



# The Road to Understanding Special Education

## Individual Education Program (IEP)

Purpose of Special Education Services – Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).  
Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Ensures students with qualifying disabilities have a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) designed to meet their unique needs in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) and prepare them for education, employment, and independent living.

[Special Education – Arc of Adams County \(arcadams.org\)](http://arcadams.org)

### Step to a Successful IEP Meeting

1. Does the day and time work for you?  
If not, contact the school.
2. Request assessment info prior to the meeting.
3. Make a list of questions/concerns and share with the team.
4. Invite the student to all or part of the meeting.  
Help the student to self-advocate.
5. Invite a support person to attend.
6. Keep copies of all evaluations/IEPs.
7. Ask for additional meeting if issues were left unaddressed.
8. If needed, ask team to meet in 4-6 weeks to review progress.
9. Maintain contact with school.



## Section 504 Plan

### Rehabilitation Act

[Special Education Rules and Regulations | CDE \(state.co.us\)](http://state.co.us)

- May be used when student does not qualify for IEP
- Wider disability definitions
- Gives accommodations in general education setting
- Reviewed annually

### Getting an IEP Process

- o Referral
- o Assessment
- o Identification/Eligibility
- o Development of IEP
- o LRE
- o Implementation of IEP
- o General Education Curriculum
- o Evaluation and Review

### Types of IEP Meetings

Initial – qualifies for special education  
 Annual Review – yearly  
 Re-Evaluation – every 3 years  
 Additional – special request

- [Office of Special Education | CDE \(state.co.us\)](http://state.co.us)
- [Special Education – Arc of Adams County \(arcadams.org\)](http://arcadams.org)
- [Individuals with Disabilities Education Act \(IDEA\)](http://idea.gov)
- [Special Education | The Thrive Center \(thrivectr.org\)](http://thrivectr.org)
- [Disability Categories | CDE \(state.co.us\)](http://state.co.us)
- [How to Prepare for an IEP Team Meeting \(verywellfamily.com\)](http://verywellfamily.com)

### Stay Connected

- The Arc of Adams County [www.arcadams.org](http://www.arcadams.org)
- PEAK Parent Center [PEAK Parent Center |](http://peakparentcenter.org)
- Parent to Parent Colorado [Parent to Parent of Colorado \(abilityconnectioncolorado.org\)](http://parenttoparentcolorado.org)
- The Thrive Center [Home | The Thrive Center \(thrivectr.org\)](http://thrivectr.org)



## How to Advocate

- <https://ccrd.colorado.gov>
- [ParentAdvocacyatSchool:8Steps](http://parentadvocacyatschool.org)
- [WhattoDoWhenConflictsonSpecialEdProgramsArise](http://whatto dowhenconflictsonspecial.edprograms.arise.org)
- [Special Education Rules and Regulations | CDE](http://state.co.us)

Advocacy is the process of persuading others to support your position/point of view.

### Tips for Expressive Communication (speaking):

- o Have the attention of the person/group
- o Send a clear and consistent message
- o Be assertive and respectful
- o Ask for feedback

### Tips for Receptive Communication (listening):

- o Face the person speaking
- o Maintain eye contact
- o Listen to their message
- o Do not interrupt
- o Ask questions
- o Check for understanding

### How to Advocate

- Identify the goal of the advocacy
- Develop a plan
- Ask questions
- Be assertive
- Be clear with what you want
- Be consistent with your message
- Consider alternatives
- Be respectful

### Conflict Resolution – Chain of Command

1. Special Education/General Education Teacher
2. Case manager
3. Principal/Assistant Principal
4. Special Education Coordinator/Director
5. Colorado Department of Education
  - Mediation
  - State Complaint
  - Due Process

- o 504 Complaints are filed with the Colorado Civil Rights Division

Click on the links for access to more resources!

