

Organizing Your Child's Records (Educational and Other Records)

There are 3 keys for a parent who wants to be a well-informed and effective advocate for his/her child:

- 🔑 Learn about your role, rights and responsibilities in the special education process.

Note: The Parent Information Center offers free workshops and training series to assist parents and others in understanding the special education law and process.
- 🔑 Use effective communication and collaboration. Being committed to working together with other members of the IEP Team means listening to the input of all team members with an open mind, but also asking questions, sharing your ideas, and explaining the reasons for your position (e.g. how it will result in the child receiving a free appropriate public education).
- 🔑 Be well organized. Organize records and information into a single (very large) binder that has been divided into sections. Many parents find it helpful to organize records in reverse chronological order (with the most recent documents first). Some types of records you can include in your binder are: school records, including copies of your child's evaluations, individualized education programs (IEPs) and samples of his/her schoolwork; other records/ information, including information about your child's disability, developmental/medical history, and a list of allergies and current medications; and contact lists, including names, titles, addresses, telephone numbers of school personnel involved with your child, doctors and other specialists who provide care/treatment for your child. Some parents also include copies of important documents, such as their child's birth certificate, passport, and health insurance cards.

The Parent Information Center has developed a format called the IEP Organizer Format (see next pages) that you can use as a guide in creating your own organizer for your child's records.

If your child is involved with other agencies/programs, such as a Community Mental Health Center or an Area Agency for Developmental Services, you can include contact information and related records/information from the programs or providers that serve your child.

If your son/daughter is a youth/young adult, and is involved with transition-related programs, including Vocational Rehabilitation, you may want to create a section in your organizer that is focused on transition and/or adult services. As your child moves towards adulthood, it is helpful to ensure that he/she is familiar with the records/information in your Organizer. This will make it easier for him/her to become an effective and well-informed self-advocate. Your Organizer can also be modified to be a valuable resource for you/your child when your child leaves school if he/she continues to be involved with programs or agencies for services and/or supports.

There are many benefits to having your child's records well-organized. It will mean that you will have all of the information related to your child's education and other records in one place. Not having to look in multiple places for copies of forms/records, contact information, or other documents will save a great deal of time.

Having well-organized records will also make it easier for you to "connect the dots" when you are explain why you are requesting something for your child: I know that my child needs ___ because of ___ data. For example, if you are requesting that your child's occupational therapy be increased, you can explain that you are making the request based on specific documentation or data such as evaluation results, input or monitoring reports from the occupational therapist or teacher, recommendations from a private provider or evaluator and/or copies of your child's school work that show a deterioration in handwriting over time. Depending on what you are requesting, relevant data may also include teacher observations, excerpts from a home/school communication log or homework diary (which you can create), observations related to your child's behavior, discipline reports, and input from your child.

IEP Organizer Format



Introduction – This section could include:

- Picture of your child
- Birth certificate, social security, Medicaid & insurance cards
- Developmental history of your child

Special Education Laws – This section could include:

- Handouts and other materials obtained at PIC workshops
- Updated information about the special education laws

Referral – This section could include:

- Chronological history of your child
- Letters or other documentation requesting testing or special education services
- School district referral form(s)
- Written notice to parents of the referral(s)
- Disposition of the referral

Evaluation – This section could include:

- Test or evaluation results from the school
- Independent evaluation results
- Observation reports
- Dated samples of your child's work
- Other educational or medical evaluations
- A copy of the permission for testing form(s)
- Credentials of evaluator(s)
- School-wide or grade-wide assessment results
- Description of each test
- Any evaluation summaries
- Behavior rating scales completed by parents and teachers
- Parent observations

Determination of Disability – This section could include:

- Your child's coding/disability (determined by the IEP team)
- Minutes of meetings and/or Written Prior Notice of meetings regarding determination of disability
- Information regarding your child's strengths and needs
- Any medical diagnoses
- Literature on your child's disability

IEP/IFSP – This section could include:

- Written notices of the meetings
- List of IEP/IFSP team members
- Minutes of meetings, as well as your notes of the meeting
- Copies of signed IEPs/IFSPs and drafts
- Written Prior Notice of decisions made
- Behavior assessments and plans
- Transition plans

Placement – This section could include:

- Notes on visits or tours of proposed placements/options
- Parent’s response to a special education proposal form

Monitoring – This section could include:

- Report cards & Progress reports
- Dated work samples
- Teachers’ comments
- Record of any discipline incidents
- Post-test results
- Date of 3-year reevaluation
- State/district wide assessments

Procedural Safeguards – This section could include:

Positive parent-school communication can generally help the IEP team work together to meet the needs of the child with a disability. Occasionally, a parent or school district may need to use one of the following procedural safeguards. Additional information on these topics may be obtained from the NH Department of Education.

- (a) Facilitated IEP Team Meeting
- (b) Neutral conference
- (c) Mediation
- (d) Due process
- (e) Complaint

Contacts/Resources – This section could include:

- Names and addresses of people and agencies involved with your child’s education
- Literature on other local/state/national organizations
- Names and numbers of other parents
- Support group information

Medical Records – This section could include:

- Results of medical evaluations/tests
- Personal medical information card for your child (sample template is included)
- Instructions/records on any medications your child takes
- List of medical professionals and emergency numbers
- Insurance forms and numbers
- Records of childhood inoculations/vaccinations
- Copies of medical records from your child’s previous doctors/specialists
- Medical diagnoses
- Narrative of medical history of child, including childhood diseases, hospitalizations & surgeries

Miscellaneous – This section could include any information that you believe are important about your child, such as:

- Social/sports participation or contact/other information about siblings, extended family members and/or friends

Note: You may decide to keep current school year information all together in one section

Note: The Parent Information Center does not provide legal advice; this document is for informational purposes only.