

Helping Parents Understand the IEP Process

Presented by:
Pinellas County Schools
Exceptional Student Education



Outcomes

- Introduction to Multi-Tiered Systems of Support
- Make connections between MTSS and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
- Understand evaluation
- Understand an Individual Education Plan (IEP)



35th Anniversary Celebration of of IDEA



movement of students with disabilities towards being educated in the general education settings. The 1990 amendments also provided for



Multi-Tiered System of Supports Key Components

- High quality instruction
- Systematic/Universal screening processes identifying supports needed
- Multiple tiers of academic/behavioral support
- Evidence-based interventions
- Ongoing progress monitoring



[Parent Guide MTSS FLDOE](#)

Multi-Tiered System of Supports

Data-Based Problem Solving

- Problem Identification
- Problem Analysis
- Plan Implementation
- Response to Intervention (RtI)



PCS Systematic Screen Process:

- ❖ Students receive high quality instruction.
- ❖ Core Curriculum is aligned with Florida State Standards.
- ❖ Each Grade Level has Progress Monitoring schedules and processes for student success.
- ❖ School Base Leadership Teams meet with grade level teams on average one time per month
- ❖ Screening measures are reviewed by teams to identify students in need for differentiated instruction.



General Assessment Processes

- Elementary, Middle and High Schools have unique progress monitoring and assessment processes.
- There are 3 main assessment cycles.
- The district administers “Common Assessments”
- Florida Standards Assessments (FSA)
- Florida Standards Alternative Assessment (FSAA)



Progress Monitoring Vocabulary

- ❑ Measure of Academic Progress (MAP)
- ❑ Running Records
- ❑ Universal Gifted Screener-
Naglieri Nonverbal Abilities
Test (NNAT)
- ❑ Testing Cycles:
1-Fall 2-Winter 3-Spring
Mid Terms and Final Exams



Multi-Tiered System of Supports

What To Expect as a Parent

- Information on child's progress toward grade-level standards
- Notice of concerns
- Intervention matched to need
- Feedback on response
- Involvement in data-based problem solving



Evaluation

Consent for Evaluation

The parent/guardian must give written permission before the child can be evaluated. The school staff will ask the parent/guardian to sign a consent form to show that agreement to the evaluation. The school will tell the parent/guardian, in writing, the following things:

- Why they determined the child should be evaluated
- Any other options the school staff considered and why they did not choose those other options
- What evaluations will be conducted



Evaluation

Consent for Evaluation

- Once the parent/guardian has given written permission for the initial evaluation, gathering information and evaluating the child will be completed within 60 school days.
- The 60 days do not include days when the child is not at school. It is important to have the child at school every day to help get the evaluations finished as quickly as possible.



Evaluation - Procedural Safeguards

At the meeting to obtain consent for evaluation, the parent/guardian will be provided Procedural Safeguards; parent/guardian rights under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

These rights, or procedural safeguards, are intended to ensure the opportunity to be a partner in the educational decisions made regarding the child.

[IDEA Procedural Safeguards](#)



Eligibility

After the evaluation is finished, the school will invite the parent/guardian to an eligibility meeting.

At this meeting, the evaluators and other school staff will explain the evaluations and discuss the results with the parent/guardian. The team of people, including the parent/guardian, will determine if the child qualifies for Exceptional Student Education (ESE) service.



The IEP Team may include...

- Principal or other school administrator
- Compliance Educational Diagnostician (CED)
- ESE teacher
- Speech Language Pathologist
- Regular classroom teacher
- School psychologist
- Other specialists who worked with your child during the evaluation process
- Local Educational Agency (LEA)



Eligibility

- **A child must meet one of the eligibility criteria in the State Board of Education Rules for ESE**
 - Autism spectrum disorder (ASD)
 - Deaf or hard-of-hearing (DHH)
 - Developmentally delayed (three through five years old only) (DD)
 - Dual-sensory impaired (deaf-blind) (DSI)
 - Emotional or behavioral disabilities (EBD)
 - Homebound or hospitalized (HH)
 - Intellectual disabilities (InD)
 - Language impaired (LI)
 - Orthopedic impairment (OI)
 - Other health impairment (OHI)
 - Traumatic brain injury (TBI)
 - Specific learning disabilities (SLD)
 - Speech impaired (SI)
 - Visually impaired (VI)



Eligibility

- Second, the team must determine if the child needs specially designed instruction and related services as a result of the disability.
 - The team will use the evaluation reports, medical records, school progress reports, test results, progress monitoring information from the MTSS process, and any information the parent/guardian provides to determine if the child requires ESE services.



Eligibility

- The team will decide one of the following:
- The child is eligible for ESE services.
 - The team will develop an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) which describes the ESE services the child will receive.
- The child does not qualify for ESE services.
 - The problem-solving process will continue and the school will continue to monitor progress to make sure that the child continues to be successful.
 - The child may need accommodations as a result of a disability. The child will be referred to the 504 Team.



What does IDEA tell us?

- Requires that all districts provide a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) at **no cost** to the parent.
- FAPE is the specially designed instruction and related services. Decisions are never based on funding or schedules



Individual Education Plan (IEP)

- Written document
- Comprehensive plan
- Drives services and supports based on FAPE
- Reasonably calculated to afford the student opportunity to receive educational benefit



IEP

- Not a contract
- Reflects unique needs of student
- Outlines the services district will provide
- Updated annually



IEP Team

- Child's parents or guardian
- Student (if age 14 or older)
- At least one Special education teacher or service provider
- Individual Interpreter of Evaluation Results
- LEA Representative
- At least one general education teacher of the child



IEP Team

- The general education teacher:
 - A general education teacher of the child
 - Who may be responsible for implementing a portion of the IEP
 - Currently teaching student at the grade level of the student



Specially Designed Instruction on the IEP is based upon the following:

- Present Levels of Performance
- Effect of the disability on involvement in general education curriculum
- Measurable annual goals



Specially Designed Instruction

... is designed to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability, including:

- Instruction in the classroom
- Instruction in the home
- Instruction in hospital or institution and in other settings
- Instruction in physical education

* Based on State Board Rule 6A-6.03411



What are related services?

State Board Rule 6A-6.03411 states:

- Transportation and such developmental, corrective, and other supportive services as may be required to assist a child with disabilities to benefit from special education.



Examples of related services

- Speech and language services
- Counseling services
- Occupational therapy
- Physical therapy
- Audiology
- Interpreting services
- Transportation



Examples of related services

- Orientation and mobility services
- Medical services for diagnostic and evaluation purposes
- School health services
- Social work services
- Psychological services
- Parent counseling and training



Accommodations

- Accommodations are changes to the way a child is expected to learn or how he or she is tested.
- Accommodations involve a wide range of techniques and support systems that help students participate in the general education curriculum.
- Testing accommodations provided for classroom assessment must also be provided for state and district assessment (and vice versa)
- Only accommodations allowed by individual test manuals may be implemented on standardized tests



Accommodations

Who decides accommodations?

The IEP Team

- Assessment data is used to determine required accommodations and must be addressed in the Present Levels of Performance in the student's IEP.
- Documentation about the effectiveness of the accommodations is maintained by the teacher to assist IEP teams in developing appropriate accommodations.



What is the IEP?

- ✓ The IEP is like a road map.
- ✓ The parent is an important member of the IEP team
- ✓ The IEP is written for an individual student only.
- ✓ The IEP is a plan for up to 12 months of your student's education
- ✓ Both the parent and district have procedural safeguard rights

[Getting Ready for Your Student's IEP](#)



The IEP Meeting

The School Process



Prior to the IEP Meeting

- Review the information on the child with the parent/guardian
 - Home, school, doctors, therapists
 - Make notes and bring records to the meeting
- Encourage the parent/guardian to talk with the child
 - What things are easy or hard?
 - Take notes on what the child says



Prior to the IEP Meeting

- Review the Procedural Safeguards with parents/guardian
- If there are areas where the parent/guardian and school might disagree?
 - Write down information to support your position
 - Think of alternatives
 - Decide where you can compromise



During the IEP Meeting

- Stay focused on the child
- Ask questions



During the IEP Meeting

What can be done if there is disagreement?

- Table the item for later discussion
- Be clear in your mind where you can and cannot compromise
- Communicate in a reasonable and calm manner
- Ask for other options



Questions?

Thank you!



Resources... Visit Online

- **PCS- ESE Department**
- <https://www.pcsb.org/Domain/169>
- **PCS- ESE Advisory Committee**
- <https://www.pcsb.org/Page/1696>
- **PCS-ESE Parent's Corner**
- <https://www.pcsb.org/Page/25586>
- **Florida Department of Education- Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services (BEES)**
<http://www.fldoe.org/academics/exceptional-student-edu/beess-resources/>
- **Parent Guide to Multi Tiered Systems of Support**
- <http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/7690/urlt/Parent-Guide-MTSS.PDF>
- **Getting Ready for Your Student's Individual Educational Plan**
- <http://fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/7690/urlt/0070119-iep-card.pdf>
- Additional Resource Information can be obtained by emailing Tracy McMannus at mcmannust@pcsb.org, or calling 727-588-6062.

