



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS



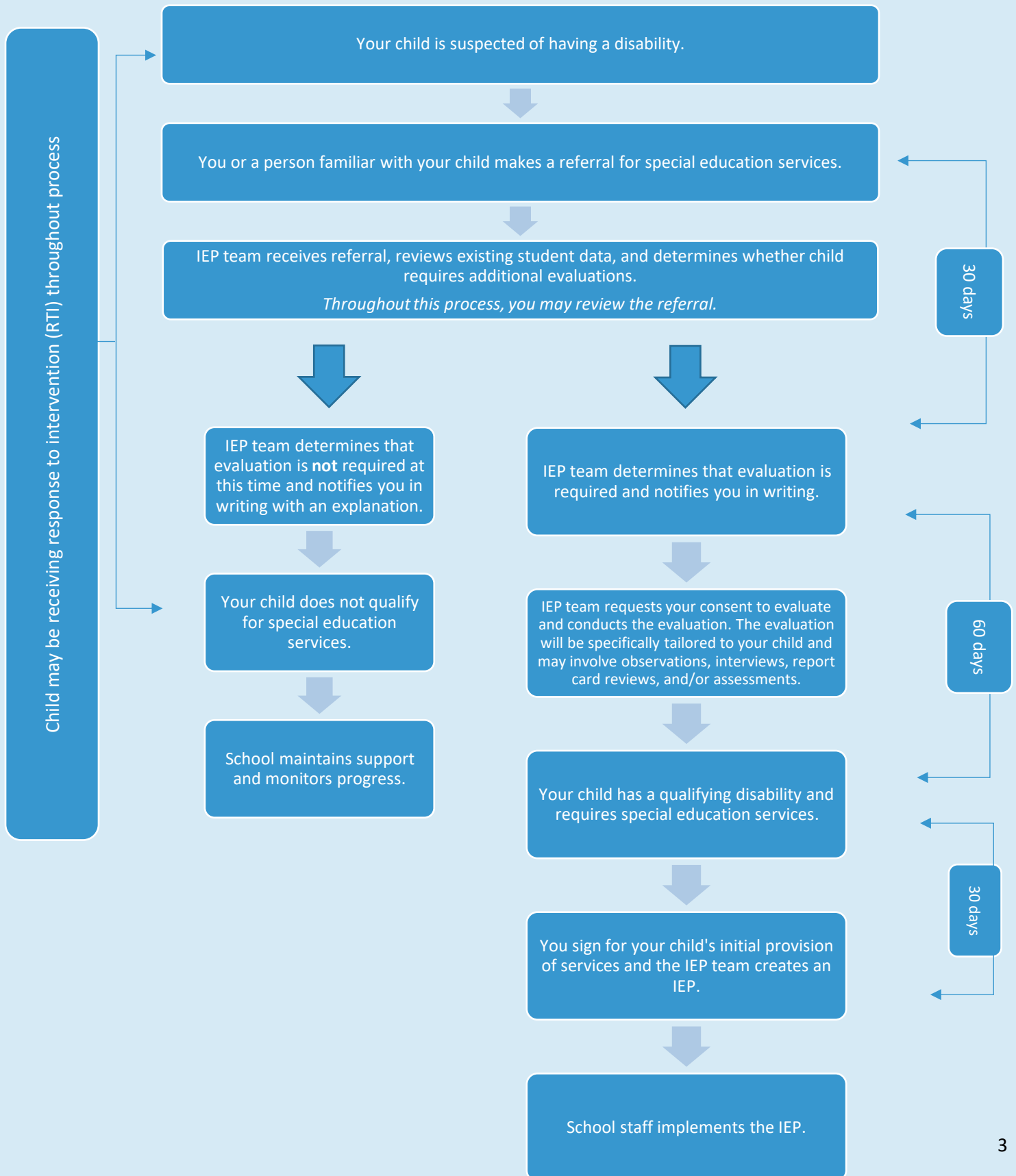
# Special Education Programs & Resources Guide for Families

School Year 2021-2022

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# Special Education Process at a Glance



## Special Education Process at a Glance

The special education process starts once a person familiar with the child submits a referral or makes a verbal request for special education services. Examples of who may submit a referral can include parents/guardians, teachers, psychologists, other school staff members, day care center employees, and physicians.

After the parent/guardian reviews the referral, the **IEP (Individualized Education Program)** team meets to discuss the referral and analyze existing data, including any previous assessments. The IEP team includes the parent/guardian, the child (if appropriate), special education teachers, general education teachers, related service providers, and/or other key members of the school staff.

If there is enough data, the IEP team may determine the child is eligible for special education services or they may recommend additional assessments and reconvene for the eligibility determination meeting. If the child is found eligible for special education services as a child with a disability, the IEP team discusses a plan of action and creates an IEP.

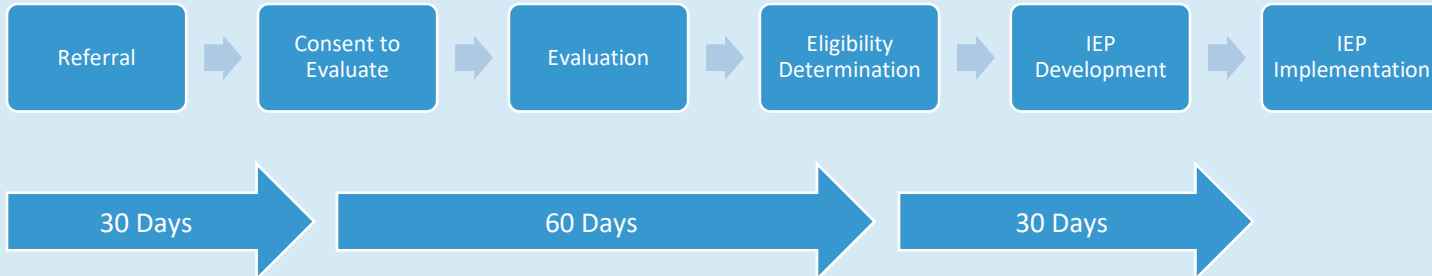
The IEP is a document that outlines the annual educational goals for the child, as well as the instructional and related services required to meet those goals. The IEP will indicate the appropriate setting in which these services should be delivered.

As the guardian of your child, you are a very important member of the IEP team. Accordingly, the Special Education Student Rights Act of 2014 requires your child's school to send you any relevant documents that will be discussed at an IEP or eligibility meeting prior to 5 business days of the meeting date. This is to ensure you have time to review and prepare for the meeting. Under the same law, you may expect that a copy of the IEP will be sent to you within 5 business days after the meeting has taken place.

DCPS makes every effort to provide special education services in each student's attending or neighborhood school. When this is not possible, DCPS assigns a student to a new location of service that is closest to the student's home and is able to implement the IEP with fidelity. The Special Education Student Rights Act of 2014 also allows parents or their designees to visit their child's current or proposed classroom. If you would like to appoint a designee to observe your child, the school will provide you with an Observation Designee Form to do so.



# Who Should I Contact if I Think My Child Needs Special Education Services?



In DCPS, referrals for special education services are made to the following teams:

- **Early Stages** ([referral@earlystagesdc.org](mailto:referral@earlystagesdc.org)) or **(202) 698-8037** - manages referrals for children ages 3 through 5 enrolled in DC private or religious schools as well as children who are not yet enrolled in school.
- **DCPS Neighborhood Schools** ([profiles.dcps.dc.gov](http://profiles.dcps.dc.gov) for school contact information) - students ages 3 through 21 enrolled in DCPS are referred through their attending school.
- **Centralized IEP Support** ([dcps.childfind@k12.dc.gov](mailto:dcps.childfind@k12.dc.gov)) or **(202) 442-5475** - The Centralized IEP Support Unit manages referrals for children ages 5 years 10 months to 21 years old who are parentally placed and funded at a private or religious school and fall in one of the following categories:
  - Are attending a private or religious school in DC, whether the family resides in DC or not;
  - Are attending a private or religious school in another state and the family resides in DC; or
  - Are being home schooled in DC.

In the process of evaluation students for special education services, the Centralized IEP Unit requests the following information:

- Referral Form
- Universal Health Form
- Proof of enrollment at a private or religious school in DC (usually a letter from the school)
- DC residency verification (DC residents only, to be completed after other documents are received)
- Additional suggested documents:
  - Attendance records
  - Report cards
  - Standardized test scores
  - Work samples
  - Prior evaluations (if applicable)



## Early Stages

Contact information: [referral@earlystagesdc.org](mailto:referral@earlystagesdc.org) or [info@earlystagesdc.org](mailto:info@earlystagesdc.org)

According to IDEA, a school district must identify, locate, and evaluate all 3- to 5-year-old children who may have a disability. Early Stages works with children in private or religious schools, childcare centers, and children who are not yet enrolled in school. In addition, Early Stages manages Part C Transition, the process that determines whether children receiving early intervention services before age three are eligible for special education services in school on or after age three.

Early Stages has two evaluation sites:

- Walker-Jones Education Campus, 1125 New Jersey Avenue, NW
- Department of Employment Services, 4058 Minnesota Avenue, NE

### Main Activities

Early Stages offers developmental screenings, manages referrals, conducts evaluations, holds eligibility meetings, develops IEPs and identifies locations for eligible children to receive their services. Each student referred for a full evaluation is assigned an evaluation team. This team is made up of a family care coordinator, who supports the family through the process, and an evaluation coordinator, who organizes the evaluations and the development of an IEP. Together with other specialists, this team completes an evaluation and provides parents with a better understanding of their child's needs. Together with the parent, the team determines whether the child is eligible for special education and related services. If so, the team develops an IEP.

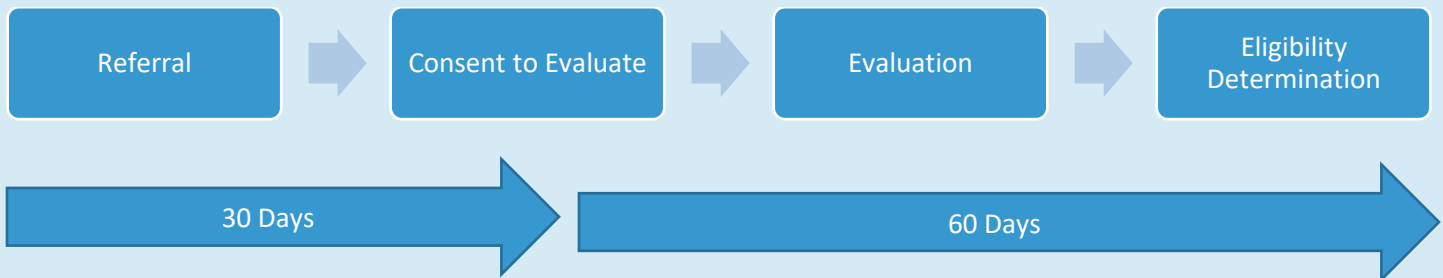
### Service Delivery

All IEP services are provided at DCPS schools by DCPS staff. Eligible children who are not already enrolled in a DCPS school are offered a seat either at their neighborhood school or through a lottery placement. If the neighborhood school is unavailable or does not have a program that meets the child needs, then a seat will be offered at the closest appropriate school that can meet his or her needs. Children already enrolled in a community-based Head Start program may also be eligible to have their IEPs implemented there. Children whose families prefer enrollment in private or religious schools will receive equitable services through an Individualized Services Plan (ISP) instead of an IEP.



## What should I expect during the eligibility process?

If your child is suspected of having a disability, and your child's IEP team determines that an evaluation is required, the team goes through the eligibility process. As of July 1st, 2018, DCPS is required to complete the eligibility process within 60 days of obtaining your consent to evaluate your child. This section describes important parts of the process, information you can use to be an informed member of the team, and supports are in place for your child.



### What should I look for in an eligibility report?

When reviewing the eligibility determination report, start by reading the conclusion of the document. The summary of the document may also help you gain a general understanding of what will be discussed at the meeting. The report will also include assessment data and the resources available to support your child.

### How is eligibility for special education services determined?

The IEP team, which includes you as the parent/guardian, determines your child's eligibility for special education services. The team will review a variety of resources that will include, but are not limited to current work samples, student's response to current/previous interventions, teacher and parent reports, evaluation reports (which include formal and informal assessment measures), review of the student's record, and student's current level of functioning in the educational environment.

Once all this information is collected and reviewed during the eligibility meeting, the team utilizes the Eligibility Determination Worksheet to establish if the student meets the requirements to receive special education services.

### What assessments were used and why? How do I interpret the scores?

Assessments can be formal or informal. Each assessment should address the area of concern identified in the referral process, as well as look at your student's overall ability in each area. Assessment results are interpreted by the provider and/or teacher based on the assessment's manual instructions.

Each formal assessment includes a rubric that determines your child's score. In the reports, the assessors will share this information and clearly state how your child did with each assessment. These may include several scores, or descriptions of the student's performance, depending on the assessment. The assessors will let the team know the ranges of these scores and how the scores compare to typical peers. If you are unsure how these scores connect to how your student performs in the classroom, please ask the assessor as well as the general education teacher and special education teacher for more information.

### Were observations done? What were the results?

Classroom observations may be conducted as a part of the eligibility process. During the observations, the observer looks to see what strategies, accommodations, and supports are already in the classroom; the student's response in the classroom; any difficulties the student may be having; and any strengths the student may be demonstrating. The results of the evaluation can be included in the Analyzing Existing Data section or in individual evaluation reports.

### When should I receive the eligibility determination documents?

You should receive any evaluations of your child at least 10 school days prior to the eligibility meeting. This will allow you to meaningfully participate in the discussion regarding your child's potential eligibility for special education services.

### What happens if my child is not eligible for special education services?

At an eligibility determination meeting, the team decides whether your child qualifies for special education services. During the meeting, other strategies and supports addressing the reason for referral can be provided by individuals on the IEP team. If your child does not qualify for special education services, the school can also provide information for other options to support your child. This could mean a continuation of the tiered supports, community resources, tutoring, a 504 plan, or other supports to ensure your child is receiving what they need.





# What to look for in an IEP?

This section will help you understand more about the individualized education program (IEP). The key sections of the IEP are:

- Student Information
- Present levels of performance and annual goals
- Special Education and Related Services
- Classroom accommodations and statewide or alternative assessment participation
- Transition plan

## Student Information

When reviewing your child's IEP, it is important to ensure your child's personal information is correct and up to date (address, phone number, date of birth, etc.). If this information is incorrect, please notify your students' case manager to update their school records.

## Annual Goals and Present Levels of Performance:

When developing annual goals for your child, the IEP team will:

- Use baseline data to support present levels of performance.
  - Baseline data is a way of measuring how your child is currently doing on a specific academic skill or standard.
  - Baseline data can come from a variety of places: standardized tests, observations, classroom-based assessments, student work samples or statewide testing results.
- Ensure that the IEP contains measurable goals for your child in the areas of mathematics, written expression, and reading; related services and/or functional goals. IEP goals are developed using baseline data.

## Each goal on your child's IEP will:

- List your child's current level of performance for the goal area,
- List the expected level of achievement within one IEP year, and
- State how your students' progress is measured and how often data will be collected. Progress on IEP goals can be measured informally or formally:
  - Informal progress measurements include student work samples, quizzes and test, behavioral progress monitoring.
  - Formal progress measurements can include standardized achievement tests, rating scales, intervention monitoring reports, and state test results.



## Special Education and Related Services

In your child's IEP, there is a section dedicated to special education and related services which identifies the services your child receives, the setting in which each service is provided, and the frequency of each service. This lets the IEP team know what services are required to fully support your child in school.

## Classroom Accommodations and Statewide or Alternate Assessment Participation

This section identifies accommodations and/or modifications required to support your child in the classroom. Types of accommodations and modifications may include:

- Preferential seating,
- Extended time,
- Frequent breaks,
- Clarification or repetition of directions,
- Enlarged print material, and
- Read aloud.

## Transition Plan:

Transition plans are developed for students ages 14 and older to prepare them for life after high school. The transition plan includes:

- Age-appropriate assessment data,
- Your child's academic, functional, and employment interests,
- Your child's strengths and needs,
- Annual transition goals reflecting what your child will work on during the school year, and
- Long term transition goals, including what your child would like to do after they graduate from high school.

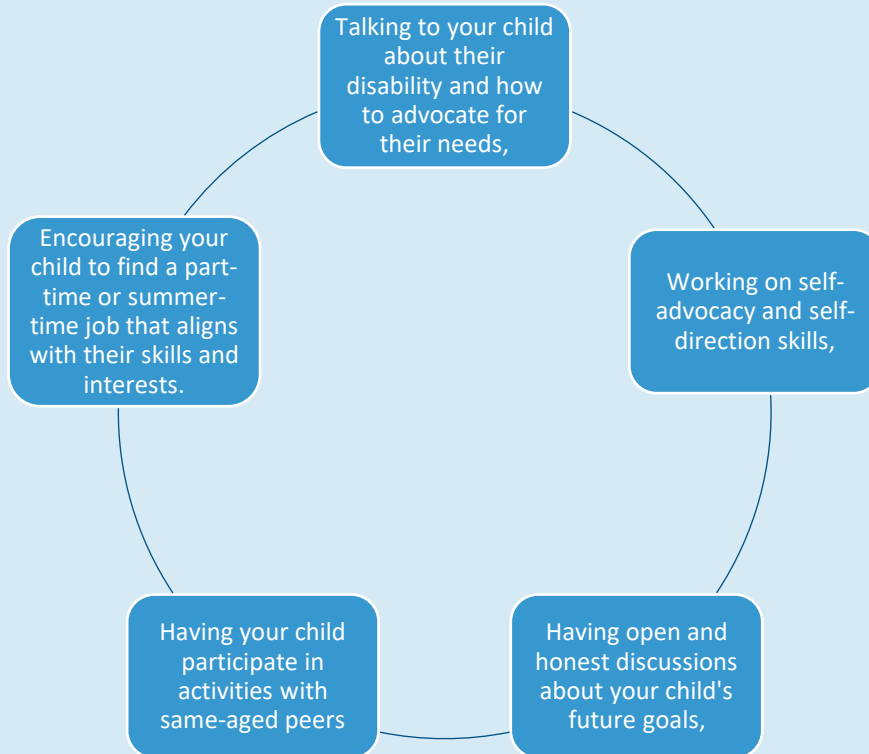
# Questions about your child's IEP

## What does family engagement look like between IEP meetings?

Families are welcome to connect with their child's teachers throughout the school year via email, telephone, or parent-teacher conferences to check on students' academic progress. Parents will also receive an IEP progress report quarterly along with your child's report card. Questions or concerns regarding your child's IEP services, academic progress, or goals, should be directed to a member of the school-based IEP team. Parents also have the right to schedule a team meeting to discuss the IEP and related services.

## How can I support my child with their IEP goals outside of their classroom?

There are several ways to support your child at home with their IEP goals. Parents can reach out to their child's teachers and/or related service providers to ask about specific activities, strategies, or supports they can do to support student academic progress outside of the classroom. Other ways you can support your child include:



## How do my child's teachers and related service providers work together?

Teachers and related service providers work together to support your child by meeting regularly to discuss strategies and supports for your child in the classroom as well as sharing your child's progress, accommodations, and modifications in between IEP meetings. Special education teachers, general education teachers, and related service providers work together to ensure your child receives instruction that supports their needs in their least restrictive environment.

## What should I do if I have concerns about my child's progress?

It can be concerning to hear that your child is not making progress or regressing on their IEP goals. If this is occurring, it can be helpful to contact your child's special education teacher to discuss options. You can request a meeting so the IEP team can come together to re-evaluate your child's services, supports, accommodations, and modifications to ensure that they are getting the support they need to be successful.

## What are the indicators that services need to be updated or changed?

Indicators can include:

Formal and informal assessment results indicating growth,

Mastering skills,

Generalizing skills into the classroom,

Plateau of skills with consistent intervention being provided over an extended period of time, and

Limited or no progress observed.

Any changes or updates to services are an IEP team decision and all data sources would need to be reviewed.

# How will I know my child is making progress?

## How is my child's progress measured?

Student progress is measured in multiple ways by teachers and related service providers. Student work samples, quizzes, tests, and formal and informal assessments are examples of how student progress is measured. For students aged 14 and above, secondary transition progress is measured by the level of independence the student demonstrates.

During every IEP meeting, there should be a discussion regarding the progress your child has made since the last IEP meeting. Your child's annual goals will be updated based on their progress and mastery of the previous year's goals, as well as the current needs of your child. These goals provide focus for the next year and ensure your child is being challenged academically.

Throughout the school year you should also:

- Request data related to your child's progress from your child's teachers and related service providers throughout the school year. If you suspect a problem or deficit, you should ask your child's teacher to assess your child using classroom assessments to quantify how your student is progressing.
- Request to meet with the guidance counselor or social worker to go over your child's behavior plan. The purpose of this is to see that their behavior supports are working and, if not, to modify those plans and interventions whenever there is a suspected issue or concern.
- Have your child use a planner to make sure assignments are being completed and turned in. The planner can be used to communicate between the parents and classroom teachers to determine if assignments are missing and to identify concerns with certain assignments or areas of curriculum.

## How is progress measured in high school students' career-based learning experiences?

An objective of transition programming is to understand the impact of each career-based learning experience on students' attitudes, skills, and confidence in professional settings. Students are surveyed, to compare students' pre-program results with their post- program results.

## How does the IEP progress report relate to my child's report card?

IEP progress reports are documents written quarterly, like report cards, to provide you with updates on how your child is progressing toward their IEP goals. These goals are connected to specific standards, like report cards, but have a different progress monitoring model.

For each IEP goal, the progress report will indicate whether:

- Your child has mastered the goal
- Your child is progressing toward meeting the goal,
- Your child has made no progress toward the goal,
- Your child is regressing, or
- Or the goal has not yet been introduced.

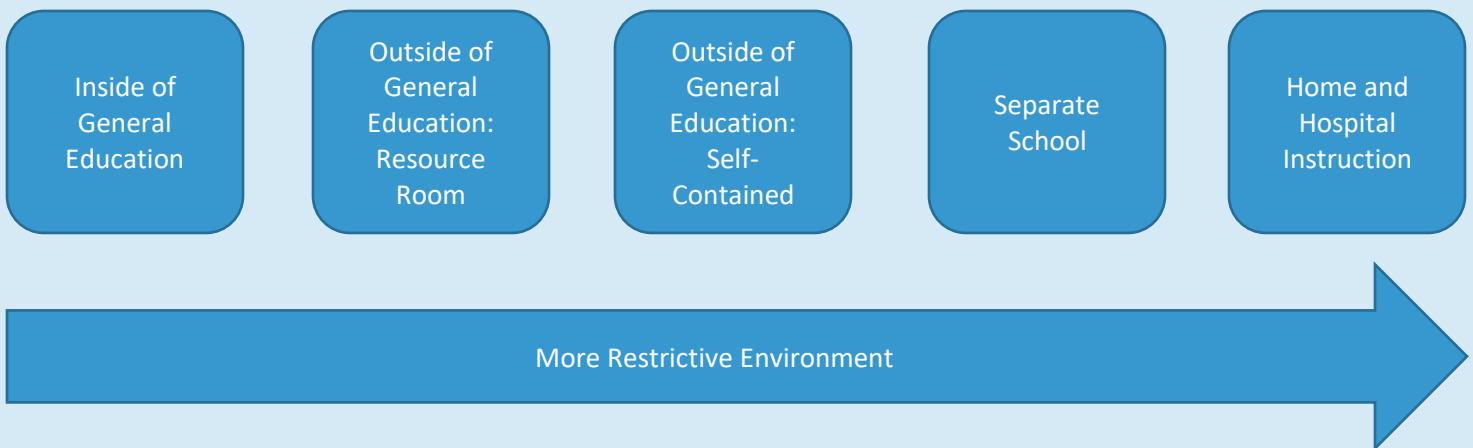


## Where are special education services provided?

DCPS provides a range of services for students ages three through 22 with disabilities who have been found eligible to receive special education services. There are different settings where these services can be provided, and students learn in the least restrictive environment possible. Most DCPS students can be served in the general education (regular) classroom, in a Resource Room or in a self-contained classroom. Separate school and home and hospital instruction are considered the most restrictive environments and are for students with the highest level of need.

IEP teams determine the level of services a student needs to access the curriculum. Students with disabilities spend as much time as possible inside of general education with non-disabled peers, as determined by the IEP Team. Within each child's IEP, accommodations are listed and provide clear ways to make the general education curriculum accessible for them.

Students with greater than 20 hours of specialized instruction outside of general education receive their services in a self-contained classroom or separate school where the curriculum is modified to support academic success. Curricular modifications change what a student is taught or expected to learn.



Students' IEPs may have services provided inside of general education, outside of general education, or both inside and outside of general education.

**Inside of general education** refers to specialized instruction and related services provided while students with disabilities are with students who are non-disabled in the general classroom. DCPS believes that all students will benefit from including students with disabilities in a general education setting to the greatest extent possible.

# Where are special education services provided?

## Consultation

- In the consultation model, general education teachers consult with special education teachers to develop lessons aligned to students' IEP goals.
- Related service providers consult with general education teachers on strategies and modifications to support access to lessons and instruction.
- The general education teacher then delivers the instruction.

## Co-Teaching

- For the purposes of specialized instruction, co-teaching is a service delivery option that exists to provide specialized instruction services to students with disabilities in the general education setting.
- Co-teaching occurs when two or more certified teachers, one of whom is licensed in special education, share the responsibility for teaching some or all students in a classroom.
- This practice provides all students with an opportunity to learn from two educators in an integrated approach to the content.

Sometimes, though, a student needs more support than can be provided inside the general education setting. **Outside of general education** refers to all specialized instruction and services that are provided to a class or grouping made up entirely of students with disabilities. Students with fewer than 20 hours of specialized instruction outside of general education in their IEPs typically receive services in a resource room.

## Resource Room

- Resource rooms are a separate setting, outside of the general education classroom, where special education services are delivered.
- Individual needs are supported in resource rooms as defined by the students' IEP.
- The student receiving this type of support will have some support in the resource room and some support in the general education classroom.

DCPS' self-contained, districtwide classrooms provide specialized supports to students with 20 or more hours of specialized instruction outside of general education in their IEP. Our self-contained classrooms are designed to give more support to students with disabilities who have a high level of need.

## Self-Contained Programs

- Self-contained special education classrooms are highly structured and supportive with low student to staff ratios.
- All classrooms are staffed with certified special education teachers and a paraprofessionals.
- Academic instruction is aligned to the Common Core State Standards and the DCPS Scope and Sequence.
- Some students access the general education curriculum, while others are provided with a modified curriculum.
- Specially trained and certified related service providers support the needs of the students in accordance with their IEP.
- Students either participate in the standard state assessment with accommodations, while others participate in alternate state assessments.

High school students in self-contained programs can either work toward a high school diploma (standard curriculum) or a high school achievement certificate (modified curriculum). The students, and their IEP team must decide whether a standard high school diploma or high school achievement certificate is appropriate. The decision must be made no later than the annual IEP team meeting held when the student enters ninth grade or is 14 years old.

## Self-Contained Program Types

Contact information: [dcps.specialed@k12.dc.gov](mailto:dcps.specialed@k12.dc.gov)

Program Name	Description
Behavior & Education Support (BES)	The BES program offers a therapeutic learning environment for students with emotional disabilities and is staffed with behavior technicians and paraprofessionals who are trained to support students with complex behavioral problems.
Communication & Education Support (CES)	The CES program features an Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) learning environment for students who have been identified with autism spectrum disorder and require intensive educational supports.
Early Learning Support (ELS)	The ELS program provides full-time, early intervention for students with developmental delays or other health impairments.
Independence & Learning Support (ILS)	The ILS program provides a modified curriculum to students who have been identified as having a cognitive or intellectual disability.
Medical & Education Support (MES)	The MES program is staffed with direct nursing support for students with complex medical needs and intellectual or cognitive delays.
Vision Programs	The Vision program provides students with visual impairments the accommodations, supports and skills they need to successfully learn alongside their non-disabled peers.
Deaf or Hard of Hearing (DHOH)	The DHOH program provides deaf or hard of hearing students with the supports and skills they need to successfully learn alongside their typically developing peers.
Specific Learning Support (SLS)	The SLS program provides intensive academic supports to students who have been identified with a specific learning disability or other disability to increase their access the general education curriculum.

### DCPS also supports students through the Home and Hospital Instruction and Extended School Year Programs.

Home and Hospital Instruction Program (HHIP)	HHIP serves students who have medical or behavioral health conditions that prevent them from attending school in person due to confinement at home or in a hospital.
Extended School Year (ESY)	The ESY program is offered during the summer to help students with disabilities retain academic skills that are essential to their progress, so they are ready to begin school in the fall.

## Location of Services (LOS):

Contact information: [dcps.specialed@k12.dc.gov](mailto:dcps.specialed@k12.dc.gov)

The purpose of the DSI Location of Services (LOS) process is to ensure students with 20-hours or more outside of general education setting on their IEP have access to the special education resources within DCPS.

### **What if a family wants a different Location of Services?**

DCPS provides students with disabilities access to programming closest to their home address. A student's location of special education services is provided within their neighborhood school boundary and high school feeder pattern. For general questions about the Location of Services process, please email [dcps.specialed@k12.dc.gov](mailto:dcps.specialed@k12.dc.gov).

### **What if a child requires transportation?**

Transportation is a related service. Once it is determined that a student will require transportation services to access a free and appropriate public education (FAPE), the current school LEA Representative will add the service request in the transportation system managed by the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE).

### **What if a student receives a seat at a school through the My School DC Lottery?**

The Division of Specialized Instruction will make every effort to accommodate enrollment at the school selected through the lottery process. It is important to note that not every school offers the full-time program your student may need. The lottery outcome does not necessarily guarantee a seat for a student in a self-contained special education program at the selected school.

### **When will families hear about a Location of Services for the upcoming school year?**

Families will hear about the following school year's LOS in the April timeframe if a student is changing schools.

### **Can families tour the proposed school?**

Yes! We encourage all families to tour their new school and participate in a transition meeting between their current school and the new school.

### **Who should families speak to if they have questions about a child's new school?**

The location of service letter contains the new schools contact information and a staff member point of contact to answer your questions. Families should feel free to reach out to the new school with any questions or to schedule a tour.

## Transition Programs

Contact information: [dcps.transition@k12.dc.gov](mailto:dcps.transition@k12.dc.gov)

Transition is the process that students and their families use to think about life after high school, to identify desired outcomes, and to plan school and community-based experiences to ensure that students acquire the knowledge and skills to achieve their goals.

Students and their IEP team must decide whether a standard high school diploma or high school achievement certificate (HSAC) is appropriate. The decision must be made no later than the annual IEP team meeting held when the student enters the ninth grade or is 14 years old. The decision to allow a student to pursue a standard high school diploma or a high school achievement certificate may be changed at any time to align with a student's progress. If the student is 20 years old or younger and 5 credits away from completing a standard high school diploma, a high school achievement certificate is not an option. The IEP team must make every effort to provide students with the opportunity to earn a DCPS standard high school diploma.

### Internship Programs

Competitive Employment Opportunities (CEO)

**Grade:** 11th/12th

**Graduation pathway:** *Diploma*

CEO pairs students with mentors based on common career interests. Students and mentors meet twice per month from January to May to develop a "Career-Focused Project", while students concurrently engage in a series of professional developments. In the summer, each student undergoes an 80-hour internship at their mentor's place of employment.

General Explorations (GE) Workforce Initiative

**Grade:** 11th/12th or C3/C4

**Graduation pathway:** *HSAC or diploma*

GE connects classroom-based job readiness instruction to internship experiences for students enrolled in transition coursework, aligned to students' IEP transition plan postsecondary employment goals.

### Workforce Development Programs

Project SEARCH Capital Area Region

**Grade:** *C4 and up at time of application*

**Graduation pathway:** *HSAC*

Project SEARCH Capital Area Region (PSCAR) is a one-year on-the-job training program that prepares DCPS adult students with intellectual disabilities ages 18 – 21 years old for competitive, integrated employment in the hospitality industry. Students engage in daily hands-on work experiences at partner hotel sites and receive employment readiness instruction. The student application opens in the Winter.



Workforce Development Center at River Terrace EC

Grade: *C4 and up at time of application*  
Graduation pathway: *HSAC*

The Workforce Development Center (WDC) is a one-year combined instructional and work-based learning program that prepares DCPS adult students with intellectual or other development disabilities ages 18-21, for employment in the community. WDC offers training in the fields of horticulture, health services, and hospitality and tourism. The student application opens in the Winter.

## Assistive Technology

Contact: [DCPS.assistivetech@k12.dc.gov](mailto:DCPS.assistivetech@k12.dc.gov)

Assistive Technology (AT) are tools that can help students with disabilities complete tasks that are difficult for them. AT can help students with reading, writing, speaking, understanding, and to use classroom supplies. AT is not always a high-tech device, but also includes low-tech and no-tech tools such as paper-based graphic organizers and communication books. Assistive technology comes in different categories, including AT for communication, learning, access. Although vision and hearing are also categories of AT, these are supported by the vision and audiology teams.

Learning	Communication	Access
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tools that help with reading, writing, and understanding</li><li>• Examples include text to speech, word prediction and manipulatives.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tools that help students communicate with others.</li><li>• Examples include communication devices, language systems, and paper-based communication boards.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tools that help students use classroom materials.</li><li>• Examples include switches and adapted seating.</li></ul>

During each annual IEP meeting, your child's team will discuss the need for assistive technology tools during the AT consideration process. This discussion will include your child's strengths and needs, the tasks that are challenging, the tools that are currently in place and if they are helping your child, and the need for potential AT tools.

If the team determines that your child would benefit from AT tools, the school-team may have the AT tools necessary to support your child or they may need help to determine which AT tools may support your child. If help is needed, your school may ask for the support of the AT team. The AT team can help the school team's decision-making process for the most appropriate AT tool for your child through AT device loans, consultations, or comprehensive evaluations.

Device Loan	Consultation	Evaluation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Loaner devices provided to the school-based team for use with the student.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Collaborative decision making process between the AT team and school-team using existing data. School-team trials AT and collects trial data with AT team guidance.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Comprehensive decision making process completed by the AT team member. The AT team member works with your child and collects data.</li></ul>

## Related Services

Often, children with disabilities need additional support and services to help them succeed in the classroom. Some students with disabilities only require specialized instruction by a teacher to adapt the curriculum to that child's needs. Other times, students receive specific related services to support classroom instruction.

### Types of Related Services:

Related Service	Description
Educational Audiology ( <a href="mailto:speech.audiology@k12.dc.gov">speech.audiology@k12.dc.gov</a> )	Educational Audiology focuses on the hearing, listening, and auditory processing challenges that may affect a student's academic, communication, and/or social skills. Audiologists support students by evaluating their hearing and auditory processing ability and selecting and fitting appropriate amplification technology.
Mental Health and Behavioral Support ( <a href="mailto:school.mentalhealth@k12.dc.gov">school.mentalhealth@k12.dc.gov</a> )	The Mental Health and Behavioral Support Services team consists of DCPS social workers who work with students on issues they face at school, at home, and in the community, that affect their ability to participate in and benefit from their education. These services can include group or individual counseling; home visits; and social, emotional, and behavioral assessments.
Occupational Therapy ( <a href="mailto:dcps.OTPTtherapyprogram@k12.dc.gov">dcps.OTPTtherapyprogram@k12.dc.gov</a> )	Occupational therapy practitioners support a child's participation in activities throughout the school day. School-based practitioners support academic achievement and social participation by promoting occupation within all school routines, including recess, classroom, and cafeteria time.
Physical Therapy ( <a href="mailto:dcps.OTPTtherapyprogram@k12.dc.gov">dcps.OTPTtherapyprogram@k12.dc.gov</a> )	Physical therapists are health care professionals who help individuals maintain, restore, and improve movement, activity, and functioning, thereby enabling optimal performance and enhancing health, well-being, and quality of life. The physical therapist performs therapeutic interventions, including compensation, remediation and prevention strategies and adaptations, focusing on functional mobility and safe, efficient access and participation in activities and routines in natural learning environments.
Psychology ( <a href="mailto:school.mentalhealth@k12.dc.gov">school.mentalhealth@k12.dc.gov</a> )	The psychologist supports students and educators by giving psychological and developmental tests, analyzing information about a child's behavior and cognitive functioning, and interpreting these results with school staff and parents.
Speech-Language Pathology ( <a href="mailto:speech.audiology@k12.dc.gov">speech.audiology@k12.dc.gov</a> )	The speech-language pathologist identifies and supports children with specific disorders and delays related to oral language and communication. Speech-Language pathologists use current intervention techniques and strategies to help students become more independent.

# Section 504 Program

Contact information: [504@k12.dc.gov](mailto:504@k12.dc.gov)

The Section 504 program is named for Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, a federal law that requires public schools to provide accommodations to students with disabilities so that these students can access the school's general education curriculum and learning opportunities.

Unlike special education, Section 504 does not prescribe specialized instruction for eligible students. Instead, the Section 504 program ensures that eligible students with disabilities receive the accommodations and/or services they need to access the general education curriculum and other opportunities for learning at their DCPS schools.

## Eligibility

A student is eligible under Section 504 if all three of the below are met:

- The student has a physical or mental impairment, that substantially limits a major life activity.

Eligibility determinations are made by the 504 team at your student's school.

## Process for Section 504:

