



Guidance for Developing the Individualized Education Program (IEP)



2025

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INTRODUCTION

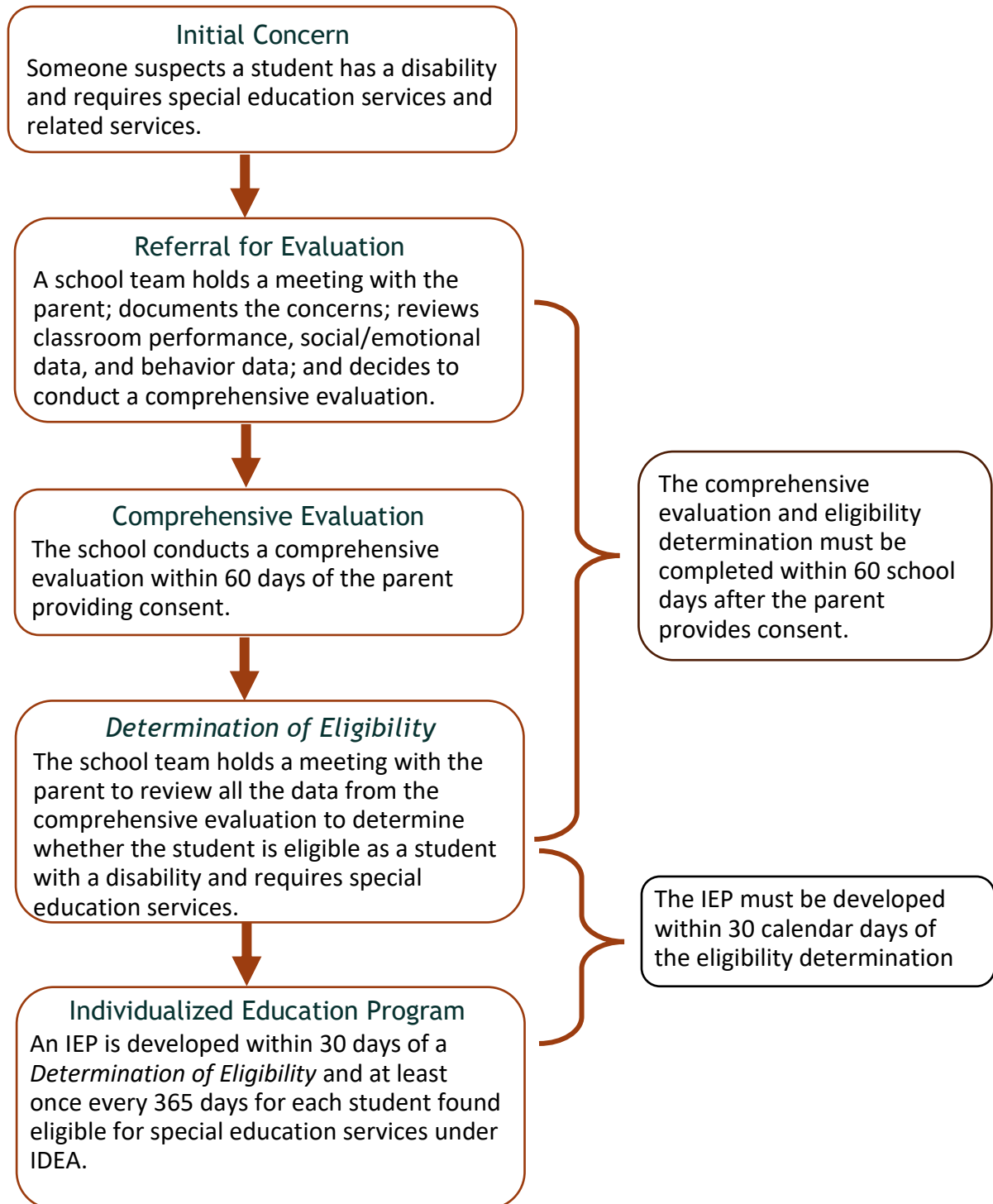
As defined by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), an individualized education program (IEP) is developed after a student is found eligible for special education services following child find procedures—including a comprehensive evaluation and eligibility determination. The purpose of this document is to provide guidance on specific regulatory requirements and best practices to increase the capacity of Bureau of Indian Education (BIE)–funded school staff to develop high-quality IEPs, which are designed to ensure access to and participation in learning for students with disabilities, meet their unique needs, and improve their educational results. The IEP documents the program and services the school will provide to meet the unique needs of each student with a disability. Students who qualify as having a disability under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 require a Section 504 plan, not an IEP.

The IEP is not just a document. It represents an ongoing process for ensuring that all students who are eligible for special education services

- receive a free and appropriate public education (FAPE),
- are provided specially designed instruction to meet their unique needs, and
- are educated in the least restrictive environment (LRE).

When working with Tribally diverse families, it is important for the IEP team to incorporate cultural responsiveness into the IEP process. For families whose primary language is not English, cultural responsiveness in the IEP process ensures families' voices are considered and their needs understood so that their child's education is genuinely customized. Including cultural responsiveness into the IEP process is essential because it builds trust, strengthens partnerships, and ensures that educational decisions reflect the values, experiences, and priorities of the student's family. For Tribally diverse families and those whose primary language is not English, culturally responsive practices help bridge communication gaps, reduce misunderstandings, and affirm the family's role as a key decision-maker. When the IEP team honors cultural identity and linguistic diversity, it creates a more inclusive, respectful process.

SPECIAL EDUCATION PROCESS



REQUIRED PARTS OF THE IEP

Every IEP must include specific federally mandated components. In addition to these minimum requirements, states may choose to add further elements. At a minimum, all IEPs must include the following:

- a statement of the student's Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP), including how the student's disability impacts participation and progress in the general curriculum or, for preschool-age students, participation in appropriate activities
- a statement of measurable academic and functional annual goals
- a description of short-term objectives, when appropriate
- a statement of special education and related services, supplementary aids and services, modifications, and program supports required by the student
- an explanation of the extent, if any, to which the student will not participate with students without disabilities in the general education environment
- a statement describing the student's participation in school, division, and statewide assessments, including any necessary accommodations and modifications
- the projected dates of services and supports, including frequency, location, and duration
- a statement of how the student's progress toward annual goals will be measured and reported
- a statement describing secondary transition services, when required
- a statement indicating that the parent or adult student (for whom Age of Majority Rights will be transferred) has been informed of their rights under the IDEA

TYPES OF IEPs

The IDEA federal regulations and BIE Special Education Handbook refer to two types of IEPs:

- **The initial IEP** is the first IEP written after a student has been found eligible as a student with a disability under the criteria of the IDEA.
- **The annual IEP** refers to the IEP written every year after the initial IEP. It is called the annual IEP because it must be reviewed and revised, as needed but at least once every 365 days.

Although the term "transition IEP" is not explicitly defined in federal regulations, many special educators use it to describe the IEP developed for students aged 16 and older. This IEP includes the federally required secondary transition plan, which outlines goals and services to support the student's move from school to post-school activities.

IEP REVIEW AND COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS

- **Annual Review Requirement:** Every IEP must be reviewed and updated at least once every 12 months (365 days) from the date of the previous IEP.

- **Initial IEP Timeline:** When a student is found eligible for special education services under the IDEA, the school must convene an IEP meeting and develop an IEP within 30 calendar days of the eligibility determination.
- **Ongoing Review and Amendments:** The IEP team may review and amend the IEP at any time. An IEP meeting should be held under the following circumstances:
 - A parent or school staff member requests a meeting.
 - The student is not making expected progress over two or more reporting periods.
 - The student achieves one or more annual goals earlier than anticipated.
 - There are significant changes in the student's needs, circumstances, or placement.
- **Compliance and Continuity of Services:**
 - If an IEP is not reviewed and rewritten within 365 days, it is considered out of compliance.
 - However, IEPs do not "expire." Special education and related services must continue as outlined in the most recently agreed-upon IEP, even if it is out of compliance.
 - If a new IEP has not been developed or parental consent has not been obtained for a proposed IEP, the school must continue implementing the last IEP in full until a new one is finalized.
 - If a student with a disability transfers to a new school and arrives with a noncompliant IEP, the receiving school must provide services that are comparable to those in the previous IEP until a new IEP is developed and agreed upon.

ENDREW F. VERSUS DOUGLAS COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT SUPREME COURT RULING

In 2017, the United States Supreme Court ruled on *Endrew F. v. Douglas County School District Re-1* (2017, hereafter *Endrew F.*). The ruling on the case provided additional guidance for what constitutes educational benefit and has had a direct implication for the development of IEPs. Before the *Endrew F.* case, it was understood that what was written in the IEP and the implementation of the IEP to students with disabilities had to provide the student with some educational benefit. However, since the *Endrew F.* ruling, school districts and schools are required to do the following to ensure that the IEP confers FAPE:

1. Adhere to the IDEA federal policies and procedures for identifying, evaluating, and providing special education services to eligible students, and
2. Develop IEPs that are reasonably calculated to enable students to make progress appropriate in light of their circumstance.¹

The Supreme Court decision also emphasized the need for schools to monitor students' progress systematically on an ongoing basis. When the data collected indicate that a student is not making adequate progress toward an IEP goal(s), the schools must make necessary changes to the IEP. The

¹ *Endrew F. v. Douglas County School District RE-1*, 580 U.S. 386 (2017).
https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/16pdf/15-827_0pm1.pdf

school should convene an IEP meeting to allow the team the opportunity to review the data and determine the changes that need to be made to provide the student with an individualized program that results in positive outcomes.

DEFINITION OF PARENT

The IDEA federal regulations and BIE Special Education Handbook define “parent” as the following:

- a biological or adoptive parent of a child
- a foster parent, unless state and/or Tribal law, regulations, or contractual obligations with a state or local entity prohibit a foster parent from acting as a parent
- a guardian generally authorized to act as the child’s parent or authorized to make educational decisions for the child (but not the state and/or Tribe if the child is a ward of the state and/or Tribe)
- an individual acting in the place of a biological or adoptive parent (including a grandparent, stepparent, or other relative) with whom the child lives
- an individual who is legally responsible for the child’s welfare
- a surrogate parent who has been appointed in accordance with state regulations

Throughout this document, the term “parent(s)” refers to any individual who fits one of the definitions above.

SECTION I: BEFORE THE IEP MEETING

Several activities need to take place before an IEP meeting. Special education teachers and other school personnel responsible for ensuring IEPs are compliant with regulations should develop a system for keeping track of specific due dates to allow enough time to prepare and develop a high-quality IEP.

SCHEDULE THE IEP MEETING

IEP meetings must be scheduled at a time and place that is mutually agreeable to all required team members, including the parent. Federal regulations require that parents receive written notice well in advance, allowing sufficient time to make arrangements and actively participate in the meeting.

To meet this requirement, schools must provide parents with a formal written invitation using the *Invitation to Participate in an Individualized Education Program* form available in BIE's Native American Student Information System (NASIS). This invitation must include the following:

- the **date and time** of the meeting
- the **location** where the meeting will be held
- the **purpose** of the meeting
- a list of **expected participants** who will attend

PARENT NOTIFICATION

Schools are required to provide parents with written notice of the IEP meeting well in advance of the meeting. The BIE Special Education Handbook recommends notifying parents of the meeting 10 school days before the meeting. In addition to the written notice requirements above, the notice must also inform parents of their right to invite individuals with special knowledge or expertise about their child. While schools may not question who the parent chooses to bring, they may ask the parent to share this information ahead of time to ensure that appropriate accommodations, such as reserving a larger meeting space or arranging additional seating, can be made.

In addition to the meeting invitation, it is strongly recommended that parents receive a copy of the Notice of Procedural Safeguards. This document outlines their legal rights under the IDEA, including the following:

- parent consent requirements
- prior written notice
- access to educational records
- independent educational evaluations
- procedures for resolving complaints
- rights related to disciplinary placements and alternative educational settings

School staff must make multiple, documented attempts to schedule the IEP meeting at a mutually agreed-upon time and place. It is expected that schools make at least three attempts before

proceeding without the parent. When proposing meeting times, offer multiple options across different days and times to demonstrate respect for the parent’s availability. Avoid limiting options to a single day or a staff member’s planning period, as this does not meet the requirement for mutual agreement. If time is limited, remember that an IEP can be developed over several shorter meetings rather than one extended session.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

When inviting the parent, schools should also offer additional supports to facilitate their participation. Examples include the following:

- providing a language interpreter
- offering child supervision or a waiting area for siblings
- sharing meeting expectations and prompts to help the parent prepare input

Federal regulations also require schools to actively encourage parent participation. This includes offering alternative formats such as phone or video conferencing and considering more accessible meeting locations, such as a community library or another school building, if needed.

DETERMINE IEP TEAM MEMBERS

While most IEP meetings occur annually, additional meetings may be held throughout the year as needed. Every IEP meeting is a valuable opportunity to strengthen collaboration between families and school staff. These meetings help ensure that the student’s educational program remains responsive, effective, and aligned with the student’s evolving needs.

IEP meetings also serve as a platform to build trust with families and engage the full team in designing a meaningful, supportive plan for the students’ success. To the extent possible, all school staff who provide the student with services and support should be invited to and participate in the IEP meeting.

The federal regulations require the following individuals to be included on the IEP team:

- at least one general education teacher of the student
- at least one special education teacher of the student
- a representative of the district or school
- an individual who can interpret the instructional implications of evaluation results
- at the discretion of the parent or the agency, other individuals who have knowledge or special expertise regarding the student, including related services personnel as appropriate
- when appropriate, the student

Table 1 below provides more information about IEP team members. All IEP team members should be knowledgeable about the student, the appropriate age level or grade level curriculum, and the data regarding the student’s academic and functional performance. While the IEP team might include just one person in each of the roles described in the table below, the

team can include multiple administrators, special education teachers, general education teachers, related service personnel, and other school staff.

Table 1

IEP Team Members

Team member	Requirements
Parent	• Advance notification: The parent must be provided adequate notice (generally 7–10 days before) of the IEP meeting to provide an opportunity to make arrangements to participate. • Mutually agreed upon time: The IEP meeting must be held at a mutually agreed upon day, time, and location for both the parent and the school staff. • Written notification: For every IEP meeting, the parent must be provided a written notification or invitation indicating the date, time, and the persons who will be in attendance.
Student	• The student must be invited to attend the IEP meeting when secondary transition services are being discussed and written into the IEP (see the Secondary Transition Plan section later in this document for more details). • The student may attend any IEP meeting at any age, when appropriate.
General education teacher	The general education teacher must • provide instruction to the student; • be able to share data on the student’s progress with the age-level and grade-level general curriculum in relation to an area of need or annual IEP goal; • be knowledgeable about the supplementary supports, accommodations, and/or modifications that the student requires to access the general education curriculum; • assist the IEP team in discussing and considering the extent to which the student can be educated in the general education setting; and • be knowledgeable about IEP goals, accommodations, and special education services.
Special education teacher	The special education teacher who attends the IEP meeting must • provide specialized instruction to the student; • be able to share data related to the PLAAFP, the development of measurable annual goals, progress made on goals, and required accommodations and modifications; and • be able to assist in developing appropriate annual goals and objectives, develop instructional strategies, and identify supplementary aids and services. Note: If the student’s case manager does not directly instruct the student, then the case manager and a special education teacher who provides instruction to the student must attend the IEP meeting.
School representative	The administrator who attends the IEP meeting must be • qualified to provide or supervise the provision of special education services, • knowledgeable about the appropriate grade-level and age-level general education curriculum standards and requirements,

Team member	Requirements
	• well-informed about the available resources within the district and/or school(s), and • have the authority to commit district and/or school resources agreed to within the IEP.
Related service personnel	• Related service providers include physical therapist, occupational therapist, speech and language pathologist or therapist, counselor, psychologist, school nurse, and transportation provider. • A related service provider who provides consultation or direct service to the student should attend the annual IEP meeting. • The related service provider should attend any IEP meeting in which changes to related services are being considered. • If the IEP team plans to consider adding or terminating a related service, the appropriate related service provider must attend the meeting.
Adult service agency	• When secondary transition is being discussed, a representative of an adult service agency (e.g., Tribal or state vocational rehabilitation) should be invited to the IEP meeting. Note: Prior to inviting a representative from an outside agency to an IEP meeting, the parent or adult student must provide consent to invite the specific agency representative.

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES REGARDING GENERAL EDUCATION TEACHERS

Federal regulations require that at least one general education teacher of the student attend the IEP meeting if the student currently participates—or may participate—in the general education classroom. This teacher must be someone who teaches the student. However, it is both acceptable and considered best practice to invite multiple general education teachers when appropriate:

- If a student’s disability affects reading or written language, inviting several general education teachers can help the team understand how the disability impacts the student’s performance across different subjects.
- If the IEP addresses behavioral needs, multiple general education teachers can provide valuable insight into how the student manages behavior across various classroom settings and routines.

STUDENTS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS WITHIN GENERAL EDUCATION SCHOOLS

Even if a student does not currently participate in the general education curriculum, a general education teacher should still be included in the IEP meeting. Their role is to provide input on the supports that would be necessary if the student were placed in a general education setting. At least once a year, the IEP team must consider the student’s potential to participate in general education classes alongside nondisabled peers to the maximum extent appropriate. In these cases, the school should invite a general education teacher who is familiar with the age-level or grade-level curriculum. For instance, if the student is in 9th grade, a 9th grade general education teacher should be invited.

This teacher should receive relevant information about the student's disability and current levels of performance prior to the meeting to ensure meaningful participation.

STUDENTS IN SEPARATE SPECIAL EDUCATION SETTINGS

If a student is placed in a separate setting, such as a public or private day school, and does not participate in a program with general education peers, the IEP meeting may proceed without a general education teacher. However, if the team is considering or proposing any level of participation in a general education setting, even part-time, a general education teacher must be included.

In such cases, the invited general education teacher may not have taught the student directly. Instead, the general education teacher should be someone knowledgeable about the appropriate curriculum, grade-level expectations, recommended accommodations, and supports needed for the student to participate in the general education setting.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Excusing an IEP team member from attending an IEP meeting and ensuring that a language interpreter attends a meeting requires planning ahead of time.

EXCUSING TEAM MEMBERS

The provision allowing team members to be excused from attending all or parts of the IEP meeting should be used on rare occasions and determined on a case-by-case basis. A required member of the IEP team may be excused from attending the IEP meeting only if the parent of the child with a disability and the school agrees in writing that the member's attendance is unnecessary because their area of the curriculum or related services is not being modified or discussed. In addition, a member may be excused from the meeting, even if it involves their area of curriculum or services, if both the parent and the school consent to the excusal in writing. A parent must provide consent to excuse a team member before the IEP meeting, and the excused member must provide written input into the IEP's development to both the parent and the IEP team before the meeting. Documentation of the agreement to excuse an IEP team member must be documented on the Excusal Form located in NASIS.

PLANNING FOR INTERPRETERS

Arranging for a language interpreter to attend an IEP meeting can be a crucial step in ensuring a parent can fully participate in the IEP meeting. It is the responsibility of the school to arrange for a qualified interpreter to attend the IEP meeting to provide interpreting services to the parent. The person identified must have the certifications and qualifications to be a language interpreter or provide American Sign Language (ASL). Arranging for a qualified interpreter might take a couple of days. The student can have conversations with the parent in the native language, but the student cannot be used as an interpreter for an IEP meeting.

PREPARE A DRAFT OF THE IEP

The IEP team must collaboratively develop the entire IEP during the official meeting. While it is never appropriate to finalize the IEP beforehand, team members may begin discussing and drafting sections in advance. Any pre-meeting drafts must remain flexible and open to revision during the meeting, when all members can provide input and make final decisions. Schools may not complete a final IEP prior to the meeting.

Developing an annual IEP is part of the ongoing process of delivering special education and related services to students with disabilities. Federal regulations require continuous monitoring of student progress, with progress reports issued at least quarterly, or more frequently if specified in the IEP. Therefore, the new IEP builds on the previous one. The final progress report for each annual goal marks the end of the current IEP cycle and serves as the foundation for the next IEP.

For an initial IEP, the IEP is developed based on data collected during the eligibility determination process. Teams should review the *Determination of Eligibility*, which is attached to the Evaluation Summary Report when a student qualifies for services. This document is available electronically in NASIS and as a hard copy in the student's record. Teams should also examine all assessment and evaluation reports used during the eligibility meeting.

STUDENT-IDENTIFYING INFORMATION

Student-identifying information can be completed before the IEP meeting and verified during the meeting. In most cases, this information exists within NASIS. This information typically includes the student's name, date of birth, age, grade, student identification number, NASIS identification number, address, and primary language. It will also include the parent's name, address, primary and secondary phone numbers, and email address. Additional information that can be completed before the IEP meeting includes the student's most recent eligibility determination date, primary disability, and secondary disability.

PRESENT LEVELS OF ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AND FUNCTIONAL PERFORMANCE (DRAFT)

The IEP must include a PLAAFP statement. This section summarizes the student's current performance and establishes the baseline data that inform the development of the entire IEP. The PLAAFP serves as the foundation for setting annual goals, identifying necessary accommodations and modifications, and determining appropriate services and placement. To ensure the IEP is both compliant and meaningful, the team should draw on multiple sources of data. Examples of data use are provided in the key components of parts of the IEP throughout this manual.

The PLAAFP must address both academic and functional performance and include all areas of need identified in the *Determination of Eligibility* (e.g., reading, writing, math, study skills, social skills). If new areas are proposed for the IEP, teachers must provide data showing that the student requires specially designed instruction or supports to access the general curriculum.

For instance, a student named Jonathan was found eligible for special education services due to an emotional disability, with social skills and behavior noted as areas of need. However, his emotional challenges also disrupt his cognitive processing, which negatively affects his academic progress over the school year. In response, his math teacher and special education teacher collected and analyzed classroom performance data, implemented targeted interventions, and implemented various accommodations. After a year of documentation and support, both teachers provided the data collected to the IEP team and recommended that Jonathan receive special education services in mathematics to help him access and succeed in the grade-level curriculum.

The PLAAFP fulfills the following purposes:

- describes the student's academic achievement and functional performance
- explains how the disability affects access to and progress in the general education curriculum
- establishes baseline performance levels aligned with age- and grade-level standards
- provides the rationale for special education services and placement decisions

Key components of the PLAAFP include the following:

- a description of the student's strengths and needs in academic and functional areas
- results from the initial or most recent evaluation
- a description of how the student's disability impacts participation in general education
- concerns and input from the student's parents

The remainder of the IEP, including goals and objectives, special education and related services, accommodations, transition services, and placement decisions, should build on the data and descriptions included in the PLAAFP.

DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDENT'S ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AND FUNCTIONAL PERFORMANCE

Including data in the PLAAFP is essential for creating a comprehensive and effective IEP for students with disabilities. Data should be used to carefully and clearly describe the student's current functioning across various academic and functional areas. This detailed description should indicate whether the student is meeting grade-level expectations with or without accommodations, modifications, or additional support. By doing so, the PLAAFP provides an accurate baseline that is crucial for setting realistic and measurable goals.

In addition, it is important to include a narrative that highlights the student's strengths, weaknesses, and preferences across several areas of academic achievement and functional performance. This narrative should ensure the IEP describes the whole student and allows the team to understand how the student's strengths might support their areas of need. Each area of need documented on the *Determination of Eligibility* should be addressed, ensuring that all aspects of the student's educational requirements are considered.

Academic areas of need include reading, mathematics, and written language. When describing skills for each academic area, differentiate the specific components of each. For instance, reading has five essential components: fluency, vocabulary, phonemic awareness, phonics, and comprehension. Components of mathematics include calculation and problem-solving. Written language includes vocabulary, spelling, and sentence structure.

When including data in the PLAAFP, it’s important to go beyond listing scores. Results should be explained in clear, accessible language and describe how the student’s performance compares to age-level or grade-level expectations.

For each assessment included, be sure to specify the following:

- the name of the assessment
- the date it was administered
- a brief summary of the results, including how they relate to the student’s current academic performance and instructional needs

Examples of functional areas of need include behavior, social–emotional skills, language and communication, social skills, independent living skills, mental health, and executive functioning. Examples of components of need that fall under executive functioning include organization, planning, and attention to task. See the Table 2 below.

Table 2
Areas of Need and Components

Area of need	Components
Reading	Fluency Vocabulary Phonemic awareness Phonics Comprehension
Mathematics	Calculation Problem-solving
Written language	Vocabulary Spelling Sentence structure
Functional skills	Behavior Social–emotional skills Language and communication Social skills Independent living

See Appendix A: Examples of PLAAFP Statements for descriptions of the student’s academic achievement and functional performance.

RESULTS OF THE INITIAL OR MOST RECENT EVALUATIONS

In the PLAAFP portion of the IEP, the description of current levels of functioning must include relevant formal and informal evaluation data used to determine eligibility for special education services. The data (e.g., a score on an assessment) must be described in relation to the academic or functional expectation for the student’s grade level.

For instance, indicating that a student achieved a score of 38 on the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) is helpful for certain eligibility criteria but does not provide much relevance to planning instruction. Therefore, a score on an assessment must also be explained in relation to the academic or functional expectation for the student’s grade level. For instance, a description of a DRA score might say, “Mark achieved a score of 38 on the DRA, which was administered by the reading specialist. The expected DRA score for 5th graders at the start of the school year is 50. Mark is currently reading significantly below grade level. When reading words in a list, Mark can read high-frequency words. He attempts to sound out each letter. As a result, he struggles with diagraphs. When reading passages, Mark is an impulsive reader and often guesses the whole word based on the first three letters of the word. He does not use context clues to help him.” Additional information should provide the 5th grade curriculum expectations for understanding how to read diagraphs, use context clues, and any other related reading conventions.

See Appendix A: Examples of PLAAFP Statements for statements about the results of initial or more recent evaluations.

DESCRIPTION OF HOW THE STUDENT’S DISABILITY IMPACTS PARTICIPATION IN GENERAL EDUCATION

The emphasis for this part of the PLAAFP is on access to the general education curriculum. Having already detailed the current levels of academic and functional performance, this part of the PLAAFP describes how the student’s disability impacts the student’s ability to access and participate in the general education curriculum. See Table 3 below.

Table 3
Examples of Statements of How the Student’s Disability Impacts Participation in General Education

Winona requires the use of a sign language interpreter throughout the entire school day. To access classroom verbal instruction, Winona will require a copy of classroom notes and lecture notes provided so she can maintain eye contact with the ASL interpreter.
Mohegan’s deficits in reading fluency result in difficulties summarizing specific details of a text. When required to read lengthy texts independently, Mohegan benefits from reading the material in a room by himself so he can quietly read aloud and not disturb other students in the classroom.

Stating only the student's eligibility category does not adequately describe the impact on their ability to access and make progress in the general education curriculum. Statements should reflect individual needs and should not describe the general characteristics of a larger group of students.

See Appendix A: Examples of PLAAFP Statements for statements describing how the student's disability impacts the student's participation in general education.

CONCERNS OF THE PARENT

The parent should be provided with opportunities to provide input. The concerns documented in this section can be a summary of concerns as a result of ongoing communication with the parent regarding the student's academic achievement, functional performance, progress toward goals, and/or plans for the future. Often, the concerns of the parent will not be documented before the IEP meeting, as the concerns are generally shared and documented during the IEP meeting.

See Appendix A: Examples of PLAAFP Statements for statements about the concerns of the parent.

PROPOSED MEASURABLE ANNUAL GOALS (DRAFT)

The IDEA regulations and BIE Special Education Handbook require that the IEP include measurable annual goals:

The IEP includes measurable annual goals, including academic and functional goals, designed to meet the student's needs that result from the disability to enable the student to be involved in and make progress in the general education curriculum and meet the student's other needs that result from the disability. Benchmarks or short-term objectives should be included for the students with disabilities who take alternative assessments aligned to alternative achievement standards, or any other student with a disability as determined by the IEP team. (34 CFR §300.320(A)(2))

Remember that goals must be challenging to ensure that students with disabilities are being held to high standards and are being adequately prepared for independence and productive lives after leaving high school (as mandated by the *Endrew F. v. Douglas County School District* Supreme Court ruling, described earlier in this manual).

When writing proposed measurable goals for an IEP, the final progress report for the previous IEP and the new PLAAFP should clearly describe the student's area(s) of need and provide the baseline data for developing the new goals. For initial IEPs, the data collected for the eligibility determination and the PLAAFP will provide the baseline data for developing annual goals. At least one annual goal should be written for each area of need described in the PLAAFP. Academic areas include reading, written language, and mathematics. Areas of functional performance include behavior, social-emotional skills, communication, social skills, and executive functioning. When including a Secondary Transition Plan, areas to address include education/training, employment, and independent living.

THREE PARTS OF MEASURABLE ANNUAL GOAL

IEP annual goals have three required, measurable parts: **Condition**, **Behavior**, and **Criteria**. Each goal must include only one clear, observable behavior.

CONDITION

This part defines the circumstance, materials, or supports under which the student will demonstrate the skill.

- Describe the setting, materials, content level, or prompts provided.
- Specify any adult assistance or accommodation and the level of independence expected.
- Examples:
 - given a 5th-grade-level reading passage
 - given 30 single-digit addition problems
 - given two teacher prompts
 - provided a visual schedule

Be clear when describing the condition under which the student will demonstrate accuracy in completing the goal. The condition should include the materials or content that will be used to measure the goal. Also, if the student requires adult assistance, such as prompts, the level of assistance or accommodations needed should be described. For instance, one particular student may be working toward completing academic tasks more independently, with fewer teacher prompts. Another student may be working toward demonstrating a skill while working with groups of students rather than just working one-on-one with the teacher. In other cases, students might require the use of a specific accommodation to complete a task or demonstrate a skill.

BEHAVIOR

This part states the single observable skill the student will perform:

- The skill must be observable or produce a tangible product (e.g., written work, completed problems).
- Avoid emotional or internal states that cannot be objectively measured.
- Examples:
 - read aloud
 - solve math problems
 - make eye contact
 - write a five-paragraph response

The behavior must be observable. A person should be able to see the student complete the task, or the task should result in something tangible, such as a writing assignment or math calculations. Pay special attention to observable behaviors when writing social/emotional or behavior goals. A student can be observed smiling, but it is difficult to clearly observe or know whether a student is expressing a certain emotion, such as happiness. Thus, it is important to be careful that what is being observed is objective and not subjective.

An annual goal should only include one behavior. When more than one behavior is included in a goal, it is no longer clearly measurable. For example, if a goal states that a students will “underline all the words spelled incorrectly and highlight the words that start with a vowel,” it is possible that the student will master one skill and not the other. For example, the student might demonstrate proficiency at underlining the words spelled incorrectly but be well below mastery of recognizing words that start with a vowel. So, although the student did master one behavior, the student did not meet all of the expectations of the goal. To avoid this issue, make sure there is just one behavior being addressed by each annual goal.

CRITERIA

This part specifies the level of performance required for the goal to be considered met (rate, frequency, or accuracy):

- Use existing performance data to set a realistic, challenging target.
- Avoid unrealistic 100 percent expectations for new skills; allow for typical learning variation.
- Examples:
 - with 80% accuracy
 - with 90% accuracy
 - with 65% accuracy
 - with 75% accuracy

To set the criteria, it is important to refer to performance data to understand the rate, frequency, or level of accuracy at which the student should demonstrate the behavior in the goal. Remember that students are human and therefore not perfect. Be careful not to set unrealistic criteria. For instance, a kindergarten student is expected to know all 26 letters in the alphabet by the end of the school year. However, many will pass that assessment, having demonstrated mastery of 23 letters; X, Y, and Z can be tricky. Mastery of 23 letters out of a total of 26 letters is approximately 88% accurate. In most cases, the criteria will not be set to 100%, because the student is learning a new skill or advancing in a skill. Mistakes are part of the process.

For some students, a high criteria may not be an appropriate expectation. For instance, a student with severe autism may be working on making eye contact after being greeted by another person with 60% accuracy. By the end of their previous IEP, the student demonstrated making eye contact when their name was called with 50% accuracy. When the content is changed to “being greeted” versus “when his or her name was called,” setting the criteria at 65% may very well be ambitious and achievable.

Examples of complete goals follow:

- **Given a 5th-grade-level reading passage, the student will read aloud with 80% accuracy.**

- **Given 30 single-digit addition problems**, the student will **solve the problems** with **90% accuracy**.
- **Given two prompts from the teacher**, the student will **make eye contact** with **65% accuracy**.
- **When provided with a visual schedule**, the student will **write a five-paragraph response** with **75 percent accuracy**.

SHORT-TERM OBJECTIVES AND BENCHMARKS

Short-term objectives or benchmarks must be included in IEPs written for students to take alternative assessments aligned with alternative achievement standards. Short-term objectives are measurable and outline the discrete steps or components the student will accomplish toward meeting the goal. Benchmarks are time-bound and document when a student is expected to make a certain amount of progress. Short-term objectives and benchmarks include skills or behaviors to be directly taught to the student in support of reaching the goal.

Short-term objectives are not required for students who are assessed with the general curriculum assessment or standard assessment. However, the IEP team can agree to include short-term objectives if requested and considered necessary.

See Appendix C: Example of a Goal with Objectives and Benchmarks for more examples.

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DEVELOPING MEASURABLE ANNUAL GOALS

It is important that goals are clear and measurable when an IEP is developed.

GOAL CLARITY

Have a colleague read each proposed goal and then describe aloud the condition, behavior, content, and criteria they would observe when the student meets the goal. Use their feedback to confirm the goal is written so that any reader can understand exactly what will be measured.

DUAL USE OF ANNUAL GOALS

An annual goal in an academic or functional area can also be a secondary transition annual goal when it directly supports a postsecondary outcome. For example, a goal to count money or make change can be written as an academic/functional goal and simultaneously support a post-school employment or independent-living objective.

SECONDARY TRANSITION PLAN

The Secondary Transition Plan must be included in the IEP starting at the age of 16. When a student is 16 or will be turning 16 during the life cycle of an IEP, a Secondary Transition Plan must be developed. Transition services should be results-oriented and student-centered and reflect a coordinated effort. This part of the IEP is focused on improving the academic achievement and functional performance of the student with a disability to facilitate the student's movement from school to post-school activities, or life as an adult.

Before the IEP meeting, the information for the Transition Plan can be drafted for the IEP team's consideration during the meeting. Data collected throughout the year and in preparation for the meeting can be summarized in the following sections:

- Student's Desired Post-School Activities
- Results of Age-Appropriate Transition Assessments
- Present Levels of Performance
- Statement of Needed Transition Services
- Course of Study
- Postsecondary Goals
- Measurable Annual Goals

There is not a Present Levels of Performance section in the Secondary Transition Plan; however, information pertinent to Secondary Transition Services should be reflected in the PLAAFP.

STUDENT DESIRED POST-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

When developing an appropriate Secondary Transition Plan, the school staff must take the time to understand the family's expectations, dreams, and goals for the student when they exit high school and enter adulthood. This expectation is another reason planning must occur before the IEP meeting and carefully consider the following:

- the expectations and desires of the student
- the expectations and desires of the parent and additional family members
- the family's role in supporting a young adult with a disability
- any cultural or community considerations
- any barriers or additional needs in the home setting

Transition planning is a student-centered process, focusing on the individual goals and aspirations of each student. It is important to include statements directly from the student that express their personal objectives for continuing education, gaining employment, and living independently after graduating or leaving high school. These statements should be in the student's own words or summarize their expressed goals. Examples include the following:

- Direct statement: "I would like to attend the community college and work on my grandfather's farm when I am not in class."
- Summary statement: "Sam indicated that he wanted to take a year off from school and work at a local automotive repair shop. He stated that he will learn a lot working full-time with mechanics at the repair shop and considers that to be an education."

These personalized statements capture the student's vision for their future and should guide the transition planning process.

RESULTS OF AGE-APPROPRIATE TRANSITION ASSESSMENTS

IDEA federal regulations and the BIE Special Education Handbook require that every Secondary Transition Plan include measurable postsecondary goals based on age-appropriate transition

assessments. The postsecondary goals must address training, education, employment, and, when applicable, independent living skills [§ 300.320(b)(1)].

Collecting data through age-appropriate transition assessments is a critical and ongoing part of planning for a student's future. These assessments help identify the student's interests, strengths, challenges, and needs for preparing the student for life after high school. Importantly, secondary transition assessments do not need to be conducted solely for the purpose of developing the IEP. Data gathered throughout the current or previous school years can and should inform the Secondary Transition Plan.

The data should be reported in the Results of Age-Appropriate Transition Assessments section of the IEP.

TYPES OF ASSESSMENTS

- **Formal Assessments:** These are standardized tools that compare a student's performance to peers and help identify specific strengths and areas for growth. Examples include the following:
 - standardized tests
 - criterion-referenced assessments
 - benchmark assessments
 - aptitude tests
- **Informal Assessments:** These are nonstandardized and focus on individual performance and context. Examples include the following:
 - teacher or staff observations
 - student portfolios
 - situational assessments (e.g., job shadowing, classroom simulations)

ASSESSING HARD AND SOFT SKILLS

When identifying a student's strengths and needs, include data on both hard and soft skills across education, employment, and independent living domains:

- **Hard Skills** (technical or job-specific skills):
 - computer and software literacy
 - operating machinery or tools
 - data analysis
 - foreign language fluency
- **Soft Skills** (interpersonal and behavioral traits):
 - communication
 - reliability and dependability
 - patience and teamwork

- problem-solving

This comprehensive approach ensures that the Secondary Transition Plan is tailored to the student's unique profile and supports meaningful postsecondary outcomes.

POSTSECONDARY GOALS

The postsecondary goals capture the students' vision of their adult life after leaving high school. Postsecondary goals are different from annual goals. Postsecondary goals are written to be achieved after exiting high school, whereas annual goals are written to be accomplished by the end of the IEP.

The IDEA federal regulations and the BIE Special Education Handbook require at least one measurable postsecondary goal to be written for each of the following areas: **education or training**, **employment**, and if appropriate, **independent living**. Postsecondary goals can also be written for other areas, as appropriate, such as recreation and leisure and community participation. Postsecondary goals are written for the time period after leaving school. Appendix B shows examples of the postsecondary goals for two fictional students.

Postsecondary goals should be reviewed and revised annually. When students first start to participate in transition planning, postsecondary goals might be broader and vague. As students become older, and they gain a better understanding of their preferences, interests, and strengths, the postsecondary goals will become more narrow and more specific. For instance, a student who is 15 years old might have a goal of attending a community college for 2 years and be unsure of the area of study. By the time that student is 17, he or she may have decided to attend a community college to earn a welding certificate while working part-time with a local plumbing company.

STATEMENT OF NEEDED TRANSITION SERVICES

Secondary transition services are a coordinated set of activities developed through a results-driven process aimed at enhancing the academic and functional skills of students with disabilities. These services are designed to support the student's successful transition from school to postsecondary education, employment or training, and independent living.

Secondary transition services may include the following:

- special education and related services
- instruction that is not considered specially designed instruction
- community-based experiences
- other activities aligned with the student's postsecondary goals

When planning transition services across the life of an IEP, teams must use data from age-appropriate transition assessments and the PLAAFP or Present Level of Performance. These data help identify the skills a student currently possesses and the skills they need to develop in order to achieve their postsecondary goals.

It is also important to consider the student's developmental stage, especially as they approach adulthood. The concepts of awareness, exploration, and preparation, often used in career readiness, apply broadly to other areas of adult life. Many students may not yet be aware of the responsibilities and tasks adults face daily. Without foundational knowledge in areas such as education, employment, and independent living, students cannot fully participate in exploration and preparation activities that support growth.

To address these gaps, instructional scaffolding, commonly used in academic settings, should also be applied to transition planning. Scaffolding helps students build the knowledge and skills necessary for adult life, ensuring they are equipped to navigate postsecondary environments with confidence and independence.

COURSE OF STUDY

Under IDEA federal regulations and the BIE Special Education Handbook, the IEP must include a documented course of study when transition services are addressed. This course of study outlines the multiyear sequence of coursework and activities a student will complete to earn a high school diploma and achieve their postsecondary goals.

For most students with disabilities, the course of study will align with state or local requirements for a standard or alternate diploma. In addition to required academic courses, the plan should include classes and experiences that directly support the student's post-school aspirations. Examples include the following:

- career and technical education or career pathways programs that prepare students for employment or vocational training
- elective courses tailored to the student's interests and future goals
- internships, apprenticeships, or community-based experiences that may not earn high school credit but contribute meaningfully to postsecondary readiness

Examples follow:

- A student interested in Tribal law might enroll in dual-credit government and history courses and participate in a Tribal youth council.
- A student preparing for a career in natural resources might take agriculture and ecology classes and complete a summer internship with the Tribe's environmental office.

Because the course of study spans multiple years, it should include both

- courses already completed in prior school years and
- proposed or recommended courses and activities for future years, which may be adjusted during the IEP meeting based on team decisions and evolving student goals.

This documentation ensures that the student’s educational pathway is purposeful, aligned with their secondary transition plan, and responsive to their evolving needs and interests.

AGE OF MAJORITY

Federal regulations authorize states to transfer educational decision-making rights to students once they reach the age of majority, typically 18 in most states. At least 1 year before a student reaches this age, schools must inform both the student and parent that parental rights under the IDEA will transfer to the student on their birthday.

When the student becomes an adult, the student assumes responsibility for their educational decisions. This includes managing their education records, receiving notifications about special education meetings, and signing consent forms as needed.

This age of majority notification is required only once and is typically performed during an IEP meeting with both parent and student present, though it can also occur outside of such meetings. The date of notification remains unchanged and documented after the official notice is given. The date when the parent and the student were informed that the rights of the parent under the IDEA federal regulations and the BIE Special Education Handbook transfer to the student when the student reaches the age of majority will remain the same after the official notice has been provided. If the student is younger than 16, the spaces for documenting the age of majority can be left blank.

See Appendix B: Secondary Transition Plan Examples for more examples.

DISTRIBUTE A DRAFT IEP

Provide the parent and all IEP team members with the draft IEP and relevant documents (e.g., assessment results, progress reports, and other supporting information) several days before the meeting.

- The additional time gives IEP team members time to review the proposed IEP, note questions or concerns, and gather data.
- Advance review allows parents and team members time to prepare meaningful input for decision-making.
- Preparing beforehand typically makes the meeting more efficient and focused, allowing the team to use meeting time for discussion and final decisions rather than initial review.

SECTION II: DURING THE IEP MEETING

The IEP is proposed by the school when all parts of the IEP have been completed as a result of the IEP meeting. During the IEP meeting, all the information prepared and drafted for the meeting is reviewed, revised, and agreed to by the entire IEP team present for the meeting. This process also includes documenting any disagreements.

During the IEP meeting, the IEP team should be prepared to make changes to the previously drafted parts of the IEP. Changes to the IEP should be completed in a way that can be observed by the parent and the rest of the IEP team. For instance, it is helpful to project the IEP onto a screen so everyone in the room can see the changes being entered directly into NASIS. In all cases, it is important to be transparent in documenting the changes the IEP team agrees to and inserting the changes accurately into proposed, or final, IEP. Also document any disagreements that a parent or an IEP team member included in the IEP.

If the parent or other IEP team members were not provided with a copy of the draft IEP before the meeting, each section will need to be presented in its entirety.
If all IEP team members were provided with a draft copy of the proposed IEP before the meeting, reviewing the draft could consist of asking for questions, clarifications, or concerns about the information included.

START THE MEETING

School staff should start IEP meeting with a friendly tone to help make the parent and student feel comfortable and welcome. Center the meeting around the student and the importance of the IEP team collaborating to develop an IEP that will ensure the student has a successful year.

REVIEW THE AGENDA

Review the agenda so everyone is aware of what to expect. Using an agenda for an IEP meeting can maximize the effectiveness of the meeting by assisting the team to remain focused and accountable. There is a sample agenda in Appendix G.

INTRODUCTION OF IEP MEMBERS

At the start of the IEP meeting, every team member should introduce themselves by giving their name, job title, and specific role on the IEP team.

- State roles explicitly; do not assume parents understand each person's role.
- If a team member has multiple or familiar school duties (e.g., an administrator who typically greets students), clarify in which capacity they are serving for the meeting.
- Explain the purpose and function of any outside-agency representatives in attendance.
- If the parent has invited additional participants, ensure their name and role are shared.

Clear introductions help parents and team members understand who is contributing what information and who will be responsible for particular decisions or supports

EXPLAIN THE PURPOSE OF THE MEETING

The purpose of the IEP meeting is to bring together a team of educators, specialists, and the student's family to develop an IEP that supports the student's unique learning needs. Each team member plays a vital role in sharing information, reviewing data, and making decisions that ensure the student receives specially designed instruction and the supports needed to access and participate in the general education curriculum. This meeting is an opportunity to come to a consensus on the student's strengths and areas of need, set meaningful goals, and determine services and accommodations that promote progress. It's important to ensure that all participants understand the intent of the IEP and how their contributions shape a program that is both compliant and responsive to the student's educational journey.

REVIEW PROGRESS REPORTS FROM PREVIOUS IEP

Begin the IEP meeting by reviewing the student's final progress reports from the previous IEP. The review reminds the team of the student's academic and functional achievements and clarifies the student's rate of progress. The information will support developing realistic, data-informed annual goals and plan appropriate activities for the coming year.

PROPOSE THE IEP

During the meeting, the IEP is proposed section by section in sequential order. It is important that the IEP team agrees with the contents of each section before moving onto the next.

IEP OVERVIEW

The first section of the IEP form is the IEP Overview. Although this section is populated by NASIS with preexisting data, it is important to review the information to ensure it is correct. If it is not correct, make the necessary changes. If it is not possible to make the changes during the IEP meeting, make sure to inform the individual in the school building who has the rights to edit demographic information in NASIS. All the information in the IEP Overview section should be correct before finalizing the IEP and providing a copy to the parent.

STUDENT INFORMATION AND GUARDIAN INFORMATION

The Student Information and Guardian Information sections are also automatically populated by NASIS using information from the Enrollment tab. Review the information with the parent to ensure the information is accurate. Ensure any necessary changes are made before finalizing the IEP and providing a copy to the parent.

PRESENT LEVELS OF ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AND FUNCTIONAL PERFORMANCE

During the IEP meeting, review the PLAAFP in its entirety. When presenting a lot of text during the meeting, provide time to allow IEP team members to pause and reflect on what has been written.

If the IEP team considers adding an area of need during the meeting, the IEP team must add specific data and a description of how the area need is impacting the student's participation in general

education. However, adding information to the PLAAFP does not necessarily mean an annual goal must be added as well. The IEP team must determine that the student requires special education services to access the general education curriculum and make progress.

Anyone from the IEP team can request information to be added to the PLAAFP to further describe the student's strengths, areas of need, and use of supports. If the parent requests that information be added to the PLAAFP but the information is not directly related to student's specific needs, it can be entered into the Parent Concerns section.

MEASURABLE ANNUAL GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Measurable annual goals must be closely tied to the areas of need described in the PLAAFP. Along with developing the annual goals, the IEP team must determine appropriate data sources for determining whether a student is making progress toward each goal.

ANNUAL GOALS

Once the IEP team reaches agreement on the PLAAFP, the team moves to the annual goals. The team may review goals drafted before the meeting or develop goals collaboratively during the meeting.

- Confirm that each proposed goal directly addresses an identified area of need from the PLAAFP.
- Ensure every goal is measurable, ambitious, and appropriately challenging.
- If the PLAAFP is revised during the meeting, review all related annual goals and adjust them as needed to remain aligned with the updated PLAAFP.
- If a new area of concern is added to the PLAAFP, verify that sufficient data exist to justify the addition and determine whether a new annual goal is required.

SHORT-TERM OBJECTIVES OR BENCHMARKS

Review the short-term objectives or benchmarks developed for each proposed measurable, annual goal. Remember, short-term objectives and benchmarks include skills or behaviors to be directly taught to the student to support reaching the goal by the end of the IEP, or school year. Short-term objectives are not required for students who are assessed with the general curriculum assessment or standard assessment. However, the IEP team can agree to include short-term objectives if requested and considered necessary.

DETERMINING HOW PROGRESS TOWARD ANNUAL GOALS WILL BE MEASURED

IDEA federal regulations and the BIE Special Education Handbook state that the IEP must include a description of the following:

- how the student's progress toward meeting the annual goals will be measured
- when periodic reports on the progress the student is making toward meeting the annual goals (such as through the use of quarterly or other periodic reports, concurrent with the issuance of report cards or progress reports for all students) will be provided

The IEP team must clearly define how progress toward each annual goal will be measured and documented. These measurement methods should be determined and recorded during the IEP meeting to ensure that both parents and team members understand how progress will be monitored and communicated. The measurement methods should be objective, reliable, and appropriate to the skill or behavior targeted by the goal.

- Match the measurement method to the skill.
 - Examples:
 - Academic skills: curriculum-based assessments, unit tests, work samples, grade-level progress measures
 - Foundational or discrete skills: frequency counts, tallies, task analysis checklists
 - Reading intervention: curriculum-based probes or standardized progress-monitoring tools (weekly or periodic probes).
- Use existing, validated tools when possible and name them in the IEP (e.g., AIMSweb, EasyCBM, or district curriculum probes).
- Specify the data source and frequency of measurement (e.g., weekly probes, monthly work-sample review, quarterly curriculum assessment).
- Ensure measurement yields objective data that show change over time and directly correspond to the behavior in the goal.
 - Examples:
 - Math calculation goal: Measure progress with unit tests, targeted work samples, and monthly curriculum assessments.
 - Sorting objects by color/shape: Measure progress using session-by-session tallies and a mastery checklist.
 - Third-grade reading intervention: Document progress with weekly reading probes and standardized progress-monitoring reports.

The IEP team must also document the manner and frequency of reporting progress in the Notification of Progress section. All students with disabilities must receive a progress report for IEP goals as often as general education students receive progress reports. This means that the parents must receive progress reports on each annual goal when report cards go out for every student.

The IEP team may consider providing the parent with progress reports more often. There is no limit on how often progress reports on annual IEP goals can be provided to the parent. The IEP team must agree that it is reasonable and necessary to provide notification of progress toward IEP goal more often than when report cards go out for every student.

If a student is not making reasonable progress toward one or more of the annual IEP goals for more than one reporting period, the IEP team should convene a meeting to discuss any necessary changes.

PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOLWIDE AND STATEWIDE ASSESSMENTS

The IEP must state the extent to which the student will participate in schoolwide, districtwide, and statewide assessments and whether that participation will include accommodations or modifications.

GENERAL PARTICIPATION AND ACCOMMODATIONS

- Students with disabilities must be included in all grade-level assessments administered to general education peers.
- The IEP must indicate whether the student will take large-group assessments in the general education setting and list any accommodations required.
- Accommodations used during assessments must match those the student uses routinely during instruction.
- Additional accommodations cannot be provided solely for testing.

WHEN THE STUDENT CANNOT PARTICIPATE IN THE GENERAL ASSESSMENT

- If the student cannot reasonably participate in the general assessment, the IEP must explain why and identify an appropriate alternate assessment.
- When considering an alternate assessment, the IEP team must complete the Alternate Assessment Form to document that the student meets the criteria.

NO ASSESSMENT AVAILABLE FOR THE GRADE LEVEL

- If there is no applicable assessment for the student's grade level during the IEP period, the team should check the designated box in the Assessment section of the IEP.

DOCUMENTING EXTRA INFORMATION

- If details about assessment participation, assessment name, or accommodations are not fully captured in the Assessment section, include the additional information in the PLAAFP.
- Use the PLAAFP to describe the student's participation level, name the assessment, and list accommodations or modifications that will be provided.

PROGRAM ACCOMMODATIONS/MODIFICATIONS

The IEP team must document program modifications and classroom accommodations that enable the student to

- advance toward attaining annual goals,
- be involved in and progress in the general education curriculum and participate in extracurricular and other nonacademic activities, and
- be educated and participate with other students with disabilities and with students without disabilities in activities.

There must be a clear connection between the evidence in the PLAAFP describing the student's needs and the accommodations that the IEP team determines necessary. Accommodations and

modifications should be individualized for each student. If an accommodation has been established in previous IEPs, or other academic plans, the IEP team should refer to the data collected to determine the continued need for the accommodation.

Accommodations and modifications are the supports the student requires consistently throughout the instructional day to access the curriculum and demonstrate knowledge. It is not appropriate to allow students particular accommodations or modifications under certain circumstances, such as schoolwide or statewide assessments. For instance, if a student does not require tests and quizzes to be read out loud during a typical instructional day, it would not be appropriate to add the accommodation and allow the student to have the statewide assessment read out loud.

See Appendix D: Examples of Accommodations by Category and Appendix E: Modifications Related to Content, Assignments, and Assessment for more examples.

SECONDARY TRANSITION SERVICES

Review all parts of the Secondary Transition Services section completely: Student's Desired Post-School Activities, Results of Age-Appropriate Transition Assessments, Statement of Needed Transition Services, Course of Study, Postsecondary Goals, and Measurable Annual Goals. If the student is present at the meeting, consider allowing them to share their postsecondary goals with the IEP team. Ensure the team agrees on the student's desired post-school activities, the outcomes of the age-appropriate transition assessments, and the proposed postsecondary goals.

EXTENDED SCHOOL YEAR INFORMATION

The IEP team needs to determine whether a student requires extended school year (ESY) services annually. ESY services are special education or related services provided to a student beyond the typical school year or the regularly scheduled school day. There are two reasons a student may receive ESY services:

- to assist students with disabilities to maintain or recoup adequate progress toward a specific IEP goal
- to not lose progress when a student is exhibiting an emerging skill before a significant break from school

Extended school year services are not the same as summer school or compensatory services.

During the IEP meeting, the team must determine whether the student is eligible for ESY services by

- considering and checking the appropriate box in the General Information section and

- providing documentation that the student has experienced a regression in academic, behavior, and/or life skills and requires a significant amount of instruction to recoup the skills previously learned.

After the IEP team has considered the question in the General Information section, the documents reviewed when considering whether the student requires ESY services must be listed in the IEP. Next, the IEP team needs to indicate whether the team determined that the student requires ESY services or that the student is not eligible for ESY services.

If the student is not eligible for ESY services, then the IEP team needs to consider if additional information is required to determine the student's eligibility for ESY. If the team does agree that additional information is needed, the IEP team must list the data needed.

If the need for ESY services is determined, the IEP team must identify which goals in the current IEP will be addressed through the provision of the ESY services. Not all the IEP goals must be addressed when ESY services are provided. The IEP team must consider and document the special education services and related services, including transportation, if necessary.

While ESY services are most commonly provided over the summer break or between school years, ESY services can also be delivered during the school year, during long breaks, and before or after school. For instance, if a student continually demonstrates significant regression of a specific skill during winter break or spring break, the IEP team may determine ESY services are necessary to allow the student to continue to make adequate progress toward IEP goals.

NOTIFICATION OF PROGRESS

As indicated on the IEP, the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be informed of their child's progress through progress reports according to the school's schedule at least as often as their nondisabled peers. The IEP team must document the manner or reporting progress and the frequency of reporting progress toward IEP goals.

SCHOOLWIDE ASSESSMENT

The IEP team must document the appropriate individual accommodations a student requires when taking schoolwide assessments. In some cases, a student will not require accommodations for schoolwide assessments. Also, the student may be in a grade level that is not being assessed during the life of the IEP. If a student does require accommodations, or modifications, the IEP team must list each one specific to state identified codes. The IEP team also must indicate whether a student is participating in the alternate assessment. If a student is not participating in a schoolwide assessment, the IEP team must provide the reason.

EDUCATION SERVICES

Federal regulations require the IEP to include a statement of the special education and related services and supplementary aids and services, based on peer-reviewed research to the extent possible, to be provided to the student or on behalf of the student and a statement of the program modifications or supports for school personnel that will be provided to enable the student to

- advance appropriately toward attaining the annual goals;
- be involved in and make progress in the general education curriculum and participate in extracurricular and other nonacademic activities; and
- be educated and participate with other students with disabilities and nondisabled students in the academic, nonacademic, and extracurricular activities.

EDUCATION SERVICES

The Education Services section is where the IEP team documents the special education services the student will receive. The IEP must include the following:

- service
- service position
- minutes per session
- frequency
- start date
- end date
- setting
- total minutes

The service refers to the area of academics or functional skills being addressed (e.g., math, reading, written language, social skills, organization). When documenting the service position, include the **title** or **role** of the provider (e.g., special education teacher) who is providing the special education services to address the area or skill documented in the service column.

Minutes per session and frequency need to be carefully calculated by the IEP team. Often, the minutes per session will correlate with a specific evidence-based instructional intervention identified by the IEP team. For example, if the IEP team determines that the student will participate in a specific reading remediation program, the minutes per session will correlate with the minutes required to implement the program with fidelity. Some evidence-based reading programs require that the student receive 45 minutes of instruction 3 days a week. Minutes per session and frequency may also be determined by the student's class schedule. For students who receive instruction for an entire class period in the special class setting (i.e., a classroom composed of special education students taught by a special education teacher), the minutes per session would equal the length of the class. The frequency would be determined by the number of times per week the class occurs. For example, a student might participate in a social skills class in a special class setting for 60 minutes, five times per week. Other services, such as audiology or occupational therapy, may occur less often, sometimes monthly, and should also be documented by minutes per session and frequency.

The IEP team must determine an appropriate start date for special education services and related services. In most cases, the services documented by the IEP team can be quickly provided to the student and will start immediately after the IEP is proposed and the parent provides consent, if it's an initial IEP. In other cases, the IEP team may determine that the student requires services that result in making significant changes to the student's schedule, rearranging service provider schedules, or locating a new service provider. The IEP team must document a start date that reflects the anticipated day when the services will begin. Schools must provide a reasonable explanation for any delays that impact service delivery.

In cases where a student is advancing from one grade to the next grade, or the next school, the IEP may need to reflect a start date for the service being provided for the current year and an additional start date for the service to be provided during the next school year. For instance, in the 8th grade, a student may receive specialized instruction for mathematics services 45 minutes a day, and in the 9th grade, the student will receive specialized instruction in mathematics for 90 minutes three times a week. In this case, the special education services would be included on two separate lines:

- The first line will include the services for the 8th grade, which will terminate at the end of the school year.
- The second line will include the services that will be provided during the 9th grade. Reminder: The end date for the services in the 9th grade cannot extend the IEP past 365 days from the development of the IEP.

RELATED SERVICES

Related services are support services or activities that some students need to maximize educational outcomes. These services are documented in the IEP the same way as special education services. The IEP must include the service, the minutes per session, the frequency, the start and end dates, and the setting where the services will be provided. Related services include, but are not limited to, the following:

- speech-language pathology and audiology services
- interpreting services
- psychological services
- physical and occupational therapy
- recreation, including therapeutic recreation
- early identification and assessment of disabilities in children
- counseling services, including rehabilitation counseling
- orientation and mobility services
- medical services for diagnostic or evaluation purposes
- school health services and school nursing services
- social work services in schools
- parent counseling and training
- transportation

Remember, when documenting the service position, include the **title** or **role** of the provider (e.g., speech language pathologist, school psychologist, physical therapist).

PROGRAM ACCOMMODATIONS/MODIFICATIONS

The IEP team must document the program accommodations, modifications, supplementary aids and services, and support for school personnel that will be provided to ensure the student has access to the general education curriculum and makes progress in the curriculum and on measurable IEP goals. Program accommodations, modifications, supplementary aids and services, and support for school personnel should be based on peer-reviewed research to the extent possible.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Accommodations change **how** a student learns the material, but they do not invalidate assessments or fundamentally change the curriculum requirements. Accommodations usually fall into the following categories: presentation, response, setting, timing, scheduling, and organization.

See Appendix D: Examples of Accommodations by Category.

MODIFICATIONS

Modifications change **what** a student is taught or expected to learn. Modifications are typically used after all possible accommodations have been considered but the student needs additional adaptations to access the curriculum and make progress. Modifications affect content, assignments, and assessment criteria.

See Appendix E. Modifications Related to Content, Assignments, and Assessment.

SUPPLEMENTARY AIDS AND SERVICES

Supplementary aids and services might also refer to adaptations or modifications to a classroom, such as providing an individualized desk or arranging furniture to accommodate the mobility needs of a student. Supplementary aids and services might also document the behavioral or social/emotional support a student requires. Providing a paraeducator to support a student or small group of students is considered a supplementary aid. Additional examples include social skills instruction, counseling supports, and peer supports. There is no set list or limit to the supplementary aids and services that can be considered by an IEP team.

SUPPORTS FOR PERSONNEL

Supports for personnel could include professional development, resources, and collaboration opportunities to help teachers implement the IEP and promote student success. The required supports for personnel are documented in the Supplementary Aids and Services section.

LEVEL OF SERVICE FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION PER WEEK

The IEP team must document the amount of time and percentage of time a student with a disability participates in the general education setting with nondisabled peers (time with nondisabled peers). In addition, IEP teams must also document the amount of time and percentage of time the student with a disability is not receiving instruction with nondisabled peers or is provided services outside the general education classroom (time separated from nondisabled peers). Students can receive special education and related services in a general education classroom, a special education classroom, or a combination of both general education and special education classroom.

The IEP team must determine the setting where a student will receive special education and related services to allow the student to access the general education curriculum and make adequate progress in the curriculum and the IEP goals. The setting is often informed by the frequency, duration, and intensity of the special education services the student needs to make progress on IEP goals and in the general education curriculum.

EDUCATION SETTING (PLACEMENT)

The IEP must also document the placement, or physical location, where the student receives special education services. The IDEA federal regulations and the BIE Special Education Handbook require schools to provide a continuum of placement options. The regulation specifically mentions general education classes, special classes, special schools, home instruction, and instruction in hospitals. Other placement options might include separate public school, separate public day school, private day school, public residential school, private residential school, or correctional education program.

The IEP team must select one of the following:

- A: Inside regular class 80% or more of the day
- B: Inside regular class 40% - 79% of the day
- C: Inside regular class less than 40% of the day
- D: Separate school
- E: Residential facility
- F: Homebound/Hospital
- G: Correctional facility

POTENTIAL HARMFUL EFFECTS

The IEP team must provide a statement describing how the education services and level of special education services limit the student's access to general education peers. The IEP team should consider

- any potential harmful effects on the student with disabilities if the student is removed from general education classes and
- any potential harmful effects on the quality of services provided to the student with disabilities if the student is removed from general education classes.

LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT

Once the IEP team has determined the special education services and the level of services for special education, the IEP team can complete the Least Restrictive Environment section by indicating which activities the student will participate in with nondisabled peers. After the IEP team has determined which academic, nonacademic, and extracurricular activities are appropriate for the student to participate in with nondisabled peers, a justification statement must be included within the IEP.

The IDEA federal regulations and the BIE Special Education Handbook require that all students with disabilities be educated with nondisabled peers to the maximum extent appropriate. Schools are required to provide a continuum of placement options to meet the needs of all students with disabilities. The IEP team must consider the continuum of placement options and the supports needed for the student to participate in general education. Removing any student with a disability from the general education environment occurs only if the nature and severity of the student's disability cannot be supported within the general education class with the use of supplementary aids and services.

IMPACT STATEMENT

IDEA federal regulations and the BIE Special Education Handbook require the IEP to include an impact statement about

- how the student's disability affects the student's involvement and progress in the general education curriculum (i.e., the same curriculum as for nondisabled students) or
- for preschool students, as appropriate, how the disability affects the student's participation in appropriate activities.

In other words, the statement is to describe why the student requires special education services. The following are some examples of impact statements:

- "Samantha has been identified as having a learning disability in the areas of reading fluency and reading comprehension. She demonstrates significant deficits in phonological awareness and auditory memory, which impact her ability to independently read and comprehend grade-level text and follow multistep directions. She requires specialized instruction and accommodations that cannot be provided solely in the general education section."
- "Dekota's significant hearing loss and subsequent deficits in the areas of speech and language negatively impact his progress in the general education curriculum. He has difficulty expressing his knowledge and understanding as well as articulating his needs."
- "Chyanne's disability (traumatic brain injury) negatively impacts her involvement and progress in the general education curriculum since she requires additional time on assignments, length reduction on assignments, additional supports during independent work, visual and verbal prompts, schedule modifications, and self-monitoring skills being infused throughout her classes. Chyanne is quick to fatigue after 25 minutes of direct instruction. She is fully included within the general education setting with supports and services to support her as well as address the current areas of deficit."

SPECIAL FACTORS

The IEP team must document the consideration of special factors in every IEP. If the IEP team determines that there is a need in any of the areas listed in the Special Factors section, then the PLAAFP must include a description of the related needs, and the IEP should document the related services and supports that will be provided.

- **Language needs for limited English-proficient students as they relate to the IEP.** The IEP must document any communication needs that the student has related to the IEP. Document the communication needs of English language learners in the PLAAFP. As with other areas of need, include information on any assessments completed in the student's native language, whether the disability impacts the student's participation in any bilingual or English as a second language programs, which language will be used to provide instruction, and what accommodations the student may need.
- **Braille instruction for the student who is blind or visually impaired.** For a student who is blind or visually impaired, the IEP must document whether the student requires braille instruction and braille materials. For a student who is blind or visually impaired, the IEP should describe the student's functional reading skills using regular size print, large print, or low-vision devices. Again, assessment data should be available to assist in determining the supports the student requires to complete visual tasks.
- **The communication and language needs for the student who is deaf or hard of hearing.** The IEP must explain the communication needs of a student who is deaf or hard of hearing. The IEP must include a description of the student's primary language to explain circumstances when a student might interchange languages, such as English and ASL. Also, the IEP should describe the student's preferred primary expressive and receptive communication modes. In addition, the IEP should include information on any auxiliary aids and services, such as a sign language interpreter, notetaker, or transcription service, a student might require.
- **Assistive technology for the student who, without it, would not benefit from special education.** Assistive technology devices are items, equipment, products, or systems used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of a student with a disability. These devices may be low tech (e.g., picture boards, calculators, specialized pencil grips) or high tech (e.g., computers, software applications, portable note-taking equipment). Assistive technology services refer to any service that assists the student in the selection, acquisition, or use of such devices. Medical devices that are surgically implanted are not considered assistive technology devices.
- **Behavioral strategies for the student whose behavior impedes his or her learning or that of others.** If a student demonstrates behaviors that impede or disrupt his or her learning or the learning of other students, federal regulations require the IEP team to consider the use of positive behavior interventions and supports to address the disruptive behavior. If a student's behavior impedes his or her learning, or the learning of others, the IEP must describe the efforts that have been made to address the behaviors of concern. The IEP team must indicate a "yes" or "no" response to the following items:
 - Are positive behavior interventions, accommodations, and/or goals and objectives included in the IEP?

- Has a Functional Behavior Assessment been conducted?
- Does the student have a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)?

DISCIPLINE

The IEP team determines whether the student will follow the schoolwide discipline plan or an individualized BIP. Indicating that the student has a BIP does not impact the school's ability to impose discipline and due process procedures if the student has violated the code of conduct.

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

As indicated in the Special Factors section, assistive technology devices are items, equipment, products, or systems used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of a student with a disability. These devices may be low tech (e.g., picture boards, calculators, specialized pencil grips) or high tech (e.g., computers, software applications, portable note-taking equipment). Assistive technology services refer to any service that assists the student in the selection, acquisition, or use of such devices. As indicated earlier, medical devices that are surgically implanted are not considered assistive technology devices.

The IEP must include the assistive technology support that the student requires to make progress on IEP goals and to access the curriculum. In some cases, it might be difficult to differentiate a support as an accommodation, modification, or assistive technology. It is acceptable to include the supports needed in several sections of the IEP as long as it is described the same in each section. Examples of assistive technology include the following:

- graphic organizers
- text-to-speech technology
- calculators
- spell-check devices
- seat cushions
- visual tracking tools
- switch-adapted devices
- iPad accessibility tools

HEARING AID MAINTENANCE

For students who may require the use of hearing aids, the IEP team must indicate whether the student is required to wear hearing aids and, if so, who is responsible for monitoring them. Federal regulations require each public agency to ensure that students who require hearing aids wear their devices and that the devices function properly. This is also the case for students who have surgically implanted medical devices, such as cochlear implants. Schools must routinely monitor students' hearing devices to ensure the external components of a cochlear implant are functioning properly.

MEDICAL/SIGNIFICANT HEALTH INFORMATION

The IEP team must indicate whether the student takes medication regularly and whether there is any significant health information about the student available in the student's record or elsewhere. If the IEP team indicates "yes" to either item, after the IEP meeting, the appropriate person from the IEP

team should follow up with the school nurse to ensure that a current Health Treatment Plan is on record at the school. In cases where the IEP team knows the student has a significant medical condition, it would be appropriate to invite the school nurse to attend the IEP meeting.

IEP MEETING PARTICIPANTS

The IEP includes documentation of each IEP team member's participation during each IEP meeting. The IEP Meeting Participant page will need to be printed to collect the signatures of everyone who attended the meeting. This can be done at the beginning or end of the meeting. However, it is recommended to have the page printed and have IEP team members sign at the beginning of the meeting in case someone needs to leave before the end of the meeting. When having IEP team members sign at the beginning of the meeting, make sure to inform the parent that their signature only documents their participation, not consent.

If the IEP meeting has been facilitated by projecting the NASIS system on a screen or wall, the IEP should be printed out in its entirety, and the parent should be given ample time to review the document before providing a signature. If the IEP was fully developed, meaning all sections were completed, but the changes agreed to in the meeting were not yet completed, the parent will need to be provided with an opportunity to sign the completed document when all the changes are made. Making the changes that were agreed upon in the IEP and finalizing the document should be completed within 24 hours of the IEP meeting.

When the entire IEP has been proposed and all the sections have been completed, the parent responds to the following items by checking a box for "yes" or "no":

- I/We participated in the development of the IEP.
- I/We agree with the content of the proposed IEP.
- I/We agree with the IEP team's recommendation for placement.

After responding to the items, the IEP team should request that the parent sign the IEP. If the parent does not sign the IEP, the IEP team must document a reason by checking one of the available options: did not attend the IEP meeting, participated by phone, other participation, or other(s) options offered for participation. If the parent was provided with other options for participation, the IEP team should indicate the options offered to the parent in the space provided.

If the student has reached the age of majority, the rights of the parent have transferred to the student, meaning the student now holds the rights to make decisions and provide consent for the IEP.

If the parent does not participate in the IEP meeting, the IEP team must document the efforts to try to encourage the parent to participate in the IEP meeting. The IEP team must document whether the parent participated in the IEP meeting by telephone or by video conference.

SECTION III: AFTER THE IEP MEETING

Once the IEP has been developed and agreed upon, the next steps ensure that it is accurately documented in NASIS, communicated to teachers and staff, and implemented with fidelity. This section outlines the procedures for certifying the IEP, issuing required notices, informing staff, adjusting schedules, and monitoring student progress to uphold compliance and support student success.

CERTIFY THE IEP

After the entire IEP has been proposed, all the agreed-upon changes to the IEP must be made in NASIS and reviewed by the IEP team and the parent to make sure the changes are accurate. After the information in NASIS has been updated, print a copy of the IEP for the parents to review and provide written consent in the form of a signature. If necessary, provide the parent with time to read through the printed IEP. The printed document looks different from how the sections are displayed in NASIS. The parent may need time to read the printed document to make sure everything that was displayed in NASIS is in fact in the IEP.

PROVIDE A PRIOR WRITTEN NOTICE

Schools are required to provide the parent with a prior written notice (PWN) after each IEP has been proposed, including when amendments are made. The PWN documents the IEP team's decision to propose the special education and related services proposed in the IEP. The PWN also documents any requests or actions the school refused to agree to. The PWN is documented on the Prior Written Notice of Proposed Actions (§ 300.503) form. The PWN must be written in easily understandable language and the parent's native language. The document must

- describe the action that the BIE-funded school proposes or refuses to take;
- explain why the BIE-funded school is proposing or refusing to take the action;
- describe each evaluation procedure, assessment, record, or report the BIE-funded school used in deciding to propose or refuse the action;
- include a statement that the parents have protections under the IDEA;
- inform parents how they can obtain a copy of the Notice of Procedural Safeguards;
- include resources for parents to contact for help understanding their rights;
- describe any other options that the school team considered and the reasons why those options were rejected; and
- describe other factors that are relevant to the BIE-funded school's proposal or refusal.

If the parent's native language or other mode of communication is not written, the school must ensure the IEP and the PWN are translated orally in the parent's native language or other mode of communication. The IEP must ensure the parent understands the contents of the PWN.

See Appendix F: Sample Prior Written Notice for an example.

INFORM TEACHERS AND SERVICE PROVIDERS

General education teachers, related service providers, and other support personnel must be informed about the relative contents of the IEP. All teachers and service providers should be provided with pertinent information such as special education services, related services, secondary transition plan, annual goals, accommodation, modifications, and supplementary aids and services. Any concerns expressed by the parents should also be communicated.

If the student will be receiving instruction or services from teachers or services providers who did not contribute to the development of the IEP or are unfamiliar with the student, those teachers and service providers should be given the opportunity to read the entire IEP. Providing a copy of the entire IEP provides an opportunity for staff members to become familiar with the student's strengths and needs for instructional support.

ADJUST SCHEDULES

It may be necessary to make changes to the student's schedule or the schedules of the staff who provide services and supports to the student. Try to make changes as soon as possible after the parent has provided consent to the IEP. If changes can't be made immediately, document the reason changes may be delayed. For instance, the IEP team may have determined the student will receive a related service (e.g., speech and language or physical therapy) for the first time, and the school needs time to locate a service provider. When there is a delay, the documentation should include the time between the date the parent provided consent and the date services began to ensure the IEP team considers the need for compensatory services.

MONITOR PROGRESS

During the IEP meeting, the IEP team determined how the student's progress toward meeting each goal will be monitored and who will monitor the progress on each goal. After the IEP meeting, teachers and service providers should develop a method for frequently collecting and documenting data to measure the student's progress. Monitoring student progress is important to ensure that the special education services and related services are appropriate. The data collected can be used to make instructional decisions and inform any changes that need to be made.

During the meeting, the IEP team also documented the manner and frequency of notifying the parent of the progress the student makes toward reaching IEP goals. The data used to monitor progress on each goal are reported to the parents. The case manager needs to make sure parents receive IEP progress reports as specified in the agreed upon IEP and at least as often as nondisabled peers receive progress reports or report cards.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: EXAMPLES OF PLAAFP STATEMENTS

EXAMPLES: DESCRIPTIONS OF THE STUDENT'S ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AND FUNCTIONAL PERFORMANCE

- **Example 1:** Jasmine is a 3rd grade student. On the Fall Word Reading Fluency DIBELS assessment, Jasmine read 55 correct words per minute (CWPM) with 85% accuracy. The expected performance for the fall of 3rd grade is 90 CWPM with 95% accuracy. Jasmine was 60 percent accurate on a teacher-administered reading comprehension test. She made errors identifying supporting details and making inferences. Classroom observations indicate that Jasmine requires frequent prompts to monitor her understanding and answer inferential questions. Her reading fluency and comprehension skills are currently at the beginning 2nd grade level, which impacts her ability to access grade-level reading material independently.
- **Example 2:** Michael is in 4th grade. He can add and subtract multidigit whole numbers using the standard equation. He can also multiply a whole number of up to four digits by a one-digit whole number. He has difficulty multiplying two-digit numbers. Michael's weaknesses in short-term memory and maintaining attention make it difficult for him to complete longer calculations. If Michael gets distracted while solving two-digit multiplication problems, he often forgets which step he is on. When this happens, he will start the problem over, which often results in him taking twice the amount of time or more than his peers to complete an assignment. Michael's performance increases when provided with graph paper, assigned fewer problems involving two-digit multiplication equations, and reminded to number the steps while solving equations.
- **Example 3:** Isaiah is in kindergarten. He continues to have difficulty maintaining safe physical boundaries with other students. During transition times in the classroom, Isaiah will walk quickly, not run, from one area of the room to another. Instead of slowing down or going around students who are in front of him, he will continue walking quickly forward and run into the student, bumping them out of the way. During circle time, when students are expected to sit cross-legged on the floor, Isaiah usually has his legs straight out in front of him. Data indicate that his upper body sways from side to side, bumping the students next to him 65% of the time. Isaiah responds well to a verbal prompt from the teacher but does not maintain the desired behavior for more than 3 minutes 74% of the time. The teacher and support staff are working on identifying a high-value item or activity to use to teach Isaiah to maintain expected behaviors for a longer period of time.

EXAMPLES: RESULTS OF INITIAL OR MOST RECENT EVALUATIONS

- **Example 1:** Jennifer was initially found eligible as a student with a learning disability on December 1, 2022. The eligibility group indicated areas of concern include reading vocabulary,

reading fluency, reading comprehension, and written language. Evaluation results indicate that Jennifer has a processing disorder in the area of phonemic awareness, which impacts her ability to understand and use the sound system in language.

- **Example 2:** Oliver was found continued eligible as a student with an intellectual disability. Oliver was born with Down Syndrome, which has resulted in significantly impaired intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior. The eligibility group indicated areas of concern include reading, math, written language, behavior, and independent living skills.
- **Example 3:** Jackson has been eligible for special education services as a student with an emotional disability since 2nd grade. He was most recently found eligible on May 30, 2024. Jackson demonstrates an inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers, a general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression, and a tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems. Jackson has been treated by a physician and psychiatrist for a mood disorder, unspecified, for the past 3 years. He demonstrates above-average ability. His overall reading and written language skills fall in the average to high-average range. His math calculation and math reasoning skills fall in the low-average range.

EXAMPLES: DESCRIPTION OF HOW THE DISABILITY IMPACTS PARTICIPATION IN GENERAL EDUCATION

- **Example 1:** Mary's difficulty decoding words significantly impacts her reading fluency, which makes it difficult to independently read and comprehend grade-level text. She requires teacher support and accommodations to participate in reading activities in class.
- **Example 2:** Due to dysgraphia, Jacob has significant difficulty taking notes, completing written assignments, and participating in assessments requiring multiple-word writing.
- **Example 3:** Jennifer demonstrates weaknesses in short-term memory, impacting her ability to recall multistep directions given by the teacher. She also struggles to complete multistep math algorithms and story problems, especially when she tries to solve the problem in her head.

EXAMPLES: CONCERNS OF THE PARENT

- **Example 1:** Mrs. Begay is worried her daughter is falling further behind in school. She stated she does not know how to teach her at home.
- **Example 2:** Mr. and Mrs. Davis stated they are struggling with Kai's behavior at home. He is not listening to his grandparents, which makes his grandmother very angry. Ms. and Mrs. Davis don't know how to discipline and reward him like when he is in school.
- **Example 3:** Mrs. Thompson stated that she wants her son to be more involved in school. She would like him to join at least one after-school club.

APPENDIX B: EXAMPLES OF SECTION OF THE SECONDARY TRANSITION PLAN

EXAMPLES: STUDENT'S DESIRED POSTSECONDARY ACTIVITIES

- **Example 1:** Jasmine Rivera demonstrates strong interpersonal skills, a positive attitude, and a natural ability to connect with others. She does well in structured environments where tasks are clearly defined and reinforced through visual supports and hands-on practice. Jasmine prefers learning through real-world experiences and benefits from opportunities to apply her skills in practical settings, such as school-based retail simulations and community job sites. Her interest in customer service and store operations has inspired her goal of pursuing postsecondary education at a community college, where she hopes to earn an associate's degree in retail management and eventually become a store supervisor.

In terms of adult living and community participation, Jasmine is motivated to gain independence and contribute meaningfully to her community. She enjoys organizing, helping others, and participating in group activities, especially those that involve teamwork and social interaction. With support from adult services, such as vocational rehabilitation and continued academic accommodations, Jasmine is eager to build the skills needed to manage her own schedule, budget, and transportation. Her long-term vision includes working in a retail environment where she can grow professionally, live semi-independently, and stay actively involved in her local community through work, education, and social engagement.

- **Example 2:** Marcus Johnson is a 19-year-old high school senior with an intellectual disability who does well in structured environments and benefits from consistent routines and hands-on learning. He enjoys helping others, especially in settings where he can complete physical tasks like stocking shelves, cleaning tables, or organizing supplies. Marcus participates in a school-based vocational training program where he practices job skills in supervised environments such as the cafeteria, school store, and local community businesses. He responds well to visual prompts, step-by-step instructions, and positive reinforcement. His preferences include working with familiar adults, engaging in predictable tasks, and contributing to team efforts. Marcus is motivated by praise and enjoys feeling useful and appreciated in his work settings.

After graduation, Marcus will require supported employment through adult services such as a job coach and vocational rehabilitation. His long-term goal is to work part-time in a retail or food service setting where he can perform routine tasks with supervision. He will also benefit from continued adult education focused on life skills, including budgeting, personal safety, and community mobility. Marcus plans to participate in a day support program that offers structured activities, social opportunities, and community outings. With ongoing support, he hopes to increase his independence in daily living and remain actively engaged in his community through work, recreation, and social interaction.

- **Example 3:** Aiden Brooks is an 18-year-old high school senior with a diagnosed learning disability that primarily affects reading comprehension and written expression. Aiden has worked hard and is on track to earn an Advanced Studies Diploma. He is very motivated. He is passionate about civic engagement, government policy, and social justice. Aiden has developed strong self-advocacy skills and uses accommodations such as extended time, speech-to-text software, and graphic organizers to support his learning. He prefers discussion-based classes and project-based learning that allow him to demonstrate his understanding through interaction and collaboration.

After graduation, Aiden plans to attend a 4-year university to major in political science. He wants to work in a public service position at the local or state level. He would like to get an internship at the local city hall during the summer. Aiden will benefit from continued academic support services in college, such as tutoring and writing labs. He wants to participate in community engagement activities and volunteer work that align with his interests in equity and civic responsibility. With the right support, Aiden is well-positioned to thrive in higher education and to contribute meaningfully to his community and future career.

EXAMPLES: RESULTS OF AGE-APPROPRIATE TRANSITION ASSESSMENTS

- **Student Interview:** Jeremiah was interviewed by his case manager. Jeremiah reported that his strengths were playing sports, being a friend, and math. He does not like reading or writing. Jeremiah wants to go to college to learn how to be a mechanic, but he doesn't know if he wants to work on small engines, like lawnmowers, or large engines, like cars. Jeremiah plans to continue to live at home with his parent, siblings, and grandparents. When he is in school to learn how to be a mechanic, Jeremiah will work on his family's farm.
- **Career Cluster Assessment:** Mariane took the Career Cluster Assessment, and her results indicated she'd be good at a career in Education, Healthcare & Human Services, Hospitality & Tourism, or Public Service & Safety. When Mariane reviewed her results, she expressed an interest in knowing more about what she needed to do to become a kindergarten and elementary school teacher.
- **Work-Based Learning Performance Observation:** Sam was observed completing tasks at Walmart with adult supervision. Sam could follow simple, one-step directions. He displayed safe behavior around carts, fixtures, and the small forklift. He was able to straighten shelves, place price displays on the shelves, and return items to the correct location. Sam greeted customers appropriately but needed adult support when customers asked him questions.

EXAMPLES: POSTSECONDARY GOALS

- **Example 1:**
 - **Education:** In the fall, after graduating from high school, Kristen will enroll in the National Resources Management program at Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute.

- **Employment:** In the fall, after graduating from high school, Kristen will work part-time on the Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute campus.
- **Adult Living Skills:** In the fall, after graduating from high school, Kristen will use strategies to effectively manage her time, so that she successfully meets her deadlines for college.
- **Example 2:**
 - **Education:** After exiting high school, Jonathan will participate in a functional skills training program through the Community Services Board.
 - **Employment:** One year after exiting high school, Jonathan will obtain a supported employment position after completing a training program through the Community Services Board.
 - **Adult Living Skills:** After exiting high school, Jonathan will continue to live with his parents and will participate in his daily care routines to the maximum extent possible.

EXAMPLES: STATEMENT OF NEEDED TRANSITION SERVICES

Transition services	Activities or strategies	Agency responsible
College campus tour	The student will walk through key areas of the campus and meet with a counselor in the disability services office.	School
Career exploration	The student will complete a career interest inventory and research careers based on the results of the inventory.	School
Maintaining a budget	The student will participate in a unit on financial literacy.	School

EXAMPLES: COURSE OF STUDY

Grade: 9 Course of Study: English 9, Algebra I, Earth & Space Science, World History, Health, Art I, Restaurant & Culinary Foundations
Grade: 10 Course of Study: English 10, Geometry, Biology, U.S. Studies, Physical Education, Chorus, Restaurant Management Essentials
Grade: 11 Course of Study: English 11, Algebra II, Contemporary Studies, Advanced Principles in Food Preparation, Job Shadow/Internship at a local restaurant
Grade: 12 Course of Study: Advanced Communication, College Algebra, Word Studies, Restaurant Professional, Dual enrollment at Arizona State University in Food Service Retail Management Program

APPENDIX C: EXAMPLE OF A GOAL WITH OBJECTIVES AND BENCHMARKS

Goal: Given sets of ten coins or fewer, Sarina will calculate the total value of the coins with 90% accuracy.

Objectives	Benchmarks
• Given ten coins or fewer, Sarina will identify the value of each individual coin with 90% accuracy. • Given sets of the same coin (e.g., four quarters), Sarina will add the amount of the coins to determine the total value with 90% accuracy. • Given a set of coins made up of two different values (e.g., dimes and nickels), Sarina will add the total value with 90% accuracy. • Given a set of coins made up of three different values, Sarina will add the total value with 90% accuracy.	• By October, Sarina will identify the value of individual coins with 90% accuracy. • By December, Sarina will use addition to calculate the total value of multiple coins of the same value with 90% accuracy. • By February, Sarina will use addition to calculate the total value of a set of coins consisting of two different values (e.g., dimes and nickels) with 90% accuracy. • By May, Sarina will use addition to calculate the total value of a set of coins consisting of three different values to determine the value with 90% accuracy.

APPENDIX D: EXAMPLES OF ACCOMMODATIONS BY CATEGORY

- **Presentation**
 - Audio recording, video, or digital media
 - Fewer items per page or line
 - Large-print text
 - Directions presented in writing and orally
 - Class notes provided by teacher or peer
 - Outline or guided note-taking tool
- **Response**
 - Providing responses orally or in writing
 - Dictating responses to scribe
 - Using a spelling dictionary or spell-check software
 - Using a word processor to type responses
 - Using a calculator
- **Setting**
 - Small-group testing
 - Tests taken in quiet room
 - Preferential seating
 - Special lighting or acoustics
 - Sensory tools
- **Timing**
 - Extended time
 - Frequent breaks
 - Assignments or test completed in multiple sessions
- **Scheduling**
 - Test taken at specific time of day
 - Assignment or test completed in multiple sessions
 - Additional time throughout the day to complete task
- **Organization**
 - Marking text with highlighter
 - Additional set of textbooks to keep at home
 - Using a planner or organizer
 - Alarm to help with time management

APPENDIX E. MODIFICATIONS RELATED TO CONTENT, ASSIGNMENTS, AND ASSESSMENT

- Content: The content used to deliver instruction is fundamentally altered and presents a lower standard in instructional level.
 - Examples: Provide text at a lower reading level, removing nonessential text.
- Assignments: The assignments are altered or simplified to provide the student with a meaningful and productive learning experience based on individual needs and abilities.
 - Examples: Allow students to complete assignments in different formats, such as oral presentations instead of written reports, to simplify the expectations.
- Assessment: The content being assessed is easier or less complex, or grading expectations are significantly different.
 - Examples: Provide word banks, allowing open-book tests.

APPENDIX F: SAMPLE PRIOR WRITTEN NOTICE

Individualized Education Program

CONTROLLED: This page contains PII and should be handled to protect privacy

Infinite Campus
109th Ave NE
Blaine, NM 55449
(555)348-2756

PRIOR WRITTEN NOTICE OF PROPOSED ACTIONS (§300.503)

The parent(s)/guardian(s) must be provided notification in a reasonable amount of time before actions occur that would initiate or change the identification, the evaluation, the educational placement, or the provision of a Free Appropriate Public Education for this student. If the student is not of age, the parent(s)/guardian(s) is provided a copy of this notice.

Dear Parent/Guardian/Student (if of Age),

We are writing to you because:

[Name of school] is proposing an annual IEP [enter date] that decreases special education services from 110 minutes a week to 90 minutes a week to address annual goals in reading vocabulary and math reasoning. The [name of student] will continue to receive 30 minutes a week of speech service to address an annual goal for articulation.

If you do not understand the content of this Prior Written Notice, or if you disagree with the proposed recommendations, please contact: [The name of the school contact] at: [phone number and email address]

The following proposals were made by the school and/or the parent/guardian.

All Items Proposed and Options Considered	Accept	Reject	Reason for Acceptance or Rejection
Decreasing the special education services from 110 minutes to 90 minutes.	☒		The IEP determined the student is making adequate progress on IEP goals receiving instruction in the general education setting and does not need as much instruction in the special education setting.
Parent requested the student receive more services in the special class setting because they feel she gets more help and does better in school.	☐	☒	The IEP team reviewed the assessment data and determined the student is making adequate progress in the general education classroom being educated with nondisabled peers.

Decisions of the school and/or parent(s)/guardian(s) were based on:

- | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| ☐ Student input | ☐ Developmental case History | ☐ Behavioral learning scales | ☐ Speech/language evaluation |
| ☐ Hearing screening | ☐ Adaptive behavior rating scales | ☒ Teacher input | ☐ Vision screening |
| ☐ Achievement tests | ☐ Developmental screening | ☐ Psychological evaluation | ☐ Counseling evaluation |
| ☒ Classroom performance | ☒ Previous IEP | ☐ Process/Learning tests | ☐ Occupational therapy evaluation |
| ☒ Parent input | ☐ Classroom observations | ☐ Language dominance | ☐ Physical therapy evaluation |
| ☐ School records Transition | ☐ Intellectual assessment | ☐ Medical information | ☐ Functional vision assessment |
| ☐ Assessment | ☒ Other: Curriculum-based Assessments; tests; work samples | | |

You have specific rights concerning this proposal. For assistance in understanding your procedural safeguards/ due process rights, you may contact the following:

Education Program Administrator Contact	LEA Contact	Parent Advocacy Support

APPENDIX G: SAMPLE IEP MEETING AGENDA

This agenda is intended to be used at the initial IEP meeting, annual IEP meetings, or the IEP review meeting.

IEP Meeting Agenda

1. Introduction
 - ☐ Introduce IEP team members.
 - ☐ Explain the purpose of the meeting.
 - ☐ Review the final progress report from the previous IEP.
2. Review the following sections of the IEP being proposed.
 - ☐ IEP Overview
 - ☐ Student Information & Guardian Information
 - ☐ Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP)
 - ☐ Documentation of Parent Concerns
 - ☐ Measurable Annual Goals
 - ☐ Determining and Reporting on Progress Toward Measurable Annual Goals
 - ☐ Short-Term Objectives or Benchmarks
 - ☐ Participation in Schoolwide and Statewide Assessments
 - ☐ Secondary Transition Services (for students 16 years and older)
 - ☐ Statement of Needed Transition Services
 - ☐ Course of Study
 - ☐ Age of Majority
 - ☐ Extended School Year
 - ☐ Extended School Year Determination
 - ☐ Notification of Progress
 - ☐ Schoolwide Assessment
 - ☐ Related Services
 - ☐ Program Accommodations and Modifications
 - ☐ Supplementary Aides and Services
 - ☐ Potential Harmful Effects
 - ☐ Least Restrictive Environment
 - ☐ Impact Statement
 - ☐ Special Factors
 - ☐ Discipline
 - ☐ Assistive Technology
 - ☐ Hearing Aid Maintenance
 - ☐ Special Education Services
 - ☐ Level of Services for Special Education per Week
3. Review all decisions made during the meeting.
4. Gather names and signatures of IEP team members.
5. Request consent from the parent.