

Common Acronyms and Terms Used During IFSP and IEP Meetings

Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP): A process and document provided to children under the age of 3 who are eligible for early intervention services. Services are delivered in the home or community-based settings and are family centered.

Individualized Education Program (IEP): A program developed for children determined to be eligible for special education and related services under one of 14 disability categories recognized by IDEA.

Section 504: Section 504 is a part of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 that prohibits discrimination based on disability. Children with a 504 plan may receive accommodations for a variety of difficulties, including but not limited to specific learning disabilities, diabetes, and epilepsy.

Accommodation: A change to or in your child's learning environment that allows him or her to learn. Accommodations do not change what your child is expected to learn. An example of an accommodation would be additional time to finish a test.

Note the difference between accommodations and modifications. A modification is a change in what a student is expected to learn and demonstrate. An example of a modification would be giving a child the assignment of describing basic facts about a topic discussed in class, while the students not receiving modifications would write a more in-depth analysis of the topic.

Annual Goals: A list of academic and functional skills for your child to master by the end of the year. These goals are updated each year at the Annual Review and are based on the child's present level of performance (PLOP).

Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA): The discipline concerned with developing and applying techniques and principles to bring about meaningful and positive change in behavior.

Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP): A plan designed after a child receives a functional behavioral assessment that will teach the child about and reward his or her positive behavior.

Due Process: A formal process for families to follow if they have a dispute with the school district regarding their child's IEP.

Extended School Year Services (ESY): Special education services provided during extended breaks from the regular school year.

Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE): Refers to special education and related services that are provided at public expense and without charge to families receiving the service.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA): The federal law that guarantees all children with disabilities access to a free and appropriate public education.

Least Restrictive Environment (LRE): A student's LRE is the setting in which they are taught, which must be the same as students without disabilities as much as possible.

Prior Written Notice: Communication between schools and families that informs families of what the school is proposing or refusing to do for a child regarding educational placement, initial evaluations, or changes in the special education or related services your child receives.

Supplementary aids and services: Equipment or staff members who work with your child to help him or her learn in a general education classroom.

Assistive technology (AT): Any device or software that helps your child function better in school. AT can be something as simple as a pencil grip, or as high-tech as text-to-speech apps.

Related services: Additional support for your child, such as transportation or occupational therapy, that can help him or her benefit from special education.

Secondary Transition: The section of the IEP that details academic and functional goals related to the child's plans and success after high school. Transition planning must begin on the child's 14th birthday, but may begin sooner if the IEP team desires. The plan is implemented when the child turns 16.