



**CENTRAL JERSEY
COLLEGE PREP
CHARTER SCHOOL**

Special Education Manual

Central Jersey College Prep Charter School

Department of Special Services

101 Mettlers Rd

Somerset, NJ 08873

This reference manual is intended to provide the reader with information regarding special education services in the Central Jersey College Preparatory Charter School, along with additional information to support students with disabilities.

MISSION STATEMENT

A Commitment to Excellence

The mission of Central Jersey College Prep Charter School (CJCP) is to provide academic and social challenges and opportunities for students to attain the skills necessary for success in post-secondary education. CJCP serves its mission by offering rigorous academic programs, college and career counseling, and extracurricular enrichment activities.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	3
About Special Education Services	3
Child Find	4
Preschool	5
About Child Study Team	5
Pre-Referral Process	6
Identification and Referral	7
Procedural Safeguards	7
Evaluation	7
Independent Evaluations	9
Eligibility	10
The Individualized Education Plan (IEP)	11
Areas of Disability	13
Least Restrictive Environment	15
Placement	16
Supplementary Aids and Services	17
Special Education Programs	17
Extended School Year (ESY)	18
IEP Amendments	18
IEP Review and Revision (Annual Review)	19
Reevaluation	19
Related Services	20
Other Factors Considered when Developing the IEP	23
Dismissal from Special Education	25
Mediation and Due Process	26
FAQs and Supporting Documents	32
Explanations of Common Acronyms	33

INTRODUCTION

As the parent of a special education student, you are a key part of the process that provides an appropriate and caring educational experience for your child. You are the advocate who remains a constant in your child's life as he or she progresses through the school system. This handbook is an effort to provide you with clear and accurate information that will help you work effectively with district personnel. It does not replace state laws and guidelines, which are detailed in separate handbooks that you will receive throughout your child's education. This book is a resource in tandem with your personal communication with district professionals.

CJCP's Mission Statement applies to every child in our district. We welcome you in sharing the responsibility, and privilege, of educating your child.

ABOUT SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

Evaluation and intervention services are provided to students by the Child Study Team, special education instructional staff, and related services specialists. A referral to the Child Study Team may be initiated by a parent/guardian, teacher, school nurse, school administrator, special services staff, medical specialist and other professionals or agencies concerned with the welfare of students when an educational disability may be suspected.

Public schools are required by law to develop a process for identifying potentially educationally disabled students. An educationally disabled student is one who may be experiencing difficulties of a physical, emotional, academic, intellectual, or social nature to the extent that the student is not able to function effectively in a regular education program. A Child Study Team evaluation is necessary to determine the basis of the difficulties and whether the student is eligible for special services. If the student is determined eligible for special education and related services an individualized educational program (IEP) is developed.

With federal passage of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA), parents/guardians are an integral part of the IEP Team that plans an appropriate school program and an IEP for the educationally disabled child. Parents and school personnel work together throughout this process in developing an appropriate program to meet the unique student needs.

The district provides the full continuum of program options as outlined in the New Jersey Administrative Code (NJAC 6A: 14). The complete rules and regulations pertaining to Child Study Team procedures and students with disabilities are contained in the New Jersey Administrative Code, Title 6A, Chapter 14, Special Education. Parents/Guardians may obtain this document by contacting the Child Study Team at (732) 649-3954 ext. 1126 or ext. 1632 or by accessing the website @ <http://www.state.nj.us/education/specialed/>

CHILD FIND

School districts are responsible for finding children with disabilities living within the district. They also must evaluate these children to see if they need special education and/or related services. Each district must have policies and procedures in place for all children with disabilities residing within the district and must be able to report to the state of New Jersey which children have been located, identified and evaluated. This includes children with disabilities attending private schools.

An ongoing effort must be made to locate and identify every child with a disability, ages three to 21, that lives in the school district. This search applies to disabled children who are already attending school and those who are not yet lottery eligible.

The district's Child Find activities include but are not limited to:

- Letters to doctors, particularly pediatricians
- Area nursery schools
- Community organizations
- Announcements in newspapers
- Postings at the library
- Fliers sent to area stores for posting
- Community newsletters and the district website

If you have a pre-school age child and have noticed that your child may not be developing skills such as walking, talking or playing like other young children of the same age, you may wish to talk to your pediatrician. S/he can assess your child in relation to normal developmental scales and can either reassure you that your child is within expected parameters or encourage you to seek the advice of a specialist such as a developmental pediatrician and/or neurologist.

Children from birth to age three are referred to New Jersey Early Intervention Services (NJEIS). NJEIS operates under the Division of Family Health Services, which implements New Jersey's statewide system of services for infants and toddlers with developmental delays or disabilities and their families. NJEIS can be reached at: 1(800) 367-6543; their website is: <http://www.njeis.org/>

If you know of any child who may need special education and/or related services, please have their parents or guardians call the Child Study Team at (732) 649-3954 ext. 1126 or ext. 1632. For further information about scheduled Child Find activities, call or log on to <https://nj.gov/education/specialed/childfind/>

ABOUT CHILD STUDY TEAM

The Child Study Team is a multi-disciplinary educational team that is responsible to locate, identify, evaluate, determine eligibility, and develop an Individualized Education Program (IEP) for students suspected of having educational disabilities. This group of specialists is employed by the Central Jersey College Prep Charter School district to provide consultative, evaluative and prescriptive services to teachers and parents. The team provides diagnostic services to children from ages five to 19 that have been identified as having a potential disabling condition.

Counseling and consultative services are available for any school-aged student exhibiting difficulty in learning or behavior. The Child Study Team (CST) together with district teachers, administrators, and I&RS committees make recommendations for programs and placements which will best address the needs of students who are experiencing school-related issues.

Members of the Child Study Team (CST)

The CST consists of a Learning-Disabilities Teacher Consultant (LDTC), School Social Worker, and School Psychologist. In cases where a speech and/or language impairment is suspected, the Speech-Language Specialist may function as a member of the CST; this also applies to an Occupational, should there be reason to suspect a physical impairment.

The functions of the CST members include the following:

- Participating in the evaluation of students
- Participating in the determination of eligibility for special education and/or related services
- Designing, implementing, monitoring, evaluating progress and techniques to prevent and/or remediate educational, social, functional, emotional or behavioral difficulties
- Designing, implementing, monitoring, evaluating and delivering appropriate related services to students
- Providing consultation services and support to special and general education staff

Case Manager

A Case Manager is a member of the CST who is assigned to a student when it is determined that a student will be evaluated. Every student who receives special education and/or related services is assigned a Case Manager. The Case Manager coordinates the development, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of progress/effectiveness of the individual education plan (IEP). The Case Manager facilitates communication between the home and school and coordinates the entire process. The Case Manager is the parent's first line of contact, except for a classroom related issue, in which case, the classroom teacher should be consulted first.

PRE-REFERRAL PROCESS

The Intervention and Referral Services (I&RS) team serves as a resource for teachers and is an integral part of the pre-referral process. I&RS members typically include, but are not limited to, the school principal or his designee, nurse, counselor, CST members and teachers. I&RS may also include parents, special education supervisors, speech therapists, or reading specialists. The purpose of the I&RS is to address any possible concerns teachers may have regarding their students' academic, social, or emotional functioning. Based on meetings with teachers, the I&RS team develops case-specific strategies for use in regular education classrooms. Teachers then implement these strategies according to I&RS recommendations. Parents are informed about the progress of their child through contact with the teacher. If the strategies are not effective, they may be revised or, if it is suspected that the student is potentially educationally disabled, a referral will be made to the Child Study Team.

Parents can request their child be brought before the I&RS team. They would do this by contacting the child's teacher or principal.

**Parents are always notified if their child is referred to I&RS.* Parents can always request a CST evaluation before, during, or after the I&RS process. Written requests for CST evaluations should be directed to the Child Study Team (732) 649-3954 ext. 1126 or ext. 1632.

IDENTIFICATION AND REFERRAL

Whenever a parent, teacher, staff member or other person with knowledge of a child/student's development believes that s/he may be a child with a disability that requires special education and/or related services, a written request should be made to the Child Study Team. The request should be sent to the Child Study Team in hard copy; emails are not accepted. The referral is presented to Child Study Team who assigns the referral to a designated case manager. The assigned case manager has responsibility for managing the referral process. Upon receipt of the written request, "a meeting of the CST, parent/guardian and the general education teacher of the child, who is knowledgeable about the child's educational performance, must be convened within 20 calendar days (excluding school holidays, but not excluding summer vacation) of the written

request.” {NJAC 6A:14-3.3(e)}. If it is determined that an evaluation is warranted, parental consent is required for the initial evaluation to proceed.

PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS

IDEA requires school districts to provide parents of a child with a suspected disability a notice containing a full explanation of the procedural safeguards (legal rights) available under IDEA and other state and federal regulations. This handbook is called, “Parental Rights in Special Education” (PRISE). Parents can obtain a copy of PRISE in any of the district’s schools or at : <http://www.nj.gov/education/specialed/form/prise/prise.pdf>

The procedural safeguards must be given to you one time each school year and at the following times:

- When your child is first referred for evaluation or when you request an evaluation;
- When you request a copy of the procedural safeguards;
- When your child is removed for disciplinary reasons and the removal results in a change in placement;
- Upon receipt of the first State complaint and/or the first due process petition in a school year, if you should file a State complaint or request a due process hearing;
- Upon revision to the procedural safeguards.

EVALUATION

Informed, signed, parental consent must be received for the school to proceed with the evaluation. It is important for the parent to understand the components of the evaluation and how the results of the evaluation will be used to determine eligibility for special education services. An initial evaluation shall consist of a multi-disciplinary assessment in all areas of suspected disability. Such evaluation shall include at least two assessments and shall be conducted by at least two members of the Child Study Team in those areas in which they have appropriate training, or are qualified through their professional licensure or educational certification, and other specialists in the area of disability as required or as determined necessary.

The specific kind of evaluations a child needs is decided on an individual basis and will include professionals trained to assess specific areas. Persons from varying disciplines including a school

psychologist, school social worker, learning disabilities/teacher consultant, behavior consultant, speech-language therapist, physical therapist, occupational therapist, audiologist, and/or neurologist may conduct evaluations.

The common elements of a comprehensive assessment generally include the following:

- A psychological evaluation, which includes a standardized aptitude test that measures cognitive functioning, a clinical interview, observation and, as needed, social-emotional and adaptive behavior rating scales;
- A social history, which includes developmental, medical, and educational histories, and parent, teacher, and student interviews;
- An educational evaluation, which includes achievement testing, learning style inventory, and a classroom observation; and
- A medical evaluation/health appraisal, which includes a physical examination and visual and auditory acuity testing.

Persons trained in the area of hearing or visual impairment may also provide assessment services, if needed. At this step of the process, parents will receive *Parental Rights in Special Education* (PRISE). After parent consent for initial evaluation of a preschool age or school age student has been received, the evaluation, determination of eligibility for services under this chapter, and, if eligible, development and implementation of the IEP for the student shall be completed within 90 calendar days.

Parents can provide the school with information about their child that they want the CST to use in deciding if their child has a disability that requires special education and related services. In the event that a parent does not give permission for the school to evaluate the child and the school personnel believe that the child is in need of special education, the school system may, but is not required to, pursue the initial evaluation of the child by utilizing due process procedures.

Other Professionals Involved in Evaluating as Needed

School Physician – A medical examination may be conducted to determine if any physical factors can account for the student’s difficulty in school. This may include a vision and hearing screening, and a standard physical examination.

Behaviorist – These professionals specialize in identifying, analyzing and the remediating of challenging behaviors. Behavior specialists conduct comprehensive assessments including interviews, and observations in order to identify the function and environmental contribution to the occurrence of problem behaviors (*Functional Behavioral Assessment –FBA*). These specialists will develop behavioral intervention plans and collaborate with and/or train additional team members (teachers, therapists, aides) to implement the treatment. The behaviorist will also analyze and evaluate data to determine if the treatment has been successful, or if modifications are needed.

INDEPENDENT EVALUATIONS

A parent has a right to obtain evaluations from qualified professionals (at their own expense) who are not employed by the school district and submit them to the CST. These reports are called independent evaluations_or are sometimes referred to as expert reports. The CST must consider the results of any independent evaluations or expert reports the parent/guardian submits during any evaluation of the child or at any other time.

If you disagree with the school’s evaluation results, you can request an independent evaluation. The maximum allowable cost for an independent evaluation will be limited to the reasonable and customary rate, as determined and approved by the Board of Education annually. This Board approved rate shall be provided to the parent upon request. The testing is done by a licensed professional not employed by Central Jersey College Prep. The results of the independent evaluation must be considered by the IEP team. The district has the right to file due process if they do not agree with the request.

ELIGIBILITY

Upon completion of the required evaluations, an eligibility conference will be held to discuss whether the student meets the code criteria making them eligible for special education and/or related services. A copy of the Child Study Team finding reports will be given to the parents 10 days prior to the eligibility conference.

The Individualized Education Program team (IEP team) conference is held to determine if a child has a disability and needs special education and/or related services. The IEP team includes the child's parents and professionals who are knowledgeable about the child's learning and behavior in the school environment. The team should discuss every area of physical, behavioral and academic functioning that affects the child's educational performance. The team must decide if the student (a) meets the eligibility criteria for a disability as outlined in the New Jersey Special Education Administrative Code, Chapter 14, Title 6A; (b) if the disability adversely affects educational performance; and (c) is in need of specially-designed instruction and related services. All three criteria must be met for the student to be found eligible for special education. According to IDEA, students may not be deemed eligible for special education services if they do not meet the eligibility criteria of the law or if their eligibility is based on a lack of instruction in reading and math. A student may also be deemed ineligible if the disability does not adversely affect the child's educational performance.

THE INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PLAN (IEP)

At this meeting, the student's educational strengths and needs will be considered. Goals and objectives will be developed to address identified needs. The team will then determine the appropriate program for each individual student with consideration of the least restrictive environment as a priority. The evaluations, determination of eligibility for services, and (if eligible) the development and implementation of the IEP shall be completed within 90 calendar days of the district's receipt of parental permission to evaluate.

The implementation of a child's individual education program should occur 15 days after the IEP Team's completion of the plan, unless parents and school personnel mutually agree to an earlier implementation date. Typically, immediately following the eligibility determination an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) conference will be held.

Times may vary, for example, if a child is assigned to another school for services and transportation must be arranged; if supplemental aids must be acquired and/or staff must receive specialized training in order to fully implement the IEP. The IEP document should identify the

student's primary educational placement, the projected date for the beginning of the services, modifications described in the plan, and the frequency, location and duration for each service.

Required Elements of an IEP

For a comprehensive list of the required elements of an IEP, see Special Education NJ Administrative Code, Chapter 14: -3.7 (e) 1-17.

IEP Team Attendance

According to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Individualized Education Program team or IEP Team must include the following persons:

- The parent(s) of the child
- At least one general education teacher of the child
- At least one special education teacher or, where appropriate, at least one special education provider of the child
- A representative of the local education agency (LEA) who
 - is qualified to provide, or supervise the provision of, specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of children with disabilities
 - is knowledgeable about general curriculum
 - is knowledgeable about the availability of resources of the local educational agency
- An individual who can interpret the instructional implications of evaluation results. This person may be the LEA representative described above
- At the discretion of the parent or the school system, other individuals who have knowledge or special expertise regarding the child, including related services personnel, as appropriate
- The child, when appropriate

Parents shall be given written notice of a meeting early enough to ensure that they will have an opportunity to attend.

Meetings shall be scheduled at a mutually agreed upon time and place. If a mutually agreeable time and place cannot be determined, the parent(s) shall be provided the opportunity to participate in the meeting through alternative means, such as conference calls.

AREAS OF DISABILITY

The following defines each area of disability included in New Jersey Special Education Administrative Code, Chapter 14, Title 6A:

- **Auditorily Impaired:** means an inability to hear within normal limits due to physical impairment or dysfunction of auditory mechanisms. An audiological evaluation by a specialist qualified in the field of audiology and a speech and language evaluation by a certified speech-language specialist is required.
- **Autistic:** means a pervasive developmental disability, which significantly impacts verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction that adversely affects a student's educational performance. Onset is generally evident before age three.
- **Cognitively impaired:** means a disability that is characterized by significantly below average general cognitive functioning existing concurrently with deficits in adaptive behavior.
- **Communication Impaired:** means a language disorder in the areas of syntax, semantics, morphology and/or pragmatics/discourse, which adversely affects a student's educational performance and is not due primarily to an auditory impairment.
- **Emotionally Disturbed:** means a condition exhibiting one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree that adversely affects a student's educational performance due to:
 - i. An inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory or health factors;
 - ii. An inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers;

- iii. Inappropriate types of behaviors or feelings under normal circumstances;
 - iv. A general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression; or
 - v. A tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems.
- **Multiply Disabled:** means the presence of two or more disabling conditions, the combination of which causes such severe educational needs that they cannot be accommodated in a program designed solely to address one of the impairments.
 - **Deaf/blindness** means concomitant hearing and visual impairments, the combination of which causes such severe communication and other developmental and educational problems that they cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for students with deafness or students with blindness
 - **Orthopedically Impaired:** means a disability characterized by a severe orthopedic impairment that adversely affects a student's educational performance
 - **Other Health Impaired:** means a disability characterized by having limited strength, vitality or alertness, including a heightened alertness with respect to the educational environment, due to chronic or acute health problem(s).
 - **Preschool Child with a Disability** means a child between the ages of three and five experiencing developmental delay, as measured by appropriate diagnostic instruments and procedures, in one or more of the following areas:
 - i. Physical, including gross motor, fine motor and sensory (vision and hearing)
 - ii. Cognitive
 - iii. Communication
 - iv. Social and emotional
 - v. Adaptive
 - **Social Maladjustment:** means a consistent inability to conform to the standards for behavior established by the school. Such behavior is seriously disruptive to the education of the student or other students and is not due to emotional disturbance as defined above.
 - **Specific Learning Disability:** means a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or using language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations, including conditions such as perceptual disabilities, brain

injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia. A specific learning disability is determined when a severe discrepancy is found between the student's current achievement and intellectual ability in one or more of the following areas, and that discrepancy is not primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor disabilities, general cognitive deficits, emotional disturbance or environmental, cultural or economic disadvantage:

- (1) Basic reading skills;
- (2) Reading comprehension;
- (3) Oral expression;
- (4) Listening comprehension;
- (5) Mathematical calculation;
- (6) Mathematical problem solving;
- (7) Written expression; and
- (8) Reading fluency

- **Traumatic Brain Injury:** means an acquired injury to the brain caused by an external physical force or insult to the brain, resulting in total or partial functional disability or psychosocial impairment, or both.
- **Visually Impaired:** means an impairment in vision that, even with correction, adversely affects a student's educational performance.

Accommodations and Modifications in the Classroom and for Testing

The IEP team determines whether accommodations, modifications of curriculum or testing, or alternative testing are needed. When the decision is made it must be documented in the student's IEP. The decision regarding the need for special consideration is based on the student's evaluation results, current level of functioning and unique learning characteristics.

LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT (LRE)

Once the determination of eligibility has been made based on the evaluations, the next step in the process is for the IEP Team to determine the appropriate program and placement for the student. This is done after the IEP is developed because "the education program and placement must be tailored to the child, not the child to a pre-packaged program and placement." {NJAC 6A:14-3.7(e) (2) and (3)} Placement means where the program should be provided.

Every child is entitled to an appropriate program to be implemented in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). LRE means:

- To the maximum extent appropriate, a child with a disability is educated with children who do not have disabilities.
- Special classes, separate schooling or removal from general education classroom is allowed only when the nature or severity of the child's disability makes it impossible to satisfactorily educate the child in the regular classroom, even with the use of supplementary aids and services
- A full continuum of alternative placements is available to meet the needs of children with disabilities.
- The child must be educated in the school the child would attend if he or she did not have a disability, unless the IEP requires some other arrangement.
- To the maximum extent appropriate, a child a disability participates with children without disabilities in nonacademic and extracurricular services and programs, such as athletics, recreation, special interest groups and clubs, and lunch and recess periods. Children in out-of- district placements may need to be return to the district in order to effectuate such participation. {NJAC 6A:14-3.7(e)(17)}

Some of the factors that are considered when deciding appropriate placement are:

- What reasonable efforts the school district can make to accommodate the child in the general education classroom, with supplementary aids and services.
- A comparison of the benefits provided in a general classroom and the benefits provided special education class
- The potentially beneficial and harmful effects which a placement may have on the child or other children in the class.

PLACEMENT

The New Jersey Administrative Code for special education and the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) ensure that children with disabilities receive a free, appropriate,

public education in the least restrictive environment. As noted above, in accordance with the least restrictive environment, the first placement option considered is the regular education classroom with the necessary supplemental aids and supports to enable the student to meet his/her educational goals.

SUPPLEMENTARY AIDS AND SERVICES

Supplementary aids and services are provided by paraprofessional aides, teachers, related service providers, or CST members in the general education classroom to enable students with disabilities to be educated as much as possible with nondisabled peers such as an assistive technology consultant who analyzes the needs of students with disabilities, assisting in the selection of appropriate assistive technology for the student's needs, and providing training in the use of the selected device(s). Supplementary aids and services may include specialized equipment or use of audio-visual aids such as Book Share. Adaptive physical education is a diversified program of activities specially designed for an individual who meets eligibility criteria for special education and/or related services and is not able to participate safely and/or successfully in the regular physical education program which also may be included as a supplementary service.

SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Resource Programs provide specialized instruction by a special education teacher to students with disabilities, in the general education classroom (in-class resource program) or in a separate Resource Center (pull-out resource program). An individual student may receive either in-class or pull-out resource services, or both, depending on his or her individual needs.

In-class Resource programs (ICR) may be provided up to the student's entire instructional day, and may provide support to enable the student to participate in the general education curriculum, or replacement instruction that modifies the general education curriculum and instructional strategies to meet the student's individual needs.

Pull-out Replacement resource classes may be provided for up to four subject areas per day, at the elementary level. In grades one through eight, replacement instruction can be provided in reading, writing, and/or math. At the secondary level, replacement pull-out resource classes may be provided for the entire instructional day. As needed, Middle School and High School provide replacement instruction in core academic subjects required for high school graduation, including English, mathematics, science, foreign language and history.

Self-Contained Classes (Autism/ Multiply Disabled/ Language Learning Disabled) are for students in need of more intensive and specialized instruction, placement in a special class program may be the least restrictive appropriate educational placement. Special class programs offer instruction in the core curriculum content standards, but the regular education curriculum and the instructional strategies may be modified based on the student's IEP. For some students, the IEP may specify a modified curriculum emphasizing functional life skills and/or prevocational/vocational skills. Students placed in a special education class typically remain in this class for a major portion of the day but may also participate in Resource/General Education classes and programs appropriate to their needs.

EXTENDED SCHOOL YEAR (ESY)

An **ESY** program provides for the extension of special education and related services beyond the regular school year. An extended school year program is provided, in accordance with the student's IEP, when an interruption in educational programming causes the student's performance to revert to a lower level of functioning and recoupment cannot be expected in a reasonable length of time.

IEP AMENDMENTS

An IEP may be amended without a meeting of the IEP team if:

- (1) The parent requests in writing a specific change to the IEP and the school district agrees
or
- (2) The school district provides the parent a written proposal to change the IEP and, within 15 days of receiving that proposal, the parent consents in writing to the proposed change.

Any changes that are incorporated into an amended IEP or as an addendum to the IEP will be provided to the parent within 15 days of when the district receives consent from the parent to make

the change. The IEP amendment does not affect the requirement for an annual IEP review meeting. {NJAC 6A:14- 3.7(d)(1), (2) and (3)}

IEP REVIEW AND REVISION (ANNUAL REVIEW)

An IEP meeting must be held at least once a year for each child, and more often if necessary, to review and revise the IEP and to determine the child's placement. The team, including the parent, discusses strengths, weaknesses, and the progress of the student toward meeting the goals and objectives, including social and/or behavioral plan goals, developed for the IEP being reviewed. The appropriate revisions of child's IEP are determined by the Team based on these discussions. The annual IEP review meeting is held around the same time every year, usually near the date of the previous year's IEP meeting.

REEVALUATION

The reevaluation is to be completed once every three years, unless the parent and school district agree that a reevaluation is unnecessary, or a parent requests a reevaluation prior to three years. A reevaluation is likely warranted whenever a significant change in placement is being considered.

A parent may make a written request for reevaluation. The written request should be sent to the Case Manager. Reevaluations can only be done once a year. A reevaluation can also be done when the students' educational or related services needs warrant it. The school district must obtain a parent's consent before the CST can begin the reevaluation. The reevaluation must be completed within 60 days from the date the parent provides consent for the assessments to be conducted as part of a reevaluation.

A reevaluation will determine

- If the child should continue in special education, and what changes, if any, should be made to the child's program or related services.
- The reevaluation includes a review of all assessments, information from the parent, the observations of teachers and related services personnel. {NJAC 6A:14-3.8}

RELATED SERVICES

Related Services may be provided to students, ages three through twenty-one, who are eligible for special education and related services. Related services in grades Pre-K through 12 include speech/language, occupational and physical therapies, counseling, and intervention/ consultation, special transportation, etc.

Speech

The development of age-appropriate speech and language skills is essential to the learning process and to a student's social and emotional growth. Children must be able to comprehend the language, express their thoughts, request explanations from the teacher and produce speech that others can easily understand.

Speech disorders include the following problems:

- Articulation disorders, which include difficulties producing sounds in syllables or saying words incorrectly to the point that other people cannot understand what is being said.
- Fluency disorders include problems such as stuttering, the condition in which the flow of speech is interrupted by abnormal stoppages, repetitions, or prolonging sounds and syllables.
- Resonance or voice disorders include problems with the pitch, volume, or quality of a child's voice that distracts listeners from what is being said. These types of disorders may also cause pain or discomfort for the child when speaking.

Language disorders can be either receptive or expressive - receptive disorders refer to difficulties understanding or processing language. Expressive disorders include difficulty putting words together, limited vocabulary, or inability to use language in a socially appropriate way.

Speech-language therapy involves having a speech-language specialist work with a child on a one-to-one basis, in a small group or directly in a classroom, to overcome difficulties involved with a specific disorder. Speech-language therapy uses a variety of therapeutic strategies, including:

- Language intervention activities – involve having a speech-language specialist interact

with a child by playing and talking. The therapist may use pictures, books, objectives, or ongoing events to stimulate language development. The therapist may also model correct pronunciation and use repetition exercises to build speech and language skills.

- Articulation therapy – articulation, or sound production, exercises involve having the therapist model correct sounds and syllables for a child, often during play activities. The level of play is age-appropriate and related to the child’s specific needs. Articulation therapy involves physically showing a child how to make certain sounds, such as the “r” sound. A speech-language therapist may demonstrate how a child should move his tongue to produce specific sounds.

Referral for Speech Services

Among the many services available to students within our district, including students not eligible for special education, are those services provided by our speech therapists. Therapists are trained in techniques to identify, support and remediate a student’s speech and language needs. There are two ways in which our district identifies which children may be eligible for speech and language services.

- A child can be referred for evaluation by the child’s teacher.
- A child can also be referred by the child’s parent who may send a letter to the Child Study Team.

Within 20 days of receipt of a referral a meeting will be convened to discuss with parents, teachers and speech therapist if evaluation for speech services is warranted. If an evaluation is agreed upon, once it is completed, parents, teachers, and speech therapist will reconvene another meeting within 90 days to discuss assessment results and, if necessary, subsequent therapy.

Orientation and Mobility (O&M)

Orientation and mobility are that part of the educational process that prepares students with visual impairments to travel independently and safely. These services enable the students to travel safely, efficiently, and independently in their home, school, and community environments.

Social Skills

Social skills are interactions with others that create healthy and positive relationships. Children who have social skills can communicate clearly, calmly, and respectfully. They show consideration for the feelings and interests of their peers. They take responsibility for their actions, can control themselves, and are able to assert themselves when needed. Children learn social skills through experiences with peers, examples and instructions from their parents, and time with adults.

It is vital for children to use social skills because they are the route to creating and developing relationships. They are needed for enriching social experiences, and they lessen the chance for negative interactions. Being the building blocks for friendships, social skills give children the chance to learn from their peers and learn how to be considerate with those they meet in the future. By having a positive impact on life experiences, social skills also give children a sense of confidence and mastery over their environment.

Occupational Therapist

School based Occupational Therapy (OT) is provided when a student needs services to function in an educational environment. The need for OT services is identified using formal and informal assessments conducted by the therapist. Direct OT services consist of group and/or individual sessions provided in class or out of class where the child's specific goals are addressed through hands on, purposeful activity. Consultation is an ongoing communication between the therapist, parent, teacher and student where problem solving, and trial of different adaptations are used to allow the student to functional optimally in his/her educational environment without the need for direct services.

What skills do occupational therapists typically address?

- Fine motor skills: managing classroom tools and other manipulatives
- Visual perceptual skills: provide strategies for interpreting visual information
- Sensory processing skills: help to effectively process and organize information from all senses so that the student can effectively interact with the environment
- Self-care skills: dressing, grooming, hygiene, and feeding
- Pre-vocational skills: address prerequisite skills such as organization, sequencing, and time management

Physical Therapist

School based Physical Therapy (PT) may be requested when there are those unique situations in which gross motor activity may significantly impact a student's ability to access their education. The school therapist works on school related goals to help the student benefit from their educational program. Educational performance for young children also includes self-help skills, gross motor skills and participation in physical education classes. PT services can take place in a variety of school settings such as a classroom, hallway, gym, and playground or in separate therapy room. Collaborating with educational staff to modify the child's environment and daily school activities is also part of school therapy.

Paraprofessionals/ Monitors

As the IEP team plans, they may decide that a student needs a paraprofessional to support the classroom teacher and/or students. The overarching needs that the paraprofessional is to address are identified by the IEP team. However, daily, paraprofessionals work as support personnel under the supervision of certified school professionals. A paraprofessional serving in a special education position assists teacher in a variety of responsibilities and performs a multitude of tasks that are both instructional and/or non-instructional.

OTHER FACTORS CONSIDERED WHEN DEVELOPING THE IEP

Transition

One of IDEA's primary purposes is to prepare children with disabilities for postsecondary education, employment and independent living. {20 U.S.C. 1400(d) (1) (A); 34 C.F.R. 300.1(a); NJAC 6A:14-1.1(b) (1)} Supports are provided to students to ensure successful adjustments as they transition from one level or building to the next. At the IEP meeting, specific suggestions or plans are made depending upon the needs of the child and then included in the IEP as appropriate. IDEA sets forth numerous obligations for the school district to provide transition planning and services, beginning when the child turns 14, or earlier where appropriate. The IEP

must describe, consistent with the child's strengths interests and preferences, a course of study and related strategies and activities designed to assist the child in developing or attaining postsecondary goals related to training, education, employment and, if appropriate, independent living. {NJAC 6A:14-3.7(e) (11)}

At age 14 the student must be invited to the IEP meetings along with the parent. It is not mandatory for the student to attend every meeting, but the parents are encouraged to bring him/her whenever appropriate. Parents are also encouraged to discuss issues that will be addressed in the meeting with the student prior to attending the meeting.

Starting with the IEP that will be in place when the child turns 16, or earlier if appropriate, the IEP must add to the information mentioned above appropriate measurable postsecondary goals and "transition services" (including courses of study) needed to assist the child in reaching those goals. {NJAC 6A:14-2.7(o) (4)} Postsecondary goals must be based on age appropriate transition assessments and related to training, education, employment and if, appropriate, independent living.

Transition services are a coordinated set of activities designed within a results oriented process, focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of the child to facilitate his or her movement from school to post- school activities, including postsecondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living and community participation. {34 C.F.R. 300.532(c) (3) (ii)}

Transition services must include instruction, related services, community experiences, the development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives, and if appropriate, the acquisition of daily living skills and a vocational evaluation. The Transition Coordinator provides services and resources for students, parents, and staff in the areas of vocational evaluation, transition planning, employment skills development, and when appropriate, employment placement for students as follows:

- Provides vocational counseling and assists in student career and transition planning.
- Provides for the vocational evaluation of secondary students with special needs on a priority basis as requested by IEP Teams.
- Provides special services staff with the resources needed to develop and carry out effective transition plans
- Assists students, as needed, in the acquisition of basic employment skills.
- Provides job placement services to students based on educational need at job sites in the community and within the school district.
- Serves as a liaison between community transition agencies and special services staff.
- Trains and directs job coaches to support transition programming.

DISMISSAL FROM SPECIAL EDUCATION

If the IEP team, including the parents or guardians, determines that a student no longer requires special education and related services, s/he must be considered for declassification from special education. A reevaluation meeting must be held, and the IEP team, including the parents or guardians, will discuss and decide whether additional testing is required to determine whether the child remains eligible for special education.

Following review of additional evaluations and data a determination may be made, during an eligibility determination meeting with IEP team, including the parents or guardians, and with the agreement of the entire team, the child may be dismissed from special education.

If the parents or guardians disagree with the recommendation to dismiss the child from special education, they must provide written disagreement to the case manager and a copy to the Child Study Team within 15 calendar days, excluding holidays but not summer vacation. The district must respond to any written disagreement within 20 calendar days, excluding holidays but not summer vacation, of receipt of the written parental disagreement or request for action, to let the parent know whether or not they will do what the parent has asked them to do or whether a meeting is required to make a determination.

If a meeting is necessary to make a determination, it must be held and a determination made within 20 calendar days, excluding holidays but not summer vacation, of the parent's written request or expression of disagreement, with written notice of determination provided within 15 calendar days of the meeting. {NJAC 6A-14: 2.3(h)(5) & (5)(I)}

MEDIATION AND DUE PROCESS

There may be a time when you and the school district disagree. Many disagreements can be resolved by communication with your child's teacher, case manager, the school principal, or other school district personnel. There are also procedures established under state and federal law to address your concerns, such as complaint resolution, mediation, or a due process hearing.

A parent or guardian can request a mediation, due process hearing or complaint investigation regarding any issue relating to identification, evaluation, classification, educational placement or the provision of FAPE. {U.S.C. 1415(b) (5), (b) (6) (A), (e) and (f); NJAC 6A:14-2(a), 2.7(a) and 9.2}

The NJDOE has developed forms for requesting each type of complaint resolution procedure. These forms can be found at www.nj.gov/doe

Mediation

The NJDOE must offer mediation, a less formal procedure for resolving disputes, whenever a parent or guardian requests a due process hearing. Mediation must be voluntary on the part of the parent or guardian and the school district, although a school district may require a parent who chooses not to use the mediation process to meet with a state mediator to discuss the benefits of mediation. {N.J.A.C. 6A:14-2.6(a), (b)}

The state bears the full cost of mediation, but not the cost of a parent's advocate or attorney fees, and a qualified and impartial mediator who is trained in effective mediation techniques must conduct the mediation.

A mediation conference must be scheduled by NJDOE within 15 calendar days of receipt of the written request and completed within 30 days. Mediation must be held at a time and place that is convenient to all parties. The mediator, who is paid by the NJDOE but not employed by the NJDOE or by the school district involved in the dispute, does not reach a decision in the dispute, but rather assists the parties in an impartial manner, in identifying issues, exploring options for resolution and , if possible, reaching an agreement. {NJAC 6A:14-2.6(d)(4)and (5)}

At the request of the parties, the mediator may adjourn the mediation for not more than 45 days, in order to obtain additional information or explore settlement options.

If the mediation conference results in an agreement between the parties, the mediator will set forth the agreement in writing and the parent or guardian and the school district officials sign it. If the mediation session does not result in agreement, the mediator will document the date and the participants in the meeting. No record of the mediation will be made, and any discussion that occurred in mediation is confidential and may not be used as evidence in any subsequent due process or court proceedings. {NJAC 6A:14-2.6(d) (6) and (7)}

Due Process

A due process hearing is a formal, trial-like hearing before an administrative law judge (ALJ) at the Office of Administrative Law (OAL). The ALJ in a due process hearing listens to and accepts evidence and legal arguments from both the parents or guardian and the school district.

Usually, unless an adjournment is granted, the ALJ must issue a formal written decision within 45 days of the conclusion of the “resolution meeting”. The ALJ’s decision must summarize the evidence in the case and explain the reasons for the decision; it is final and binding on both parties. The decision must be implemented without delay, unless the parent or guardian files an appeal to challenge the decision, in which case “stay put” applies. {NJAC 6A:14-2.7(j), (i), and (u)}

Stay Put applies pending the outcome of mediation, a due process hearing, or any judicial proceeding, and means no change may be made to the child’s classification, program or placement,

unless both parties agree, or emergent relief is granted during the course of a due process hearing.
{NJAC 6A:14-2.6(d) (10) and 2.7(u)}

A school district may request_a due process hearing when it is unable to obtain parental consent to conduct an initial evaluation or reevaluation or to release student records. A school district must request_a due process hearing when it denies a written parental request for an independent evaluation or seeks to remove a child from school on the grounds that the child is dangerous.
{N.J.A.C. 6A:14-2.7(b) and (n)}.

More information on mediation, due process and compliance investigation, can be found at the NJDOE web-site: www.nj.gov/doe/specialed and www.edlawcenter.org

Central Jersey College Prep Charter School Resources

Office of Special Services
101 Mettlers Road
Somerset, NJ 08873
Child Study Team: (732) 649-3954 ext. 1126 or ext. 1632

GOVERNMENT AGENCIES AND COMMITTEES

New Jersey Department of Education:
NJDOE Office of Special Education Programs
P.O. Box 500; Trenton, NJ 08625-0500;
(609) 292-0147
www.nj.gov/education

Early Intervention, Project Child Find:
1-800-322-8174

National Info Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities
Phone: 800-695-0285
<http://www.nichy.org>

Division of Developmental Disabilities:
Phone: 800- 832- 9173
<http://state.nj.us/humanservices/ddd/>

NJ Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired:
(732) 308-4001
www.state.nj.us/humanservices/cbvi/

New Jersey Department of Children and Families, Division of Child Behavioral Health Services:
www.nj.gov/dcf/behavioral

United States Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights:

www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/index.html

Statewide Parent Advocacy Network:

www.spanadvocacy.org

New Jersey Department of Human Services Division of Deaf
and Hard of Hearing

<http://www.nj.gov/humanservices/ddhh/home/>

NJ Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

www.nj.gov/labor/dvrs

Supplemental Security Disability Insurance

Phone: 800-776-1213 <http://www.ssa.gov>

COMMUNITY BASED RESOURCES

Children's Mobile Response and Stabilization Services (CMRSS)

Warm Line: 908-782-7905

Referrals: 1-877-652-7624

Tri County Care Management Organization (TCCMO)

Office/Info Line: 908-526-3900

Referrals: 1-877-652-7624

Family Support Organization of Hunterdon, Somerset, and Warren (FSO-HSW)

Office: 908-223-7624

Referrals: 1-877-652-7624

Tri-County Substance Use Navigators

Michael Calderon

Cell: 908-381-2437

Office: 908-231-6495

Carolyn Reynolds
Cell: 908-381-2436
Office: 908-231-6414

Somerset County Department of Education
Sandra Gogerty: 908-541-5700, Press 4

Division of Child Protection and Permanency (DCP&P)
NJ Child Abuse Reporting Hotline: 1-877-NJ-ABUSE / 1-877-652-2873

Somerset County Question and Answer Line (QAL)
Juvenile Institutional Services
Office: 908-704-6355
Family Crisis intervention Unit (FCIU)
Office: 908-704-6330

Psychiatric Emergency Screening Services (PESS)
Office: 908-526-4100

FAQs and Supporting Documents

New Jersey Special Education Code

<https://www.state.nj.us/education/code/current/title6a/chap14.pdf>

Approved New Jersey Clinics and Agencies

<https://www.nj.gov/education/specialed/clinics/>

EXPLANATION OF COMMON ACRONYMS

ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
AI	Auditory Impairment
AT	Assistive Technology
AU	Autism
BD	Behavioral Disabilities
BIP	Behavior Intervention Plan
CI	Communication Impaired
COTA	Certified Occupational Therapist Assistant
CST	Child Study Team
DB	Deaf-Blindness
DDD	Division of Developmental Disabilities
DOE	Department of Education
DYFS	Division of Youth and Family Services
ED	Emotionally Disturbed
ESERS	Eligible for Special Education and Related Services
ESY	Extended School Year
FAPE	Free Appropriate Public Education
FBA	Functional Behavior Assessment
HI	Hearing Impaired
ICR	In-Class Resource (w/Special Education Teacher)
IDEA	Individual with disabilities Education Act
IEP	Individual Education Program
INTPS	Integrated Preschool
LLD	Learning and/or Language Disabilities
LDTC	Learning Disabilities Teacher / Consultant
LEA	Local Education Agency (School District)
LPT	Licensed Physical Therapist

LRE	Least Restrictive Environment
MCI	Moderately Cognitively Impaired
MD	Multiple Disabilities
OCD	Obsessive Compulsive Disorder
OCR	Office of Civil Rights
ODD	Oppositional Defiant Disorder
OHI	Other Health Impaired
OI	Orthopedically Impaired
OT	Occupational Therapist
OTR	Occupational Therapist Registered
POR	Pull-Out Replacement (Special Education Teacher)
PSD	Preschool Disabled
PT	Physical Therapist
PT	Physical Therapy
RTI	Response to Intervention
SC	Self-contained
SCI	Severely Cognitively Impaired
SI	Supplemental Instruction (taught by Regular Ed. Teacher)
SLD	Specific Learning Disabilities
SM	Socially Maladjusted
TBI	Traumatic Brain Injured
VI	Visual Impairment