

# IEP 101

## Individualized Education Plans:

### *What Parents Need to Know*



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General questions are welcome. Individual questions can be sent to [secacchair@gmail.com](mailto:secacchair@gmail.com)

## As a result of attending, you will...

- Understand the purpose of the sections of the IEP Document
- Understand the importance of parental input
- Learn strategies to communicate effectively in your IEP meetings



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## The Role of Parents in Special Education

“Almost 30 years of research and experience has demonstrated that the education of children with disabilities can be made more effective by... strengthening the role and responsibility of parents and ensuring that families of such children have **meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children at school and at home....**”

*20 U.S.C. §1400(c)(5)(A), (B)*



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Family has a right to have meaningful input in the IEP process.

## The Role of Parents in Special Education

**Parental rights of participation can be summarized as follows:**

- Parents have the right to participate in meetings related to the **evaluation, identification, FAPE, and educational placement** of their child.
- Parents are entitled to be members of **any group that decides whether their child is a “child with a disability” and meets eligibility criteria** for special education and related services.
- Parents are entitled to be members of the team that **develops, reviews, and revises the individualized education program (IEP) for their child.**
- If neither parent can attend the IEP meeting or meeting deciding placement, the **school must use other methods** to ensure their participation, including individual or conference calls.

<http://www.parentcenterhub.org/lqa2/>



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PTI - Parent Training Information. Required by law. Every state has one. MD is Parent's Place of MD.

Required to accommodate parent - translator, transportation, documents delivered to your house, etc.....

## Individualized Education Program (IEP)

*Individualized education program, or IEP, means a written statement for a child with a disability that is developed, reviewed, and revised in accordance with §§ 300.320 through 300.324.*

**34 C.F.R. §300.22**

**COMAR** <http://www.dsd.state.md.us/COMAR/ComarHome.html>



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## Eligibility & Categories

- Autism
- Deaf
- Deaf-Blindness
- Developmental Delay
- Emotional Disability
- Hearing Impairment
- Intellectual Disability
- Orthopedic Impairment
- Other Health Impairment
- Specific Learning Disability
- Speech or Language Impairment
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- Visual Impairment
- Multiple Disabilities

*34 C.F.R. 300.8*



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Developmental Delay is only available until age 8. Recommendation to get your child approved for something other than Developmental Delay before they turn 8.

## Prior Written Notice

**Date**

**Time**

**Purpose of the meeting**



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Keep all paperwork and keep it organized. The amount of paperwork can be overwhelming.

A notice should be sent home 10 calendar days before the date of the meeting.

## Five Day Rule: Before

“At least five (5) business days before a scheduled IEP team meeting or other multidisciplinary education team meeting, school systems must provide parents with an accessible copy of each assessment, report, data chart, draft IEP, or other document(s) the team plans to discuss at the meeting. A “business day” is defined as Monday through Friday, except for federal or State holidays, when a local school system (LSS) or public agency (PA) is open for business whether or not students are required to be in attendance for instruction”

[34 C.F.R. §300.111(b); COMAR 13A.05.01.03B(9)].



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5-Day Rule: Five days before the meeting - all documentation should be sent home. This includes a draft IEP, teachers' note, progress reports, evals.

School personnel may provide the document(s) required through “electronic delivery, home delivery with the student or any other reasonable and legal method of delivery”

Make sure that documentation matches the purpose of the meeting. If you'd like to discuss more, email the IEP team.



## Five Day Rule: After

“Not later than five (5) business days after a scheduled IEP or other multidisciplinary education team meeting, appropriate school personnel are to provide parents an accessible copy of the completed IEP. If the IEP has not been completed by the fifth business day after the IEP team meeting, school personnel shall provide the parents with the draft copy of the IEP”

[Md. Code Ann., Educ., §8-405(e)(1)(2)].



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Q - Does this apply to IEP transition meeting? Yes it should apply to all.

Suggestion - if you don't get, send a polite email and quote the law.

Q - Can we request data from them? Yes.

Q - what if the parent requests the meeting? It's 5 days from the meeting date.

Q - Say the IEP meeting is for re-eval, what if you don't want to agree with it right away?

A - Dr. Savage. Only the initial IEP is signed. But you can ask to get info from outside the meeting (therapist, dr, etc..) and set another meeting as a continuation. IEP Team Report (the minutes) would reflect that. A - Could ask that person be at the meeting.

Q - This all applies to the ending of an IEP as well? Yes.

Q - Meeting scheduled only for one day without regard for parent schedule? A - Not okay. OSEP MOU says "Parent participation is at the forefront". Be flexible via phone or email if it's something small and easy. But full meeting should accommodate.

"Mutually agreeable time" - per the language from Dr. Savage. Sometimes a parent cannot make it and the meeting has to go out without them but that is rare. Should not be told that there is only one day and time available - no.

# Parental Input

9 / 29

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Agency: \_\_\_\_\_ IEP Team Meeting Date: / /

**SCHOOL-AGED STUDENT'S ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AND FUNCTIONAL PERFORMANCE**

What is the parental input regarding the student's educational program?

What are the student's strengths, interest areas, significant personal attributes, and personal accomplishments? (Include preferences and interests for post-school outcomes, if appropriate.)

How does the student's disability affect his/her involvement in the general education curriculum?

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Parental Input is a very important section!!! This isn't the place to put a complaint or criticize but should tell a history or add to the history of your child's struggles and achievements, what has worked, what has not, and what your concerns are for the future. Date it and send ahead of time, this way it can be uploaded to the IEP. Focus on some of the positive.

Trisha - should get a questionnaire for this part.

Janice - For HS families, at least once a year will get a questionnaire about transition to adulthood. Not a required MD or US form, something to HCPSS. Put in thoughts for the future as well.

## Supplementary Aids and Services

### **Aids:**

- \* **Materials**
- \* **Specialized Equipment**

### **Services:**

- **Instructional supports**
- **Program modifications**
- **Social/behavior supports**
- **Physical/environmental supports**
- **School personnel/parental supports**



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Progress report - comes with report card.

Q - Who is the IEP chair for a non-public kid?

A - HCPSS is ultimately in charge, progress report is from teacher at non-public. If there's an issue, contact case mgr (HCPSS person).

## Section IV – Goals

Measurable Annual Goals, including academic and functional goals, designed to:

- Meet the child's needs to enable them to be involved in and make progress in the *general education curriculum*; and
- Meet each of the child's other educational *needs that result from the child's disability*.



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SMART goals. [understood.org](http://understood.org) is a great resource.  
Goals should be specific, measurable and contain an instructional strategy,

## Section IV – Goals

Measurable Annual Goals will:

- Name the skill or behavior that needs to change
- Report your child's current level in this skill or behavior
- State what your child can reasonably achieve in one year
- Tell how progress will be measured



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Goals should be not too hard or not too easy, go back to section 2 to see if it's appropriate.

Janice Yetter, Director of Special Ed - HCPSS just did advanced training for teachers and related service providers based on the Technical Assistance Bulletin on goals and objections. Aligning present levels to goals. Need a time frame, conditions under which the skill is being taught, accommodations, criteria for mastery, measurable, observable and targeted. "Ambitious but achievable."

Emily Kinsler, Coordinator of County Wide Services - "For mastery", what does mastery look at like and what does retention look like.

Janice Yeter, Goals should be aligned to grade level curriculum standards.

Q - Does the goal role toward 504? They are different.

Q - Are stats being collected for the school? Stats for each school/team? A - For your child you are able to visit. A - Ask for work samples.

Q - What if it seems like the school over all is failing as an IEP team? A - email up the chain with evidence.

Q - Should we ask first or show up? A- ask.

Grade level expectations - <https://www.hcpss.org/academics/>

## Section V – Services

### Related Services:

...transportation and such corrective and other supportive services as required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from **special education**

*34 C.F.R. §300.3*



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Has to be related to section 2. Is it truly an academic need and functional need for independent living?

Independent living is important.

## Section V – Services

### Career & Technology Education Services:

*For Transition – career & technology  
education and vocational or pre-  
vocational objectives*



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## Section VI – Placement

Special Education:

“...specially designed instruction, at no cost to the parents, to meet the **unique needs of a child** with a disability.” 34 C.F.R. §300.39

*Special Education is a **service**,  
and not a place!*



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## Section VI – Placement

### Least Restrictive Environment

***“To the maximum extent appropriate,*** children with disabilities are educated with children who are nondisabled. Special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment ***occurs only if*** the nature and severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes ***with the use of supplementary aids and services*** cannot be achieved satisfactorily.

*34 C.F.R. §300.114(2)*



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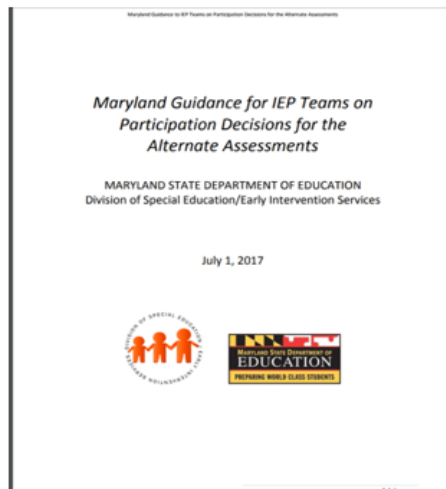
## Section VI – Placement

*YOU have a say in this decision!*



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# Participation in Assessments



<http://marylandpublicschools.org/programs/Documents/Special-Education/TAB/AlternateAssessmentParticipationGuide.pdf>



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Certificate track - alternate assessments. IEP will look different.

# Communication Styles

## Passive

People who use the passive communication style often act indifferently. Passive communicators usually don't express their feelings or needs, and they can allow others to express themselves too much. Sometimes, a passive communicator's lack of outward communication can lead to [misunderstanding, anger build-up or resentment](#).

But passive communicators are also easy to get along with as they follow others and "[go with the flow](#)." At the same time, these communicators can be safer to speak with when a conflict arises, because they most likely will avoid a confrontation or defer to others.

"It really doesn't matter that much."

"I just want to keep the peace"



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Book - "From Emotions to Advocacy" Wright's Law

FSRC has 10 copies to borrow. Talk to Ann Scholz. [ann\\_scholz@hcpss.org](mailto:ann_scholz@hcpss.org)

It's a very emotional thing to go through. Don't communicate when you are feeling angry and negative.

For a passive person - write down questions.

# Communication Styles

## Aggressive

You can tell when someone communicates in an aggressive way. You'll hear it. You'll see it. You may even feel it. The [aggressive communication style](#) is emphasized by speaking in a loud and demanding voice, maintaining intense eye contact and dominating or criticizing.

Aggressive communicators often issue commands, ask questions rudely and fail to listen to others. But they can [also be considered leaders and command respect](#) from those around them.

"I'm right and you're wrong."

"I'll get my way no matter what."

"It's all your fault."



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Suggestion - try to be calm.

# Communication Styles

## Passive-Aggressive

Passive-aggressive communication style users appear passive on the surface, but within he or she may feel powerless or stuck, building up a resentment that leads to acting out in subtle, indirect ways. Most passive-aggressive communicators will mutter to themselves rather than confront a person or issue. They have difficulty acknowledging their anger; even deny there is a problem. Passive-aggressive communicators may also appear cooperative, but may silently be doing the opposite. Ultimately, passive-aggressive communicators are aware of their needs, but at times struggle to voice them.

“That’s fine with me, but don’t be surprised if someone else gets mad.”

“Sure, we can do things your way” (then mutters to self that “your way” is stupid).



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Suggestion - ask for data. Use I statements.

# Communication Styles

## Assertive

The most effective form of communication, the assertive communication style features an open communication link while not being too overbearing. Assertive communicators can express their own needs, desires, ideas and feelings, while also considering the needs of others. Assertive communicators aim for both sides to win in a situation, balancing one's rights with the rights of others. One of the keys to assertive communication is using "I" statements, such as "I feel frustrated when you are late for a meeting," or, "I don't like having to explain this over and over."

"We are equally entitled to express ourselves respectfully to one another."

"I realize I have choices in my life, and I consider my options."



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# Communication Styles

## How to Become an Assertive Communicator

Understanding how others communicate can be key to getting your message across to them. In order to develop a more assertive communication style, here are a few tips to keep in mind:

- Take ownership (use “I” statements)
- Maintain eye contact
- Learn to say “no”
- Voice your needs and desires confidently
- Request firmly, not demand



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## Questions?

**Specific question about your child's IEP can be asked to us on [secacchair@gmail.com](mailto:secacchair@gmail.com)**



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Q - How does the annual review process work?

A - Same as every other meeting. IEP is once a year. 504 should be once a year but no law states that. For either, any member of the IEP team can call a meeting anytime.

Suggestions from the group on having a good IEP meeting:

Goal to be less emotional - focus on goal of the meeting.

Bring a picture of your child.

Bring food or coffee to the team.

Q - Are paraeducators allowed?

A - They are not required to attend but they can. Per parent request.

Q - Is there an HCPSS policy regarding paraeducator attendance?

A - Dr. Terri Savage, Executive Director of Special Education - No. Members of the team should be based on what the purpose of the meeting. Ask team how information from the para is communicated if they can't be in the meeting.

Q - Paraeducator training? Concern about paras not having the right training. Can cause behavior training.

A - Lots of changes with paraeducators. Dr. Savage will follow up with this parent after the meeting.

Q - What age can the child attend the IEP meetings?

A - During transition age. Janice Yetter, - It's required for kids 14 and older to be invited. Talk to team about how much is appropriate for your individual child.  
Trish Gunshore, Special Education Parent Liaison - Ask child for input and give that input to the team.

Q - What if the child isn't meeting goals?

A - Maybe the goal isn't right. Trish Gunshore - If they aren't achieving goals the IEP team should call a meeting to discuss and if they don't you can.

Ask for raw data.

IEP has a list of types of data. Informal procedures aren't as good as the other methods. Ask for classroom based assessment or observation record.

Draft IEP should be sent 5 days before the meeting, final IEP 5 days after.

Q - What happens if there is an disagreement?

A - Can do another meeting, will get another draft 5 days after and concerns should be written in the meeting notes.

IFSP and IEP team will meeting to discuss transition twice. The first will be to share. The second will be the real IEP Transition meeting.

A 60 day review can be called as well.

Request for a 504 talk at this meeting.

Trish Gushore - IEP Meeting Notes are also "prior written notice" before the final IEP is issued.

Q - Are IEPs pulled for auditing?

A - Dr. Terri Savage - Overall not yet but some are already (related services). Doing new monitoring. That includes the IEP survey card.