



Support for Caregivers Navigating the IEP Process
An Offering of the Chris Walsh Center for Educators and Families of MetroWest
Week 3: March 16, 2023

Mission statement of Chris Walsh Center

To provide information for families and educators about the continuum of educational support available to students with disabilities, students who are gifted, and students with unmet needs. The center will offer support, workshops and other programming for families, educators, student support professionals, administrators, and advocates in the MetroWest area. The center also will engage in scholarly research, educator preparation, and professional development.

Purpose of the Group

Provide accurate, objective information for people to learn and use or apply to their own individual situation. We welcome questions about the process or the information presented but please refrain from asking questions about how the information we present should or might be applied to individual circumstances.

Group guidelines and expectations

- Confidential safe space
 - Don't expect answers to specific questions
 - Respect each other's confidentiality
 - Share ideas not names
 - It's expected that we have different experiences. We're here to listen, inform, not advise or judge
 - Assume good intentions



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Topic: THE IEP

Introductions

Ice breaker

Review of Last week : RTI, PBI, Eligibility for a 504, Accommodations, Eligibility for an IEP

Outstanding questions

- Topic:** 1) How to Prepare for Meetings
2) The Development of an IEP: Accommodations, Modifications, Goals, Specialized Instruction, Providers, Timelines for Review
3) Independent Schools and Students with Disabilities
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How should a parent/guardian prepare for a meeting, 504 eligibility, 504 development, special education eligibility, and/or IEP development?

- Read all reports in advance
 - Ensure that you and any other guardian/parent are on the same page; depending on the age of your child, get input and information from them on what they experience and what they may find helpful or need help with
 - Bring reports from the school and/or any other objective data/information you may have about your child's skills and performance (emails, progress reports, report cards, etc.)
 - Bring previous 504s or IEPs if it is a reeval
 - Bring your vision of your child: current and future:
 - Present abilities, interests, learning style; what your child does well
 - Concerns - what is your child not yet doing that they need support for?
 - What do you want your child to be able to know, do and understand in the next 1 to 5 years?
 - Write ALL questions in advance, many will be answered during the meeting, but some may not.
 - Bring curiosity: about the process, the document, and how you are going to work together in the best interest of your child
 - If possible, bring another person with you who can take notes and/or who can be an objective listener for you and someone with whom you can talk afterwards to confirm or clarify what was discussed
 - Bring a blank copy of an IEP so you will know what items the team will complete
 - Know that you do not need to sign the IEP at the meeting; you have 10 days to make a decision and can leave without signing if you want
 - [Annotated Version of the IEP](#)
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Overall Purpose of the IEP

Assumption: A child has been found to have a disability which is impacting their ability to make effective progress and requires specialized instruction to make effective progress. The Team is going to develop an IEP that the district is going to propose to the parent/guardian

[Process of the IEP](#)

[Blank IEP form](#)
[Sample CW IEP](#)

The IEP:

I. Concerns/strengths/vision

A. Parent (student 14 yo and up) concerns

B. Student summary

1. Strengths
2. Interests
3. Evaluation summary
4. Disability type

C. Vision: what do we want for the student in the next 1 to 5 years? Guides the IEP

II. PLEP A (Present Level of Educational Performance) - Focuses on General Curriculum

A. Disability impact statement

B. Accommodations

■ What Are They?

- Accommodations remove barriers to learning that allows an individual with a disability to gain access to content of the curriculum and/or complete assigned tasks.
- They are not changing the expectation for what a child will learn or making modifications to the curriculum or what the child is expected to do
 - Changes to the environment (like taking tests in a quiet space or providing necessary equipment)
 - Changes to instruction (like checking in to ensure assignments are recorded or a student sits in the front row for attention or vision needs)
 - Changes to how the curriculum is presented (like in braille or audible instead of written)



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- Examples:
 - Note taker or access to teacher notes
 - Extended time
 - Reduced number of problems
 - Reduced visuals on a page
 - Text to speech
 - Speech to text
 - Access to audiobooks
 - Preferential seating – should be specified
 - Breaks – requested and suggested
 - Visuals paired with auditory information
 - Auditory information paired with visuals
 - Testing outside the classroom

C. Modifications to curriculum, instruction, assessments

III. PLEP B - Other Educational Needs

- A. Similar to PLEP A but outside of the classroom, i.e. lunch, recess, field trips, social emotional, etc.
 - 1. BIP
 - 2. Social groups
 - 3. Nurse for field trip
 - 4. Braille instructor/instruction
 - 5. Assistive Technology

IV. Goals

- A. Over the course of the IEP period (typically 1 year)
- B. Current Performance Level (CPL): what can the student do now
- C. Goal: What student is expected to learn (do) over the course of the period
- D. Benchmarks/objectives: breaks down goal into smaller, more manageable and measurable pieces

V. Service Delivery Grid

- A. Consult - professional to professional
 - 1. In the gen ed classroom
 - 2. Co-taught
 - 3. Push in services
 - 4. Para supported
- B. Outside of the gen ed classroom
 - 1. Direct, specialized instruction (LC)
 - 2. Services like OT, PT, counseling
 - 3. Summer services



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VI. Non-participation justification/modified schedule

- A. LRE statement
- B. Extended school year
- C. Specialized transportation

VII. Additional information (anything else), i.e.

- A. Bullying statement
- B. Team will reconvene

VIII. Response Section (typically not discussed at meeting)

- A. This is where signatures for accepting, rejecting or accepting in part will go

After the meeting, you will receive a packet that includes:

- 1) **Cover letter**
- 2) **N1**
- 3) **Administrative data sheet**
- 4) **Response section, and**
- 5) **Placement page**

N1: Executive summary

- A. What is the district proposing?
 - 1. IEP with goals and services
- B. Why is the district proposing this?
 - 1. Disability impact statement
- C. What options were considered and rejected?
 - 1. This can be conversation (should he have a para?)
 - 2. Rejected and accepted (co-taught math)
 - 3. Discussed and rejected (co-taught ELA)
 - 4. Discussed and undecided (i.e. summer services)
- D. What data was used?
 - 1. Evaluations
 - 2. Work samples
 - 3. Grades
 - 4. Attendance
- E. Anything else?
 - 1. Parent input
 - 2. Outside circumstances
 - 3. Bullying statement



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F. Next steps?

- If you leave with a draft IEP or meeting notes, the district has 10 school days to get you the proposed IEP
- If you leave without notes or a draft, the district has 3 school days to get you the proposed IEP
- You have 30 days to respond
 1. Accept in whole
 2. Reject in whole
 3. Reject parts and the rest of the IEP is implemented
 4. See next week for more details

Administrative data sheet

- Parent information
- Date of meeting
- Date of next annual meeting
- Date of next 3 year re-eval

Response section

Place for parent to respond and sign - this is an IMPORTANT STEP!

Placement page

- Typically states LEA. If other, will have discussed at the meeting
- Will include inclusion, partial inclusion, sub separate classroom
- Separate signature required on this page

Independent Schools Overview of Information for Students with Disabilities

- [Proportionate Share](#) (DESE website provides thorough resources)
- [Summary of District Obligations](#) and [Guidance for Proportionate Share](#)
- [A course you can go through and learn all about Proportionate Share](#)
 - Proportionate share is a portion of a district's IDEA Part B entitlement grants (DESE fund codes 240 and 262) allocated to eligible parentally-placed students who are privately educated in the district's geographic boundaries regardless of where the students live.
 - Districts are required to conduct a variety of activities related to provision of proportionate share special education services for students who are privately enrolled by their parents. These activities include consultation, child find, evaluation and determination of eligibility, determination of the proportionate share amount, expenditure of the proportionate share, development of services plans, and provision of services either directly or through contracts.



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- Public school districts must spend a portion of their federal special education entitlement (IDEA grant 611- MA Fund Code 240 and IDEA grant 619 – MA Fund Code 262) funds on services for eligible parentally-placed private school students attending school in the Local Educational Agency's catchment area and home-schooled students ([34 CFR § 300.133](#)).
- Districts provide these services to eligible private school students attending a private school within the geographic boundaries of the district through a "services plan" instead of an IEP, because privately enrolled students do not have an individual entitlement to the full range of special education and related services under federal law.
- **Reconciling the Differences Between State and Federal Requirements for Private School Students**
 - Federal law
 - District where the private school is located, rather than the district of residence, must fulfill the requirements for child find and for proportionate share services.
 - The district where a private school is located must meet federal special education requirements for all eligible students who are privately enrolled in schools within the geographic boundaries of the district, regardless of where those students live. (aka evaluation and eligibility)
 - Massachusetts law
 - The school district where the student resides must offer special education and related services to eligible students as described on their IEPs.
 - The districts in which privately enrolled students live are responsible for finding, evaluating, and providing services to such students.
 - The Overlap of responsibilities under federal and state law
 - a parent may choose whether to seek an evaluation and services from the district of residence or from the district in which their child is privately enrolled.
 - A district's obligations under state and federal law depends on 3 factors:
 - where students live,
 - where they are privately enrolled,
 - the choices a parent makes regarding evaluation and services for their child.
 - For some students who are privately enrolled, such as those who are home schooled, the district in which they live will be the same as the district in which they attend school.



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- In those situations, the district of residence is responsible for fulfilling all obligations under state and federal law.
- Other students live in one district and attend a private school in another district.
 - In these cases, the two districts will need to coordinate to meet state and federal obligations for these students.
 - The district in which the student attends private school is responsible for meeting federal proportionate share obligations, and
 - the district of residence is responsible for meeting state special education requirements of free, appropriate public education.
 - For students who reside in another state but attend a private school in Massachusetts,
 - the district in which the private school is located must fulfill the proportionate share obligations under federal law.
- Under IDEA, school districts must conduct child find activities and evaluations to determine students' eligibility for special education. In contrast to state law that requires all eligible students to have an IEP, federal law requires school districts to expend a "proportionate share" of the federal grant money districts receive under Part B of IDEA (grants 240 and 262) to provide services to parentally-placed and privately enrolled students
- Following timely and meaningful consultation with private school and parent representatives of students attending schools located within the district, school districts must make decisions regarding the child find process and which services to provide with the proportionate share of 240 and 262 grant funds.
- **Questions about Independent Schools, Eligibility and Services for students with disabilities** ideaequitable.services@doe.mass.edu

Next Week: To Accept the IEP or not, what's next?



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Notes: