

Special
Education

Parent
Training
Session #2

Freedom Area School District

November 7, 2017

Agenda

- Identification Process
- GIEP
- IEP vs. 504
- Agreements Defined
- MTSS (Multi-Tiered Systems of Support) or Interventions
- Modifications vs. Accommodations
- Inclusion/Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)
- FAPE (Free Appropriate Education)
- Autism Support
- FBA/PBSP
- Supports for Enrichment and Remediation
- Assistive Technology
- Transition
- Interagency Meetings
- What if a parent disagrees?

Process for Identification



Inclusion Practices/Least Restrictive Environment

Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

- LRE is part of the [Individuals with Disabilities Education Act](#) (IDEA). IDEA says that children who receive [special education](#) should learn in the least restrictive environment. This means they should spend as much time as possible with peers who do not receive special education.

IDEA says two things about LRE that are important to understand when working with the IEP team:

1. Your child should be with kids in general education to the “maximum extent that is appropriate.”
 2. Special classes, separate schools or removal from the general education class should only happen when your child’s learning or attention issue—his “disability” under IDEA—is so severe that supplementary aids and services can’t provide him with an appropriate education.
- A key word here is “appropriate.” It refers to what’s suitable or right for your child. Sometimes, putting a child in a general education classroom isn’t suitable because a specific service or program can’t be provided there.
 - An inclusion classroom is a general education classroom that has students who receive special education. *Inclusion* is a teaching approach that focuses on including students with special education needs in the school community.
 - Inclusion goes beyond placement in a general education class. It also aims to have a child participate in the classroom, lessons and extracurricular activities

IEP Options for LRE

- The intent of LRE is to make sure that kids who receive special education are included in the general education classroom as often as possible. But agreeing on how that happens isn't always easy. The IEP team, which includes you, decides what the LRE is for your child. Here are some common LRE scenarios:
 - **General education classroom with support.** Your child spends the entire day in a general education class. He receives supports and services like a tutor or aide, [assistive technology](#), [related services](#), [accommodations](#), [modifications](#) or any combination of these.
 - **Partial mainstream/inclusion classroom.** Your child spends part of the day in a general education class. He gets some individual or small-group instruction in a special education class, or is pulled out of class for some services.
 - **Special education class.** This is a program with specialized instruction for kids with similar learning needs.
 - **Specialized program outside of your school district.** This includes private schools, residential programs and hospital programs.

***The IEP team ALWAYS starts with the LRE, or in this case, General Education Classroom With Support.*

Interagency

An Interagency Team is gathered that includes educators, family, student, cross agency staff that are connected to the student.

- The goal of the meeting is to identify ways to enhance the capacity of the educational program to the needs of the student can be met in the Least Restrictive Environment
- This process is NOT for dispute resolution about the placement of a student

Assistive Technology (AT)

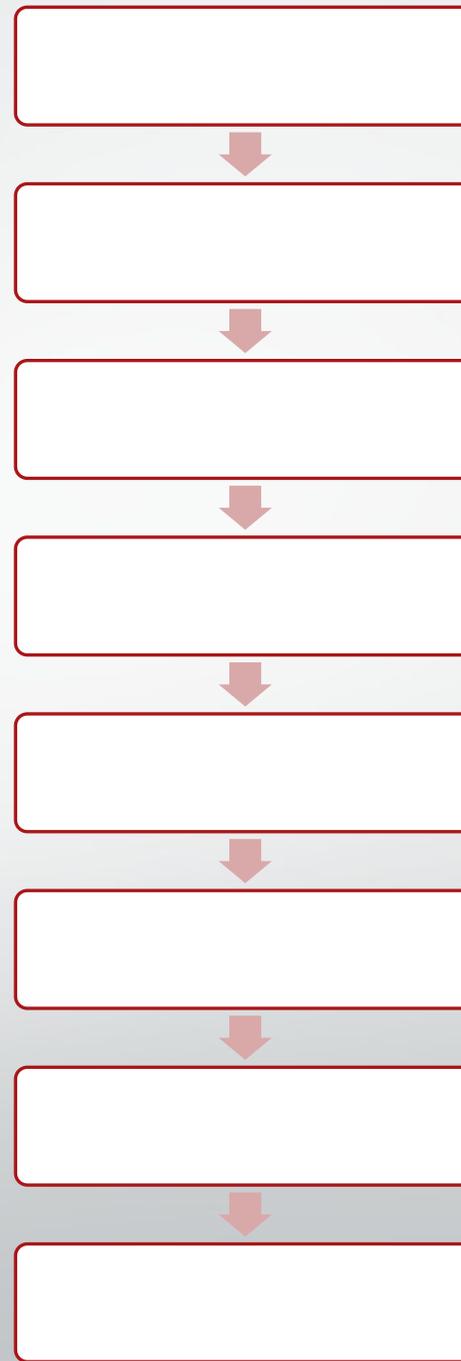
- **Assistive Technology Devices:** Any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially, modified or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities.
- **Assistive Technology Services:** Any services that directly assist an individual with a disability in the selection, acquisition, or use of an assistive technology device

*In order to complete an AT evaluation, parental consent forms (including a consent for videotaping) must be signed and the Intermediate Unit would complete this evaluation

Autism Supports

- District staff are provided with professional development to assist in supporting students who have been diagnosed on the Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Outside consultations can be utilized to ensure that student needs are being met
- Staff help support student needs through a variety of techniques; including sensory room integration, social skill training, and visual schedules

Process for Identification



Agreements Defined

- GIEP- Gifted Individualized Education Program
- IEP- Individualized Education Program
- 504- Shortened term referring to a plan that comes from Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act



What is a GIEP?

The Pennsylvania State Board of Education has defined the purpose of its regulations governing special education for gifted students (22 Pa. Code Chapter 16) as follows:

§16.2. Purpose

- (a) This chapter specifies how the Commonwealth will meet its obligations to suspected and identified gifted students who require gifted education to reach their potential. It is the intent of the Board that gifted students are provided with quality gifted education services and programs.
- (b) The Commonwealth, through the Department, will provide general supervision of services and programs provided under this chapter.
- (c) The Department will disseminate information about and promote the use of promising practices and innovative programs to meet the needs of gifted students.
- (d) To provide services and programs efficiently, the Commonwealth will delegate operational responsibility to its school districts. Each school district shall, by direct service or through arrangement with other agencies, provide the following:
 - (1) Services and programs planned, developed and operated for the identification and evaluation of each gifted student.
 - (2) Gifted education for each gifted student which is based on the unique needs of the student, not solely on the student's classification.

IEP or 504??

What do they mean?

| IEP (IDEA) | 504 (Section 504) |
|--|--|
| Accommodations | Accommodations |
| Specialized Instruction (Specially Designed Instruction, SDI) | Modifications |
| Related Services | Medical condition that has an adverse impact on education |
| Documented Disability | |

Refer to Handout A

Let's go a little deeper...

| IEP | 504 |
|---|--|
| Child must have one or more of the <u>13 specific disabilities listed in IDEA</u> | Child has a disability or physical /mental impairment that limits one or more major life activities |
| Child's disability must affect the child's educational performance and/or ability to learn and benefit from the general education curriculum | Disability must interfere with a child's ability to learn in a general education classroom |

IEP, GIEP, 504 Meetings

- **What should you expect?**

- Lots of paperwork!
- This is a TEAM meeting...
 - Parent, Reg. Ed. Teacher, Case Manager, LEA (Principal, Administrator, or Designee, Student (if over 14), and any other related service provider
 - Your role: <https://www.understood.org/en/school-learning/special-services/ieps/playing-a-role-in-the-iep-process>
- Review of IEP/GIEP/504
- Discussion of your child's progress
- Interventions, Enrichment, Accommodations, Modifications, etc...

- **What does it all mean?**

- ASK QUESTIONS!!!!

What if I disagree?

- Explain why you disagree with an option
- Listen to what the team has to say in response
- If you still disagree, you can do one of many things...
 1. Ask to reschedule another meeting because you want to explore options and find out more information
 2. Request a meeting with the district special education director and school psychologist (if they are not present)
 3. Find an advocate to help you
 4. Ask for an interagency meeting
 - All groups associated with the student's case meet to review the case and options
 5. Ask for mediation
 - Impartial state representative comes in to hear both sides and determine a resolution (FREE to both sides)
 6. Go to Due Process
 - Assigned a state representative to hear both sides of the concern and determine a final resolution (usually includes attorneys)

Accommodations vs. Modifications

- **Accommodations** are practices and procedures that level the playing field. They provide equal access during instruction and assessments for students with disabilities.
- **Modifications** are alterations to instruction and assessments. Modifications may change, lower, or reduce learning expectations.

Transition

- Transition planning is a formal process for helping kids with IEPs figure out what they want to do after high school and how to get there. It's required by the [Individuals with Disabilities Education Act \(IDEA\)](#).
- IEP transition planning is more than just a hopeful exercise or brainstorming session. During planning, your child will work on specific goals. She'll also receive services to help her achieve these goals.
- Planning often starts at age 14
- The purpose of transition planning is to help your child prepare to be an independent young adult. She'll be [encouraged to attend IEP meetings](#) and to play a leading role.

Functional Behavior Assessments/Positive Behavior Support Plans

- Functional Behavioral Assessments (FBA) are formal behavioral assessments in which a team (parent, relevant staff, and student) are involved in identifying the function (cause) behind interfering behaviors
- FBAs include interviews (parents, staff, student), indirect assessments (motivational scales, cognitive profilers, etc.), and direct assessments (observations), which lead to a formal hypothesis
- From the results of the FBA, a Positive Behavior Support Plan (PBSP) can be formed to address the interfering behaviors with specific/proactive interventions

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)

- Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) is an approach used by schools to provide support for struggling students
- It provides interventions and support that can be adjusted depending on a student's progress
 - MTSS is NOT special education, but a way to intervene early so that students can be successful
- The MTSS process has three levels of instruction that build on one another.
 - Each level provides a more intensive "tier" of support.
- Tier 1 is the high-quality instruction provided to all students in general education classrooms
- Tier 2 provides additional instruction targeted to meet the needs of struggling students
- Tier 3 includes intensive interventions to meet the needs of individual students

What supports are available for enrichment and Remediation?

- **Academic**
 - Tutoring, instructional coaches working with regular education teachers, interventions within the general education setting, learning support special education services
- **Behavioral**
 - Behavioral contracts, behavioral plans, functional behavioral assessments, positive behavior support plans
- **Social-emotional**
 - Counseling services, prevention specialist supports, Student Assistance Team supports
- **Related Services**
 - Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Vision and hearing supports, speech services, specialized transportation, personal care aide, etc.
- **Family Behavioral Resources**
 - Outpatient therapy services provided on campus for individual students K-12
 - Referrals are made through the district's Student Assistance Team (SAP)

Supports Continued...

- **Sensory Room**

- The sensory room is organized to serve students with sensory needs (sensory integration disorder, Autism Spectrum Disorder, etc.) through Occupational Therapist consultation

- **P.A.W.S.**

- The Freedom Middle School is piloting a school-wide positive behavior support system in order to provide a systemic positive behavioral environment
- They are entering the 1st year of implementation of this process guided by a Core SWPBIS building team
- Core values of positive behavior supports will be built into the daily schedule to create a positive and nurturing environment

Free and Appropriate Education (FAPE)

- <https://www.understood.org/en/school-learning/your-childs-rights/basics-about-childs-rights/at-a-glance-free-and-appropriate-public-education>