

# Pulse!

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## Special points of interest:

- IEP team members each bring important information to the meeting.
- Parents are key members of the team.
- Teachers are vital members of the team as well.
- Annual Review IEP is the educational plan for the following school year.

## Annual Review Season

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### What is an Annual Review Meeting?

The purpose of an annual review meeting is to review student progress and prepare an IEP (Individualized Education Plan) to determine a student's educational program for the next school year. With approximately 200 students in Westampton Township receiving special education and/or related services, coordinating meeting times and locations can be a challenging undertaking for our case managers, related service personnel, teachers, and the support staff that help this process to run as smoothly as possible. With that being said, this time of year tends to be one of the busiest for the Child Study Team.

### Who are the IEP Team Members?

By law, certain individuals must be involved in writing a child's Individualized Education Program for annual review. The figure below displays the members of the IEP team. Note that an IEP team member may fill more than one of the team responsibilities if properly qualified and designated. For example, the school system representative may also be the person who can interpret the child's evaluation results. These individuals are as follows: student as appropriate, parents, general education teacher, special education teacher, case manager who is usually the same person who can interpret evaluation results, a school system representative (i.e. a principal or case manager), and a transition services agency representative if appropriate. Each team member brings important information to the IEP meeting.





## IEP Team Members Roles

IEP team members share their information and work together to write the child's Individualized Education Program. Each person's information adds to the team's understanding of the child and what services the child may need.

### Parents

Parents are key members of the IEP team. They know their child better than anyone and can talk about their child's strengths and needs as well as their ideas for enhancing their child's education. They can offer insight into how their child learns, what his or her interests are, and other aspects of the child that only a parent would know. They can listen to what the other team members think their child needs to work on at school and share their suggestions. They can also report on whether the skills the child is learning at school are being used at home.

### Teachers

Teachers are vital participants in the IEP meeting as well. At least one of the child's regular education teachers must be on the IEP team if the child is (or may be) participating in the regular education environment. The regular education teacher has a great deal to share with the team. For example, he or she might talk about the following:

- the general education curriculum in the regular classroom;
- the aids, services or changes to the educational program that would help the child learn and achieve; and
- strategies to help the child with behavior, if behavior is an issue.

The child's special education teacher contributes important information and experience about how to educate children with disabilities. Because of his or her training in special education, this teacher can talk about such issues as:

- how to modify the general curriculum to help the child learn;
- the supplementary aids and services that the child may need to be successful in the regular classroom and elsewhere;
- how to modify testing so that the student can show what he or she has learned; and
- other aspects of individualizing instruction to meet the student's unique needs.

Beyond helping to write the IEP, the special educator has responsibility for working with the student to carry out the IEP. He or she may:

- work with the student in a resource room or special class devoted to students receiving special education services;
- team teach with the regular education teacher; and
- work with other school staff, particularly the regular education teacher, to provide expertise about addressing the child's unique needs.

### Student

The student may also be a member of the IEP team. If transition service needs or transition services are going to be discussed at the meeting, the student must be invited to attend beginning by at least age fourteen. More and more students are participating in and even

leading their own IEP meetings. This allows them to have a strong voice in their own education and can teach them a great deal about self-advocacy and self-determination.

### Related Services

A child may require any of the following related services in order to benefit from special education. Related services, as listed under IDEA, include (but are not limited to):

- Occupational therapy
- Physical therapy
- Psychological services
- Recreation
- Social work services in schools
- Speech-language pathology services

If a child needs a particular related service in order to benefit from special education, the related service professional should be involved in developing the IEP. He or she may be invited by the school or parent to join the IEP team as a person "with knowledge or special expertise about the child."



