

# Individual Education Plan (IEP)

## What is an IEP?

An IEP is a written plan of action that helps children with disabilities succeed in school. The IEP specifies what special education and related services will be provided to your child during the school year. The IEP is written by an IEP team.

## Who is included on the IEP team?

The team includes the parents, at least one regular education teacher if appropriate, at least one special education teacher, and a district representative who is qualified to provide (or provide the supervision of) the special education that is designed to meet the unique needs of your child. The district representative must be knowledgeable about the general education curriculum as well as the availability of school resources. One member of the team must be able to explain your child's evaluation results. You, as parents, as well as the school, may add other people to the team who have knowledge or special expertise regarding your child. Also, your child may be a member of the IEP team when appropriate.

## What does the IEP cover?

- Statement of your child's abilities: Present levels of educational performance statements describe what your child can do and what your child knows now. It also includes your child's specific problem areas and how that impacts your child's progress in the general curriculum. This information helps the team decide what your child needs to learn.
- Goal for the school year: The IEP must include one or more measurable annual goals including short-term instructional objectives or benchmarks. The goals state what your child needs to learn in order to progress academically and in order to meet each of your child's needs related to his or her disability. There will be a description of how your child's progress towards his annual goals will be measured. You will be informed of your child's progress at least as often as parents of nondisabled children.
- Special education services: These services, depending on the needs of your child, include specially designed instruction provided by an ESE teacher or therapist. You will want to be sure that each service you and the school have agreed upon is listed in the IEP.
- Related services: These services are special kinds of help your child may need in order to benefit from school. Some children don't need any related services; other children may need several. Examples include special transportation, student counseling, and physical or occupational therapy services.
- Supplementary aids and services: These are services that enable children with disabilities to be educated with nondisabled children as much as possible.
- Opportunities for regular education: This part of the IEP explains the extent to which your child will participate with nondisabled children in general education and other settings.
- Initiation, duration, frequency and location of services: The IEP will tell when, where, and for how long your child will receive each ESE service. When you and the rest of the team

decide when and where your child will receive services, you are also deciding your child's placement. The placement information includes:

- Initiation date - the date services will begin
  - Duration - the length of time your child is expected to need the service (i.e., one semester, one year)
  - Frequency - how often your child will use the service (i.e., every day, once a week, once a month)
  - Location - where the service will be provided or used (i.e., general classroom, ESE resource room, community)
- Accommodations in the administration of state and districtwide assessments: The IEP must include a statement about any accommodations (changes to the way your child is tested) made for your child in district or statewide testing. If the IEP team decides that your child will not participate in this testing, the IEP must include an explanation of why that particular assessment is not appropriate for your child and how your child will be tested instead (alternate assessment).
  - Accommodations to the general education curriculum: Accommodations are changes in how a student is taught or tested. Examples are allowing additional time to complete homework, giving less written work, etc. It is important to know that the accommodations for the general education classroom and the standardized testing are consistent.
  - Transition services: These are activities that help prepare students for the challenges of life after school. Beginning at age 14 and updated each year, the IEP must state the child's transition needs. (Actual transition services may not begin until age 16.) Transition services may focus on job training, preparation for college, or independent living skills such as self-care, managing money, etc.

### **Additional Information:**

- Signatures – at the IEP meeting, the people who helped write it will be asked to sign their names. Signing the IEP means you attended the meeting.
- Diploma options – some students will be able to pass the courses and tests needed to get a standard (regular) diploma. Others will work toward a special diploma. The diploma option will be decided no later than eighth grade. It may be decided earlier.
- The focus of the IEP is to address the accommodations and modifications necessary to enable children with disabilities to participate in the general curriculum to the maximum extent possible.
- For more information about the IEP, please contact your child's ESE teacher, FDLRS Parent Services at 727-793-2723, or the Bureau of Instructional Support and Community Services at 850-245-0475 ([www.fldoe.org/ese](http://www.fldoe.org/ese)).