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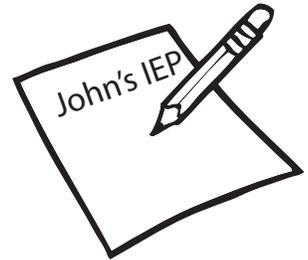


Is It Possible to Revise My Child's IEP Once I Sign It?

by Becky L. Spivey, M.Ed.

What is an IEP?

Every student in public schools enrolled in special education services has an IEP (Individualized Education Program). An IEP is a legal and binding document outlining objectives, measurable goals, expectations, and the services provided to an individual student. School personnel use the IEP as a guide to ensure students are receiving the maximum amount of support services they qualify for under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) 2004 or Public Law 108-446.



After an extensive evaluation determines that a student qualifies for special education services, a designated team of staff members from the school /district meet at length to discuss how the special education program can promote the student's achievement. This team meets and writes the initial IEP and, after requesting the parents' presence at a conference, reviews it with the parents. At this time, the team notes any concerns or input the parents may have. If parents do not show up for the meeting and do not ask to reschedule, the meeting may take place without them. However, the IEP becomes active and services will begin **only** with the parents' written consent.

After a designated period of time, the team reconvenes with the parents and presents an evaluation of the student's progress. At this time, the team and/or parent may suggest changes to the goals and support services, or the IEP may stand as is if the services are meeting the student's needs sufficiently. Any changes to the IEP must have parental consent before implementation.

Can parents request a revision of the IEP before the next scheduled IEP meeting?

Parents have the right to request a meeting of the IEP team to discuss making changes to the IEP; **however, there are procedures to follow. To call a meeting of the IEP team, some districts require a written request with at least a 10-day notice (or more) in order to give members of the team sufficient notice to attend.**

IDEA law states, ***"There should be as many meetings a year as a child may need."*** This is from Appendix A to the IDEA regulations. If school personnel tell parents that a revision of the IEP is not possible, they may not know the law. Some school personnel have limited knowledge of IDEA laws regarding special education and know only what they hear in an in-service training or by word-of-mouth.

Parents of a student with a disability should educate themselves on IDEA laws. Information regarding IDEA laws as they apply to special education, specifically IEPs, is

readily available on the internet. You can find answers quickly to your questions or information on how to address your concerns in the IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) Public Law 108-446 statute and regulations. Special education service providers should make sure teachers and other staff members have a copy of the IDEA statute and provide one for parents before the initial IEP meeting. For an overview of the IDEA statute and regulations, go to <http://idea.ed.gov/explore/view/p/,root,statute>,



For a more parent-friendly translation and commentary on IDEA 2004 Public Law 108-446, go to the National Center for Learning Disabilities website

<http://www.nclld.org/images/stories/Publications/AdvocacyBriefs/IDEA2004ParentGuide/idea2004parentguide.pdf>

Special Education coordinators in every school district have access to copies of IDEA 2004 and will be able to discuss parent concerns or answer questions regarding the student's IEP.

For an accurate, current, reliable, and **extensive** library of information about special education law, education law, advocacy for children with disabilities, the rights of students enrolled in special education, and FAQs regarding IDEA, go to <http://www.wrightslaw.com/>.

Resources

National Center for Learning Disabilities. (April 2006) *A comprehensive guide to your rights and responsibilities under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA 2004)*. Retrieved from <http://www.nclld.org/images/stories/Publications/AdvocacyBriefs/IDEA2004ParentGuide/idea2004parentguide.pdf>

U.S. Department of Education. (2004). *Building the Legacy of IDEA 2004*. Retrieved January 2012 from <http://idea.ed.gov/explore/view/p/,root,statute>,

Wrightslaw. (2012). *How can I get my child's IEP changed?* Retrieved from http://www.wrightslaw.com/advoc/ltrs/iep_revise.htm

Wrightslaw. (2012). *IDEA 2004*. Retrieved from <http://www.wrightslaw.com/idea/index.htm>

For more Handy Handouts®, go to www.handyhandouts.com.

Helpful Products

The list of Super Duper® products below may be helpful when working with children who have special needs. Visit www.superduperinc.com and type in the item name or number in our search engine. Click the links below to see the product descriptions.

Making a Difference for America's Children 2nd Edition
Item # TP-29703

Autism: A Guide for Educators, Clinicians, and Parents
Item # TP-297

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