

# Individualized Education Plans



## WHY IS IT CALLED AN “IEP”?

Under federal law known as Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), any public school student with a disability has access to a free and appropriate public education. Any child who meets criteria for special education services under IDEA will be given an Individualized Education Program (IEP). The program is based on the individual child’s specific needs.

## WHAT IS AN INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP)?

An IEP is a document that is specific to the individual student and his/her needs. It explains at what level the child is currently functioning, the child’s strengths and areas for growth, what supports, accommodations and modifications will be provided, as well as any related services. The IEP also describes duration and location of services. Another key function of the IEP is to list annual goals and benchmarks that the child will work toward in order to build specific skills, as well as a plan for how those goals will be measured.



## WHO QUALIFIES FOR AN IEP?

In order to determine if a child qualifies for an IEP, an evaluation must first take place. An evaluation is a process of collecting data and gathering information about your child’s needs in the academic setting. The evaluation will determine if your child has a disability that adversely impacts learning and performance in the academic environment. All of this information must meet criteria under one or more of the 13 different disability categories as stated by IDEA. From there, the team that collected the data (including you as the parent/caregiver) will determine if special education services are required and will begin creating an IEP for your child.

## WHAT DOES AN IEP INCLUDE?

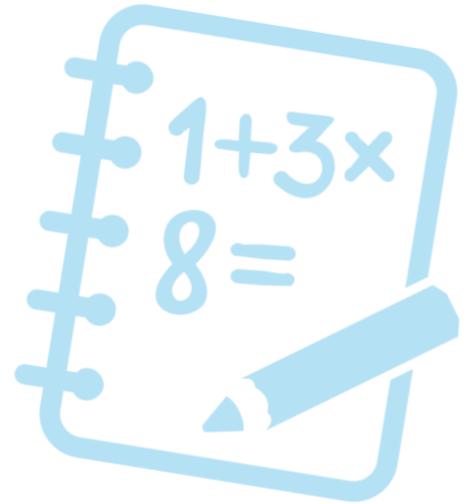
The format of an IEP varies from district to district but, under IDEA guidelines, the type of information housed within the plan is the same. It includes:

- Present levels of the child’s academic and functional performance
- Information regarding assessments
- Accommodations and modifications that will be provided
- Special education services and related services that will be provided (including a description of the frequency, duration, location and by whom)
- Annual goals with benchmarks and how progress will be measured
- Placement where the child will receive special education services

*(continued)*

## HOW DO I GET MY CHILD AN IEP?

If you are concerned about your child's academic performance, development and/or overall functioning within the school setting, it is best to make a request for an evaluation in writing. Include examples of the concerns you have, the date and your signature. Give a copy to the school's administration, your child's teacher, case manager, school social worker and/or school counselor and keep a copy for yourself. Once the request is made, a school official should reach out to you with the next steps in the process. It is also important to remember that if your child receives an IEP, you can also request a meeting at any point throughout the school year. You do not have to wait until the annual meeting to discuss your concerns!



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**For more information regarding the evaluation and special education process, please visit:**

[parentcenterhub.org/repository/evaluation/](https://parentcenterhub.org/repository/evaluation/)

[parentcenterhub.org/repository/iep-overview/](https://parentcenterhub.org/repository/iep-overview/)