

Section 3

Team Meeting

School District Name:
 School District Address:
 School District Contact Person/Phone #:

Special Education Eligibility/Initial and Reevaluation Determination

Student Name: _____ DOB: _____ ID#: _____ Date: _____

A. Proceed through the flowchart until an eligibility determination is reached..

1. Does the student have one or more of the following types of disability?

- Autism
- Developmental delay
- Intellectual
- Sensory:Hearing, Vision, Deaf-Blind
- Neurological
- Emotional
- Communication
- Physical
- Specific Learning
- Health

no ☐ Student is not eligible for Special Education but may be eligible for other services in other programs.

yes ☐ If yes, indicate disability type(s):

2. a) is the student making effective progress in school?
 (For reevaluations: Would the student continue to make progress in school without the provided special education services?)

yes ☐ Student is not eligible for Special Education but may be eligible for accommodation(s) for disability(ies) under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act or may be eligible for other services in other programs.

no ☐ 2. b) is the lack of progress a result of the student's disability?

yes ☐ 2. c) does the student require specially designed instruction in order to make effective progress in school or does the student require related services in order to access the general curriculum?

yes ☐ THE STUDENT IS ELIGIBLE FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION.

B. Answer this question for all students.

Is parent satisfied with school evaluation?

Continue forward as previously discussed.

Discuss Extended Evaluation and rights to an Independent Educational Evaluation.

KEY EVALUATION FINDINGS
AND/OR NEXT STEPS

DISABILITY DEFINITIONS

<p>Autism:</p> <p>A developmental disability significantly affecting verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction. The term shall have the meaning given it in federal law at 34 CFR 300.7.</p>	<p>Key words from the state and federal definitions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A developmental disability significantly affecting verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction • generally evident before age 3 . . . • adversely affects. . . educational performance • engagement in repetitive activities and stereotyped movements • resistance to environmental change or change in daily routines, and • unusual responses to sensory experiences
<p>Developmental Delay:</p> <p>The learning capacity of a young child (3-9 years old) is significantly limited, impaired, or delayed and is exhibited by difficulties in one or more of the following areas: receptive and/or expressive language; cognitive abilities; physical functioning; social, emotional, or adaptive functioning; and/or self-help skills.</p>	<p>Key words:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3-9 years old • Learning capacity significantly limited, impaired, or delayed • Difficulties in one or more areas
<p>Intellectual Impairment: The permanent capacity for performing cognitive tasks, functions, or problem solving is significantly limited or impaired and is exhibited by more than one of the following: a slower rate of learning; disorganized patterns of learning; difficulty with adaptive behavior; and/or difficulty understanding abstract concepts. Such term shall include students with mental retardation.</p>	<p>Key words:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • permanent capacity for performing cognitive tasks • is significantly limited or impaired • shall include students with mental retardation
<p>Sensory Impairment: Hearing - The capacity to hear, with amplification, is limited, impaired, or absent and results in one or more of the following: reduced performance in hearing acuity tasks; difficulty with oral communication; and/or difficulty in understanding auditorally-presented information in the education environment. The term includes students who are deaf and students who are hard-of-hearing.</p>	<p>Key words:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • capacity to hear with amplification • limited, impaired, or absent • reduced performance in hearing acuity • difficulty with oral communication • difficulty understanding auditorally-presented information
<p>Sensory Impairment: Vision - The capacity to see, after correction, is limited, impaired, or absent and results in one or more of the following: reduced performance in visual acuity tasks; difficulty with written communication; and/or difficulty with understanding information presented visually in the education environment. The term includes students who are blind and students with limited vision.</p>	<p>Key words:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • capacity to see, after correction • limited, impaired, or absent • reduced performance in visual acuity • difficulty with written communication • difficulty with understanding information presented visually
<p>Sensory Impairment: Deaf-Blind - Concomitant hearing and visual impairments, the combination of which causes severe communication and other developmental and educational needs.</p>	<p>Key words:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • concomitant hearing and visual impairments • severe communication and other developmental and education needs

<p>Neurological Impairment: The capacity of the nervous system is limited or impaired with difficulties exhibited in one or more of the following areas: the use of memory, the control and use of cognitive functioning, sensory and motor skills, speech, language, organizational skills, information processing, affect, social skills, or basic life functions. The term includes students who have received a traumatic brain injury.</p>	<p>Key words</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • capacity of the nervous system is limited or impaired • includes traumatic brain injury <p>Note: The MA definition of neurological impairment is more inclusive than the federal definition, which is limited to students with traumatic brain injury.</p>
<p>Emotional Impairment: As defined under federal law at 34 CFR §300.7, the student exhibits one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree that adversely affects educational performance: an inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors; an inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers; inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances; a general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression; or a tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems. The determination of disability shall not be made solely because the student's behavior violates the school's discipline code, because the student is involved with a state court or social service agency, or because the student is socially maladjusted, unless the Team determines that the student has a serious emotional disturbance.</p>	<p>Note: The federal definition uses the terminology "serious emotional disturbance". State statutory requirements require that the term "emotional impairment" be considered synonymous with the term "serious emotional disturbance".</p> <p>Key words in both state & federal definitions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • long period of time and to a marked degree • adversely affects educational performance • inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances • not solely behavior • not solely court or social service involvement • not solely social maladjustment <p>This regulatory definition is by no means exhaustive in its listing of possible characteristics of an emotional impairment. Readers are reminded that many other sources of evidence of emotional impairment may affect educational progress.</p>
<p>Communication Impairment The capacity to use expressive and/or receptive language is significantly limited, impaired, or delayed and is exhibited by difficulties in one or more of the following areas: speech, such as articulation and/or voice; conveying, understanding, or using spoken, written, or symbolic language. The term may include a student with impaired articulation, stuttering, language impairment, or voice impairment if such impairment adversely affects the student's educational performance.</p>	<p>Key words:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use of expressive and/or receptive language is significantly limited, impaired, or delayed • adversely affects educational performance <p>The regulatory definition is not exhaustive in its listing of communication areas that may be affected.</p>
<p>Physical Impairment: The physical capacity to move, coordinate actions, or perform physical activities is significantly limited, impaired, or delayed and is exhibited by difficulties in one or more of the following areas: physical and motor tasks; independent movement; performing basic life functions. The term shall include severe orthopedic impairments or impairments caused by congenital anomaly, cerebral palsy, amputations, and fractures if such impairment adversely affects a student's educational performance.</p>	<p>Key words:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • physical capacity to move, coordinate actions, or perform physical activities. • Significantly limited, impaired, or delayed • adversely affects educational performance <p>The regulatory definition is by no means exhaustive in its listing of physical impairments. Readers are reminded that <u>many</u> other physical impairments may affect educational progress.</p>

<p>Health Impairment: A chronic or acute health problem such that the physiological capacity to function is significantly limited or impaired and results in one or more of the following: limited strength, vitality or alertness including a heightened alertness to environmental stimuli resulting in limited alertness with respect to the educational environment. The term shall include health impairments due to asthma, attention deficit disorder or attention deficit with hyperactivity disorder, diabetes, epilepsy, a heart condition, hemophilia, lead poisoning, leukemia, nephritis, rheumatic fever, and sickle cell anemia, if such health impairment adversely affects a student's educational performance.</p>	<p>Key words:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • chronic or acute • capacity to function is significantly limited • resulting in limited alertness with respect to the educational environment <p>The regulatory definition is by no means exhaustive in its listing of health impairments. Readers are reminded that <u>many</u> other health impairments may affect educational progress.</p>
<p>Specific Learning Disability: The term means a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations, including conditions such as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia. Use of the term shall meet all federal requirements given in federal law at 34 C.F.R. §§300.7 (c)(10) and 300.541.</p>	<p>Comments: Use of the term "an imperfect ability" must be considered in the context of other federal language, which provides guidance that such term may be considered to mean "seriously compromised".</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 34 CFR 300.541 includes an assessment of whether the student was provided with learning opportunities appropriate to the age of the student and directs the Team to look for a severe discrepancy between achievement and intellectual ability. (See also Table SA)

MAKING AN ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION

The Eligibility Flowchart reviews the full process of making a determination of eligibility or ineligibility. The Ipswich Public Schools special education teams use both this flowchart and the Disability Definitions (both found on preceding pages) at Eligibility Determination meetings to guide all participants in decision-making.

As previously indicated, the Team makes assessment information available to parents two days in advance of the meeting. This allows time for the family to review the evaluations and note any questions they would like clarified. The descriptions below are modified from an excellent Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) resource, *“Is Special Education the Right Service?”*

On the flowchart, Question #1 asks, **“Does the student have one or more of the following types of disability?”** The assessment information gathered through the required assessment in the area of suspected disability will help the Team to answer this. The Team must indicate the type of disability.

The Team must identify the disability category that best represents the student’s difficulties. The Team may identify one disability as being primary and other disabilities as being secondary or tertiary.

A disabling condition is characterized by significant delays, impairment, or limitations in the student’s capacities. In making a disability determination, the Team considers all of the following indices of limited, impaired, or delayed capacity:

- A pattern of difficulty that persists beyond age expectations;
- A pattern of difficulty across settings;
- A pattern of difficulty that is not solely the result of cultural, language, or socio-economic differences;
- A pattern of difficulty that persists despite instructional support activities.

Although identifying a disability category is a similar process to that of making a diagnosis, state and federal guidelines caution that the Team is not diagnosing, but simply determining that the student be considered eligible because the assessed characteristics of the student are consistent with the regulatory definition of the disability. This may sometimes differ significantly from a clinical definition. For example, even though medical personnel may use the term “dyslexia”, there is no such disability category under the regulations. The Team may determine that, based on a medical diagnosis in combinations with the Team’s own evaluations and observations, the student meets the criteria for “Specific Learning Disability”. The team is cautioned to focus on the educational impact of this clinical diagnosis. Diagnoses from the DSM-V or medical environment may have contributory relevance to a Team’s designation of a disability, but they cannot be the sole determinant of eligibility.

Guidance from MA DESE is very clear that, although a Team may use a diagnosis made available to them, it is not the responsibility of the Team to confirm or deny a diagnosis made by an assessor. Additionally, parents and school Team members are cautioned that although medical personnel may make contributions to the Team by providing reports or recommendations, the following holds true:

Special education law explicitly requires that a Team of people, including educators and the parent(s) make a determination of eligibility. Although medical personnel may be members of a Team, they cannot be the only voice of the Team since a determination of eligibility for special education is an educational decision and not a medical one. (Is Special Education the Right Service? 19)

The Team makes the disability identification within the context of the educational impact of the disability. The Team examines whether the student is unable to progress effectively in general education, and if the disability alone or in conjunction with other factors explains why the student is unable to make effective progress.

In Three Year Re-Evaluations, the Team must make a continued eligibility determination, deciding whether the student continues to have a disability that has educational impact. In cases where the student was initially found eligible under the disability category, "Developmental Delay" and is currently or within a year of becoming 9 years old, the Team must determine if the student has a disability in this category.

Question #2 on the flowchart asks, **"Is the student making effective progress in school?"** According to the regulations, progressing effectively entails making documented growth in the acquisition of knowledge and skills including social/emotional development within the general education programs, with or without accommodations, according to chronological age and developmental expectations, the individual educational potential of the child, and the learning standard set forth in the MA Curriculum Frameworks and the curriculum of the District.

DESE guidance concerning this standard emphasizes that the definition combines both individual factors (educational potential of the student) and more standardized factors (chronological age, developmental expectations, Curriculum Frameworks learning standards). The law requires that the Team use both academic and non-academic information about the student to determine if the student's participation in the school life is evidence of effective progress.

The next few pages represent DESE guidance regarding specific disabilities for Teams to consider in eligibility determination.

INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM

Once a Team has determined that the student has a disability and is unable to make effective progress in the classroom without specialized instruction, the Team works to develop the Individual Educational Program (IEP). The Program Manager running the meeting will institute a variety of strategies for ensuring the input of all participants. Three main tasks that the IEP must accomplish include determining the following:

- What will be done to help the student make effective progress in the curriculum and other school-related areas? This will involve setting measurable goals and determining services necessary to attain those goals.
- How will the student participate in local and state assessment? This may involve accommodations and modifications.
- What measurable goals and benchmarks (based on the evaluative data) is the student expected to achieve by the end of the IEP period? How will we know when the student has achieved them?

The Team will agree as a group on the broad goal areas and the evaluators will make recommendations for service delivery based on the intensity of need. It is highly unlikely and not feasible that the IEP will be written as a group effort. Rather, the Program Manager as the meeting facilitator, will take care to ensure that there is time for parents and/or the student (if he/she is 14 years of age or older) to indicate their "Parent and Student Concerns" and for the Team as a group to articulate their Vision Statement (what outcomes the group envisions for the student that are reasonably accomplished within the next one to five years).

SPECIAL EDUCATION TEAM

The term "Special Education Team" or "Team" has been referenced many times. It is important to note that the Team represents a collaboration of home and school. The Special Education Team is comprised of individuals who work with and know the student, and who develop, revise, and review the IEP. Every student evaluated for special education services has a Team who must determine whether the student is eligible for services and, when eligible, what services should be provided.

By law, the Team is comprised of the following:

- The student if he/she is age 14 or older
- The parent(s), guardians, or educational surrogates
- At least one general education teacher
- A special education teacher
- Related service providers as appropriate to the areas of suspected disability
- A school professional with the authority to commit District resources, who will facilitate the meeting. This is usually the special education Program Manager in the school.
- A representative of any agencies responsible for transition services
- Others who the parents or District wish to invite

The members of the Team invited to the meeting are listed on the Meeting Invitation. If, on the day of the meeting, a Team member is unavailable, the Program Manager will seek written permission in the form of a Meeting Excusal, indicating willingness to carry on the meeting without the member being present. Similarly, if the parents indicate that they do not wish the student to attend the meeting, they will be asked to similarly sign the Meeting Excusal.

LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT

The Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) is a fundamental principle of special education law. All students have the right to access the high expectations of the general education environment to the degree that their disabilities permit. The LRE is the environment where a student with disabilities can receive the Free and Appropriate Education (FAPE) designed to meet his or her unique individual needs while still being educated with non-disabled peers.

- LRE is designed to ensure that students with disabilities are educated with non-disabled peers to the extent appropriate given the students' disabilities. Students have the right to be educated in the Least Restrictive Environment.
- LRE means that, to the maximum extent appropriate, students with disabilities have the right to be educated in the general education environment and in the classroom they would have attended if they did not have disabilities.
- LRE means the student cannot be removed from the general education classroom solely because of the needed curriculum modifications.
- LRE means that removal from the general education program occurs only if the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in general education classes with special education services cannot be satisfactorily achieved.

School District Name:
School District Address:
School District Contact Person/Phone #:

Administrative Data Sheet

STUDENT INFORMATION:

Full Name: _____ School ID#: _____ SASID: _____
Birth Date: _____ Place of Birth: _____ Age: _____ Grade/Level: _____
Primary Language: _____ Language of Instruction: _____
Address: _____ Sex: ☐ Male ☐ Female
Home Telephone: _____
If 18 or older: ☐ Acting on Own Behalf ☐ Court Appointed Guardian: _____
☐ Shared Decision-Making ☐ Delegate Decision-Making

PARENT/GUARDIAN INFORMATION:

Name: _____ Relationship to Student: _____
Address: _____
Home Telephone: _____ Other Telephone: _____
Primary Language of parent/guardian: _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN INFORMATION:

Name: _____ Relationship to Student: _____
Address: _____
Home Telephone: _____ Other Telephone: _____
Primary Language of parent/guardian: _____

MEETING INFORMATION:

Date of Meeting: _____ Type of Meeting: _____
Next Scheduled Annual Review Meeting: _____ Next Scheduled Three Year Reevaluation Meeting: _____

ASSIGNED SCHOOL INFORMATION: (Complete after a placement has been made.)

School Name: _____ Telephone: _____
Address: _____
Contact Person: _____ Role: _____ Telephone: _____
Cost-Shared Placement: ☐ No ☐ Yes If yes, specify agency: _____

After a meeting, attach to an IEP, an IEP Amendment or an Extended Evaluation Form.

School District Name:

School District Address:

School District Contact Person/Phone #:

Individualized Education Program

IEP Dates: from _____ to _____

Student Name: _____ DOB: _____ ID#: _____ Grade/Level: _____

Parent and/or Student Concerns

What concern(s) does the parent and/or student want to see addressed in this IEP to enhance the student's education?

Student Strengths and Key Evaluation Results Summary

What are the student's educational strengths, interest areas, significant personal attributes and personal accomplishments?
What is the student's type of disability(ies), general education performance
including MCAS/district test results, achievement towards goals and lack of expected progress, if any?

Vision Statement: What is the vision for this student?

Consider the next 1 to 5 year period when developing this statement. Beginning no later than age 14,
the statement should be based on the student's preferences and interest,
and should include desired outcomes in adult living, post-secondary and working environments.

IEP 1

Individualized Education Program

IEP Dates: from _____ to _____

Student Name: _____ DOB: _____ ID#: _____

Present Levels of Educational Performance

A: General Curriculum

Check all that apply.

- | General curriculum area(s) affected by this student's disability(ies): | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> English Language Arts | Consider the language, composition, literature (including reading) and media strands. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> History and Social Sciences | Consider the history, geography, economic and civics and government strands. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Science and Technology | Consider the inquiry, domains of science, technology and science, technology and human affairs strand. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mathematics | Consider the number sense, patterns, relations and functions, geometry and measurement and statistics and probability strands. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other Curriculum Areas | Specify: _____ |

How does the disability(ies) affect progress in the curriculum area(s)?

What type(s) of accommodation, *if any*, is necessary for the student to make effective progress?

What type(s) of specially designed instruction, *if any*, is necessary for the student to make effective progress?

Check the necessary instructional modification(s) and describe how such modification(s) will be made.

- ☐ Content:
- ☐ Methodology/Delivery of Instruction:
- ☐ Performance Criteria:

Use multiple copies of this form as needed.

IEP 2

Individualized Education Program

IEP Dates: from _____ to _____

Student Name: _____ DOB: _____ ID#: _____

Present Levels of Educational Performance

B: Other Educational Needs

Check all that apply.

☐ Adapted physical education

☐ Braille needs (blind/visually impaired)

☐ Extra curriculum activities

☐ Social/emotional needs

☐ Other

General Considerations

☐ Assistive tech devices/services

☐ Communication (all students)

☐ Language needs (LEP students)

☐ Travel training

☐ Behavior

☐ Communication (deaf/hard of hearing students)

☐ Nonacademic activities

☐ Skill development related to vocational preparation or experience

Age-Specific Considerations

☐ For children ages 3 to 5 — participation in appropriate activities

☐ For children ages 14* (or younger if appropriate) — student's course of study

☐ For children ages 16 (or younger if appropriate) to 22 — transition to post-school activities including community experiences, employment objectives, other post school adult living and, if appropriate, daily living skills

How does the disability(ies) affect progress in the indicated area(s) of other educational needs?

What type(s) of accommodation, *if any*, is necessary for the student to make effective progress?

What type(s) of specially designed instruction, *if any*, is necessary for the student to make effective progress?

Check the necessary instructional modification(s) and describe how such modification(s) will be made.

☐ Content:

☐ Methodology/Delivery of Instruction:

☐ Performance Criteria:

Use multiple copies of this form as needed.

IEP 3

Individualized Education Program

IEP Dates: from _____ to _____

Student Name: _____ DOB: _____ ID#: _____

Current Performance Levels/Measurable Annual Goals

Goal #	Specific Goal Focus:
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Current Performance Level: What can the student currently do?

Measurable Annual Goal: What challenging, yet attainable, goal can we expect the student to meet by the end of this IEP period?
How will we know that the student has reached this goal?

Benchmark/Objectives: What will the student need to do to complete this goal?

Goal #	Specific Goal Focus:
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Current Performance Level: What can the student currently do?

Measurable Annual Goal: What challenging, yet attainable, goal can we expect the student to meet by the end of this IEP period?
How will we know that the student has reached this goal?

Benchmark/Objectives: What will the student need to do to complete this goal?

Progress Reports are required to be sent to parents at least as often as parents are informed of their nondisabled children's progress. Each progress report must describe the student's progress toward meeting each annual goal.

Use multiple copies of this form as needed.

IEP 4

Individualized Education Program

IEP Dates: from _____ to _____

Student Name: _____ DOB: _____ ID#: _____

Service Delivery

What are the total service delivery needs of this student?

Include services, related services, program modifications and supports (including positive behavioral supports, school personnel and/or parent training/supports). Services should assist the student in reaching IEP goals, to be involved and progress in the general curriculum, to participate in extracurricular/nonacademic activities and to allow the student to participate with nondisabled students while working towards IEP goals.

School District Cycle: ☐ 5 day cycle ☐ 6 day cycle ☐ 10 day cycle ☐ other: _____

A. Consultation (Indirect Services to School Personnel and Parents)

Focus on Goal #	Type of Service	Type of Personnel	Frequency and Duration/Per Cycle	Start Date	End Date

B. Special Education and Related Services in General Education Classroom (Direct Service)

Focus on Goal #	Type of Service	Type of Personnel	Frequency and Duration/Per Cycle	Start Date	End Date

C. Special Education and Related Services in Other Settings (Direct Service)

Focus on Goal #	Type of Service	Type of Personnel	Frequency and Duration/Per Cycle	Start Date	End Date

Use multiple copies of this form as needed.

IEP 5

Individualized Education Program

IEP Dates: from _____ to _____

Student Name: _____ DOB: _____ ID#: _____

Nonparticipation Justification

Is the student removed from the general education classroom at any time? (Refer to IEP 5—Service Delivery, Section C.)

☐ No ☐ Yes If yes, why is removal considered critical to the student's program?

IDEA 2004 Regulation 20 U.S.C. §612 (a) (5).550: "... removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs **only when** the nature or severity of the disability of a child is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily." (Emphasis added.)

Schedule Modification

Shorter: Does this student require a *shorter school day* or *shorter school year*?

☐ No ☐ Yes — shorter day ☐ Yes — shorter year If yes, answer the questions below.

Longer: Does this student require a longer school day or a longer school year to prevent substantial loss of previously learned skills and / or substantial difficulty in relearning skills?

☐ No ☐ Yes — longer day ☐ Yes — longer year If yes, answer the questions below.

How will the student's schedule be modified? Why is this schedule modification being recommended?

If a longer day or year is recommended, how will the school district coordinate services across program components?

Transportation Services

Does the student require transportation as a result of the disability(ies)?

☐ No Regular transportation will be provided in the same manner as it would be provided for students without disabilities. If the child is placed away from the local school, transportation will be provided.

☐ Yes Special transportation will be provided in the following manner:

☐ on a regular transportation vehicle with the following modifications and/or specialized equipment and precautions:

☐ on a special transportation vehicle with the following modifications and/or specialized equipment and precautions:

After the team makes a transportation decision and after a placement decision has been made, a parent may choose to provide transportation and may be eligible for reimbursement under certain circumstances. Any parent who plans to transport their child to school should notify the school district contact person.

IEP 6

Individualized Education Program

IEP Dates: from _____ to _____

Student Name: _____ DOB: _____ ID#: _____

State or District-Wide Assessment

Identify state or district-wide assessments planned during this IEP period:

Fill out the table below. Consider any state or district-wide assessment to be administered during the time span covered by this IEP. For each content area, identify the student's assessment participation status by putting an "X" in the corresponding box for column 1, 2, or 3.

1. Assessment participation:
Student participates in
on-demand testing under routine
conditions in this content area.

2. Assessment participation:
Student participates in
on-demand testing with
accommodations in this content
area. (See ❶ below)

3. Assessment participation:
Student participates in alternate
assessment in this content area.
(See ❷ below)

CONTENT AREAS	COLUMN 1	COLUMN 2	COLUMN 3
English Language Arts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
History and Social Sciences	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mathematics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Science and Technology	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reading	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

❶ For each content area identified by an X in the column 2 above: note in the space below, the content area and describe the accommodations necessary for participation in the on-demand testing. Any accommodations used for assessment purposes should be closely modeled on the accommodations that are provided to the student as part of his/her instructional program.

❷ For each content area identified by an X in column 3 above: note in the space below, the content area, why the on-demand assessment is not appropriate and how that content area will be alternately assessed. Make sure to include the learning standards that will be addressed in each content area, the recommended assessment method(s) and the recommended evaluation and reporting method(s) for the student's performance on the alternate assessment.

NOTE

When state model(s) for alternate assessment are adopted, the district may enter use of state model(s) for how content area(s) will be assessed.

Individualized Education Program

IEP Dates: from _____ to _____

Student Name: _____ DOB: _____ ID#: _____

Additional Information

- ☐ Include the following transition information: the anticipated graduation date; a statement of interagency responsibilities or needed linkages; the discussion of transfer of rights at least one year before age of majority; and a recommendation for Chapter 688 Referral.
- ☐ Document efforts to obtain participation if a parent and if student did not attend meeting or provide input.
- ☐ Record other relevant IEP information not previously stated.

Response Section

School Assurance

I certify that the goals in this IEP are those recommended by the Team and that the indicated services will be provided.

Signature and Role of LEA Representative

Date

Parent Options / Responses

It is important that the district knows your decision as soon as possible. Please indicate your response by checking at least one (1) box and returning a signed copy to the district. Thank you.

- ☐ I accept the IEP as developed.
- ☐ I reject the IEP as developed.
- ☐ I reject the following portions of the IEP with the understanding that any portion(s) that I do not reject will be considered accepted and implemented immediately. Rejected portions are as follows:

- ☐ I request a meeting to discuss the rejected IEP or rejected portion(s).

Signature of Parent, Guardian, Educational Surrogate Parent, Student 18 and Over*

Date

**Required signature once a student reaches 18 unless there is a court appointed guardian.*

Parent Comment: I would like to make the following comment(s) but realize any comment(s) made that suggest changes to the proposed IEP will not be implemented unless the IEP is amended.

IEP 8

School District Contact Person/Phone #:

Amendment will be attached to IEP dated: from _____ to _____

Student Name: _____ DOB: _____ ID#: _____ Grade/Level: _____

What change(s) will be made to the existing IEP?	Why?

Page of

Individualized Education Program Amendment

Attached to IEP Dated: from _____ to _____

Student Name: _____ DOB: _____ ID#: _____

Additional Information

Response Section

School Assurance

I certify that the changes in this amendment are those recommended by the Team and that the indicated services will be provided.

Signature and Role of LEA Representative

Date

Parent Options / Responses

It is important that the district knows your decision as soon as possible. Please indicate your response by checking at least one (1) box and returning a signed copy to the district. Thank you.

- ☐ I accept the IEP amendment. ☐ I reject the IEP amendment.
- ☐ I reject the following portions of the IEP amendment with the understanding that any portion(s) that I do not reject will be considered accepted and implemented immediately. Rejected portions are as follows:

- ☐ I request a meeting to discuss the rejected IEP amendment or rejected portion(s).

Signature of Parent, Guardian, Educational Surrogate Parent, Student 18 and Over*

Date

**Required signature once a student reaches 18 unless there is a court appointed guardian.*

Parent Comment: I would like to make the following comment(s) but realize any comment(s) made that suggest changes to the proposed IEP amendment will not be implemented unless the IEP or IEP amendment is changed.

Educational Environment / Placement – PL2: 3-5 year olds

(For school district record keeping only)

District:	School:		
Student:	SASID:	IEP Dates:	To:

FOR DATA COLLECTION PURPOSES ONLY – STUDENT INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (SIMS)

Clearly indicate the final DOE code that corresponds with the student's placement

Is the child with an IEP attending an inclusive early childhood program*?

YES

If YES: How many hours does the child attend an inclusive early childhood program?

10 or more hours/week

Where are the IEP services delivered?

IEP services provided in inclusive setting majority of the time (> 50%)

 (DOE032=31) ☐

IEP services provided in inclusive setting 0 to 50% of time (e.g. special education service provided in another location)

 (DOE032= 30) ☐

Less than 10 hours/week

Where are the IEP services delivered?

IEP services provided in inclusive setting majority of the time (> 50%)

 (DOE032=34) ☐

IEP services provided in inclusive setting 0 to 50% of the time (e.g. special education service provided in another location)

 (DOE032=32) ☐

NO

If NO: Does the child attend a program exclusively serving children with disabilities, in order to receive IEP services?

If YES, What is the location where IEP services are provided? Please only check one box.

Substantially Separate Classroom

☐ (DOE032=36)

Public Separate Day Program

☐ (DOE032=38)

Private Separate Day Program

☐ (DOE032=42)

Residential School

☐ (DOE032=44)

Institutional Facility

☐ (DOE032=45)

If NO, What is the location where IEP services are provided?

Home

☐ (DOE032=46)

Service Provider Location or some other location not in any other category

☐ (DOE032=48)

***Definition of Inclusive Early Childhood Program**
 An **inclusive early childhood program** is defined as a program that includes a majority (at least 50%) of children not on IEPs. This may include, but is not limited to a public preschool class, a public kindergarten class, a private preschool or kindergarten, Head Start, or other child care programs, such as a family child care program, nursery school or center-based child care program.

Educational Environment / Placement – PL2: 6-21 year olds

(For school district record keeping only)

District:

School:

Student:

SASID:

IEP Dates:

To:

SPECIAL EDUCATION SUMMARY DATA

DOE034

Educational Environment for Students Age 6-21

6-21 Year Olds ONLY:

01-Not currently a special education student age 6-21, but was previously a special education student during the current school year

10-Full Inclusion – special education services outside the general education classroom less than 21% of the time

20-Partial Inclusion – special education services outside the general education classroom 21% to 60% of the time

40-Substantially Separate Classroom – special education services outside the general education classroom more than 60% of the time

41-Public Separate Day School

50-Private Separate Day School

60-Residential School

70-Homebound/Hospital

90-Public Residential Institutional Facilities (DMH and DPH = 0370XXXX schools; DYS = 09200300; County House or Dept. of Corrections = 09200500)

For the purpose of this exercise, the total hours per week = 28 hours. This may not necessarily reflect the true hours in a school week.

Case Studies to Assist in Determining Correct Corresponding Educational Environments for DOE034

SCENARIO	DETERMINATION	CORRECT PLACEMENT
Seven year-old Maria spends most of her day in a general education classroom but is removed from the general education classroom for speech therapy and special education services for a total of two hours per day.	2 hours per day X 5 days = 10 hours special education outside the general education setting 10 hours / 28 total hours per week X 100 = 35.7% outside the general education classroom	20-Partial Inclusion special education services outside the general education classroom 21% to 60% of the time
For the entire school day, fourteen year-old Stacy is in a collaborative program located in a building outside the general education environment that provides educational services primarily to students with disabilities.	Stacy does not attend her local public school, but rather attends a public collaborative program in a separate school. She is there during the day and does not spend the night. She receives all her special education services in this school.	41-Public Separate Day School
The district placed Pat at a Massachusetts Approved Private Special Education school. Though still attending this school for half of each day, he is now transitioning back to his local high school where he participates in two general education classes and one special education life skills class.	Pat's placement is at the Massachusetts Approved Private Special Education school. Even though he attends his local high school and is in the general education environment while there, his primary placement is the private separate school.	50-Private Separate Day School
Eight year-old Raymond is a home-schooled student who is provided 4 hours per week of one-to-one occupational therapy.	4 hours receiving special education services outside the general education / 28 total hours X 100 = 14.3% outside general education	10-Full Inclusion special education services outside the general education classroom less than 21% of the time
17 year-old Tamara receives all of her core academics in a special education classroom. She participates in one elective course with her non-disabled peers for one-hour each day.	28 total hours minus 5 hours a week in general education = 23 hours receiving special education outside the general education setting 23 hours receiving special education services outside the general education / 28 total hours X 100 = 82.1% outside the general education	40-Substantially Separate Classroom special education services outside the general education classroom more than 60% of the time
Robert has been attending his local high school where he is primarily in co-taught general education classes. Additionally, he receives 1-hour of special education services in a resource room each day. In November Robert was arrested and is now in a Department of Youth Services facility. He is expected to remain there for three months.	Any SIMS reporting that occurs prior to Robert's arrest in November would be calculated and reported according to his IEP. 5 hours receiving special education services outside the general education / 28 total hours X 100 = 17.9% outside general education.	10-Full Inclusion special education services outside the general education classroom less than 21% of the time
	Any SIMS reporting that occurs while Robert is in the DYS facility should be reported in a public residential institutional facility.	90-Public Residential Institutional Facilities Department of Youth Services SIMS school code = 09200300

School District Letterhead

To:

[Name of Parent, Guardian, Educational Surrogate Parent, Student 18 and over]

Re:

[Name of Student and other identifying information (i.e. DOB, ID#)]

Subject: **The school district proposes the following:** [Check all that apply.]

☐ An Evaluation

☐ An IEP/Amendment

☐ A Placement

☐ Other: _____ (please specify)

Notice Date:

[Date notice is to be mailed.]

The school district has recently discussed this student and, with your input, has developed a proposal. We have described our actions and our reasons for these actions on page two of this memo.

As you know, special education regulations provide protection to you and your child. You will find specific information about your legal rights within the *Notice of Procedural Safeguards*, including sources that you may contact for help in understanding your rights. This notice is enclosed for initial evaluations. You should have received your *Notice of*

Procedural Safeguards on _____ if you will be attending an IEP/Amendment or Placement meeting during this school year. We will also disseminate the notice at your request and upon disciplinary removal to an alternative education setting. You should carefully review this brochure and the enclosed material before making any decisions.

The school district staff is available to speak to you or meet with you about your rights and the school district's proposal. We strongly encourage you to call us if you have any questions. Please contact us through the district contact person listed below. Thank you.

An Evaluation Consent Form, an IEP or an IEP Amendment must be signed and returned, as we are required by law to have a signed copy on file regardless of your decision. Please return a copy as soon as possible but no later than the date listed below. Thank you.

Document Return Date:

[Date or non-applicable]

District Contact Person:

[Name and Role]

Contact Information: [Address, Telephone Number, Fax Number and Email Address (if not on letterhead)]

Enclosures:

☐ *Notice of Procedural Safeguards* [for initial evaluations, parent request or disciplinary removal]

☐ Other: [Specify: Evaluation Consent Form, Extended Evaluation Form, IEP, IEP Amendment, etc.]

Re:

[Name of Student and other necessary identifying information]

Notice Date: [Date from page 1]

Directions to School Staff:

This notice must be sent to parents in their native language or other mode of communication used by the parent. School district must ensure that parents understand the content of this notice. (Federal Regulation §300.503)

Describe one or more of the following actions: Initial Evaluation, Reevaluation, Emergency Evaluation, Extended Evaluation Period, IEP, IEP Amendment, Placement (include the specific placement location and transportation requirements, if any), Graduation or any other proposal used to initiate or change the identification, evaluation, educational placement or the provision of special education services by answering the following questions:

- 1. What action is the school district proposing to take?*
- 2. Why is the school district proposing to act?*
- 3. What rejected options were considered and why was each option rejected?*
- 4. What evaluation procedure, test, record or report was used as a basis for the proposed action?*
- 5. What other factors were relevant to the school district's decision*
- 6. What next steps, if any, are recommended?*

Narrative Description of School District Proposal

School District Name**EVALUATION CONSENT FORM
Attachment to N 1**

TYPE OF ASSESSMENTS: <i>A variety of assessment tools and strategies should be used to gather information that determines the educational needs of this student. [Check yes or no for each assessment.]</i>	RECOMMENDED	
	YES	NO
Assessment in All Areas Related to the Suspected Disability(ies) – describes the student’s performance in any area related to the child’s suspected disability(ies). List recommended assessment(s): _____ _____ _____		
Educational Assessment – includes the history of the student’s educational progress in the general curriculum and includes current information on the student’s performance.		
Observation of the Student – includes the student’s interaction in the student’s classroom environment or in a child’s natural environment or an early intervention program.		
Health Assessment – details any medical problems or constraints that may affect the student’s education.		
Psychological Assessment – describes the student’s learning capacity and learning style in relationship to social/emotional development and skills.		
Home Assessment – details any pertinent family history and home situations that may affect the student’s education and, with written consent, may include a home visit.		

PARENT RESPONSE SECTION

Please indicate your response by checking at least one (1) box and returning a signed copy to the school district. Please keep one copy for your records. Thank you.

☐ I accept the proposed evaluation in full.

☐ I reject the proposed evaluation in full.

☐ I accept the proposed evaluation in part and request that only the listed assessments be completed:

I additionally request the following assessment(s):

☐ assessment(s) listed above:

☐ other assessments: (specify)

Signature of Parent, Guardian, Educational Surrogate Parent, Student 18 and Over*

Date

**Required signature once a student reaches 18 unless there is a court appointed guardian.*

PARENT INPUT

We strongly encourage you to share your knowledge of this student with us. If you choose, please provide a written statement (use back of form) or call the indicated contact person. Thank you.

School District Letterhead

To: *[Name of Parent, Guardian, Educational Surrogate Parent, Student 18 and over]*

Re: *[Name of Student and other identifying information (i.e. DOB, ID#)]*

Subject: **The school district does not intend to act:** *[Check all that apply.]*

- ☐ Finding of No Eligibility
☐ Refusal of Requested Services
☐ Other: _____
[Please specify.]

Notice Date: *[Date notice is to be mailed.]*

The school district has recently discussed this student with you. We now write to tell you of our intention not to act on a request. We have described our reasons for refusing on page two of this memo.

As you know, special education regulations provide protection to you and your child. You will find specific information about your legal rights in the *Notice of Procedural Safeguards*, including sources that you may contact for help in understanding your rights. You should have received this brochure prior to the initial evaluation. If you would like another copy, please contact the school district staff. You should carefully review this brochure and the enclosed material.

The school district staff is available to speak to you or meet with you about your rights and the school district's refusal to act. We strongly encourage you to call us if you have any questions. Please contact us through the district contact person listed below. Thank you.

District Contact Person: *[Name and Role]*

Contact Information: *[Address, Telephone Number, Fax Number and Email Address (if not on letterhead)]*

Enclosures:

☐ Other: *[specify]*

Re: *[Name of Student and other necessary identifying information]*

Notice Date: *[Date from page 1]*

Directions to School Staff:

This notice must be sent to parents in their native language or other mode of communication used by the parent. School districts must ensure that parents understand the content of this notice. (Federal Regulation §300.503)

Describe any refusal to initiate or change the identification, evaluation, educational placement or the provision of special education services by answering the following questions:

- 1. What action is the school district refusing to take?*
 - 2. Why is the school district refusing to act?*
 - 3. What rejected options were considered and why was each option rejected?*
 - 4. What evaluation procedure, test, record or report was used as a basis for the refusal to act?*
 - 5. What other factors were relevant to the school district's decision?*
 - 6. What next steps, if any, are recommended?*
-

Narrative Description of School District Refusal To Act

School District Letterhead

To: *[Name of Parent, Guardian, Educational Surrogate Parent, Student 18 and over]*

Re: *[Name of Student and other identifying information (i.e. DOB, ID#)]*

Subject: **MEETING INVITATION**

Notice Date: *[Date notice is to be mailed.]*

You are invited to a meeting to discuss the above-named student. Your participation is essential. The purpose and details of the meeting are printed below. Other invited participants are listed on the enclosed attendance form.

It is your legal right to be present and to participate. Also, the school district values your input and hopes you will make every effort to attend this meeting.

If the suggested meeting time is inconvenient, we will set a more convenient time. Please call the listed contact person to request another meeting time. If you cannot attend, it is our responsibility to obtain your participation, if at all possible, in another way.

You may invite other individuals to attend who have knowledge or special expertise regarding this student. We request that you inform us in advance of the meeting if you plan to invite other individual(s) to join us. Again, please call the listed contact person with this information.

We look forward to working cooperatively with you on behalf of this student.

Meeting Purpose: *[Eligibility Determination, IEP Development, Placement Determination, Transition Planning or specify other purpose]*

Meeting Date/Time/Location: *[Details of Meeting Date, Time and Location]*

District Contact Person: *[Name and Role]*

Contact Information: *[Address, Telephone Number, Fax Number and Email Address (if not on letterhead)]*

Enclosure: N 3A – Attendance Sheet *[should be included in all cases]*

c: Student age 14 or older

School District Contact Person/Phone #:

IEP DEVELOPMENT

The IEP meeting can be a daunting process for parents because a great deal of information is discussed and the meeting itself may take from one to one and one half hours. For that reason, it is rare that the entire Team would write an IEP line-for-line during this meeting. Instead, the parent(s) will be given a Meeting Summary sheet. For students found eligible for services, this will identify the goal areas as well as the service delivery grid. For students who are found not eligible, the Summary Sheet will identify next steps. The Meeting Summary templates used by Ipswich Teams for various types of meetings are included in the ensuing pages.

The IEP (Individualized Educational Program) is developed based on the discussion at the Team meeting. The results of the individual evaluations are used to provide baseline information that allows the Team to detail modifications, accommodations, measurable goals, and services for the student.

The IEP includes information including the nature and extent to which the student may require environmental accommodations or modifications, and what resources are required to support learning in the general education curriculum and environment. IEP development occurs in a structured, sequential manner.

- **Present Levels of Performance** are a statement of what strengths and needs the student currently exhibits.
- **Goals** identify the knowledge and skills that the student will need to achieve by the end of the IEP year.
- Special education programs and **services** are detailed in terms of type of service, amount of time, and period of duration.
- Service **providers** are also delineated by category.

IPSWICH PUBLIC SCHOOLS
IEP MEETING SUMMARY
(Initial & Re-Evaluation)

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

School: _____ Grade: _____

Parent/Guardian Name(s): _____

IEP Liaison: _____ Telephone: _____

Person completing this form: _____

Type of Meeting (Circle one): **Initial** **Re-evaluation**

Eligibility Determination: Disability (ies) _____

Effective Progress: **Yes or NO**

Major Goal Areas: _____

Discussed Bullying/Harassment:

1. Does the Team believe the student could potentially become a target? _____
2. Is the student able to identify bullying attempts? _____
3. Does the student engage in behavior that might be identified as bullying? _____
4. Is the student able to conform to the school's code of conduct relative to bullying prevention? _____
5. Is the student able to access the general education curriculum, including the bullying prevention curriculum? _____

Special Considerations for ASD: **Yes or No**

Notes: _____

Service Delivery Grid (attached): **Yes or No**

A-Indirect Services **B**-Direct Services in General Education Setting **C**-Direct services in Other Setting

Transition Plan (14 Years and older): _____

For High School Only: 688 Referral: _____ Age of Majority: _____ Anticipated Date of Graduation: _____

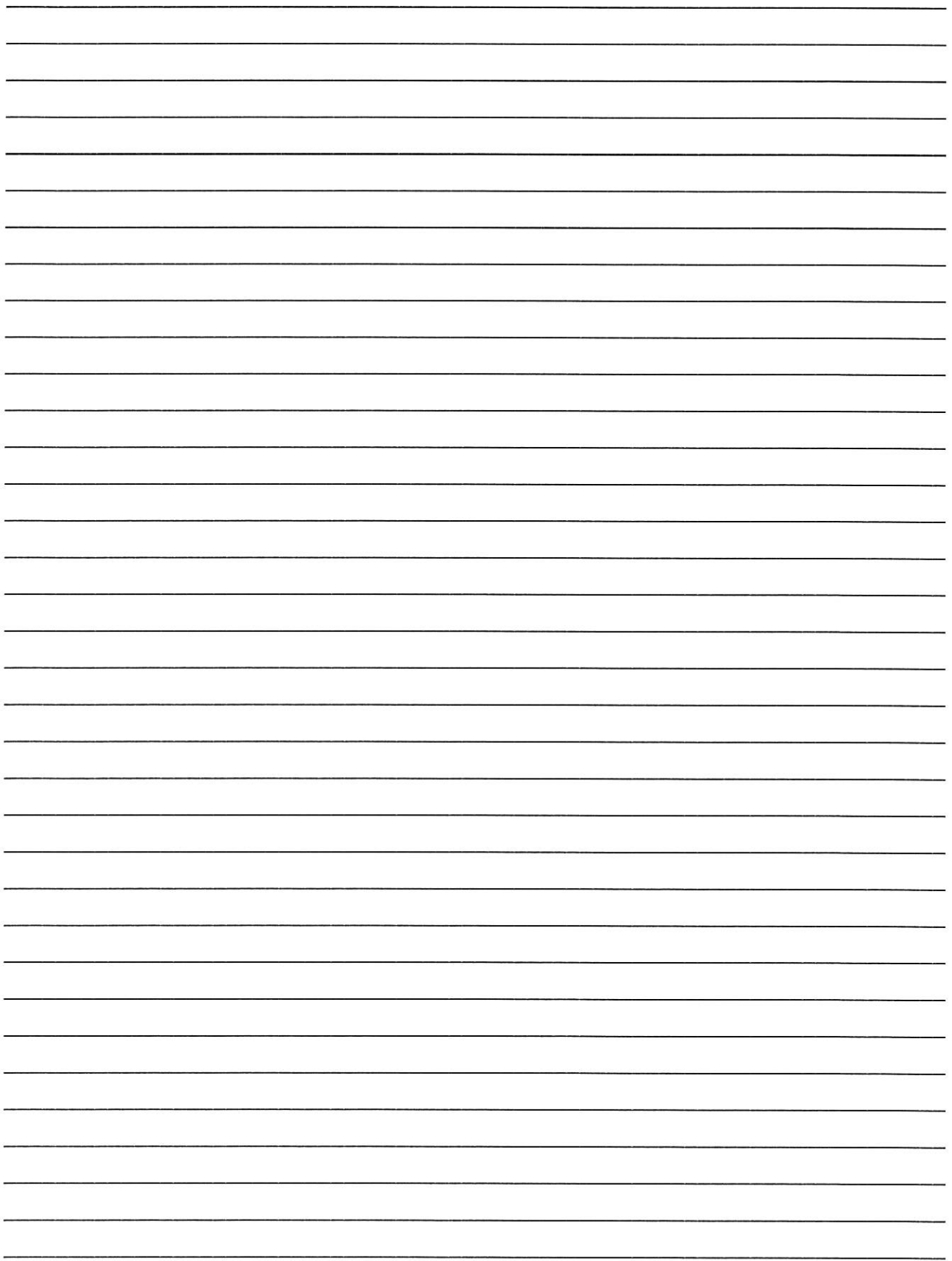
MAIN FOCUS OF DISCUSSION:

The parents were furnished with a copy of the **Procedural Rights** brochure with their evaluation consent form.

***I have received a copy of the Meeting Summary:** _____

(Continued on back of form Y or N)

(Signature)



IPSWICH PUBLIC SCHOOLS
IEP MEETING SUMMARY
(Amendment, Progress, Other)

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

School: _____ Grade: _____

Parent/Guardian Name(s):

IEP Liaison: _____ Telephone: _____

Person completing this form:

Type of Meeting *(Circle one)*: **Amendment** **Progress** **Other:** _____

Service Delivery Grid *(attached)*: **Yes** **or** **No**

A-Indirect Services B-Direct Services in General Education Setting

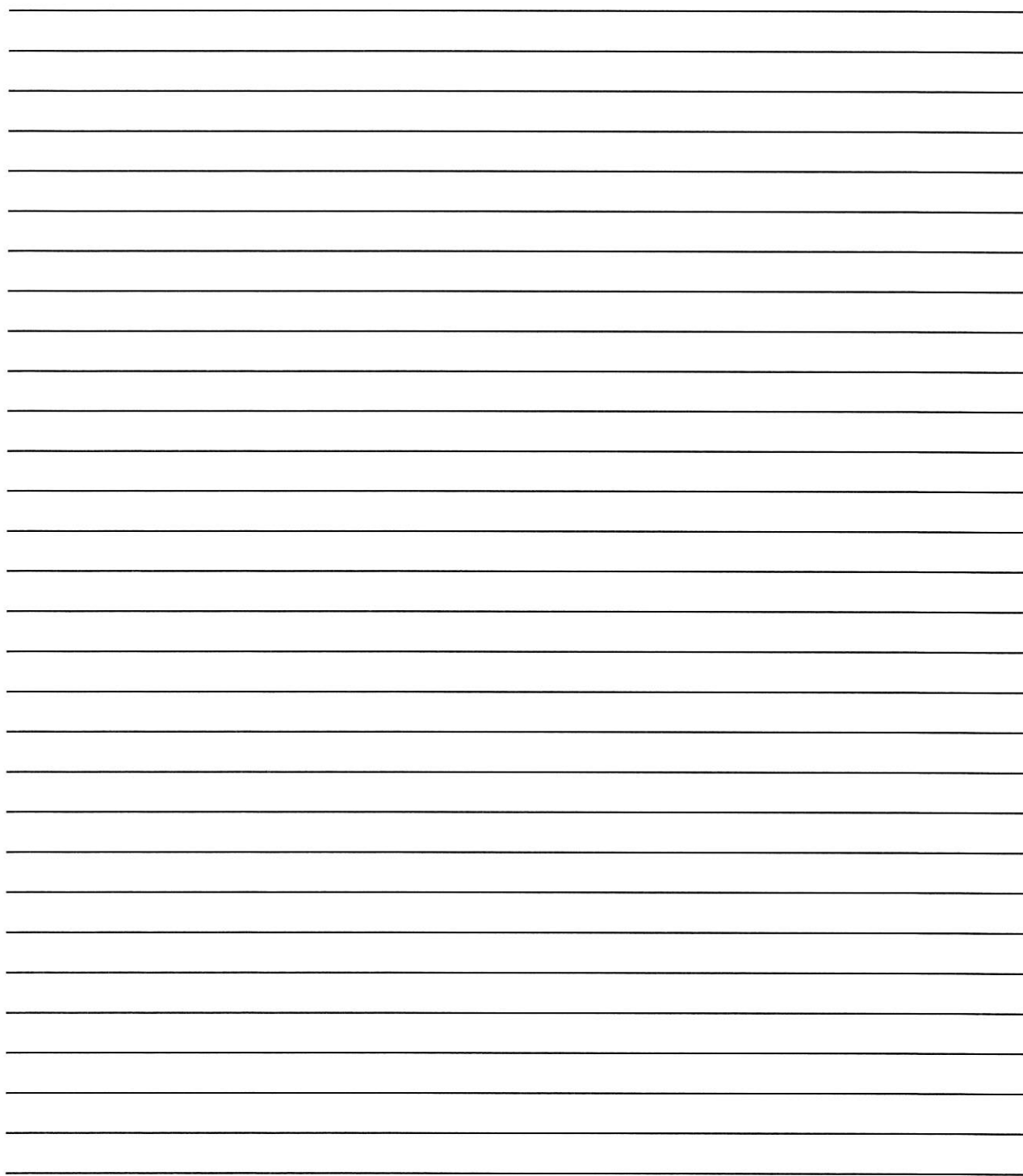
C-Direct services in Other Setting

MAIN FOCUS OF DISCUSSION:

***I have received a copy of the Meeting Summary:** _____

(Continued on back of form Y or N)

(Signature)



IPSWICH PUBLIC SCHOOLS
IEP MEETING SUMMARY
(Annual Review)

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

School: _____ Grade: _____

Parent/Guardian Name(s): _____

IEP Liaison: _____ Telephone: _____

Person completing this form: _____

Type of Meeting : Annual Review

Major Goal Areas: _____

Discussed Bullying/Harassment:

1. Does the Team believe the student could potentially become a target? _____
2. Is the student able to identify bullying attempts? _____
3. Does the student engage in behavior that might be identified as bullying? _____
4. Is the student able to conform to the school's code of conduct relative to bullying prevention? _____
5. Is the student able to access the general education curriculum, including the bullying prevention curriculum? _____

Special Considerations for ASD: Yes, No, or N/A

Notes: _____

Service Delivery Grid (attached): Yes or No

A-Indirect Services B-Direct Services in General Education Setting C-Direct services in Other Setting

Transition Plan (14 Years and older): _____

For High School Only: 688 Referral: _____ Age of Majority: _____ Anticipated Date of Graduation: _____

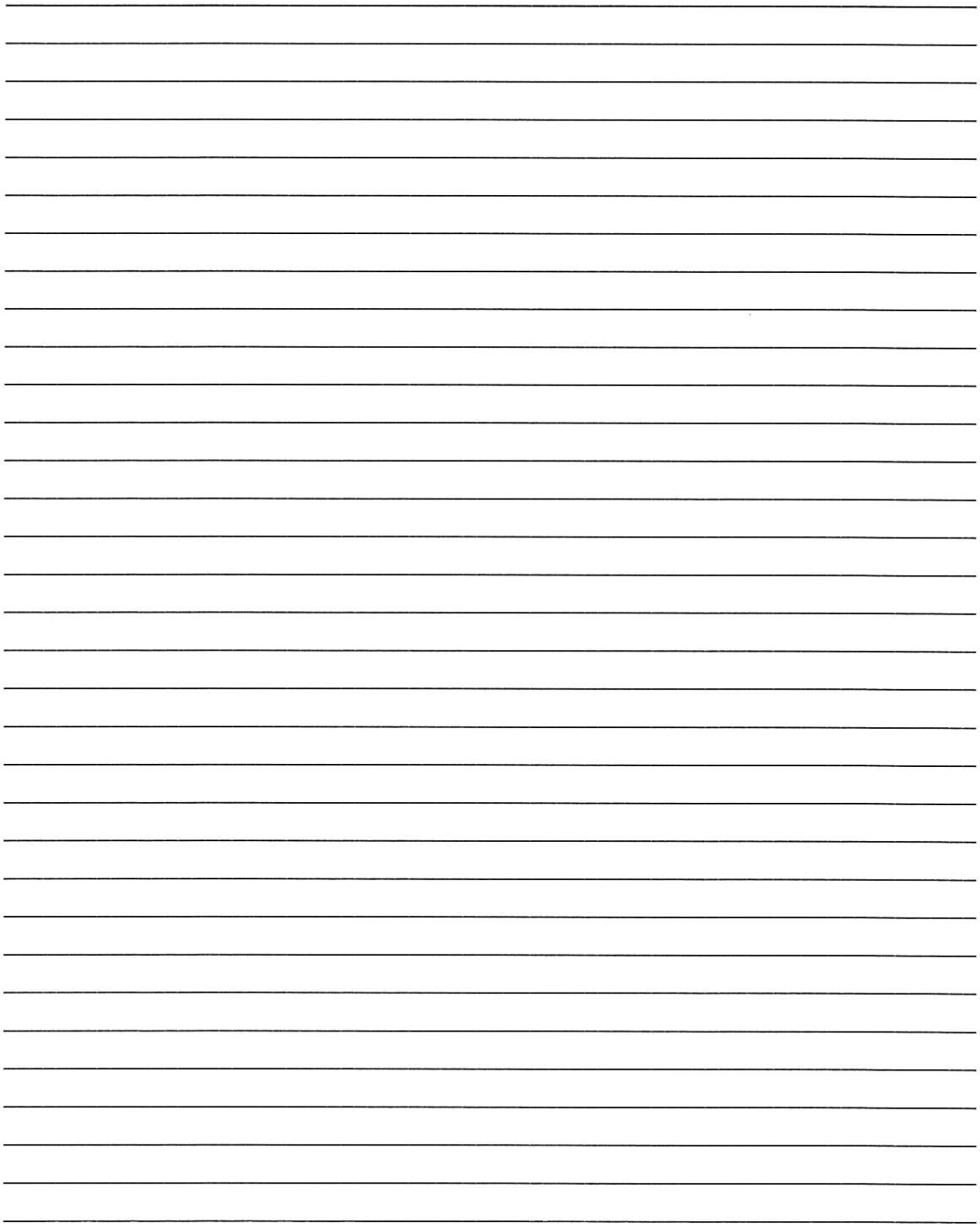
MAIN FOCUS OF DISCUSSION: (major Goals, Accommodations, Schedule Modifications, Rejected Items, etc.)

☐ The parents were furnished with a copy of the **Procedural Rights** brochure at the time of the meeting to develop the IEP.

***I have received a copy of the Meeting Summary:** _____

(Continued on back of form Y or N)

(Signature)



SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS IN CREATING IEPs

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) has offered guidance to special education Teams regarding the various disability categories. These considerations are important not only for the determination of eligibility for special education services, but also ensuring that various aspects of the presenting disability are addressed in the IEP plan that is developed.

The following pages, taken from "*Is Special Education the Right Service?*" should be reviewed by the Team in order to give full consideration to the educational impact of the disability areas.

TABLE SA (4 pages)

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS RELATED TO DISABILITY IN DETERMINING ELIGIBILITY

AUTISM

- Performance may be inconsistent and may not be consistent with developmental norms.
- Environmental structure and presentation of materials may significantly affect performance.
- High anxiety is frequently a major component and may affect performance measures.
- The impact of this disability may be pervasive.
- Students may manifest attentional issues and issues with organizing information and understanding abstract concepts.

DEVELOPMENTAL DELAY

- Appropriate consideration only for students 3-9 years of age
- Team must consider developmental normative data and curricular expectations of the educational environment
- Test scores cannot be single determinant of disability finding, particularly in making a finding of a significant delay. A balanced approach to assessment results is required.
- For 3-5 year old students, Team must consider student participation in developmentally appropriate activities.
- Appropriate standards to determine that the developmental delay exhibited by the student is "significant" - recommended minimum is 6 months delay; however, Team must determine if the affect on the student is "significant" in light of the educational context and expectations.
- Team should determine that delay is not a function of lack of instruction or opportunity to learn, nor a function of cultural differences or temporary events in the child's life.
- Category should not be used as a "temporary catch-all" and the Team should consider if constellation of assessment findings fit with another disability type.

INTELLECTUAL IMPAIRMENT

- Nature of impairment is permanent and generally consistent across similar learning tasks.
- Health or physical impairments may have similar presentations. Team should carefully consider history and other reasons for assessment results.
- Evidence of limited capacity in at least three different settings or situations should be present.
- The impact of this disability is pervasive.

SENSORY IMPAIRMENT - HEARING

- Language and communication access and skills are integral to making effective progress for students who are deaf or have hearing loss.
- Hearing acuity, not auditory processing, is a key feature.
- Finding should address hearing capacity after correction, if correction is possible. Cochlear implants, hearing aids, or use of an FM system can correct or facilitate learning. If student uses any of these, the impact of such should be part of the assessment consideration.
- Careful consideration must be given to any sudden changes in hearing acuity to determine if short-term, corrective action can be taken, prior to determining eligibility.
- Hearing impairments are at high risk for co-existing with other disabilities.
- Due consideration must be given to assessment challenges with young children.

SENSORY IMPAIRMENT - VISION

- Vision impairments are at high risk for co-existing with other disabilities.
- There is a lack of formal assessment tools for vision loss and concomitant issues. This presents challenges in obtaining complete and representative assessment information.
- Stability or progressiveness of vision loss is integral to examining impact.
- Standardized tests developed for use with sighted individuals may provide inaccurate measures of skills, abilities, or developmental levels for blind or visually impaired students.
- Visual acuity, not visual processing is a key feature of this impairment.
- Finding should address vision capacity after correction, if correction is possible.

SENSORY IMPAIRMENT - DEAFBLIND

- Deafblindness is at high risk for co-existing with other disabilities, the presence of which may make hearing and vision loss.
- Many syndromes are associated with deafblindness. Presence of a syndrome should trigger key assessments.
- Unique challenges in obtaining representative skill levels
- Low incidence population presents challenges in identification and service issues. Acuity measures often fluctuate. Presence of an individual familiar with deafblindness is recommended.
- Safety and mobility are generally significant concerns.
- Intellectual capacity is difficult to evaluate and often inappropriately ignored. Deafblind individuals have wide range of abilities.

NEUROLOGICAL IMPAIRMENT

- Intellectual Impairment, Specific Learning Disability, or Emotional Impairment may have similar presentations.
- Potential for Intermittent, inconsistent, or delayed effects of neurological impairment confusing the connection to educational progress.
- High incidence of co-occurrence of behavioral issues, substance abuse issues, or issues of socially inappropriate behavior.
- Highly correlated with effects of neurotoxins (lead poisoning, substance abuse, Fetal Alcohol syndrome).
- Highly correlated with effects of stroke, brain tumors, traumatic brain injury, anoxia, spinal cord injury, infectious disorders (e.g., encephalitis), metabolic disorders, chemotherapy, radiation, degenerative diseases, and various syndromes.

EMOTIONAL IMPAIRMENT

- Team must consider if presentation is due to serious emotional disturbance or social maladjustment. (See Table 58)
- Willful decision making that does not result from deficits in judgement, skill, or performance attributable to an emotional impairment may preclude a finding of eligibility.
- Voluntary behavior with an absence of remorse that cannot be attributed to an emotional impairment may preclude a finding of eligibility.
- Involvement of the court or DYS must be carefully examined and not assumed to represent a finding of disability.
- High anxiety is frequently a major component of an emotional impairment and may affect performance measures.
- Lack of progress in relation to this type of disability must consider school attendance/school refusal; tardiness; transience; family, personal, or school crisis; and/or possible substance abuse.
- High incidence of co-occurrence of behavioral issues, substance abuse issues, or issues of socially inappropriate behavior

COMMUNICATION IMPAIRMENT

- Specific Learning Disability or Emotional Impairment may have similar presentation.
- A finding of a "significant" communication impairment must be related to the ability of the student to convey meaning to others or understand communication from others in both formal and informal educational contexts.
- Should not be used to provide supportive services to students with language differences rather than a disability
- Presence of minor articulation errors or disfluencies must be considered in the context of the educational environment and its expectations in order to determine if a disability exists and if it is causal to a lack of educational progress. Many students with minor articulation errors or disfluent speech do not require special education.

PHYSICAL IMPAIRMENT

- Student is not eligible when the physical need is short-term and medically treatable and does not affect ability to make effective educational progress.
- Student is not eligible when problems of physical disability can be corrected through changes to the physical plant or classroom space.
- Student is not eligible when problems of physical disability can be corrected through provision of assistive device(s) or equipment that can be used immediately without special training. (If such devices or equipment are educationally necessary, the school is required to provide them during school hours.)
- Student is not eligible when he/she has learned to independently use compensatory strategies, or assistive devices or equipment and is, therefore, making effective educational progress. (If such devices or equipment are educationally necessary, the school is required to provide them during school hours.)
- Student may be eligible if physical impairment is progressive and although educational progress is not currently impaired, the progress of the physically disabling condition makes such limitation inevitable and requires immediate attention to compensatory strategies.

HEALTH IMPAIRMENT

- See special considerations related to physical disabilities (above). Similar concerns are present for health impairments.
- Consideration of severity is critical and must occur in the context of the educational program and educational expectations, as well as the nature of the health impairment and expected longevity and severity.
- Consideration of temporary, episodic, or cumulative impact related to chronic conditions with phases of partial remission and acute impairment should be carefully considered in light of student's educational progress over time.
- Health conditions may have an impact for the student that fluctuates over time and in response to medication or medical treatment. The Team must determine if such fluctuations represent a persistent threat to the student's ability to make effective progress, or if they are episodic and short-term in nature and can be managed through temporary accommodations.
- Attention deficit disorders are discussed in more detail in Table 58.

SPECIFIC LEARNING DISABILITY

- Test scores cannot be single determinant of disability finding particularly in making a finding of a severe discrepancy. A balanced approach to assessment results is required.
- Federal requirements include that the team must determine that the student does not achieve commensurate with age and ability, if provided with learning experiences appropriate for the student's age and ability (34 CFR 300.341 (a)); and

SPECIFIC LEARNING DISABILITY continued

- Team must ensure that finding of inability to make progress is not the result of other impairments or environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage. (34 CFR 300.541(b)) (See also Table 58)
- Federal law requires that the Team find that the child has a severe discrepancy between intellectual ability and achievement in one or more of the following areas: oral expression, listening comprehension; written expression; basic reading skill; reading comprehension; mathematics calculation; and/or mathematics reasoning. (34 CFR 300.541 (a)(2))
- A written statement is required by the Team. (34 CFR 300.543) This statement must document the Team's determination of whether or not the student has a specific learning disability, the basis for the academic functioning: the educationally relevant medical findings, if any; and whether there is a severe discrepancy between achievement and ability that is not correctable without special education and related services. The written report must also include the determination of the Team concerning the effects of environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage. Each Team member is required to indicate if such statement reflects his or her own conclusions and, if it does not, the Team member must submit a separate statement with his or her conclusions in these areas.
- Disability finding meshed with finding related to inability to make progress in education - cannot be considered separately like most of the other disability types.
- Consideration in relation to age, instructional history, cognitive abilities, and academic performance
- A pattern of strengths and weaknesses must be present.
- Particular attention must be paid to reading instruction (or lack thereof) when considering SLD. (See also Table 58)

TABLE 58 (3 pages)

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS RELATED TO STUDENTS WITH CERTAIN CHARACTERISTICS

Groups	Special Considerations
Students with suspected ADD or ADHD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not eligible for special education solely by virtue of the diagnosis-assessment must show that attentional issues rise to the level of a disability. If so, most likely disability type will be "health impairment". • Diagnosis by General Practitioners must be considered in light of educational impact. Psychologists or Neurologists may be more precise in their use of this term in the educational context. • Student needs may be able to be met through environmental accommodations or adaptations and may not require special education. • Medical treatment options are controversial and parents may elect not to consider their use for students with such characteristics. • Schools cannot make service contingent on use of medication for ADD or ADHD. • If the student <u>does</u> use medication, then assessment must reflect performance with medication. • Attentional issues may be components of other impairments or may co-occur with other impairments, and a careful consideration of emotional impairment, specific learning disability, neurological impairment, or other types of disabilities should accompany any discussion considering ADHD. • Student's attentional issues may significantly interfere with attention to the educational environment and may, therefore, significantly adversely affect educational performance. With no other presenting issues, the disability determination would be Health Impairment.
Young Children (3-5 years)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the student is coming from early intervention programs, consideration should be given to assessment information already available. • Assessment data may need to be gathered from natural environments such as the playground, the home, or other settings where the child spends time. • Observational data should include the child in relation to activities alone and with others - both adults and other children. • Young children develop at varying rates and according to the life experiences available to them. Great variation will be seen. The challenge is determining if the variation seen in the individual child's performance is aberrant or significantly delayed. • Many standardized norm referenced tests are not applicable to young children. Assessment sources may be primarily informal. • Early childhood specialists and the child's family may be the most effective informants to the Team's decision-making. • Concerns about the young child in relation to the general curriculum and the life in the school may consist of a review of typical play-based activities related to the developmental foundation for academic work and may not be based in a school environment.
Students with Different Linguistic or Cultural Background	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different linguistic or cultural background may only be used to determine <u>ineligibility</u> if different linguistic or cultural background is the <u>determinant</u> factor for a student's inability to make progress and the student does not otherwise meet eligibility criteria. • Different linguistic or cultural background is more of an assessment factor as outlined in the following bullets. • Regulations require the use of tests that are linguistically and culturally free

Students with Different Linguistic or Cultural Background continued	<p>of bias; however, there are not sufficient unbiased assessment tools to provide comprehensive information.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teams should ensure they have information available on the linguistic or cultural differences related to learning that may be applicable to the student being considered for special education eligibility. • Assessment of the student's inability to make effective progress must go beyond simple determination of English language skills. Language proficiency, both receptive and expressive in relation to all aspects of school communication must be assessed to determine relationship of linguistic/ cultural background to school achievement. • Cultural differences may impact the student's approach to school and learning and the student's educational history. • Cultural differences of the parent may not be readily apparent in the student, but may affect the student's approach to school, learning, and assessment. • When possible, information from a person fluent in the language and culture of the student and conversant with academic expectations of the school would be valuable to the Team's discussion. • Information on the student's educational history should be considered very carefully and, if possible, information on educational history outside of the US should be obtained.
Students Involved with Social Services or the Courts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involvement with Social Services or the Courts should not result in a presumption that a student requires special education nor that inability to make progress in education is caused by factors outside of the school environment. • School must use the same standard to determine eligibility as for any other student.
Students with Multiple Impairments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teams may make a determination of multiple disabilities if all disabilities are inextricably meshed and there is no primary disability. • Determination of a primary disability would be appropriate if the Team believes that the educational impact of one type of disability is much greater than any other impairment of the student.
Social Maladjustment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Team must determine that student behavior interfering with student achievement does not result from willful misbehavior or the effects of willful unconcern with education with no indication of a causal disability such as an emotional impairment. • The determinations that a Team would make when considering if a student's misbehavior is a result of the student's disability are instructive. The Team would seek to determine if the student knew what was appropriate at the time of the misbehavior, was capable of appropriate behavior at the time of the misbehavior, and still willfully chose not to do the appropriate thing. • Information related to use of alcohol or drugs may be a factor in making a finding that social maladjustment is causal to lack of progress, rather than a disability.
Poor Performance on MCAS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statutory language explicitly requires that student not be found eligible for special education solely because of poor performance on the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) tests. • Poor MCAS performance should be considered one piece of assessment information that is appropriately considered when a student is referred for an evaluation because of a suspected disability.

<p>Lack of Reading or Math Instruction</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ineligibility may only be found if lack of instruction is the determinant factor for lack of progress and the student does not otherwise meet the eligibility criteria. • Special education is <u>not</u> the appropriate service solely to provide instruction to a student who has not received instruction in the past. • Lack of instruction may occur for student coming into the US from under-developed countries. • Lack of instruction may occur for migrant students or students from families with transient histories. • Lack of instruction may occur when students have been homeless. • Lack of instruction may be considered by the Team when the Team has knowledge that the student received limited instruction with limited instructional variation, e.g., reading instruction that employed solely a whole language approach.
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PROCESSING THE IEP

Furnishing a Meeting Summary

The Program Manager gives the parent a copy of the Meeting Summary Sheet at the IEP meeting. This serves as a placeholder until the completed IEP is issued within two calendar weeks.

Issuance of the IEP

Parents will receive two copies of the proposed IEP to sign and return to the special education office in the student's school along with a self-addressed envelope. Once received by the school, the signed IEP is date-stamped and entered into the electronic IEP system by the special education secretary in that particular school. Accompanying the IEP is a form referred to as the "N-1" (Notice of Proposed District Action). This acts as a summary of the salient areas of the accompanying IEP.

Parent Response to the IEP

No later than 30 days after receipt of the proposed IEP and placement, the parents will accept or reject the IEP in whole or part and request a meeting to discuss rejected portions of the IEP. IEPs that are rejected in whole or part are sent to the Bureau of Special Education Appeals (BSEA). The IEP will also be sent to BSEA in those cases where parents have not returned the IEP within 30 days and attempts have been made to contact the parents.

Implementation Upon Receipt

Upon signed receipt, the District will implement all accepted elements of the IEP without delay. Should there be a question regarding resources, the Team must provide as many of the accepted services as possible, then immediately inform the parent in writing of any delayed services, reasons for the delay, and actions taken by the District to address the service. Compensatory services will be offered for accepted but delayed services.

Amendments

The Team can further develop or amend a signed IEP. The consultation for the amendment can take place with the parent and Team in person or via telephone. The N-1, Notice of Proposed Action, accompanying the Amendment will summarize the nature of the amendment. It should be noted, however, that amendments are only appropriate for small changes in an IEP. Any significant changes made to an IEP would require that a new IEP be issued and, again, the circumstances of the issuance of a new IEP would be summarized in the accompanying N-1.

EVALUATIONS IN PROCESS: PARENTAL AND STUDENT RIGHTS

All Special Education Evaluation Teams have been made aware of the following Rights & Responsibilities in regard to evaluations in process:

- The same protections afforded to students who have been found eligible for special education services apply to those students whose evaluations are in process.
- Timelines and discipline considerations for students whose evaluations are in process are treated as if the student had been found eligible.
- Protections afforded to students with disabilities are extended to those students whose evaluations are taking place.

These protections apply because the District can be viewed as “having a Basis of Knowledge” of the potential needs of the student and, so for that reason, protections are accorded.

The Basis of Knowledge applies when:

1. The parent of the student has expressed a concern in writing to an administrator or a teacher that the student may be in need of special education.
2. The parent has requested an evaluation.
3. The teacher of the student or other school personnel have expressed concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the child and said concern would have been expressed either to a principal, supervisor, or other administrator.

LEVELS OF INDEPENDENCE

MA DESE Special Education Technical Assistance Advisory SPED 2014-3 (revised) advises school districts and parents about concerns regarding inappropriate utilization of paraprofessionals. In an effort to reduce over-use of paraprofessionals in a transparent manner guided by best professional practices, Ipswich has created a mandated practice.

At the initial Annual Review or Re-Evaluation meeting held for a student who has had support personnel assigned to him/her, the Team must include in its Annual Review an assessment of the student's level of independence in areas of functioning. Further, a detailed plan should be discussed for fading this support.

The document included on the following page is the Technical Assistance Advisory, *Identifying the Need for Paraprofessional Support*. This is followed by the template for discussion currently used in the District. The intent of this consideration is not to deny services to students who need them; rather, it represents a focus on building student internalization of skills, with ultimately greater student independence.

Special Education

Technical Assistance Advisory SPED 2014-3 (revised): Identifying the Need for Paraprofessional Support

To:

Administrators of Special Education, Parents, and Other Interested Parties

From:

Marcia Mittnacht, State Director of Special Education

Date:

February 26, 2015

The purposes of this advisory are to:

- a. Advise school districts and parents about concerns regarding inappropriate utilization of paraprofessionals.
- b. Clarify when it may be appropriate to use a paraprofessional, as well as ensuring adequate training and supervision.
- c. Provide recommended actions and sample tools to increase school district capacity to support students with disabilities.
- d. Clarify the decision-making process for assigning paraprofessionals to individual students.

A. Introduction: Response to a Cry for Help

When school personnel or parents request a paraprofessional, they are asking for help. Something is amiss. Should a school district respond simply by assigning a paraprofessional to an individual student? Absolutely not.

"If schools respond exclusively to the request for a paraprofessional, without fully understanding the meaning behind the request, it increases the likelihood of masking the underlying issues and delaying attention to them."¹ Instead, "the task is to identify the underlying issues so that they can be addressed."²

The essential premise of this advisory is that the underlying learning needs of each particular student - that is, the root causes of the teacher's or parent's "cry for help" - must first be determined. Then there needs to be consideration of the full array of supports and services that may successfully address the student's unique needs. Districts must not restrict their consideration to use of a paraprofessional.

B. Concerns Regarding Inappropriate Use of Paraprofessionals

Data reflecting substantial increases in the number of special education paraprofessionals raises concerns about whether districts are effectively responding to the educational needs highlighted by requests for a paraprofessional.

The Department is particularly concerned by reports that, in some cases, paraprofessionals have been assigned simply on the basis of a student's educational profile or to provide a teacher with temporary relief from a demanding student. This may leave unaddressed key issues such as (a) improving teacher ability to educate a full range of students with disabilities; (b) building capacity in general education to design curriculum and instruction for mixed ability groups that include students with disabilities; and (c) changing or improving student behavior.

The Department is also concerned that paraprofessionals have been assigned responsibilities that require the skills of a licensed teacher - for example, making curriculum decisions, planning lessons or designing adaptations, as compared with implementing decisions made by the teacher. There have also been reports of inadequate training and supervision, making it impossible for a paraprofessional to be effective. And, paraprofessionals may continue to be assigned even though other services or supports could more appropriately address the student's learning needs. Inappropriate use of paraprofessionals may have detrimental consequences such as over-dependence, interference with peer interactions, insular relationships, stigmatization, provocation of behavior problems, or diminished student-teacher interactions.

This is not to say that paraprofessional services should never be used.³ As with any other special education service, paraprofessionals are inherently neither appropriate nor inappropriate for a particular student. Appropriate use of paraprofessionals depends, to a large extent, on whether the paraprofessional has the requisite skills to address effectively one or more aspects of a student's unique needs and whether the paraprofessional is adequately trained and supervised to be effective. Importantly, appropriate utilization of paraprofessionals also depends on consideration of whether there are other service or support options that would be a better choice because they would address effectively these same learning needs and offer additional advantages such as fostering greater independence. The process for weighing these considerations and making a decision as to whether a paraprofessional should be assigned to a particular student, will be discussed in section E of this Advisory.

C. Over-Archiving Goal of Promoting Students' Independence

It is the essential mission of elementary and secondary education to prepare all students for successful adult life, which may include independent living, competitive employment, further postsecondary education or training, and participation in the life of their community. State and federal special education laws recognize that independence is a key factor of adulthood and our public schools must always strive to build independence in our students, particularly as they begin to approach adult life.⁴

In order for these core educational principles to be realized, decisions regarding special education and related services (and, in particular, decisions regarding paraprofessional services) must be made in a way that allows the unique learning needs of each student to be met and that, at the same time, allows each student to become as independent as possible, particularly in preparation for the end of secondary education.

The following recommended actions are intended to respect and promote these essential principles.

D. Recommended Actions: School District Level

Whole school approach. School districts can develop greater regular education capacity to effectively serve diverse learners. School district leaders should review the use of paraprofessionals within the context of the whole school environment and consider adopting a tiered model of supports such as [Systems for Student Success \(SfSS\)](#). Data gathered in the analyses of students' needs can be compiled into a chart or matrix, and reviewed by school-based teams to make decisions regarding system-wide allocation of services and supports. Effective use of school-based student support teams (SSTs) may reduce the number of retentions, suspensions/expulsions, and referrals to special education. SSTs may also assist in reducing the inappropriate use of paraprofessionals. See the [SfSS quick reference guide for student support teams](#).

District culture. Some may unconsciously believe that a one-to-one paraprofessional is always needed for a student with a particular kind of educational profile. It is important for the district community to examine its own assumptions and to challenge those that perpetuate a status quo that can result in unintended negative consequences. District leaders may find it fruitful to share data on the use of paraprofessionals and to discuss with students, their families and special educators together how to achieve the best instructional services, and aim for the best academic and non-academic outcomes for students. Involving families in this discussion will assist in fully considering how the community as a whole, not just the school, can help to achieve successful adult life outcomes for all students.

E. Recommended Actions: Individual Students

The IEP decision-making process. State and federal special education law require an IEP Team to make all decisions regarding the assignment of a paraprofessional to a particular student. The Team makes this decision solely on the basis of whether paraprofessional services are appropriate to meet the unique learning needs of the particular student so that he or she will have the opportunity to receive FAPE in the least restrictive environment and at the same time prepare for "further education, employment, and independent living."⁵

Breaking down the IEP Team decision-making into a three-step process, that considers use of paraprofessionals within a broader context, may substantially increase the likelihood of using paraprofessionals appropriately and effectively. First, at least one member of the Team should be fully informed about the general education environment and the expectations that typical students are expected to meet in the coming year. In that context, the Team examines information available from evaluations and other information which may include concerns of the parent, and previous progress with earlier IEPs. The Team then identifies all of a student's *special education needs* arising from the disability and presenting barriers to the student's learning. The Team must differentiate among needs that can and should be met in the general education environment with accommodations or minor modifications and needs that must be met through the delivery of specially designed instruction⁶ so that the student receives FAPE.

Second, the IEP Team considers the goals that are most important for the student to accomplish during the upcoming year and considers these goals in the context of the general curriculum, its available support services as well as the *entire range of specially designed instruction, related services and accommodations* that can meet the student's particular needs.

Finally, the Team then determines the extent to which needed services can be delivered in the general education classroom and which services may require removal from the classroom. Research supports that most students with disabilities have better outcomes when they are fully included in the general education classroom, and the Team is tasked with carefully considering the risks and benefits to the student when removal appears to be necessary. It is at the intersection of these two important priorities -- the least restrictive environment (the general education classroom) and the promotion of independence, that the Team may consider the use of a one to one paraprofessional. If a one to one paraprofessional can increase the student's access to the general education environment or assist in moving toward more independence, then generally the Team should identify use of the paraprofessional.

This decision-making process offers the following advantages: (1) it assists the Team to assign paraprofessionals when necessary to meet the individual student's unique special education needs, (2) precludes assignment of a paraprofessional based on limited information - for example, solely on the basis of a student's diagnosis or the needs of a teacher, and (3) seeks to ensure that service or support options (other than a paraprofessional) are also considered and utilized if they would address effectively a student's learning needs and offer additional advantages such as fostering greater independence.⁷

Training and supervision. School districts have an affirmative obligation to ensure that all paraprofessionals are trained and supervised so that they will be able to provide the services for which they are responsible, as reflected in federal Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) policy guidance. Therefore, once an IEP Team decides that a paraprofessional is needed for a student, the Team has a responsibility to determine the means by which a paraprofessional will have sufficient training and supervision. This may occasionally require additional services or consultation in the IEP.

Develop a plan for fading paraprofessional support. It is important that paraprofessional services continue in amount and duration only as needed. For many students, other services or supports can be substituted for some or all of a student's paraprofessional services. Therefore, whenever an assignment of paraprofessional services is initially made, the Team should discuss and develop a plan for reviewing the continued need for these services, including a process to review and monitor the student's progress and determine whether the student's need can be met with other services or supports. The Team may establish criteria which, if met by the student, will trigger initiation of the IEP amendment process to consider a change in services. The family is a critical partner in the planning process, with the family made well aware of any potential changes in the student's program and engaged throughout the process. There is no "standard" plan for fading paraprofessional services--each will be individually tailored for the particular student.

Anchor district policies and procedures with best-practices for student leadership. Depending on the age of the student involved, the student may be a "driver" but at all times will be a participant in whatever actions are taken. Keep the student's needs and desires at the center of discussions and to the extent possible, involve the student in the planning and actions taken. If, after all, the purpose is to promote independence, then the student should be able to take pride in actively working toward his/her increased independence and full participation in the life of the school. With the student central to the process, educators and families alike must remember that each student is different and may need different approaches, and different amounts of time to respond to different actions. Anticipate that some students may need paraprofessional support in one or more areas for years, while others may move forward in leaps and bounds toward independence.

F. Conclusion

Paraprofessionals may be an essential service for some disabled students. Yet, their inappropriate use can waste resources, limit a student's potential for independence, and leave key issues unaddressed. To respond to these potential challenges, system-wide changes can substantially increase the capacity of a school district to respond appropriately to a wide range of learners, and consideration of paraprofessional services for an individual student must be integrated into the IEP decision-making process for determining all of the student's unique special education needs and how they should be met.

The cause is important. The goal is the right one: successful adult life!

Attachment:



Examples



Student Needs Analysis (sample 1)



Student Needs Analysis (sample 2)



Student School Day Analysis (sample)

1 A Giangreco, M.F., Doyle, M.B., Suter, J.C., *Constructively Responding to Requests for Paraprofessionals: We Keep Asking the Wrong Questions*, Remedial and Special Education 33(6), October 2012, 362-373.

2 Giangreco, M.F., Halvorsen, A.T., Doyle, M.B., Broer, S.M., *Alternatives to Overreliance on Paraprofessionals in Inclusive Schools*, Journal of Special Education Leadership 17(2), October 2004, 82-90.

3 Giangreco, M.F., Doyle, M.B., Suter, J.C., *Constructively Responding to Requests for Paraprofessionals: We Keep Asking the Wrong Questions*, Remedial and Special Education 33(6), October 2012, 362, 363.

2 Id.

3 Paraprofessional services may be appropriate, for example, for a disabled student to learn in the least restrictive environment - that is, with non-disabled students to the maximum extent appropriate. The paraprofessional may be appropriate to allow the student to participate in extracurricular and other nonacademic activities, or to address a wide variety of other educational needs identified on a student's individualized education program (IEP). Assignment of a paraprofessional may also be an effective tool to foster independent living by teaching a student how to utilize a personal care attendant. See also the examples in the attachment to this Advisory.

4 See 20 U.S.C. § 1400(d)(1)(A) (a principal purpose of the IDEA is "to ensure that all children with disabilities have available to them a free appropriate public education that emphasizes special education and related services designed to ... prepare them for further education, employment, and independent living"); 20 USC § 1414 (d)(1)(A)(i) (requiring transition planning and services beginning at age sixteen); *Hendrick Hudson Dist. Bd. of Educ. v. Rowley*, 458 U.S. 176, 201, n.23 (1982) (in enacting the IDEA, Congress endeavored to enable disabled students to "achieve a reasonable degree of self-sufficiency" and "become productive citizens, contributing to society"); MGL c. 71B, s. 2 (requiring transition services beginning at age fourteen or sooner).

5 See 20 U.S.C. § 1400(d)(1)(A) (a principal purpose of the IDEA is "to ensure that all children with disabilities have ... services designed to ... prepare them for further education, employment, and independent living"); DESE IEP Process Guide, p. 12 (2001) ("the IEP must address the unique needs of the student and, therefore, must be tailored to the individual student needs as determined through the evaluation process").

6 Or related services necessary for access to the general curriculum. 603 CMR 28.02(20)

7 For additional guidance regarding the appropriate utilization and support of paraprofessionals, see Giangreco, M.F., Doyle, M.B., Suter, J.C., *Constructively Responding to Requests for Paraprofessionals: We Keep Asking the Wrong Questions*, Remedial and Special Education 33(6), October 2012, 362-373.

LEVELS OF INDEPENDENCE DATA COLLECTION

Student Name: _____ Grade: _____

Special Education Liaison: _____ Meeting Date: _____

Type of Meeting: _____

Rate the amount of student independence in relation to special education personnel working within the classes below. (1-Most independent to 5-Dependence upon Special Education Personnel)

READING	1	2	3	4	5
MATH	1	2	3	4	5
WRITTEN LANGUAGE	1	2	3	4	5
SOCIAL STUDIES	1	2	3	4	5
SCIENCE	1	2	3	4	5
RELATED ARTS	1	2	3	4	5
RECREATIONAL	1	2	3	4	5
THERAPIES	1	2	3	4	5

Plan for Fading Support:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

PLACEMENT

Placement is the result of the IEP sequence: the **goals** for the student determine the **services** required that then determine the least restrictive setting or **placement** in which these services can be provided.

The following are guiding principles in the Team determination of placement:

1. The decision is made by the Team. It is not unilaterally predetermined by either family or school portions of the Team. Placement is based on the services to be provided to the student, types of settings in which those services will be provided, types of service providers, and location at which services will be provided.
2. The placement selected is to be the *least restrictive environment* (LRE) consistent with the needs of the student.
3. At least a limited evaluation must precede the decision to enact a change in placement that constitutes placing the student in a more restrictive setting. This is to ensure that updated data is used as the basis for the Team determination.
4. LRE - The Team will ensure that to the maximum extent appropriate, students with disabilities are educated with students who do not have disabilities. Special classes, separate schooling, and other removal from the general education program should occur only if the nature or severity of the disability necessitates that services cannot be delivered in the general education environment. This is documented in the *Non-participation Justification* section of the IEP.
5. Particularly in cases where a placement other than the District is being considered, the District practice is to develop a Decision Matrix, as included on the following pages. The Team will need to agree on various criteria against which potential placements will be evaluated.
6. The Team must give priority consideration to special education placements that are approved by the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) to provide special education services. In cases where the unique needs of a student dictate the consideration of an unapproved placement, the Director, in accord with 603 CMR 28.06 (3) & (4) will complete documentation of Notification of Intent to Seek Approval for Individual Student Program. It should be noted that this approval must take place prior to student placement.
7. With older students, the Team will ensure options consistent with transition needs, as evident in their Transition Planning Form (TPF). These options include developing independent living skills, skills for self-management of medical needs, and career or job-related skills.

POST-MEETING SURVEY

It is the intent of all of the District's special education Teams that meetings represent best standards of professional practice. Inherent in the partnerships with families is an implicit expectation that meetings address the presenting concerns, be grounded in norms including mutual respect, and take place in a collaborative and welcoming atmosphere.

In the spirit of continual improvement, it is District practice for the school's special education secretary to include a post-meeting parent survey along with the IEP. This allows parents to give feedback concerning various measurable elements of the meeting process. These feedback forms are reviewed by the Director of Pupil Personnel Services on a regular basis and discussed with the Special Education Program Managers.



Ipswich Public Schools

IPS – Payne Building 1 Lord Sq. 978-356-2935

IEP Post Meeting Parent Survey

You recently attended a Team Meeting at your child's school to address his/her educational needs. We value your opinion and would be most appreciative if you could take a few minutes to complete the survey and return it to us in the enclosed envelope.

School Level:

☐ PreK ☐ Elementary ☐ Middle ☐ High ☐ Out of District

Purpose of Meeting:

☐ Annual Review ☐ Re-evaluation ☐ Initial Evaluation ☐ Other

For all Meetings:

1. Were you notified about this meeting at least 10 days prior to the meeting?

☐ Yes

☐ No

2. The meeting started on time, or close to the scheduled time.

Strongly Disagree
1

2

Somewhat
3

Strongly Agree
4 5

3. Team members started on time, or close to scheduled time.

Strongly Disagree
1

2

Somewhat
3

Strongly Agree
4 5

4. The purpose of the meeting was clearly stated at the start of the meeting.

Strongly Disagree
1

2

Somewhat
3

Strongly Agree
4 5

5. I was encouraged to provide information and ask questions during the meeting.

Strongly Disagree
1

2

Somewhat
3

Strongly Agree
4 5

6. Even if we did not agree, I was given the opportunity to voice my thoughts and concerns.

Strongly Disagree
1

2

Somewhat
3

Strongly Agree
4 5

7. Clear information was shared regarding my child's performance during this meeting.

Strongly Disagree
1

2

Somewhat
3

Strongly Agree
4 5

Please complete other side ➡

8. The team made recommendations to address my child's educational needs.

Strongly Disagree
1 2

Somewhat
3 4

Strongly Agree
5

9. Recommendations provided will meet my child's needs.

Strongly Disagree
1 2

Somewhat
3

Strongly Agree
4 5

Please Explain:

10. I received a Team Meeting Summary and Service Delivery Grid when I left the Team Meeting.

☐ Yes ☐ No

11. If there was a disagreement, options available to parents/guardians were explained.

Strongly Disagree
1 2

Somewhat
3

Strongly Agree
4 5

FOR INITIAL AND RE-EVALUATION MEETINGS:

12. Were your child's evaluation reports made available to you 2 days prior to meeting?

☐ Yes ☐ No

13. The process and criteria for special education eligibility were explained adequately to me.

Strongly Disagree
1 2

Somewhat
3

Strongly Agree
4 5

CONTINUE ONLY IF IEP WAS DEVELOPED:

14. My concerns and vision were included in the development of the IEP.

Strongly Disagree
1 2

Somewhat
3

Strongly Agree
4 5

COMMENTS ARE GREATLY APPRECIATED AND WE INVITE YOU TO SHARE THEM HERE:

*****THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME*****

WS