

OVERVIEW OF SPECIAL EDUCATION PROCESS

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FEDERAL INDIVIDUAL WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT ACT -- IDEA

- Provides for a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) for all children.
- Outlines the processes for providing services to students within the educational system
- Major points:
 - Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)
 - Special education and related services
 - Services for eligible students
 - Individualized Education Program (IEP)
 - Least restrictive environment (LRE)
 - Students eligible for special education will be educated to the maximum extent appropriate with students who are not disabled

AS PART OF IDEA, A SCHOOL DISTRICT'S RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE:

- That all students eligible for/in need of special education and related services must be:
 - Located
 - Identified
 - Evaluated
- To develop and implement a method to determine which children are eligible for special education and that they are receiving services

PRE-REFERRAL / SCREENING

- Process shall include:
 - Curriculum-based or performance based assessments
 - Observation
 - Intervention and the student response to intervention at reasonable intervals
 - Determination whether student's needs exceed functional ability of regular education program
 - Parent involvement

SCREENING

- Each HHSD school has a screening process in place that identifies students who **may** need special education. This process includes:
 - Review of students records
 - Review of data from pre-referral interventions based on grade-appropriate standards in core academic subjects,
 - A systematic observation of the student's behavior in the classroom or area in which the student is displaying difficulty.

DETERMINING ELIGIBILITY

- In order for the IEP team to **QUALIFY** a child for services, they must be found to have one of 13 categories of special education and it must **adversely affect their educational performance**.
- A student may qualify for special education in one or more of the following educational eligibility areas:

- Intellectual Disability
- Emotional Disturbance
- Orthopedic Impairment
- Speech or Language Impairment
- Visual Impairment / Blindness
- Autism
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- Other Health Impairment
- Specific Learning Disability
- Hearing Impairment / Deafness
- or Multiple Disabilities and.....
- ❖ Needs special education as determined by an evaluation team.

EVALUATION PROCESS

- The evaluation process gathers the information that will be used to determine if a child needs special education and, if so, what types of programs and services are needed.
- The types of tests that are used in the evaluation process depend upon the educational challenges the student is experiencing.

EVALUATION TIMELINE

- The school district has 60 calendar days to complete the evaluation upon receipt of a signed permission.
- If a student qualifies for special education based on the findings of the evaluation, an IEP meeting will be held within 30 calendar days.

THE INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

- The IEP team meets to develop the IEP
IEP Team Members include:
 - a special education teacher,
 - regular education teacher,
 - LEA/administrator,
 - Parent,
 - if relevant, related service provider
- The IEP includes a description of the programs and services necessary to help the student meet with success. The IEP is developed using information contained in the Evaluation Report

UNDERSTANDING THE IEP REPORT

- The IEP is organized into Sections I-VIII
 - **Section I-** Special Considerations before developing the IEP.
 - These considerations include if a student has visual impairment, communication needs, behaviors of concern, requires assistive technology, or has limited English proficiency.
 - If any of these are relevant, then that area of need is addressed in the IEP.

UNDERSTANDING THE IEP REPORT

- **Section II-** Present Ed Levels
 - In this section, students current academic and behavior functioning are addressed
 - Reading, Math, Science, Social Studies, Learning Related Behaviors, Speech and Language, Fine and Gross motor skills are all represented, assessed, and considered.
 - Areas of are organized into three parts
 - Assessments
 - Previous goals and progress
 - Current functioning and performance in the classroom

PRESENT ED LEVELS EXAMPLE

LANGUAGE ARTS/READING:

- **Assessments:**
 - This section includes any standardized assessments given to the student in this area.
- **Goals and Progress Monitoring:**
 - This section includes the goals from the previous IEP and the progress reported towards the goals.
- **Curriculum Based Performance and Integration of Assessment Information:**
 - This section includes information from the student's current teachers regarding in class performance and supports for success
 - Includes a description of the learning setting and the student's functioning in that setting.

UNDERSTANDING THE IEP REPORT

Section III: Transition

- This section is required for any student who will turn 14 in the life of the IEP or who is already 14 and continues through graduation
- Transition services are a coordinated set of activities
- Takes into consideration a student's preferences and interests
- Focused on academic and functional achievement to facilitate the student's eventual movement from school to post-secondary life.

- Post-Secondary Education
- Vocational Education
- Employment skills/Supported Employment
- Adult Education / Services
- Independent Living
- Community participation

✓ Builds upon the individual student's needs, strengths, preferences, and interests

UNDERSTANDING THE IEP REPORT

Section IV: PARTICIPATION IN STATE AND LOCAL ASSESSMENTS

- Accommodations required for State and Local Assessments are considered.
- PSSA vs PASA
- District curriculum / common assessments

UNDERSTANDING THE IEP REPORT

Section V: Goals and Objectives

- Based on information from Present Ed Levels; address identified needs .
- Goals developed to build skill and growth in the identified area(s)
- Progress towards these goals are then measured throughout the life of the annual IEP.
- Progress monitoring is shared with the parent each trimester (elementary)/quarter (secondary).

UNDERSTANDING THE IEP REPORT

Section VI: Specially Designed Instruction

- This grid documents supplemental aids and services needed for the student to meet with success and support progress towards their goals.
- Includes modifications and/or accommodations required for success
- The grid includes the location and the frequency for each SDI.

SECTION VI (CONTINUED)

- Required Related Services such as Speech and Occupational Therapy also indicated in this section.
- Specialized needs can be addressed here
- Extended School Year eligibility determination
 - To address students with extensive needs in the area of skill retention following breaks in programming. This is an IEP team decision based on data from classroom performance and progress monitoring.
 - Determination reviewed annually

UNDERSTANDING THE IEP REPORT

Section VII: Educational Placement

- The IEP team determines where the instruction will occur in this section.
 - Both setting and curriculum is considered
- The Least Restrictive Environment (LRE), beginning with the general education setting is discussed in order to determine the most appropriate setting to meet the needs of the student.
- Type and Amount of support is determined
- The full continuum of services is to be considered

UNDERSTANDING THE IEP REPORT

- **Section VIII:** Penn Data Reporting
 - This grid is where the percentage of time inside the regular classroom with typical peers is reported
 - Calculated by dividing the number of hours the student spends inside the regular classroom by the total number of hours in the school day
 - This information is reported to the state

REVISING THE IEP

- The IEP can be revised at any time throughout the course of the IEP year.
- Any IEP team member, including the parent, can suggest a revision and/or request an IEP team meeting at anytime.
- Programming, placement, goals, SDI can all be revised with the purpose of improving student progress, access, programming.