

IEP 101:

Individualized Education Program



HIGHLINE
PUBLIC SCHOOLS



“We begin by acknowledging that we are on the ancestral land stewarded since time immemorial by the Salish people of the Duwamish, Green, White, Cedar, and Upper Puyallup Rivers, many of these giving birth to the contemporary citizens of the Muckleshoot Indian Tribe. We honor and give thanks that we are able to collectively engage in this conversation on their sacred homelands about the future of teaching and caring for our sacred children and youth.”

Highline Public Schools
Land Acknowledgement





OUR PROMISE

Every student in Highline Public Schools is known by name, strength and need, and graduates prepared for the future they choose.



What is an IEP?

- Individualized Education Program
 - sometimes the P is referred to as a Plan
- Describes an entire program of education, individualized to a student & their needs
- IEP Document: written, legal document that guides student's specially designed instruction (SDI)



Who? The IEP Team

- Parent/guardian
- Student
- IEP Case Manager*
- Special Education Teacher
- General Education Teachers
- Occupational Therapist (OT)
- Speech & Language Pathologist (SLP)
- Physical Therapist (PT)
- School Psychologist
- Nurse
- Principals or Administrators as the LEA representative
- Personal supporters
- Other relevant school staff

*The case manager can be teacher, ESA, or anyone with special education certification that can create SDI



When? Where?

- When?
 - Yearly
 - At a time & date that works for parent/guardian & IEP team
 - Can also be scheduled when a parent requests one
- Where?
 - Typically in person
 - Zoom or other virtual/hybrid options available by request
 - Type of room based on number of people?



Family Input & Participation

- You are an **EQUAL & VALUABLE** member of the IEP team
- The IEP meeting is not intended to just inform you of the new IEP, your feedback & input about your child is crucial
- Notetaking
 - Will notes be helpful to you? Can you bring someone along to take notes for you? Will team member take notes & provide to you?
- Before the meeting, think about what you want to share and learn:
 - Student strengths at home
 - Concerns or needs
 - Transition related questions: what's next?
 - How will you find out about their progress?
 - What can I do?



Language Access

- Case Manager is responsible for arranging an interpreter to be present at the IEP meeting
- Consider reminding case manager 2-4 weeks in advance
- District provides interpretation at no cost to you
- Translation of written document not available, so consider:
 - Requesting draft to review with someone who can interpret
 - Bringing support person to take notes
 - Follow up with teacher, family liaison, or other school/district if you need more clarification – they can utilize interpreters to ensure understanding
 - Strong advocacy required – partner with others in school/district on this effort



Procedural Safeguards

- School districts **MUST** provide a copy to families at least once a year
- Procedural safeguards protect the rights of children with disabilities and their parents
- These safeguards include the right:
 - to participate in all meetings
 - to examine all educational records
 - to Prior Written Notice when the school proposes to change or refuses to change their child's identification, evaluation or placement
 - and includes various ways to resolve parent-school disputes

Available from OSPI in 20 different languages:

<https://www.k12.wa.us/student-success/special-education/family-engagement-and-guidance/parent-and-student-rights-procedural-safeguards>

The IEP Document: page 4

- *Click the link above for a copy of a blank IEP*
- Student and family information
- List of participants at meeting, signature to confirm attendance



1. Present Levels & Goals: page 9 & 10

- a. General Education & Adverse Impact Summary
- b. Categories
- c. Present Levels
- d. Measurable Annual Goals



1a. General Education and Adverse Impact Summary

- General Education Report will describe the grade level standards for your student's current grade
- Adverse Impact Summary will describe how the student's disability is impacting their ability to learn to that grade level standard
- This is why they qualify for SDI: Specially Designed Instruction



1b. Categories

- Medical-Physical
- Observation
- Audiology
- Communication
- Adaptive
- Social/Emotional/Behavioral
- Executive Functioning
- Motor
- Fine Motor
- Gross Motor
- Adapted PE
- Vision and Mobility
- Cognitive
- Reading
- Math
- Writing
- Vocational
- Assistive Technology
- Listening Comprehension
- Oral Expression
- Physical Therapy
- Occupational Therapy



1c. Present Levels of Performance

- How your student's disability is **currently** impacting their ACADEMIC and FUNCTIONAL performance
- Present Levels inform the rest of the IEP
- Should be supported by data points: classroom grades, smarter balance assessments, standards-based assessments



1d. Measurable Annual Goals

- Goals for each relevant category
- There can be one or more goals under each category
- Goals adjust year to year based on student's progress & need
- Even if a goal needs to remain similar, what changes in **approach** will occur?
- **Objectives:** How will growth be measured?



S: Specific

M: Measurable

A: Attainable

R: Realistic & Relevant

T: Timely



1d. SMART Goal example

Poorly written goal	SMART goal
Student will improve their reading	By February 2024, Student will be able to orally read a text passage at the 2 nd grade reading level at 80 words per minute with 5 or less errors as measured by curriculum-based measurement conducted every two weeks.
Student will use calming strategy when upset	Given a choice of three picture cards of self-calming strategies, Student will independently choose a strategy card and follow what it shows in 4 out of 5 opportunities as measured by teacher data sheets by February 2024.



Source: [The Autism Community in Action, Resource article "SMART IEP Goals"](#)

2. Accommodations & Modifications

Accommodations:

- Changes to HOW the general curriculum is taught or accessed

Modifications:

- Changes to WHAT is taught
- And could be how they are assessed
- Designed by Special Education Specialists

BOTH can be provided by all educators

INDIVIDUALIZED to student



2a. Examples of Accommodations & Modifications

Accommodations

- Listening to audio recordings instead of reading text
- Capture responses on an audio recorder
- Typing notes
- Taking tests in a different environment
- Preferential (for the student) seating

Modifications

- Completing different homework than peers
- Answering different test questions
- Learning different material
- Alternate assessment model (e.g. WA-AIM, see OSPI)



2b. Supports for school personnel

- Below Accommodations & Modifications, there is a space to list out what school personnel might need in order to better support the student
- Might include:
 - classroom aides
 - trainings or professional development
 - consultation or collaboration time with other team members



3. Related Services: page 15

- A summary of the student's program & services
 - **when** services will begin
 - **where** they will be provided
 - **who** will be responsible for providing them
 - when they will **end**
- Measured in **minutes**



4. Transition planning

- Secondary transition – *additional pages 12-18 ([available here](#))*
 - Post-secondary ideas, community resources
 - Post-secondary transition can begin in middle school or earlier
 - Includes student voice in their IEP
- But also: Pre-K to K / K to 1st / 5th to 6th / 8th to 9th
- Questions to consider:
 - How will these goals support them next year?
 - Will the same services be available?
 - Is another meeting necessary? (informal or IEP)



5. LRE: Placement: page 16

- **LRE: Least Restrictive Environment**

“To the maximum extent appropriate, the student is educated with children without disabilities”

- Will list what placements were considered, selected, and rejected
- Explanation required if student will not participate with nondisabled students in classroom or extracurricular activities



5a. The Big Picture: Inclusion

- Assumptions required for meaningful inclusion:
 - Intelligence is not a singular, measurable characteristic
 - All students have different talents and skills
 - Students learn best when they feel valued, when people hold high expectations for them, and when they are taught and supported well
 - Presume competence and develop education programs based on that assumption (this is the least dangerous assumption)

Source: *It's More Than "Just Being In": Creating Authentic Inclusion for Students with Complex Support Needs*, Cheryl M. Jorgensen Ph.D, 2018



6. Excused Team Members: page 5

- IEP team member may be excused if the family & district agree in writing
- Either:
 - Their area of curriculum is not being modified or discussed
 - The excused member provides written input
- This is **OPTIONAL**



7. Medicaid Consent: page 21

- Medicaid allows school districts to submit claims for Related Services (pg 15)
- By giving consent, the district can seek reimbursement for some of these expenses.
- Consent is optional & only required once
- This will **NOT** impact family benefits in any way
- HIPAA & FERPA still protect confidentiality
- You can revoke consent at any time by contacting the district



Conflict & Resolution

- Conflict is baked into the process, makes for better outcomes
- Can start with case manager, then other IEP team members, then administrators, then district directors
- Some options based on parent/guardian rights:
 - Contacting teacher, requesting updates, clear plan of communication
 - Reach out for support, guidance, partnership (within school, within district, or through community organizations)
 - Request an IEP meeting to get everyone in the room
 - OSPI: facilitation or mediation (see Procedural Safeguards)
 - Creative option: Student-led IEPs...



Student-led IEPs

- Can begin in elementary school
- Can start with attendance & introductions of team members
- Center the team around **student voice**
- Case managers still put everything together & in the right place
- Increased participation in IEP means increased **self-determination skills**



Source: Peterson, Grime, & Friedman, "Creating Change: Student-Led IEPs as a Dispute Resolution Option"

Example Meeting Agenda

45 minutes - 1 hour, possibly more for interpretation

- 4:00-4:05 Introductions: *entire IEP team, plus interpreters!*
- 4:05-4:07 Excused absences, procedural safeguards, signatures
- 4:07-4:15 Student Strengths: *anyone who works with student + family to share*
- 4:15-4:20 Family concerns
- 4:20-4:23 General Education & Adverse Impact Summary
- 4:23-4:40 Present Levels & Goals: *bulk of time spent here*
- 4:40-4:45 Accommodations, Modifications, & Testing
- 4:45-4:55 Post-Secondary Transition planning*
- 4:45-4:50 Services
- 4:50-4:53 LRE
- 4:53-5:00 Questions, comments, concerns (and throughout the meeting)



HSNPTA: Highline Special Needs Parent Teacher Association

More info, how to join,
and resources:

HighlineSpecialNeedsPTA.memberplanet.com

