

Island County Parent to Parent

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Free monthly newsletters, resources, support, community connections, events, educational workshops, resources and more. Our Facebook Page is updated daily with tips, articles, resources and more on raising a child or supporting an adult with developmental and intellectual disabilities.

<https://www.facebook.com/islandcountyparent2parent>

Variety of resource guides and links on our website

<https://www.islandcountywa.gov/198/Parent-to-Parent>

- Island County Developmental Disability Resource Guide
- Island County Autism Spectrum Disorder Resource Guide
- Island County Behavioral Health Resource Directory
- Island County Transition to Adulthood and Beyond
- Island County Autism Resource for Families Website

<https://www.pilotace.org/>



August 2026

Special Education Information & Resources



Special Education, IDEA Law,
IEPs, Section 504 Plan & More

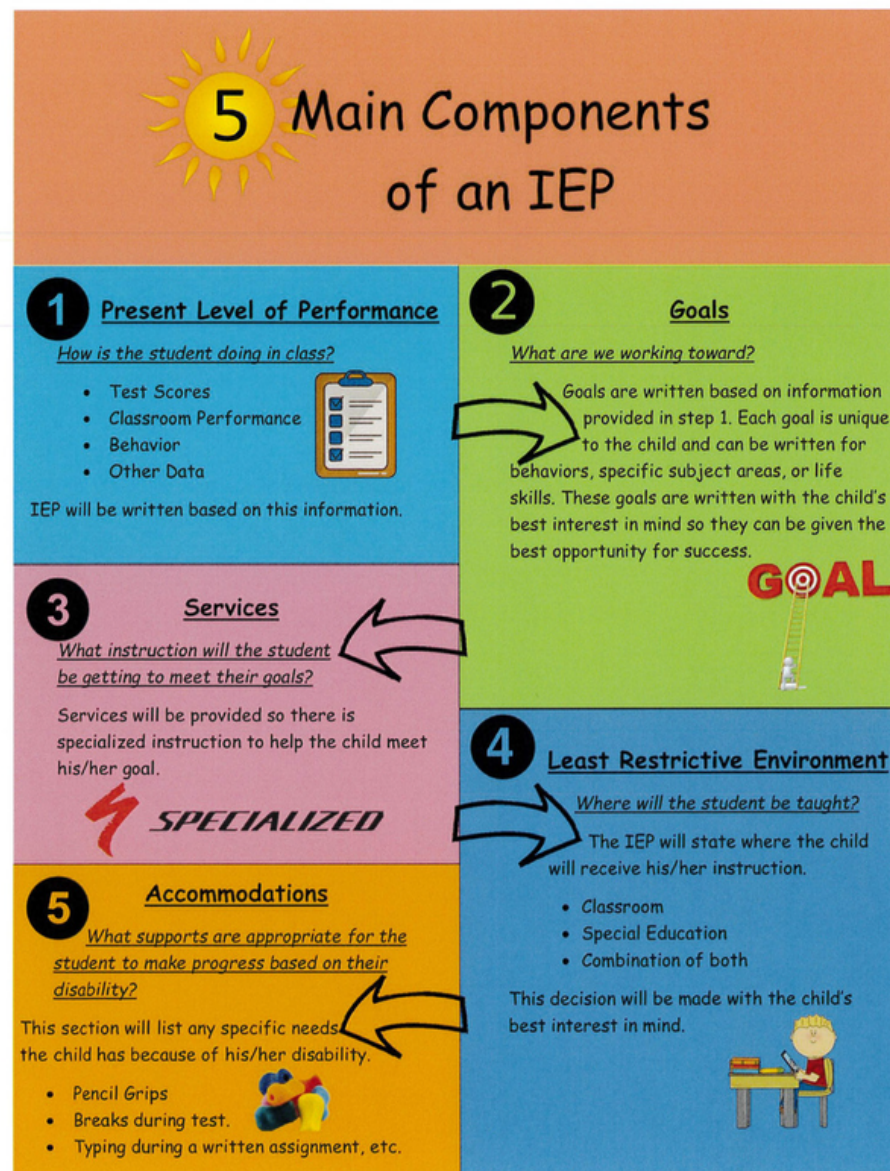
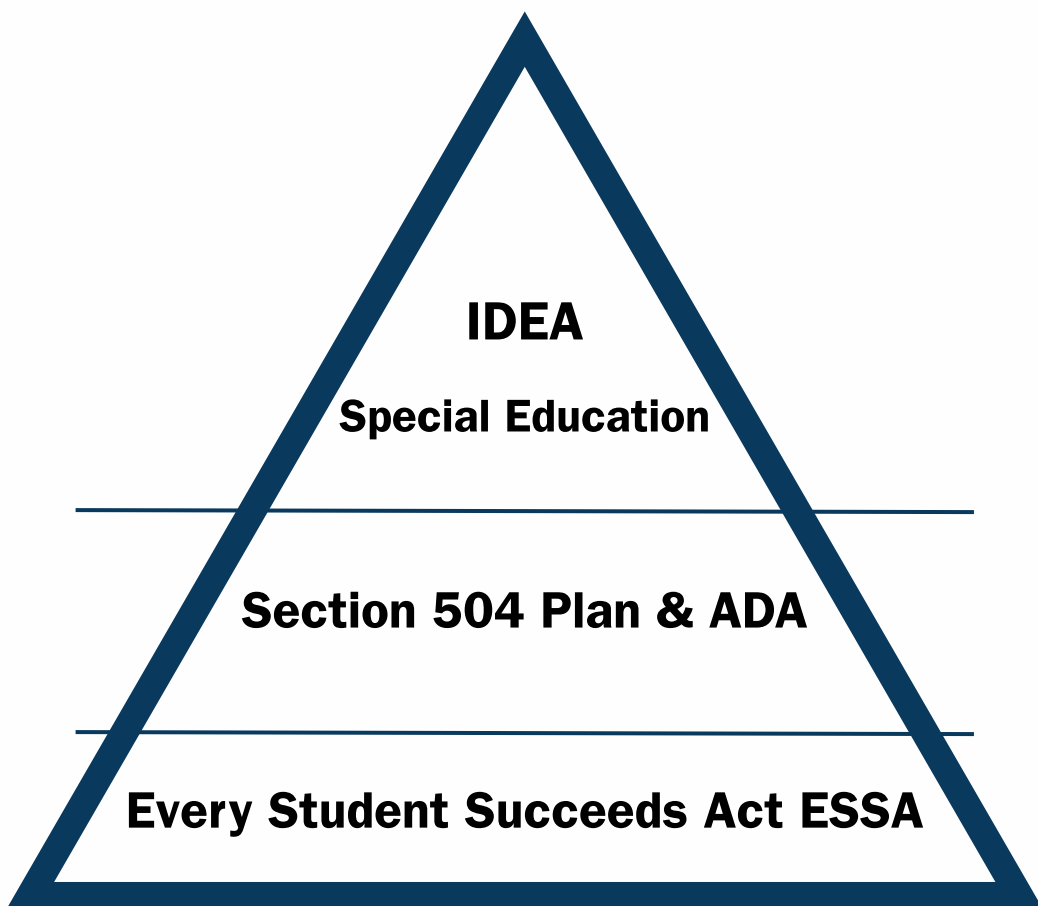


Provided by: Island County Parent to Parent
Providing resources, support, workshops & community
connections for special needs families

The alphabet soup of education,
especially special education,
can be daunting.

Student Rights

Pyramid of Educational Rights



Common Special Education Acronyms

IDEA Individuals with Disabilities Education Act	DD Developmental Delay
IEP Individual Education Program	FBA Functional Behavioral Assessment
IFSP Individualized Family Service Plan	BIP Behavior Intervention Plan
FAPE Free Appropriate Public Education	ADA American Disabilities Act
LRE Least Restrictive Environment	EI Early Intervention
ESIT Early Support for Infants & Toddlers	IEE Independent Educational Evaluation

The Individualized Education Program (IEP)

process is a legally required, multi-step journey under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) . It ensures students with qualifying disabilities receive tailored special education services, accommodations, and a customized learning environment.

The 7 essential steps in the IEP process include:

1. Pre-Referral & Request: Interventions are first tried in the general education classroom to address a child's learning or behavioral challenges. If these do not succeed, either the child's parent or a teacher requests a formal special education evaluation.
2. Referral: The school formally receives the evaluation request. Parents must sign a written consent form before the school is legally permitted to assess their child.
3. Evaluation: A multidisciplinary team conducts a comprehensive, individualized evaluation of the child in all areas of suspected disability. This typically includes psychological testing, academic assessments, and health reviews.
4. Eligibility Determination: The evaluation results are reviewed by a team of professionals and the child's parents. Together, they determine if the child has a qualifying disability and requires special education services.
5. IEP Development: If the child is eligible, the IEP team has 30 days to draft a customized plan. This outlines the child's present levels of performance, annual goals, required accommodations, and specialized services.
6. Implementation: Once the IEP is written and the parents provide consent for services to begin, the school implements the program. All teachers and service providers receive a copy of the IEP and are legally required to fulfill its mandates.
7. Reviews & Re-Evaluations: The IEP team meets at least once a year to review the student's progress and update their goals. Additionally, the child must be formally re-evaluated every three years to determine if they still qualify for special education services.

Federal and State Laws, the difference between IFSP, 504 Plan, IEP & More

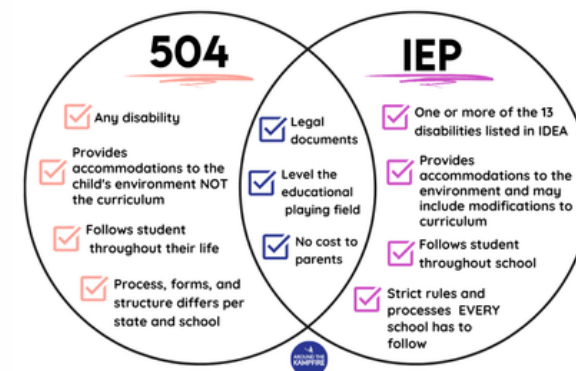
Access, Equity, Appropriate Services

The **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act IDEA** entitles an eligible child to uniquely designed educational program to enable progress, appropriate, inlite of the child's circumstances. **IDEA Part C** projects students in early learning (birth-3), and **IDEA Part B** protects school age students through graduation and/or age 22. Children at top of pyramid have all the protections of these laws. At the center of the pyramid are Section 504 Plan and the **American with Disabilities ADA** for their life span. **Every Student Succeeds Act ESSA** is the bottom, providing all children in the United States the right to a free and appropriate public education FAPE to ensure that every child acheives



SECTION 504 of THE REHABILITATION ACT of 1973

Commonly called "Section 504," is a federal law that protects students from discrimination based on disability. This law applies to all programs and activities that receive funding from the federal government-including Washington public schools. For a child who is having trouble in school, a 504 plan can offer a lot of support. The plan can put in place changes to how your child is taught, like frequent breaks or audiobooks. 504 plans are great for kids who don't need special education but who do need support to learn.



SPECIAL EDUCATION FEDERAL LAW (IDEA) Ages 0-22

<http://idea.ed.gov/> US Department of Education: IDEA 2004.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is a law ensuring services to children with disabilities throughout the nation. IDEA governs how states and public agencies provide early intervention, special education and related services to more than 6.5 million eligible infants, toddlers, children and youth with disabilities. Infants & toddlers with disabilities (birth-3) and their families receive early intervention services under IDEA Part C. Children and youth (ages 3-22) receive special education and related services under IDEA Part B.... See website for full definition.

WHAT IS SPECIAL EDUCATION?

Special education is specially designed instruction that addresses the unique needs of a student eligible to receive special education services. Special education is provided at no cost to parents and includes the related services a student needs to access her/his educational program.

EARLY STAGES (AGES 0-3)

Early Intervention services are available to children who have disabilities and/or developmental delays. The Early Support for Infants and Toddlers (ESIT) program provides services to eligible children and families in a variety of settings - in their homes, in child care, in preschool or school programs & in their communities. Island County providers include Steps on Whidbey and Sherwood Community Services on Camano.

SCHOOL AGE (AGES 3-22)

Students with disabilities who are determined eligible for special education and related services are entitled to a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) . Services are provided to eligible students according to an Individualized Education Program (IEP) in preschools, elementary, and secondary schools, or other appropriate settings.

SPECIAL EDUCATION WASHINGTON ADMINISTRATIVE CODE

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 2004 is the federal law that guarantees free appropriate public education (FAPE) is provided to eligible students with disabilities. The Washington state regulations on special education can be found in the Washington Administrative Code (WAC) Chapter 392-172A.

SCHOOL DISTRICTS & CHILD FIND

Each Island County School District provides evaluation and services for children beginning at age three. If a delay is suspected in any of the five areas (cognition, communication, fine motor, gross motor and/or social emotional) the school district will provide an interdisciplinary evaluation. Eligible children will be provided a program with an Individualized Education Plan IEP- School District Contact info on page 4

Early Intervention – IFSP Components

44

- Child's current functioning
- Family's concerns
- Needs and resources of child and family
- All services child/family need (initiation, method, frequency and duration)
- Identify natural environment
 - ✦ "Natural Environment" is home or other setting in which children without disabilities participate
- Expected outcomes
- 6-month reviews and annual re-evaluation
- Transition plan

EARLY INTERVENTION (EI)

A system of services that helps babies and toddlers with developmental delays or disabilities. Early Intervention provides a free screening to all families that suspect a delay or disability. NO REFERRAL NEEDED The Individualized Family Service Plan **IFSP** is a written treatment plan for Early Intervention (EI). It details your child's current levels of functioning, specific needs and goals for treatment (referred to as outcomes). The first step in writing the IFSP will be for the members of your child's team to conduct various types of assessments to identify your child's individual strengths and needs. Physical development, cognitive development, communication development, social & emotional development, adaptive development, fine & gross motor skills, vision, hearing, etc.

SPECIAL EDUCATION RESOURCES

- **Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction–Special Education**

(360)725-6075 Children with disabilities have access to a free and appropriate public education (FAPE).

<https://www.k12.wa.us/student-success/special-education>

- **US Department of Education: Office of Special Education Programs**

(OSEP) <https://www.ed.gov/> is dedicated to improving results for infants, toddlers, children and youth with disabilities ages birth through age 22 **(800)872-5327**

- **WA State Governor's Office of Education Ombuds** (OEO) provides conflict resolution: **(866)297-2597**

<https://www.oeo.wa.gov/en/education-issues/supports-studentsdisabilities>

- **WA PAVE** Can connect you with parents and advocates in your area who can help. PAVE provides support, training, information and resources to empower and give voice to individuals, youth and families impacted by disabilities in Washington. **(800)5-PARENT** <https://wapave.org/>

- **Washington Autism Alliance and Advocacy** Helping children and adults with ASD. Access to healthcare, education and services for people with autism and other intellectual and developmental disabilities in WA State **(425) 894-7231** <https://washingtonautismalliance.org/>

- **Informing Families** Of the major systems, education is the only guaranteed entitlement for your child. <https://informingfamilies.org/>

- **Wright's Law** Information about special education law, education law and advocacy for children with disabilities. <http://www.wrightslaw.com>

- **Understood** Learning and thinking difference resources www.understood.org/

- **Northwest Justice Special Education Clinic** Attorneys present an overview of the laws affecting students' special education. Parents of children with special education needs can learn about their legal rights and options and where to get legal help with their children's needs aren't being met. (206)464-1519 (888)201-1012

<https://www.washingtonlawhelp.org/resource/special-education-legalclinic>

- **Island County Parent to Parent School Age to Adulthood Transition Guide** <https://www.islandcountywa.gov/198/Parent-to-Parent>

- High School Transition Toolkit

<https://informingfamilies.org/transitiontoolkit/>

- **Got Transition** <https://www.gottransition.org/> Healthcare

- **School to Adulthood: Transition Planning Toolkit** High School, Life, and Work <https://wapave.org/school-to-adulthood-transition-planning-toolkitfor-high-school-life-and-work/>

TECHNOLOGY AND COMMUNICATIONS

- **Telecommunication Equipment Distribution** (TED) Program. Devices and apps for anyone who lives in Washington State (over age 4) and who is deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind, or has difficulty with speech. <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/altsa/odhh/telecommunication>

- **Special Education Technology Center** (509)963-3350 <https://specialedtechcenter.com/> Assists with special technology needs of special education students.