

Does Your Child (age 5-21) Have Special Needs?

Is your child showing developmental delays or having significant academic, physical, or emotional problems?

Your local school district can help determine if your child needs interventions or a specialized plan.

You are a team member in making these decisions and developing a plan.

Your child may need a Section 504 Accommodation Plan or Individual Health Plan

The 504 Plan is a plan developed to ensure that a child who has a disability identified under the law and is attending an elementary or secondary educational institution that receives federal funds and receives accommodations that will ensure their academic success and access to the learning environment.

Individualized Healthcare Plan (IHP) is a plan for “students whose healthcare needs affect or have the potential to affect safe and optimal school attendance and academic performance.”

Your child may need an Individualized Educational Plan and special education services

Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) is a plan or program developed to ensure that a child who has a disability identified under the law; is attending an elementary or secondary educational institution and receives specialized instruction and related services.

Call: Your Local Education Agency (LEA)

Henderson Co. Schools	-----828-697-4566
Asheville City Schools	-----828-350-7000
Buncombe Co. Schools	-----828-255-5972
Polk Co. Schools	828-894-3051

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Need Further Assistance?

See additional resources in the back of your care notebook.

FIRST Resource Center	-----828-277-1315
Family Support Network of WNC	-----828-213-0033
Exceptional Children’s Assistance Center (ECAC)	-----1-800-962-6817

What is the difference between an IEP and a 504 Plan?

IEP Defined – Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) is a plan or program developed to ensure that a child who has a disability identified under the law and is attending an elementary or secondary educational institution receives specialized instruction and related services.

504 Plan Defined – 504 Plan is a plan developed to ensure that a child who has a disability identified under the law and is attending an elementary or secondary educational institution receives accommodations that will ensure their academic success and access to the learning environment.

Subtle but Important Differences – Not all students who have disabilities require specialized instruction. For students with disabilities who do require specialized instruction, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) controls the procedural requirements, and an IEP is developed. The IDEA process is more involved than that of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and requires documentation of measurable growth. For students with disabilities who do not require specialized instruction but need the assurance that they will receive equal access to public education and services, a document is created to outline their specific accessibility requirements. Students with 504 Plans do not require specialized instruction, but, like the IEP, the 504 Plan should be updated annually to ensure that the student is receiving the most effective accommodations for his/her specific circumstances.

Borrowed from: Molly's Place at the CHaD Family Center

TERMS TO KNOW

FAPE

- Children with disabilities have the right to a free and appropriate public education (FAPE). It ensures that each child receives an education that meets his/her individual needs.

IEP

- An Individualized Education Program (IEP) is a legally binding document that sets goals for an eligible child based on their unique needs and strengths. The IEP explains the services and supports the school will provide, and how progress will be monitored.

Present Level of Performance

- Present level of performance serve as the starting point for the coming year's IEP. Present level of performance focus on a child's strengths, needs, and grade level expectations for both academic and functional performance. Present levels play an important role in setting annual goals for the IEP.

LRE

- Least restrictive environment (LRE) means that students with disabilities have to be educated in the same setting as students without disabilities as much as possible, as long as their needs can be met.

Accommodation

- An accommodation is a change made because of a student's disability to allow them to participate and benefit from their education. Accommodations don't change what a child is expected to know.

FBA

- A functional behavioral assessment (FBA) is a process used to try to understand a child's challenging behaviors. It attempts to identify when and where specific behaviors occur, and the function of the behavior for the child. The school then writes a behavior intervention plan (BIP), which outlines how to address the issues.

Related Services

- Specialized services required for the student to benefit from special education. Ex: Physical therapy, counseling, and/or transportation.

Prior Written Notice

- Schools must tell parents in writing before changes are made or refused regarding a child's evaluation, eligibility or the child's special education program.

Procedural Safeguards

- Schools must give parents a written explanation of the rights that they and the student have under IDEA. This is sometimes called the parent rights handbook.

IEP Checklist:

Prepare and Participate

Your involvement...

in developing an effective and appropriate Individualized Education Program or IEP for your child is essential to your child's success.

While IEPs typically cover a 12-month period, they help to create the foundation for your child's future. Think of the adult your child will become. When planning, think well beyond just one year.

step ONE:

Before The IEP Meeting:

Review!

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA) requires schools to give parents of students with disabilities adequate notice to participate in the IEP meeting. This notice is called **Invitation to Conference/Prior Notice**. The NC Department of Public Instruction considers "adequate" notice to be 7-10 calendar days. The notice must be given to you in writing and in your native language.

Carefully review the invitation/notice and consider the following:

- ☐ Is the *purpose* of the meeting clearly stated?
- ☐ Is my child 14 years old or turning 14 during the next 12 months? If so, did he/she receive their own written invitation to the IEP meeting as required when planning for their transition to adulthood?
- ☐ Who is attending? What are their roles in the meeting?
- ☐ Are there any team member excusal requests attached to invitation?
- ☐ Is the Date/Time/Location convenient for your schedule?

Respond!

Read, sign and return the Invitation to Conference/Prior Notice as soon as possible and keep a copy for your records. Include in writing any of the following that apply:

- ☐ Suggestions for alternative meeting dates or times, if necessary
- ☐ A request to participate by conference call or other way if you are unable to participate in person
- ☐ A list of whom you are inviting, if anyone
 - consider inviting a friend, relative, outside professional or note taker
- ☐ A list of concerns or issues that you wish to discuss: this is your **agenda**
- ☐ A request for a copy of any proposed IEP draft, well in advance of the meeting
- ☐ Your approval or disapproval of any team member excusal request
- ☐ A note, if you plan to audio record the meeting

Be sure enough time has been scheduled for the meeting to discuss:

- Items listed on the Invitation to Conference
- Concerns or issues on your agenda

Organize!

Carefully organize your child's records/files in an order that works well for you. If you notice that you are missing an important document, ask your child's school for a copy.

Your child's records/files should include *(as appropriate for your child)*:

- ☐ Current and past IEPs
- ☐ Report cards
- ☐ Work samples
- ☐ Evaluation/assessment results
- ☐ Progress reports on academics and IEP goals
- ☐ Notes/email/phone call logs of communication about your child
- ☐ Functional Behavior Assessments (FBA)
- ☐ Behavior Intervention Plans (BIP)
- ☐ Other documents, such as Person-Centered Plan, tutor reports, behavior logs/reports, discipline referrals, medical records, therapy, treatment reports, etc.



Prepare!

As you prepare for the IEP meeting, review your child's records/files and consider the following:

1. ***What has been accomplished?***
2. ***What has worked well?***
3. ***What needs more work?***
4. ***What are my concerns? What are my child's concerns?***

- ☐ Visit ECAC's web site, www.ecac-parentcenter.org, to download or review the following tools:
 - Positive Student Profile
 - Blank IEP documents and other worksheets or forms
 - NC Policies Governing Services for Children with Disabilities
 - NC Procedural Safeguards: Handbook on Parents' Rights
 - Select the **YouTube** icon and watch ECAC's IEP videos
- ☐ Write down and prioritize a list of any questions, concerns or requests that you have.
- ☐ Create a vision statement for your child's life both now and for the future.
- ☐ Make copies or ask the school to make copies of your agenda (*those topics or issues that you want to discuss and address*).
- ☐ Gather supporting documents such as private evaluations, therapist notes, research-based fact sheets, records of past trials, etc.
- ☐ Ask your child about how things are going. What is working or not working?
- ☐ Prepare your child to participate in the meeting, if they are attending.
- ☐ Consider bringing pictures or a short video of your child to the meeting.
- ☐ Give or send a reminder note to anyone you have invited to the meeting.
- ☐ Ask the teacher(s) about your child's progress and any specific concerns or ideas they have for the upcoming year.



step TWO:

The IEP Meeting:

Participate!

It is important for every member of the IEP Team, including you, to be prepared to work together. The Team must consider and use a wide variety of data and other information, including the information you share, to create an IEP that is appropriate for your child.

The following steps will help you to effectively participate in the IEP meeting:

- ☐ Remember to bring your notes, records and any other information you need for the meeting. Don't forget a pencil/pen/paper and remember to bring your child's pictures or video if desired.
- ☐ Arrive 10-15 minutes before the meeting's start time.
- ☐ Connect with any person(s) that you invited before entering meeting.
- ☐ Request introductions, if necessary, and clarify everyone's role at the meeting.
- ☐ Ask who is responsible for taking the meeting notes or minutes. *Review notes periodically during the meeting to ensure that they are clear, accurate and have adequate detail.*
- ☐ Review the IEP meeting agenda.
- ☐ Give copies of your agenda (*if you made one*) to each team member.
- ☐ Share your ideas, opinions and feelings throughout the meeting.
- ☐ Listen carefully to what is being said.
- ☐ If something is not clear, ask questions as needed to be sure you fully understand before moving forward.
- ☐ Request a brief break if you need one.

Remember that YOU are the expert on your child!

Fifteen minutes before the meeting ends:

- ☐ Review the meeting minutes and the Prior Written Notice for accuracy. (form DEC5)
- ☐ Check to see if all your concerns have been addressed.
- ☐ Make sure that the wording throughout the IEP is clear and specific enough to be understood by anyone – even if they were not present at the meeting!!
- ☐ Schedule another IEP meeting if there is an unresolved issue or if you ran out of time.
- ☐ Identify who is responsible for each part of the IEP and any follow-up activity.
- ☐ Sign the IEP. Your signature documents your **attendance and participation** in developing the IEP.
- ☐ If you disagree with any part of the IEP, state your concern(s) in writing on the IEP form next to your signature or in the margin.
- ☐ Thank the other team members for their participation, efforts and ideas for your child.

IMPORTANT NOTE: You are entitled to a copy of your child's completed IEP. If it is not offered to you, ask for a copy before leaving. Be sure to take it with you even if a cleaned-up copy will be sent.

You may also receive copies of other special education related documents at the end of the meeting. Once home and while the meeting is still fresh in your memory, take time to review everything. Contact the school in writing if any clarifications or corrections are needed. As always, keep these documents with your child's other records!

step

THREE:

After The IEP Meeting:

Follow Up!

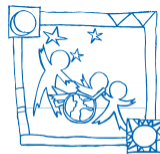
Congratulations, you have completed an important step in your child's education. This is a great time to reflect on your IEP meeting experience and to make some notes about how to improve this process for the next meeting.

- ☐ Write **"Thank You"** notes or letters to those you invited and other team members.
- ☐ Write letters of clarification to address any concerns, questions, overlooked areas, etc., if needed.
- ☐ Consider sharing a copy of the IEP with other professionals working with your child.
- ☐ Ensure ALL of your child's teachers are aware that the IEP has been updated.

Remember...

the end of the IEP meeting is the beginning of an appropriate education for your child. Stay connected throughout the year:

- ☐ **MONITOR** your child's education to ensure proper implementation of the IEP and to ensure that your child is making adequate progress.
- ☐ **COMMUNICATE** with your child's teachers and others. Share successes and address any issues as they arise.
- ☐ **MAKE TIME** to review the IEP periodically and request an IEP meeting to discuss changes if needed.
- ☐ **CONTACT ECAC** at 1-800-962-6817 or visit www.ecac-parentcenter.org



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exceptional children's
assistance center

Empowering Families • Improving Lives

**ECAC is home to North Carolina's Statewide
Parent Training and Information Center (PTI)**

All services are provided at no cost to parents, students and families.

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Revised
January
2013

Working With Your Child's Teachers

Parent Checklist

It is important to have a positive relationship with your child's teacher. Effective and positive communication is key in building a partnership to help your child succeed.

Working with Teachers / School	Already do this!	I'll try it!
I talk to my child's teachers about his/her work, and tell them what they need to know about my child.		
If I don't understand what is going on at school, I contact the teacher.		
If my child is concerned about school issues, I talk to my child and to the teacher to find out what is happening.		
I try to show my child's teachers respect, and work with them on my child's behalf.		
I find out everything I can about the school my child attends.		
If possible, I attend PTA or PTO meetings.		
If I notice my child is having trouble in a subject I will talk with my child's teacher and find out how I can help.		
I meet the teacher early in the year before any problems arise.		
If the teacher has been especially helpful and cooperative I send a thank you note and pass the compliment on to the principal.		
I mark important dates on my calendar.		
I keep and organize school records relevant to my child's IEP.		
I prepare for and attend parent/ teacher conferences, Individualized Educational Plan meetings or other individualized school meetings.		
I have a communication system with my child's teacher (For example: communication notebook, daily / weekly folder, contact information scheduled, etc).		

Adapted from Literacy Resource Kit for Parents: Families Helping children Become Better Readers. Tennessee State Improvement Grant and Pages Ahead Literacy Program, www.pageahead.org

Exceptional Children's Assistance Center (ECAC)

907 Barra Row, Suites 102/103 • Davidson, NC 28036 • (704) 892-1321

Parent Information Line: 1--800-962-6817 • www.ecac-parentcenter.org

SCHOOL INFORMATION

(KINDERGARTEN THROUGH TRANSITION YEARS)

Preschool

School:	Address:
Principal:	Principal Phone:
Teacher/ Aide/ Inclusion Specialist:	Teacher/ Aide/ Inclusion Specialist Phone:
ST/PT/OT Name:	ST/PT/OT Phone:
Other:	

Preschool

School:	Address:
Principal:	Principal Phone:
Teacher/ Aide/ Inclusion Specialist:	Teacher/ Aide/ Inclusion Specialist Phone:
ST/PT/OT Name:	ST/PT/OT Phone:
Other:	

Kindergarten

School:	Address:
Principal:	Principal Phone:
Teacher/ Aide/ Inclusion Specialist:	Teacher/ Aide/ Inclusion Specialist Phone:
ST/PT/OT Name:	ST/PT/OT Phone:
Other:	

1st Grade

School:	Address:
Principal:	Principal Phone:
Teacher/ Aide/ Inclusion Specialist:	Teacher/ Aide/ Inclusion Specialist Phone:
ST/PT/OT Name:	ST/PT/OT Phone:
Other:	

2nd Grade

School:	Address:
Principal:	Principal Phone:
Teacher/ Aide/ Inclusion Specialist:	Teacher/ Aide/ Inclusion Specialist Phone:
ST/PT/OT Name:	ST/PT/OT Phone:
Other:	

3rd Grade

School:	Address:
Principal:	Principal Phone:
Teacher/ Aide/ Inclusion Specialist:	Teacher/ Aide/ Inclusion Specialist Phone:
ST/PT/OT Name:	ST/PT/OT Phone:
Other:	

4th Grade

School:	Address:
Principal:	Principal Phone:
Teacher/ Aide/ Inclusion Specialist:	Teacher/ Aide/ Inclusion Specialist Phone:
ST/PT/OT Name:	ST/PT/OT Phone:
Other:	

5th Grade

School:	Address:
Principal:	Principal Phone:
Teacher/ Aide/ Inclusion Specialist:	Teacher/ Aide/ Inclusion Specialist Phone:
ST/PT/OT Name:	ST/PT/OT Phone:
Other:	

6th Grade

School:	Address:
Principal:	Principal Phone:
Teacher/ Aide/ Inclusion Specialist:	Teacher/ Aide/ Inclusion Specialist Phone:
ST/PT/OT Name:	ST/PT/OT Phone:
Other:	

7th Grade

School:	Address:
Principal:	Principal Phone:
Teacher/ Aide/ Inclusion Specialist:	Teacher/ Aide/ Inclusion Specialist Phone:
ST/PT/OT Name:	ST/PT/OT Phone:
Other:	

8th Grade

School:	Address:
	Principal
Principal:	Phone:
Teacher/ Aide/ Inclusion Specialist:	Teacher/ Aide/ Inclusion Specialist Phone:
ST/PT/OT Name:	ST/PT/OT Phone:
Other:	

9th Grade

School:	Address:
	Principal
Principal:	Phone:
Teacher/ Aide/ Inclusion Specialist:	Teacher/ Aide/ Inclusion Specialist Phone:
ST/PT/OT Name:	ST/PT/OT Phone:
Other:	

10th Grade

School:	Address:
	Principal
Principal:	Phone:
Teacher/ Aide/ Inclusion Specialist:	Teacher/ Aide/ Inclusion Specialist Phone:
ST/PT/OT Name:	ST/PT/OT Phone:
Other:	

11th Grade

School:	Address:
	Principal
Principal:	Phone:
Teacher/ Aide/ Inclusion Specialist:	Teacher/ Aide/ Inclusion Specialist Phone:
ST/PT/OT Name:	ST/PT/OT Phone:
Other:	

12th Grade

School:	Address:
	Principal
Principal:	Phone:
Teacher/ Aide/ Inclusion Specialist:	Teacher/ Aide/ Inclusion Specialist Phone:
ST/PT/OT Name:	ST/PT/OT Phone:
Other:	

Transition Year

School:	Address:
	Principal
Principal:	Phone:
	Teacher/ Aide/ Inclusion

Teacher/ Aide/ Inclusion Specialist:	Specialist Phone:
ST/PT/OT Name:	ST/PT/OT Phone:
Other:	
Transition Year	
School:	Address:
Principal:	Principal Phone:
Teacher/ Aide/ Inclusion Specialist:	Teacher/ Aide/ Inclusion Specialist Phone:
ST/PT/OT Name:	ST/PT/OT Phone:
Other:	
Transition Year	
School:	Address:
Principal:	Principal Phone:
Teacher/ Aide/ Inclusion Specialist:	Teacher/ Aide/ Inclusion Specialist Phone:
ST/PT/OT Name:	ST/PT/OT Phone:
Other:	
Transition Year	
School:	Address:
Principal:	Principal Phone:
Teacher/ Aide/ Inclusion Specialist:	Teacher/ Aide/ Inclusion Specialist Phone:
ST/PT/OT Name:	ST/PT/OT Phone:
Other:	



NOTES TO TAKE TO THE INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLAN (IEP)

This is a form to help you prepare for the Individualized Education Program (IEP). The term IEP is used to describe the plan for your child's education and the services provided through the school system. The meeting where the plan is created is called an IEP.

What are your main concerns about your child?

What are your child's strengths?

In order to put together a plan that is tailored to your child, rather than your child's diagnosis, please describe your child.

What is your child's diagnosis or qualifying condition?

Who diagnosed your child?

Who would you like to be at your IEP?

What type of school setting and support services do you believe your child needs?

IEP ISSUES / RESOLUTION LOG

Date:

Who was contacted:

Phone #:

Description of Issue:

Resolution:

NOTES / ISSUES FOR REVIEW AT THE NEXT IEP MEETING

Date: Notes:



VISION FOR THE FUTURE FORM

Date:

Ideas for the future of my child (Employment, Housing, further education their dreams, your dreams, etc.):

Resources to make my child's dreams come true:

My Child's Individualized Education Plan (IEP)

(Insert a copy of your child's current IEP. This should include a Transition Plan at the age of 14.

*If you do not use an IEP then add your Section 504 and/or
Individualized Health Plan (IHP) plan to this section)*

A Quick Summary of Transition

Life is full of transitions, and one of the more remarkable ones occurs when we get ready to leave high school and go out in the world as young adults. When the student has a disability, it's especially helpful to plan ahead for that transition.

- Transition services are intended to prepare students to move from the world of school to the world of adulthood.
- Transition planning begins during high school at the latest.
- The Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) requires that transition planning start by the time the student reaches age 16.
- Transition planning may start earlier (when the student is younger than 16) if the IEP team decides it would be appropriate to do so.
- Transition planning takes place as part of developing the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP).
- The IEP team (which includes the student and the parents) develops the transition plan.
- The student must be invited to any IEP meeting where postsecondary goals and transition services needed to reach those goals will be considered. This is particularly important starting at the age of 14 so the child can be a part of the process. Of course, parent participation should continue even as the child gets older.
- In transition planning, the IEP team considers areas such as postsecondary education or vocational training, employment, independent living, and community participation.
- Transition services must be a coordinated set of activities oriented toward producing results.
- Transition services are based on the student's needs and must take into account his or her preferences and interests.