

# **IEP EXPLAINED**

## **Individualized Education Plan**

### **What is an IEP?**

Special education laws give children with disabilities and their parents' important rights not available to children in regular education. Specifically, the federal Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) (P.L. 101-476) gives families of special education children, who are in public school, the right to:

- A free and appropriate education through age 21 for students with disabilities who have an IEP
- Have their child assessed or tested to determine their special education eligibility and needs
- Inspect and review school records relating to their child
- Attend an annual "Individualized Education Program" (IEP) meeting and develop a written plan with representatives of the local school district, and
- Resolve disputes with the school district through an impartial administrative and legal process

### **What is included in an IEP?**

IDEA now requires that an IEP include:

- Measurable annual goals
- Explanation of how progress will be measured and how parents will be informed of progress
- Explanation of how the disability affects the student's involvement and progress in the general education curriculum
- Explanation of reasons and degree to which the student will participate with non-disabled students
- Any type of modifications and/or supplementary aids required for the student to be successful in the school setting

### **Who is on the IEP team and what must be included?**

- General education educators
- Parents
- A qualified district representative
- A special education teacher
- An individual who can interpret for the parents in their native language when necessary.
- An individual who can interpret instructional implications and provide evaluation results.

### **What is IDEA?**

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, (IDEA) is the federal law that provides for the education of children with disabilities.

### **What is FAPE?**

According to IDEA 04, children with disabilities are entitled to receive a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE).

### **What are IDEAS' requirements?**

Every school district is legally required to identify, locate and evaluate children with disabilities (20 U.S.C. §1412 (a) (3)). After the evaluation, a disabled child may be provided with specific programs and services to address his or her special needs.

IDEA gives students the right to be educated with children who are not disabled (to the maximum extent appropriate). Individual need determine the appropriateness of a placement with disabilities (20 U.S.C. §1414(d)(1)(A)(vii); 34 C.F.R. §300.347(b)).

IDEA gives you the right to:

- Have your child assessed in his or her first language
- Call an IEP meeting
- Advocate for your child
- Become an equal partner with your child's school district in making decisions regarding your child's needs. No one knows your child as well as you do.
- Your child's school must provide you with adequate information to help you along.

### **What is Special Education?**

Special education is a term used to describe the education system for children with disabilities. If your child qualifies for special education then your child's school system **must** provide special services and programs to meet your child's needs.

### **How do I get more information on IDEA and special education law?**

Contact the following organizations:

- Your local school district. The district is required to by the IDEA to provide you with a copy of federal and state statutes and regulations and any relevant policies. Be sure to request this information, along with the school district's IEP form and any parent guide that is available.
- US Department of Education Office of Special Educational and Rehabilitative Services  
400 Maryland Ave., S.W.  
Washington, DC 20202-7100  
Tel: (202) 245-7459 Website: <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/index.html>
- IDEA by State Website: <https://sites.ed.gov/idea/states/>

## **Sample IEP Request**

Date:

Your home address

Attn: Principal  
Name of School  
School Address  
City, State Zip

Dear (Name of Principal):

I would like to request an IEP (Individualized Education Plan) evaluation for my (son/daughter) \_\_\_\_\_ (DOB : \_\_\_\_\_), who is a \_\_\_\_ grade student at your school, but currently a patient under the care of physicians at Shriners Children's Hospital, (city, state \_\_\_\_\_).

Due to (his/her) current condition, I request that he be placed on an Other Health Impaired (OHI) Individual Education Plan.

You may call me at (your phone number) or email (your email), if we need to communicate regarding this.

Thank you very much.

Yours truly,

Parent Signature

Attached:  
(Examples)  
Letter / document of diagnosis  
School Note

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, (IDEA) is the federal law that provides for the education of children with disabilities. According to IDEA 04, children with disabilities are entitled to receive a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE).

IDEA 04 states that each student determined to need special education and related services, be provided these services in the LRE, that is, in the environment that promotes the maximum interaction with the general school population in a manner appropriate to the needs of the student and his or her non-disabled peers.

Individuals with disabilities should be educated to the maximum extent possible in accordance with their individual capabilities and in a manner that enables them to strive for their fullest potential. This is accomplished by:

- Maintaining high standards and expectations of each individual's achievements in correspondence with their abilities and physical limitation.
- Focusing on the strength of students and emphasizing those students with disabilities are valued and shall be included fully in the school, and district.
- Fully involving parents of students with disabilities in all aspects of their child's education with the goal of developing effective home-school partnerships.
- Engaging staff in regular professional development activities and trainings in order to keep current with effective programs and practices.
- Challenging individuals with disabilities to use their abilities to the maximum extent possible to become educated, productive, and independent citizens.