



# New MA IEP: Overview and Opportunities

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**Welcome and Agenda**





# Learning Outcomes

By the end of this session, participants will:

**KNOW** current information about the New MA IEP and DESE's planned support for districts.

**UNDERSTAND** the opportunities to support teams to prepare for the New MA IEP process and align practices for supporting striving learners.

**BE ABLE TO** identify one next step to take in supporting teams to prepare for the new MA IEP process.



**CHANGE  
CE**



MASSACHUSETTS  
Department of Elementary  
and Secondary Education

## 5 Principles MA IEP Improvement Project

**Principle 1:** All students are general education students first. **Take a strengths-based approach.**

**Principle 2:** General and special education should work together. **Integrate systems.**

**Principle 3:** Ensure a continuous cycle of improvement. **Move beyond compliance.**

**Principle 4:** Assessment is key. **Make no decisions without the right data.**

**Principle 5:** Family engagement matters. **Welcome parent and student voice.**

# Full special education process

<b>Pre-Evaluation</b> General Education Setting			<b>Evaluation &amp; IEP Development</b>			<b>Post-Evaluation</b> General Education Setting and Special Education Setting			
School Climate and Culture – Meaningful Family and Student Engagement									
Instruction	Assessment	Considering Referral (Intervention)	Evaluation/ Assessment	Making an Eligibility Determination	Writing the IEP	Accommodations and Placement Setting	Staffing	Monitoring Progress on Goals	Re-evaluation
<b>Best Practices:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Instructional Equity</li> <li>→ Equitable Data and Assessment</li> <li>→ Meaningful Family and Student Engagement</li> <li>→ School Culture</li> </ul>			<b>Best Practices:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Instructional Equity</li> <li>→ Equitable Data and Assessment</li> <li>→ Meaningful Family and Student Engagement</li> <li>→ School Culture</li> </ul>			<b>Best Practices:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Instructional Equity</li> <li>→ Equitable Data and Assessment</li> <li>→ Meaningful Family and Student Engagement</li> <li>→ School Culture</li> </ul>			



A photograph of a woman with blonde hair and a man with glasses and a beard, both smiling and looking at a laptop screen. The woman is wearing a patterned top, and the man is wearing a yellow polo shirt. The background is slightly blurred, suggesting an office or meeting environment.

# Benefits to Educators

- **MORE TIME:** Improves efficiency—less time gathering and organizing information for teachers once the initial learning phase ends.
- **LESS STRESS:** Improves consistency and offers opportunities for a clearer process that all team members can understand.
- **LESS UNNECESSARY CONFLICT:** Empowers students and families to have input in planning. Involves students directly in IEP planning and development.
- **EASIER COMMUNICATION:** Reduces administrative burdens and allows easy access for students receiving individualized support

A woman with dark hair, wearing a colorful patterned scarf and a light orange knit sweater, stands in a hallway with her arms crossed. The hallway is brightly lit with recessed ceiling lights. In the background, a person with a backpack is walking away from the camera. To the right, a bulletin board is covered with various papers and photos. A semi-transparent white box is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing the text.

**What's changing and when?**



# New Massachusetts IEP Forms and Process

- 12 New Forms (February 2024)
- Technical Assistance Guide
- PK Sample IEP
- HS Sample IEP
- Parent Letter

[New MA IEP Form](#) - January 2024 (Google Doc View Only)



## Eight Main Sections:

**Profile: What is the individual picture of this student?**

1. Student & Parent Concerns
2. Student Vision & Team Response
3. Student Profile & PLAAFPs
4. Transition Planning

**SDI: What individualized support makes a better fit between this student and school?**

5. Accommodations / Modifications
6. Goals / Objectives
7. Service Delivery & Transportation
8. Additional Information





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# Crosswalk

A hiker with a large red backpack is seen from behind, walking across a narrow suspension bridge. The bridge is made of metal cables and a mesh floor, stretching across a deep valley filled with dense, lush green forest. In the background, misty mountains rise under a soft, hazy sky. The overall scene is serene and adventurous.



## IEP Technical Guide

### Says... (p.3)

Schools and districts should consider **conferring with students and parents prior to the IEP meeting** and reminding them that the meeting will begin with their concerns.

# STUDENT AND TEAM VISION

## 34 CFR 300.320(b)

<b><i>Student's Vision (ages 3–13)</i></b>	
This year, I want to learn:	
By the time I finish (circle one: elementary or middle school), I want to:	
<b><i>Student's Vision/Postsecondary Goals (required for ages 14–22, may be completed earlier if appropriate)</i></b>	
While I am in high school, I want to:	
After I finish high school, my education or training plans are	
After I finish high school, my employment plans are:	
After I finish high school, my independent living plans are:	
<b><i>Additional Team Vision Ideas</i></b>	
In response to the student's vision, this year:	
In response to the student's vision, in 5 years:	



## IEP Technical Guide Says... (p.4)

- The student may need assistance developing their vision statement prior to the IEP Team meeting. Such assistance may be provided by a trusted teacher, related service provider, school counselor, paraprofessional, etc.
- Students who are 13 but will turn 14 during the new IEP period should respond to the questions for students aged 14-22.
- For students aged 14-22, the “Student's Vision/Post-Secondary Goals” section is a first step toward transition planning. More transition planning information appears later in the IEP.
- The “Student’s Vision” section will vary by student, as each student is unique. The vision expressed by the student should be used to guide the rest of the IEP process.





## Four PLAAFP pages

- Academic (p. 4)
- Behavioral / Social / Emotional (p. 5)
- Communication (p. 6)
- Additional needs (Sensory disabilities; Other) (p. 7)

# PLAAP: Academics

**Describe the student's present levels of academic achievement and functional performance in the relevant areas listed below.**

Consider the areas of learning listed below and complete only the sections that apply to the student. Include relevant information and data from sources such as initial or most recent evaluations; documentation from classroom performance; parent(s), student, and teacher observations; and curriculum-based and standardized assessments, including MCAS.

<b>Academics</b>  Briefly describe current performance. Check all that apply: <input type="checkbox"/> English Language Arts <input type="checkbox"/> History and Social Sciences <input type="checkbox"/> Math <input type="checkbox"/> Science, Technology, and Engineering	Strengths, interest areas, and preferences	Impact of student's disability on involvement and progress in the general education curriculum or appropriate preschool activities

*Autism-Specific Question:* Does the student have needs resulting from the disability that impact progress in the general curriculum, including social and emotional development (e.g., organizational support, generalizing skills, practicing skills in multiple environments)?

Yes  No

If yes, this need will be addressed in the following section(s) of the IEP:

- Accommodations/Modifications       Services Delivery Grid  
 Goals/Objectives                               Additional Information



## IEP Technical Guide Says...(p.8)

- Use clear, easy to understand, language.
- When including information from evaluations, the IEP Team may **include the key conclusions from those evaluations rather than repeating extensive details that can be easily found by reading those evaluations** separately from this IEP.
- Discuss Present Levels holistically, rather than limiting conversation on a particular topic to specific individuals. For example, the middle school English teacher may not be the only person on the IEP Team who understands the student’s literacy progress. **The student’s parents, history teacher, school psychologist, special education teacher, etc. all might have ideas to share about the student’s literacy progress.**
- Include the student’s strengths, interests, and preferences in relation to the relevant Present Levels.
- The IEP Team should comment on each component that is relevant to the student. If a component or components are not relevant to the student, write “Not applicable.”



# IEP Technical Guide

## Says...(p.9)

Before the IEP Team meeting, consider:

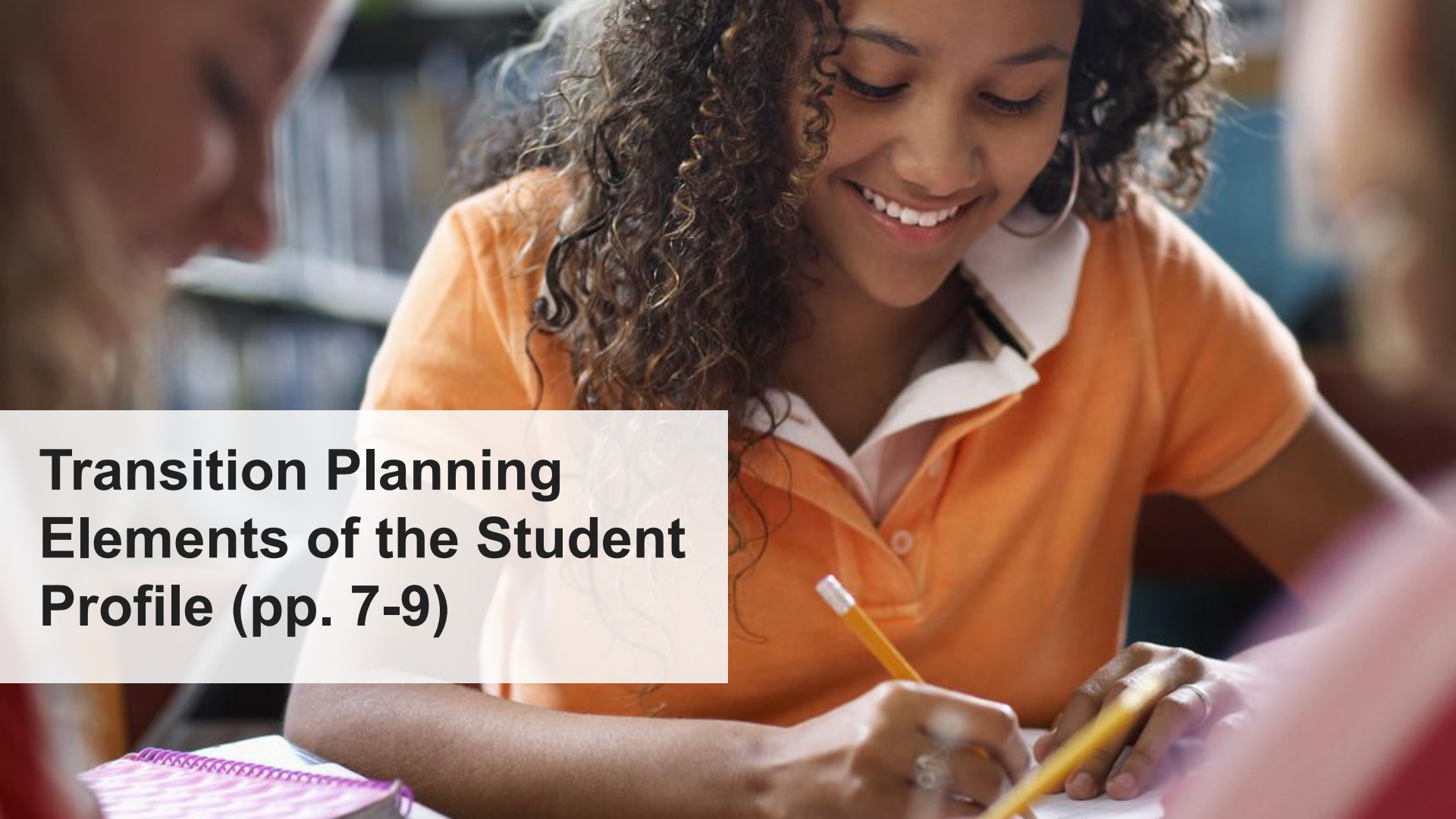
- Gathering data and information about the student's current performance and preparing information that is most timely and relevant for the IEP Team meeting.
- Asking the student about where they are having difficulties in school to help inform the IEP Team discussions.

During the IEP Team meeting, consider:

- Discussing skills that are necessary across curricular areas which may inform the IEP Team as to the impact of the disability on involvement and progress.
- Asking the student about what they see as their strengths, interests, and preferences.

After the IEP Team meeting, consider:

- As appropriate, sharing the student's strengths, interest areas, and preferences to assist them the student's teachers in planning and building on the student's strengths.



**Transition Planning  
Elements of the Student  
Profile (pp. 7-9)**



## IEP Technical Guide Says...(p.13)

- “The goal of the planning process is to provide support and accommodations for a smooth transition, and to help students achieve their educational and career goals.
- “Because postsecondary transition can now be found in the IEP form, rather than in a separate document, the Department asks that schools and districts take a close look at this section for important information.”
- The Department is also in the process of developing a supplemental resource related to transition planning.



# POSTSECONDARY TRANSITION PLANNING

(p. 7 top)

Complete for eligible students aged 14–22 and update annually. Complete also for students who are 13 and will turn 14 during this IEP period.

<b>Postsecondary Transition</b> Briefly describe current performance.	Strengths, interest areas, and preferences	Impact of student's disability on involvement in the general education curriculum and/or specific area of postsecondary transition
Education/training		
Employment		
Community experiences / postschool independent living, if applicable		

The identified areas of postsecondary transition will be addressed in the following section(s) of the IEP:

Accommodations/Modifications

Services Delivery Grid

Goals/Objectives

Additional Information

# Progress toward Graduation / Program Completion

(p. 7 bottom)

Complete for eligible students aged 14–22 and update annually. Complete also for students who are 13 and will turn 14 during this IEP period.

Projected date of graduation/program completion:	
Projected type of completion document (diploma, certificate of attainment, or other locally defined completion document):	

*Planned Course of Study* [\[Course of Study Continuum\]](#)

What requirements does the student need to meet to receive that type of completion document? What is the student's planned course of study?

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What is the student's current status regarding those requirements?

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# Community and Interagency Connections

(p. 8 top)

<b>Agency</b>	<b>Description of Support Provided</b>	<b>Role of school staff who will be the liaison to the agency, as needed (please include contact information)</b>



## IEP Technical Guide Says...(p.13)

- This section documents the agencies and community organizations the student is working with as part of their transition from secondary school.
- The purpose of this section is to promote coordination and communication between the school and the community or agency providers.
- If this section does not apply to the student, please write N/A.





## IEP Technical Guide Says...(p.15)

To complete this section, Teams should:

1. **Determine if the student is within 2 years of exiting special education services.**
  - a. At what age will the student exit from special education services? Will the student be within two years of that date during this IEP period? If so, select yes. If not, select no.
2. Determine if the student meets the criteria for a *688 referral*. More information about the ***688 referral process including eligibility criteria can be found*** on the Department's [Chapter 688](#) webpage.
3. Document when the *688 referral* was or will be made or, alternatively, select the option stating that the Team has determined that the student does not meet the criteria for a *688 referral*.
4. Finally, if a *688 referral* has been submitted, **identify the agency to which the referral was made.**

Accommodations	<b>Presentation of Instruction</b> The way information is presented.	<b>Response</b> The way the student responds.	<b>Timing and/or Scheduling</b> The timing and scheduling of the instruction.	<b>Setting and/or Environment</b> The characteristics of the setting.
Classroom accommodations				
Nonacademic settings (lunch, recess, etc.)				
Extracurricular activities				
Community/workplace				

Modifications	Content	Instruction	Student Output
Classroom modifications			
Nonacademic settings (lunch, recess, etc.)			
Extracurricular activities			
Community/workplace			

# IEP Technical Guide

## Says...(p.16-17)

IEP accommodations and modifications are two kinds of supports that may be provided for students with disabilities through their IEP. In general, the key differences are:

Both accommodations and modifications are individualized based on the student's specific needs resulting from their identified disability(ies).

	Accommodations	Modifications
<b>General Purpose</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide access to the general education curriculum by addressing barriers or challenges.</li> <li>Level the playing field so students can fully participate in educational activities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make changes to curriculum, instruction and/or assessment directly tailored to individual needs.</li> <li>Alter what is being taught or assessed to match the student's abilities and learning goals.</li> </ul>
<b>Typical Nature of Changes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Content and standards of the curriculum are not changed.</li> <li>The ways in which educators present information and the ways in which students demonstrate their knowledge or skills are adjusted to allow for access to curriculum and instruction.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The curriculum is adapted to focus on key concepts.</li> <li>Content is simplified.</li> <li>Complexity of assignments or tasks is reduced.</li> </ul>
<b>Examples</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing extra time on tests.</li> <li>Using assistive technology.</li> <li>Providing visual prompts and instructions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using alternative assignments.</li> <li>Direct, explicit, multi-sensory instruction.</li> <li>In language arts, providing modified materials at a different reading level.</li> </ul>

## MEASURABLE ANNUAL GOALS

Please identify the academic and functional goals for this student this year. The goals must be measurable and meet the student's needs that result from their disability to enable them to be involved in and make progress in [Early Childhood Outcomes \(ages 3–5\)](#) or the [Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks](#) (older students). The goals must meet each of the student's other educational needs that result from their disability.

<b>Goal Area:</b>				
<b>Baseline (What can the student currently do?):</b>				
<b>Annual Goal/Target</b> What skill(s) will the student be expected to attain by the end of this IEP's timeframe?	<b>Criteria</b> What measurement will be used to determine whether the goal has been achieved?	<b>Method</b> How will progress be measured?	<b>Schedule</b> How frequently will progress be measured?	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b> Who will monitor progress?
<b>Short-term objectives and/or benchmarks (intermediate steps between the baseline and the measurable annual goal)</b>				

## SCHEDULE OF PROGRESS REPORTING

Explain how and when parent(s) will be periodically informed of the student's progress toward meeting the annual goal(s):

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## IEP Technical Guide

### Says...(p.25)

1. The ***baseline*** refers to the student's current level of performance or skill in the targeted area. It serves as a starting point for measuring progress toward the annual goal and is **determined through assessments, observations, or other data collection methods**.
2. A ***measurable annual goal*** is a specific objective that the **student is expected to achieve** within a year. It focuses on an **area of need identified through assessment and other data**. The goal should be specific, measurable, and relevant.
3. The ***criteria for success*** specify the **expected level of achievement or proficiency** the student must reach to demonstrate that they have met their goal. These criteria establish clear benchmarks to evaluate progress and can be **defined in terms of specific performance levels, percentages, scores, or other measurable indicators**.

## IEP Technical Guide Says...(p.25)

4. The ***method of measurement*** outlines how progress toward the goal will be assessed and documented. Assessment tools, tests, observations, work samples, and other data collection methods can provide reliable and valid information measuring the student's progress.
5. The ***schedule for progress monitoring*** determines how frequently progress will be assessed and reported. It identifies specific checkpoints throughout the year when data will be collected and analyzed to determine the student's progress toward the annual goal. Progress monitoring may occur quarterly, semi-annually, or at other specified intervals.
6. The ***person responsible for monitoring and reporting progress toward the annual goal*** is identified in the Goal section. This may be a special education teacher, general education teacher, a related service provider, or another designated professional. **The person responsible verifies that data are collected, progress is tracked, and reports are shared with the IEP Team, including the parents.** Names of specific staff members should not be included in this section as they may change during the IEP period, but IEP Teams should identify the person responsible by title or role.

# PARTICIPATION IN THE GENERAL EDUCATION SETTING

Can the student's educational needs be met in the general education setting, with or without the use of supplementary aids and services?

Yes

No

If no, provide an explanation of the extent to which the student will not participate in general education. Include a description of the specific supplementary aids and services considered before determining that the student would be removed from a general education class or activity.



## IEP Technical Guide Says...(p.27)

***To the maximum extent appropriate, students with disabilities must be educated with students who do not have disabilities, and special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of students with disabilities from the regular educational environment should only occur 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.***

**[34 CFR 300.114](#)**



- 1. Individualized Approach:** The extent to which the student can participate in the general education setting must be determined considering the individual student's strengths, abilities, and needs. Teams should avoid making blanket assumptions or decisions based solely on a student's disability category (e.g., assuming that the student should be placed in a substantially separate classroom because they are identified as having an intellectual impairment).
- 2. Collaboration and Team Decision-Making:** The LRE determination involves collaboration among the student's IEP team, including parents, general and special education teachers, related service providers, administrators, and student support providers. The collective expertise and input from team members are crucial in making informed decisions.
- 3. Academic and Social Considerations:** Consider the student's academic abilities, learning needs, and social-emotional needs. Can the general education classroom adequately address the student's educational goals and needs? Can accommodations, supplementary aides, services, modifications, or other supports be provided to facilitate the student's meaningful participation and progress in the general education classroom?
- 4. Support Services and Accommodations:** Determine the level and type of supplementary aides, services, supports, accommodations, and modifications required for the student to participate and progress in the general education setting. This may include additional teacher and other professional support, specially designed instruction, assistive technology, modifications to assignments, or related services such as speech and occupational therapies.
- 5. Social Integration and Peer Interaction:** Consider the importance of social integration and peer interaction for the student's overall development. Will the general education classroom provide opportunities for meaningful interactions with peers without disabilities and promote social inclusion?

# SERVICE DELIVERY

Include specially designed instruction, related services, and supports based on peer-reviewed research to the extent practicable [including, if applicable, positive behavioral supports and support/training for school personnel and/or parent(s)]. Consider providing services in general education settings before considering other options.

<b>Goal Number(s)</b>	<b>Type of Service</b>	<b>Provided by</b> List job title	<b>Location</b>	<b>Frequency/Duration</b> __ × __ minutes per __ - day cycle	<b>Start Date</b>	<b>End Date</b>
<b>A. Consultation (Indirect Services to School Personnel and Parents)</b>						
<b>B. Special Education and Related Services in General Education Classrooms (Direct Service)</b>						
<b>C. Special Education and Related Services in Other Settings (Direct Service)</b>						

## Consultation

The consultation model in special education service delivery typically involves collaboration between special education professionals, general education teachers, related services providers, parents/guardians, and other stakeholders to meet the needs and IEP goals of students with disabilities. Here are some key components of the consultation model:

1. **Observations and Assessments**: Classroom observations and assessments help gather additional information about the student's learning environment and progress.
2. **Problem-Solving and Action Planning**: The consulting service provider engages in problem-solving discussions with general education teachers, parents/guardians, and other relevant stakeholders to develop action plans and interventions, as needed.
3. **Recommendations and Support Strategies**: The consulting service provider offers IEP Team members recommendations and support strategies to address the student's needs.
4. **Training and Professional Development**: The consultation model often includes training, classroom modeling, and professional development for IEP Team members to enhance understanding and implementation components of the IEP.

**Direct Service in the General Education Classroom:** Direct service in the general education classroom refers to the provision of specially designed instruction, services, or support delivered by staff members such as special education teachers, related service providers, etc. directly to students with disabilities within the general education setting. Here are some key points about direct services:

- 1. Specially Designed Instruction:** Direct services often encompass specially designed instruction tailored to address students' unique learning needs and challenges. This may involve strategies, techniques, or interventions designed to promote academic, social-emotional, or behavioral progress. Special education professionals may provide direct instruction in specific subjects, such as reading, math, or writing, using evidence-based practices and instructional methodologies.
- 3. Related Services:** In addition to specially designed instruction, direct services can also include related services delivered by professionals such as speech-language pathologists, occupational and physical therapists, or counselors. These services support students in areas such as communication, motor skills, social-emotional development, and behavior management, contributing to their overall educational progress.
- 4. Progress Monitoring:** Special and general education professionals regularly monitor students' progress during direct services. They collect data, assess learning outcomes, and adjust instructional strategies as needed to promote student growth and achievement. Progress monitoring helps track individual student progress and inform decision-making regarding instructional adjustments or intervention strategies.



**Direct Services in Other Settings:** In addition to direct services provided in general education classrooms, special education and related services can also be delivered in other settings outside of the general education environment.

- Special Education Services in Other Settings:** Students with disabilities sometimes require specially designed instruction and/or related services provided in settings outside of the general education classroom in smaller groups or individually. Special education professionals provide direct services in these settings, focusing on targeted skill development, remediation, previewing or reinforcement of academic concepts, or otherwise meeting the student's unique needs outside of the general education classroom.
- Related Services in Other Settings:** Related services may be provided in designated therapy rooms or specialized spaces so that they can be provided more explicitly and intensively. Therapists work directly with students to address their specific therapy goals, improve skills, and support their overall development.
- Home-Based Services:** In certain situations, special education and related services can be delivered directly in a student's home. This may occur when a student is unable to attend school due to medical reasons or when specific services, such as homebound instruction or therapy, are required. Special education professionals or therapists visit the student's home to provide direct services tailored to their individual needs.
- Community-Based Instruction:** Community-based instruction involves providing direct services in real-life settings outside of the school, such as community centers, vocational training sites, or workplaces. Students receive instruction and support in practical skills related to independent living, socialization, vocational training, and community integration.

## Extended School Year Transportation Services

- Transportation will be provided in the same manner as it would be for students without disabilities. Please note that if the student is placed in a program located at a school **other** than the school they would have attended if not eligible for special education, transportation will be provided.
- The student requires transportation supports and/or services as a related service.
  - Student will be transported on a **regular** transportation vehicle with the following assistance, attendants, modifications, and/or specialized equipment and precautions:

Specify the disability-related need(s) that require support(s) during transportation (e.g., seizures, a tendency for motion sickness, behavioral or communication difficulties):

- Student will be transported on a **special** transportation vehicle with the following assistance, attendants, modifications, and/or specialized equipment and precautions:

Specify the disability-related need(s) that require support(s) during transportation (e.g., seizures, a tendency for motion sickness, behavioral or communication difficulties):


[IEP Technical  
Guide](#)  
**Says...(p.32)**

“If the IEP team determines that an eligible student needs ESY services, this section of the IEP details the specific special education services that the eligible student will receive during ESY, including when, where, how often, and for how long.”

Laurel’s addition (from the draft of the technical manual)

The ESY service delivery grid in the IEP includes:

- **how often** the child will receive the service(s) (number of times per day or week);
- **how long** each session will last (number of minutes);
- **where** services will be provided (in the general education classroom or another setting such as a special education classroom, or outside community location); and
- **when** services will begin and end (starting and ending dates).



**What do you need in order to prepare well for the New MA IEP?**



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