What Is an Individualized Education Program (IEP) for Families of Preschool Students?

Produced by the Technical Assistance Partnership for Transition at Cornell University.

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Disclaimer

The resources shown are designed to provide helpful information. Resources are provided for instructional use purposes only and do not constitute NYSED endorsement of any vendor, author, or other sources. To the best of our knowledge, the resources provided are true and complete.
Meeting Norms

• Take care of your needs (water, food, restroom, etc.).
• Speak your truth; use “I” statements.
• Ask what you need to understand and contribute.
• Listen with respect.
• Push your growing edge.
• Participate and struggle together.
• Expect a lack of closure.
• Respect each other's needs.
Learning Objectives

Participants will:

• List the various preschool components of the IEP
• Identify the family's role in the development of the IEP and on the Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE)
• Review tools and resources that can enhance family engagement during the IEP process
Welcome and Introductions

• Name

• School District

• What are you hoping to take away from this training?
Individuals with Disabilities Education Act 2004 (IDEA)

Federal law governing special education ages 3-21, entitles students to a free appropriate public education (FAPE) in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE).
Blueprint for Improved Results for Students with Disabilities

Self-Advocacy
Students engage in self-advocacy and are involved in determining their own educational goals and plan.

Family Partnership
Parents, and other family members, are engaged as meaningful partners in the special education process and the education of their child.

Specially-Designed Instruction
Teachers design, provide, and assess the effectiveness of specially-designed instruction to provide students with disabilities with access to participate and progress in the general education curriculum.

Research-Based Instruction
Teachers provide research-based instructional teaching and learning strategies and supports for students with disabilities.

Multi-tiered Support
Schools provide multi-tiered systems of behavioral and academic support.

Inclusive Activities
Schools provide high-quality inclusive programs and activities.

Transition Support
Schools provide appropriate instruction for students with disabilities in career development and opportunities to participate in work-based learning.
This Is a Partnership

• The development of an IEP is a collaborative partnership and process between the family, provider, county, and district

• Providers and families have the best knowledge of the child’s:
  - Current levels of abilities
  - Strengths and needs
  - Supports and accommodations that work
  - Next steps
## CPSE Membership in New York State

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member Title</th>
<th>CPSE (3–5)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parents/Individual in parental role, Guardian</td>
<td>Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not less than 1 General Ed. Teacher (If child is or may be in general ed)</td>
<td>Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not less than 1 Special Ed. Teacher/Provider</td>
<td>Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Psychologist</td>
<td>Not Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Representative (CPSE/CSE Chairperson)</td>
<td>Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others with Knowledge/Expertise</td>
<td>Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Individual to Interpret Evaluations</strong> (may serve dual role with any of the</td>
<td>Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>professional roles listed above, but not the parent)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Physician</td>
<td>Not Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional Parent Member</td>
<td>If requested (72 hrs.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agency Representative (for transition planning)</td>
<td>Not Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student (if appropriate)</td>
<td>Not Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representative from Municipality</td>
<td>Invited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representative from Early Intervention</td>
<td>By parent request for transition to CPSE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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CPSE Process

1. Initial referral and parental consent for evaluation
2. Evaluation by an approved State Education Department (SED) evaluator
3. CPSE meeting—determine eligibility and develop IEP
4. Recommended implementation of IEP
5. Annual Review within one year of last annual review date
Guiding Principles for IEP Development

- Tool to guide instruction and measure progress
- Child-centered
- Shared responsibility, parental participation
- Includes positive behavior supports
- Special education is a service, not a place
- Planning for adult outcomes
- Least restrictive environment
- Based on individual strengths and needs
- General education curriculum, standards and assessments

Adapted from NYSED Special Forms
Family’s Role in the IEP Process
What to expect and how to prepare for success at the CPSE meeting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Your role at the CPSE meeting</th>
<th>How to prepare</th>
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</table>
| Provide documentation prior to meeting                           | • Read through all of your child’s evaluations and highlight anything you feel is relevant  
• Submit all documentation that professionals will need to have the most well-rounded description of your child |
| Describe how your child learns, strengths, needs and interests    | • Make a list about your child’s strengths, needs, and interests prior to the meeting  
• Consider completing the "about my child form" to bring to the meeting                              |
| Consider bringing another person with you to the meeting          | • This person could be a family member or friend  
• You can also request a parent member and interpreter, 72 hours in advance                                                                   |
| Participate fully                                                 | • Voice your thoughts, questions, and concerns  
• Advocate for what you believe your child needs to be successful                                                                         |
Sections of the IEP

- Placement
- Special transportation
- Participation in state assessments and with students without disabilities
- Coordinated set of transition activities
- Testing accommodations
- Twelve-month services (if needed)
  Programs and services—modifications and supports
- Reporting progress to parents
  Annual goals, objectives/benchmarks (if needed)
- Measurable postsecondary goals and transition needs

Present levels of performance

(Optional student information form) and student information
Components of the Present Levels of Performance

Including:
- Strengths
- Preferences
- Interests
- Needs
- Concerns of the family
Evaluation Results

Evaluations are a variety of assessments tools and strategies including information from the parent to gather relevant functional, developmental, and academic information about the student.

• Individual Evaluations (psychological, speech, occupational therapy (OT), physical therapy (PT), physical/medical, etc.)

• Social history
  • Student observation
  • Factors related to the disability
  • Family concerns
Academic Achievement and Functional Performance

Levels of knowledge and development in subject and skill areas including activities of daily living, level of intellectual functioning, adaptive behavior, expected rate of progress in acquiring skills and information, and learning style. Academic achievement and functional performance also includes student needs that are of concern to the parent/guardian.

- Dressing
- Toileting
- Identifying objects
- Problem solving
- Decision making

- Following a schedule and routine
- Attention to tasks
- Following directions

- Avoiding danger
- Communication skills
- Processing verbal information
Social Development

Social development is the process through which students learn the ability to interact with others and regulate their own behaviors. The student can develop and maintain meaningful interpersonal relationships, engage in positive social interaction skills with adults and peers, regulate their emotions and develop self-awareness. Social development also includes, student needs that are of concern to the parent/guardian.

• Sharing
• Friendships
• Resolving conflicts

• Cooperative Play
• Self-confidence
• Identifying feelings

• Exploring and engaging in their environment
Physical Development

Physical development is the growth and skill development of the body including the brain, muscles and senses during infancy and early childhood. This includes the student’s use and control of their bodies. Developing gross (large muscles involving the whole body) and fine motor (small muscles involving hands and fingers) skills is a component of physical development. Physical development also includes, student needs that are of concern to the parent/guardian.

- Walking
- Running
- Buttoning
- Using scissors

- Copying shapes and letters
- Controlled sitting

- Using utensils
- Brushing teeth
- Zipping
Management Needs

The Management Needs Section of the IEP discusses how the adults in your child's environment provide environmental, human, and material modifications previously identified in the Present Levels of Performance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Needs</th>
<th>Supports Provided By Adults</th>
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<tr>
<td>Difficulty following directions</td>
<td>Simplify, repeat directions, visual pictures/prompts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unable to sit/stay in place</td>
<td>Cushion, &quot;sit disc,&quot; visual space/mark for circle time</td>
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<tr>
<td>Difficulty using utensils (draw, eat, play)</td>
<td>Adapted utensils, pencil grip, weighted utensils</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sensitivity to noise, light, smell</td>
<td>Modifications to environment—minimal noise, dimmed lights, fragrance free</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communication delays</td>
<td>Picture exchange</td>
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Effect of Student Needs on Participation in Appropriate Preschool Activities

Summary of how your child's disability affects their ability to participate or progress in activities. For preschool children, appropriate activities include any activity that same-age peers engage in, such as coloring, pre-reading activities, play time, listening to stories, sharing-time, parallel play.

Examples:

• Seraphina prefers to play in isolation and becomes upset (e.g., cries and hits others) when another student comes too close. As a result, her peer interactions at playtime are limited.

• Damien’s challenges with attention are impacting his ability to follow teacher directions and expectations during group activities.
Student Needs Relating to Special Factors

- Behavioral Considerations
- Language Needs
- Students Who Are Blind or Visually Impaired
- Communication Needs
- Assistive Technology (AT)
Annual Goals

Section 200.4(d)(2)(iii)(a-c)

Statements that identify what knowledge, skills, or behaviors a student is expected to be able to demonstrate by the end of the year.

• Focus on knowledge, skills, behaviors to address the student’s needs or skill delays that interfere with participation in age-appropriate activities, as identified in the Present Levels of Performance.

• For preschool students, goals include short-term skill steps to reach the larger annual goal, called objectives or benchmarks.

• Parents have input into the goals that are developed for their child.

• Goals are reviewed at least annually and can be modified, as necessary and appropriate for the student.

• Goals should be measurable and observable.
Examples of a Measurable Goal

Given 15 minutes of free play time, Sam will engage in interactive play with peers for at least 10 minutes.

Benchmarks:
1. Sam will engage in interactive play with peers for at least 2 minutes.
2. Sam will engage in interactive play with peers for at least 5 minutes.
3. Sam will engage in interactive play with peers for at least 7 minutes.
Reporting Progress to Parents

The IEP must identify when periodic reports on the progress the student is making toward the annual goals will be provided to the student’s parents.

1. Progress reports will be provided at least as often as parents of nondisabled students are informed of their student's progress.

2. Progress is reported in a jargon-free, objective manner that is easily understood to inform parents of:
   a) Specific data regarding the extent to which the student is progressing toward meeting annual goals.
   b) The student's progress or lack of progress in order to review/revise the IEP to ensure the student is provided the appropriate supports to reach the annual goals.
Special Education Programs and Services

What programs and services does a child need to achieve their annual goals and to participate in age-appropriate activities?
Least Restrictive Environment

(§200.1(cc))

Under IDEA, the presumption is that students with disabilities will attend the same schools they would have attended if they did not have disabilities and that removal or restriction from their regular schools and classrooms can only occur for reasons related to the student’s disability when the student’s IEP cannot be satisfactorily implemented in that setting, even with the use of supplementary aids and services.
LRE Placement

The placement of an individual student with a disability in the LRE must:

• Provide the special education needed by the student
• Provide for education of the student to the maximum extent appropriate to the needs of the student with other students who do not have disabilities
• Be as close as possible to the student's home
Access to Inclusive High-Quality Early Childhood Programs

When enrolled in a district pre-K program, including special education programs and services, preschool students with disabilities must have equal access to:

• Pre-K curriculum
• Desired learning results established for all students
• Length of school day
• Protocols for Emergent Multilingual Learners
• Family engagement and parent choice activities
• School facilities and food programs
Continuum of Services (200.16(i))

- Related Services: Speech, OT, PT, and more
- Special Education Itinerant Services (SEIS)
- SEIS and Related Services
- Special Class in an Integrated Setting (SCIS)
- Special Class
Related Services

• Frequency and duration
• Intensity of the disability—individual or group
• Location
  - Service delivery model may include push-in or pull-out
Related Services (200.1(qq))

Related services means developmental, corrective, and other supportive services as are required to assist a student with a disability, and includes:

- Speech-language pathology
- Audiology services
- Interpreting services
- Psychological services
- PT
- OT
- Counseling services, including rehabilitation counseling services
- Orientation and mobility services
- Medical services as defined in this section
- Parent counseling and training
- School health services
- School nurse services
- School social work
- AT services
- Appropriate access to recreation, including therapeutic recreation
- Other appropriate developmental or corrective supports and services
- Other appropriate supports and services
- Includes the early identification and assessment of disabling conditions in students
Supplementary Aids and Services/Program Modifications/Accommodations

Provided in general education classes or other education-related settings to enable students with disabilities to be educated with students without disabilities to the greatest extent possible in the LRE.

Examples:

- Therapeutic chair, adaptive furniture
- Adapted materials, utensils
- Simplify language/restate directions
- Visual schedule/routine
- Pictures, visual cues of people, places, things
- Preferential seating—close to teacher
- One-to-one aide/teaching assistant
Assistive Technology Devices and Services

**Assistive technology device** means any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified or customized, that is used to increase, maintain or improve the functional capabilities of a student with a disability.

**Assistive technology service** means any service that directly assists a student with a disability in the selection, acquisition or use of an assistive technology device.

**Examples:**
- Noise-blocking headphones
- Fidgets
- Foam grips
- Augmentative and alternative communication devices
Supports for School Personnel

The IEP must consider any training and/or professional development that providers or staff may need in order to help them to work more effectively with the student.

Should consider what support the student might need in meeting annual goals.

Examples:

- Information on a specific disability and implications for instruction
- Training in the use of a specific positive behavior intervention
- Training on specific software or technology
- Consulting with related service for adapted utensils or equipment
- Assistance with instructional supports
Twelve-Month Program/Services Extended School Year (ESY)

The CPSE must determine whether a student requires special education services during the months of July and August in order to prevent substantial regression.

Typically for students as follows:
• Highly intensive management needs
• Severe multiple disabilities/services are mainly habilitation and treatment/in special classes
• Home/hospital instruction to prevent substantial regression
• Seven-day residential placement

Not all students will qualify to receive services in July and August!
Special Transportation

For students who are recommended to attend a Special Class or SCIS setting, the Committee must determine whether a student’s disability prevents them from using the same transportation provided to other students.

**Special transportation can include:**
- Special seating (car seat, booster)
- Vehicle/equipment needs (lifts, ramps, etc.)
- Adult supervision (aide)
- Type of transportation (car/small bus)
- Other accommodations (head-set, tablet)
Pause, Reflect, and Discuss
Next Steps

• Develop a yearly folder/binder to keep your child's educational documents.

• Secure a copy of your child's IEP for your records.

• Review your child's IEP; if there is anything that does not sound familiar or is unclear, contact the CPSE chairperson for clarification.

• Communicate regularly with your child's providers to ensure all areas of the IEP are being implemented.

• Be sure to review progress monitoring information and gather more information from your child's team if necessary.
Final Thoughts or Questions
Resources

• NYSED Office of Special Education Website
• NYSED Blueprint for Improved Results for Students with Disabilities
• Extended School Year Programs and Services Questions and Answers
• NYSED Field Advisory—July 2021: School District Responsibilities for Preschool Inclusion in Publicly Funded Prekindergarten Programs
• NYSED Guide to Quality IEP Development and Implementation
• NYSED Individual Evaluations
Resources (continued)

- NYSED Part 200 Regulations of the Commissioner of Education
- NYSED Present Levels of Performance and Individual Needs
- NYSED Specialized Forms
- NYSED Transportation
- The New York State Prekindergarten Learning Standards (nysed.gov)
- U.S. Department Of Health And Human Services U.S. Department Of Education Policy Statement On Inclusion Of Children With Disabilities In Early Childhood Programs
References

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