

Be wiser than other people, if you can, but do not tell them so.

Lord Chesterfield

Meeting Survival Guide

Note details such as:

- Who is setting the agenda?
- How do I add topics?
- What is the meeting to accomplish?
- Will a decision be made at this meeting?
- How much time do we have?
- What is their role?
- What are their rights and responsibilities?
- Who are the decision-makers?
- How are they involved with my child?
- What questions do I want to ask?
- What concerns do I have to share?
- What is my role in the meeting?
- Will I have a say in the decision?
- What information do I have to help make a better decision?
- What works well for my child at home?
- Do I need more information on my child's:
 - Behaviour
 - Education activities
 - Education goals
- Are others looking to me for specific information on my child's:
 - Learning needs
 - Health
 - Emotional needs

The topic of the meeting is:

Note who will be attending the meeting:

I want to accomplish:

The information I need to participate effectively:

What resources might help me prepare for the meeting?

- MAPC Advocacy project materials
- BCCPAC Speaking Up! A Parent Guide to advocating for students in public schools
- School Division/District policies
- School policies
- Fair Schools Report, Office of the Ombudsman
- Parent's Guide to Individual Education Planning
- Other _____

Should I take a support person?

- Would it help me to have someone taking notes?
- Will I feel outnumbered or overwhelmed?
- Will I be able to stay on track?

It is important to include your child whenever possible.

Should my child attend?

- Is this a positive place for my child?
- Is my child able to understand & participate?
- Is my child OK with coming?

What does my child want taken into account?

Have confidence in yourself! You know your child and have important things to share!

Try to control your emotions. If you start to go off track:

- Review the purpose of the meeting.
- Focus on what will work for your child.
- Openly share information that will lead to better decisions.
- If you do not understand -- ask!

Speak when you are angry and you will make the best speech you will ever regret.

Ambrose Bierce

If you need more time, ask for it:

- You may want to consider options, reflect on the needs of your child, or gather more information. It may be better to delay the final decision rather than made a decision while under pressure.
- If you agree to something during a meeting and later realize that it won't work for you or your child, ask that the decision be reviewed.
- As the meeting draws to a close, summarize the meeting from your perspective to ensure a common understanding.

Put a plan in place in case things won't work. Discuss:

- What you would do -- contact the school?
- What the school would do -- contact you -- speak to your child?
- What your child would do -- phone home -- speak with someone at school?