

Norwalk School District Special Education FAQs November 2018

1. What is an IEP?

An Individualized Education Program (IEP) is a plan developed for students identified as having a disability and a need for specially designed instruction. *Iowa Administrative Rules of Special Education (LARSE) 300.23*

2. What is “specially designed instruction?”

It is instruction that is adapted to meet the needs of the student. This includes adapting the content, methodology, and delivery of instruction. *LARSE 300.39(3)*

3. What happens at an IEP meeting?

The purpose of the IEP meeting is to discuss the needs of the students, due to their disability, and determine the appropriate ways to educationally serve the student. This discussion may take more than one meeting and may involve many people who have a knowledge of the student, the disability and the services that are required to meet the student’s need.

4. Who will be at an IEP meeting?

The members of an IEP meeting include: parent/guardian, teachers (general and special), school district administrator, AEA staff, and the child with the disability, if appropriate. *LARSE 300.321*

5. Is it OK for a parent to bring someone else to an IEP meeting?

Yes, parents may invite others to attend who have a legitimate educational reason for being at an IEP meeting. Likewise, the district may invite others as well. It is important that all parties communicate with one another if others are invited to a meeting so there are no ‘surprise’ participants.

6. Will a child still be in his/her regular classroom?

The goal of the IEP team should always be to educate the student in the environment that is least restrictive (or most inclusive) with peers. However, no two students are the same and each decision should be made based on what is appropriate for the student to receive appropriate educational benefit.

7. How often do parents get updates on their child's progress?

You will receive updates three to four times per year regarding your child’s progress. If you would like progress updates more often, you can always contact your child’s teacher directly to request more frequent updates.

8. Who should parents contact if they have questions or concerns?

When you have questions regarding your child’s IEP or services, the first person to start with would be the special education teacher. If your concerns persist, you can then follow the appropriate chain of communication to the building principal, director of student services, and then the superintendent.

9. How can I be prepared for the IEP meeting as a parent?

The best thing to do as a parent to be prepared for a meeting is to ask questions of the teacher or AEA staff person. It is often helpful to write down questions or concerns prior to the meeting so that you can make sure you get the information you want to know. If you feel as if you would like support, the AEA has staff people designated through their Family and Educator Connection to come alongside parents to help them understand the process and ask questions.

10. Am I supposed to bring my child to an IEP meeting?

If you feel your child is old enough to sit through an IEP meeting (which typically last 30-60 minutes) and mature enough to contribute to the discussion, then bringing your child is a good idea. Most children 12 years of age and older can understand and contribute meaningful information to help decisions that are being made about their services. However, each child is different and bringing a child to the meeting should be discussed by the parents and teacher prior to the meeting.