

IDEA / Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

IDEA is...

A federal education law. Kids with disabilities who qualify can get special education and related services from public schools.

IDEA covers...

Kids from birth through high school (or age 21). But a child must have a disability in one of 13 categories in the law **and** need special education to make progress in school. Not all kids who struggle in school will qualify.

IDEA requires public schools to...

Find and evaluate kids with disabilities — at no cost to families. Kids have the right to a free appropriate public education (FAPE) through an Individualized Education Program (IEP). The IEP is tailored to a child's unique needs and may include the following:



Special education

Instruction designed to meet the child's individual differences and needs

Example: explicit reading instruction



Related services

Services that help the child benefit from special education

Examples: speech and occupational therapy



Accommodations

Changes in the classroom to how the child learns the curriculum

Examples: extra time on tests, seating at the front of the class



Assistive technology

Tools that help the child work around barriers to learning

Examples: calculators, keyboards, graphic organizers



IDEA gives families rights, too

Parents and guardians have the right to be part of the team that develops the IEP. They have the right to disagree with the school and ask for due process, a formal way to resolve disputes.