What are the benefits of a Facilitated IEP meeting?

- Builds and improves relationships between parents and school personnel.

- Ensures that the IEP meeting is student focused.

- Clarifies points of agreement and disagreement.

- Models effective communication and listening.

- Encourages parents and district staff to identify new options to address unresolved problems.

- Supports all parties in participating fully in the IEP meeting.

- Is provided at no cost to parents or school districts.

- Leads to resolution of conflict, avoiding use of more formal proceedings such as due process hearings.

Which school districts can offer IEP Facilitation through the State's Pilot Project?

For the 3-year duration of this Pilot Project, IEP Facilitation will be available to:

◊ All school districts in Long Island;
◊ Selected regions of New York City

Who are the IEP Facilitators?

The IEP Facilitators are individuals from various backgrounds including, but not limited to: educational advocates, mediators, social workers, attorneys and retired teachers or school district administrators. Some, but not all, speak a language other than English and/or have experience working with diverse cultures. All have received training in meeting management and conflict resolution skills, possess knowledge of the special education process in New York State, are impartial and do not represent either school districts or parents.

Individualized Education Program (IEP) Meeting Facilitation

A Guide for Parents and School Districts

Sponsored by:

**New York State
Education Department
Office of Special Education**

89 Washington Avenue, Room 309 EB
Albany, NY 12234
Phone: (518) 473-0170

What is IEP Facilitation?

When members of a Committee on Special Education (CSE) or Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) meet to develop recommendations for special education services for a student with a disability, there are sometimes disagreements or misunderstandings between parents and school personnel. When these cannot be resolved through regular communication channels, use of IEP Facilitation can be effective.

IEP Facilitation is voluntary, and both the parent and district must agree to its use. The Facilitator's primary goal is to assist CSE/CPSE members in the thoughtful, productive construction of a quality IEP. This is achieved by encouraging and directing communication around the needs of the student and ensuring that all CSE/CPSE members are working together to develop an IEP that all agree to support.

What is the role of the IEP Facilitator?

Upon request and agreement between the parent and school district to use IEP Facilitation, an IEP Facilitator is appointed. At the meeting, the IEP Facilitator:

◊ helps CPSE/CSE members to identify the needs of the child and develop an IEP that everyone can agree with;
◊ helps the CPSE/CSE to solve problems and disagreements about the IEP;
◊ helps keep open communication among all members of the CPSE/CSE;
◊ helps CPSE/CSE members develop and ask questions for better understanding;
◊ guides CPSE/CSE members to stay on task and within the time set aside for the meeting;
◊ maintains fairness and does not take sides, place blame or determine if a particular decision is right or wrong;
◊ does not offer legal, regulatory or policy advice or force a decision on the group; and
◊ is not a member of the CPSE/CSE.

How is IEP Facilitation arranged?

◊ If the parent and school district agree in writing to IEP facilitation, the school district sends the request to the New York State Education Department (NYSED).

◊ NYSED provides the school with a list of trained IEP facilitators. Together, the parent and district select a Facilitator and enter into an agreement with the IEP Facilitator.

◊ NYSED pays for the cost of IEP Facilitation. There is no cost to the parent or the school district.

Information and forms to request and agree to use IEP Facilitation can be found at: http://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/dueprocess/iep-facilitation/IEPFacilitation.html. These forms are available in five different languages in addition to English.