# IEP meeting red flags checklist

Trust your instincts & know what to look for.

A lot of parents and caregivers leave an IEP meeting feeling that something was off, without being able to say what. These are the signs that feeling usually points to. None of them prove bad faith.

> **A red flag is not an accusation. It's a reason to ask a question.**
>
> One on its own may be nothing. Several together often mean the plan was written to fit the schedule or the budget, and that's worth saying out loud.

## In the meeting

- [ ] You were not given enough notice to prepare
- [ ] The team seems to have already made decisions before the meeting started
- [ ] You are being pressured to sign the IEP before you are ready
- [ ] Your concerns are being dismissed or minimized
- [ ] Services are being justified by what the school "typically does" rather than your child's needs
- [ ] No one can explain how goals were developed or what data supports them
- [ ] You are being rushed through the document without time to read or ask questions
- [ ] Related services are being reduced or removed without a clear data-based explanation
- [ ] Your child's progress, or lack of it, is not being directly addressed

MY NOTES

## In the document

- [ ] Goals are vague or cannot be measured objectively
- [ ] Present levels do not reflect what you know about your child
- [ ] Goals are not connected to the present levels described in the IEP
- [ ] Accommodations are copied from a previous IEP without discussion
- [ ] Services are listed in minutes but no one can explain how that amount was determined
- [ ] The Prior Written Notice does not explain the reasons for decisions clearly
- [ ] Placement is more restrictive than what was previously discussed
- [ ] ESY is denied without explanation or data

MY NOTES

You don't have to prove anything in the moment. Write down what you noticed, with dates, and ask for the reasoning in writing. That reasoning belongs in the Prior Written Notice, the first thing I ask to see.

"This is how we do it" is not a reason. Ask again, in writing, before the next meeting.

> **Checking off more than a few? You do not have to figure out next steps alone.**
>
> Book a free 15-minute consultation at myaccessadvocacy.com.

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