

Individualized Education Program (IEP) Overview

If your child receives special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the school must develop an Individualized Education Program (IEP). This is a written document detailing the special educational services your child will receive. [IDEA, Sec. 300.320](#), outlines seven requirements that must be part of the IEP as well as additional requirements once your child reaches transition age.

The IEP is developed by a team of school staff and you (as parent or guardian). In Texas, this team is called the Admission, Review and Dismissal (ARD) committee. You are an important member of the ARD committee because you know your child's interests, strengths, weaknesses, and all the things that make your child unique. Your knowledge can help the ARD committee develop an IEP that is appropriate for your child.

Contents of the IEP

Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP)

The PLAAFP describes your child's current performance, strengths, and needs, including information about academic areas (reading, writing, and mathematics) and functional areas (social skills, behavior, dressing, eating, mobility, and more). It also describes how your child's disability impacts their involvement and progress in general education.

Measurable Annual Goals

Measurable annual goals outline the progress the ARD committee expects your child will make over the next year. These goals should connect to the needs identified in the PLAAFP and be both appropriate and challenging. If your child will be taking an alternate assessment, their goals will include benchmark objectives that act as stepping stones toward the annual goals.

Progress Monitoring and Reporting

The IEP must include a description of how your child's progress toward meeting their IEP goals will be measured, including how and when that information will be shared with you.

Statement of Special Education and Services and Aids

This statement describes the special education, related services, supplementary



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aids, and supports that will be provided to your child allowing them to make progress toward their IEP goals and to participate, as much as possible, with peers in the regular education setting, extracurricular activities, and nonacademic opportunities. This statement also includes supports that will be provided for school staff to help them implement the IEP.

Dates, Frequency, Location, and Duration of Services

This portion of the IEP describes:

- When services will begin,
- How often your child will receive services,
- Where services will be provided,
- How long each session will last, and
- If services will be provided to the child, teacher, or both.

Explanation of Educational Setting

This section describes the extent to which your child will not participate with their peers in the regular education classroom. School districts are required to provide a variety of options for students with disabilities, but they must ensure that your child will participate with their peers without disabilities to the maximum extent possible.

Participation in Assessment

This section details any accommodations your child will need to participate in state and districtwide assessments or if your child will participate in an alternate assessment.

- Accommodations change how your child is tested but do not change what is tested.
- The alternate assessment changes what is tested. The ARD committee determine if, and why, an alternate assessment is needed.

Transition Plan and Age of Majority

Once your child turns 14, the IEP must include a transition plan with appropriate goals for after graduation and the transition services needed to help your child reach those goals. Transition goals and services should focus on further education, employment, and, when appropriate, independent living skills.

Before your child reaches the age where they are recognized as a legal adult, known as the age of majority, the IEP must include a statement that your child has been informed of their rights and any rights that will transfer to them. In Texas, the age of majority is 18.

How is the IEP developed?

The IEP is developed, reviewed, and revised each year, or as frequently as needed, by the ARD committee.

Developing the First IEP

- Within 30 calendar days from the date the initial evaluation was completed, the ARD committee must meet to determine your child's eligibility for special education services.
- If your child is determined eligible, the ARD committee will review information about your child and develop the IEP.
- Five school days after the ARD meeting, the school will implement the IEP that was developed, unless you agree for services to begin sooner.

Reviewing and Updating the IEP

- After the initial IEP is developed, the ARD committee must meet **at least** once a year to review your child's progress and develop the IEP for the next year.
- The ARD committee may meet more than one time per year if you or the school have concerns such as a lack of adequate progress, the need for additional goals or services, or the need for revisions to the IEP.
- At least once every three years, unless you and the school district determine it is not necessary, the school will conduct a reevaluation. The ARD committee will use the information from the reevaluation to identify any additional needs your child may have when developing the new IEP.
- A child can be reevaluated more often if conditions warrant or the parent or school requests a reevaluation.



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