So, you’re going to a PPT…..

The IEP Guide

…don’t leave home without reviewing this.
Acknowledgements

This guide was initially designed by parent Stacy Hultgren and further enriched and revised in January 2015 through the collaboration of the Department of Developmental Disabilities (DDS), Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE), CSDE Parent Work Group, Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center (CPAC) and parents throughout Connecticut.

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Thank you to all who have contributed to this project, including the original IEP Guide Committee Members (2004):

David Arney - CT State Department of Developmental Services  
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Gail Mangs - CT State Department of Education  
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Nancy L. Taylor - CT State Department of Developmental Services  
Ann Tetreault - CT State Department of Developmental Services  
Mona Tremblay - Parent/CT Family Support Network
Dear Parent,

The information within this guide is designed to assist you in understanding the Individualized Education Program (IEP) document and the Planning and Placement Team (PPT) process. While this guide may not answer all your questions, the intent is to provide you with an awareness of the more important components within the IEP, thus allowing you to be an informed and active member of your child’s PPT meeting.

For a more in-depth review of the IEP, please visit the State Department of Education website to access the “IEP Manual and Forms” document; see link below:


~ Remember ~
All PPT participants are equal members of the Team.
“The Planning and Placement Team (PPT)” must include: the parents/guardians, regular ed. teacher, special ed. teacher or provider, someone to interpret evaluation results, an administrator, the student (if appropriate), an interpreter (if needed) and anyone with expertise on the child invited by either the parents or the school.

“Current Home School” is the school in the district the student would attend if not disabled.

Upon determining the “Primary Disability”, the Team will select the disability category which is most indicative of the student’s primary disability.

An “Administrator/Designee” must be in attendance for all PPT meetings. This individual must have knowledge of Sp. Ed. Law and have the authority to secure any necessary resources, including personnel and funding.

List of “Team Members Present” is simply an acknowledgement of those present, not an indicator of approval.

When amending or making changes to an IEP without a PPT, an amendment agreement must be in writing and signed by both parent/guardian and school district representative. (Consent form ED634, must be used). Any member of the PPT may ask to have amendments added to the IEP. However, parents may withhold consent and require a PPT.

“Next Re-evaluation Date” refers to the date the “Triennial Testing” is due. Every three years the PPT must decide if the student needs a reevaluation to provide updated recommendations for the IEP development and determination of eligibility. A reevaluation may occur sooner if conditions warrant, or if the parent or student’s teacher requests it.
The "List of PPT Recommendations" provides an itemized list of the PPT recommendations that were made by a student's PPT. It is important that this section be specific so that both parent and school district staff know what is being recommended. It is good practice to review these recommendations prior to the conclusion of each meeting.

The "PPT Meeting Summary" is a brief description of discussions within the team meeting. Such a summary is not mandated by the Federal Regulations, however if provided, the school must ensure its accuracy. If parents feel that the summary is incorrect, they may request, in writing, a correction. The school must respond to this request in writing, and the parents have the right to appeal any reply that they feel results in an inaccurate record.

Parents please note: Effective October 1, 2005, parents must be provided with a copy of the state developed Parental Notification of the Laws Relating to Physical Restraint and Seclusion in the Public Schools (http://www.sdes.ct.gov/sdes/cwp/view.asp?id=207836&Q=207343[.pdf]) at the first PPT meeting following a child's initial referral for special education. In addition, the notice must also be provided to parents at the first PPT meeting where the use of seclusion as a behavior intervention is included in a child's IEP. A copy of the Parental Notification of the Laws Relating to Physical Restraint and Seclusion in the Public Schools has been provided to the parents on [date].
Prior Written Notice provides written communication to the parent/guardian of the actions that have been proposed or refused. PWN is provided at the PPT meeting or sent with the IEP within 5 school days. An IEP must be in effect on the first day of school.

In most instances, the “Implementation” date should match with the “Start Date” of services on the grid on page 11. Parents/guardians must receive PWN at least 10 school days before the implementation date of the IEP.

The completed Prior Written Notice (PWN) should be given to the parent(s) at the conclusion of the PPT. Parent’s receipt of the PWN and the agreed upon implementation date should be documented on page 2 of the IEP.

If parent(s) do not agree to implement the IEP on an agreed upon date, the reasonable timeframe for implementation of the IEP is ten school days from receipt of the PWN.

CPAC - Great Resource!
The statements written in the “Area” column should clearly describe how the student is currently performing within the general curriculum and non-academic areas, given peer-level expectations. Any assessments or evaluations utilized to determine present levels of performance should also be included.

### Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance

(The following information was derived from: report data, documentation from classroom performance, observations, parent/student reports, and curriculum based and standardized assessments, including CMT and CAPT results and student samples.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student:</th>
<th>DOB:</th>
<th>District:</th>
<th>Meeting Date:</th>
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#### Parent and Student Input and Concerns

“Parent and Student Input and Concerns” must be considered in the development of the IEP and should specifically record any statements of concerns or success by the parents or student.

For example: 1) the parent is concerned that his/her child needs a hands-on approach in science class rather than a lecture style and 2) the parent shares that his/her child has made good progress in both reading and math this school year.

#### Area

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<tr>
<th>Academic/Cognitive</th>
<th>Language Arts: (Age Appropriate)</th>
<th>Academic/Cognitive: Math: (Age Appropriate)</th>
<th>Other Academic/Nonacademic Areas: (Age Appropriate)</th>
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</thead>
</table>

#### Strengths

“Strengths” may include relatively strong areas for the student; a strength when compared to peers, or particular motivational or interest areas. Statements about the student’s strengths can support instructional decisions related to motivation, learning styles, and learning preferences.

#### Concerns/Needs

“Concerns/Needs” detailed in this column must result in corresponding goals and objectives.

(See page 7 of the State Department of Education IEP Manual and Forms.)

#### Impact of Student’s Disability on Involvement and Progress in the General Education Curriculum or Appropriate Preschool Activities

Information within this column will describe how the student’s disability specifically impacts her/his involvement, participation and progress in school activities. It may help to think in terms of “if-then” statements. (e.g., If there is a concern, then what is the impact on the student’s participation and progress in that area?)
The remaining pages of the IEP should be directly aligned with the performance information found on pages 4 and 5.

“Other” applies to all other assessments strengths, concerns/needs, and impacts that do not neatly fit into a specific area. For example: generalized psychological data (e.g., WISC, WAIS).

**Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Strengths (include data as appropriate)</th>
<th>Concerns/Needs (requiring specialized instruction)</th>
<th>Impact of student’s disability on involvement and progress in the general education curriculum or appropriate preschool activities</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Behavioral/Social/Emotional:</td>
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<td>Vocational/Transition:</td>
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<td>Including Vision And Hearing:</td>
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<td>Fine and Gross Motor:</td>
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See notations on page 4 for these four columns.
Each student must have transition goals documented on page 7 of the IEP and in effect when the child turns 16.

Transition services are based on the student’s strengths, preferences, interests and needs and must be considered in planning post-school outcomes.

The “Summary of Performance” (SOP) provides the student with a summary regarding his/her academic achievement and functional performance. It should include recommendations on how to assist a student achieve post-school goals. The SOP must be completed during the final year of the student’s high school education.

IDEA requires that the student must be informed of his/her rights under IDEA that will transfer to him/her at age 18 at least one year prior to his/her 18th birthday.
Mastery of goals and objectives is defined by these three elements.

Please note: It is important that goals and objectives be specific, measurable and, to the extent appropriate, relate to the student’s achievement in the general education curriculum and non-academic areas.

Documentation of progress should be clearly understood by both Parent/Guardians and professionals and reported as noted on page 10.

"Measurable Annual Goals" and "Short Term Objectives/Benchmarks" should relate directly to the information recorded on Page 4 and 5 under "Concerns/Needs" (requiring specialized instruction). They should align with the grade-level general education curriculum standards, as well as relevant non-academic needs/concerns such as the CORE Transition Skills.

"Evaluation Procedures" must provide an objective means of measurement. "Teacher observation" is often specified under “Other,” however, this may be subjective and parents might want to request the data that was collected during the teacher’s observation.

"Performance Criteria" determines how the team will know the student has reached his/her goal.

"Measurable Annual Goals" estimate expected outcomes for the student within the academic year. These may be measured in terms of achievement of short-term objectives. "Short-Term Objectives/Benchmarks" describe measurable intermediate outcomes.

When selecting “Other” to report progress, the teacher must specify what “Other” means.

As noted, if this box is checked, page 6 must be completed and corresponding transition goals and objectives developed.

The following is an example of an academic goal and related objective.

**Goal #1:** Given the district’s 4th grade math curriculum scope and sequence, [student’s name] will demonstrate mastery of the 4th grade goals for math applications, as measured by completion of the objectives.

**Objective #1:** When given a word problem involving fractions, [student’s name] will solve the problem correctly by reading a word problem (or having it read to her/him) and choosing the correct operation.

The following is an example of an employment goal and related objective.

**Goal #2:** Given his/her interest and skills, [Student name] will investigate two jobs and determine what kind of postsecondary training or education is required for each job.

**Objective #1:** Given a copy of the local newspaper, [student name] will select two job descriptions that meet his/her interest from the want ads and underline the words that describe the skills or requirements for each job.


Of ___ Goal Pages
“Accommodations” are the services and/or supports related to a student’s disability that allows full access to a given subject matter and an accurate demonstration of knowledge without requiring a fundamental alteration to the content, standard or expectation of the task; thus altering **HOW** a student learns, but not **WHAT** a student learns.

“Modifications” are the services and/or supports related to a child’s disability that help him or her to access subject matter and demonstrate knowledge; modifications fundamentally alter the standard or expectation of the task and therefore **WHAT** the student learns.

Accommodations and Modifications to be provided to enable the child:
- To advance appropriately toward attaining his/her annual goals;
- To be involved in and make progress in the general education curriculum;
- To participate in extracurricular and other non-academic activities, and
- To be educated and participate with other children with and without disabilities.

Accommodations may include Assistive Technology Devices and Services
Materials/Books/Equipment:

Tests/Quizzes/Assessments:

Grading:

Organization:

Environment:

Behavioral Interventions and Support:

Instructional Strategies:

Other:

Program Accommodations and Modifications must be specific and appropriate to meet the needs of the student as defined in the IEP. Note: Assistive Technology must be considered.

Parent/Guardians and other PPT members may refer to page 16 of the IEP manual for frequently used options.

“Frequency and Duration of Supports Required for Personnel to Implement this IEP”:
Federal law requires the IEP to include supports that staff might need in order to implement the student’s IEP. Typically, these supports refer to: teacher training specific to a student’s diagnosis (e.g., Autism), paraprofessional support in the classroom, or consultation by a special education teacher or related services provider.

When completing this section, the team must indicate the site/activities and duration. The most common error is a failure to indicate the duration of recommended accommodations/modifications. Simply writing “All classes” in this space is not sufficient. The correct entry would be, in its simplest form: “All classes, all year.”
In all instances where a student is exempted from a district-wide assessment, the PPT must determine how the student will otherwise be assessed. A statement must be provided as to why the student cannot participate in the standard assessment and why the alternate assessment specified is appropriate for the student.

All of the accommodations for the Smarter Balanced Assessments, CMT/CAPT Science and the CTAA are indicated on the Test Supports/Accommodations Form. The complete list of accommodations and the parameters for their use can be found in the State Department of Education publication entitled Assessment Guidelines for Administering Connecticut’s Statewide Assessments.
When a child’s behavior impedes his/her learning or that of others, the PPT must consider the use of positive behavioral interventions. In the case of a child whose behavior has resulted in the suspension from school for more than 10 days or removal from his/her current educational placement, a Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) should be completed and lead to the design and implementation of a Behavioral Intervention Plan (BIP), if one is not already in place, or the review and modification of the BIP that is already in place, as necessary to address the behavior. The BIP assists the student in the development of positive communication, behavioral, and social presentation. Provision of personal supports, goals, objectives, and/or other supportive strategies may be necessary.

IDEA 04 requires the PPT to determine when periodic progress reports will be provided.

For the purposes of “Exit Criteria,” “Graduation” means with a regular high school diploma regardless of the age of the student.

For a “Functional Behavioral Assessment” (FBA) looks beyond the behavior itself. The FBA focuses on identifying factors within the student’s social, cognitive, and/or physical environment that are associated with the occurrence of behaviors. The FBA provides an understanding of “why” a student behaves the way he/she does, leading to an effective behavior plan.

A “Behavioral Intervention Plan” (BIP) must:
- be developed when a student’s behavior interferes with his/her learning.
- be based on recent and meaningful assessment data.
- be individualized.
- include positive behavioral strategies and supports.
- be implemented as designed.
- have effects monitored.

Information regarding transition must be provided and discussed at least annually with parents and families of students who are on an IEP in grades 6-12.
Special Education Services must list everything related to "specially designed instruction" – all Special Education services. Regular Ed Services will not appear here.

If a Special Ed teacher provides instruction in a regular education classroom, this is still considered special education hours.

Related Services are designed to enhance the goals and objectives of the IEP.

"Frequency" may be indicated in a way that most accurately reflects the service implementation (e.g., 3 hours/week).

Responsible Staff refers to the professional(s) responsible for developing specially designed instruction, monitoring the implementation of the IEP, and reporting progress towards achievement of the annual goals.

The "Service Implementer" refers to the Professional/Paraprofessional who actually implements the service/instruction.

This section should be used to further describe and clarify delivery of instructional services, particularly with reference to related services; such as 1:1 or small group instruction.

"Frequency" may be indicated in a way that most accurately reflects the service implementation (e.g., 3 hours/week).

The "Service Implementer" refers to the Professional/Paraprofessional who actually implements the service/instruction.

If "Extended School Year Services" (ESY) are required, districts may use an additional Page 11 to outline extended school year services. Recommend that ESY decision be made no later than early Spring.

If a Special Education teacher provides instruction in a regular education classroom, this is still considered special education hours.

"Special Education Services" must list everything related to "specially designed instruction" – all Special Education services. Regular Ed Services will not appear here.

According to the IDEA 2004, "Least Restrictive Environment" (LRE) means that a child must be educated in the classroom in the school where he or she would attend if he or she did not have a disability. (ii) Special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular education environment occurs only if the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.

The intent of Page 11 is to give the reader a “snapshot” view of the service provisions of the student’s IEP. It includes a description of:

- Special Education Services;
- Related Services;
- Participation in the regular education curriculum;
- Service time requirements; and
- Least Restrictive Environment information.

Item 13a reviews the regular education classes and activities in which the student will not participate.
The “Required Data Collection” page is not part of the IEP. Data collected from this page is required to meet state and/or federal data requirements. The information on this page should be collected at the “Initial Eligibility Determination” PPT if the student is found eligible for special education and related services or yearly at an annual review. The data reported on this page needs to be accurate but does not affect decisions reached by the PPT as part of the child’s IEP.

“The student’s projected graduation date is projected in 9th grade and cannot be changed regardless of the “Exit Criteria” reported on page 10 of the IEP.”
Notes