

Special Education Resource Packet

Presented by

**South Orange and Maplewood
School District
Department of Special Services**

And

SOMA SEPAC
(Special Education Parents Advisory Committee)

Updated May, 2016

Special Education Resource Packet

Contents

- A Guide to the Special Education Process
- SOMA Special Education Contact Matrix
- SEPAC Information
- Special Education PTO Information
- Special Education Parent Liaisons
- Additional Resources for Special Education Families
- The Difference Between IEP's and 504 Plans

A Guide to the Special Education Process

**South Orange - Maplewood
School District**

**525 Academy St., Maplewood, NJ 07040
973/762-5600x1840**

Revised May 2016

Introduction

We are pleased to present parents/guardians, staff members, and other individuals interested in special education with “A Guide to the Special Education Process.” This practical guide was developed as an overview and is meant to serve as a companion piece to more comprehensive resources and legal information such as Parental Rights in Special Education (PRISE) (which is cited throughout this document.) Wherever possible, we have avoided jargon and simplified language so that the explanations are as clear as possible for lay people – especially those new to special education.

At the end of this document is a Glossary that defines terms used herein, and a Frequently Asked Questions section that offers a sampling of the myriad questions parents/caregivers may have. In addition to supplementing this guide with other reading, parents/caregivers are encouraged to reach out to knowledgeable staff members at their student’s school and the School District’s central administration office to learn more and establish relationships within the system. Note that within the body of this Guide, staff members are referred to by title; the Contact List appendix provides the names of current staff members in those positions.

This edition of the Guide is the product of collaborative efforts between parents/guardians of students with special needs, represented by the South Orange-Maplewood Special Education Parent Advisory Committee (SEPAC), and the South Orange-Maplewood School District’s Department of Special Services.

Table of Contents

A. The Special Education Process	
1. Intervention & Referral Services (I&RS)	Page 4
2. Referral to the Child Study Team (CST)	Page 5
3. Evaluation and Eligibility	Page 7
4. The Individualized Education Plan (IEP)	Page 10
5. Ongoing Processes After Placement	Page 12
B. Frequently Asked Questions	Page 14
C. Glossary of Terms	Page 18
D. Attachment: Contact List	

A. The Special Education Process

1. Intervention & Referral Services

Intervention and Referral Services (I&RS) are intended to respond to situations where a student in a grade K-12 general education classroom is experiencing or is at risk for academic, behavioral or health problems at school. Typically, when such concerns first arise, parents/guardians and teachers/guidance counselors will communicate directly with each other to discuss how best to assist the student. When standard resources and methods are insufficient or staff needs further assistance to address a student's needs, an I&RS process may be initiated.

A request for I&RS is typically made by parents/guardians, teachers, or guidance counselors and should be submitted in writing to the school's I&RS Coordinator, with a copy to the school's Principal. The I&RS Coordinator then convenes an interdisciplinary I&RS Team to develop 'interventions' to help the student function effectively using available resources within the general education environment. There is no formal timeline for this action, but the District's goal is to respond to requests within 20 days.

An I&RS Team comprises parents/guardians, teachers, administrators, students (when appropriate), and other school personnel as needed; its primary responsibilities are to:

- Identify students who are experiencing or are at risk for academic, behavioral or health problems at school and then plan and provide appropriate intervention for those students within the general education setting;
- Identify the areas of concern and responsibilities of building staff who participate in the planning and provision of intervention and referral services;
- Actively involve parents/guardians in the development and implementation of the I&RS action plans;
- Review and assess the effectiveness of the interventions provided in achieving the outcomes identified in the intervention and referral plan;
- Provide professional development to general education staff members who either refer students to the I&RS or who assist in providing the intervention and referral services; and
- Coordinate the services of community-based social and health agencies.

The I&RS Team process is a collaborative cycle. The Team collects and evaluates relevant data in order to determine or identify specific barriers to student performance. Once these barriers have been identified, individualized interventions are determined and implemented through a written action plan that addresses the barriers and targets specific behaviors. Frequently, a Response to Intervention Model (RTI) approach is used. An RTI typically entails: multiple tiers of increasingly intense interventions; problem-solving to identify and evaluate instructional strategies; and an integrated data collection and assessment system to monitor student progress and guide decisions at every level. The action plan names an individual(s) responsible for student monitoring, the I&RS Team reviews progress after an agreed amount of time, and action plans are revised accordingly. This process is ongoing in that it continues to identify and evaluate problems, solutions and progress within the student's academic setting.

A successful I&RS action plan may be sufficient to address a student's needs. If however the I&RS process exhausts all available school-based general education interventions with unsatisfactory results, the student may be referred to the Child Study Team (CST) for a comprehensive evaluation in order to gather additional information and determine if the student is eligible for special education and related services. When referrals are warranted, the learning obtained from the I&RS period about what has or has not been successful will help inform the formulation of future strategies.

The recommendation for a CST evaluation may come directly from the I&RS team or from a parent/guardian.

2. Referral To the Child Study Team (CST) (see also *PRISE p.1*)

When interventions in the general education classroom are not appropriate for the student or when interventions are not effective, the student may be referred to the CST or speech/language therapist for evaluation.

What is a Referral?

A referral is a formal written request that a student be evaluated by the CST to determine whether the student is eligible for special education and related services or by the speech/language therapist to determine whether a student is eligible for speech services.

The Referral Process

Who Can Refer a Student?

Students may be referred to the CST or for a speech/language evaluation by instructional staff, school administration, parents/guardians and/or community agencies. For preschoolers receiving Early Intervention Services (EIS) from a state agency, the referral is generally made by the agency.

When Should a Student Be Referred?

Students may be referred to the CST at any time. Typically, students who present with academic and/or behavioral difficulties are first brought to the attention of the I&RS Team at the student's school. Interventions in the general education classroom are then attempted prior to a CST or speech referral. In cases where the I&RS process is unsuccessful at remediating the issues, or when interventions in the general education setting are clearly not appropriate, a student may be referred for an evaluation by the CST. Parents/guardians of preschool students who may be eligible for special services should initiate a referral 90 days in advance of their child's third birthday.

To Whom Should the Referral Request Be Made?

All requests must be made in writing (preferably in hard copy) and addressed to the Director of Special Services. Copies of the request should be submitted to the student's teacher and principal. If submission is made via email, it is recommended that the subject line "REFERRAL" be used.

The Determination Meeting (*see also PRISE pp 1-6*)

Once a referral is received, the parents/guardians will be invited to a Determination Meeting that must be scheduled within 20 calendar days of stamped receipt of the referral (excluding school vacations other than summer vacation). The purpose of the Determination Meeting is to determine whether the student will be evaluated for special education or speech services.

The attendees of the Determination Meeting should include parents/guardians, general education teachers, and CST member(s).

Based on a review of available information about the student's educational progress (e.g. student work, observations, assessments, progress reports, medical records,) a decision will be reached at this meeting whether a CST evaluation or speech evaluation is warranted.

If an evaluation is warranted, the nature and scope of the evaluation will be discussed (see The Evaluation Planning Meeting.)

If an evaluation is not warranted, there may be a decision to refer the student to the school's I&RS Team for development of an action plan, or if the student is already in the I&RS process, the action plan may be given more time or be adjusted. In some cases, the student may be referred to the school's Section 504 Coordinator (see accompanying Overview on Section 504 Policies and Practices.)

The Evaluation Planning Meeting

If there is an agreement to perform an evaluation, a written plan for the evaluation is developed at the Evaluation Planning Meeting. In practice, the Evaluation Planning Meeting often occurs as an extension of the Determination Meeting. The Evaluation Plan describes the nature and scope of the evaluation(s) to be performed.

Written consent for an evaluation is required by the parent/guardian. This consent for evaluation can be provided at the conclusion of the meeting or the parent/guardian may wish to take additional time before providing written consent. Evaluations can only begin after the parent has provided written consent; if consent is not given, the District cannot proceed with an evaluation.

The District has ninety (90) days from the time written consent is provided to complete the entire evaluation, eligibility, and placement process. (Note: Preschool students should complete the evaluation and eligibility process in time to receive services upon attaining the age of three.)

Parents/guardians will receive written notice of the results of both the Determination and Evaluation Planning Meetings.

3. Evaluation and Eligibility (see also PRISE pp 7-10)

The Evaluation Process

The Determination/Evaluation Planning Meetings complete the referral process. If a decision has been made that an evaluation is warranted and signed parental/guardian consent has been obtained, evaluation of the student will commence. The evaluations will be provided at no cost to the parent/guardian.

Parents/guardians may have obtained private evaluations at their own expense before or during the evaluation timeframe. If the parents/guardians wish to share this information with the school personnel, it will be taken into consideration in identifying the student as being eligible for special education and related services or speech language services and, if appropriate, in planning the program. In most cases where evaluation is warranted and where a family has previously obtained private evaluations, the District will conduct at least one evaluation in addition to those obtained privately.

Certified professionals will administer the evaluations in the student's native language and will explain the results of their testing.

1. Evaluation for Special Education:

The evaluation shall include separate assessments by at least two members of the CST. For a preschool aged child who requires a speech-language assessment, that assessment may serve as one of the required two. If the suspected area of disability is *autism* or *communication impaired*, a speech-language assessment is required in addition to at least two other assessments by the CST. A hearing and vision screening by the school nurse is required. Other information may be gathered through a specialized medical evaluation(s), speech/language evaluation, occupational/physical therapy evaluations, and/or an audiological evaluation, which may be conducted by the members of the CST or by professionals contracted by the school district.

2. Evaluation for Speech/Language Services:

For concerns regarding articulation, fluency, and voice *only*, students may be evaluated by the speech/language therapist, if academic impact and developmental norms indicate it is warranted. Parents/guardians should contact the school's speech/language therapist directly for further information. A hearing and vision screening by the school nurse is required.

The set of evaluations recommended by the school district is designed to be in the student's best interest; however, parents/guardians have the right to refuse consent or withdraw consent at any time. If the school district disagrees with this action, it may submit a due process petition. (See Section D. Glossary for a definition of 'due process' and where to find out more about parental rights.)

Upon completion of the evaluations, the CST will provide the parent/guardian with a written report of the details of the testing results 10 calendar days prior to the Eligibility Meeting. These evaluations will help determine if the student has an educational disability and whether special education services or speech/language therapy is needed. This determination will take place at the Eligibility Meeting.

The Eligibility Meeting

Upon completion of the evaluations, an Eligibility Meeting will be scheduled to determine whether the student is eligible for special education and related services or speech/language services. The Eligibility Meeting is attended by all IEP Team members (see Glossary for IEP Team definition.) CST member(s) and other school district personnel, when appropriate, can also be invited to attend. Attendees at a speech/language services Eligibility Meeting must include a speech/language therapist in addition to the IEP Team members.

At this meeting, the case manager or evaluator will review evaluation results and answer all questions. The case manager will discuss the rationale for determining eligibility or non-eligibility. Parents/guardians will receive written notice of the results of this meeting.

Should there be disagreement about the eligibility decision, parents/guardians should refer to page 16 of PRISE.

Categories of Special Education Eligibility

If the CST finds that the student presents with an educational disability that adversely affects educational performance and requires special education and related services, they identify a primary justification for special education eligibility which will be stated in the IEP. There are 14 categories for eligibility:

1. auditory impaired
2. autistic
3. intellectually disabled
4. communication impaired
5. emotionally disturbed
6. multiply disabled
7. deaf/blindness
8. orthopedically impaired
9. other health impaired
10. preschool with a disability
11. social maladjustment
12. specific learning disability
13. traumatic brain injury
14. visually impaired

For definitions of each, see Chapter 14, pp 68-76 of the [State Education Code](#).

Determining the Least Restrictive Environment

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that students with disabilities receive a free and appropriate education in the ‘least restrictive environment’ (LRE) appropriate for the student’s specific learning needs. This law requires that, to the greatest extent possible, students with disabilities be educated alongside their nondisabled peers (see Glossary for LRE definition.)

When a student is found eligible for special education services, a considered opinion must be made as to what constitutes the LRE for that particular student (it is different for each student.) There are a variety of environments – or educational placements - to consider, which range in levels of restriction, including class size, student-teacher ratio, and degree of inclusion with general education peers. The progression of LRE’s is as follows (See Glossary for definitions of each):



The student’s ‘home’ zoned school is always considered first for placement, however, the IEP may be delivered in another school in the district, another public school district or a state approved school for special education students if that is considered the LRE for that particular student.

Speech/Language Services Eligibility

Eligibility for speech/language services requires a disorder of articulation, phonology, voice or fluency that a) adversely affects educational performance and b) is no longer consistent with age expected norms according to standardized testing. An “Eligible for Speech Language Services” (ESLS) IEP will then be drafted with the parent, classroom teacher and the speech/language therapist who will serve as the case manager.

4. The Individualized Education Plan (IEP) (see also PRISE pp 10-11)

Once a student has been found eligible for special education and related services or speech/language services, an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) must be developed. The IEP is a legal document that identifies what supports are needed for the student's success.

The IEP Meeting

The purpose of the IEP meeting is to determine the student's current educational status and to develop a program designed to meet the student's unique needs. This meeting is required before any special education services can commence.

Timing of the Meeting

This meeting may be held immediately after the Eligibility Meeting with parent/guardian consent or within 15 calendar days of that meeting.

Meeting Attendees

The meeting is attended by the IEP Team. In some cases, individual IEP team members may be excused if there is written notification and consent from parents/guardians. At the beginning of the meeting, all participants will be asked to sign and date an attendance sheet. This signature does not indicate consent or approval of the IEP.

The IEP Document

There are several components of the IEP document. Some components are specific to students in certain stages of their educational careers. The IEP team may work from a blank or draft version of the IEP, which parents can request in advance of the meeting.

Educational Impacts

The student's present levels of academic achievement and functional performance will be discussed, including how the student's disability affects involvement and progress in the general education curriculum. This discussion will include the results of the initial or most recent evaluation and, as appropriate, consider the student's performance on any general statewide or district assessment. The sources of information including evaluation data, teacher reports, classroom observations, and other relevant information will be listed. The strengths of the student and the concerns of the parent will also be stated as well as the interests and preferences of the student, if age 14 and older. For preschool aged children there will be a description of how the disability affects the child's participation in appropriate activities.

The Effective Period

The IEP should indicate the period for which it is effective.

Assistive Devices and/or Services

If the IEP team determines that the student needs a particular assistive device or service, the IEP must include a statement to that effect in the appropriate section. These needs may include behavioral, communication, language, hearing, and vision and may additionally require assistive technology.

Paraprofessional Support

If the IEP team determines that the student needs the full or part-time support of a paraprofessional, the IEP must include a statement to that effect in the appropriate section. The statement should specify when and where the para will provide support, and whether the para's services will be exclusive to the student with the IEP, or whether they will be shared with other students.

Upcoming Transitions

A statement regarding the student's transition from an elementary to secondary program will be included based upon factors such as age, social, academic, and vocational development.

Beginning at age 14, a transition plan for the student's future will begin to be developed. A statement will be written about the student's interests and preferences and post secondary plans.

At age 16, the IEP will list the multi-year plan for promoting movement from school to the student's desired post-school outcomes. At least three years before the student's 18th birthday, a statement advising both parent and student of the transfer of rights at age 18 will be included in the IEP.

Goals

Annual measurable academic and functional goals may be developed that are related to the core curriculum content standards through the general education curriculum unless otherwise required according to the student's educational needs. Annual benchmarks or short term objectives will be included, as will methods of progress reporting.

Accommodations & Modifications

An accommodation generally allows a student to complete the same assignment or test as other students, but with a change in the timing, formatting, setting, scheduling, response and/or presentation. An accommodation generally does not alter in any significant way what the test or assignment measures. A modification is generally an adjustment to an assignment or test that changes the standard or what the test is supposed to measure. Any accommodations or modifications will be described in the IEP document.

Least Restrictive Environment

The IEP will explain the extent, if any, to which the student will participate with nondisabled peers in the general education class and in extracurricular and nonacademic activities. The District will make every effort to include students with disabilities with non-disabled peers to the greatest extent possible.

Extended School Year Programs

The IEP will include a statement on the student's eligibility for an extended school year (ESY) program.

Test Participation/HS Gradation Requirements

Participation in district and state assessment will be addressed; and, if necessary, modifications and or accommodations will be developed. Beginning at age 14, the IEP will identify the State and local graduation requirements that the student will be expected to meet for graduation. If the student is exempted from meeting any of the standard graduation requirements or if any of the requirements are modified, this is addressed with a rationale.

Description of Services

Special education services are listed by instructional area. For each area, the IEP should state whether services will be provided via In-Class Support or via Replacement (see glossary for definitions). For in-class programs, the amount of time the special education teacher or paraprofessional is present in class is noted. Related services are listed with the frequency, location (in class or pull out), duration (length of session) and whether the sessions will be individual or group.

Transportation

If it is determined that the student is eligible for transportation services, the IEP will include a statement about this.

Approving, Reviewing, and Amending the IEP

Parental consent is required to implement the *initial* IEP. Parents/guardians may sign the initial or updated IEP at the IEP meeting, or they may take some time to consider it before signing. The program and services offered in an initial IEP will not begin prior to signed consent.

All IEPs will be reviewed and updated in an annual IEP meeting. Interim meetings will be held during the year upon request, and IEP's may be amended without a meeting if the parent or district makes a written request for such change and both parties are in agreement.

Only the initial IEP requires parental consent; renewed or revised IEPs are implemented automatically 15 days after a renewed/revised document is issued to parents/guardians, whether or not the parent/guardian has signed the document. If there is disagreement regarding the renewed or revised IEP document, parents should contact their case manager. If concerns are not resolved, parents have the right to file for due process (*see PRISE p. 17*)

5. Ongoing Processes After Placement

Annual Review

The annual review is a meeting to develop, review and/or revise a student's IEP, based on input from parents/guardians, teachers, and other members of the IEP Team working with the student. Participants make recommendations for the next year's program based on progress made in reaching the goals and objectives stated in the previous IEP and on the student's current needs.

The school must notify parents/guardians in advance of the IEP expiration date and attempt to schedule a meeting time and place that is mutually agreeable. IEP reviews must be held at least annually and also under specific situations:

- By June 30 of a child's last year in a preschool program.
- By June 30 of a student's last year in an elementary school and includes input from the staff of the secondary school.
- During a 21 year old student's last year in an educational program.

In addition to the annual review, a parent/guardian may request a meeting at any time during the year, for example if there is concern that the student is not making anticipated progress.

Eligibility Reevaluation (*see also PRISE p. 12*)

A reevaluation will be conducted within three years of the student's prior eligibility meeting at which time the IEP team will discuss whether formal testing is warranted or if there is sufficient available information to continue the eligibility without formal testing. A reevaluation may be waived with parental consent unless a change in eligibility is being considered, such as declassification.

The reevaluation of students who are classified as 'preschool disabled' must be completed to determine eligibility under one of the 13 other categories of school aged classification. Without a reevaluation, the preschool disabled classification expires on June 30th of the student's last year in preschool.

If testing is not warranted, with written parental consent the IEP team may proceed to the eligibility meeting. If testing is warranted, an evaluation plan is developed, written parental consent is obtained, and the evaluations performed. Upon completion of the evaluations, the CST will provide the parent with copies of the district's evaluation reports 10 days prior to the eligibility meeting. These evaluations will help determine if the student continues to be eligible for special education services.

Transition Services (*see also PRISE pp 11-13*)

Transition Services are managed by the District's Transition Services Coordinator.

Transition services are those activities that are designed to assist the student from school to post-school activities. These may include preparation for postsecondary education, vocational training, employment skills, continuing and adult education, independent living, or community participation. Transition services include the instruction, related services, community experiences, and development of employment or other adult learning objectives sufficient to assist the student with becoming an independent adult and lifelong learner. Transition services commence at age 14, or younger, if deemed appropriate by the IEP team.

Graduation Requirements

Specific graduation requirements are listed in the IEP commencing at age 14. The graduation requirements are then reviewed annually at the IEP meeting, and if the student is exempted from any local and/or state high school graduation requirements, the rationale for that as well as the alternate proficiencies that are required will be delineated.

A summary of performance is required when a student graduates. The summary of performance includes a written summary of academic achievement and functional performance prior to the date of the student's graduation. This summary also includes recommendations to assist the student in meeting post-secondary goals.

B. Frequently Asked Questions

1. Question: What are timeframes within which the District must respond or take action at various stages in the special education process?

Answer:

- The District must schedule a Determination Meeting within 20 calendar days of receiving a referral to the Special Services Department.
- If a determination is made that a student will be evaluated for eligibility for special services, the District must complete the evaluation, eligibility and placement process within 90 calendar days of written consent for evaluation.
- The District must provide completed evaluation reports at least 10 days prior to the Eligibility Meeting.
- In years following the initial IEP (which requires written consent), annual IEP revisions/updates will automatically be put into effect 15 days from IEP meeting.

2. Question: Can I submit my request for a CST evaluation if we have not engaged in the I&RS process?

Answer: Yes. Upon receipt of your letter, the District may want to determine if any previous processes have been utilized, such as I&RS, but utilizing I&RS is not a prerequisite for a request for a CST evaluation.

3. Question: I would like my student evaluated for special education eligibility by an outside agency. Can this be done?

Answer: Parents/guardians are entitled to one independent evaluation of their student at no cost. The independent evaluation can be requested at any time during or after the district's evaluation process. Districts often maintain a list of agencies that provide independent evaluations. It is important that the district's CST evaluate your student since it is in the best position to observe classes, speak to teachers and be knowledgeable of curriculum delivery in the student's school. The evaluation process also helps the CST become more knowledgeable of your student's needs

and puts the CST in a better position to assist teachers and therapists who may be working with your student in the future.

4. Question: I have had a private evaluator assess my student and several recommendations are made in the evaluator's report. Will these be accepted by the district?

Answer: The district's CST must consider the findings of any evaluation provided by the parents/guardians of a student receiving special education or undergoing consideration for services. In some cases, the entire report may be accepted, in other cases a portion of the report, and in some instances the CST may not accept the findings of a report. The CST should provide you with its determination in this regard and the reasons for its determination.

5. Question: My student is receiving private services outside the school day and is responding well to the methodology that is used in this program. Will the school district adopt this methodology if I request it?

Answer: The fact that your student is responding to a particular strategy or method is important information of which the IEP team should be aware. To the degree possible, the district staff may wish to implement strategies that the parent/guardian identifies as productive for the student. The ability to adopt a particular method may be limited in many instances by factors such as environmental conditions (some methods that are successful in a non-school setting do not transfer to a classroom setting), specific training requirements, or a lack of supportive scientific research. For these reasons, districts are given the responsibility of choosing the method which they view to be most appropriate. However, particular methodologies are not a required component of an IEP.

6. Question: Are parents/guardians part of the team who decides eligibility for special education and related services?

Answer: No. Although parental input is considered in making eligibility determinations, the CST is responsible for determining eligibility for special education and related services. Parent/guardian consent to the *initial* IEP and to commence services is required.

7. Question: As a parent/guardian, am I a member of the IEP Team and the CST?

Answer: Parents/guardians are members of the IEP team – but not the CST. The CST consists of a school psychologist, a learning disabilities teacher/consultant, school social worker, and when needed, a speech-language therapists, responsible for conducting evaluations to determine eligibility for special education and related services for students with disabilities. (Also see Glossary definitions.)

8. Question: Are parents/guardians permitted to bring additional family members, friends, doctors or therapists, or advocates to meetings with the CST?

Answer: Yes. Parents/guardians can bring whomever they would like to attend the meeting; preferably it is someone who has knowledge of the student, can advocate for the student's rights, and be a contributing member of the IEP team. A parent or guardian is the only person(s) who can sign to give consent for classification and to accept the IEP.

9. Question: At what point is my student considered ‘classified?’

Answer: After the eligibility meeting is held that deems the student eligible for special education and related services.

10. Question: Once my student is classified, can my student have transportation if I live too close for the regular bus?

Answer: While transportation is a possible related service, most classified students are not eligible for transportation as part of their IEP. Transportation is only provided as a related service due to a condition of the student’s disability and in accordance with specific needs of the student as detailed in their IEP.

11. Question: When is a student eligible for Extended School Year (ESY) services?

Answer: The IEP team determines eligibility for ESY services by reviewing several factors. One factor to be considered includes a regression/recoupment analysis which considers the amount of regression a student experiences as a result of an interruption in educational services over the course of the summer and the amount of time required to regain the prior level of skill upon the student’s return to school in the fall. The IEP team may also consider other factors such as the nature and severity of the student’s disability.

12. Question: What are related services?

Answer: Related services are services that are provided to help classified students benefit from special education. The services are specified in the student’s IEP and are provided in conjunction with the special education program. Many times the related services to a special education program are provided in the classroom setting. Examples of related services include: counseling services, occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech/language services, and transportation.

13. Question: Does my student have to be classified to have speech/language services?

Answer: Yes, either as eligible for special education and related services or as eligible for speech/language services.

14. Question: Should my student have goals and objectives for in-class support programs?

Answer: It depends: academic goals and objectives may be the same as those for the general education curriculum (while addressing the student’s areas of need to enable him/her to access the curriculum); or if a student is receiving a replacement curriculum for specified subjects, goals and objectives will be different than the general education goals and objectives for those subjects. Goals and objectives will be defined for all related services programming.

15. Question: My student is scheduled to receive related services. At what point in the school year should I expect such services to commence?

Answer: Related services should generally commence within 2-3 weeks of the start of the school year, of the signing of the initial IEP or of changes adding these services to an existing IEP. This

allows a student to first get acclimated to the new school year routine in September, or for integration of services into established routines.

16. Question: What do I do if I just want occupational therapy?

Answer: Occupational therapy is a related service and is only provided if a student is determined as eligible for special education or eligible for a Section 504 plan and then found to be in need of occupational therapy, based upon an occupational therapy evaluation.

17. Question: What is Section 504?

Answer: Section 504 is a part of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, a civil rights statute that aims at preventing discrimination against individuals with disabilities in programs that receive direct or indirect federal funds. Section 504 aims to ensure that the student with a disability has equal access to the District's general educational program. With a Section 504 Plan, a student with a disability may receive accommodations and modifications that are not available to students who are not disabled. Responsibility for administering Section 504 does NOT fall within the Special Services Department; Section 504 is considered a general education management responsibility (please refer to Overview of Section 504 Policies and Practices.)

18. Question: How do I find out if my child is eligible for a Section 504 Plan?

Answer: Parents/guardians and teachers should contact the designated Section 504 Coordinator at their school to convene a meeting regarding a student's eligibility under Section 504 and to develop an appropriate plan. Responsibility for administering Section 504 does NOT fall within the Special Services Department; Section 504 is considered a general education management responsibility. Section 504 Coordinators are typically Assistant Principals or Guidance Counselors (see Contact Sheet appendix.)

19. Question: Can a student have both an IEP and a Section 504 Plan?

Answer: In some rare cases, yes. Generally, any accommodations for students with IEPs will be included in the IEP. Remember, Section 504 is a civil rights law that guarantees equal access to the general educational program – “a level playing field” – for students with disabilities. The IDEA is a funding statute for students whose disabilities require an IEP Team to determine educational program and placement issues. On rare occasions, a student with an IEP may have a 504 Plan for a discreet disability, but the general rule is that all accommodations are included in one type of plan.

20. Question: Can ‘twice exceptional’ students, i.e. students with special needs who are ‘gifted’ or who function at an above average level in one or more areas, be eligible for accelerated or gifted and talented programs?

Answer: Yes, it is possible for students who are ‘twice exceptional’ to be enrolled in advanced classes or gifted and talented programs. Discussions regarding support services for all students with special needs are based on the individual needs of the students.

21. Question: What can I do if I think a student's IEP is not being followed as written?

Answer: Parents/guardians should contact the student's case manager regarding IEP compliance.

22. Question: Whom should I contact if I have concern about a student’s teacher or paraprofessional?

Answer: Parents/guardians should contact the building administration, i.e. Principal, with concerns regarding a teacher. The teacher should be the first point of contact for concerns regarding a paraprofessional.

C. Glossary of Terms (see also PRISE p. 18)

Accommodations: An accommodation generally allows a student to complete the same assignment or test as other students, but with a change in the timing, formatting, setting, scheduling, response and/or presentation. An accommodation generally does not alter in any significant way what the test or assignment measures. Examples of accommodations include a student who is blind taking a Braille version of a test, a student taking a test alone in a quiet room or a student using assistive technologies.

Child Study Team (CST): Consists of a school psychologist, a learning disabilities teacher/consultant, school social worker, and when needed, a speech-language specialist, responsible for conducting evaluations to determine eligibility for special education and related services for students with disabilities.

Consultative services: In this model, a special education teacher or child study team member consults directly with a general education teacher(s) about the progress of a consult student. Students function in a general education setting with any accommodations (as listed in the IEP) made by the general education teacher. The consult teacher communicates and supports the general education teacher, to ensure the student is progressing well. The consult teacher is also a resource for the student, should he/she need additional support.

Due Process: A defined procedure to settle a dispute between a parent/guardian and a school district. See PRISE p. 17 for more information.

Educational Evaluation: An assessment of a student based on multiple tests, analysis of class work, classroom observation, and teacher input intended to determine levels of achievement in certain academic areas, as well as the student’s learning style and perceptual abilities.

Extended School Year (ESY): Extended school year services during the summer months is considered and discussed at the annual IEP review meeting. Special education and related services may be provided to a student with a disability beyond the normal school year in accordance with the student’s IEP.

General Education: An educational program designed for all students that follows the core curriculum content standards.

In-class replacement: If a student receives in class replacement, it has been determined by the IEP team that he/she cannot access the general education curriculum as it exists. Content modifications and accommodations *must* be made daily so the student can access the material. In

this model, a general education teacher and a special education teacher are present in a class at the same time to support the students. The general education and special education teachers work together collaborate on creating lessons and to deliver the class instruction, according to one of several co-teaching models. The special education teacher has the primary responsibility for assuring that all his/her students' needs are met, provides feedback about his/her students' grades in consultation with the general education teacher, and is responsible for managing everything related to the special education students. The special education teacher is the "teacher of record," i.e. he/she is responsible for attendance and grades of the student.

In-class support: In this model, a general education teacher and a special education teacher are present in a class at the same time to support the students. The general education and special education teachers work together to collaborate on creating lessons and to deliver the class instruction, according to one of several co-teaching models. The special education teacher has the primary responsibility for assuring that all his/her students' needs are met, provides feedback about his/her students' grades in consultation with the general education teacher, and is responsible for managing anything related to the special education students. The general education teacher, however, is the "teacher of record," i.e. he/she is responsible for attendance and grades of the student.

The special education teacher is responsible for differentiating instruction for his/her students at their readiness level. If the classroom instruction is not sufficient for the student, it is the special education teacher's job to plan targeted, small group instruction, to meet his/her students' needs. This includes but is not limited to pre-teaching, re-teaching, and varying the instructional modality used. Generally, the student should participate in all classroom activities and lessons, but the more important goal is for the students to make academic progress.

Inclusion/Mainstreaming: The practice of placing a student who has special education needs into general education classrooms for a least part of the student's educational program.

Individualized Education Plan (IEP): The written educational program designed for each classified student, incorporating certain information such as educational goals (long-term and short-term), the duration of the program, and provisions for evaluating the program's effectiveness and the student's performance.

IEP Team: The group of individuals who are responsible for the development, review and revision of the student's individualized education program. The Team includes:

- the parents/guardians of a student with a disability;
- not less than 1 general education teacher of such student (if the student is, or may be, participating in the regular education environment);
- not less than 1 special education teacher;
- a representative of the school;
- an individual who can interpret the instructional implications of evaluation results;
- at the discretion of the parent/guardian or school, other individuals who have knowledge or special expertise regarding the student, including related services personnel as appropriate;
- and whenever appropriate, the student with a disability.

Intervention & Referral Services (I&RS): A procedure in which staff members and parents/guardians develop intervention strategies to assist a student who is having difficulty in learning, behavior or socialization to function in the general education classroom.

Least Restrictive Environment (LRE): To the maximum extent appropriate, students with disabilities are educated with students who are not disabled. Special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of students with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs only when the nature and severity of the disability is such that education in general education classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.

Mainstreaming/Inclusion: The practice of placing a student who has special education needs into general education classrooms for at least part of the student's educational program.

Modification: A modification is generally an adjustment to an assignment or test that changes the standard or what the test is supposed to measure. Examples of possible modifications include a student completing work on *part* of a standard or completing an alternate assignment that is more easily achievable than the standard assignment.

Pull-out replacement: In this model, there is one teacher in a separate classroom, providing instruction for a small group of students. Students are expected to master key portions of the grade or course curriculum, and instruction is tailored to individual students' needs. Students entirely receive major subject instruction in a small-group setting in a different room. The special education teacher is fully responsible for assessing, planning, instructing, and grading his/her students for the subjects he/she instructs.

Parental Rights in Special Education (PRISE): A document developed by the NJ Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs to describe the state and federal laws affecting the provision of special education, help parents/guardians understand their rights in the special education, and enable them to take an active role in their student's education. PRISE is available in Spanish and other languages at [PRISE/Translations](#). Print copies can be obtained from a student's case manager or the Special Services Department.

Related Services: Services that are provided to help classified students to benefit from special education. The services are specified in the student's IEP and are provided in conjunction with the special education program. Some examples of related services include: counseling services, occupational therapy, physical therapy, parent training, social work, speech/language services, transportation.

Response to Intervention (RTI): The Response to Intervention (RTI) model for school-age children who are at-risk for school problems emphasizes pre-referral prevention and intervention. Although several variations of the model exist, in general RTI is based upon three components:

- a. the use of multiple tiers of increasingly intense interventions;
- b. a problem-solving approach to identify and evaluate instructional strategies; and
- c. An integrated data collection and assessment system to monitor student progress and guide decisions at every level.

Section 504: A federal law designed to protect the rights of individuals with disabilities in programs and activities that receive federal funds from the U.S. Department of Education. Section 504 provides: "No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States . . . shall solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance . . ."

Self Contained Programs: Taught by the special education teacher, this is considered a special class program that serves students with similar educational needs; instruction is usually provided with an alternative curriculum based upon the nature or severity of the student's disability and in accordance with the student's IEP goals and objectives.

Supported Instruction: The support of a student's education in the general education class by a paraprofessional.

Transition: A coordinated set of activities for a student, designed within an outcome-oriented process that promotes movement from school to post-school activities, including post-secondary education, vocational training, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation. Transition services for students with disabilities may be special education, if provided as specially designed instruction, or related services, if required to assist a student with a disability to benefit from special education.

SOMA Special Education

Contact Matrix

Updated May, 2016

Note: E-mail and telephone contact information can be located on "contacts" link on the District Website at <http://www.somdsd.nj.us>

School Contacts						
	Clinton	Tuscan	South Mountain / Annex	Marshall	Jefferson	Montrose
Principal	Ms. Ann Bodnar	Ms. Malukah Majeed	Ms. Audrey Wallock-Interim	Mrs. Bonita Samuels	Ms. Kimberly Hutchinson	Ms. Rene Joyce
Assistant Principal(s)	Mr. Tim Beaumont	Mr. Kevin Mason	Ms. Marianne Hess	Mrs. Shannon Glander	Ms. Laura Swyberius	N/A
Special Ed Parent Liaison	Katie Rumley kjrumley@gmail.com	Holly Evans holev@aol.com	Jocelyn Ryan jocelyncleary@gmail.com Jennie Tinkelman jennie.tinkelman@gmail.com	John Sarantakis john.sarantakis@gmail.com Bernie Hackler bhackler@me.com Muriel Liberto mimiliberto@gmail.com	Elisabeth Kravitz ptwlizk@gmail.com	Vacant
Intervention/Referral Team	Mr. Tim Beaumont	Mr. Kevin Mason	Ms. Marianne Hess	Mrs. Shannon Glander	Ms. Kimberly Hutchinson	N/A
CST Primary Caseworker	Ms. Danielle Washington	Ms. Rebecca Miligan	Ms. Renee Kay	Mrs. Gerri Colon/Mrs. Meg Richardson	Ms. Diana D'Addozio	Ms. Gerri Colon/Mrs. Meg Richardson
Building 504 Coordinator	Mr. Tim Beaumont	Mr. Kevin Mason	Ms. Marianne Hess	Mrs. Bonita Samuels	Ms. Laura Swyberius	N/A
Social Worker(s)	Ms. Lindy Rollo (Counseling), Ms. Danielle Washington (CST)	Mr. Eric Stoudemire	Ms. Nicole Banas	Ms. Caitlin Cox	Ms. Amy Litkey, Ms. Nicole Banas, Ms. Caitlin Cox	N/A
Nurse(s)	Ms. Joann Harrigan	Ms. Angela Thompson	Ms. Sharyn Wills; Ms. Nina Treitler (Annex)	Mrs. Jean-Gaillard Johnson	Ms. Carol Scalgione	Ms. Mary Pfister
Speech/Language Services	Deborah Blumenthal	Deborah Blumenthal	Linda Gottlieb	Ilana Rakovsky	Lori Goldberg	Lori Smith
Anti-Bullying Specialist	Ms. Lindy Rollo	Mr. Eric Stoudemire	Ms. Nicole Banas	Ms. Caitlin Cox	Ms. Amy Litkey	N/A

	Seth Boyden	MMS	SOMS	Columbia	O.O.D
Principal	Mr. Mark Quiles	Mr. Jerrill Adams	Ms. Lynn A. Irby	Ms. Elizabeth Aaron	N/A
Assistant Principal(s)	Mrs. Raquel Horn	Mr. Louis Brown; Mr. Marc Gold	Mr. James Jennings; Mr. James Waldron	Mr. Terry Woolard; Ms. Cheryline Hewitt; Mr. Charles Ezell	N/A
Special Ed Parent Liaison	Kristin O'Connor kristin_m_oconnor@yahoo.c	Rebekah Novemsky bektom@aol.com	Wendy Lazarus glotzer4@verizon.net	Erin Siders esiders@aol.com	Jane Bleasdale janeyb70@gmail.com
Intervention/Referral Team	Mrs. Raquel Horn	Mr. Louis Brown lbrown@somdsd.k12.nj.us	Mr. James Waldron	Grade level administrator	
CST Primary Caseworker	Mrs. Kathy Bohm	Dr. Michael Zarabi and Ms. Mary Harrington	Ms. Susan Betcher and Ms. Dana Franza	Ms. Robin Straus, Dr. David Velder, Mr. Chris Sedlak, Ms. Alexandra Freitas	Mr. Nathan Hollis
Building 504 Coordinator	Mrs. Raquel Horn	Mr. Louis Brown lbrown@somdsd.k12.nj.us	Mr. Waldron	Grade level administrator	N/A
Social Worker(s)	Mr. David Connerty	Ms. Beth Giladi	Ms. Alison Steiner	Ms. Marilu Gregory/Ms. Laura Prato	
Nurse(s)	Ms. Nancy Weinstein	Ms. Julianne Porter	Ms. Jacqueline Gilker	Ms. Lynn Schwartz	N/A
Speech/Language Services	Diane Leick	Diane Leick	Lori Hersh	Lori Hersh	N/A
Anti-Bullying Specialist	Mr. David Connerty	Ms. Beth Giladi	Ms. Alison Steiner	Mr. Matthew Endlich	N/A

District Administration Contacts	
Director of Special Services	Ms. Ella Rideau
Assistant Director of Special Services K-5	Ms. Crystal Riddick
Assistant Director of Special Services 6 - 12	Mr. Robert Schmidt
District 504 Coordinator	Mr. Philip Stern
Transition Coordinator / Counselor	Mr. Matthew Endlich
Behavior Management Consultant	Ms. Penny Petcher
Transportation Coordinator	Ms. Janice Ortiz
District Anti-Bullying Coordinator	Mr. Philip Stern

Other Organization Contacts	
SEPAC	info@somsepac.org
Special Ed PTO	somaspedpto@gmail.com
Special Services Secretaries	(973) 762-5600
Ingrid Williams	ext 1840
Carol Squier	ext 1220
Sandy Blair	ext 1846
Shyrisa Pleasant	ext 1845

Note: This document was compiled by SEPAC based on the SOMA district website and conversations with District personnel and others.



South Orange/Maplewood Special Education Parent Advisory Committee (SEPAC)

SEPAC is an advocacy group focused on policies, programs and practices within the South Orange/Maplewood School District.

Special Education Parent Advisory Groups are required for all school districts in New Jersey. The purpose of these groups is to provide opportunities for parents/caregivers and community members to offer input to their districts on critical systemic issues related to students with disabilities.

Families and caregivers of student(s) with learning needs or students eligible for or receiving services under an IEP or 504 plan are encouraged to attend SEPAC Meetings.

2015-16 SEPAC Meeting Dates: 10/6, 11/17, 1/28, 3/15 & 5/9

Meetings are held at 7:30pm in the general meeting room at the Board of Education Administrative building 525 Academy Street Maplewood.

2015-16 SEPAC Officers

Jenny Lindstrom, President
Michael Donoghue, Vice President
Erin Siders, Secretary
Reesa Salomon, Communications Officer
Nedra Cabbagestalk, Policy Officer

For more information, to contact SEPAC, or to sign up to receive periodic information on special education policy:

www.somsepac.org
email: info@somsepac.org



The Special Education PTO

South Orange - Maplewood

*"Our job is to join our children
in discovering who they are."*

~ Susan Marston

The Special Education Parent Teacher Organization (Special Education PTO) endeavors to enhance the understanding, respect and excellence in the education of all differently-abled children in our community through peer support and community outreach. We support, educate and empower families to effectively advocate for their children's needs. We have enjoyed a positive relationship with the SOMSD community for over 15 years. We welcome all community members, especially families with children who have special needs or are atypical learners, and professionals working with our children. In partnership with the school district's Parenting Center, we host monthly meetings to help families network with other families and share information, concerns, successes, and resources.

The Special Education PTO Executive Committee
2015-2016

Sonya Selig
Tendai N'Doro
Leon Morton
Ann Leeb

Kristin O'Connor
Rebekah Novemsky
Sheila Oliver
Barry Berg

Please visit the Special Ed PTO's website, private Facebook group, or contact us by email:

Online - somaspedpto.com Facebook - [somaspedpto](https://www.facebook.com/somaspedpto) Email - somaspedpto@gmail.com

Special Education Parent Liaisons

Each school has a volunteer special education parent liaison. They should be families' first point of contact. They can provide support and offer advice for those new to the process, struggling with school related IEP/504 issues. As parent volunteers, liaisons cannot answer for the District. Rather, they can share their experiences, make suggestions, and connect parents/caregivers with other contacts and resources.

2015-16 Liaisons

Clinton School

Katie Rumley kjrumley@gmail.com

Marshall School

John Sarantakis john.sarantakis@gmail.com
Bernie Hackler bhackler@me.com
Muriel Liberto mimiliberto@gmail.com

Jefferson School

Elisabeth Kravitz ptwlizk@gmail.com

Seth Boyden School

Kristin O'Connor Kristin_m_oconnor@yahoo.com

South Mountain School

Jocelyn Ryan jocelyncleary@gmail.com
Jennie Tinkelman Jennie.tinkelman@gmail.com

Tuscan School

Holly Evans holev@aol.com

Maplewood Middle School

Rebekah Novemsky bektom@aol.com

South Orange Middle School

Wendy Lazrus glotzer4@verizon.net

Columbia High School

Erin Siders esiders@aol.com

Out of District

Jane Bleasdale janeyb70@gmail.com

Montrose - VACANCY

Additional Resources for Families of Children with Special Needs

The State of New Jersey Department of Special

Education <http://www.state.nj.us/education/specialed/>

Parental Rights in Special Education Booklet (a PDF file) from the NJ Department of Education, Special

Education <http://www.state.nj.us/education/specialed/form/prise/prise.pdf>

Spanish: http://www.state.nj.us/education/specialed/form/prise/prise_s.pdf

The Statewide Parents Advocacy

Network <http://www.Spannj.org> SPAN offers families, professionals, policy makers, and our parent center colleagues information, resources, support, and advocacy assistance addressing: effective parent involvement, child care, general and special education, dropout and bullying prevention, child welfare, health care, mental health, youth leadership, transition to adult life, incarcerated youth, military family support, violence prevention & more.

The New Jersey Coalition for Inclusive

Education <http://njcie.net/> NJCIE supports families and schools in the quest to create neighborhood schools where children with disabilities and learning differences are welcomed as classmates, valued as learners and empowered to succeed.

Education Law Center

(ELC) <http://www.edlawcenter.org/ELCPublic/StudentRights/SpecialEducation.htm>

The ELC serves as advocates for equal educational opportunity and education justice in the United States. The ELC promotes educational equity through coalition building, litigation support, policy development, communications, and action-focused research in New Jersey, in other states, and at the federal level.

Understood 15 nonprofit organizations who have joined forces to support parents. Understood.org offers state-of-the-art technology, personalized resources, free daily access to experts, a secure online community, practical tips and more.

<https://www.understood.org/en>

National Center for Learning Disabilities <http://www.nclld.org> The mission of NCLD is to improve the lives of children and adults nationwide with learning and attention issues—by empowering parents and young adults, transforming schools and advocating for equal rights and opportunities.

Wrightslaw <http://www.wrightslaw.com> Parents, educators, advocates, and attorneys come to Wrightslaw for accurate, reliable information about special education law, education law, and advocacy for children with disabilities.

The Difference between IEP and 504 Plans

Both Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and 504 plans can offer formal help for K–12 students with learning and attention issues. They’re similar in some ways but quite different in others. This chart compares them side-by-side to help you understand the differences.

	IEP	504 Plan
Basic Description	A blueprint or plan for a child’s special education experience at school.	A blueprint or plan for how a child will have access to learning at school.
What It Does	Provides individualized special education and related services to meet the unique needs of the child. These services are provided at no cost to parents.	Provides services and changes to the learning environment to meet the needs of the child as adequately as other students. As with IEPs, a 504 plan is provided at no cost to parents.
What Law Applies	The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) This is a federal special education law for children with disabilities.	Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 This is a federal civil rights law to stop discrimination against people with disabilities.
Who Is Eligible	To get an IEP, there are two requirements: 1 A child has one or more of the 13 specific disabilities listed in IDEA. Learning and attention issues may qualify. 2 The disability must affect the child’s educational performance and/or ability to learn and benefit from the general education curriculum.	To get a 504 plan, there are two requirements: 1 A child has any disability, which can include many learning or attention issues. 2 The disability must interfere with the child’s ability to learn in a general education classroom. Section 504 has a broader definition of a disability than IDEA. That’s why a child who doesn’t qualify for an IEP might still be able to get a 504 plan.
Independent Educational Evaluation	Parents can ask the school district to pay for an independent educational evaluation (IEE) by an outside expert. The district doesn’t have to agree. Parents can always pay for an outside evaluation themselves, but the district may not give it much weight.	Doesn’t allow parents to ask for an IEE. As with an IEP evaluation, parents can always pay for an outside evaluation themselves.
Who Creates the Program/Plan	There are strict legal requirements about who participates. An IEP is created by an IEP team that must include: • The child’s parent • At least one of the child’s general	The rules about who’s on the 504 team are less specific than they are for an IEP. A 504 plan is created by a team of people who are familiar with the

	<p>education teachers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least one special education teacher • School psychologist or other specialist who can interpret evaluation results • A district representative with authority over special education services <p>With a few exceptions, the entire team must be present for IEP meetings.</p>	<p>child and who understand the evaluation data and special services options. This might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The child’s parent • General and special education teachers • The school principal
What's in the Program/Plan	<p>The IEP sets learning goals for a child and describes the services the school will give her. It’s a written document. Here are some of the most important things the IEP must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The child’s present levels of academic and functional performance—how she is currently doing in school • Annual education goals for the child and how the school will track her progress • The services the child will get—this may include special education, related, supplementary and extended school year services • The timing of services—when they start, how often they occur and how long they last • Any accommodations—changes to the child’s learning environment • Any modifications—changes to what the child is expected to learn or know • How the child will participate in standardized tests • How the child will be included in general education classes and school activities 	<p>There is no standard 504 plan. Unlike an IEP, a 504 plan doesn’t <i>have</i> to be a written document. A 504 plan generally includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific accommodations, supports or services for the child • Names of who will provide each service • Name of the person responsible for ensuring the plan is implemented
Parent Notice	<p>When the school wants to change a child’s services or placement, it has to tell parents in writing <i>before</i> the change. This is called prior written notice. Notice is also required for any IEP meetings and evaluations.</p> <p>Parents also have “stay put” rights to keep services in place while there’s a dispute.</p>	<p>The school must notify parents about evaluation or a “significant change” in placement. Notice doesn’t have to be in writing, but most schools do so anyway.</p>
Parent Consent	<p>A parent must consent in writing for the</p>	<p>A parent’s consent is required for the</p>

	school to evaluate a child. Parents must also consent in writing before the school can provide services in an IEP.	school district to evaluate a child.
How Often It's Reviewed and Revised	The IEP team must review the IEP at least once a year. The student must be reevaluated every three years to determine whether services are still needed.	The rules vary by state. Generally, a 504 plan is reviewed each year and a reevaluation is done every three years or when needed.
How to Resolve Disputes	IDEA gives parents several specific ways to resolve disputes (usually in this order): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mediation • Due process complaint • Resolution session • Civil lawsuit • State complaint • Lawsuit 	Section 504 gives parents several options for resolving disagreements with the school: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mediation • Alternative dispute resolution • Impartial hearing • Complaint to the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) • Lawsuit
Funding/Costs	Students receive these services at no charge. States receive additional funding for eligible students.	Students receive these services at no charge. States do not receive extra funding for eligible students. But the federal government can take funding away from programs (including schools) that don't comply. IDEA funds can't be used to serve students with 504 plans.

SOURCE: Understood.org