Educational Accommodations and Supports

The need for supplementary aids, accommodations, modifications, or both, and supports for school personnel must be considered at all IEP meetings. Anyone responsible for implementing the educational accommodations must be informed by the case manager of his/her specific responsibilities.

Completion of IEP Accommodation Page:

Consideration of Special Factors: Use the boxes to indicate which, if any, special factors apply to the student and must be addressed in the IEP. If any box is checked "Yes", the team must document in the Supplementary Aids, Accommodations, and Modifications section what aids and/or services will be provided. (Additional information on the selection of appropriate accommodations and modifications and their documentation are included later in this section.)

The special factors include:
- Assistive Technology Devices and Services
  - Check "yes" if needed and explain what assistive technology supports are needed (see next paragraph)
  - If not needed, check "no" and explain why it is not necessary for the student to have assistive technology supports to access their education (i.e. "Student can access education without any assistive technology supports").
- Communication Needs including Deaf and Hard of Hearing
  - Does the student receive speech/language services?
  - Will the student require supplementary aids, accommodations, or modifications to enable the child to communicate in the general education curriculum?
  - Does the student require repetition of directions, extra time to provide a verbal response, etc?
  - Does the student require use of augmentative or assistive communication devices?
  - Does the student use another means of communication, such as picture exchange communication system, sign language, etc?
- English Learner Status (Limited English Proficiency – Language Needs)
- Blind/Visually Impaired – Provision of Braille Instruction
  - Will the student require Braille instruction?

- Behavior Impedes Student's Learning or That of Others
  - If the student has a BIP mark "yes"

○ If the student doesn't have a BIP and the behavior impedes the student's learning or that of others, we need to consider doing an FBA and writing a BIP. (See the section of the manual on Functional Behavior Assessment and Behavior Intervention Plans).

Determining the Need for Assistive Technology

During the IEP process, assistive technology must be considered for every child and then provided by districts if required in a child's IEP to access a free and appropriate public education (FAPE).

> AT DEVICE: An assistive technology device means any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of a child with a disability. (34 CFR 300.5)

> AT SERVICE: An assistive technology service means any service that directly assists a child with a disability in the selection, acquisition, or use of an assistive technology device. (34 CFR 300.6)

Questions to Consider:

What difficulties is the student experiencing in the school environment for which AT intervention is needed?

What tasks is the student unable to perform because of his/her disability and will the use of AT help the student accomplish task(s) more independently and within the least restrictive environment?

Will the use of AT enable the student to compensate for difficulties in various settings (i.e., regular classroom, special education classroom, home, social)?

What strategies, materials, equipment, and technology tools has the student already used to address concerns?

What new or additional AT should be tried?

What is the student's prior experiences with technology and does the student want to use the AT device and/or service recommended?
Will the student be involved in the decision making process to determine the most appropriate AT device and/or service?

What are the student's expectations for what AT will do for him/her?

Is the teacher comfortable with the AT? If not, will training and support be available.

What will be the criteria used for determining whether or not the student's needs are being met while using AT?

What plan will be in place to integrate the technology effectively?

What will be the time frame for evaluating the potential success of using the AT?

Who will be responsible for determining if the criteria are being met?

Are the AT devices and services being used? If not, explain why.

Does the use of AT enable the child to meet his/her goals?

Linguistic and Cultural Accommodations

Use the boxes to indicate if the student has any special accommodations due to his/her linguistic and/or cultural need or requires the provision of special education and related services in a language or mode of communication other than or in addition to English. Indicate any accommodations or other language/modes of communication that are required.

Questions to Consider:

Will the student require supplementary aids, accommodations, or modifications to enable the child to understand the material presented if English is not native language?

Will materials need to be adapted to the child's native language?

Will the student require accommodations due to cultural differences?

Consideration of Needs of Deaf or Hard of Hearing

Questions to Consider:

Will the student require American Sign Language?

Will the student require interpretation services?

Will the student require an FM system?

Will the student require preferential seating in the classroom?

List the opportunities for direct communication with peers and professional personnel in the child's language and communication mode.

List the identified mode of communication accessible in academic instruction, school services and extracurricular activities that the student will receive.

Supplementary Aids, Accommodations, and Modifications

Indicate what aids, accommodations, and/or modifications are needed in the general education classes and other education-related settings to enable the student to make progress toward annual goals, to 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 disabilities and/or nondisabled children.

- Should link to the Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP) and the Disabilities Effect on Progress in the General Curriculum sections on the IEP. Must be based on data included in the PLAAFP.

- Must be individualized – consider the student's mode of communication, level of instruction, skills, learning style, etc.

- Must be clear and specific. **Statements MAY not include terms such as "as needed," "when appropriate," "upon student request," "optional" or any other non-specific qualifier.** Each statement must indicate specifically when the accommodation, modification, or support will be needed, when it is appropriate, or when it should be provided.

- Must not leave room for interpretation

- Must not be blanket statements on all IEPs

- Can be limited; more accommodations are not necessarily better. Select only those necessary for student access

- May be acceptable for one content area but not for others

- May apply to extracurricular or non-academic areas

- Could threaten validity of assessment in some testing situations. (Not all accommodations are appropriate in all situations.)

- Those indicated for state tests should mirror those provided in the classroom (Refer to Assessment section for more information on Assessment Accommodations.)

Accommodation during Emergencies, including Natural Disasters or an Active Shooter Situation

Have a discussion about which supports are needed for mobility, transitions, sensory supports, and behavior needs. Some common accommodations may include, but are not limited to: Social stories about emergency situations, wheelchair access to quickly remove a student with mobility concerns or due to refusal behavior, noise canceling headphones, physical escort

Specific with Aides, Accommodations, and/or Modifications are needed for the student to participate in extracurricular activities and other non-academic activities

Questions to discuss during your IEP Team discussion:

What extracurricular and non-academic activities are available to all students at the school?

Which of these activities does the student express interest in or currently participate in?

Are there any barriers (physical, social, behavioral, sensory, or communication-related) that might limit the student's full participation?

What supports does the student currently receive in academic settings that could be adapted for these activities?

How can we ensure the student has equal access to opportunities for peer interaction and inclusion?

Are all locations where activities take place physically accessible to the student (e.g., playgrounds, gym, field trip sites, buses)?

Does the student need any specialized equipment, mobility aids, or assistive technology to participate safely?

What social supports or visuals are necessary for the student to engage more fully during group or team activities?

What behavioral supports or strategies are effective for the student in the classroom that might also be needed during extracurricular or non-academic times?

Are there potential triggers in unstructured environments, and how can we proactively address them? (i.e. Does the student need access to a calming area or break option during activities?)

Supports for School Personnel

Check the boxes to indicate supports for school personnel are needed for the student to:
- Advance appropriately toward the annual goals,
- Participate in the general curriculum, and
- Be educated and participate with other students in educational activities.

Supports could include training or consultation to assist school personnel. The supports should be based on the student's needs and should include, when appropriate, information that clarifies when the supports will be provided, by whom, in what location, etc. Supports must be based upon peer-review research.

Parent Training and Counseling

Parent counseling and training services are needed to assist parents in understanding the special needs of their child, provide parents with information about child development, and help parents to acquire the necessary skills that will allow them to support the implementation of their child's IEP. If "Yes," information that clarifies the service must be entered as a related service

Difference between an Accommodation and Modification

Accommodations eliminate obstacles that would interfere with a student's ability to perform or produce at the same standard of performance expected of general education students.

Modifications are changes in work requirements or expectations that lower the standards of performance.

Addressing Student Refusal of Accommodation

When students with disabilities refuse the accommodations required in their IEPs, the best course of action is to reconvene the IEP meeting to determine whether the rejected accommodation is necessary, and if so, how to ensure implementation.

The next step would be to consider if the refusal is a "behavior that interferes with the child's learning." This requires the IEP team to develop a behavior intervention plan to address the behavior.

Keeping Records of Accommodations Offered/Provided

General and special education teachers should maintain documentation of the provision of accommodations and modifications. This could be a separate log or it could be incorporated into existing recording systems.

For example, a teacher may develop his/her own coding system. In their grade book they could mark that the student received 10 minutes of extra time to complete the in-class assignment by marking "10M" next to the assignment recorded. If the student refused, they could mark "10M – RF." If tests were read aloud to a student, the teacher might record "RA."

The teacher might also mark on a copy of the assignment or test, then maintain a copy in the student's file.