

# Tips from the Field: Facilitating Successful Virtual IEP Meetings



These tips are based on Emily Surapaneni's experience facilitating multiple virtual IEP meetings through her role as a process coordinator in Columbia Public Schools in Columbia, MO.



## 1. Share a Draft IEP in Advance

- Allow time for the parents and other participants to review prior to the meeting.
- Provide a chance for families and participants to have a printed copy to follow along with during the meeting.



## 2. Plan for Confidentiality

- Close all unnecessary applications on your computer in advance.
- Use the PDF versions of documents instead of the IEP system to minimize the chance of sharing other students' information and because it is the version that is more familiar to parents.



## 3. Assign Roles & Prepare Technology

- Assign a note-taker to record information directly in the system and to allow the facilitator to focus on sharing their screen.
- Assign someone to monitor the chat and switch hosting so they can monitor the waiting room to admit any attendees who arrive late.
- Enable sharing in advance to make sure everyone can easily share their screen during the meeting.



## 4. Share Scheduling Information in Multiple Ways

- Send a calendar invite with the meeting information included.
- Provide the link to the parent in the format that is easiest for them (e.g., email, text) in addition to the information in the Notice of Meeting.



## 5. Have Intentional Introductions

- Have the meeting facilitator (often the case manager) guide the introductions as everyone sees attendees on the screen in a different order.
- As needed, rename participant names to ensure the full name appears in the meeting application.



## 6. Be Flexible with Meeting Structure

- If parents cannot attend via zoom or another meeting software program, give them the option of attending via phone.
- If the parent prefers to be in person, if possible, consider having the parent and case manager together in the building (following social distancing guidelines), and the rest of the team attending virtually.

*This material was produced under the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, Award No. H326C190002. David Emenheiser serves as the project officer. The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the positions or policies of the U.S. Department of Education. No official endorsement by the U.S. Department of Education of any product, commodity, service, or enterprise mentioned on this website is intended or should be inferred.*