

## **The Essential Preschool IEP**

### **Part 1: The Development of the IEP**

#### **Opening slide:**

**The Essential Preschool IEP module is presented in three separate parts. This first part focuses on the IEP cover page, Future Planning, Extended School Year and the Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance sections.**

#### **Slide 2: Initial IEP**

Once a district has determined that a child requires a specialized program based upon the evaluation assessment process, they have 30-calendar days to hold a meeting to develop an initial IEP. Once the parent signs the initial IEP and the district has provided the parent with a PR-01, Prior Written Notice, the district will begin providing services based upon the individual needs of the child.

The IEP is *active* for not more than 364 days from the date the IEP was agreed upon and signed by a qualified IEP team. At least once a year, the IEP team will be required to meet unless the child turns 22 years of age, tests out of services, receives a diploma or the parent revokes consent for services. The IEP is a working document and the IEP team is encouraged to meet throughout the year, as the child makes progress (or does not make progress) and not wait for the IEP Annual Review to make the necessary changes.

#### **Slide 3: The Cover Page**

On the cover page of the IEP, it is important to ensure that the child and district information presented is complete and accurate. Much of the information on the cover page will become part of the Education Management Information System (EMIS) record that districts must submit for annual reporting.

The District of Residence (DOR) is the school or district where the student's parents/guardians reside, which is responsible for ensuring that an IEP is developed and implemented and is ultimately responsible for providing a free and appropriate public education to the child. The District of Service is the school or district that is responsible for implementing the services contained within the IEP. The DOR may contract with other entities (such as another school district or an Educational Service Center) to provide IEP services, but the DOR is still responsible. Districts of Residence that have students who are educated outside their district must maintain communication with the District of Service in order to ensure compliance and accurate implementation of the IEP.

Community schools are the district of residence. If a child attends a community school, list the community school as the district of residence. In the case when a community school places a

child in a separate facility for their academic and/or functional services, the community school remains the DOR and continues to be responsible for the education of that student.

For a child who is in preschool, check the Yes box in answer to the question, “Is the child in Preschool?” Note that by checking this box on the dynamic or static version of the form certain sections are not applicable for preschool students which includes Section 5 (Postsecondary Transition), Section 12 (Statewide and District Wide Testing), and Section 13 (Exemptions). Also, Section 11 (Least Restrictive Environment) appears on both the preschool and school-age versions of the IEP form, however there are different questions on each version.

The IEP dynamic version of the form includes “roll overs” throughout to provide additional information that will assist districts to complete the form.

The Other Information area is a good place to list placement and general education information for preschool students. For example, you could write in this area that “Cindy will continue to attend Jones County Head Start for 4 days a week. She will receive itinerant services for 2 hours/week, 1 hour from an itinerant intervention specialist and 1 hour from an itinerant speech language pathologist.”

#### **Slide 4: Cover Page**

Please be attentive to the date of the meetings and the type of meeting being held. In the box labeled “Meeting Date” list the date that the IEP meeting was held. Then check off the type of meeting, such as Initial or Annual, etc. The IEP Time Lines section includes IEP Effective Dates. The “Start” box is where the date of implementation should be recorded. The date or implementation is the date that all identified services begin. The meeting date can be the same date as the IEP effective start date only if identified services begin on this date. In the “End” box record the date that services will end.

One of the most misunderstood areas on the cover page is in the box labeled “IEP Time Lines” where it indicates the date of the “Next IEP Review”. Again, the IEP is a working document and the IEP team is encouraged to meet throughout the year, as the child makes progress (or does not make progress) and not wait for the IEP Annual Review to make the necessary changes.

An example of using the “Next IEP Review” section might include the date the team will reconvene to determine the need for extended school year services (in which case this date would match the “Date to Reconvene “in Section 4). Another example would be the date the team will meet to determine whether progress monitoring data indicates a need to amend the IEP. Otherwise, use the IEP Annual Review date.

The IEP Annual Review needs to occur prior to the IEP expiration of 364 days to provide time for review and documentation so the new IEP will be completed and in effect within the timeline.

The amendment section is at the bottom of the cover page. The district must complete this section if, during the duration of the IEP, they decide to amend any section of the IEP. The

participants will initial if any changes are made to the IEP. The amendment needs to also be stated in the IEP section(s) amended, not only on the cover page.

#### **Slide 5: Future Planning & Special Instructional Factors**

Section 1 of the IEP asks for Future Planning. Parents, teachers, and other staff provide statements that discuss the family and child's preferences and interests as part of the future planning process.

Section 2 addresses Special Instructional Factors. While these are "check boxes", it is important to remember that if the IEP Team indicates any of the areas are "yes", it must be addressed in the IEP.

#### **Slide 6: The Profile**

Section 3 contains the child profile. The IEP team provides background information on the child. Information might include assessment data, data collected from the family, Part C or other early care experiences, if applicable, and other information about the child that the team thinks is important for all parties involved in the IEP to know. The IEP team should consider strengths of the child, areas of concern and instructional strategies that have been successful.

Do **not** cut and paste all of the assessment data found in the ETR. Only include relevant developmental and/or academic readiness information that may have an impact on the child's academic and/or functional performance.

If the IEP team decides that based on the severity of the child's needs that they will prioritize addressing needs of the child, then they should explain that within the Profile. Additionally if the IEP team determines that there is no longer a need in a given area, then they should also explain that within the Profile and include data used to make that decision. If applicable, this information could also be added to the relevant Present Levels of Performance section of the IEP.

Keep in mind that the language must be understandable to the parents and all team members involved.

#### **Slide 7: Extended School Year**

Section 4 is "Extended School Year services". This section of the IEP must be considered for each goal.

For preschool, the IEP team must consider extended school year services as part of the IEP process for each child transitioning from Part C services. A school district shall not require any child to have previous school experience to qualify for extended school year services. Based upon data available from the Part C system, the IEP team, shall determine if extended school year services are required as outlined in the Administrative Code.

Extended School Year services may happen at any time the school is not in session. Extended school year services are provided beyond the normal school year of the district which includes both the days of the school year and the hours of the school day. Extended school year services are not the same as summer school, compensatory services or enrichment programs.

The IEP team should consider extended school year services to prevent significant regression of skills or knowledge retained by the child so as to seriously impede the child's progress toward their educational goals, and whether extended school year services are necessary to avoid something more than adequately recoupable regression of skills or knowledge.

The team needs to determine whether the time the child will need to re-learn the skills lost is excessive, particularly compared to the time it takes nondisabled children to regain skills lost during a school break.

The IEP team may need to review progress data and reconvene later in the school year in order to determine if extended school year services are necessary. The team would enter that date on the IEP in section 4.

### **Slide 8: Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance**

Within Section 6, the "Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance" establishes a baseline of the child's current level of performance including their strengths and needs. It must indicate the child's current academic readiness and functional levels compared to expected developmental standards in order to provide a frame of reference. Current means a child's performance at the time of the writing of the IEP. Data should not be more than a year old. If the student is currently receiving special education services, information about the child's progress towards his or her current goals must be included in the present levels of performance. There must be a direct relationship between the annual goal and the present levels of academic achievement and functional performance. Annual goals are required in areas that are directly affected by the student's disability.

The statement of present levels of performance should be written in language understandable to all, including the parent.

### **Slide 9: Present Levels**

When writing about a child's present levels of performance, districts should be sure that the focus is on current and specific functional performance and/or academic readiness of that child. Current means a child's performance at the time of the writing of the IEP. Data should not be more than one year old. All performance levels must be described in measurable terms of growth using the same conditions, behaviors, and performance criteria as the goal it is aligned.

Some sources of present levels data might be classroom-based measures, functional scores, and behavioral actions. Any data that is used to help determine the Child Outcome Summary score and that is related to the IEP goal may also be used here.

**Slide 10: Focus on the Essential Need**

When data points are used, it is important that the data points selected and presented are related directly to the area or areas of need.

**Slide 15: Closing Slides**

For more information, visit:

- <https://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Special-Education/Federal-and-State-Requirements/Operational-Standards-and-Guidance>
- <https://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Special-Education>
- For further support, contact your State Support Team (SST). To find your SST, please visit: <http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/District-and-School-Continuous-Improvement/State-Support-Teams>