



# Questions for Parents to Ask Each Step of the Way in the Special Education Process<sup>1</sup>

## Evaluation

- What tests and other evaluation materials are being considered for my child, and why?
- How will the information be used to plan my child's education?
- Is my child similar to the group on which the test was normed (the children who participated when the test was developed)?

For more information see PACER's handouts "Evaluation: What Does It Mean for Your Child?" [PACER.org/parent/php/PHP-c2.pdf](https://pacer.org/parent/php/PHP-c2.pdf) and "Help for Parents: How to Prepare for a Special Education Evaluation Planning Meeting" [PACER.org/parent/php/PHP-c249.pdf](https://pacer.org/parent/php/PHP-c249.pdf).

## Individualized Education Program (IEP) Development: Goals

- What are the disability-related challenges affecting my child's progress and participation in the general education curriculum?
- What are my child's current levels of academic and functional performance?
- What goals will help my child learn the skills or behaviors he or she needs to make meaningful educational progress?

For more information see PACER's handouts "A Place to Start" [PACER.org/parent/php/PHP-c186.pdf](https://pacer.org/parent/php/PHP-c186.pdf), "Individualized Education Program" [PACER.org/parent/php/PHP-c266.pdf](https://pacer.org/parent/php/PHP-c266.pdf), "Attending Meetings to Plan Your Child's IEP" [PACER.org/parent/php/php-c27.pdf](https://pacer.org/parent/php/php-c27.pdf), and "A Guide to the IEP for Minnesota Parents" [PACER.org/parent/php/PHP-a12.pdf](https://pacer.org/parent/php/PHP-a12.pdf).

## IEP Development: Adaptations

- What supplementary aids and services does my child need to participate in the general education curriculum and the general education classroom?
- How are the accommodations or modifications on the current IEP working for my child?
- What accommodations or modifications does my child's most recent evaluation summary report recommend?

For more information see PACER's handout "Questions for Parents to Ask about School Adaptations" [PACER.org/parent/php/PHP-c91.pdf](https://pacer.org/parent/php/PHP-c91.pdf).

## IEP Development: State Standards and Academic Success

- Is there a regular education teacher at today's IEP meeting who understands both my child's academic ability and state academic standards?
- What goals and or objectives on my child's IEP will address participation in the general education curriculum and in the regular education classroom?
- What can we do at home to help support my child's academic progress?

For more information see PACER's handout "Plan Ahead for Academic Success Using the IEP Meeting Checklist" [PACER.org/parent/php/PHP-c183.pdf](https://pacer.org/parent/php/PHP-c183.pdf).

<sup>1</sup>Understanding the Special Education Process, [PACER.org/parent/resources/understanding-the-spec-ed-process.asp](https://pacer.org/parent/resources/understanding-the-spec-ed-process.asp)

## **IEP Development: Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)**

- What is the placement in the LRE where my child’s services will be provided?
- Does the LRE statement explain why and to what extent full participation in the regular education classroom is not possible?
- What can be provided in the regular education classroom so that my child can remain in the regular education classroom?

For more information see PACER’s handout “Least Restrictive Environment: What Parents Need to Know” [PACER.org/parent/php/PHP-c264.pdf](https://pacer.org/parent/php/PHP-c264.pdf).

## **IEP Development: Extended School Year (ESY)**

- When will the IEP team determine eligibility for ESY?
- What data will be used in this determination?
- If my child needs ESY services, what options are available to meet my child’s needs?

For more information see PACER’s handout “Extended School Year (ESY) Services: What Parents Need to Know” [PACER.org/parent/php/PHP-c256.pdf](https://pacer.org/parent/php/PHP-c256.pdf).

## **IEP Progress**

- How will progress on my child’s IEP goals be measured? How will that look on a progress report?
- Is the rate of progress shown on the progress report likely to lead to the accomplishment of the goals by the end of this IEP year?
- What will this IEP team do if I think my child is not making meaningful progress?

For more information see PACER’s handout “Individualized Education Program (IEP) Progress Reports: How will you know if your child is making progress on IEP goals?” [PACER.org/parent/php/PHP-c255.pdf](https://pacer.org/parent/php/PHP-c255.pdf).

## **Transition**

- What assessments were used to determine my child’s plans and goals for further education, employment, and independent living after high school?
- What services, specific instruction, and classes will the school provide to help achieve the annual goals?
- What assistive technology might help my student achieve those goals?

For more information see PACER’s “IEP Meeting Parent Tip Card for Transition Age Students” [PACER.org/cultural-diversity/resources-for-parents.asp](https://pacer.org/cultural-diversity/resources-for-parents.asp).

## **Agreeing or Disagreeing with IEP**

- Who do I contact after this meeting if I have questions?
- When can I expect to receive the proposed IEP?
- What are the steps I must take to agree or disagree with the IEP?

For more information see “A Guide to the IEP for Minnesota Parents” [PACER.org/parent/php/PHP-a12.pdf](https://pacer.org/parent/php/PHP-a12.pdf).

## **Exiting Special Education**

- When will my student graduate or exit special education services?
- Does my student need transition services after the 12th grade?
- What might the consequences be if I revoke consent for special education services?

See [PACER.org/parent/php/PHP-c173.pdf](https://pacer.org/parent/php/PHP-c173.pdf) for information on revoking consent.

## Communication Within the Special Education Process

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- Would you please tell me more about \_\_\_\_\_?
- What are some other options?
- Do we all agree that \_\_\_\_\_ (summary statement)?

For more information see PACER's handouts "Use Questions to Find Answers: A guide for parents of children receiving special education services" [PACER.org/parent/php/PHP-c136.pdf](https://www.pacer.org/parent/php/PHP-c136.pdf) and "Top Ten Tips: Ideas to Improve Parent-to-Professional Communication from PACER Parent Advocates" [PACER.org/parent/php/PHP-c198.pdf](https://www.pacer.org/parent/php/PHP-c198.pdf). Additionally, request PACER's guide "Working Together: A Parent's Guide to Parent and Professional Partnership and Communication within Special Education" (call to order, free for parents).