Getting Organized for Your Child:

Here are some tips and helpful suggestions on organizing important information about your child, their learning needs and all school-based records and documentation.

• **Keep an Advocacy Binder or Notebook**
  Collecting and organizing your child’s information can be as easy as buying a three-ring binder and regularly adding documents in chronological order. Or you might consider creating tabbed sections to further categorize the information. Be sure to add an adorable photo of your child to the cover!

Be sure to include:

- Report Cards
- State Assessments
- School Transcripts
- IEP/504/Other Educational Plans
- All Progress Reports
- Evaluation Reports
- Samples of Homework Assignments
- Samples of Class Work
- Test/Quizzes
- Letters from School
- Emails from School Staff
- Records of Phone or In Person Conversations

• **Always Communicate in Writing**
  It is very important to keep detailed records of all school-based correspondence, communications and requests. By keeping organized and being consistent with your documentation, you can effectively stay on top of your child’s educational progress and hopefully avoid any miscommunications with school staff. If a conversation with staff occurs in the hallway, school yard or on the phone, be sure to follow up with an email recapping that discussion so that you have a formal account in writing.

• **Organize Your Resource Information**
  Invest time in learning all you can about your child’s learning disability and seek out organizations that can be helpful along your journey. Search out resources to help you understand what current research recommends. Subscribe to a publication on the subject of education in order to keep abreast of current policy. Learn about the special education laws both at the federal and state levels.

• **Observe and Record**
  Keep a log or notebook available to jot down your thoughts during homework time, study sessions or reading time with your child. Document your daily observations of your child at home and of the school observations given to you by the teacher. Ask your child to share their thoughts and feelings about class and their experiences. All of these observations are important contributions to team decision making.
Get Organized and Start Advocating

Keep an Advocacy Binder
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The Special Education Cycle
- Evaluation Reports
- IEP or Educational Plan
- Progress Monitoring
- Student Samples
- Correspondence
The Special Education Cycle

**STEP 1** Identification/Referral

**STEP 2** Evaluation
Parental consent required

**STEP 3** Determination of Eligibility

**STEP 4** IEP Developed

**STEP 5** Implementation of IEP

**STEP 6** Monitoring of the IEP

**STEP 7** Annual Review and/or 3 Year Re-evaluation

*RETURN TO STEP 3*
**Needs → Goals → Services**

- Archive the documentation that identifies your child's needs for easy and efficient reference
- Have a record of the goals developed to meet your child's needs at your fingertips
- Keep up to date records of the data, work samples, communications and the services that are needed in order for your child to meet their goals

**Child Centered / Focused**

We need to have the confidence to step into this role and help our team remain child focused.

Getting ourselves organized and staying well-informed is a first step towards feeling confident.

**Positions vs. Interests**

- **Position: The WHAT**
  Specific solution proposed to resolve problem
- **Interest: The WHY**
  Underlying real need/desire that gives position its life (beliefs, values, expectations, fears, priorities, hopes, concerns)

**AS PARENTS WE SHOULD ASK OURSELVES:**

Why is this solution so important to my child? And then organize our documentation to support the WHY in order to prepare ourselves to focus the team’s attention on it.
NEEDS

- Present Levels of Performance within the IEP
- Evaluation Results
- Progress Monitoring Data
- Classroom/Teacher Observations
- Grades – Accommodations/Modifications
- Other: Behavior Data, Homework Data

GOALS

- Annual Measurable Goals within the IEP
- Statement of Grade Level Standards
- Information on Objective Measurement of Goals

SERVICES

- Statement of Services within the IEP
- Documentation related to Specially Designed Instruction: Adapted Content, Methodology, and Delivery of Service
- Progress Monitoring Data
- Student Work Samples
Being Organized is Being Prepared!

Procedural Safeguards

- Facilitated IEP
- Mediation
- Resolution Meeting
- Due Process
- State Complaint

Organizational Tips

- Always Communicate in Writing
- Organize your Resource Information
- Observe and Record

Develop an IEP Highlights Document
IEP at a Glance...

Name: ________________________________________

Parents: ______________________________________

Phone: ______________________________________

Email: ______________________________________

Present Levels of Performance: (Academics, Social/Emotional, Organizational, etc)

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Overview of Goals & Objectives:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

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________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
Learns most efficiently when:

Best accommodations and supports:

Incentives and motivators:

Organizational techniques:

Self advocacy strategies:

Road blocks:
THANK YOU

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