

## Facilitated Individual Education Plans (FIEP)

IEP Team Meeting Facilitation is an optional process, not required by the IDEA that state educational agencies (SEA) or school districts may provide to parents and schools. A facilitated IEP Team meeting is the same as any other IEP Team meeting, except that a facilitator joins the meeting.

### **What is IEP Team Meeting Facilitation?**

IEP Team Meeting Facilitation is a collaborative dispute prevention and resolution process used when members of an IEP Team agree that the presence of a third party would help facilitate communication and problem solving. IEP Team Meeting Facilitation can be especially useful when there is a history of communication challenges or a meeting is expected to be particularly complex or controversial.

In a facilitated IEP Team meeting, an impartial facilitator helps to keep members of the IEP Team focused on the development of the IEP while addressing conflicts and disagreements that may arise during the meeting. At the meeting, the facilitator will use communication skills that create an environment in which the IEP Team members can listen to each member's point of view and work together to complete the development of a high quality IEP.

### **What is the role of the facilitator?**

- Helps IEP Team members develop group norms, an agenda, and desired outcomes for the meeting
- Guides discussions by asking student-focused questions
- Keeps the IEP Team on task and the meeting on schedule
- Asks questions to clarify points of agreement and disagreement and assists parties in identifying workable solutions
- Does NOT make decisions and is NOT a member of the IEP Team
- Does NOT address issues unrelated to the IEP and does NOT draft the IEP

## **What are some benefits of IEP Team Meeting Facilitation?**

- May build and improve relationships among IEP Team members
- Team members may feel better heard when a facilitator is involved
- Allows all members of the IEP Team the chance to participate fully
- The IEP Team may work together more effectively and efficiently to create an IEP that benefits the student and is supported by all IEP Team members
- Keeps decision-making with the IEP Team members who know the student best
- Helps resolve disagreements more quickly than other dispute resolution processes

## **How do you request a Facilitated IEP Team meeting?**

- If a student is enrolled in one of the school districts participating in the GaDOE's Facilitated IEP Team meeting program, parents or district personnel may initiate the process by completing the IEP Team Meeting Facilitation Request form located on the participating school district's website. A list of participating school districts is located below.
- Both the parties (district and parents or student if 18 years or older) must agree to participate.
- A complete and signed request form and notice of meeting must be submitted to the GaDOE at least 7-10 days before the scheduled IEP Team meeting.
- Upon approval, a facilitator will be provided at no cost to the parent or district