

UNDERSTANDING AND HOW TO READ THE IEP

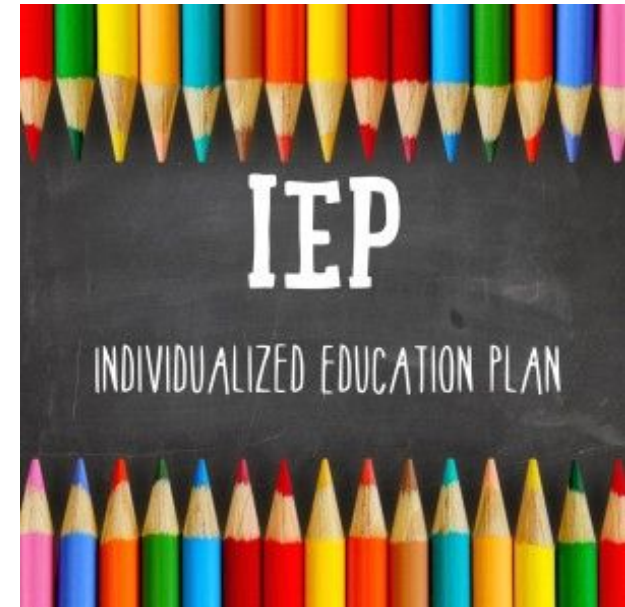
Alameda Unified Special Education Department
Family Resource Network
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OVERVIEW

In this presentation you will learn about:

- The IEP Process
- The IEP Document - What are they?
- Components of IEP
- Participating in the IEP Meeting



Remember - IDEA

- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
 - Your child is entitled to a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)
 - Your school district must provide services to eligible children who have a disability
 - With specifically designed instruction to meet their unique needs, known as special education
 1. Individualized Education Program is created to address each students needs. The program identifies each students needs, goals, classroom placement and services.
Cal. Educ. Code § 56013



WHAT'S INVOLVED IN DEVELOPING MY CHILD'S IEP?

- Developing your child's IEP involves two main things:
- The **IEP meeting(s)**, where you, your child (when applicable), and school staff members together decide on an educational program for your son or daughter, and
- The **IEP document**, which puts the decisions from that meeting in writing.

6 KINDS OF IEPs

1. **Initial**—Determines eligibility for special education.
2. **Annual**—An IEP must be held at least once a year.
3. **Triennial**—Every 3 years, schools must conduct new assessments to determine a student's progress, and discuss those assessments at an IEP meeting.
4. **Amendment/Addendum**—The Parent or Educational Rights Holder (ERH) or school can request a meeting at any time to modify an existing IEP. After written ERH request, the IEP must be held within 30 calendar days.
5. **30-Day/Transfer**—An IEP must be held within 30 calendar days of transfer to a new school district to discuss placement options and services within the new district. District must implement the old IEP and provide 'comparable' services for the first 30 days.
6. **Manifestation Determination IEP**—If a child with an IEP is suspended for 10+ days in a school year or is recommended for expulsion, a manifestation determination IEP meeting must be held. If the behavior was closely related to the disability, no further discipline can happen and the school must conduct a behavior assessment. Schools must notify you of a manifestation IEP.

Cal. Educ. Code §§ 48915.5, 56043, 56302.1, 56341.1



WHERE AND WHEN DO IEP MEETINGS TAKE PLACE?

- YOU and the school agree on where and when to have the IEP meeting.
- The school must tell you in writing:
 - The purpose of the meeting
 - The time and place for the meeting
 - Who will be there
 - Other people who have knowledge or special expertise about your child to the meeting
- This is all found on the meeting notice which is given prior to the meeting

WHO ATTENDS THE IEP MEETING?

MUST be a Part of the IEP Team

- You
- School Administrator
- General Education Teacher
- Special Education Teacher
- Evaluation Personnel
- Your Child (when appropriate)

Other Members of the Team May Include:

- Translators or Interpreters
- Transition Personnel
- Others with knowledge or Special Expertise About Your Child - Ex- Speech and Language

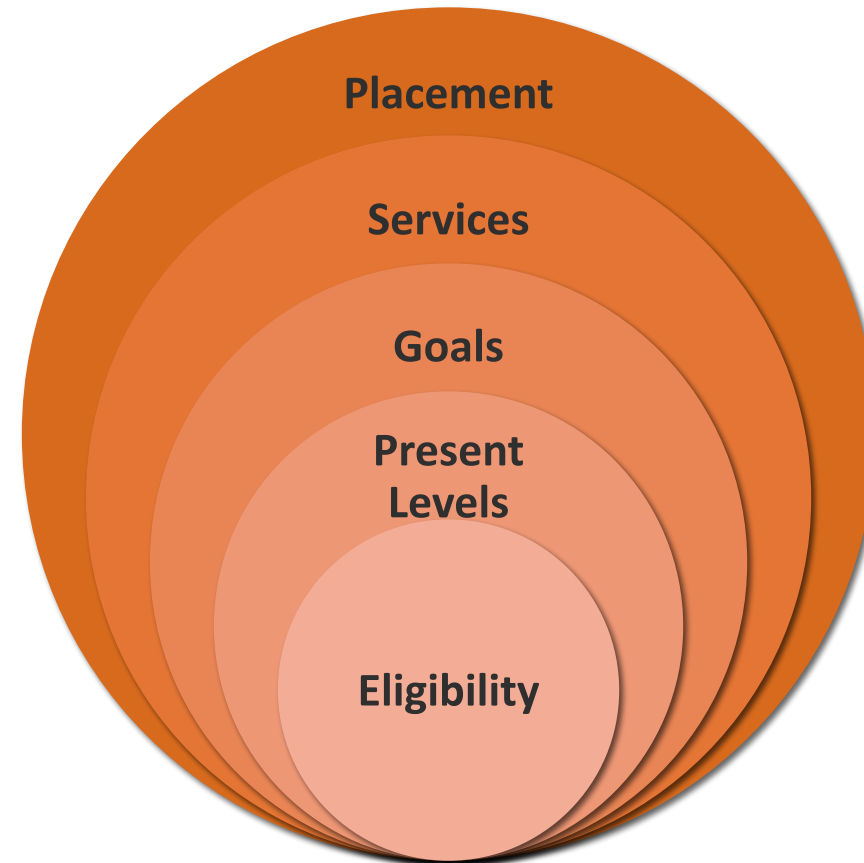
WHAT DO DIFFERENT TEAM MEMBERS BRING TO THE IEP PROCESS?

- The Special Education Teacher
 - Has been involved in your child's evaluation
 - Understands the results and can explain and interpret the results
 - Supports your child with special education services as case manager
- The General Education Teacher
 - Content knowledge in specific subject or information about the general education program at your site
- The Parent...your job at the IEP meeting is to
 - Learn and understand the process
 - Share information
 - Ask questions
 - Keep the team's focus on "the big picture" and your child's long term needs
 - Speak up on your child's behalf
- The Administrator
 - Represents the district
- Your Child

WHAT HAPPENS AT THE IEP MEETINGS

The Written IEP includes
5 main components:

1. Statement of Eligibility
2. Present Levels of Performance
3. Annual Goals and Objectives
4. Statement of Services
5. Statement of Placement





WHAT HAPPENS AT THE IEP MEETING?

- Team will develop, review, and/or revise the IEP document
- The Discussion will include talking about:
 - Your child's strengths;
 - Your concerns for enhancing your child's education;
 - The results of the most recent evaluation of your child; and
 - Your child's academic, developmental, and functional needs and supports needed

WHAT HAPPENS AT THE IEP MEETING? (CONT.)

The team will also talk about "special factors" or "special considerations"...

- Does your child have **communication needs**?
- Does your child need **assistive technology services and devices**?
- Does your child's **behavior** interfere with his/her learning or the learning of others?
- Does your child have a **visual impairment** and need instruction in or the use of Braille?
- Is your child **deaf or hard of hearing** and have language and other communication needs?
- Does your child have language needs related to his/her IEP because of **limited English Proficiency**?



PRESENT LEVELS OF ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AND FUNCTIONAL PERFORMANCE

- Present Levels of Performance areas covered:
 - Academic/Functional Skills
 - Communication Development
 - Gross/Fine Motor Development
 - Social Emotional/Behavioral
 - Vocational Skills
 - Adaptive/Daily living Skills
 - Health

PRESENT LEVELS OF ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AND FUNCTIONAL PERFORMANCE (CONT.)

- Where Does the Information Come From?
 - For new IEP and triennial IEP, it comes from tests and observations done during your child's evaluation for eligibility.
 - For annual IEP, it comes from data taken during the year by teachers and others who work with your child:
 - IEP goals' progress & report cards
 - Student work samples & teacher taken data
 - Your child's strengths and weaknesses
 - What limits or interferes with your child's learning
 - Objective data from current evaluations of your child
- A clearly written and thorough present levels is important, because it identifies the areas of learning needs, which will drive the IEP goals.

ANNUAL GOALS

- An annual goal should address your child's identified areas of need.
- Goal should describe what your child can be expected to learn within a school year.
- A well-written goal should be SMART:
 - S=specific
 - M=measurable
 - A=attainable
 - R=relevant
 - T=time-bound
- IEP Team must provide periodic progress on your child's IEP goals. Progress reports are sent at the same time when general education report cards are issued.

EXAMPLE OF Annual Goal for Reading:

By 1/21/22, Joe when given a book will follow words from left to right and top to bottom on a printed page with 85% accuracy in 3 of 5 trials as measured by teacher-charted observation/data



SERVICES AND SUPPORTS

IEP must list services and supports your child might need for FAPE such as:

- Specialized Academic Instruction
- Related services
- Supplementary aids and services
- Accommodations and modifications
- Program modifications or supports for school staff

All of these services and supports are designed to help your child:

- Reach his/her annual goals
- Be involved and access general education curriculum, as appropriate



SERVICES AND SUPPORTS SPECIAL EDUCATION

Special education is a service that includes instructional strategies and supports that are specially designed to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability to access a free and appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment.

REMEMBER, SPECIAL EDUCATION IS NOT A PLACE

SERVICES AND SUPPORTS RELATED SERVICES

Related services includes services that your child may need in order to engage in their learning experiences. Examples include, but not limited to:

- Assistive Technology
- Counseling Services
- Interpreting Services
- Medical Services - G Tube feeding
- Occupational Therapy
- Orientation and Mobility Services
- Parenting Counseling/Training
- Physical Therapy
- Psychological Services
- School Health Services and School Nurse Services
- Social Work Services in Schools
- Speech-Language Pathology
- Transportation



ACCOMMODATIONS AND MODIFICATIONS FOR YOUR CHILD

Accommodations are setup in a classroom environment that support how your child access to learning. Modifications are changes to what your child's taught or expected to do in a classroom.

Examples of Accommodations

1. access to visual schedule
2. extended time for assignments
3. seating arrangement

Examples of Modifications

1. alternate assignments
2. different curriculum
3. different test questions



LOCATION AND DURATION OF SERVICES

- Each of the services your child needs is written down in the IEP
- The IEP must also include:
 - How often your child will receive the service(s)
 - How long each service session will last (number of minutes)
 - Where services will be provided
 - When services will begin and end
- Extended School Year (if eligible) include:
 - Which services your student will receive

AGE OF MAJORITY

- Age of Majority is the legal age established under state law at which an individual is no longer a minor and, as a young adult, has the right and responsibility to make certain legal choices that adults make.... This includes signing their own IEP.

California that is age 18

- There resources out there to help
 - Regional Center of East Bay for students who are more moderate to severe
 - Here is a PDF booklet - Conservatorship
 - https://lanterman.org/uploads/lanterman_conservatorship_english_rev081710_web_final.pdf

WHAT DO I DO BEFORE THE MEETING?

- Review the information on your child including:
 - Last IEP
 - Any progress reports
 - teacher or school reports
- Generate a list of questions you may have
- Talk with your child about the upcoming IEP
 - what do they want to see happen
- Think about your child's involvement in general education classes
 - is it meaningful
 - what supports may be needed
- If your child will be attending all or part of the IEP meeting - Do a **Positive Student Profile**

DOING A POSITIVE STUDENT PROFILE

Answer the following questions about your child as a way to prepare for the IEP meeting...

1. Who is _____?
2. What are _____'s strengths?
3. What are _____'s successes?
4. What are _____'s greatest challenges
5. What are _____'s needs?
6. What are our dreams for _____?
7. Other helpful information



WHAT DO I DO DURING THE MEETING?

- Stay focused
 - Use your notes to keep yourself and the team on track
- Don't be afraid to ask questions
 - What does that mean?
 - How will we know if it's working
 - How have you supported others
- Think Collaboratively
- Be thorough

WHEN THE IEP IS COMPLETELY WRITTEN, AM I SUPPOSED TO SIGN IT?

- The IEP is a contract.
- You the parent can agree with none, all, or certain portions of the document.
- If You the parent does not sign an IEP, the prior IEP remains in place.
 - This means no new services or goals are starting or being implemented
- Make sure any disagreement is noted in writing on the IEP document.

WHAT CAN I DO IF WE DON'T AGREE?

- If the team cannot agree on a particular item after several minutes of discussion, add it to the notes of concerns and suggest coming back to it later.
- Avoid getting stuck debating a particular point over and over, especially if it feels like you are not getting anywhere.
- Communicate this in a reasonable and calm way.
- A key is to be respectful of each other, even when you do not agree
- Keep coming back to the purpose of the meeting – to develop an appropriate IEP for your child.



FINAL WORDS

Keep in mind that developing an IEP is a learning process. With time it gets easier. Maintain your sense of humor and try to relax. When parents and schools truly work together, the process works well, and the best results for your child can be realized.