

IEP FACILITATION

Facilitation is a term used for a set of principles, skills, and practices aimed at helping people make collaborative decisions. In special education, **facilitative** approaches may be used throughout the entire child-centered process: **before, during, and after** meetings. A **Facilitated IEP (FIEP)** meeting refers to the use of a more neutral or independent facilitator who focuses on process, not content. The facilitator helps the team communicate, problem-solve and make decisions in ways more likely to improve outcomes for students.

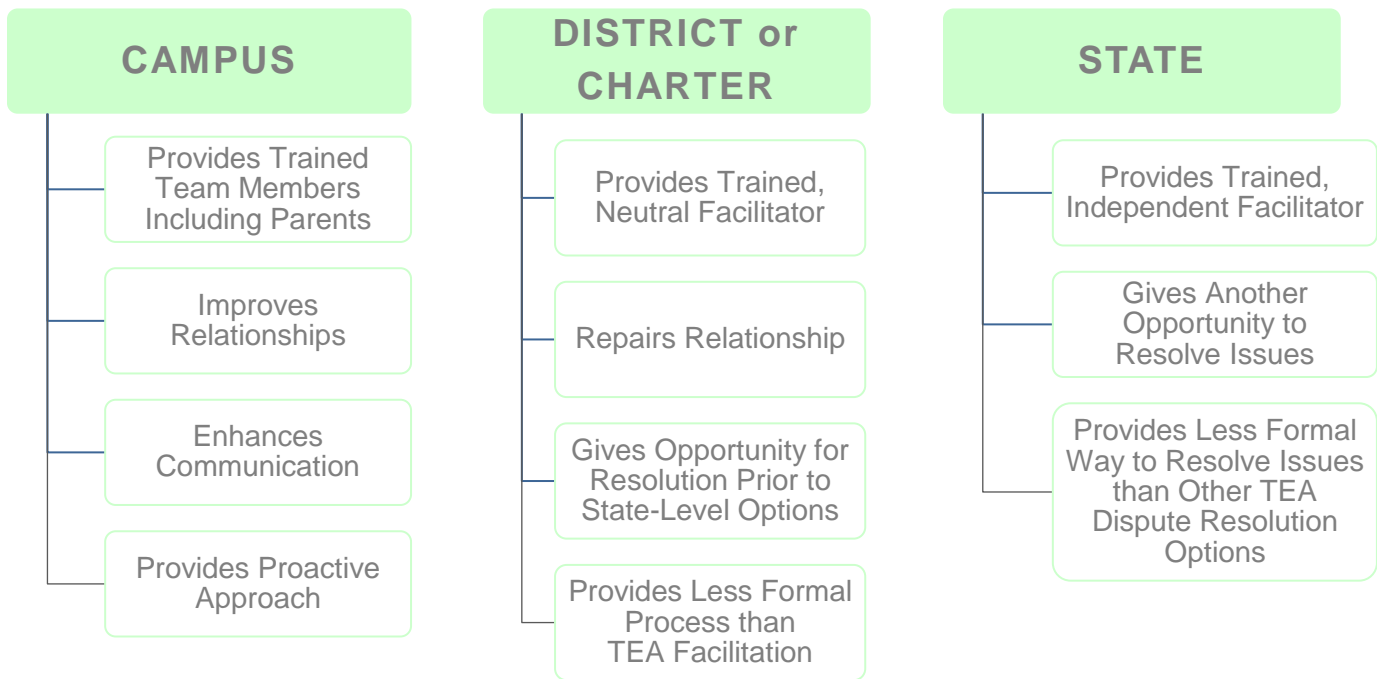
IEP FACILITATION IN TEXAS

CAMPUS FACILITATION USED BY ALL RECOMMENDED	DISTRICT/CHARTER IEP FACILITATION PROGRAM ENCOURAGED BY TEC§29.019	TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY (TEA) REQUIRED BY TEC§29.020
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All IEP team members are trained in facilitation. Use of facilitation is a routine way of conducting meetings and interacting with parents. IEP team members recognize that collaboration occurs before, during, and after the meeting. All team members use facilitation skills and practices to improve interactions and decisions. Team members, regardless of role, intervene in a facilitative manner to improve the group's effectiveness. Campus may designate a campus-based facilitator to assist with IEP meetings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A district or charter may choose, but is not required, to offer an IEP facilitation program. If program offered, parents must be provided information regarding facilitation. Parents must be provided procedures about how to request IEP facilitation. Facilitators are not IEP team members and cannot give input or an opinion on the development of the IEP. The facilitator may be an employee, an independent contractor, or other qualified individual. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TEA offers IEP facilitation as a dispute resolution option at no cost to parent or school. The dispute must relate to an ARD in which mutual agreement about required IEP elements was not reached, and the committee agreed to recess and reconvene. Parent and school file completed form with TEA within 5 calendar days of the meeting, and a facilitator must be available on the date set for reconvening the ARD. If conditions met, TEA assigns facilitator who contacts the parent and school to clarify issues, gather information and explain IEP facilitation.

TYPICAL FACILITATION SKILLS AND TECHNIQUES

PROCESS/ PROCEDURES	INTERACTION/ COMMUNICATION	QUALITY OUTCOMES
Pre-Meeting Planning	Listening to Understand	Student-Centered IEP
Agenda Visible to All	Purposeful Questioning	Data-Based IEP
Discussion Guidelines	Interests-Based Problem Solving	Commitments Monitored
Facilitated Discussions	Consensus Building	Commitments Met
Decision-Making Tools	Consensus Language	Progress Monitored and Reported

BENEFITS OF IEP FACILITATION



FACILITATING IEP (FIEP) RESOURCES

CADRE <http://www.directionservice.org/cadre/>

The **National Center on Dispute Resolution in Special Education** website includes resources on facilitation for parents and schools. Webinars, videos on facilitation, and other information provided.

Education Service Center Region 13 Facilitating IEP (FIEP) <http://www5.esc13.net.fiep/>

The website is dedicated to Facilitating IEPs including a model **FIEP video**; a **Parent Handbook for Special Education** describing how facilitation can be used by all members of the IEP team; a series of animated videos on communication skills; and other resources.

Education Service Center Region 13 E-Campus Catalog <http://ecampus.esc13.net>

A free online course, **The Basics: Facilitating IEPs**, introduces facilitation skills, techniques, and resources. **FA1219851 (ENGLISH)** OR **SP1221588 (SPANISH)**

Legal Framework IDEA 2004 <http://framework.esc18.net>

A website, authorized by TEA and maintained by ESC Region 18, houses the electronic IDEA Legal Framework; Texas **Procedural Safeguards; A Guide to the Admission, Dismissal, and Review Process**; and each district or charter's policies and procedures related to special education.

Texas Education Agency (TEA) <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index2.aspx?id=25769815968>

The **TEA Individualized Education Program Facilitation** website defines facilitation at the local and state levels; outlines conditions for a facilitator; and provides a link to the form for requesting facilitation.

Texas Education Code TEC §29.019 and TEC §29.020

These regulations support facilitation in ALL meetings; encourage optional IEP facilitation programs at the district or charter level; and require facilitation as a dispute resolution option at the state level.