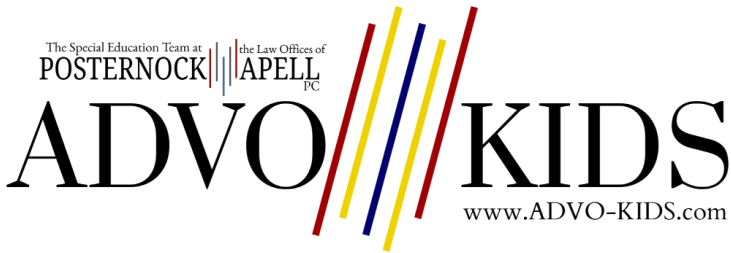




# WAYS TO MAXIMIZE PARENT ADVOCACY



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**Parents are key members of their child's IEP team. Consider these six strategies to exercise your right to meaningful participation and advocacy.**

## INVOLVE

Connect with the parent advisory group dedicated to your child's school to keep abreast of programs, laws, and to share knowledge. In New Jersey, these groups are known as SEPAGS (Special Education Parent Advisory Group).

See N.J.A.C. 6A:14-1.2(h)

## ORGANIZE

Create a 3-ring binder to organize your documents and reports to support your child's educational needs. Use dividers and folders to make the binder easy to navigate and update it often. A second binder should also be used for 'archived' items that are not relevant to their current needs or program.



## PREPARE

Review your IEP binder (see *Organize above*) so it is fresh in your mind's eye and easy to navigate if needed during a meeting. Create a list of questions with room to jot down answers and highlight sections of the IEP, evaluations, or report cards you want to address and/or seek clarification.



## INQUIRE

Asking the right questions will lead to the right answers. If you are unsure of a proposal or the data used to develop the proposal, it is well within your right to request clarification in writing.

## SHARE

Information from your child's doctors, counselors, and other professional supports outside of school can be helpful when designing programs and services to support their educational needs/goals.

## ATTEND

Your attendance at every IEP meeting is important. If you cannot attend in person, ask for virtual and/or phone options. You may also request the meeting be rescheduled.

Note: Meetings can be held without your presence if you do not respond or collaborate with the school to attend via alternative means.

See: § 300.322