

Crash Course in Special Education: How the Process Works

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Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network

PaTTAN's Mission

The mission of the Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network (PaTTAN) is to support the efforts and initiatives of the Bureau of Special Education, and to build the capacity of local educational agencies to serve students who receive special education services.

PDE's Commitment to Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

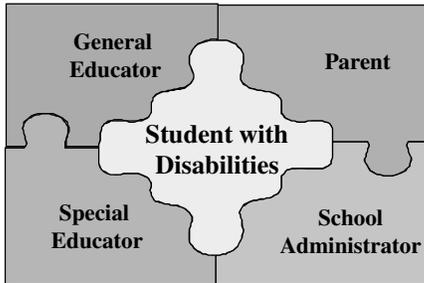
Our goal for each child is to ensure Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams begin with the general education setting with the use of Supplementary Aids and Services before considering a more restrictive environment.

Outcomes for This Session:

- Discuss the general process of special education
- Discuss the roles and responsibilities of various IEP team members

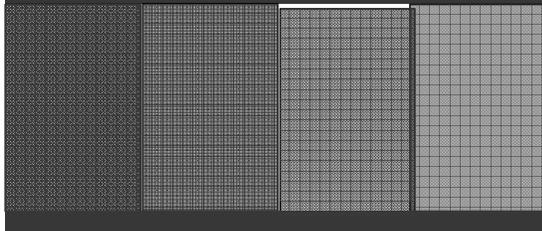
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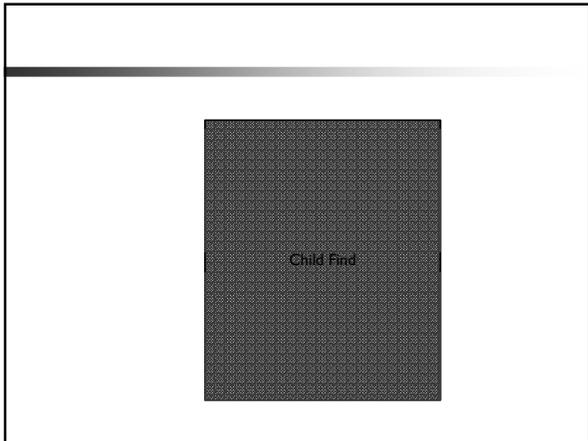
An Important Piece of the Puzzle



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Special Education Processes





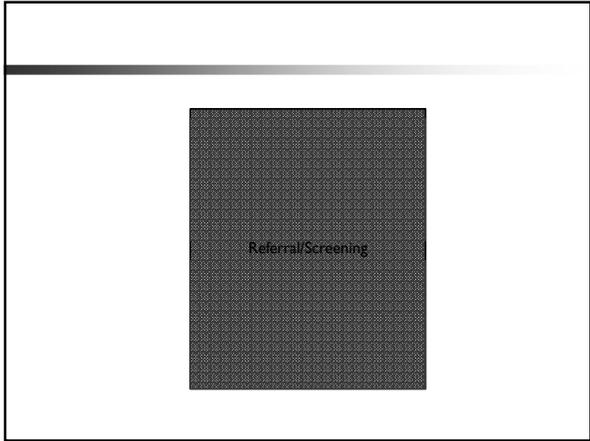
The Child Find Process- Annually

- LEAs must demonstrate they have a system in place to locate and identify children thought to be eligible for special education
- Public notice must be made describing special education programs and how parents can request evaluation
- Written information must be published in the LEAs handbook and LEA web site.

What does that mean?



- School personnel need to be aware of and let parents know where information is located regarding child find, screening procedures and the evaluation process
- School personnel, especially classroom teachers, need to know when to make a referral for an evaluation



Screening

- Hearing & Vision screenings
- Screening at reasonable intervals to determine whether all students are performing based on grade-appropriate standards in core academic subjects.

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What does that mean?



- A verification that the student was provided with appropriate instruction in reading, including the essential components of reading instruction and appropriate instruction in math.
- For students with academic concerns, an assessment of the student's performance in relation to State-approved grade level standards.

Referral

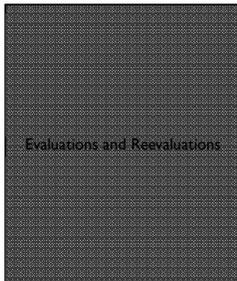
- Professional personnel employed by the LEA may refer a student for additional testing
- A referral may or may not result directly from the screening process

Referral



Once a student has been formally referred for an Evaluation, the student is considered "Thought to be Eligible"

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Forms Related to Evaluation

- **Permission to Evaluate-Evaluation Request**
 - Sent to the parent within 10 calendar days if the parent makes an oral request for an evaluation
 - Serves the purpose of getting the parent’s request in writing
- **Permission to Evaluate-Consent**
 - Contains the parent’s signature
- **Evaluation Report**
 - Contains the evaluation results and recommendations

The Evaluation Team

A group of qualified professionals:

- Must include the child’s parent(s)
- Must include a certified school psychologist unless evaluating for deaf-blindness, deaf/hard of hearing, speech/language impairment, visual impairment and/or orthopedic impairment

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The Charge of the Evaluation Team

The evaluation team must determine if the child is eligible for special education with the two-prong test:

1. Does the child have a disability by definition?
2. Does the child have need for specially designed instruction?

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Disability Categories

1. Orthopedic Impairment
2. Intellectual Disability
3. Emotional Disturbance
4. Deafness/Hard of Hearing
5. Autism
6. Speech or Language Impairment
7. Visual Impairment including Blindness
8. Traumatic Brain Injury
9. Other Health Impairment
10. Specific Learning Disability
11. Deaf-blindness
12. Multiple disabilities
13. Hearing Impairment

The Evaluation Report

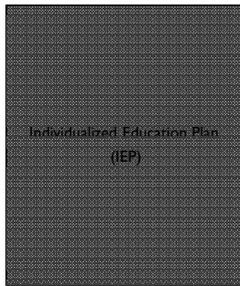
- Must be of sufficient scope and depth to provide a complete picture of the child
- Does not use a single test as sole criteria
- Includes a review of testing and assessments that were conducted, includes information from parents, and a classroom observation(s).

Timelines for Evaluations

- Evaluation Report
 - 60 calendar days from the day the LEA receives informed written consent
- IEP Team Meeting
 - Not sooner than 10 school days from the date the parent receives the completed Evaluation Report (unless waived by the parent)
 - Held within 30 calendar days of the completed Evaluation Report

If the Student Eligible for Special Education:

- An Individualized Education Program (IEP) must be developed within 30 days.
- General Education is a large part of the IEP and is expected to help develop the IEP for the now eligible student



The (IEP) Team

- The student's parent(s)
- The LEA representative
- A general education teacher
- A special education teacher
- Someone who can interpret the results of assessments (may be an existing team member)
- Others as appropriate

Understanding the IEP

INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP)
Student's Name:

Other (specify):

II. PRESENT LEVELS OF ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AND FUNCTIONAL PERFORMANCE

Include the following information related to the student:

- Present levels of academic achievement (e.g., most recent evaluation of the student, results of formative assessments, benchmark-based assessments, transition assessments, progress toward current goals)
- Present levels of functional performance (e.g., results from a functional behavior assessment, results of ecological assessment, progress toward current goals)
- Present levels related to current postsecondary transition goals (if the student's age is 14 or younger if determined appropriate by the IEP team (e.g., results of formative assessments, curriculum-based assessments, progress toward current goals)
- Present concerns for remaining one hour of one month
- Assess the student's disability affects involvement and progress in the general education curriculum
- Strengths
- Academic, developmental, and functional needs related to student's disability

III. TRANSITION SERVICES - This is required for students age 14 or younger if determined appropriate by the IEP team. If the student does not attend the IEP meeting, the school must take other steps to ensure that the student's preferences and interests are considered. Transition services are a coordinated set of activities for a student with a disability that is designed to be directed by a results-oriented process that focuses on improving the academic and functional achievement of the student with a disability to facilitate the student's movement from school to post school activities, including postsecondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation that is based on the individual student's needs taking into account the student's strengths, preferences, and interests.

POSTSECONDARY GOALS - Based on age appropriate assessment, define and project the appropriate measurable postsecondary goals that address education and training, employment, and as needed independent living. Include such areas as the specific activities and courses of study that support that goal. Include for each senior/activity the location, frequency, projected beginning date, anticipated duration, and person/agency responsible.

For students in the Career and Technology Centers, CIP Codes:

Understanding the IEP

INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP)
Student's Name:

V. LONG-TERM OBJECTIVES - Include, as appropriate, academic and functional goals (use as many copies of this page as needed to plan appropriately). Specify assigned instruction may be listed with each goal/objective or listed in section V.

Short term learning outcomes are required for students who are gifted. The short term learning outcomes related to the student's gifted program may be listed under Goals or Short Term Objectives.

MEASURABLE ANNUAL GOAL Include Conditions, Name, Behaviors, and Criteria (Refer to Annualized IEP for descriptions of these components)	Describe HOW the student's progress toward meeting this goal will be measured	Describe WHEN periodic reports on progress will be provided to parents	Report of Progress

SHORT TERM OBJECTIVES - required for students with disabilities who take alternate assessments aligned to alternate achievement standards (PAU).

Short term objectives / benchmarks

Understanding the IEP

INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP)
Student's Name:

VI. SPECIAL EDUCATION / RELATED SERVICES / SUPPLEMENTARY AIDS AND SERVICES / PROGRAM MODIFICATIONS - Include, as appropriate, for nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities.

A. PROGRAM MODIFICATIONS AND SPECIALLY DESIGNED INSTRUCTION (SDI)

- SDI may be listed with each goal or aspect of the table below.
- Include supplementary aids and services as appropriate.
- For a student who has a disability, as applicable, SDI also should include adaptation, accommodation, or modification to the general education curriculum, as appropriate for a student with a disability.

Modifications and SDI	Location	Frequency	Projected Beginning Date	Anticipated Duration
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B. RELATED SERVICES

- list the services that the student needs in order to benefit from his/her special education program.

Service	Location	Frequency	Projected Beginning Date	Anticipated Duration

C. SUPPORTS FOR SCHOOL PERSONNEL

- list the staff to receive the supports and the supports needed to implement the student's IEP.

School Personnel to Receive Support	Support	Location	Frequency	Projected Beginning Date	Anticipated Duration

Understanding the IEP

INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP)
Student's Name: _____

VI. EDUCATIONAL PLACEMENT

A. QUESTIONS FOR IEP TEAM - The following questions must be reviewed and discussed by the IEP team prior to providing the explanation regarding participation with students without disabilities.

It is the responsibility of each public agency to ensure that, to the maximum extent appropriate, students with disabilities, including those in public or private institutions or other care facilities, are educated with students who are not disabled. Special classes, separate schools or other removal of students with disabilities from the general educational environment occur only when the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in general education classes, even with the use of supplementary aids and services, cannot be achieved satisfactorily.

- What supplementary aids and services were considered? What supplementary aids and services were received? Explain why the supplementary aids and services will or will not enable the student to make progress or the goals and objectives (if applicable) in the IEP in the general education class.
- What benefits are provided in the general education class with supplementary aids and services versus the benefits provided in the special education class?
- What potentially beneficial effects and/or harmful effects might be expected on the student with disabilities or the other students in the class, even with supplementary aids and services?
- To what extent, if any, will the student participate with nondisabled peers in extracurricular activities or other nonacademic activities?

Explanation of the extent, if any, to which the student will participate with students without disabilities in the regular education class:

Explanation of the extent, if any, to which the student will not participate with students without disabilities in the general education curriculum:



Understanding the IEP

Student's Name: _____

B. Type of Support

1. Amount of special education supports

- Minimal: Special education supports and services provided by special education personnel for 20% or less of the school day
- Supplemental: Special education supports and services provided by special education personnel for more than 20% of the day but less than 20% of the school day
- Full Time: Special education supports and services provided by special education personnel for 80% or more of the school day

2. Type of special education supports

- Audio Support
- Blind/Visionally Impaired Support
- Care and Ward of Hearing Support
- Emotional Support
- Learning Support
- Life Skills Support
- Multiple Disabilities Support
- Physical Support
- Speech and Language Support

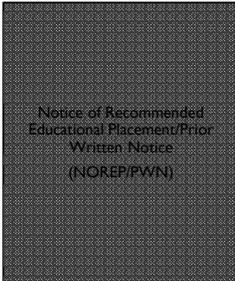
C. Location of student's program

Name of School District where the IEP will be implemented: _____

Name of School Building where the IEP will be implemented: _____

Is this school the student's neighborhood school (i.e., the school the student would attend if he/she did not have an IEP)?

- Yes
- No. If the answer is "no," select the reason why not.
 - Special education supports and services required in the student's IEP cannot be provided in the neighborhood school
 - Other. Please explain: _____



NOREP/PWN

- To be completed before providing initial services to the student
 - Outlines the student's recommended educational placement as well as other placement options that were considered
- The LEA may NOT provide services to the student unless the parents provide their written consent

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