

Frequently Asked Questions...

The following questions were compiled by parents of children receiving special education in our district.

My child is being referred for special education. What does that mean?

When your child is referred for possible special education it means the teacher(s) have tried a number of different strategies and modifications to his or her learning program, but they are still experiencing difficulties in some areas. Different school professionals will conduct testing to determine 1) if your child has a disability, and 2) if your child requires specially designed instruction to facilitate their learning. The enclosed brochure will help answer questions more specific to the disability for which your child been referred.

Is there any cost for special education services?

No. If your child qualifies for special education, services are free. Children with disabilities are required by law to receive what is called FAPE (Free and Appropriate Public Education). There will be no additional cost to you, as parents.

Is transportation provided?

Possibly...if the IEP team decides the student requires specially-designed transportation because of his/ her disability. Important to note though...all Early Childhood Program children are offered transportation because of their age.

Can I visit the program to get a better sense of what a special education resource room looks like? Can I meet with the teacher?

Absolutely. All you need to do is contact the building Principal to schedule a time that will work well in the teacher's schedule.

Can I volunteer to help in the program or class?

Teachers welcome volunteer help; and don't ever think you would be in the way! Simply contact the school where you wish to volunteer. They will "sign you up!"

I have many questions about the program. Who do I go to for information about my child or the program?

Once your son or daughter is found by the IEP team to have a need for special education, they will be assigned a **IEP coordinator**. That person will be your child's primary special education teacher. Any time you have questions about their program, your best contact is that teacher. For questions about the initial evaluation process, contact our school psychologist.

How do we determine what services my child receives?

Once a referral for special education is made, a team of professionals is assigned for testing and observation. This is called an IEP team. The IEP team will determine (certainly with your input) what testing needs to be done and what services are recommended. Their ideas and suggestions will be presented to you at the IEP meeting.

I still don't quite understand what an IEP team is.

You will work as part of a team along with others from the school. This team will decide if your child qualifies for special education and what services are appropriate to help your son or daughter be successful in school. Team participants include you (as the parent), the student (when appropriate), a representative for the school district (usually the student services director or the school psychologist) the student's general education teacher(s), the student's special education teacher, professionals who administered testing, and people you may invite,

If I want to talk to another parent about the school or special education program, who should I contact?

Even though you have talked with school personnel about questions, sometimes you just want another parent's perspective. If you contact Alan Chittick, the student services director, he will have a parent contact you that could help with your questions.

What would my child's schedule look like? Could they be "pulled out" of their regular class?

Your child's schedule would be determined at the IEP meeting. He or she may be "pulled out" of their regular class for more intensive help, but the IEP team must first consider the least restrictive environment, which means trying to keep the child in the general education classes with appropriate support.

Will modifications be provided to my child?

Before a referral for special education is made, teachers must document that adaptations and modifications have already been tried. Even with these modifications, teachers believe more support and specially designed instruction is necessary.

Who would I expect to see at an IEP meeting?

Depending on the needs of your child, initially you will probably find the school psychologist, a special education teacher, your child's regular education teacher, and a school representative (such as the student services director). You may also find more than one teacher, or even possibly the school nurse. We try to keep the number of school staff low so it's not overwhelming. If you have questions about who would be attending, the best person to contact would be your child's IEP coordinator.

Can I have someone attend the meeting with me?

Yes. You are welcome to bring a friend to listen to the conversations or even to take notes of the meeting. You are also welcome to bring someone connected with an outside agency who sees your child on a professional level.

