

Parent Training

May 6, 2008

Ed Center, Board Room



Welcome Parents and Thank you for being here!

*Sponsored by The Arc in Jefferson County
and Jeffco Schools Exceptional Student
Services*

- Tonight's Topics:
 - Changes in IDEA '04
 - District's new IEP System (Encore)
 - Parents in the IEP Process



The Arc in Jefferson County

303-232-1338

- **Who we are:**

- A membership-based nonprofit organization serving individuals birth through end of life with developmental disabilities in Jefferson, Clear Creek, and Gilpin counties.
- Information table in the lobby

- **Educational Advocacy:**

- 2 ¼ Educational Advocates for Birth – 21 on an IEP in the 3 counties
- Educational Advocates intervene on behalf of the best educational practices for your child under IDEA.
- Offer on-going parent trainings on accessing developmental disabilities systems



IDEA over the Years



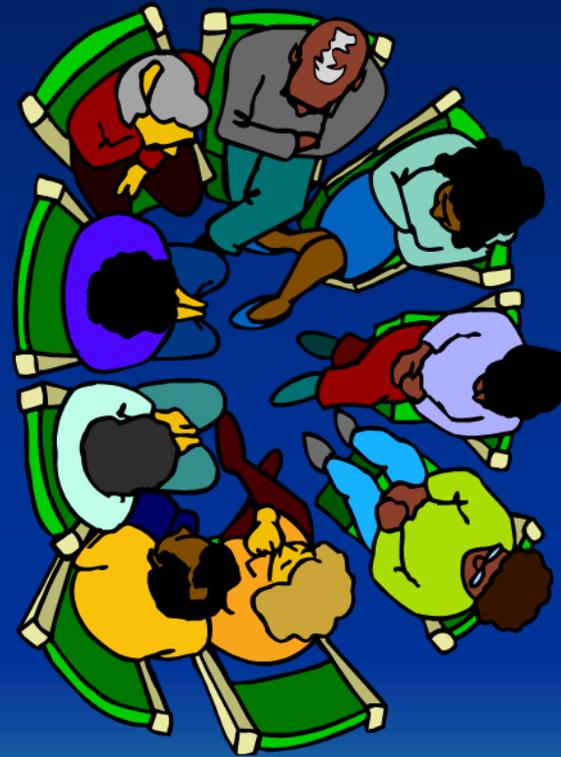
1974	1997	2004
<p data-bbox="98 465 575 625">Emphasis on access to a free appropriate public education.</p> <p data-bbox="98 786 614 946">Process above results and protection of due process rights.</p>	<p data-bbox="666 465 1143 682">Continued emphasis on process above results, rights and discipline.</p> <p data-bbox="666 775 1116 992">Increased focus on student progress in the general curriculum.</p> <p data-bbox="666 1082 1110 1299">Themes of accountability for student outcomes throughout the law.</p>	<p data-bbox="1234 465 1665 568">Greater focus on student outcomes.</p> <p data-bbox="1234 729 1692 832">Accountability at all levels.</p> <p data-bbox="1234 922 1731 1310">Purposeful alignment with NCLB which requires general and special education collaboration and shared ownership for results.</p>

Presidential Commission, 2002: Key Findings

- The current system uses an antiquated model that waits for a child to fail, instead of a model based on **prevention and intervention**.
 - **General education and special education share responsibilities** for children with disabilities..... They are not separable at any level --- cost, instruction or even identification.
 - Given what is known about LD, **it is irresponsible** to continue current policies that dictate inadequate identification practices.
 - It is estimated that the number of children who are typically identified as poor readers and served through either special or compensatory education could be **reduced by up to 70%** through early identification and prevention programs.
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IDEIA '04

- Adds language saying a child will not be determined to have a disability if the determinate factor is lack of scientifically based instructional practices and programs that contain the essential components of reading as defined in No Child Left Behind.



Types of IEP Meetings

- Initial - Eligibility and Disability
- Annual
- Triennial – Reevaluation for eligibility and disability
- Special Request Meeting



Purpose of an IEP is to provide meaningful educational benefit by:

1. Conducting relevant assessments of a student's needs and summarizing the Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP).
2. Writing measurable goals that address those needs. *Curriculum*
3. Developing special education intervention that will assist students to achieve those goals. *Instruction*
4. Monitoring a student's progress toward his/her goals. *Progress Monitoring*

IEP Content

- Permission/Assessment
- Notice of Meeting
- Signature Page/Education Rights
- Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP).
- Accommodations/Modifications
- Eligibility/Disability
- Goals & Objectives
- Special Education & Related Services
- Placement



Permission

Only 2 situations when your signature equates to permission:

1. Permission to formally assess
 - Initial, Reevaluation, Annual
2. Permission for initial placement
 - Permission to provide services under an IEP

“Informed Consent” -- describe the evaluation procedure



Purpose of Assessment

- Assessment must help us know the learner – it is our guide for instruction.
- The purpose of assessment is to determine the student's PLAAFP as well as the unique instructional needs that require special education services.



IDEIA '04: Evaluation

Group must consider as part of the evaluation...

- Data that prior to, or as part of the referral process, the child was provided appropriate instruction in regular education settings, delivered by qualified personnel

AND

- Data-based documentation of repeated assessments of achievement at reasonable intervals, reflecting formal assessment of student progress during instruction, which was provided to the child's parents.

Notice of Meeting

- Timely written notice = 10 days (waiver)
 - Case Manager sends notice
 - Responsibility of the Case Manager:
 - Communicate with everyone on the student's team including scheduling of IEP meetings.
 - Ensure each goal and objective is dated at the time of completion, throughout the year.
 - Convene a group of professionals if the student is not making progress on goals and objectives.
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Signature Page Education Rights

Identifies participants by name & title

- Signature is for attendance only
- Parent's signature does not equal agreement of IEP contents
- Receive a copy of rights one time a year

Excusing IEP team members

- Excused when member's area is not being changed or discussed
- Excused if member's area is discussed and instead of attending, gives written report to the parent and the team before the IEP meeting
- Parent and school agree in writing



Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance

- PLAAFP includes:
 - Cognitive
 - Social/Emotional
 - Physical
 - Communicative
 - Educational
 - Life Skills



Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance - PLAAFP

- Describes to the parents, in understandable language, where their child is functioning in each area of need.
- Describes how the deficit affects the child's performance in general education.
- Statement should be written in objective measurable terms and should reflect the impact of the disability on the child's performance.



Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance

- There should be a direct relationship between the PLAAFP and the components of the IEP including student needs, goals and objectives, special education and related services.
- Statements are measurable.
- The focus is on the **relevant information (what will inform instruction)**; not irrelevant information (what will not inform instruction).



Accommodations/Modification

Supplementary Aids and Services

- **Accommodations:**
 - Describes changes in format, response, setting, timing, or scheduling that do not alter in any significant way what the test measures.
 - Accommodations are designed to ensure that an assessment measures the intended construct, not the child's disability.
- **Modifications:**
 - Substantially changes what the student is expected to demonstrate
 - Includes changes in instruction level, content and performance criteria. Includes alternate assessment or supports for school personnel
- **Supplementary Aids and Services**
 - Aides, services, and supports provided in regular education classes that enable the child to be educated with non-disabled children

Eligibility/Disability

- **Preschool Disability/ Developmental delay (ages 3-5 in CO)**
 - **Physical condition, impairment, chronic illness**
 - Autism
 - Traumatic Brain Injury
 - ADHD (sometimes)
 - **Vision Impairment**
 - **Hearing Impairment**
 - **Cognitive Impairment**
 - SLIC = significant limited intellectual capacity
 - **Specific Learning Disability**
 - **Emotional Impairment**
 - SIED = significant identifiable emotional disorder
 - **Speech/Language Impairment**
 - **Multiple Disability (a combination of cognitive and at least one other disability)**
 - **Other Health Impairment**
 - ADHD (sometimes)
 - Tourette Syndrome
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Understanding the Proposed SLD Criteria in Colorado

- Through a problem-solving process, a student's response to scientific, research-based intervention, as reflected in a body of evidence collected over time, must demonstrate over time that....
 - 1) the student has one or more significant academic skill deficits as compared to age-level peers or grade level benchmarks;

2) The student is making insufficient progress to research/evidence-based interventions.

The eligibility team must also determine...

3) that the student's learning difficulties are not **PRIMARILY** the result of visual, hearing or motor disabilities; significant limited intellectual capacity; significant identifiable emotional disability; cultural factors; environmental or economic disadvantage; or limited English proficiency.





Goals & Objectives



Statement of measurable annual goals

- Academic and functional goals that are individual & enable the child to be involved and make progress in the general education curriculum
 - Meaningful measure of progress = baseline and end point
 - Tied to content standards
- Methods of Informing parents of students progress towards goals & objectives
 - Frequency of which parents will receive reports of progress
 - Manner in which progress will be reported

Related Services

any NON-MEDICAL* service necessary for the child to benefit from special education, including but not limited to:

- **Speech-language pathology and audiology**
 - **Interpreting services**
 - **Psychological services**
 - **Physical and Occupational therapy**
 - **Recreation, including therapeutic recreation**
 - **School nurse services**
 - **Counseling including rehabilitation counseling**
 - **Orientation and mobility services**
 - **Medical services for diagnostic or evaluation purposes**
 - **Assistive technology**
 - **Transportation**
 - **Interpreter Services**
 - **IDEA '04 clarifies that cochlear implants are NOT a related service**
- *** Under IDEA the term “medical” refers to a service that a Doctor must provide**



LRE

Least Restrictive Environment

- The law takes a common sense approach to this issue; children with disabilities should be educated with children who are not disabled to the maximum extent appropriate.
 - However, children can receive one-to-one or small group instruction outside of regular classes if this is necessary for them to learn.
 - Special classes, separate schooling or removal from the regular educational environment occurs only when education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily
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Placement

- Determined by the nature and intensity of services
- LRE continuum
 - Neighborhood school
 - time spent in general classroom
 - time spent outside the general classroom
 - Center based program
 - Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
 - Challenge (multiple disabilities)
 - Deaf/HOH
 - Communication Centers
 - Physically Disabled (PD)
 - Significant Identifiable Emotional Disorder (SIED)
 - Significant Limited Intellectual Capacity (SLIC)



Supporting Student's Transition Into A New Setting

- Individualized Transition Planning
 - Best Practice
 - Facilitated by Area Coordinators
 - IEP Meeting with Current and New School Teams in Early Spring to:
 - Share student's strengths & interests
 - Identification of needs in new setting
 - Discuss accommodations and strategies that will support student in new setting
 - Review and update current goals



Transitioning

- What Can Families Do?
 - Attend Transition IEP Meeting
 - Visit School
 - Take Pictures
 - Write Social Stories
 - Talk About New Setting in a Positive Way
 - Participate in School Events/Committees (PTA, Accountability, Boosters, Picnics, etc.)
 - Participate in Summer Events at New School (if available)
 - Share Insights, Information, and Concerns About Your Child With the New Team



Instruction

- Jeffco Language
 - ALL students are part of the general education system
 - RTI = Instructional Decision-Making
 - Core Instruction (target is 80%)
 - Strategic Instruction (15%)
 - Intensive Instruction (5%)
- No Child Left Behind linked to IDEA '04
 - Sets standards for both regular and special education teachers
 - Standards are tied to state requirements
 - Instruction driven by researched, high quality instructional practices



What do I do with this information?

- Is this true? Is this the wave of the future for special education?
- Yes! It's the true intent of federal law
- Students in special education are learners and districts are accountable for their education
- Access skills vs. deficit based model
- Appropriate programming that offers strategic intervention and progress monitoring



Big Concepts for Parents

FAPE: Free Appropriate Public Education

- Provides the child with special education and related services to allow the child to receive *some educational benefit*.
 - *Some benefit* has been interpreted to mean meaningful educational benefit
 - Means more than zero but less than maximum Benefit = progress
 - Benefit varies by child and their individual needs
- FAPE does not equate to entitlement to the “best” program, nor a program that maximizes the child’s potential.
 - “Best” education is not in the law
 - Only appropriate/meaningful- no more, no less.



Big Concepts for Parents

- Educational vs. Medical
 - What intervention is needed to access the general curriculum
 - Benefit from educational setting not overall functioning in life
 - Example: if you have motor needs how OT/PT is used to access skills in classroom, cutting, writing, sitting, focus
 - Encourage using both community and school systems



Parents as Advocates

As a parent of a child with a disability you have two goals:

- To ensure that the school provides your child with a “free appropriate public education” that includes “...special education and related services designed to meet [the child’s] unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment, and independent living...”
20U.S.C. 1400 (d)
- To build a healthy working relationship with the school



Parents as Advocates...

- Read and understand special education laws, regulations, and cases to get answers to your questions
- Gather facts and information
- Learn about your child's disability
- Know your child's educational history
- Organize your documents



Turning Information Into Action

The IEP Process

- IEP is a consensus model with equal give and take from team members.
- As a parent you are an equally weighted IEP team member.
- Talk to your child's case manager about your concerns and ideas to be included in the IEP.



IEP Meetings

- Planning prevents problems
- Preparing for an IEP meeting is a year round process
- Reviewing, preparing, and identifying the negotiable items from the “must-haves”, and developing evidence to support them can remove considerable stress from the process
- If you prepare ahead of time it changes your emotional state to be able to respond instead of react
- Remember it should be a dialogue working to build consensus for a win-win solution that will satisfy both parents and school



Draft Copy of IEP

- A draft of the IEP document should be given to you at least one day before the meeting. If not, ask for one.
- This allows you time to reflect on the information provided and prepare your questions, thoughts, comments



Relationship Building

- Respect what the IEP can give your child
- Show respect to the people working with your child as you want them to show respect to you as the parent
- Appreciation for staff... FOOD!
- Network
 - Be involved in your school and the district
 - Know the decision making body
 - Volunteer, accountability committee, PTA, be a part of the school community



Parental Rights

- Signatures - #1 Question
 - Attendance only --not agreement
 - Formalized assessment
 - Initial placement
- Educational Rights under IDEA
 - Read them, know them, love them
 - Resources on IDEA law



“There is no more powerful advocate than a parent with information and options.”

Rod Paige Secretary of Education (2001-2005)

- **Colorado Department of Education**
 - www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped
- **Peak Parent Center**
 - www.peakparent.org
- **Jeffco’s Exceptional Student Services**
 - www.jeffco.k12.co.us
 - A-Z listings – Exceptional Student Services
 - <http://sc.jeffco.k12.co.us/education/components/scrapbook/default.php?sectionid=7835>
- **The Legal Center**
 - Book: Special Education Handbook
 - www.thelegalcenter.org
- **Matt Cohen, Esq.**
 - Special Education Attorney, Chicago, IL
 - Articles, Cases, E-mail Newsletter
 - www.monahan-cohen.com
- **WrightsLaw**
 - www.wrightslaw.com
 - Articles, Cases, E-mail Newsletter
 - Books
 - IDEA 2004
 - From Emotions to Advocacy
 - No Child Left Behind
 - IEP Tips for Parents & Teachers
- **National Center for Learning Disabilities**
 - www.ncld.org
 - Parent Advocacy Brief titled “A Parent’s Guide to Response to Intervention”

