

IEP TEAM PROCESS

Review the 504 guidelines before referring a student for Special Education assessment.

A parent or staff member may request that a student be referred for assessment of a suspected disability. It is highly recommended that all referrals for assessment be made through the SST/Impact Team process. A parent request for assessment must be made in writing, signed, and dated. Parent requests need to proceed through the SST/Impact Team process. Parent consent is necessary prior to any assessment.

The IEP team has 15 days from the referral whether through the SST or parent letter date to develop a proposed assessment plan. If a parent has not returned a signed and dated assessment plan after 15 days, a member of the site team should contact the parent.

Once consent is provided by the parent, a multidisciplinary team of educators will conduct the assessment within 60 days. This team may include a school psychologist, special education teacher, general education teacher, speech/language therapist, occupational therapist, etc.

The Special Education Case Manager has 25 days to assess and provide a written report of the academic assessments, anecdotal notations, and other findings to the school psychologist. Other professionals involved in the assessment process will also generate written reports for the school psychologist based on this same timeline. The school psychologist will then create an integrated report using all assessment information and send it to the parents no later than 45 days after the assessment plan was returned (signed) by the parent to the school. It is highly recommended that all staff understand the findings in advance of the IEP.

The assessment results are shared at an IEP team meeting. If the student is determined to have a disability and to be eligible for special education services, then the team has 30 days to meet and develop an appropriate IEP in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) with standards-based goals and objectives that are based on the student's current Present Levels of Performance (PLOP).

At the IEP meeting, the student's current level of performance or functioning is reviewed. Assessment reports are shared with all participants. IEP goals and objectives are developed. A placement is determined and any services are agreed upon that are necessary to support the student in the placement. All parties receive a signed copy of the agreed upon IEP document at the conclusion of each IEP meeting.

Placement is made and services are provided. Each of the student's teachers and service providers has access to the IEP and is aware of his/her specific responsibilities for following through on the IEP. This includes the accommodations, modifications, and

supports that must be provided to the student. The accommodations, modifications supports, and interventions should be monitored carefully for effectiveness and dropped from the IEP when no longer effective. “Boiler plate” lists should be avoided.

IEPs may be written for less than 1 school year, based on the needs of the student, transitions, etc. IEPs should always reflect current student needs. For instance, if a student will only need specific services for a finite period of time, the IEP should be written to reflect that the team will reconvene to review the services.

IEPs should also be written to reflect that services are delivered during the District’s regular calendar year. Services are not offered when students are absent, during holidays and field trips and in circumstances beyond the control of the district. Thereafter, at minimum, it is required that the IEP team meets annually. A team member may request an IEP meeting at any time. At the annual meeting, the team reviews the progress the student has made toward meeting goals and objectives.

The composition of the IEP team must include the parent, student (if appropriate), special education teacher (case manager), general education teacher, any other service providers, school psychologist (if necessary), program specialist (if necessary), and site administrator or designee.

It is expected that site administrators attend and participate in all IEP meetings, by law, or designate a vice principal or other qualified staff member to attend as designee. Please do not assume that the Program Specialist or School Psychologist should take on that role in the interest of the school site. They need to be at all initial, triennial, and 30-day interim IEP meetings. If the IEP meeting is of a “high profile” nature where it is expected the parents will be adversarial or bring a lawyer/advocate, then the program specialist needs to facilitate the meeting. The district needs to be able to bring counsel to meetings, where needed.

If the team is anticipating a change in placement or services, or is anticipating a referral for additional services, the Program Specialist and Director must be part of the planning process well in advance of the IEP meeting in order to ensure appropriateness of the placement and availability of the resources. Resources committed by the site and without the explicit and prior written approval by the Special Education Director will become the financial responsibility of the school site. Training and support are available through the special education department office for all site administrators in all areas of special education.