

## How Should I Participate in My Child's IEP? (continued)

### What are my rights regarding the IEP Team Meeting and IEP development?

You have the right to:

- Be notified in advance of the IEP Team meeting date, time and purpose.
- Have the meeting scheduled at a mutually agreeable time and place.
- Be involved in any decision made at the meeting concerning your child.
- Invite a friend, an advocate, or any individual who has knowledge or special expertise regarding your child to participate in the meeting.
- Have your child attend the meeting; the school is required to invite him or her to the meeting the year he/she turns age 16.
- Request that any evaluation reports be provided to you before the meeting takes place.
- Participate in the development of the IEP.
- Receive a copy of the IEP.
- If you disagree with the IEP, you have options for resolving these disagreements. Read your procedural safeguards for more information, contact your special education supervisor/director, or contact a member of the SEPAC for assistance.
- Call an IEP Team meeting at any time.

### What do I do between IEP team meetings?

- Communicate with your child's general and special education teachers and providers.
- Review progress reports showing how your child is progressing on his/her IEP goals. You will receive these progress reports from the school at least as often as students receive report cards.
- Arrange to visit your child's program.
- Tell the teacher(s) and your child when you see progress being made.
- Ask the teacher(s) how you can be of help.
- Let the school know if your child's learning needs change; consider requesting a new IEP Team meeting.

## How Should I Participate in My Child's IEP?

### How can I participate effectively in my child's Individualized Educational Program (IEP) Team meeting?

As a parent of a child with a disability, it is important to learn how to participate in the IEP process. Watch the MAISD Parent DVD (contact your local special education department for a copy) or contact a member of the Special Education Parent Advisory Committee (SEPAC) for more information.

### What is my role in the IEP Team meeting?

- Share your parent perspective as a member of the IEP Team.
- Share information to help other IEP Team members develop an accurate picture of your child's strengths and learning needs.
- Share your ideas for enhancing your child's education.
- Share related information that the Team may need to know.
- Ask for an explanation if you do not understand something.

### How can I prepare for the IEP Team meeting?

Be sure to inform the school if you need assistance in preparing for the meeting. Also, you may want to write down the following and bring it to the IEP Team meeting:

- Any questions you wish to ask.
- Things that your child is able to do and things he or she is not able to do.
- Information from school staff or other professionals previously involved with your child.
- A list of what you want your child to learn to make his/her life and your family's life better.
- A list of academic and/or life skills that you would like your child to learn.
- Any medical information the team may need to know about your child.
- Ideas about when and how you and the school will communicate.

Communicate

# A Parent's Guide to Participating in Your Child's IEP



MUSKEGON AREA  
INTERMEDIATE  
SCHOOL DISTRICT

**MAISD**  
Muskegon Area  
Intermediate School District  
630 Harvey Street  
Muskegon, Michigan 49442-4278

## What if I Disagree with my Child's IEP?

### What are informal ways to resolve problems?

If you disagree with the school, try to resolve the problem at the most direct level first and in the most informal way possible.

- Identify the problem.
- Identify the person closest to the problem and try to resolve the problem with them.
- While discussing the problem, talk about the facts of the issue and avoid making accusations or threats.
- Let the person you're talking to know how you feel and have suggestions ready on how the problem can be worked out.
- If that does not resolve the problem, keep going one step further until the problem is resolved. After talking with the teacher or service provider, consider talking to the principal or assistant principal, then the Special Education supervisor or director.

### What formal methods are there to resolve problems with the school?

If the problem cannot be resolved informally, consider using formal methods that include:

- Facilitated IEP Team Meeting—A parent may request that a neutral facilitator attend the IEP to assist the parent and the school in coming to agreement.
- Mediation—A parent or public agency may request mediation. Mediation is a voluntary process available by request of either parents or school officials to resolve a dispute regarding special education matters. Mediation may be requested at any time. If the parent or school is unsatisfied with the results of mediation, the parties may then decide to proceed with a due process hearing or state complaint.

*For more information on facilitated IEP team meetings or mediation, contact Mediation and Restorative Services in Muskegon, MI at 231-767-6001.*

## What if I Disagree with my Child's IEP? (continued)

- State Complaint—Any person or organization may file a state complaint alleging that a violation of state or federal law or rule regarding special education has occurred. To file a state complaint, follow the procedures outlined in the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) Procedural Safeguards Notice, May 2009.
- Due Process Complaint—A parent or guardian of the student, or a student at age 18 or older, may file a due process complaint to resolve disagreement with a district proposal or refusal to initiate or change the identification, evaluation, placement or free appropriate education of a student with a disability. To file a due process complaint, follow the procedures outlined in the MDE Procedural Safeguards Notice, May 2009.

*For more information on State and Due Process Complaints, go to [www.michigan.gov/mde](http://www.michigan.gov/mde) and click on MDE Offices > Special Education > Administrative Forms and Procedures.*



*Collaborate*

## Where Can I Go For Help?

### Additional Resources for Parents

- **Michigan Administrative Rules for Special Education** (effective October 2013)  
**For an online copy, go to:**  
 ► [www.muskegonisd.org](http://www.muskegonisd.org); click on Academic Services > Special Education > Legal  
**For printed copies:**  
 ► Call the Center for Educational Networking at 888-463-7656 Toll Free  
 ► Call the MAISD at 231-767-7251
- **Michigan Department of Education Procedural Safeguards Notice** (May 2009). For an online copy, go to [www.muskegonisd.org](http://www.muskegonisd.org) > Academic Services > Parent Resources > Laws and Rules.
- **Special Education: An Advocate's Guide**  
 Contact the Michigan Protection and Advocacy Service (MPAS) at 800-288-5923 for a printed copy. There is a cost for this guide.
- **Local District Special Education Contacts**
  - Fruitport Schools 231-865-3188
  - Holton Schools 231-821-1725
  - Mona Shores Schools 231-780-4751
  - Montague Schools 231-894-2661
  - Muskegon Public Schools 231-720-2010
  - North Muskegon Schools 231-719-4110
  - Oakridge Schools 231-788-7300
  - Orchard View Schools 231-760-1400
  - Ravenna Schools 231-853-2218
  - Reeths-Puffer Schools 231-744-1647
  - Whitehall Schools 231-893-1020
  - Muskegon Hts. Public School Academy System 231-830-3700
  - Muskegon Covenant Academy 231-766-7500
  - Muskegon Montessori Academy for Environmental Change 231-766-7500
  - Three Oaks Academy 231-767-3365
  - Timberland Academy 231-767-9700
- **Muskegon Area Intermediate School District**
  - Special Education 231-767-7251
  - Wesley School 231-773-9158
  - Website: [www.muskegonisd.org](http://www.muskegonisd.org)

## PAC Membership Contact Information

<b>Fruitport</b> Amber Reilly	.....616-502-5782
<b>Holton</b> Julie Brantman	.....821-9226
<b>Mona Shores</b> Janet Brushman	.....759-8950
<b>Montague</b> Open	.....
<b>Muskegon Public Schools</b> Shannon Polidori	.....730-4668
<b>North Muskegon</b> Cyndi Blair	.....744-9365
<b>Oakridge</b> Amy Weberg	.....747-9022
<b>Orchard View</b> Melissa Bengtson	.....773-6839
<b>Ravenna</b> Laura Peterson	.....853-0526
<b>Reeths-Puffer</b> Karla White	.....744-0895
<b>Whitehall</b> Laurie Gilbert	.....893-1411
<b>Muskegon Heights Public School Academy System</b> Open	.....
<b>Muskegon Covenant Academy</b> Open	.....
<b>Muskegon Montessori Academy for Environmental Change</b> Open	.....
<b>Three Oaks Academy</b> Open	.....
<b>Timberland Academy</b> Open	.....