

# IEPs and 504 Plans

## What is a 504 plan?

Section 504 is a civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities. Section 504 ensures that the child with a disability has equal **access** to an education. The child may receive accommodations and modifications. These modifications may be environmental (changing a seating assignment for better hearing/vision, or sitting at a peanut free table at lunch), content based (getting books on tape or notes from the teacher), evaluation related (extended time on tests/ assignments), or physical accommodations (allowing the child to go to the nurse for medication or medication during the day.)

Any student whose day to day activities are affected by a disability are eligible for a 504 plan. These disabilities may include physical conditions, learning disorders, adhd, mental or behavioral disorders, developmental delays, visual or auditory deficits and intellectual disabilities.

If you believe your child requires a 504 plan, contact your school's guidance counselor or psychologist.

## What is an IEP?

Individual Education Plans (IEPs) are mandated by the [Individuals with Disabilities Education Act](#) (IDEA.) From Wikipedia: "An IEP defines the individualized objectives of a child who has been found with a disability, as defined by federal regulations. The IEP is intended to help children reach educational goals more easily than they otherwise would. In all cases the IEP must be tailored to the individual student's needs as identified by the IEP evaluation process, and must especially help teachers and related service providers (such as [paraprofessional educators](#)) understand the student's disability and how the disability affects the learning process.

The IEP describes how the student learns, how the student best demonstrates that learning and what teachers and service providers will do to help the student learn more effectively. Developing an IEP requires assessing students in all areas related to the known disabilities, simultaneously considering ability to access the general curriculum, considering how the disability affects the student's learning, forming goals and

objectives that correspond to the needs of the student, and choosing a placement in the **least restrictive environment** possible for the student.

As long as a student qualifies for special education, the IEP is mandated to be regularly maintained and updated up to the point of high school graduation, or prior to the 22nd birthday"

Many schools offer Section 504 plans instead of IEPs because Section 504 requires less of them. Unlike the IDEA, Section 504 does not create a right to a free appropriate education from which the child receives **educational benefit**. Section 504 does not require schools to invite parents to the meeting where the 504 Plan is developed.

An IEP ensures that a child receives not only access to an education, but also receives an appropriate education experience should they have particular learning needs.

## How to navigate getting your child an IEP and 504 Plan:

[What is an IEP?](#)

<http://idea.ed.gov>

[http://parenting.blogs.nytimes.com/2014/05/08/where-to-turn-when-the-school-wants-to-have-your-child-tested/?\\_php=true&\\_type=blogs&emc=edit\\_ml\\_20140508&nl=style&nlid=68807770&\\_r=1](http://parenting.blogs.nytimes.com/2014/05/08/where-to-turn-when-the-school-wants-to-have-your-child-tested/?_php=true&_type=blogs&emc=edit_ml_20140508&nl=style&nlid=68807770&_r=1)

## For more information on 504 plans and IEPs:

<http://www.wrightslaw.com/info/sec504.index.htm>