Use Questions to Find Answers: A guide for parents of children receiving special education services

As the parent of a child with disabilities, you are a valuable member of your child’s Individualized Education Program (IEP) team. You have knowledge about your child from which school personnel and other IEP team members will benefit. Likewise, they have information and professional perspectives that will help you understand your child’s educational program. The following questions can help you gather information from others and be an effective member of the IEP team.

- Would you tell me more about ________________________________________________________?
- That term (or acronym) is unfamiliar to me. Would you please explain it?
- Would you please explain ____________________________________________________________?
- How will I know this plan is working?
- Would you please rephrase that so I’m sure I understand?
- What will the school propose to do about ______________________________________________?
- Could you please share the data to support ____________________________________________?
- Could you give me more specifics about ______________________________________________?
- I think I heard you say _____________________________________________________________ . Is that correct?
- How was the progress you mentioned measured?
- That is interesting. Could you tell me more about it so I’m sure I understand your view?
- How long will we need to use this intervention to determine if it’s successful?
- Could we look at other methods?
- Could you share the research on the effectiveness of that method?
- What are some other options?
- What assistive technology might benefit my child?
- Could you give a few examples of ____________________________________________________?
- What time of day does _____________________________________________________________ usually happen?
- When can I expect to receive that report?
- How much time has been scheduled for this meeting?
- What was the reason or rationale for __________________________________________________?
- I’ve noticed __________________________________________ at home. What do you see at school?
- What does “disruptive” (or another nonspecific, general term) mean?
- You say the policy is ______________________________________. May I please have a copy of that policy to read?
- Do we all agree that ___________________________________________ (summary statement)?