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Special Education Pocket Guide

IDEA Disability Categories in ND

- Autism
- Deaf-blindness
- Deafness
- Developmental delay
- Emotional disability
- Deaf/Hard of Hearing
- Intellectual disability
- Multiple disabilities
- Orthopedic impairment
- Other health impairment
- Specific learning disability
- Speech or language impairment
- Traumatic brain injury
- Visual impairment, including blindness

Please refer to the ND Department of Public Instruction document, Parent Guide to Special Education, for a description of each of these categories.

Section 504/ADA: Guideline for Parents and Educators
<https://pathfinder-nd.org/resources/1133.pdf>

Categories of Disability Under IDEA
https://www.parentcenterhub.org/wp-content/uploads/repo_items/gr3.pdf

Questions Often Asked by Parents about Special Education Services
<https://www.parentcenterhub.org/igt/>

Parent Guide to Special Education
<https://pathfinder-nd.org/resources/1132.pdf>

The Top 10 Basics of the Special Education Process (webinar)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AhI2JrCT2TI>

Center for Parent Information and Resources (CIPR)
<https://www.parentcenterhub.org/>

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

- IDEA defines a child with a disability as a child: (a) who has been evaluated in accordance with IDEA requirements; (b) who has been determined through this evaluation to have one or more of the disabilities included in IDEA; (c) who, because of a disability, needs special education and related services.
- If there is a concern, the parent of a child or the school district may initiate the referral for an initial special education evaluation.
- The public agency must have the parents' written informed consent before evaluating their child for the first time.
- A child's initial evaluation must be accurate, individualized, and comprehensive.
- Eligibility for special education and related services is determined by a multidisciplinary team including the child's parents.
- Every child a disability, ages 3-21, who receives special education and related services under IDEA must have an Individualized Education Program (IEP).
- Progress must be reported periodically to parents.

Additional Resources

a student with disabilities.

Special Education: Specially designed instruction, at no cost to the parent, to meet the unique needs of

are required to assist a student with disabilities to benefit from education.

Related Services: Transportation and such developmental, corrective, and other supportive services as

without due process of law.

Procedural Safeguards: Legal protections taken to insure that an individual's rights are not denied

served in an infant-toddler program (Part C) for ages birth-3.

Individualized Family Services Plan (IFSP): A written plan developed for a child with disabilities being

that is developed and implemented to meet unique educational needs.

Individualized Education Program (IEP): A written document for a student with disabilities (ages 3-21

education to eligible children with disabilities throughout the nation and ensures special education and

related services to those children.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA): A law that makes available a free appropriate public

education to eligible children with disabilities throughout the nation and ensures special education and

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Terms and Acronyms

Acronyms

Special Education Process

1. Child is identified as possibility needing special education and related services.
2. Child is evaluated.
3. Eligibility is decided.
4. Child is found eligible for services.
5. IEP meeting is scheduled.
6. IEP meeting is held and the IEP is written.
7. Services are provided.
8. Progress is measured and reported to the parents.
9. IEP is reviewed.
10. Child is reevaluated.

▶ LOOK INSIDE FOR MORE ▶

The Basic Special Education Process

1

A child may be identified as possibly needing special education and related services when they are having difficulty in school. Before a child is old enough to attend school, it is also common for a babysitter, daycare provider, or preschool staff to notice possible developmental or learning delays. They may share these concerns with the parents and suggest contacting the right agency for help. If there is a concern, either the parent or the school district can ask to start the evaluation process to see if the child needs extra support.

2

The child is evaluated to see if they need special education services. The first evaluation must be careful, personalized, and thorough. To understand a child's strengths and challenges, information is gathered in different ways and from many sources, such as parents, teachers, and tests. Before the evaluation can begin, the school or public agency must get written permission from the parents.

3

Eligibility is decided. After the evaluation is complete, a team of qualified people meets to decide if the child is eligible for special education and related services. The child's parents are an important part of this team and help make the decision.

4

A child is found eligible for special education services. If the child meets the IDEA definition of a child with a disability, the child qualifies for special education and related services. The next step is to create an Individualized Education Program (IEP) to plan the child's supports and services.

5

An IEP meeting is scheduled. Every child who receives special education services under IDEA must have an IEP. The school must hold an IEP meeting within 30 calendar days after it is decided that the child has a disability under IDEA and needs special education and related services.

6

The IEP meeting is held and the IEP is written. During the meeting, the IEP team works together to create the IEP using information from the evaluation. The team looks at the child's strengths and their academic, developmental, and everyday needs. The IEP has two main purposes: (1) to set learning goals for the child; and (2) to explain the services and supports the school will provide.

7

Services are provided. After the IEP is written, special education and related services must begin as soon as possible. These services are provided based on what is listed in the child's IEP. This includes extra supports, aids, and changes to the school program that the IEP team decides the child needs. Before services can start for the first time, the school must have the parents' informed written permission.

8

Progress is measured and shared with parents. The IEP explains how the child's progress will be measured. The school must regularly report this progress to parents. These updates help parents, the IEP team, and the school review how the plan is working and make changes if needed.

9

The IEP is reviewed. The IEP is not a fixed document. It can be updated as the child learns, grows, and makes progress. The IEP team decides when changes are needed and updates the plan to better meet the child's needs.


10


Child is reevaluated. The purpose of reevaluation is to determine if the child continues to be a child with a disability, as defined by IDEA, and to identify the child's current educational needs. Children grow and change, and the school has a responsibility to monitor their learning and development.


This brochure was developed from information located from:

ND Department of Public Instruction, *Parent Guide of Special Education* &
Center for Parent Information and Resources (CIPR), *Building the Legacy Module- The Top Ten Basics of Special Education*

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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