



## Individualized Education Program (IEP)

In Michigan, the IEP is a written document for student with disabilities, between the ages of 3 and 26 years old, who receive special education programs and related services. The purpose of an IEP is to identify each student's needs, develop reasonable learning goals, and document the services the school district will provide to help the student achieve these goals.

### What's in the IEP?

The *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)* requires certain information be in the IEP. IEP forms can look different, but must include:

1. Present levels of academic achievement and functional performance (PLAAFP), which is information on how the student is doing in school and how his or her disability may affect progress in the general education curriculum.
2. Specific skills or sets of skills to be taught called 'goals.' These goals must be reasonable and achievable for the student.
3. A description of how the student's progress on these goals will be measured.
4. Special education and related services (such as speech therapy), including supplementary (or additional) aids and services the student will receive (also called accommodations).
5. Amount of time during the school day, if any, the student will spend apart from his or her peers without disabilities.
6. The student's participation in state and district tests, including test accommodations.
7. The projected start date for the services and modifications provided to the student, including where, how often, and how long.

### When to do the IEP

An initial IEP must be completed and notice provided within 30 school days after you provide consent for your child's evaluation. Your child's eligibility is determined at the initial IEP meeting, based on the results of the evaluation and other relevant information. However, the IEP meeting and notice of the offer of special education programs or services might not be on the same day. The IEP must be reviewed annually to develop and/or revise the contents for your child's IEP. An IEP can happen more than once a year if revisions are needed.

For more information, see [Guidance for Timeline for Initial Evaluations](#).

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## The IEP Team

Required IEP Team members who are responsible for developing a student's IEP include: the parents of the student, not less than one general education teacher of the student, at least one special education teacher who works with the student, a representative of the public agency, an individual who can interpret the instructional implications of evaluation results and, at the discretion of the parent or agency, other individuals who have knowledge of the child.

For more information, see the Family Matters [Educational Teams and Roles fact sheet](#).

## IEPs are legal, enforceable documents

After an IEP becomes final, the school district is required to provide what is written in the IEP (the supports and services).

The school may prepare a draft of the IEP and share it before or during the meeting. Drafts are not considered enforceable documents.

You will need to provide signed consent before the school implements your child's first IEP. However, after that, the school does not need your signed consent again for future IEPs. Your signature is not needed to make an IEP final.

If you do not agree with the final IEP, work with the school to make changes. If you cannot reach an agreement, other options can be sought including mediation, filing a state complaint, filing a due process complaint (request for a hearing), or withdrawing (or revoking) consent for services.

For more information, see the Family Matters [Special Education Problem Solving fact sheet](#).

## Including Your Child

Often children begin taking part in the IEP process in high school when transition services are discussed. But your child can take part in the process at any age. The earlier your child is involved in educational planning, the more it helps him or her grow independence and self-advocacy. When your child is young, he or she may only be involved in the IEP for shorter periods, but this can be increased over time.

## Resources



### [Michigan Alliance for Families: Individualized Education Program](#)

The Alliance IEP resources include a checklist and a webinar.

- [Center for Parent Information and Resources \(CPIR\): The Short-and-Sweet IEP Overview](#)
- [Michigan Administrative Rules for Special Education \(MARSE\)](#)
- [Michigan Department of Education: IEP Development Process](#)