

Individualized Educational Program Fact Sheet

To qualify for an Individualized Educational Program (IEP) a child must have one or more of the 13 disabilities listed in IDEA; and as a result of the disability, the child requires specialized educational services to make educational progress in school. For more on the 13 disability categories, see eligibility. If your child is found eligible for special education services and you agree with the school division on eligibility and the provision of services, then a team will meet to determine your child's individualized educational needs. This team is called an IEP team and the team's purpose is to write an appropriate IEP. The IEP is a written educational plan for a child with a disability.

An IEP team must consist of:

- You, the parent
- At least one general education teacher
- At least one special education teacher
- A representative of the school division who is:
 - Qualified to provide or supervise the provision of specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of the child
 - Knowledgeable about the general education curriculum
 - Knowledgeable about the availability of services and resources in the school division
- A person able to interpret the instructional implication of the evaluation data
- Anyone the parent or the school division invites who has knowledge or special expertise regarding the child
- Whenever appropriate, the child

When developing a child's IEP, the team must consider:

- The strengths of the child
- The parental concerns
- Results of the most recent evaluations and
- The academic, developmental and functional needs of the child
- In the event of a child with behaviors which impede the access to learning of the child or others, the team must consider the use of positive behavior interventions to address the behaviors

- The communication needs of the child
- Whether the child needs assistive technology

An IEP must consist of the following components:

- Present level of Performance or “PLOP”
 - The PLOP must include the parent’s concerns
 - Results of evaluations and assessments
 - Interpretation of the evaluations and assessments, specifically how the child’s disability affects the child’s ability to access the educational curriculum and or environment
 - An explanation of the child’s current educational and functional performance
 - The PLOP must directly relate to every other area of the IEP
- Statement of measurable goals including academic and functional goals that enable the child to be involved in and progress in the general education curriculum and meet every other educational need resulting from the child’s disability
- Benchmarks or short-term objectives, as deemed appropriate by the IEP team. **NOT EVERY IEP WILL HAVE SHORT-TERM OBJECTIVES.**
- Statement of special education, related services and supplementary aides and services which will be provided for the child
- Explanation of the extent the child will not participate in the general education setting with non disabled students
- Accommodations for instructions
- Whether the student will take statewide or alternate assessments
- Accommodations for assessments
- Projected date for the beginning of services modifications to services, and the frequency, location and duration of services
- Statement regarding how progress will be measured and when periodic reports on progress will be provided to the parent
- Finally, transition information must be included when appropriate, not later than the first IEP in effect when the child turns 14

The school division must make reasonable attempts to ensure one or both of a child’s parents are able to attend the IEP meeting. To do this the division must notify the parents of the meeting early enough to have an opportunity to attend and schedule the meeting at a mutually agreed upon time.

The school division must give the parent what is called prior written notice of:

- Scheduled meetings
- Intent to change or add information or services in a child’s IEP or
- Refusal to provide aides or services requested by the parent

When prior written notice is given for the refusal of services, the school division must provide an explanation for the refusal which includes the reason, what data or other information was used to make the decision and what alternative means the division will use to address the parent’s concerns.

Parents are an important member of the IEP team. Parents know their child and often are able to contribute information and suggestions from that the school team members would otherwise not know.

Parents have the right to record every IEP meeting. dLCV strongly encourages parents to take advantage of this right. Inform the school division at least one night prior to the meeting that you will be recording the meeting and request that the recording be made a part of your child's educational record

dLCV encourages parents to have an agenda or outline of the topics you want to discuss during IEP meetings. Be sure to read the list of topics you want addressed during the meeting at the beginning of the meeting so your exact concerns are recorded and the school division will then be held accountable for addressing your concerns.

If you do not believe every area of need is appropriately addressed in the IEP, outline exactly what issues you see with the IEP and be prepared with solution suggestions to address any deficiencies you note. If you and the school division are unable to reach consensus, you may need to seek outside assistance.

The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) has a dispute resolution process available to parents and school divisions when there are disagreements. For more information on dispute resolution you may go to the VDOE website at http://www.doe.virginia.gov/special_ed/resolving_disputes/.