



What is an IEP?

It is time for your child's IEP meeting, but you're not sure what to expect. What is an IEP meeting? How can you prepare? Who will be there? How will this help your child become more successful in the classroom?



Provided by: Family and Educator Partnership

IEP Basics

Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings give you and your child's school a chance to work together to design an IEP for your child. The goals for your child are the core of the IEP. As a parent, you play an important role in developing these goals.

What is an IEP?

The individualized Education Program (IEP) is a legal document that is designed to meet your child's individualized learning needs. The IEP is created through a team effort and is reviewed every year. It guarantees the necessary supports and services to be provided to your child to help him/her be successful in school.

Who can have an IEP?

Before an IEP can be written, entitlement must be determined. By federal law a team must determine (1) that the child is a child with a disability and (2) that he or she requires special education and related services to benefit from the general education program. Both of these requirements must be met for a child to be entitled for special education.

Who is part of the IEP team?

Team members include:

- You, the parent, who has valuable insights and information about your child's strengths and needs
- General education teacher(s)
- A special education teacher
- A representative of the school who can commit resources
- Others such as an AEA staff member, private provider or agency staff member hired by the family; You can also invite a friend or your Family & Educator Partnership (FEP) Coordinator
- Representatives from transition service agencies, when transition services are being discussed
- Your child, when appropriate, and whenever transition is discussed

What are goals?

Goals represent what you and other IEP team members think your child will be able to do in a year's time. Goals must be written so the teacher can monitor progress by using data. The specially designed instruction used to achieve the goals should be research-based. The IEP team develops goals based on the student's educational needs. Goals should help with progress in the general curriculum and may address other concerns such as language development, behavior or social skills.

Who carries out these goals?

The type of goal written determines who will carry it out. It may be the special education teacher, general education teacher, or support person such as a speech-language pathologist. Teams work together to help the student work on a goal. The IEP team considers the way—to the maximum extent appropriate—to educate your child in the same setting as students without disabilities. Remember, special education is a set of services, not a specific place.

When can you expect progress reports on goals?

The IEP must include a description of how progress will be measured and when reports will be provided. Reports should be issued at least as often as those sent to parents of students without disabilities, usually 3-4 times a year. As a parent you are a critical member of the IEP team, so if you have concerns about your child's progress, talk with your child's teacher and if you still have concerns, provide a written request for an IEP meeting.

Other Considerations

- If the student will take state and district-wide tests, with or without accommodations
- When services will begin, where and how often they will be provided
- Transition services by age 14
- Supports and strategies for behavior management if behavior is a concern
- Communication needs for the student with limited proficiency in English
- Assistive technology support
- Accommodations and/or modifications

Need more information?

Contact your Family & Educator Partnership Coordinator if you have questions or need support before, during or after the IEP meeting. The FEP can also provide information on trainings, conferences, and workshops.

Connect with the Family & Educator Connection at:

Sandy Kraschel: 800-392-6640 or 641-355-4242
or skraschel@centralriversaea.org

April Wooldridge: 641-485-9166 or [641-753-3564](tel:641-753-3564)
awooldridge@centralriversaea.org

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(A copy of the IEP Planning Form is on the next page)

IEP Planning Form

This form provides a guideline for your input at the IEP meeting and can be used as a basis for discussion. Please share a copy with your child's special education teacher prior to the meeting.

Date: _____

Child's Name: _____

My child's strengths, interests and preferences:

My child needs the most help with:

The most important goal(s) for my child for next year:

What works for my child, effective strategies or rewards:

Special considerations such as transition, social or behavioral issues:

Questions or concerns:

Other information the school should know:

For more information

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Connect with the Family & Educator Partnership at
Sandy Kraschel, 800-392-6640, 641-357-6125
April Wooldridge, 800-735-1539, 641-485-9166 (cell), 641-753-3564

