



# What you should know about your child's IEP

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# How did we get here?

Does your child qualify for an IEP?

Do you Suspect your child MAY qualify for an IEP?

What EXACTLY is an Individualized Education Program?  
(IEP)

# Qualifying for Special Education

- ▶ A student qualifies for Special Education when 2 conditions have been met
- 1. Identified by an individualized education program team as a child with a disability and;
- 2. the child's impairment requires instruction and services which cannot be provided with modification of the regular school program

# 13 Categories for IDEA Eligibility - Ages 3 to 21

- ▶ Autism
- ▶ Deaf-Blindness
- ▶ Deafness
- ▶ Emotional Disturbance
- ▶ Hard of Hearing
- ▶ Intellectual Disability
- ▶ Multiple Disabilities
- ▶ Orthopedic Impairment
- ▶ Other Health Impairment
- ▶ Specific Learning Disability
- ▶ Speech or Language Impairment
- ▶ Traumatic Brain Injury
- ▶ Visual Impairment Including Blindness

...and who, by reason of disability, **requires**  
special education and related services

# What is an IEP?

An IEP is a written document that describes your child's present levels of performance, learning goals, school placement, and services. In order to obtain an IEP, your child must first be assessed. Starting from the date the district receives your written consent to assessment, the assessment(s) must be completed, and the IEP developed at a meeting within 60 calendar days. In counting days, you do not count the days in between regular school sessions or school vacations in excess of five school days.

[34 C.F.R. Sec. 300.320; Cal. Ed. Code Sec. 56344 (a).]    *Special Education Rights and Responsibilities*  
*Written by: Community Alliance for Special Education (CASE) and Disability Rights California*

# What is an IEP?



## Tonight's Plan

- ▶ Review key parts of the IEP
- ▶ Tips on participating in the IEP
- ▶ Review **F**requently **A**sked **Q**uestions, and any new ones!

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# Understanding the IEP Agenda

## Getting Started:

- ❑ Introductions
- ❑ Purpose of the meeting Annual? Triennial? Transition? Additional Meeting? Parent Requested Meeting?
- ❑ Time Parameters
- ❑ Review of Information Eligibility Page
  - Find /check the dates for the next Annual and Triennial IEP
  - Verify your Address and Contact Info
  - Your child's qualifying disability will be listed along with a statement that explains why he/she requires Special Education Services

# Understanding the IEP Agenda

present levels

goals

school placement, and services

"It's the District's Process....How can I be a meaningful participant?"

# Know the Components

present levels

```
graph TD; A[present levels] --> B[goals]; B --> C[school placement, and services.]
```

goals

school placement, and services.

## Present Levels

The description of the child's present levels **must** contain sufficient details to allow the IEP team to determine the extent of the child's abilities and special education needs.

# Present Levels

**Meaningful participation: You have valuable information to share!**

- ❑ Student Strengths
- ❑ Parent Concerns
- ❑ **Assessment data:** State Testing, District Testing, District Benchmark testing
- ❑ **Academic and Classroom information:** Observational data, teacher input, Is homework easy or difficult? How is the student best supported with academics?
- ❑ Communication

# Present Levels

- ❑ **Gross and Fine Motor:** Is the student able to participate in the physical activities of school?
- ❑ **Social Emotional/Behavioral**
- ❑ **Vocational**
- ❑ **Adaptive/Daily Living Skills**
- ❑ **Heath:** Information from school nurse, updates from parents and family doctors. Also the school's last vision and hearing test results will be listed
  - Health Care Plans should be documented here

# Present Levels

- ❑ **Progress on Goals** Providers give you copies of old goals and report out the student's progress
- ❑ **Assessments** are shared (if applicable)
  - Provider reports
  - Outside assessments for team consideration
- ❑ **For Educational Benefit, goals will be written in the following areas of need:**  
**Is there a corresponding goal for each area of need?**

# Goals

- ▶ Describe what a student can reasonably accomplish within a 12 month period.
- ▶ Are a broad projection or idea of what you want and reasonably calculate what the student will be able to do.
- ▶ Capitalize on the student's strengths and learning styles.
- ▶ Bridge current student function to student growth needed toward state content standards for core academics.



# Goals – Legal Requirements

According to the IDEA (34 CFR 300.320(a)(2)(ii)) and California Education Code (CEC 56345) IEP goals must be designed to:

1. **Meet the child's needs** that result from the disability to **enable the child to be involved in and progress in the general education curriculum** (i.e., the same curriculum as non-disabled children)
- (AND)
2. **Meet each of the child's other educational needs** that result from the child's disability



# Goals

<b>When?</b>	Time Frame
<b>Given what?</b>	Conditions
<b>Who?</b>	The Student
<b>Does what?</b>	Observable Behavior
<b>How much?</b>	Mastery or performance accuracy and/or criteria
<b>How will it be measured?</b>	Data collection methods

# Some Questions on Goals

- ▶ Can we write a goal that gets my child to grade level by the end of the year?
- ▶ Can we have goals for every one of the second grade standards?
- ▶ How will I know if my child is making progress?
- ▶ What if I don't agree to all the proposed goals?
- ▶ I know my son/daughter has had that goal for a long time but why doesn't the team want to keep it?

# Other Parts of the IEP

## ▶ **Participation in Statewide Assessments**

- IEP cannot opt a student out of testing but can list needed accommodations or justify the need for an Alternative Assessment

## ▶ **Special Factors**

- Assistive Technology
- Provisions for English Language Learners
- Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports Plan (PBIS)
- Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)

## ▶ **Individual Transition Plan** for students 15 and older

- Identify student's goals for AFTER High School (post-secondary) in the areas of Education, Vocational, Independent Living

# Know the Components

present levels

```
graph TD; A[present levels] --> B[goals]; B --> C[school placement, and services.]
```

goals

school placement, and services.

# Placement and Services – LRE

## Least Restrictive Environment: Public agencies must ensure:

1. To maximum extent possible, children with disabilities, are educated with children who are nondisabled; and
2. Special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of children with disabilities from regular education setting only occurs if the nature and severity of the disability is such that education in the regular classroom with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily (34 CFR 300.114).

# Placement and Services – LRE from least restrictive to most restrictive



**LRE: Least Restrictive Environment is *Individualized***

# Placement and Services – LRE

**Service Options considered:** All of the potential placement and service options that the team is considering must be discussed and listed on the IEP.

## **Potential Harmful Effects:**

Your child has all the same rights and privileges of a general education student. Any *additional* supports and services must be deemed *required* for the student to make educational progress, and listed on the IEP. In order to receive these additional supports and services, there may be activities or curriculum that the student will miss out on. **The IEP team must weigh the benefits of the student receiving services against the potential harmful effects of missing out on other instructional or non-instructional school activities.**



# Placement and Services

School placement and services are listed on the **Services Offer of FAPE** and the **Educational Placement** pages of the IEP.

## **Services must be defined by Frequency, Duration and Location**

- ▶ How many times per **week/month/year** (including the length of the sessions)
- ▶ **Where** will the services be delivered?

## **Services cannot be written for longer than the length of the IEP cycle**

- ▶ An IEP cycle is one year from the last Annual IEP date.

# Tips & Tricks

**Communication on Campus** Know your school team and their roles

Your child has a **Case Manager** who is a special education teacher who will organize your IEP dates, prepare the IEP meeting document, and coordinate with other teachers and providers your child may have.

**General Education Teacher** knows classroom assignments, general education expectations

**School Principal and Vice Principal:** School rules, personnel issues, school operations

# Tips & Tricks: Know your team

**Instructional Assistant** implements instructional support designed by Special Education Teacher and/or outlined in IEP (accommodations or behavior support plan) Reports to teacher and principal.

**Related Service Provider(s)** Speech, Occupational Therapy, Vision Specialist, etc.

**School Psychologist** Provides psychoeducational assessment as well as expertise in the area of learning strengths and weaknesses.

**Academic Counselor (Middle School and High School)** Graduation and class requirements, scheduling, educational supports for all students

**Program Specialist** Assists and supports teachers and families in the IEP process, IEP team meetings and problem solving. Covers multiple schools.

# Tips & Tricks

## Get the most out of your IEP

- ☐ The school may provide you with a form to complete for parent input and/or you can create your own
- ☐ Make requests in writing
  - You can ask that your request be documented in the IEP notes
  - Follow up on requests via email
- ☐ Keep copies of IEPs and reports
- ☐ Take Notes
- ☐ Request reports in advance
- ☐ Ask Questions!



### Did you know?

- ▶ It's okay to ask for a break or to continue the meeting at another date
- ▶ You can participate by phone if necessary

# Tips & Tricks

So much paperwork! What's Important?

Creating an IEP Binder

IEP Binder: How to Assessmble and Organize

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DNEdNQaqJAM>

Understood.org



# FAQ's

## What is FAPE?

- ▶ Free, Appropriate, Public Education

## Can I bring someone to the IEP?

- ▶ Yes, it is nice to inform the school who you will be bringing so they can be prepared.

## What happens if I don't agree with the IEP?

- ▶ It's important to be clear about which parts you do agree with and which parts you may not agree with.

### Did you know?

The school can only implement what has been legally agreed to in the IEP

# FAQ's

## How do I know when to ask for an IEP?

- ▶ The IEP team must meet no less frequently than 1x per year
- ▶ A parent requested IEP must be scheduled within 30 days
- ▶ An IEP meeting is not required to resolve all school issues – Is your issue related to the IEP?

# FAQ's

## How do I know when to ask for an IEP?

- ▶ An IEP is required to make changes to the offer of FAPE

**\*Some examples:**

- New area of suspected need
- Change to Accommodations, Modifications, or Supplemental Supports
- New report or medical information that the team should consider
- Goals are met or adequate progress is not being made
- A change in service frequency/duration or discussing a new service



# FAQ's

## Who else can I ask for help or advice?

- ▶ Your child's Case Manager and School Administrators
- ▶ FCUSD Special Education Department, **start with your Program Specialist!**
  - Discuss possible Alternative Dispute Resolution remedies that are available
    - Facilitated IEP
    - Mediation
- ▶ Your CAC has parents of Special Education Students that are experienced with the IEP process that can help
- ▶ Warmline Family Resource Center [www.warmlinefrc.org](http://www.warmlinefrc.org) 916-455-9500

# Other Questions?

Every child deserves a  
**champion**  
-- an adult who will  
**never give up**  
on them,  
who understands the  
power of  
**connection**  
and insists that they  
**become**  
the best that they can  
possibly  
**be.**

-- Rita F. Pierson

toddlerapproved.com

# Thank You!

~~"It takes a special kind of person to care for a child with special needs."~~

A child with special needs will inspire you to be a special kind of person.

GLOBAL HYDROENCEPHALY FOUNDATION