

# Understanding IEPs and Parent Rights– Presented at SEAC, October 19, 2023

Navigating your child's Individual Education Plan (IEP)



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# You will leave here knowing:

- The Process
- Team Members
- Principles of IDEA
- The Document (IEP)
- Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)
- Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)
- Parent Rights & Procedural Safeguards

# IEP– Individualized Education Plan

The IEP is:



- The Individualized Education Plan is a legal document under United States law that is developed for each public school child in the U.S. who needs special education. It is created through a team of the child's parent/s and district personnel who are knowledgeable about the child's needs

# IEP Team Members

- Parent/Guardian
- Student (sometimes)
- General Education Teacher
- Special Education Teacher
- Principal or Administrative designee
- Others depending on related services

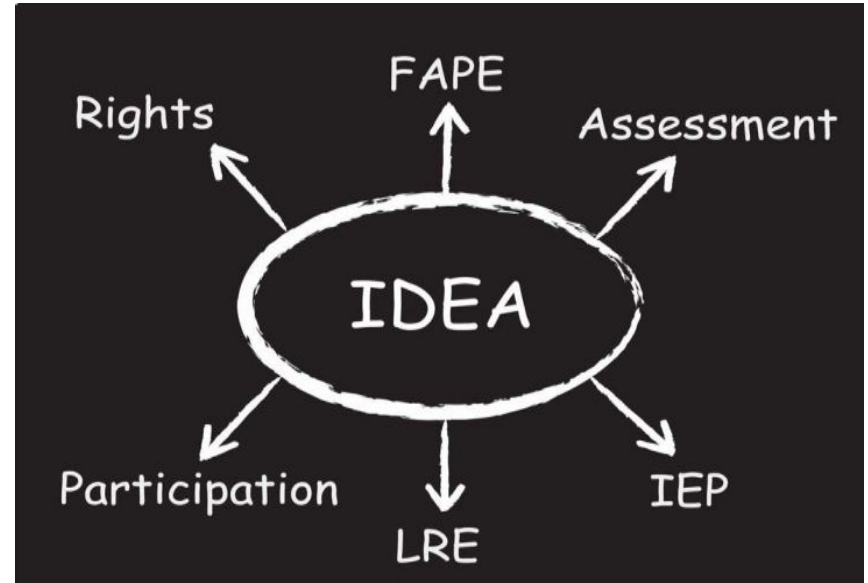


# IEP Team Members



# Six Principles of the IDEA (Individual with Disabilities Education Act)

- 1. Assessment
- 1. Individual Education Program (IEP)
- 1. Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)
- 1. Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)
- 1. Parent Participation
- 1. Parent Rights



# The IEP Process



## **The IEP Process follows a certain order:**

1. Assessment -Identification of strengths, concerns, needs, and present levels of ability
1. Eligibility (not eligible, now what?)
1. Goals, Accommodations, Modifications, and Services
1. District's Offer of a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)
1. Services in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

# How can Parents/Guardians Contribute?

## Be prepared:

- *You can request (in writing) to have copies of assessment reports and draft goals before the IEP meeting*
- *You can request pre-meetings (phone calls) with the teachers or service providers*

## Be informed:

*Understand your child's disability and how it manifests in them, be prepared to share this information*

*Share a (no more than one page) synopsis, especially if your child has a rare condition*



# How can Parents/Guardians Contribute? (cont')

## Be organized:

- *Organize records, reports, work samples, teacher notes, etc.*
- *Bring your written concerns to the meeting to be included in the Parent Concerns section of the IEP*
- *Send questions in advance*

## Collaborate:

- *Focus on your child's best **interest** rather than a fixed **position** or demand*
- *Keep an open mind*
- *Be a calm and informed member of the IEP team*
- *Recognize areas of agreement or **consensus***

# The IEP Document

## The IEP is a written document

- Contains information about your child and their program; present levels, goals, services, placement and more
- Includes the district's offer of FAPE
- The plan can be amended and adjusted as a student's needs change over the course of a year

SANTA CLARITA VALLEY SPECIAL EDUCATION LOCAL PLAN AREA (SELPA)  
INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP) - INFORMATION / ELIGIBILITY

Page \_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_

Student Legal Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Original SpEd Entry Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Last Eligibility Evaluation: \_\_\_\_\_

Legal Suffix: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ IEP Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Next Annual Plan Review: \_\_\_\_\_  
Next Eligibility Evaluation: \_\_\_\_\_

MEETING TYPE: ☐ Initial ☐ Plan Review ☐ Eligibility Evaluation  
Additional Purpose of Meeting (if needed): ☐ Transition ☐ Pre-Exclusion ☐ Interim ☐ Other

Age: \_\_\_\_\_  
Grade: \_\_\_\_\_  
EL: ☐ Yes ☐ No  
Student ID: \_\_\_\_\_

Native Language: \_\_\_\_\_  
Redesignated: ☐ Yes ☐ No  
SSID: \_\_\_\_\_ Interpreter ☐ Yes ☐ No

Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_  
Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_  
State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_  
Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_  
State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

District of Special Education Accountability: \_\_\_\_\_  
Residence School: \_\_\_\_\_

Hispanic Ethnicity: ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Ethnicity Intentionally Left Blank  
Race (regardless of Ethnicity): Race 1 \_\_\_\_\_ Race 2 \_\_\_\_\_ Race 3 \_\_\_\_\_ Race 4 \_\_\_\_\_  
Race 5 \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ Race Intentionally Left Blank

INDICATE DISABILITIES Note: For initial and internal IEPs, assessment must be done and discussed by IEP Team before determining eligibility. \*Low Incidence Disability

Primary: ☐ Not Eligible for Special Education ☐ Exiting from Special Education (returned to reg. ed/no longer eligible)  
Describe how student's disability affects involvement and progress in general curriculum (or for preschoolers, participation in appropriate activities)

Secondary: \_\_\_\_\_

FOR INITIAL PLACEMENTS ONLY  
Has the student received IDEA Coordinated Early Intervening Services (CEIS) using 15% of IDEA funding in the past two years?  
☐ Yes ☐ No

Date of Initial Referral for Special Education Services: \_\_\_\_\_  
Person Initiating the Referral for Special Education Services: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date District Received Parent Consent: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Initial Meeting to Determine Eligibility: \_\_\_\_\_

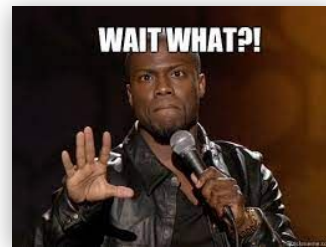
# Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)

Every child is entitled to FAPE

**Appropriate** does not mean *first-rate* or *ideal*

*It means that the student is receiving the resources and services needed so that they can access the curriculum and make educational progress*

The school team must make an offer of FAPE



# LRE– Least Restrictive Environment

**Least Restrictive Environment** or **LRE** means to the extent possible, a child should be educated:

- at their home school
- in a general education classroom
- with typically developing peers
- with needed services and supports

A special day class is considered more restrictive, and non-public schools or home instruction are considered most restrictive

# Parent Rights & Procedural Safeguards

- There are procedural safeguards developed to protect parent's rights per the federal regulations in IDEA.
- You will receive a copy of the Procedural Safeguards at least one time per year at your student's IEP team meeting. You are *encouraged* to read them.
- Becoming familiar with your child's rights will empower you to support him/her/them through their educational journey.

# IEP Team Meeting



## Parent Response to the IEP

- A parent/guardian can consent to ALL, PART, or NONE of the IEP
- If/when there are new concerns, the parent/guardian can request an IEP meeting, in writing, to discuss and problem-solve

# IEP Timelines

- Initial evaluation - 60 days from the date of the signed Assessment Plan
- Annual IEP - within 1 year of previous IEP team meeting
- Re-evaluation IEP (Triennial) - 60 days from the date of signed Assessment Plan, and within the 3 year mark from the previous evaluation to determine eligibility
- Parents' or team member request for IEP - within 30 days of the written request

# Table Talk

- Table 1 - Services and Educational Setting (LRE)
- Table 2 - Present Levels and Goals
- Table 3 - Parent Rights & Procedural Safeguards
- Parking Lot - Other Information or Questions



**Next Meeting:**

**December 7, 2023** at 5:30 -6:30 pm

**Parent Workshop:**

**Helping Children Cope with Anxiety**

**Presenter:**

Student Support Services