New York State Education Department
Office of Special Education
Educational Partnership

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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

Handout

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

Discussion

- 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

Handout

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.
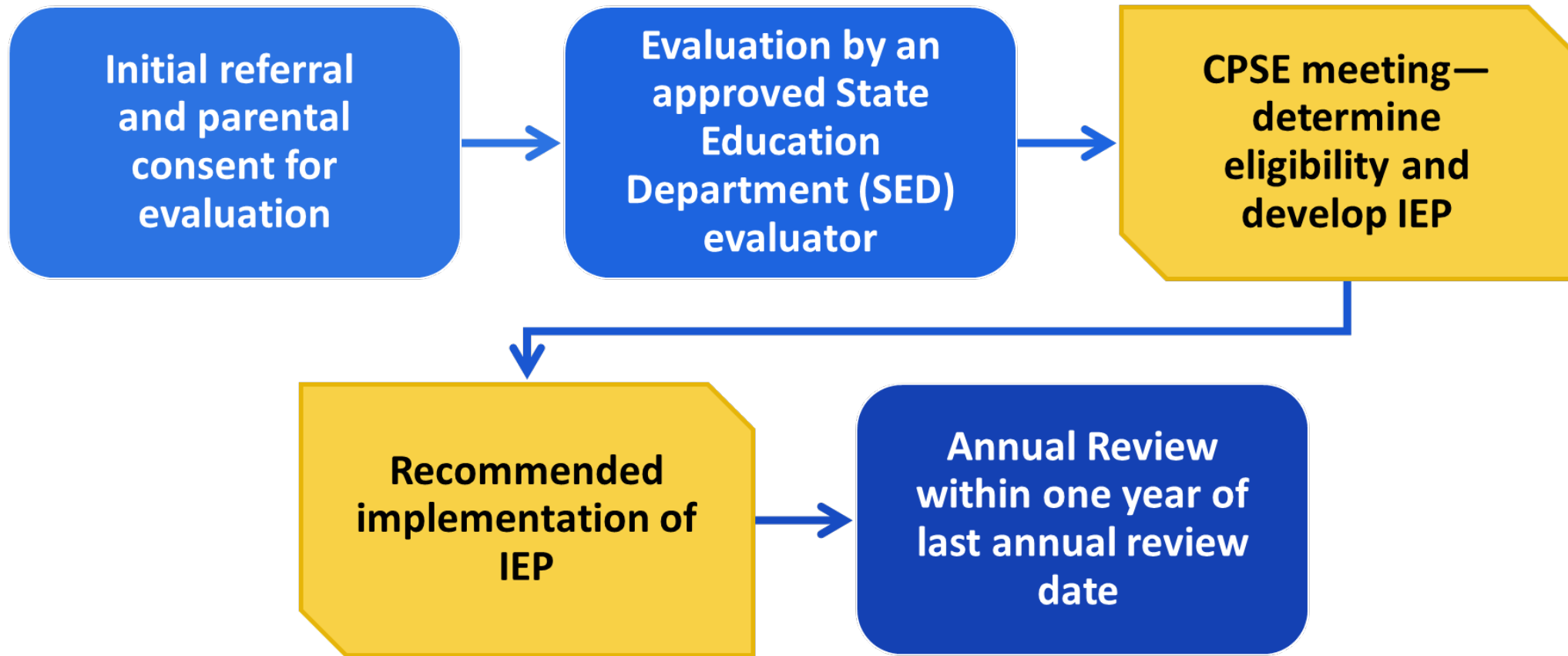
This Is a Partnership

- 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
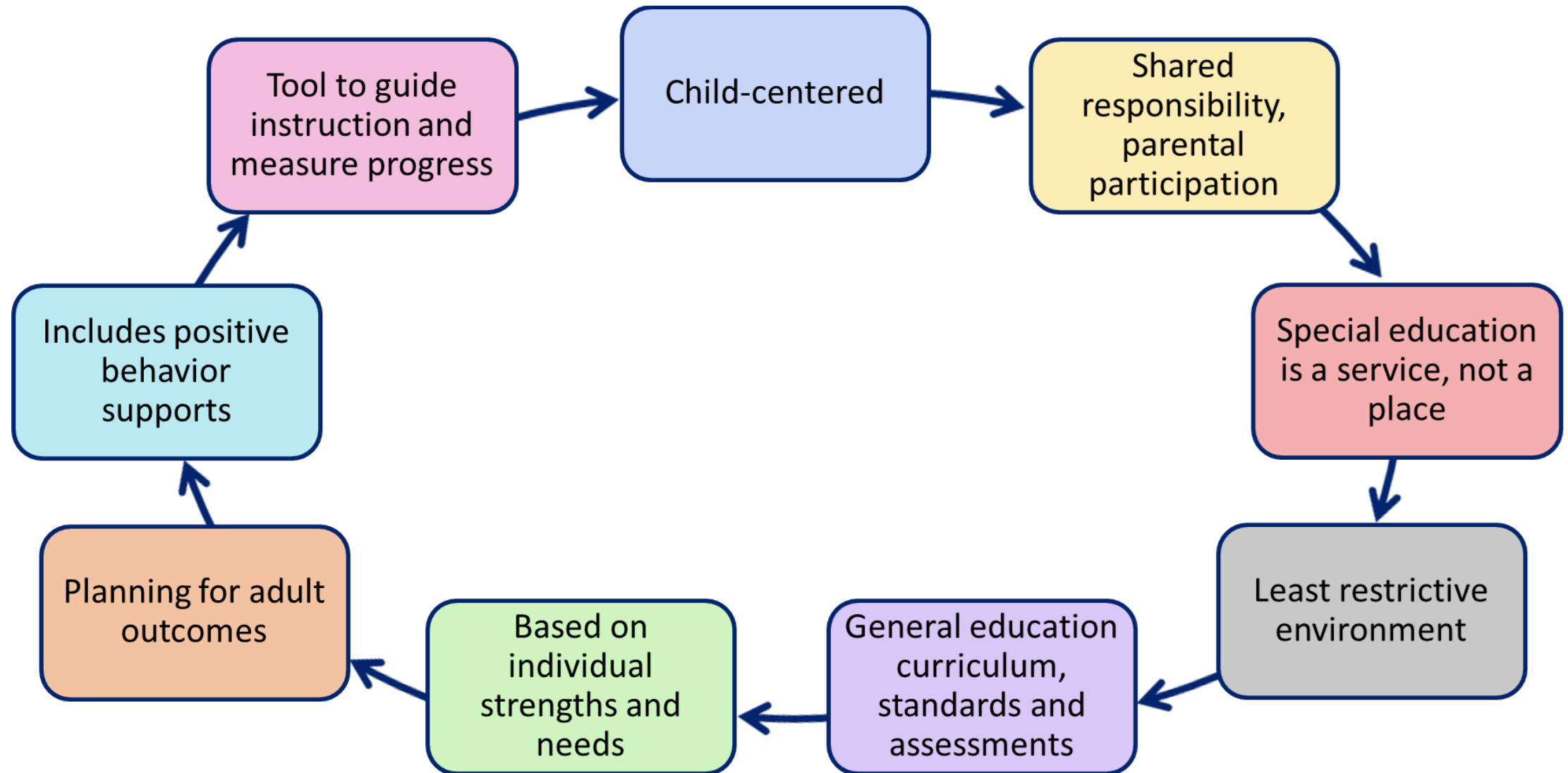 - Supports and accommodations that work
  - Next steps

CPSE Membership in New York State

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

CPSE Process

Initial referral and parental consent for evaluation → Evaluation by an approved State Education Department (SED) evaluator → CPSE meeting—determine eligibility and develop IEP → Recommended implementation of IEP → Annual Review within one year of last annual review date

Guiding Principles for IEP Development

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Tool to guide instruction and measure progress → Child-centered → Shared responsibility, parental participation → Special education is a service, not a place → Least restrictive environment → General education curriculum, standards and assessments → Based on individual strengths and needs → Planning for adult outcomes → Includes positive behavior supports → (back to Tool to guide instruction and measure progress)
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Family's Role in the IEP Process

What to expect and how to prepare for success at the CPSE meeting

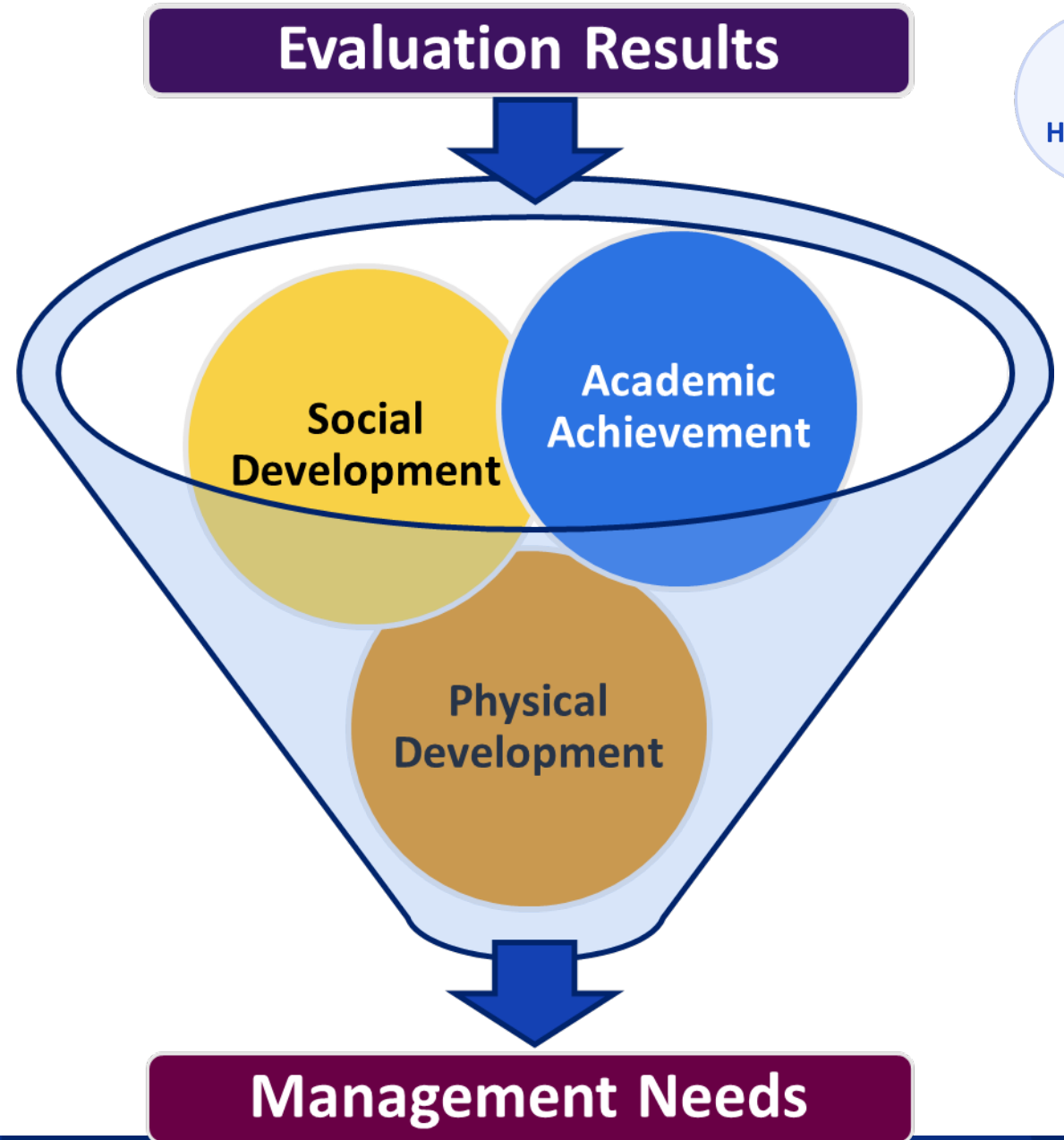| Your role at the CPSE meeting	How to prepare
Provide documentation prior to meeting	• Read through all of your child's evaluations and highlight anything you feel is relevant • Submit all documentation that professionals will need to have the most well-rounded description of your child
Describe how 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

Social Development

Academic Achievement

Physical Development

Management Needs

Handout

Evaluation Results

Handout

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

Handout

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.

Student Needs	Supports Provided By Adults
Difficulty following directions	Simplify, repeat directions, visual pictures/prompts
Unable to sit/stay in place	Cushion, "sit disc," visual space/mark for circle time
Difficulty using utensils (draw, eat, play)	Adapted utensils, pencil grip, weighted utensils
Sensitivity to noise, light, smell	Modifications to environment—minimal noise, dimmed lights, fragrance free
Communication delays	Picture exchange

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

The University of the State of New York and The State Education Department. (2010). *Guide to Quality Individualized Education Program (IEP) Development and Implementation.* http://www.nysed.gov/special-education/guide-quality-individualized-education-program-iep-development-and-implementation

Contact Us

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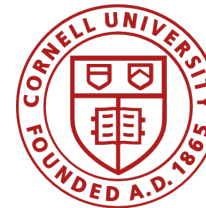This training was provided by the Technical Assistance Partnership for Transition at Cornell University. The OSE Educational Partnership is funded by the New York State Education Department Office of Special Education.