverse abilities been considered in the planning of activities?
- Is the admission cost affordable for all families?