

## Brief Guide to Reviewing Individualized Education Programs (IEPs)

The format of **Individualized Education Programs (IEPs)**<sup>1</sup> differs between states and even school districts. This brief guide suggests where to look for relevant information and what to consider including in a recommendation of denial. Please note that information provided in an IEP should be reviewed in its entirety and in conjunction with other information about the applicant.

| DEMOGRAPHICS  |  |
|---|--|
| Date of IEP   | INCLUDE  |
| School Year, Grade, Age   | INCLUDE  |
| Type of Meeting   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual Review</li> <li>• Change of Placement</li> <li>• Transition Planning<sup>2</sup></li> <li>• Reevaluation</li> <li>• Recovery Services</li> <li>• Other</li> </ul>  |
| <a href="#">Disability</a> (hyperlink for all 13 categories)      |  |
| Primary   | Most relevant: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Autism (ASD or AUT)</li> <li>• Emotional/Behavioral Disturbance (EBD)</li> <li>• Other Health Impairment (OHI – many disabilities including AD/HD, Anxiety Disorder, Tourette Syndrome, Sensory Integration Disorder, etc.)</li> <li>• Specific Learning Disability (SLD)</li> <li>• Speech and Language Impairment (SLI)</li> <li>• Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)</li> </ul> |
| Secondary   |  |
| Tertiary (rare)   |  |
| Initial Date of Referral or Eligibility                           | <i>Include, if available.</i>  |
| Diploma Track   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diploma</li> <li>• Modified Diploma</li> <li>• Certificate of Completion (COC)</li> <li>• Other</li> </ul> <i>If relevant, include expected completion date.</i>  |
| PRESENT LEVELS OF ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AND FUNCTIONAL PERFORMANCE |  |
| <b>Academic Areas</b>   | Only include relevant behavioral information, e.g., excessive absences, refusal to do work, difficulty completing work, etc. Math sometimes contains functional information for independent living, e.g., understanding time, using money (making change), etc.  |
| <b>Non-Academic Areas</b>   | <i>Note: Also referred to “Functional Skills” or “Functional Performance”</i>  |
| Social/Emotional  | RELEVANT   |
| Communication Skills  | RELEVANT   |
| Adaptive Skills/Self-Help   | RELEVANT   |
| Motor Skills  | <i>Usually not relevant.</i>   |
| Sensory Skills  | <i>Usually not relevant but may be for applicants with ASD.</i>  |
| Health  | RELEVANT. Look here for <b>diagnoses, medications, and outside services.</b>   |
| MEASURABLE ANNUAL GOALS   |  |
| Academic Areas  | Check for relevant information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading and Written Language may have information relevant to communication skills</li> <li>• Math may include relevant functional goals for independent living, e.g., understanding time, using money (making change), etc.</li> </ul>   |

<sup>1</sup> For more, visit US Department of Education’s parent information and resources at <https://www.parentcenterhub.org/pa12/>.

<sup>2</sup> If the IEP is only for Transition Planning, the center is encouraged to request the previous IEP (prior to the Transition IEP) to get more substantial information about functional performance and special education service needs and accommodation supports.

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Social/Emotional   | RELEVANT. Include baseline information, if reported.   |
| Communication  | <i>May be relevant, particularly for applicants with ASD.</i>  |
| Transition   | Check for information related to adaptive functioning, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), referrals/continued connection to outside mental health services/agencies, etc.  |
| <b>PROGRAMS AND SERVICES</b>   |  |
| <b>Special Education - Include percentages for special education vs. regular education</b>   |  |
| Academic Areas   | <p>The <u>location</u> where services are provided (also called “Setting” or “Environment”) may be relevant IF the student is being placed or will continue in a different school or in a specialized school/program such as a residential treatment center due to behavioral or socioemotional concerns (aggression, emotional outbursts, etc.)</p> <p>To determine if the applicant is attending a different school, check the placement to the <b>applicant’s neighborhood school</b> (usually listed on the first page). <i>Note: Sometimes an applicant will be placed at a different school/program due to the way the school district has structured its special education supports. Only include information about location when it is clearly tied to specific behavioral or socioemotional concerns.</i></p> |
| <b>Related Services – May Include</b> counseling/social work, consultation by school psychologist, speech/language, and paraprofessional services  |  |
| Behavior   | <p><input type="checkbox"/> Does the student’s behavior impede the student’s learning or the learning of others? (Yes or No) <b>Include if answer is “yes.”</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Behavior goal is part of this IEP? (Yes or No)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Functional Behavior Assessment (Yes or No)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)/Support Plan (BSP) required? <b>If yes, include target behaviors from BIP/BSP in your summary.</b></p> <p>Check for counseling/social work services (and where provided), behavior intervention specialist services and paraprofessional services or 1:1 aide.</p>  |
| Communication  | Speech and language services are listed here. May be relevant, particularly for applicants with ASD.   |
| <b>Supplementary Aids/Supports (Program Accommodations and Program Modifications)</b>  |  |
| Academic Areas   | <i>Usually not relevant for social/emotional functioning unless there are behavioral concerns such as refusal to do work, forgets to turn in assignments, difficulties working in a group, conflict with teacher, etc.</i>   |
| Behavior   | <p>Check for <b>Supports</b>, e.g., 1:1 aide/support, reinforcement system, positive reinforcement, breaks to cool down, etc.</p> <p><b>Transportation Services</b> - If “yes,” may be relevant due to behavioral issues (needs monitor or aide) or due to attending a school/program other than neighborhood school. You may have to check a different section (e.g., “Special Factors”) to find the justification.</p>   |
| Transition   | Check to see if DVR is involved or another outside agency.   |
| <p>The <b>Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)</b> or <b>Offer of Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)</b> usually appears at end of this section to provide the justification for special education services and supports and extent of non-participation in general education.</p> <p><b>YOU WILL ALMOST ALWAYS WANT TO INCLUDE THESE JUSTIFICATION STATEMENTS.</b></p> |  |