



# Westonka Special Education Guide for Parents/Guardians

*Your child has now gone through the special education evaluation process and has been found eligible for special education services through Westonka Public Schools. Here are some helpful tips and tricks for you to better understand your rights and the district's responsibilities.*

Question	Answer
<p>What is the purpose of the IFSP, IEP or ISP?</p>	<p><b>IFSP</b> stands for <b>Individualized Family Service Plan</b>. This is a written document that outlines family outcomes for infants and toddlers (birth through age three) that qualify for special education services. These outcomes are based on family-guided routines-based interventions along with coaching and collaboration between school service providers, the child and the family.</p> <p><b>ISP</b> stands for <b>Individualized Service Plan</b>. This is a written document that describes the educational program designed to meet a child's individual needs. Every child who is either home schooled or receiving educational services at a through a non-public program (ie. private school) but receives special education services at his/her public school must have an ISP.</p> <p><b>IEP</b> stands for <b>Individualized Education Program</b>. This is a written document that describes the educational program designed to meet a child's individual needs. Every child who receives special education must have an IEP.</p> <p>The IEP has two general purposes: (1) to set learning goals for your child; and (2) to state the supports and services that the school district will provide for your child.</p>
<p>How can I help develop my child's IEP?</p>	<p>The law is very clear that parents have the right to participate in developing their child's IEP. In fact, <b>your input is invaluable</b>. You know your child better than anyone, and the school needs to know both your insights and concerns.</p> <p><b>Prior to an IEP meeting, consider:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- your child's strengths and needs</li> <li>- talking to outside providers to get their thoughts about your child</li> <li>- talking to your child about his or her feelings toward school</li> </ul> <p>It may be helpful to write down what you think your child can accomplish during the school year and make notes about what you would like to say during the meeting.</p>
<p>What are the timelines that I should know about?</p>	<p><b>Annual IEP:</b> After the initial IEP is written, and each year after that, there needs to be an IEP team meeting scheduled on or before that date.</p> <p>After the IEP meeting, the IEP team has 10 days to write a new IEP and send that along with a Prior Written Notice (PWN) for permission to start services and/or make changes.</p> <p>You will have 14 calendar days to either mark that you consent or object to the proposed plan. <i>If you do not respond, after 14 calendar days have lapsed, services will automatically go into effect.</i></p> <p><b>** The school district may not start special education services from an initial IEP until parent/guardian permission is received.</b></p> <p><b>** You may request a meeting at any point in time with the case manager.</b></p>

	<p><b>3-year Re-evaluation:</b> After the initial evaluation is completed, subsequent re-evaluations will occur within three years of the date in which the student was found eligible for special education services</p> <p><b>Progress Reporting:</b> Progress reporting occurs as often as the student's general education peers (ie. report cards)</p>
Who should be in attendance at the IEP meeting?	<p><b>There are FOUR core team members of an IEP team:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The parents of the pupil;</li> <li>- At least one regular education teacher of the pupil, if the pupil is, or may be, participating in the regular education environment;</li> <li>- At least one special education teacher or, where appropriate, at least one special education provider of the pupil;</li> <li>- An administrative designee, who is qualified to provide or supervise the provision of specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of pupils with disabilities, is knowledgeable about the general curriculum, and is knowledgeable about the availability of resources of the district</li> </ul> <p><i>These four people need to attend the ENTIRE meeting unless excusal is obtained prior to the IEP meeting.</i></p>
What is an 'LRE'?	<p><b>Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)</b> is part of the IEP that includes an explanation of the extent, if any, to which the child will not participate with nondisabled children in the regular class [and in extracurricular and nonacademic activities].</p>
What is a 'FAPE'?	<p><b>Free, Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)</b> is an individualized educational program that is designed to meet the child's unique needs and from which the child receives educational benefit, and prepares them for further education, employment, and independent living.</p>
What if I disagree with the proposed plan?	<p>Each year, you should receive a copy of the <b>parental rights notice</b> (also called procedural safeguards) which provides an overview of your parental special education rights. These rights are the same rights that belong to adult students between the ages of 18 and 21. The notice addresses key rights such as providing informed consent and procedures for disagreeing with the district.</p> <p>When you receive proposed changes to the IEP, you will receive a Prior Written Notice (PWN) in which you will be able to: (1) Consent, (2) Object and request a Conciliation Conference or (3) Object and request a meeting with relevant IEP Team members to discuss the objections.</p> <p>This would all be communicated through the case manager.</p>
Possible Parent/Guardian Resources	<p>Parent Hub → <a href="https://www.parentcenterhub.org/lg1/">https://www.parentcenterhub.org/lg1/</a></p> <p>PACER → <a href="https://www.pacer.org/">https://www.pacer.org/</a></p> <p>Minnesota Department of Education → <a href="https://education.mn.gov/MDE/fam/sped/studst/">https://education.mn.gov/MDE/fam/sped/studst/</a></p> <p>Minnesota Disability Information → <a href="https://mn.db101.org/mn/situations/youthanddisability/education/program2g.htm">https://mn.db101.org/mn/situations/youthanddisability/education/program2g.htm</a></p>
What if I have questions about my child's plan?	<p>Your go-to person will be your child's case manager. If you have any other additional questions, comments, or concerns, please contact the Special Services Department at (952) 491-8030.</p>