

Ideas for Student Participation

- **Prepare and send meeting invitations:** teams report increased general education teacher attendance when the student extends the invite to their meeting
- **Conduct introductions:** a great way for student's to start small at IEP meetings and for the team to see what the student understands of everyone's role in their life
- **Communicate strengths, preferences, interests, and needs:** student may communicate this in a variety of ways—verbally, written, with use of AAC device, presentation, or many more!
- **Request Accommodations:** student can attend the meeting to provide input about their accommodations. They know what works for them and may have ideas the rest of the team didn't consider.
- **Share future goals, dreams, and aspirations:** Again, the student knows better than anyone what motivates them towards their future. Even if it seems unattainable now, see their vision as a start to an exploration. It can be very empowering for students to express this to their team.
- **Make a presentation:** maybe the student wants to share visually with the team. They can make a presentation with support from a team member to share their ideas.
- **Write sections of the IEP:** Once a student feels comfortable participating in their IEP meeting, ask if they want to assist the case manager in writing the IEP itself.
- **Facilitate all or part of the meeting:** some students will be able to facilitate an entire meeting with their team. This is an invaluable practice in self-advocacy and leadership!

Source: ²Cadre Webinar: "Student-led IEPs..."

Resources

I'm Determined

www.imdetermined.org

This resource out of Virginia as student, family, and teacher facing webpages with interactive resources to help students set goals, be heard, and reach for the stars. IEPs can vary slightly nationwide, but the supports and tools here apply anywhere.

Highline Student Led Conferences

www.highlineschools.org

Highline already hosts Student Led Conferences for all secondary students. This can be another time for students to get more involved in the decision making behind their education and to practice self-advocacy.

WA PAVE: Lead Your Own IEP Meetings

www.wapave.org

PAVE is a Washington state resource that offers support and information to those impacted by disability. They have multiple toolkits available related to student-led IEPs.

Sources

¹[Seattle University, Center for Change in Transition Services \(CTSS\), Student-led IEPs \(SLIEP\)](#)

²[Cadre Webinar "Student-led IEPs & Youth Engagement as a Dispute Resolution Option"](#)

³ImDetermined.org



HIGHLINE
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Student-Led IEPs

Considerations for families and students as they prepare for more student involvement in the IEP process



What is a Student-Led IEP?

Student led IEPs describe an approach to the Individualized Education Program that moves towards centering student voice and increasing student self-determination skills. Here are some quick facts about the student-led IEP:

- Encourages students to participate in making choices and decisions, increasing their engagement and accountability²
- It can be implemented at any age
- There is no one “right” way to hold a student-led IEP and it will look different for every student based on age, need, and abilities¹
- Students gain greater knowledge of disability and accommodations, increasing their self-advocacy and self-determinations skills²
- Can lead to improved post-high school transition outcomes²

How do we prepare for a Student-Led IEP?

- **Talk with the IEP case manager:** ask about what ways they incorporate students into the team and process. Sometimes other team members (such as OTs or SLPs) take the lead on doing this 1-on-1 with students
- **Talk with your student:** ask if this is something they are interested in doing. If so, utilize the ideas of your team and explore resources online (*see back*)
- **Share the history of their IEP:** along with your student, you are the longest standing member of the IEP team. There are insights you can share about what their IEP has provided in the past or how the team works. It's important to keep this conversation strengths based and positive to foster their motivation to engage

S.P.I.N.

While many students know what their strengths and needs are, sometimes communicating that in different situations or settings can be difficult. There are a variety of tools to help them gather their thoughts and express themselves clearly.

Here is one from ImDetermined.org, **SPIN**. Use this to brainstorm ideas with your student

Strengths: What am I good at in school, at home, or my community? What do others say are my strengths?

Preferences: What makes my school day more enjoyable? What would be nice to have? Where do I see myself in the future?

My Strengths

My Interests

Interests: What do I like to do? What do I find enjoyable? Hobbies? Activities?

Needs: What tools or changes help me? What are some things that are hard for me? What can others do to help me?

Self-Determination Skills

Self-determination means **making choices and decisions regarding one's own life**. In Highline, we value and center student voice, including students with disabilities. It's vital that they have the skills to express their needs. And they can practice this in the context of their IEP with the support of their team.

My Preferences

My Needs