

Preschool Special Education Key Terms and Acronyms

Accommodations: Tools and procedures that provide equal access to instruction and assessment for students with disabilities. Designed to "level the playing field" for students with disabilities, accommodations are generally grouped into the following categories:

- Presentation (e.g., repeating directions);
- Response (e.g., pointing instead of speaking etc.);
- Timing/Scheduling (e.g., extended time, frequent breaks, etc.);
- Setting (e.g., special lighting, preferential seating, etc.).

Annual Goals: Goals written on the IEP that describe what the child is expected to achieve in the disability related area(s) over a one-year period.

Annual Review: A review of a student's special education services and progress that is completed at least once each school year at an IEP Team meeting. Changes in special education programs or services may or may not be recommended at this time. For preschool students, this process is managed by the Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE).

Assistive Technology Devices and Services: An Assistive Technology Device is any piece of equipment, product or system that is used to increase, maintain or improve the functional capabilities of a child with a disability (e.g., a communication device, FM unit, computer access). An Assistive Technology Service is any service that directly helps a child with a disability select, acquire, or use an assistive technology device. Any assistive technology or services your child requires must be listed in his or her IEP.

Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP): A plan that is based on a Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) to address problem behavior that, at a minimum, includes a description of the problem behavior, global and specific hypotheses as to why the problem behavior occurs and intervention strategies that include positive behavioral supports, strategies and supports, program modifications, and supplementary aids and services that may be required to address the problem behavior.

Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE): The CPSE is responsible for coordinating the special education process for preschool children ages 3 to 5. CPSEs serve families in the district where a family resides, regardless of where children receive preschool services. There are 10 CPSEs in different areas of the city. Each CPSE is part of a larger Committee on Special Education (CSE) office. A Chairperson oversees the office, including the CPSE in it. CPSE contact information can be found at <http://schools.nyc.gov/Academics/SpecialEducation/ContactsResources/cse.htm>

Consent: Consent must be "informed," which requires more than obtaining a parental signature. The following steps are taken for informed consent to be obtained by the IEP Team:

- Parent must be fully informed, in the preferred language or other mode of communication, of all information relevant to the activity for which consent is sought. Also, a parent must be notified of the child's records that will be released and to whom they will be released. This includes providing information about what testing will be completed, if any, and where the testing will take place;
- Parent must understand and agree in writing to the activity for which consent is sought; and
- Parent must be made aware that the consent is voluntary and may be revoked at any time. However, if consent is revoked, the revocation is not retroactive, meaning that it does not negate an action that occurred after consent was given and before the consent was revoked.

Declassification: An IEP Team determination that a student no longer needs special education services.

Due Process: The provision in law that guarantees and protects the rights of parents, students, and the Department of Education during the referral, evaluation, and placement process.

Early Intervention (EI): The Early Intervention (EI) Program, under the NYC Department of Health, supports families with children ages birth to three who have disabilities or developmental delays.

Eligibility: A preschool child will be found eligible for special education services if there is a significant delay in cognitive, language and communication, adaptive, socio-emotional, or motor functional areas or the child meets the other criteria set forth in the regulations. If found eligible, a preschool child is classified as a “Preschool Student with a Disability” on his/her IEP.

Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE): Special education programs and related services that are provided at public expense, under public supervision and direction, and without charge to the parent.

Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA): A functional behavioral assessment (FBA) is an assessment that seeks to determine why a student engages in behaviors that impede learning and how the student’s behavior relates to the environment.

Health Services: A type of related services provided to students who are identified as having medical and/or health needs that require the assistance of a nurse or health paraprofessional during the school day. Examples of this service may be feeding, ambulation, suctioning, or catheterization.

Hearing Education Services: Services designed to provide instruction in speech, reading, auditory training, and language development to enhance the growth of receptive/expressive communication skills.

Individualized Education Program (IEP): The IEP documents a child's eligibility for special education services and formalizes the school system's plan to provide special education programs and services that are appropriate for the child’s unique needs. It contains specific information about a child and the education program designed to meet these needs, including:

- A child's current performance in school and goals that can be reasonably accomplished in a school year;
- Special education and related services, including counseling; speech, occupational or physical therapy; paraprofessional support; assistive technology; behavior intervention and modifications;
- Participation with non-disabled children and/or mainstreaming opportunities;
- Date services will begin, how often they will be provided, where they will be provided and for how long;
- Means of measuring a child's progress.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA): A Federal law that gives students with disabilities the right to receive a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment from age 3 to the year the student turns 21 years or graduates with a high school diploma.

Least Restrictive Environment (LRE): LRE means that students with disabilities should be educated with their non-disabled peers to the greatest extent appropriate. This means that placement of students with disabilities in special classes, separate schools, or other removal from the regular educational environment occurs only when the nature or severity of the disability is such that even with the use of supplementary aids and services, education cannot be satisfactorily achieved. The least restrictive environment is therefore different for each child.

Management Needs: This means the amount of adult supervision and any necessary environmental modifications required to meet a student's needs. This must be indicated in the IEP.

Modifications: This describes a change in the curriculum. While accommodations are changes in formats or procedures that enable students to participate readily rather than be limited by disabilities, modifications are more extensive changes of both difficulty level and/or content quantity.

Occupational Therapy: This will help a child maintain, improve, or restore adaptive and functional skills, including fine motor skills and oral motor skills in all educational activities.

Orientation and Mobility Services: These services are designed to improve a child's understanding of spatial and environmental concepts and use of information he or she receives through the senses (e.g., sound, temperature, vibrations) for establishing, maintaining and regaining orientation and line of travel. They are provided to students with visual impairments.

Physical Therapy: This uses activities to maintain, improve or restore a child's functioning, including gross motor development, ambulation, balance and coordination in various settings, including but not limited to the classroom, gym, bathroom, playground, staircase and transitions between classes.

Recommendation: This is the determination of the provision of special education program and services made at an IEP Team meeting.

Reevaluation: This refers to an updated evaluation(s) for a student with a disability. A request for this can be made by the student's teacher, parent, or school district. A reevaluation may not be conducted more than once a year unless the school and the parent agree otherwise.

Referral: A referral begins the evaluation and placement process to determine whether the student has a disability and requires special education services.

Related Services: Services that may be given to students with disabilities to help support and assist their participation in their school program. These services must be recommended on the IEP and are provided either individually or in groups of no more than five. Related services may include: counseling, school health services, hearing education services, occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech/ language therapy, vision education services, orientation and mobility services and "other support" services.

Requested Review: An IEP Team meeting to review the child's IEP to determine if it continues to meet his or her needs. This review may be requested at any time by a parent, a teacher or other school staff member.

Speech/Language Therapy: These services help in the way a child understands sounds and language (called auditory processing), with articulation or phonological skills, comprehension, use of syntax, pragmatics, voice production, and fluency.

Twelve-Month School Year Services (also known as extended school year services): Twelve-Month School Year Services are provided during July and August to students with severe disabilities who require the continuity of education in order to prevent substantial regression in their developmental levels. This must be recommended by the IEP Team and indicated on the IEP, and for a preschool student, the CPSE must include a statement of the reasons for such recommendation. Parents must consent to extended school year services.

Vision Education Services: These services are designed to provide instruction for a child who is visually impaired. They utilize Braille, Nemeth Code, large print, optical and non-optical low-vision devices, and other skills necessary to attain academic, social, vocational and life adjustment skills, literacy and acquisition of information using tactile, visual and auditory strategies.