

SPECIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT OF ST. LOUIS COUNTY

PARENT INFORMATION

INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP) FACTS

**If your child receives special education services, here is
important information regarding the IEP process**

**For additional information about
the IEP process or your child's disability,
this is where you might want to start...**

FAMILY & COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTER

Parent Education & Diversity Awareness

12110 Clayton Road
St. Louis, MO 63131

*(East of Ballas Road, South of Highway 40,
located at the entrance of the lower level)*

West: 314-989-8438

South: 314-989-8108

North: 314-989-8194

Central: (all three numbers)

<http://www.ssd.k12.mo.us/parenteducation/index.html>

TTY: 314-989-8552

FAX: 314-989-8449

About the IEP...

Request a copy of the “Individualized Education Program (IEP) Guide for Parents” by calling Parent Education & Diversity Awareness

What the IEP is:

- *A meeting where parents, school personnel and students (when appropriate) jointly make decisions about an educational program for a student with a disability.*
- *A document; a written record of the decisions reached at the meeting for a student who will receive special education and related services.*
- *A management tool in implementing an educational program.*
- *A communication opportunity between parents and educators.*
- *An opportunity to resolve any differences between the parents and the school concerning the special education needs of a student with a disability.*
- *A commitment to provide services and resources necessary to enable a student with a disability to receive needed services.*

What the IEP is not:

- *A daily lesson plan*
- *An evaluation report*
- *A specific methodology*
- *A comprehensive curriculum*

Principles that guide the IEP process...

The right to a free appropriate public education (FAPE)

FAPE is:

- *Free — at no charge to parents*
- *Appropriate — your child benefits from the program*
- *Public — public money is used to provide services*
- *Education — the right to participate in the same curriculum as peers who are not disabled*

The right to FAPE does not include the right to select a classroom, school or district; a specific teacher or implementer, or a particular methodology. It also does not include medical treatments.

The right to placement in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE):

LRE means:

- *To the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities are to be educated with children who do not have disabilities*
- *Special classes, separate schooling, or other removal from the general education classroom occurs only when the nature or severity of the disability of a child is such that education cannot be achieved in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services*

LRE is not:

- *Placement in a parochial setting*
- *Placement in a state-approved private setting (unless services cannot be provided in a public school)*

- *Assignment to a specific school or program*

**...remember, special education is not a "place,"
but rather a set of services.**

Required IEP components...

- **Present level of academic achievement and functional performance** — includes how your child's disability affects his or her involvement and progress in general education, plus examples; the strengths of your child; your concerns about the education of your child; changes in the current functioning of your child since the initial or prior IEP; a summary of the most recent evaluation or re-evaluation; a summary of the results of your child's performance on any general and district-wide assessments.

- **Measurable annual goals** — academic or functional goals are the targets toward which your child's special education services are directed and focus on individual instructional areas. Goals should be designed to enable the child to be involved in and make progress in the general education curriculum. (Short-term objectives/benchmarks are required only for a small percentage of students who participate in alternate assessments.)

- **Special education and related services** — such as physical therapy, occupational therapy, adaptive physical therapy, music therapy, social work, transportation, vision/hearing services, orientation/mobility services, medical services for diagnostic/evaluation purposes, parent training/counseling, rehabilitation counseling.

- **Program adaptations and modifications** — statements of supplementary aids, services, supports and equipment.

- **Dates** — when services begin, how long offered, date of the IEP meeting, a review date if desired.

- **Procedure for evaluation of the IEP** — when and how your child's performance and the effectiveness of the plan will be evaluated.

- **Program placement recommendations** — how your child will receive special education services.

- **Transition planning for student age 16 and older.**

Who, where and when...

Who develops an IEP? The meeting should include:

- The parents or guardians of the student
- At least one general education teacher (if the student is, or may be, participating in a general education setting)
- At least one special education teacher
- A representative of the partner district who is knowledgeable about resources and curriculum (the general education teacher may also fulfill this role)
- An individual to interpret instructional implications of evaluation results (the special education teacher may also fulfill this role)
- At the discretion of the parent or local education agency, other individuals who have

knowledge or special expertise regarding the student

- *The student, if appropriate*
- *At transition (age 16), other agencies needed for planning*

Feel free to invite anyone you feel can provide information for the IEP committee. *This may include any therapists, counselors or doctors who may be working with your child outside of school. You also may want to invite someone to attend, a relative or friend, who can provide moral support or who makes you feel more comfortable in a group. You must sign a release form so the district can share information with whomever you bring.*

Where? *Typically an IEP will be held at your child's school and will last one-to-two hours. If more time is needed, another meeting will be scheduled.*

When: Timelines for the IEP *A meeting to develop an IEP must be held within 30 calendar days of a determination of an educational diagnosis. IEP services cannot begin until 10 days after the meeting unless you sign a waiver. (Exceptions would be when meetings occur during summer or vacation, or where circumstances require a short delay (e.g., transportation arrangements). There can be no undue delay in providing special education and related services to the student. An IEP must be in effect before special education and related services are provided.*

Before the IEP...

- *Make an outline of what you believe your child needs to learn. The program for your child should be built on services that relate to his or her strengths and abilities, special problems and learning needs ... not to the category of the disability.*
- *Prepare a list of questions. You have the right to ask questions and request changes either during the conference or later.*
- *Make sure the focus of the discussion is on your child's strengths as well as needs. Stick with the issue at hand and do not be sidetracked by issues such as your past experiences or a possible lack of funds.*
- *Share relevant information about your child using the parent participation form, which has questions relating specifically to the various components of the IEP.*
- *If the group needs more time to complete the IEP or if you are not sure you are in agreement with the IEP, you may ask for the IEP to be reconvened.*

After the IEP...

- *SSD will issue a Notice of Action if any services are initiated or changed or if you do not agree with the educational proposals. The Notice of Action enables you to appeal the district's decision through mediation or a due process hearing.*
- *You should receive the final copy of the IEP within 15 to 20 days of the meeting.*
- *Services cannot begin until 10 days after the IEP meeting unless you sign a waiver.*
- *The front page of the IEP lists who attended the meeting and does not indicate agreement.*