



SPECIAL EDUCATION PARENT FAQ

What is an LEA? LEA = Local Education Agency = School District

A Charter School is considered to be its own School District, separate from the School District of Philadelphia. Therefore, each charter school is its own LEA.

What is FAPE? FAPE = Free and Appropriate Public Education

What does “Child Find” mean?

Each LEA is responsible for identifying students in their school population that may have a disability or impairment to ensure that they are offered appropriate supports and services. With parent permission, the school evaluates these children to determine the need for an IEP or a 504.

What are Procedural Safeguards?

A reference document that explains parental rights regarding placement, parental consent, confidentiality, and discipline procedures.

What is an IEP vs a 504?

Both protect people with impairments or disabilities but under different laws.

INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PLAN	504 SERVICE AGREEMENT
Disability* that requires specially designed instruction Eligible categories: *specific learning disability, intellectual disability, emotional disturbance, orthopedic impairment, hearing impairment, deafness, speech impairment, visual impairment, autism, traumatic brain injury, other health impairment	Medically identified impairment that affects a major life activity/function (Note: can overlap with IEP’s “Other Health Impairment” category IF the degree of impact requires specialized instruction.)
Federal Law: Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) State Law Chapter 14	Federal Law: Americans with Disabilities Act State Law Chapter 15
Special Education	General Education With accommodations
Think of a child with a speech impairment that requires specialized therapy or a child with a learning disability that needs specialized instruction.	Think of a child with a health issue or a child with attention issues that needs extra time on a test.

What is a NOREP? Notice of Recommended Educational Placement

This is a document that is used to summarize the school's recommendations for service and placement. It is where a parent can indicate if they agree or disagree with the recommendation. The school cannot proceed without their initial approval.

What is the “Least Restrictive Environment”?

Under “FAPE”, students are entitled to be fully included in the general education classroom and receive any supports and aids necessary to help them be successful in that setting. The more restrictive the environment, the fewer general education students are present.



Itinerant	Supplemental	Full-Time
0-20%	20-80%	80-100%
Student receives services inside the classroom or with limited pull-out (push-in or check-in)	Student takes a separate class that only has special education students in it (pull-out)	Student is not included in regular classes (with exceptions)

What is considered a change of placement?

If a student changes their educational placement (with IEP team approval) or disciplinary exclusion. Students with IEPs can only be suspended for 10 consecutive days or 15 total days for the year. Beyond that, it is considered a change of placement and a NOREP is required to obtain parent approval.

What is a Manifestation Determination?

If a child's placement is changing due to disciplinary action, the IEP team must meet to determine if the behavior was a manifestation (a result) of their disability or the school's failure to implement the IEP. If it is a manifestation, then the placement cannot be changed.

Top 10 Parental Rights

10 Steps to an IEP

10. Parents have the right to request that their child be evaluated for Special Education. (School does NOT have to honor this request given justification)	1. Identify the child may need services (Child find)
9. Parents have the right to list all of their concerns in the IEP.	2. Evaluate the child.
8. Parents have the right to request a new IEP meeting to be held within 30 days of a written request when an IEP is already in place.	3. Eligibility is decided
7. Parents have the right to participate in the IEP meeting and have their opinions heard and noted.	4. Schedule IEP Meeting
6. Parents have the right to bring any person to an IEP meeting with knowledge of their child or the child's disability including advocates and attorneys. (School should have prior knowledge of any/all attendees)	5. Write Draft IEP
5. Parents have the right to review and receive copies of their child's educational records.	6. Meet to discuss and finalize IEP
4. Parents have the right to consent, refuse to consent or revoke consent for special education for their child.	7. Services in IEP begin
3. Parents have the right to receive Prior Written Notice (NOREP) when a school district proposes a change in a child's placement or refuses a parent's request.	8. Progress is monitored
2. Parents have the right to ask for an Independent Educational Evaluation at public expense when they disagree with the school district's assessments. (School does NOT have to honor this request given justification)	9. Review/revise IEP annually (at least)
1. Parents have the right to file complaints , including state complaints and due process complaints, and disagree with parts or all of the IEP.	10. Re-evaluate eligibility every 2-3 years.

Where can I get more information?

Within ICS West: Contact **Fatimah Johnson**, Special Education Coordinator, 215-724-5600 or fatimahj@icswest.org

Outside of ICSW: **Contact Bureau of Special Education's ConsultLine**, 1-800-879-2301