

What is IDEA?

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is a law ensuring services to children with disabilities throughout the nation. This statute governs how states and public agencies provide early intervention, special education, and related services to eligible infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities.

IDEA is composed of four parts, or statutes. For each part, the U.S. Department of Education issues regulations to implement IDEA requirements.

For more specific information about one or more of these parts, click below:

Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA)

PART A

General Provisions

Outlines IDEA'S purpose and definitions

PART B

Assistance for All Children with Disabilities

Educational Guidelines for school children 3-21 years of age

PART C

Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities

Recognizes need for identifying and reaching very young children with disabilities

PART D

National Activities to Improve Education of Children with Disabilities

Includes grants and resources to support programs, projects, and activities

Additional Resources:

[Consider specific regulations or rules required for Part B.](#)

[Consider specific regulations or rules required for Part C.](#)

IDEA Timeline

The [Individuals with Disabilities Education Act \(IDEA\)](#) ensures services to children with disabilities throughout the U.S. The timeline below follows the history of IDEA, from the groundwork for the Education for All Handicapped Children Act through today. This history illustrates the growing support to states and localities in protecting the rights of infants, toddlers, and children with disabilities and their families.

prior to
1970

Before the passage of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EHA) in 1975, students with disabilities were often entirely excluded from public education systems. Schools simply refused to enroll students with disabilities. Students with disabilities were often stigmatized and subjected to negative stereotypes about their abilities and potential. They were viewed as incapable of learning or as burdens on the education system, leading to further marginalization and exclusion from mainstream educational settings.

When schools did enroll students with disabilities, they were frequently segregated into separate "special" schools or institutions specifically designed for individuals with disabilities. These institutions varied widely in quality and resources, but they were often isolated from mainstream society and lacked access to the same educational opportunities as their non-disabled peers.

The civil rights movements of the mid-20th century, including the African American civil rights movement, inspired advocacy efforts for the rights of individuals with disabilities. Activists fought against discrimination, segregation, and institutionalization, demanding equal opportunities and access to education, employment, and public services.

1972

Parents were strong advocates for their children and brought landmark legal cases and legislation to challenge the segregation and exclusion of students with disabilities from mainstream education. Cases such as *Pennsylvania Association for Retarded Children (PARC) v. Commonwealth of Pennsylvania* (1972) and *Mills v. Board of Education of the District of Columbia* (1972) established that students with disabilities could not be excluded from school and were entitled to a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE).

1975

November 29, 1975 - Public Law 94-142, also known as Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 (EHA). The EHA guaranteed a free, appropriate public education, or FAPE, to each child with a disability in every state and locality across the country ages 3 years and up.

1986

The 1986 reauthorization (Public Law 99-457) addressed early intervention and mandated that individual states provide services to families of children born with disabilities from the time they are born.

1990

The 1990 reauthorization (Public Law 110-476) changed the law's name from EHA to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, or IDEA. It also added traumatic brain injury and autism as new disability categories. The individual transition plan (ITP) was added to the Individualized Education Program (IEP) to help the student transition to post-secondary life.

1997

The 1997 (Public Law 105-17) reauthorization emphasized access to the general curriculum. The law also required parents be provided an opportunity to attempt to resolve disputes with schools and local educational agencies (LEAs) through mediation.

2004

In 2004, the IDEA reauthorization aligned the IDEA with the No Child Left Behind Act requirements. This reauthorization called for:

- Early intervening services for children not currently identified as needing special education,
- Greater accountability and improved educational outcomes, and
- Raised standards for instructors who teach special education classes.

2006

The 2006 IDEA regulations required schools to use research-based interventions in the process of assisting students with learning difficulties or determining eligibility for special education. The 2006 regulations also included:

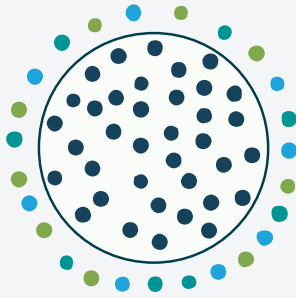
- The resolution process required when a parent files a due process complaint, and
- Shifting the responsibility to provide equitable services for parentally-placed private school children with disabilities to the local educational agency (LEA) in which the private school is located.

2017

2017, Reflects changes made to the IDEA by Rosa's Law replace references to "mental retardation" in Federal law with "intellectual disability" or "intellectual disabilities." Also, the Supreme Court ruled on a landmark case that defines the scope of FAPE requirements under IDEA. In *Endrew F. v. Douglas County School District*, the Supreme Court determined that "[t]o meet its substantive obligation under the IDEA, a school must offer an IEP reasonably calculated to enable a child to make progress appropriate in light of the child's circumstances."

The Importance of Sustaining Progress and Driving Forward Inclusion

We need to understand how support for all students, with and without disabilities, has changed over time. IDEA says that every student should have access to public education. It's our job, as educators, to keep working towards a truly inclusive education that celebrates each student's uniqueness and different ways of learning.

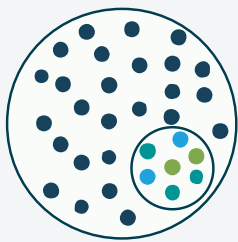
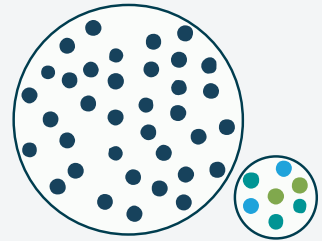


Exclusion

Prior to the passage of Public Law 94-142 students with disabilities were excluded from public education.

When *education for all* came into law, often students were placed in segregated schools and IEPs were developed to help fix deficits. IEPs were implemented in self-contained or segregated settings.

Segregation

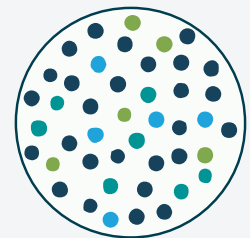


Integration

Overtime, students with disabilities were integrated in classrooms alongside peers without disabilities. Students that required additional supports would be provided extra supports and/or sometimes removed from the classroom through pull-out services. Integration helped to place students with disabilities in the general education classrooms but still emphasized they were different based on their learning.

Inclusion

Inclusion embraces that all students, with or without disabilities are different and learn differently. With this in mind, all students have a primary location of general education classes and have access to the same curriculum and opportunities. Our classrooms should be the place to connect students in a community where each individual belongs and is valued. Supports and services are emphasised and not location.



Your feedback is vital as the user of this handout.
Please share your feedback on this [survey](#).



What are your personal or professional experiences with inclusion?
What does inclusion and belonging mean to you?
How does this look in your classroom or school site?