



CHILDREN'S DISABILITIES INFORMATION COALITION- PARENT RESOURCE CENTER

IDEA- Reauthorized Statute WORDS TO KNOW

Educators sometimes use language that is difficult to understand. If at any time, you see or hear words (like "assessment") or acronyms (like "ESY") that you don't understand, immediately ask school staff to explain them. As an equal partner in planning, you must understand all the information you receive in writing or hear in a meeting so you can decide what is best for your child.

Some words commonly used in educational planning are:

Accommodations

Adjustments made in how a student with a disability is taught or tested. Accommodations do not change what the student is taught or what he is expected to know. Common examples of accommodations are: highlighted textbooks, extensions of time for a student who writes slowly, or seating close to the teacher. Assistive technology is a common accommodation.

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)

Under No Child Left Behind, all schools, schools districts, and states are required to show progress in: reading/language arts, math, and either graduation rates or attendance rates. There are consequences for failing to meet AYP criteria for two consecutive years.

ARD Committee (Admission, Review and Dismissal Committee)

In Texas, the name for the group made up of a student's parents and school staff who meet at least annually to decide whether or not the student has an eligible disability and what special education and related services will be provided. Its major responsibility is the development of the individual education program (IEP) for students receiving special education. In Texas, the meetings of these committees are called "ARD meetings".

Adult Student

Students age 18 and over are considered to be an adult student unless the student's parent or other individual has been granted guardianship of the student under the Texas Probate Code.

1101E. Schuster Ave.
El Paso, Texas 79902
(915) 217-2747
(915) 496-0751 fax
gilda@elprc.org





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Alternative Education Programs (AEPs)

Disciplinary programs operated by school districts for students who have committed a range of offenses specified in state law and/or in the district's student Code of Conduct. AEPs operated by the school district are DAEPs (Disciplinary Alternative Education programs). AEPs operated by the juvenile justice system are called Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Programs, or JJAEPs. Students with disabilities who are in DAEPs or JJAEPs are still entitled to special education services.

Assessment

Assessments are test given to all students in the state to evaluate learning. The most common statewide assessment in Texas is the TASK (Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills). Students receiving special education take the same state and district-wide assessments given to all students, unless their ARD committee determines a particular test is not appropriate. In that situation, the student will take an alternative test.

Assistive Technology

An assistive technology device is any item, piece of equipment or product used to increase, maintain, or improve the functioning of a student with a disability. Assistive technology devices for students with disabilities include those used for seating and positioning, mobility, augmentative communication, computer access and instruction, environmental control, adaptive toys and games, visual and listening aids and self-care. Assistive technology services (including training) assists students with disabilities in the selection, acquisition or use of an assistive technology device.

Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)

A Behavior Intervention Plan, which is part of the IEP, identifies supports and services that will be provide to prevent inappropriate behaviors from occurring and to support desired behaviors.

Content Mastery

A type of services to provide extra help to students with disabilities outside the regular classroom. Content Mastery is defined and used differently from district to district. If content mastery is recommended for your child, always ask for a description of what services will be provided and where.

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Early Intervening Services

IDEA 2004 allows school to use up to 15% of IDEA funds for support services for students not identified as having a disability, but who need additional academic and behavioral support to succeed in a general education classroom.

ECI (Early Childhood Intervention)

A statewide program for children from birth to age three who have developmental delays. ECI must make services available for every eligible child. Early intervention programs are required by Part C of the IDEA.

Education Services Centers (ESCs)

Educational Services Centers are located in each 20 geographic regions covering the state. Their main function is to provide training and technical assistance to the school districts located in their region. ESCs must also include parents in some of its trainings.

ESY (Extended School Year)

Education services provided in the summer (or over a holiday break) to some students with disabilities who require them as a part of their free appropriate public education. ESY services are to be provided in accordance with the IEP, and at no cost to the parents.

FAPE (Free Appropriate Education)

Special education and/or related services designed to meet the individual needs of each student at no cost to the parents, guaranteed to all students with disabilities by the Individuals Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Highly Qualified Teachers

No Child Left Behind requires each state to require all teachers (including special education teachers) who teach in "core academic subjects" to be "highly qualified" by the end of the 2005-06 school year. For specific information about Texas requirements, go to:

<http://www.tea.state.tx.us/nclb/hqteachers.html>

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Highly Qualified Professionals

NCLB also sets new standards for paraprofessionals, including those working in special education. The new requirements apply to all special education paraprofessionals working in a Title 1 school, or any who provide instructional support in reading, writing or math. For specific information, go to:

<http://www.ed.gov/adminis/tchrqual/qual/hqp/hqparas.pdf>

IEP (Individual Educational Program)

The written plan that details the special education and related services that must be provided to each student who receives special education. Parents and schools personnel work together to write the IEP at the ARD meeting. It must be reviewed, and revised if needed, every year.

IDEA (Individuals With Disabilities Education Act)

The federal law requiring school districts to provide students with disabilities a free appropriate public education.

LRE (Least Restrictive Environment)

The term used in the IDEA to refer to a student's right to be educated to the maximum extent appropriate with students who do not have disabilities, and as close to home as possible.

Manifestation Determination Review (MDR)

A review of the relationship between a student's disability and behavior that is the subject of disciplinary action.

Modifications

Modifications, unlike accommodations, change the level of instruction provided or tested. Modifications create a different standard for the student receiving them. The most common modifications are those made to the general education curriculum for a student with a cognitive disability. Curriculum modifications should be in the student's IEP.

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OCR (The Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights)

The federal agency that enforces Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. OCR looks into complaints about discrimination based upon disability.

PPCD (Preschool Program for Children with Disabilities)

Public school services for children between the ages of three and five who qualify for special education services. Students ages 3-5 can receive special education services and support settings such as a regular preschool in the community, a Head Start program or a pre-kindergarten class. Option for 3 and 4 year olds cannot be limited to only PPCD classrooms containing only students with disabilities.

Parent

IDEA 2004 expanded the definition of parent to include: natural, adoptive or foster parents; guardians (unless the children is a ward of the state); individuals acting in the place of natural or adoptive parents such as grandparents, stepparents, other relatives with whom the child lives; individuals responsible for the child's welfare; and assigned surrogates.

Peer-reviewed research

IDEA 2004 says a special education student's services should be based on "peer reviewed research". The term is not defined, but is assumed to be much like the requirement for "scientifically-based research" in No Child Left Behind. The intent is for educational decisions to be based on sound methodology, supported by credible research that supports its effectiveness.

RTI (Response to Intervention)

Refers to consideration of whether a student has "responded" to appropriate instructional techniques (i.e., "interventions") before determining the student has a disability.

Section 504

The common name for the federal law that prohibits discrimination against students with disabilities. Section 504 (of Public Law 93-112, the Rehabilitation Act of 1972) applies to any agency (including a school district) that receives federal money.

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Special Education Rules and Regulations.

The document produced by TEA that contains the state and federal rules and regulations Texas school districts must follow in providing special education services. In some cases, state rules give families additional rights beyond the federal law and regulations.

Supplementary Aids and Services.

The term used in IDEA to describe those aids, services, and other supports provided in regular education classes, or other school settings, to enable a student with a disability from a setting with non-disabled peers.

TEA (Texas Education Agency)

The state agency ultimately responsible for making sure every student with disability receives a free appropriate public education.

Texas Essential Knowledge & Skills (TEKS) Curriculum.

The state-mandated curriculum for each grade level in Texas public schools. TEKS should be considered the "general education curriculum" referenced in the IDEA. Parents should request (or download) a copy of TEKS for their child's age-appropriate grade level to use in developing their IEP.

Modified TEKS Curriculum: TEKS taught using adaptations and modifications in instructional strategies to address needs of some students with disabilities.

Alternates TEKS Curriculum: TEKS significantly modified to meet the functional level of students with significant disabilities who take LDDA (Local Developed Alternative Assessment). Sometimes referred to as the "alternate curriculum".

Universal design

A way of designing products and services so they can be used by people with the widest possible range of abilities.

