

An Individualised Educational Program (IEP)

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Abstract— *The Individualised Educational Program (IEP) is a crucial document designed to ensure that students with disabilities receive personalised and effective educational support. An IEP outlines specific educational goals, tailored to the unique needs of each student, ensuring they receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment. Developed collaboratively by a team that includes educators, parents, specialists, and, when appropriate, the student, the IEP serves as a roadmap for the student's educational journey. The IEP process begins with a comprehensive assessment to identify the student's strengths, challenges, and needs. Based on these findings, measurable annual goals are set, accompanied by short-term objectives and benchmarks. The plan specifies the special education services, accommodations, and modifications necessary to help the student achieve these goals. Additionally, the IEP details how the student's progress will be measured and reported to parents, ensuring transparency and accountability. The component of the IEP is its emphasis on inclusivity and integration, advocating for students to participate in general education settings to the greatest extent possible. This integration fosters social development and provides opportunities for students with disabilities to interact with their non-disabled peers. Moreover, the IEP addresses the need for related services such as speech therapy, occupational therapy, and counselling, which are vital for holistic development. Regular reviews and updates of the IEP ensure that it remains responsive to the evolving needs of the student. This dynamic nature of the IEP process underscores the commitment to providing Individualised support that adapts as the student grows and their educational needs change. Ultimately, the IEP aims to equip students with the skills and knowledge they need to succeed academically, socially, and vocationally, paving the way for a fulfilling and independent future.*

document that outlines tailored educational goals and the specific services a student requires to achieve them. Developed through a collaborative process involving educators, parents, specialists, and the student, the IEP ensures that each child receives a free appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment. The primary objective of an IEP is to address the unique needs of each student, fostering their academic, social, and emotional development. It encompasses detailed assessments of the student's abilities, sets measurable goals, and specifies the accommodations and modifications necessary for their success. By focusing on the individual, the IEP not only promotes educational equity but also empowers students to reach their full potential. Through regular reviews and updates, the IEP remains a dynamic tool, adapting to the changing needs of the student and ensuring ongoing progress. In essence, the IEP is a vital instrument in supporting the educational journey of students with disabilities, paving the way for their future success.

Meaning: An Individualised Educational Program (IEP) is a specialized plan developed for students with disabilities to ensure they receive a tailored education that meets their unique needs. Required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), an IEP is a legally binding document that outlines specific educational goals and the services necessary to achieve them. The creation of an IEP involves a collaborative team including educators, parents, specialists, and the student, aiming to provide a comprehensive support system.

I. INTRODUCTION

The Individualised Educational Program (IEP) is a cornerstone of special education, designed to provide Personalised support to students with disabilities. Mandated by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the IEP is a legally binding

The essence of an IEP lies in its Individualised approach, which begins with a thorough assessment of the student's strengths, challenges, and educational requirements. Based on this assessment, the IEP sets personalised goals and details the accommodations, modifications, and related services such as speech therapy or counselling needed to facilitate the

student's learning and development. It also specifies how progress will be measured and reported, ensuring transparency and accountability.

An IEP is a critical tool in special education that customizes learning experiences to help students with disabilities succeed academically, socially, and emotionally. It ensures that these students have access to an equitable education and the opportunity to achieve their full potential.

Individualised: According to meet the specific needs of each student. It recognizes that every student with a disability has unique requirements that cannot be addressed through a one-size-fits-all approach.

Educational: Focused on the student's learning and academic progress. It includes both academic goals and functional goals, such as social skills and life skills.

Program: An organized plan that includes specific services, accommodations, and modifications designed to help the student succeed in school.

Components of an IEP

Current Performance Levels: This section describes the student's current academic and functional performance. It includes assessments and observations that highlight the student's strengths and areas of need.

Annual Goals: These are measurable, achievable objectives that the student should accomplish within a year. Goals are specific to the student's unique needs and designed to help them make progress in the general education curriculum.

Special Education and Related Services: This part details the specific educational services, accommodations, and modifications the student will receive. It includes special education instruction, speech therapy, occupational therapy, and other services necessary for the student to meet their goals.

Participation with Non-Disabled Students: The IEP must explain the extent to which the student will participate in general education classes and activities. The goal is to include the student with their non-disabled peers as much as possible.

Testing Accommodations: This section outlines any modifications or accommodations needed for the student to participate in state or district-wide assessments. For instance, extra time, alternative formats, or the use of assistive technology might be specified.

Transition Plan: For students aged 16 and older (or younger in some states), the IEP must include a transition plan to prepare the student for post-secondary education, employment, and independent living.

Progress Monitoring: The IEP must specify how the student's progress toward meeting their annual goals will be measured and how often parents will receive updates.

IEP Development Process

Referral and Evaluation: A student is referred for special education evaluation, often by a teacher or parent. Comprehensive assessments are conducted to determine the student's eligibility for special education services.

IEP Meeting: An IEP team, including the student's parents, teachers, special education professionals, and sometimes the student, meets to develop the IEP. They discuss the student's needs, set goals, and determine the appropriate services.

Implementation: Once the IEP is developed, it is implemented by the school. Teachers and service providers deliver the outlined services and supports.

Review and Revision: The IEP is reviewed at least annually to assess the student's progress and make necessary adjustments. Re-evaluations occur every three years (or more frequently if needed) to determine continued eligibility and update the IEP.

Importance of an IEP

Personalised Support: An IEP provides tailored support that addresses the unique educational needs of a student with disabilities.

Legal Protection: It ensures that students with disabilities receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE) as mandated by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Parental Involvement: Parents are essential members of the IEP team, ensuring their child's needs are met and their rights are protected.

Accountability: Regular monitoring and updates ensure that the student is making progress and that educational goals are being met.

Parts of an IEP

An Individualised Educational Program (IEP) comprises several key parts, each serving a specific function to ensure that the student's educational needs are met.

1. Student's Current Performance: Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP) is a crucial section of an Individualised Educational Program (IEP). It provides a detailed description of the student's current abilities, performance, and needs. This section serves as the foundation for setting annual goals and determining appropriate services and supports. The more in-depth look at what the PLAAFP should include:

Components of PLAAFP

Academic Achievement: Information about the student's performance in academic areas such as reading, writing, math, science, and social studies. Standardized test scores, classroom assessments, grades, teacher observations, and work samples.

Functional Performance: Information about the student's performance in non-academic areas that impact their ability to participate in educational activities. This includes social skills, communication, behaviour, daily living skills, and mobility. Observations, functional assessments, input from parents, and reports from related service providers (e.g., speech therapists, occupational therapists).

Impact of Disability: Explanation of how the student's disability affects their involvement and progress in the general education curriculum. Specific challenges the student faces due to their disability, and how these challenges manifest in the classroom and other educational settings.

Strengths and Interests: Highlights the student's strengths, talents, and interests. Positive attributes that can be leveraged to support learning and engagement.

Parental Input: Consideration of the parents' observations, concerns, and suggestions regarding their child's performance and needs. Parents' perspective on their child's abilities and challenges, which provides valuable context for the IEP team.

Baseline Data: Specific, measurable information about the student's current performance levels, serving as a starting point for setting goals. Quantitative data (e.g., reading at a certain grade level, completing math problems with 80% accuracy) that provides a clear picture of where the student is at the beginning of the IEP period.

Purpose and Importance of PLAAFP:

Foundation for Goal Setting: The PLAAFP provides the baseline data needed to set realistic and measurable annual goals.

Individualised Planning: It ensures that the IEP is tailored to the student's unique needs by providing a comprehensive understanding of their current performance.

Progress Monitoring: Establishes a starting point for measuring the student's progress over time.

Informed Decision-Making: Helps the IEP team make informed decisions about the services, supports, and accommodations necessary for the student to succeed.

Example of a PLAAFP Statement:

Academic Achievement: "Krish is currently reading at a 2nd-grade level, as measured by the XYZ Reading Assessment. She demonstrates strength in decoding words but struggles with comprehension, particularly with inferencing and drawing conclusions."

Functional Performance: "Krish shows appropriate social skills with peers but has difficulty staying focused during group activities. She often requires redirection to stay on task and benefits from visual schedules to understand daily routines."

Impact of Disability: "Krish's ADHD significantly impacts her ability to remain focused and organized, affecting her progress in the general education curriculum. She needs frequent breaks and structured support to complete assignments."

Strengths and Interests: "Krish has a keen interest in science and enjoys hands-on experiments. She excels in activities that involve building and creating, such as using construction toys and conducting simple science experiments."

Parental Input: "Krish's parents note that she is very creative and motivated by tasks that involve drawing or building. They are concerned about her ability to stay organized and complete homework independently."

Baseline Data: "Krish can solve single-digit addition problems with 90% accuracy but struggles with multi-step word problems, solving them correctly only 50% of the time."

This detailed and structured information helps ensure that the IEP is Personalised and focused on the student's specific needs, leading to more effective support and improved educational outcomes.

2. Annual Goals: Annual goals are a critical part of the Individualised Educational Program (IEP), outlining what the student is expected to achieve over the course of a year. These goals focus on both academic and functional areas and are designed to address the specific needs identified in the Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP) section. Goals should adhere to the SMART criteria:

Specific: Clearly defined and understandable.

Measurable: Quantifiable, so progress can be tracked.

Achievable: Realistic and attainable within the timeframe.

Relevant: Directly related to the student's needs.

Time-bound: Set to be achieved within a specific period, typically one year.

Components of Annual Goals:

Specific Objectives: Detailed description of what the student will accomplish.

Example: "Improve reading comprehension skills."

Measurable Criteria: Clear indicators of progress and success.

Example: "Answer 8 out of 10 comprehension questions correctly."

Achievable Targets: Goals set based on the student's current performance and potential for growth.

Example: "Increase from answering 4 out of 10 to 8 out of 10 questions correctly."

Relevant Focus: Goals that address the student's unique educational needs.

Example: "Focus on understanding main ideas and supporting details."

Time-bound Deadlines: Specific timeframe for achieving the goal.

Example: "Achieve this goal by the end of the school year."

Example of Annual Goals:

Academic Goal: Reading Comprehension

Goal: By the end of the school year, Krish will improve her reading comprehension skills.

Specific: Krish will focus on identifying the main idea and supporting details in grade-level texts.

Measurable: She will answer at least 8 out of 10 comprehension questions correctly in 4 out of 5 trials.

Achievable: Based on her current ability to answer 4 out of 10 questions correctly.

Relevant: Improving comprehension is crucial for her overall academic success.

Time-bound: This goal will be reviewed and updated by the end of the school year.

Functional Goal: Organizational Skills

Goal: By the end of the school year, Krish will improve her organizational skills.

Specific: Krish will use a planner to track her assignments and due dates.

Measurable: She will independently write down and complete 90% of her assignments on time over 8 consecutive weeks.

Achievable: She currently tracks and completes 50% of her assignments on time.

Relevant: Organizational skills are essential for her academic and functional success.

Time-bound: This goal will be reviewed and updated by the end of the school year.

Behavioural Goal: Focus and Attention

Goal: By the end of the school year, Krish will improve her ability to stay focused during class activities.

Specific: Krish will use a visual timer and checklist to stay on task during independent work.

Measurable: She will remain on task for at least 20 minutes in 4 out of 5 trials.

Achievable: She currently remains on task for 10 minutes.

Relevant: Increased focus will enhance her ability to complete academic tasks.

Time-bound: This goal will be reviewed and updated by the end of the school year.

Criteria for Measuring Progress:

Data Collection: Regularly collect data on the student's performance.

Example: Teacher observations, quizzes, assignments, and checklists.

Progress Monitoring: Assess the student's progress towards the goals at regular intervals.

Example: Weekly or bi-weekly reviews of the student's performance data.

Adjustments: Make necessary adjustments to instruction or support based on progress data.

Example: Modifying strategies or providing additional resources if the student is not making expected progress.

Reporting: Regularly inform parents and guardians about the student's progress.

Example: Progress reports sent home every quarter or during scheduled IEP meetings.

By setting SMART annual goals, the IEP ensures that the student has clear, attainable targets to work towards, and that their progress can be effectively monitored and supported throughout the school year.

Special Education and Related Services: The Special Education and Related Services section of an IEP outlines the specific supports and interventions that will be provided to the student to help them achieve their annual goals. These services are tailored to meet the individual needs of the student and can include a wide range of educational and therapeutic interventions.

Components of Special Education and Related Services:

Specialized Instruction: Individualised or small-group instruction tailored to the student's unique learning needs.

Examples: Reading interventions, math tutoring, modified curriculum, and resource room support.

Related Services: Additional services that support the student's educational goals and address specific areas of need.

Examples

Speech Therapy: To address speech and language impairments.

Occupational Therapy: To improve fine motor skills, sensory processing, and daily living skills.

Physical Therapy: To enhance gross motor skills and mobility.

Counselling: To support social-emotional and behavioural needs.

Transportation: To ensure the student can travel to and from school and related services.

Frequency, Duration, and Location of Services

Frequency: How often the service will be provided (e.g., daily, weekly).

Duration: How long each service session will last (e.g., 30 minutes, 1 hour).

Location: Where the service will be provided (e.g., general education classroom, special education classroom, therapy room).

Service Providers: Identification of the professionals responsible for delivering the services. Special education teachers, speech-language pathologists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, counsellors.

Example of Special Education and Related Services:

Specialized Instruction

Service: Reading intervention

Frequency: 4 times per week

Duration: 45 minutes per session

Location: Resource room

Provider: Special education teacher

Service: Math support

Frequency: 3 times per week

Duration: 30 minutes per session

Location: General education classroom

Provider: Special education teacher

Related Services

Service: Speech Therapy

Frequency: 2 times per week

Duration: 30 minutes per session

Location: Speech therapy room

Provider: Speech-language pathologist

Service: Occupational Therapy

Frequency: 1 time per week

Duration: 45 minutes per session

Location: Occupational therapy room

Provider: Occupational therapist

Service: Counselling
Frequency: 1 time per week
Duration: 30 minutes per session
Location: Counselling office
Provider: School counsellor

Additional Supports

Service: Assistive technology consultation
Frequency: Monthly
Duration: 1 hour per session
Location: General education classroom

Provider: Assistive technology specialist

Service: Transportation
Frequency: Daily
Duration: As needed for school commute
Location: From home to school and back
Provider: School transportation services

Importance of Special Education and Related Services

Targeted Support: Ensures that the student receives specific interventions tailored to their unique needs, facilitating progress towards their goals.

Collaborative Effort: Involves a team of professionals working together to provide comprehensive support, addressing all areas of the student's development.

Legal Compliance: Meets the legal requirements set by IDEA, ensuring that the student receives a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE).

Holistic Development: Addresses not only academic needs but also functional, social-emotional, and physical development, promoting overall well-being.

By detailing the special education and related services in the IEP, the educational team can ensure that the student receives the necessary supports to make meaningful progress in their educational journey.

Supplementary Aids and Services: The Supplementary Aids and Services section of an IEP details the additional aids, services, and supports that will be provided to the student in general education classes or other education-related settings. These aids and services are designed to help the student access the general education curriculum, participate in educational activities, and achieve their annual goals.

Components of Supplementary Aids and Services

Assistive Technology: Tools and devices that support the student's learning and communication.

Examples: Text-to-speech software, communication devices, adaptive keyboards, and software applications.

Classroom Accommodations: Changes to the environment, instruction, or materials to support the student's learning.

Examples: Extended time on tests, preferential seating, reduced assignment length, and visual supports.

One-on-One Aides: Individual support provided by an aide or paraprofessional to assist the student with tasks and activities.

Examples: Help with staying on task, assistance during transitions, and support with classroom activities.

Modified Materials: Adapted or altered educational materials to meet the student's needs.

Examples: Simplified texts, large print materials, and graphic organizers.

Behavioural Supports: Strategies and interventions to address behavioural challenges and promote positive behaviour.

Examples: Behaviour intervention plans, positive reinforcement systems, and social skills training.

Environmental Supports: Adjustments to the physical or social environment to enhance the student's learning experience.

Examples: Quiet areas for focused work, sensory-friendly spaces, and structured routines.

Example of Supplementary Aids and Services

Assistive Technology:

Service: Text-to-speech software

Frequency: Available as needed

Location: General education classroom and home

Provider: Special education teacher

Service: Communication device

Frequency: Daily use

Location: All educational settings

Provider: Speech-language pathologist

Classroom Accommodations

Service: Extended time on tests

Frequency: As needed for assessments

Location: General education classroom

Provider: General education teacher

Service: Preferential seating

Frequency: Daily

Location: General education classroom

Provider: General education teacher

One-on-One Aides

Service: Classroom aide

Frequency: Daily, full-time support
Location: General education classroom and during transitions

Provider: Paraprofessional

Modified Materials

Service: Simplified texts

Frequency: For all reading assignments

Location: General education classroom

Provider: Special education teacher

Service: Graphic organizers

Frequency: For writing assignments and projects

Location: General education classroom

Provider: General education teacher

Behavioural Supports

Service: Behaviour intervention plan

Frequency: Implemented daily

Location: All educational settings

Provider: School psychologist

Service: Positive reinforcement system

Frequency: Throughout the day

Location: General education classroom

Provider: General education teacher

Environmental Supports

Service: Quiet area for focused work

Frequency: Available as needed

Location: General education classroom

Provider: General education teacher

Service: Structured routines

Frequency: Daily

Location: General education classroom

Provider: General education teacher

Importance of Supplementary Aids and Services

Access to Curriculum: Ensures that the student can access and participate in the general education curriculum alongside their peers.

Inclusive Education: Promotes inclusion by providing the necessary supports for the student to succeed in regular education settings.

Tailored Support: Addresses the specific needs of the student, providing Individualised assistance that enhances learning and participation.

Positive Outcomes: Helps the student achieve their academic and functional goals, leading to better educational and personal outcomes.

These supplementary aids and services in the IEP, the educational team can ensure that the student receives

the necessary supports to succeed in their educational environment.

Participation with Non-Disabled Peers: Describes the extent to which the student will participate in general education classes and activities. Includes information on any necessary accommodations or modifications to facilitate inclusion.

Assessment Accommodations: Specifies any modifications or accommodations needed for the student to participate in state or district-wide assessments. Examples include extended time, alternate formats, and the use of assistive technology.

Transition Plan (for students 16 and older): Outlines a plan to prepare the student for life after high school, including post-secondary education, employment, and independent living. Includes goals and services related to vocational training, higher education, and life skills.

Progress Reporting: Explains how the student's progress towards meeting the annual goals will be measured and reported to parents. Specifies the frequency of progress reports and the methods used to evaluate progress.

Extent of Non-Participation: Justifies any time the student will not participate in general education classes and activities. Explains the reasons for any necessary segregation and the benefits of the specialized setting.

Extended School Year (ESY) Services: Determines if the student requires services beyond the regular school year to prevent significant regression. Specifies the type and duration of services to be provided during breaks.

Special Considerations: Addresses any additional considerations that may affect the student's education. Includes considerations for students with specific needs, such as those who are blind or visually impaired, deaf or hard of hearing, or those with behavioural challenges.

Each part of the IEP is designed to ensure that the student's educational needs are thoroughly assessed and addressed, providing a comprehensive framework for their educational journey.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of an Individualised Educational Program (IEP) underscores its fundamental role in bridging the gap between students with disabilities and their educational aspirations. An effective IEP is not

merely a document but a dynamic, evolving strategy that tailors education to the specific needs and strengths of each student. By fostering a collaborative approach that involves educators, parents, specialists, and the students themselves, the IEP process ensures that educational goals are not only set but also achievable and meaningful. The IEP's commitment to inclusivity and integration within the general education environment highlights the importance of social interaction and equal opportunity. This inclusiveness is pivotal for the personal and academic growth of students with disabilities, allowing them to benefit from diverse perspectives and experiences. Furthermore, by detailing necessary accommodations, modifications, and related services, the IEP provides a comprehensive framework that supports students in overcoming barriers to learning.

Regular assessment and updates to the IEP are crucial, as they ensure that the program adapts to the student's evolving needs. This responsiveness is key to maintaining the relevance and effectiveness of the educational strategies employed. The IEP's focus on measurable goals and transparent progress monitoring keeps all stakeholders informed and engaged, fostering a supportive environment where the student can thrive. Ultimately, the success of an IEP lies in its ability to empower students with disabilities to achieve their full potential. By equipping them with the necessary tools, skills, and knowledge, the IEP prepares students for lifelong learning and participation in society. It aims to create a pathway to independence and self-sufficiency, ensuring that students with disabilities have the opportunity to lead fulfilling and productive lives. The IEP stands as a testament to the educational system's dedication to equity, Individualised support, and the holistic development of every student.

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