# Parent Handout: Why Methodology Matters in Your Child’s IEP

The Law Protects Your Child’s Right to the Right Teaching  
Two important court cases explain why schools must sometimes include specific teaching methods (methodology) in a child’s IEP:

## R.E.B. v. Hawaii Department of Education (2017)

- The court ruled that if a child needs a specific program or method to learn, that method must be written into the IEP.  
- Why? Because leaving it vague gives schools the freedom to switch or drop the program, even if that program is the only way the child can make progress.  
- The case made it clear: when methodology is critical, it cannot be optional. It must be consistent and documented.

## Endrew F. v. Douglas County School District (2017)

- The U.S. Supreme Court raised the standard for IEPs.  
- Schools must create an IEP that allows the child to make “appropriately ambitious progress” in light of their circumstances.  
- In plain language: your child is entitled to more than minimal or trivial progress.  
- If your child requires a certain reading program (like Orton-Gillingham or Wilson) to make that progress, then leaving it off the IEP does not meet the legal standard.

## What This Means for Parents

- If your child’s neuropsychologist or evaluator recommends a specific program, and the evidence shows your child cannot succeed without it, then the school must explain why it is not included in the IEP.  
- This explanation must come in writing through a Prior Written Notice (PWN) under IDEA.  
- The PWN has to spell out:  
 • What the school is refusing,  
 • Why they are refusing,  
 • What data they relied on,  
 • What options they considered and rejected.

## Talking Point for IEP Meetings

“My child’s evaluation shows that this program is critical for meaningful progress. Under R.E.B. v. Hawaii DOE, if methodology is essential, it must be on the IEP. And under Endrew F., my child’s IEP must provide ambitious progress, not just minimal gains. Please explain in writing, through Prior Written Notice, why the district is refusing.”

## Bottom Line

- Your child has the right to an IEP that works.  
- If a method or program is the key to your child’s success, the law supports your right to insist it be written into the IEP.

Prepared by: WYO Right to Read  
Advocating for the right of every Wyoming child to learn to read.