



PARENT QUICK GUIDES

to the Education of Children with Disabilities

Parent Quick Guides are designed to provide parents who have a child with a disability with easy to understand information to help parents participate in their child's educational program. The content is only a summary and parents are encouraged to explore the additional resources that follow each topic.

Most of the information contained in these guides is taken directly from the *Operating Standards for Ohio Educational Agencies Serving Children with Disabilities* (July 1, 2014) or *Whose IDEA Is This?: A Parent's Guide to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004* (IDEA). Both documents from the Ohio Department of Education, Office for Exceptional Children, are available from the following Web site: <http://education.ohio.gov>.

One of Ohio's 16 State Support Teams, the State Support Team Region 1 (SSTR1) is responsible for the regional delivery of school improvement, special education, and early learning and school readiness services to districts. The SSTR1 serves Defiance, Fulton, Hancock, Henry, Lucas, Ottawa, Paulding, Putnam, Sandusky, Van Wert, Williams, and Wood counties and Fostoria Community School in Seneca County. The Educational Service Center of Lake Erie West is the State Support Team Region 1 fiscal agent.

State Support Team Region 1

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A PARENT QUICK GUIDE TO

Assistive Technology

This page contains a summary of information that parents may use to guide their active and equal participation on their child's team. The content is only a summary and further exploration of listed resources is encouraged.

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY (AT)

“Assistive technology device” means any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of a child with a disability. The term does not include a medical device that is surgically implanted, or the replacement of such device.

“Assistive technology service” means any service that directly assists a child with a disability in the selection, acquisition, or use of an assistive technology device.

TERMS TO KNOW

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY DEVICE - is any item, piece of equipment, or product system used and may range from low tech (e.g., pencil grip / magnifying glass) to high tech (e.g., specialized communication computer).

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY SERVICE - what/who needs to be in place that directly assists in all processes involved in using an AT device.

ACCESS - means to have an opportunity to participate in activity with typically developing peers.

PARENT PREPARATION

- Remember, acquiring AT is an ongoing process. Your child's AT needs will change as s/he grows physically, cognitively, and emotionally.
- How much is my child interested in technology?
- What are my child's experiences with technology?
- What are my child's strengths? What is s/he good at doing?
- How will AT decrease my child's struggles and increase my child's skills at school?
- What tasks does my child most struggle with day to day?
- In what academic areas does my child struggle?
- In what settings / situations will my child need AT?
- Where will the AT tool be used (home, school, work, social settings)?
- How portable is it?
- How easy is it to learn about and operate?
- What technical support is available?
- Does it need to work with other technologies?
- How reliable is it? (Ask past and present users how well the product holds up)
- Are there devices for my child to try before purchasing?

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER WITH THE TEAM

- Does the child need **assistive technology (AT)**:
 - to meaningfully participate in the general curriculum?
 - to receive a free and appropriate public education (FAPE)?
 - to participate in academic or functional activities?
 - to access print materials?
 - to access auditory information?
 - for written communication and/or computer access?
 - for augmentative/alternative communication (AAC)?
 - to participate in state and local assessments?

- Does the child require **AT services** for:
 - evaluation of needs?
 - purchasing, leasing, or providing a piece of assistive technology?
 - selecting, designing, fitting, customizing, or adapting AT devices?
 - coordinating and using other therapies, interventions, or services with AT devices?
 - i.e., who will charge/maintain device and provide updates?
 - training or technical assistance for child, family, professional?

RESOURCES

Contact your local school district

State Support Team Region 1 _____ 800.346.8495 _____ www.sstr1.org

Ohio Department of Education (ODE) _____ education.ohio.gov

Ohio Center for Autism and Low Incidence (OCALI) _____ www.ocali.org

Family Center on Technology and Disability (FCTD) _____ www.fctd.info

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A PARENT QUICK GUIDE TO

Evaluation

This page contains a summary of information that parents may use to guide their active and equal participation on their child's team. The content is only a summary and further exploration of listed resources is encouraged.

EVALUATION = a process used to gather information that will help determine whether your child is a child with a disability **and** help determine educational needs of your child, including special education and related services, to access and make progress in the general education curriculum

TERMS TO KNOW

EVALUATION PLANNING FORM = developed and agreed upon by the evaluation team, including the parent, to determine what areas related to your child's suspected disability will be assessed, how, and by whom

EVALUATION TEAM REPORT (ETR) = written summary of evaluation information obtained by each evaluator; documents eligibility determination and team members agreement; must be provided to the parent prior to the next IEP meeting but no later than 14 days from the date of eligibility determination

PARENT CONSENT = parent understands and agrees in writing to the evaluation procedures outlined in the evaluation plan; giving consent is voluntary and may be revoked at any time; must get from parent before a first evaluation or before a reevaluation begins if new testing will be done

INTERVENTIONS = provided by school district address academic / behavior concerns for any individual preschool or school-age child who is performing below grade-level standards

REEVALUATION = once a child is receiving special education services, a reevaluation must take place (1) every three years, (2) when he/she is transitioning from preschool to school-age services, or (3) to make a change in disability category

REQUEST FOR EVALUATION = the procedural form that is used to officially make a request for a student to be evaluated for special education eligibility is Form *PR-04: Referral for Evaluation*

REVIEW OF EXISTING EVALUATION DATA = review of existing and current data (information) on the child, including progress in the curriculum, current and previous interventions, current and previous IEPs, etc.

PARENT PREPARATION

- Put request for evaluation in writing, or complete the Request for Evaluation form (PR-04) provided by the school or found at www.education.ohio.gov, click Topics → Special Education → Resources → Required and Optional Forms.
- Keep documentation of all correspondence, phone calls, conversations regarding your child.
- Become familiar with *Whose IDEA is This: A Parent's Guide to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA)*.
- Gather and provide existing information for the team: medical, hearing / vision screenings, family and educational history, private therapy progress, social-behavioral, successful home / community interventions, community services your child receives, your view of your child's strengths and needs.
- Review your child's school records / work samples to note academic / behavior progress and needs.
- If results are not explained and to you in a way that you understand, ask for re-explanation, clarification, or examples.
- Know your option to disagree with the team's decision and provide in writing as to why you disagree.
- If you disagree with the team's evaluation, you may request further evaluation by the school in specific areas, or may request, in writing, an independent evaluation.
- It is possible to request a reevaluation sooner than the usual time period of three years if there is a change in your child's needs.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER WITH THE TEAM

- What interventions have been done and what are the results of those interventions?
- What assessment methods and activities will be used to gather information (observation, standardized test, criterion-referenced scale, work samples, etc. . .)
- Who will be working with my child and when?
- What classes will my child miss if further testing is needed?
- Will my child be responsible for assignments when being pulled from testing? How will that missed instruction be provided?
- What will be done to assess my child's functional needs?
- What are my child's current strengths and skills in (reading, writing, math, social-behavioral, communication, independent skills, etc....)?
- How is my child performing in (area) compared to typical peers?
- What are the needs of my child academically? Functionally?
- Has any regression occurred? In what area(s)?
- If my child is not eligible for special education, what services will he / she receive?
 - What will that look like during the school day? How will progress be monitored?

RESOURCES

Contact your local school district special education administrator

State Support Team Region 1 _____ 800.346.8495 _____ www.sstr1.org

Ohio Department of Education _____ education.ohio.gov

Ohio Coalition for the Education of Children with Disabilities _____ www.occad.org

National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities:

Developing Your Child's IEP _____ www.nichcy.org

A PARENT QUICK GUIDE TO

Transition

from Preschool to Kindergarten

This page contains a summary of information that parents may use to guide their active and equal participation on their child's team. The content is only a summary and further exploration of listed resources is encouraged.

TRANSITION is “the planning for and moving of your child with a disability from early intervention to preschool OR preschool to elementary school.”

TERMS TO KNOW

ELIGIBILITY - After all the assessments are complete, the team will invite you to a meeting to review the results and determine if your child is eligible for special education services. The decision is made as a team.

- **Eligible**
 - The student meets one of the 14 definitions of educational disability, and an Individualized Education Program is developed.
- **Not Eligible**
 - The district may recommend other community services and programs that could help your child.
 - An accommodation / intervention plan may be developed to provide support to your child in the general education classroom.
 - The district is required to send you a form called Prior Written Notice (PR-01), which describes what **and** why the district has proposed / rejected an action with your child. It also describes your right to challenge the team decision.

EVALUATION TEAM REPORT (ETR) - is the written report (documentation) that summarizes the evaluation results, including the child's educational needs, and team determination of special education eligibility.

INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP) - is a written statement for a child with a disability that is developed, reviewed, and revised in accordance with federal and state regulations; outlines the educational goals, objectives, supports, and services for your child.

PRIOR WRITTEN NOTICE (PR-01) - is information in writing before the school district proposes to implement or refuse any action related to your child qualifying for and/or receiving special education services.

REEVALUATION - if your child has been receiving preschool special education services and will be transitioning to kindergarten the next school year, the IEP team will conduct a reevaluation to determine if they continue to be a student with a disability and to determine the educational needs of your child.

PARENT PREPARATION

- If possible, write or email the following information to the school, in advance of the meeting, to assist the team in preparing for the transition process:
 - Write down important things you'd like the team to know about your child: special interests/motivators, abilities, strengths, strategies that work at home/ in the community, situations that may cause problems for your child
 - Provide updated health information – particularly what is relevant to their learning/development
 - Relevant safety information
 - Provide other non-school providers' information (evaluations, progress notes) regarding your child's skills/needs (such as speech-language therapist, occupational therapist, counselor)
 - Your vision/future plan for your child
 - Make a list of goals you have for your child
 - Write down any questions/concerns you would like to address with the team
- Ask someone you trust and who knows your child to attend the meeting with you if you feel you would like support at the meeting

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER WITH THE TEAM

- Which school-age disability category is suspected and how will my child be assessed to determine if he is eligible for special education services in kindergarten?
- What current information and data do you have from the preschool team that helps explain the skills my child has or needs to learn?
- What skills does/doesn't my child demonstrate compared with typical peers?
- What are the prioritized needs of my child and are they best addressed through the IEP goals? (Not all "needs" will be addressed through IEP goals. They may be addressed through typical instruction, accommodations, behavior plans etc. This is an area for the team to discuss.)
- If my child receives special education services in Kindergarten, would my child benefit from participating in the general education classroom all or part of the day? What would that look like?
- In preschool, did my child make significant progress toward achieving their IEP goals? What data supports this?

RESOURCES

Contact your local school district

State Support Team Region 1 _____ 800.346.8495 _____ www.sstr1.org
Ohio Department of Education _____ education.ohio.gov

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A PARENT QUICK GUIDE TO

Preparing for Your Child's IEP

This page contains a summary of information that parents may use to guide their active and equal participation on their child's team. The content is only a summary and further exploration of listed resources is encouraged.

INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP) - a written statement for a child with a disability that is developed, reviewed, and revised in accordance with federal and state regulations; outlines the educational goals, objectives, supports, and services for your child.

TERMS TO KNOW

ACCESS - means to have an opportunity to participate in activities with typically developing peers.

EVALUATION TEAM REPORT (ETR) - is the written report (documentation) that summarizes the evaluation results, including the child's educational needs, and team determination of special education eligibility.

LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT - means that to the maximum extent possible, children with disabilities are educated with children who are nondisabled.

PARENT'S GUIDE: WHOSE IDEA IS THIS? - is given to you at least one time per year. This guide summarizes Ohio's special education rules, including your rights and the rights of your child.

PRIOR WRITTEN NOTICE (PR-01) - is information in writing before the school district proposes to implement or refuse any action related to your child qualifying for and/or receiving special education services; also provides information on your rights if you disagree with the district's decision.

PARENT INVITATION (PR-04) - is a written invitation to a meeting about your child with date, time, location, and purpose of meeting.

SPECIAL EDUCATION - is specially designed instruction, provided at no cost to the parents, to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability.

SPECIALLY DESIGNED INSTRUCTION - is adapting the content, methodology, or delivery of instruction as appropriate to the needs of a child with a disability.

PARENT PREPARATION

- Keep a notebook, or some type of organization system, to help track your notes, questions and other information relevant to your child's disability and educational needs.
- Keep and organize your child's work samples, progress notes, evaluations, etc.
- Ask someone you trust to attend a meeting with you if you feel you need support.
- Take *Whose IDEA is This* (Parent Guide) to the meeting with you for reference.

- Share with the school your goals, priorities and future hopes for your child.
- Share with the school relevant information from outside sources, such as therapists, doctors, etc.
- If your child will attend the meeting, prepare them for what the meeting is about, who may be there, and what will be discussed.
- In advance of the meeting:
 - Share with the school the information about your child that will help the team prepare for the IEP meeting (examples: safety concerns, medical issues, strengths/challenges, motivators, needs, strategies that work at home/community, situations that are difficult for your child).
 - Request a draft of the IEP to review / make notes.
- Reschedule the meeting if you cannot attend; ask to meet again before you sign the IEP if you need additional time to review information that was presented to you at the IEP meeting.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER WITH THE TEAM

- What skills does/doesn't my child demonstrate in the classroom compared with typical peers?
- What data does the team have (classroom skills, tests etc.) that shows how my child is doing with regard to achieving goals, instructional objectives and skill development?
- What skills does my child need to perform academically? Functionally?
- What are the prioritized needs of my child and are they best addressed through the IEP goals? (Not all "needs" will be addressed through IEP goals. They may be addressed through typical instruction, accommodations, behavior plans, etc. This is an area for the team to discuss.)
- Would my child benefit from participating in the general education classroom all or part of the day? What would that look like?
- Is my child making significant progress toward achieving the IEP goals and how will the progress be reported to me?

RESOURCES

Contact your local school district special education administrator

State Support Team Region 1 _____ 800.346.8495 _____ www.sstr1.org

Ohio Department of Education _____ education.ohio.gov
Special Education is under "Topics"

Ohio Coalition for the Education of Children with Disabilities _____ www.occde.org

National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities:
Developing Your Child's IEP _____ www.nichcy.org

A PARENT QUICK GUIDE TO

Transition

from Preschool to Kindergarten

This page contains a summary of information that parents may use to guide their active and equal participation on their child's team. The content is only a summary and further exploration of listed resources is encouraged.

TRANSITION is “the planning for and moving of your child with a disability from early intervention to preschool OR preschool to elementary school.”

TERMS TO KNOW

ELIGIBILITY - After all the assessments are complete, the team will invite you to a meeting to review the results and determine if your child is eligible for special education services. The decision is made as a team.

- **Eligible**
 - The student meets one of the 14 definitions of educational disability, and an Individualized Education Program is developed.
- **Not Eligible**
 - The district may recommend other community services and programs that could help your child.
 - An accommodation / intervention plan may be developed to provide support to your child in the general education classroom.
 - The district is required to send you a form called Prior Written Notice (PR-01), which describes what **and** why the district has proposed / rejected an action with your child. It also describes your right to challenge the team decision.

EVALUATION TEAM REPORT (ETR) - is the written report (documentation) that summarizes the evaluation results, including the child's educational needs, and team determination of special education eligibility.

INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP) - is a written statement for a child with a disability that is developed, reviewed, and revised in accordance with federal and state regulations; outlines the educational goals, objectives, supports, and services for your child.

PRIOR WRITTEN NOTICE (PR-01) - is information in writing before the school district proposes to implement or refuse any action related to your child qualifying for and/or receiving special education services.

REEVALUATION - if your child has been receiving preschool special education services and will be transitioning to kindergarten the next school year, the IEP team will conduct a reevaluation to determine if they continue to be a student with a disability and to determine the educational needs of your child.

PARENT PREPARATION

- If possible, write or email the following information to the school, in advance of the meeting, to assist the team in preparing for the transition process:
 - Write down important things you'd like the team to know about your child: special interests/motivators, abilities, strengths, strategies that work at home/ in the community, situations that may cause problems for your child
 - Provide updated health information – particularly what is relevant to their learning/development
 - Relevant safety information
 - Provide other non-school providers' information (evaluations, progress notes) regarding your child's skills/needs (such as speech-language therapist, occupational therapist, counselor)
 - Your vision/future plan for your child
 - Make a list of goals you have for your child
 - Write down any questions/concerns you would like to address with the team
- Ask someone you trust and who knows your child to attend the meeting with you if you feel you would like support at the meeting

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER WITH THE TEAM

- Which school-age disability category is suspected and how will my child be assessed to determine if he is eligible for special education services in kindergarten?
- What current information and data do you have from the preschool team that helps explain the skills my child has or needs to learn?
- What skills does/doesn't my child demonstrate compared with typical peers?
- What are the prioritized needs of my child and are they best addressed through the IEP goals? (Not all "needs" will be addressed through IEP goals. They may be addressed through typical instruction, accommodations, behavior plans etc. This is an area for the team to discuss.)
- If my child receives special education services in Kindergarten, would my child benefit from participating in the general education classroom all or part of the day? What would that look like?
- In preschool, did my child make significant progress toward achieving their IEP goals? What data supports this?

RESOURCES

Contact your local school district

State Support Team Region 1 _____ 800.346.8495 _____ www.sstr1.org
Ohio Department of Education _____ education.ohio.gov

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A P A R E N T Q U I C K G U I D E T O

Postsecondary Transition

This page contains a summary of information that parents may use to guide their active and equal participation on their child's team. The content is only a summary and further exploration of listed resources is encouraged.

POSTSECONDARY TRANSITION - the planning for and moving of your child with a disability from high school to post-school activities (such as college, employment, training, and living)

TERMS TO KNOW

AGE-APPROPRIATE TRANSITION ASSESSMENT (AATA) - is an ongoing process of collecting data on your child's preferences, interests, needs and strengths in current and future working, learning and living environments. The data is the basis for defining goals and services to be included in the IEP.

COURSE OF STUDY – is the type of classes you child will take throughout his/her high school years, for example, college preparatory, career-technical, or life-skills.

INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP) - is a written document for a child with a disability that outlines the educational goals, objectives, supports, and services for your child.

OHIO CORE GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS – three options for children with disabilities determined by the IEP team: complete the required CORE classes of the district, opt-out of the required CORE classes, or, meet the goals on his/her IEP.

POSTSECONDARY GOAL - is a goal that your child plans to achieve after leaving secondary school.

SELF-ADVOCACY - is an individual's ability to effectively communicate, convey, negotiate or assert his or her own interests, desires, needs, and rights. It involves making informed decisions and taking responsibility for those decisions.

SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE (SOP) - is a summary of your child's academic and functional performance along with recommendations that can assist your child in meeting postsecondary goals. The SOP is provided when your child graduates or ages out of services. It does not have to be completed as part of an IEP meeting.

TRANSITION SERVICE - assists your child's movement from school to post-school activities and is based on your child's preferences, interests, needs and strengths.

PARENT PREPARATION

- Where does my child intend to live, work and continue learning after high school?
- How well do my child's future goals match his/her preferences, interests, needs and strengths (PINS)?
- Is my child an active participant in the IEP meeting?
- Does my child understand his/her disability and can self-advocate?
- Have other agencies currently working with my child been invited to the IEP meeting?

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER WITH THE TEAM

- What skills does my child need to self-advocate?
- How will my child meet Ohio Core Graduation requirements?
- How many years will my child attend high school?
- What classes will prepare my child with skills needed to achieve post-school goals?
- Do the postsecondary goals in the IEP reflect my child's preferences, interests, needs and strengths (PINS)?
- How do my child's current skills compare to those needed to achieve the future goals?
- Will the transition services/activities, course of study, and annual goals in the IEP support my child's movement toward postsecondary goals?
- Has the team involved outside agencies that can support my child's movement toward the postsecondary goals?
- Are accommodations/modifications in the IEP appropriate for the adult environment and do they maximize independence for my child?
- Will my child require direct experience and instruction to learn life and job skills?
- Are there work opportunities for my child while still in high school?
- If this is the final year of high school for my child, has a Summary of Performance been completed?
- How does my child locate disability services after high school?

RESOURCES

Contact your local school district

State Support Team Region 1 _____ 800.346.8495 _____ www.sstr1.org

Ohio Department of Education _____ education.ohio.gov

National Transition Technical Assistance Center _____ www.nsttac.org

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A PARENT QUICK GUIDE TO

Functional Behavior Assessment

This page contains a summary of information that parents may use to guide their active and equal participation on their child's team. The content is only a summary and further exploration of listed resources is encouraged.

FUNCTIONAL BEHAVIOR ASSESSMENT (FBA) is a process for identifying observable problem behaviors, including the contexts or routines where the problem behavior occurs, the specific events that happen prior to and prompt the behavior, and the consequences (positive or negative) that follow and reinforce the behavior in order to gather information that will lead to the development of a behavior intervention plan (BIP)

An FBA is required when a student with a disability is to be removed from his or her educational program beyond 10 days.

TERMS TO KNOW

BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION PLAN (BIP) – defines how an educational setting will be changed to improve the behavioral success of one or more students; includes strategies of prevention, teaching, consequences, safety, and monitoring

INFORMAL ASSESSMENT - review previous and current information about student; problem-solve with team members

INDIRECT ASSESSMENT - rely on reports about a student's behavior: interviews, rating scales, checklists

DIRECT ASSESSMENT - student is observed in the context / routine where the problem behavior is most likely to occur; validates information provided by others; focuses on identifying specific events that precede the behavior and consequences that appear to control the problem behavior

PARENT PREPARATION

- Keep documentation of all correspondence, phone calls, conversations regarding your child.
- If you suspect your child has problem behaviors interfering with school progress, put a request in writing to meet with an educational team.
- Gather and provide existing information for the team: medical, hearing / vision screenings, family and educational history, private therapy progress, social-behavioral, successful home / community interventions, community services your child receives, independent evaluations, your view of your child's strengths and needs.
- Document any problem behaviors you observe at home that teachers report they also observe, when does the behavior occur (time, setting), what does it look like (describe what your child does), what happens after the behavior stops (how do you react? Other family members? Your child?)
- Review your child's school records / work samples to note academic / behavior progress and needs.
- If assessment results are not explained and to you in a way that you understand, ask for re-explanation, clarification, or examples.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER WITH THE TEAM

- What are my child's current strengths and skills in (reading, writing, math, social-behavioral, communication, independent skills, etc....)?
- What interventions have been done with my child and what are the results of those interventions?
- What assessment methods and activities will be used to gather information (e.g., observation, standardized test, criterion-referenced scale, interviews, work samples)
- What is my child's "problem behavior"?
 - How often does the behavior occur? How long does it last? How intense is the behavior?
 - What is happening when the behavior occurs?
 - What precipitates ("sets-off") the behavior?
 - What usually happens after the behavior?
 - With whom is the behavior most / least likely to occur?
 - Is that behavior the result of a skill problem (my child does not know how) or performance (my child has the skill but does not show that in class) problem?
 - Is my child trying to get or avoid something?
- To what type of reinforcers does my child better respond? (stimulation / sensory, social, or tangible/activity)
- When does the problem behavior NOT happen?
- What is the intent of the behavior? (Why is my child acting this way?)
- What do you want him/her to do instead?
- How can we teach him/her a better way to get the same thing?
- What other supports are needed to help my child be successful?
- How will we evaluate to know if it works? Who will be responsible for collecting data?
- Who will be working with my child and when?
- What are the needs of my child academically? Functionally?
- How will the following strategies be implemented: setting / event, antecedent, teaching, reinforcement, crisis intervention?
- When will we meet again to review?
- Who will communicate revisions and updates to team members, including parent / guardian?

RESOURCES

Contact your local school district

State Support Team Region 1 _____ 800.346.8495 _____ www.sstr1.org

Ohio Department of Education _____ education.ohio.gov

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A PARENT QUICK GUIDE TO

Section 504 | 504 Plans (K-12)

This page contains a summary of information that parents may use to guide their active and equal participation on their child's team. The content is only a summary and further exploration of listed resources is encouraged.

SECTION 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a law enforced by the Office for Civil Rights that prohibits discrimination based on disability in programs or activities receiving federal financial assistance. Schools, colleges, and vocational rehabilitation programs that receive U.S. Department of Education funds are required to provide access to educational programs and facilities, a free appropriate public education (FAPE) for elementary and secondary students, and academic adjustments in higher education.

TERMS TO KNOW

504 PLAN - a written document that outlines the services and accommodations a student with a disability will receive to access and participate in a free appropriate public education to the same extent as non-disabled peers

EVALUATION - gathering of data or information from a variety of sources by a multidisciplinary group; a school district is required to conduct before any action taken with respect to identifying a student with a disability and eligible under IDEA (Special Education) or Section 504

FREE APPROPRIATE PUBLIC EDUCATION (FAPE) - under Section 504, this consists of regular or special education services, accommodations, or modifications that allow a child with a disability to participate in an educational experience that is comparable to that of his nondisabled peers

MAJOR LIFE ACTIVITIES - include such functions as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working

MENTAL IMPAIRMENT - any mental or psychological disorder

OFFICE FOR CIVIL RIGHTS (OCR) - enforces Section 504 in programs and activities that receive Federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Education.

PARENT CONSENT - required for initial evaluation to begin and for the initial implementation of Section 504 services

PHYSICAL IMPAIRMENT - any physiological disorder or condition, cosmetic disfigurement, or anatomical loss affecting one of more body system

PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS - all public school districts are required to have a system of 504 policies in place that assure that the civil rights of the student are not violated

REEVALUATION - required to be conducted by school district "periodically" for each student eligible under Section 504; required before any action taken with a significant change in placement (discipline, transfer of program, terminating / reducing a related service)

PARENT PREPARATION

- Keep documentation of all correspondence, phone calls, conversations regarding your child.
- If you suspect your child has a disability and/or needs a 504 Plan, put a request in writing for an evaluation completed by the educational team.
- Gather and provide existing information for the team: medical, hearing / vision screenings, family and educational history, private therapy progress, social-behavioral, successful home / community interventions, community services your child receives, independent evaluations, your view of your child's strengths and needs.
- Review your child's school records / work samples to note academic / behavior progress and needs.
- If evaluation results are not explained and to you in a way that you understand, ask for re-explanation, clarification, or examples.
- Know your option to disagree with the team's decision and provide in writing as to why you disagree.
- If you disagree with the team's evaluation, follow the districts grievance procedure, and you may request a due process hearing.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER WITH THE TEAM

- What interventions have been done and what are the results of those interventions?
- What assessment methods and activities will be used to gather information (e.g., observation, standardized test, criterion-referenced scale, work samples)
- Who will be working with my child and when?
- What classes will my child miss if further testing is needed?
- Will my child be responsible for assignments when being pulled from testing? How will that missed instruction be provided?
- What are my child's current strengths and skills in (e.g., reading, writing, math, social-behavioral, communication, independent skills)?
- How is my child performing in (area) compared to typical peers?
- What are my child's needs to access and participate in general education?
- What related aids and services are necessary?
- What accommodations and/or modifications will be provided?
- When will the team next review the 504 plan?
- How will teachers be made aware of my child's 504 plan?
- When will my child be reevaluated?
- What are the needs of my child academically? Functionally?
- If my child is not eligible for Section 504, what is available to support their educational progress?
- What will that look like during the school day? How will progress be monitored?

RESOURCES

Contact your local school district

State Support Team Region 1 _____ 800.346.8495 _____ www.sstr1.org
Ohio Department of Education _____ education.ohio.gov
U.S. Department of Education _____ www.ed.gov

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