



## Contact Us!

701-837-7500

info@pathfinder-nd.org

pathfinder-nd.org

# Individualized Education Program

## Pocket Guide

## Terms and Acronyms

**Individualized Education Program (IEP)** - A written document for a student with a disability (ages 3-21) that is developed and implemented to meet unique educational needs.

**Extended School Year (ESY)** - For some students with a disability, special education and related services may be required in excess of the regular school year in order to receive a free appropriate public education. Extended school year services support the student in maintaining the skills and progress on IEP goals acquired, during the school year.

**Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)** - A term used to describe procedures to ensure that, to the maximum extent appropriate, students with disabilities are educated with students who are not disabled.

**Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAPF)** - The PLAAPF statements are the foundation of the student's IEP that comprehensively describes a student's current abilities, performance, strengths, and needs at school and at home.

**Supplementary Aids and Services** - Aids, services, and other supports that are provided in the general education classes or other education settings to enable students with a disability to be educated with students who are not disabled to maximum extent appropriate.

<https://www.cadreworks.org/resources/cadre-materials/steps-success-communicating-your-childs-school>

**Steps to Success: Communicating with Your Child's School CADRE**

**Developing Your Child's IEP CPIR**

<https://www.parentcenterhub.org/pa12/>

**Guidelines: IEP Planning Process NDDPI**

<https://pathfinder-nd.org/resources/122.pdf>

**Building an Individualized Education Program (Webinar)**

Part 1: <https://pathfinder-nd.org/resource.php?r=325>

Part 2: <https://pathfinder-nd.org/resource.php?r=324>

<https://www.cadreworks.org/>

**The Center for Appropriate Dispute Resolution for Special Education (CADRE)**

**Center for Parent Information & Resources (CPIR)**

<http://www.parentcenterhub.org/section504/>

**ND Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI)**

<https://www.nd.gov/dpi/>

**Pathfinder Services of ND**

<https://www.pathfinder-nd.org/>

## Additional Resources

### Things to Remember

- An individualized education program, IEP, meeting must be initiated and conducted at least once every twelve months. However, an IEP may be reviewed more frequently than once every twelve months if needed.
- The local education agency must notify the parent(s) early enough to ensure that they will have an opportunity to attend the IEP meeting. They must also schedule the IEP meeting at a mutually agreed upon time and place.
- Required members of the IEP team include the parent(s) of the student, not less than one regular education teacher, not less than one special education teacher, and a local education agency, LEA, representative. Additional team members are required for special circumstances. (see Required IEP Members section)
- The IEP process serves multiple purposes including: 1) documentation of the student's strengths and needs; 2) assurance of procedural safeguards for the students and parents, and 3) assurance that a decision making process is followed.
- Special education is not a place. It is a set of services and the type of environment/location where those services will be provided that allows the student to progress in the general education curriculum.

## Additional Resources

when designing and developing transition services.

the student in reaching those goals. The student's preferences and interests must always be considered

be the consideration of the postsecondary goals of the student and the transition services needed to assist

data for the suspected disability area.

evaluation personnel must also be in attendance. This person must have experience in interpreting evaluation

district resources and be able to ensure that whatever services are set out in the IEP will be provided.

representative in an IEP meeting. It is important that the LEA representative have the authority to commit

of typical child development and behavior.

materials and accommodations currently used. Additionally, they bring to the IEP team a rich understanding

general education curriculum as much as possible.

help the IEP team focus on the system of necessary supports that will allow the student to participate in the

interests, performance, and history.

the scope of the student's needs. Parents provide valuable information relating to the child's abilities,

## Required Team Members

### Components of an IEP

- Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAPF)
- Consideration of Special Factors
- Goals/Short-term Objectives/Periodic Review of Services
- Adaptations of Education Services NID State Assessment
- Description of Activities with Students Who are Not Disabled
- Educational Environments
- Special Education and Related Services
- Length of Day and Extended School Year (ESY)

### Things to Remember

▼ **LOOK INSIDE FOR MORE** ▼

# Components of the IEP

1

**Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP)** describes how a student is currently doing in school and daily activities. It explains the student's strengths, challenges, and needs at school and at home. This information is used to build the IEP and helps the team decide appropriate goals, services, supports, accommodations, and placement. The PLAAFP also explains how the student's disability affects their learning and participation in the general education classroom.

2

**Consideration of Special Factors** means the IEP team looks at any special needs that may affect the student's learning. This includes things like limited English skills, vision or hearing needs, communication challenges, behavior needs, and the use of assistive technology. These factors must be discussed and written into the IEP so the student receives the right supports and services.

3

**Annual goals** are based on the needs identified in the student's PLAAFP and are written with the student's unique skills, interests, and strengths in mind. These goals describe what the student is expected to learn or improve over one year and are used to measure progress in knowledge, skills, or behavior over time.

4

**Short-term objectives** are smaller, measurable steps that help a student work toward each annual goal. They are used to track progress and show whether the student is making enough progress toward meeting the goal. Short-term objectives are not required for all students and are only required for students who take the North Dakota Alternate Assessment aligned to alternate achievement standards.

5

**Periodic review of services** keeps parents informed about their child's progress toward meeting annual goals and short-term objectives. Parents receive updates that explain how much progress the student is making and whether the student is on track to meet the goals by the end of the year. The IEP team decides how often these updates are shared, and the schedule is written into the IEP. These reviews help the team decide if the current services and placement are meeting the student's learning needs.

6

**Adaptation of Educational Services** section of the IEP explains the supports, accommodations, modifications, and other adjustments a student needs to take part in the general curriculum and school activities as fully as possible. This section also explains how the student will participate in North Dakota state and districtwide assessments. All students, including students with disabilities, must be included in the state's accountability system.

7

**IEP helps make sure students with disabilities have chances to learn** and take part in activities with students who are not disabled. This includes more than just academic classes and may involve activities that build social skills, job skills, and physical health, which can be important throughout life.

8

**Students with disabilities are educated** with students who are not disabled as much as possible. The IEP team carefully considers different learning environments and writes down where the student will receive most of their instruction. These decisions are based on the student's individual learning needs and the supports listed in the IEP, not on general rules or checklists.

9

**IEP team decides and writes down the services** the student will receive, including what services are provided, how often and how long they will occur, when they begin, who provides them, and where they take place. This helps families clearly understand the supports their student will receive.


**Length of Day:** If a student needs a school day that is different from the typical school day, the IEP team must explain the reason based on the student's individual needs.


**Extended School Year (ESY):** Some students may need special education services beyond the regular school year to maintain the skills and progress they gained during the school year. ESY services are provided to prevent skill loss and are not used to teach new skills.


**This brochure was developed from information located in:**

ND Department of Public Instruction, *Guidelines: Individualized Education Program Planning Process*.  
<https://www.nd.gov/dpi/sites/www/files/documents/SpEd/Guidelines/IEP%20Guide%208-2019.pdf>  
Center for Parent Information and Resources, *CPIR, Building the Legacy Modules*.  
<http://www.parentcenterhub.org/>

Pathfinder Services of ND (PSND) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that provides educational resources and navigational supports through statewide services to families, youth, and professionals.

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