

**Down Syndrome
Advocates in
Action**



Sample Questions Parents Can Ask at IEP Meetings

To Ensure Baseline Data is Included for Each Goal

“I’d like to confirm that baseline data will be added to each goal. That’s essential for tracking progress and meeting IDEA’s requirement for measurable goals.”

General - To Clarify FAPE and Decision-Making

“Can you help me understand how this IEP ensures my child is receiving a Free Appropriate Public Education under IDEA and Nebraska Rule 51?”

To Request Data Behind Decisions

“What data is the team using make this decision?”

To Address Inclusion and LRE

*“What data shows that my child cannot make meaningful progress in the general education setting **with supports?**”*

To Push Back Gently on Vague or Flexible Language

“Can we clarify the primary service delivery model and location, and specify when changes would require an IEP team meeting?”

To Address Staffing or District Practices

“Is this decision based on my child’s individual needs, or on current staffing or district practices?”

To Ask for Alternatives (Without Backing Down)

“If that option isn’t being offered, what alternatives is the team proposing to meet the same identified need?”

To Ensure Written Accountability

“Can you include that in the IEP so we are all clear on what will be provided?”

To Request Documentation

“Can you document in the IEP why this support or service is not being considered for my child?”

To Activate Procedural Safeguards

“If the team is declining this request, can you provide Prior Written Notice explaining the decision and all the data used to make this decision?”

To Clarify Legal Authority

“Can you show me where IDEA or Nebraska Rule 51 allows a district practice to override individualized IEP decisions?”

Gentle Follow-Up That Keeps the Door Open

“I want to make sure we’re making decisions based on my child’s needs and current best practices, not on what’s typically done.”

One-Sentence Reminder for Families

Districts may have standard practices—but IDEA requires individualized decisions.

One Simple Follow-Up Families Can Always Use

“Can you help me understand this better?”

This question alone often shifts the tone and invites clearer explanations.

Why These Questions Matter

These questions:

- Keep the focus on **student need and data**
- Signal that the family understands their rights
- Encourage clearer documentation
- Support collaboration while protecting FAPE

Our goal is not conflict—it’s **clarity, collaboration, and empowerment**, so families have the tools and language they need to advocate effectively. IDEA and Nebraska Rule 51 provide important protections for students, but those protections work best when families understand them and feel empowered to use them. When procedural safeguards are not exercised, IEP teams may not fully examine alternatives or supports, which can impact whether a student is receiving FAPE.

If something in your child’s IEP doesn’t sit right, trust your instincts. Ask for clarification.

DSAANE is here to help you review, understand, and prepare for informed IEP conversations.

- Use [this link](#) to request an IEP review.
- *This document is for educational purposes only and is not legal advice.*