

Understanding an IEP

Episode 3 – Demographics, Procedural Safeguards, and Medical Assistance Billing

Todd M. Gorshe, M.Ed.

Developmental Specialist

Penn State Health Children's Hospital – Developmental
Medicine



Episode Outline

Episode 1 – Introduction

Episode 2 – FAPE

Episode 3 – Demographics, procedural safeguards, and medical assistance billing

Episode 4 – Section II (present levels)

Episode 5 – Sections III (transition services) and IV (state/local assessments)

Episode 6 – Section V (goals and objectives)

Episode 7 – Sections VI (modifications/SDIS, related services, supports), VII (educational placement), and VIII (PennData reporting)

Episode 8 – Parent preparation and follow-through

Episode 9 – Live session with families

Episode 3 – Structure of the IEP (1 of 3)

IEP documents are structured to ensure compliance with federal IDEA and state regulations, serving as a legally binding, customized roadmap for a student's special education programming. The structure ensures all required components are included, monitored, and legally defensible.

- The document forces a logical flow from Demographics (first page) through Section VIII (last page)
- Pennsylvania IEPs specifically include structured sections for transition planning (Section III), required by law to guide the student toward post-secondary goals.

Analogy – “Pulling the String”

- Once the structure of the IEP is understood (and with practice), the reader can more easily find information and make connections between sections. A skilled reader of IEPs can read the document in reverse... from the last page to the first.

Episode 3 – Structure of the IEP (2 of 3)

The following are the sections outlined by PDE.

Demographics – IEP Team Signatures – Procedural Safeguards Notice – Medical Assistance Program Billing Notice

Section I – Special Considerations

Section II – Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance

Section III – Transition Services

Section IV – Participation in State and Local Assessments

Section V – Goals and Objectives

Section VI – Special Education/Related Services (B)/Supplementary Aids and Services/Program Modifications

Section VII – Educational Placement

Section VIII – PennData Reporting

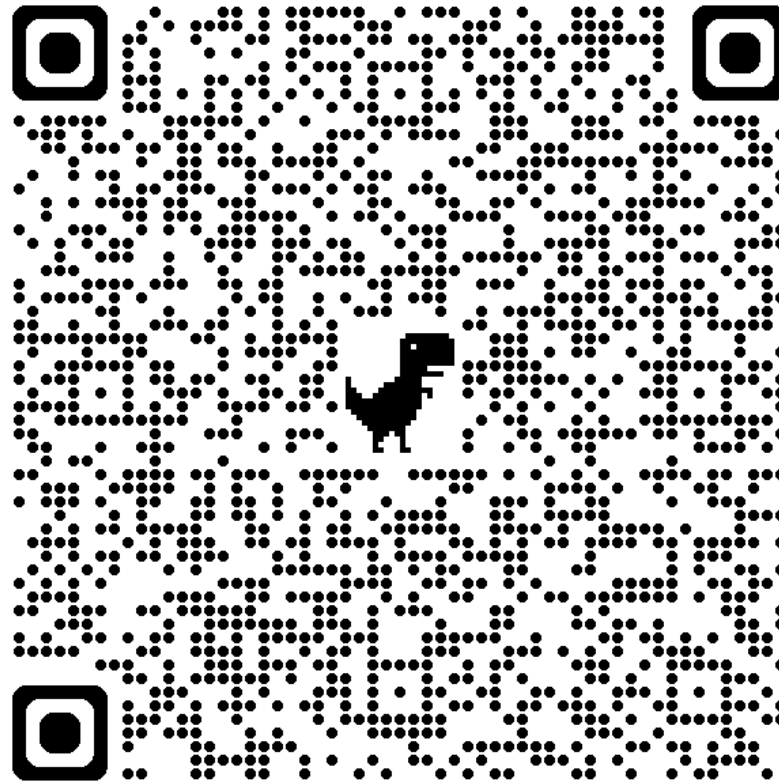
Episode 3 – Structure of the IEP (3 of 3)

- This presentation will focus on the school-age IEPs. School-age IEPs are designated for students 5 to 22 years of age.
- The Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) is the “IEP” for children ages 0 to 3 in early intervention (EI). The IEP for children ages 3 to 5 in preschool EI are also called IEPs; however, the format is different than school-age IEPs.
- The Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network (PaTTAN) provides an annotated IEP as a model for the development of an IEP. The annotated version can be found at this website:

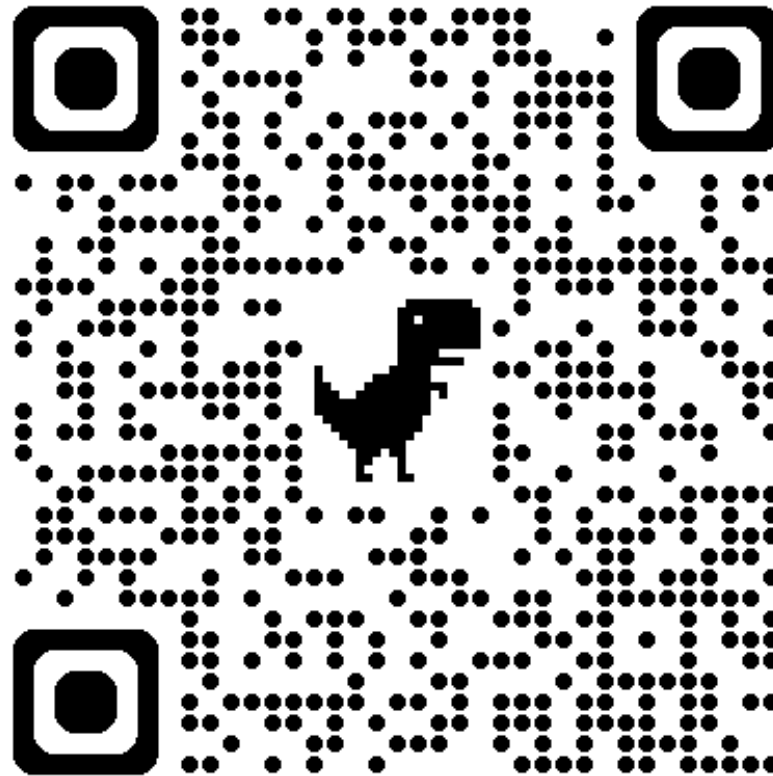


<https://www.pattan.net/Forms/Individualized-Education-Program-IEP-1-1-1>

**Please use this QR code for a blank
template of the school-age IEP (18 pages)**



**Please use this QR code for the annotated
school-age IEP (63 pages)**



Episode 3 – Demographics

QR Document (page 1 of 18)

- Confirms the student's name, date of birth, grade, and address.
- Provides parent/guardian contact details for communication.
- Records the IEP meeting date, the date services begin (implementation), and when they end (anticipated duration).
- Captures data for the Pennsylvania Information Management System (PIMS) for special education reporting.
- Lists the Local Education Agency (LEA) and county of residence.



Episode 3 – Signature page

QR Document (page 2 of 18)

- The IEP signature page documents attendance of team members at the meeting (in-person, virtually, or by phone). It also identifies the roles of each attendee
- The signature page DOES NOT acknowledge agreement with the IEP's content. It serves as a record the meeting occurred and the individuals who participated (via signature).
- NOTE - To officially approve or disagree with the proposed IEP, parents must sign the Notice of Recommended Educational Placement (NOREP). More on this will be reviewed later in the presentation (Episode #7).



Episode 3 – Signature page QR Document (page 2 of 18)

- The signature page confirms the team met to develop the IEP, satisfying federal and state IDEA compliance.
- Parents can give permission for IEP team members to be absent from a meeting via signature on the *Parental Consent to Excuse Members from Attending the IEP Team Meeting*. Excused team members should not sign the signature page.



Episode 3 – Procedural Safeguards

QR document (page 3 of 18)

- This section provides documentation the parent received a copy of the Procedural Safeguards Notice. The parent/guardian/surrogate must sign acknowledging receipt and awareness of whom to contact if more information is needed.
- Procedural safeguards are legally mandated rights under IDEA that protect students with disabilities and their parents, ensuring “protections” such as participation in the special education process, informed consent, access to records, the right to resolve disputes regarding FAPE, etc.
- The Procedural Safeguards Notice (PSN) must be presented to the parents once per year, but it is best practice for the procedural safeguards to be presented at each meeting of the IEP team.



Episode 3 – Examples of procedural safeguards

- To be fully informed by the school district about all rights provided to you and your child under the law.
- To request your child be assessed for special education if you think he/she needs special education services, or to request a reevaluation if you think your child's current educational placement is no longer appropriate.
- To consent, refuse to consent, or revoke consent for special education for your child.
- To obtain an Independent Educational Evaluation (IEE) if you disagree with the school district's evaluation.
- To be notified whenever the school wishes to evaluate your child for potential special education needs, wants to change your child's educational placement, or refuses your request for an evaluation or a change in placement.



Resource: <https://www.pattan.net/assets/PaTTAN/18/18eb2479-1e79-4d0e-a0f5-ce8c21d23409.pdf>

Episode 3 – Examples of procedural safeguards

- To participate in all IEP (or IFSP) team decisions, including placement. Parental opinions should be heard and noted.
- To request an IEP (or IFSP) meeting at any time during the school year.
- To disagree with parts or all of the IEP. This may lead to a request for mediation and/or a due process hearing when differences with the school district can't be resolved informally.
- To bring any person to an IEP meeting with knowledge of the child or the child's disability (including advocates and attorneys).
- To review and receive copies of your child's educational records.
- To be kept informed about your child's progress at least as often as parents of children who do not have disabilities.



Resource: <https://www.pattan.net/assets/PaTTAN/18/18eb2479-1e79-4d0e-a0f5-ce8c21d23409.pdf>

Episode 3 – Medical Assistance Billing

QR Document (pages 3 of 18)

In Pennsylvania, the purpose of billing Medical Assistance (MA) for IEP services is to secure federal MA reimbursement for mandated, health-related services (such as therapy, nursing, or specialized transportation) provided to eligible students. This program, known as the School-Based ACCESS Program (SBAP), helps schools offset the costs of special education.

What Parents Need to Know:

- Consent is given only one time, but consent can be withdrawn at any time.
- Refusal to give consent WILL NOT change the services the student receives in the IEP
- Whether consent is given or refused, parents DO NOT have to pay for the services outlined in the IEP.
- Parents can either give or refuse permission for the LEA to release information about the student to receive reimbursement for services.
- Parents can receive copies of the student's records that are disclosed as part of this authorization.

Episode 3 – Special Considerations

QR Document (4 and 5 of 18)

- These are the 6 critical areas that might affect a student's learning. Any of the following considerations identified as "YES" must be specifically addressed within the IEP or by a separate document (i.e. Communication Plan, Positive Behavior Support Plan, etc.).



Blind or Visually Impaired



Deaf or Hard of Hearing



Communication Needs



Assistive Technology



Behaviors that impede the student's learning or that of others



Other