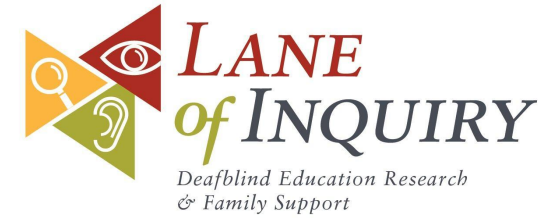

IEP Development

Lanya McKittrick, PhD



My Background

- ▶ Mom to 4 boys, 2 are deafblind due to Usher syndrome (Conner (21), Dalton(13))
- ▶ Special education researcher specializing in Deafblindness / Founder of Lane of Inquiry - focus is IEP collaboration
- ▶ Chair of the Board of the Usher Syndrome Coalition
- ▶ Family support
- ▶ Affiliate of NFADB
- ▶ Adjunct Faculty at University of Northern Colorado - IEP's and the Collaborative Process.



Agenda

- ▶ Overview of Special Education Law
- ▶ Review of IEP Components
- ▶ Deafblind Specific IEP Considerations



Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

The IDEA is a law that makes available a free appropriate public education to eligible children with disabilities throughout the nation and ensures special education and related services to those children.

The IDEA governs how states and public agencies provide early intervention, special education, and related services

Infants and toddlers, birth through age 2, with disabilities and their families receive early intervention services under IDEA Part C. Children and youth ages 3 through 21 receive special education and related services under IDEA Part B.

Passed in 1975 as the Education for All Handicap Children Act, most recent addendum in 2004.



Other Laws (antidiscrimination)

- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (1973)- all programs w/fed funds
- ADA (1990)- private sector
 - Physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities
 - Record of such impairment
 - Regarded as having a disability



504 Plans

- To level the playing field
- Prohibit discrimination on the basis of any disability
- Provide appropriate educational services to the same extent as needs of non-disabled
- Evaluation data is necessary
- Students get:
 - Non-discrimination protection
 - Limited Procedural safeguards
 - Accommodations
 - Possible related services



Individualized Family Services Plan (IFSP)

- An IFSP describes services that the infant-toddler and the family will receive
 - (option to identify resources, priorities, and concerns and to include outcomes and services related to enhancing the child's development)**
 - reviewed at six-month intervals or more often if necessary
 - developed within 45 days of the time of referral



Individualized Education Program (IEP)

- An IEP provides the foundation for the student's appropriate education and assures that the student will benefit from special education through full participation
 - reviewed at least once a year
 - must promote movement from school to adult outcomes



The IEP Process: What's Involved in Developing My Child's IEP?

- Process involves two main things:
 - The IEP meeting
 - The IEP Document



What Is An IEP (Individualized Education Program)?

The IEP meeting serves as a communication vehicle between parents and school personnel, and enables them as *equal participants*, to make joint, informed decisions regarding:

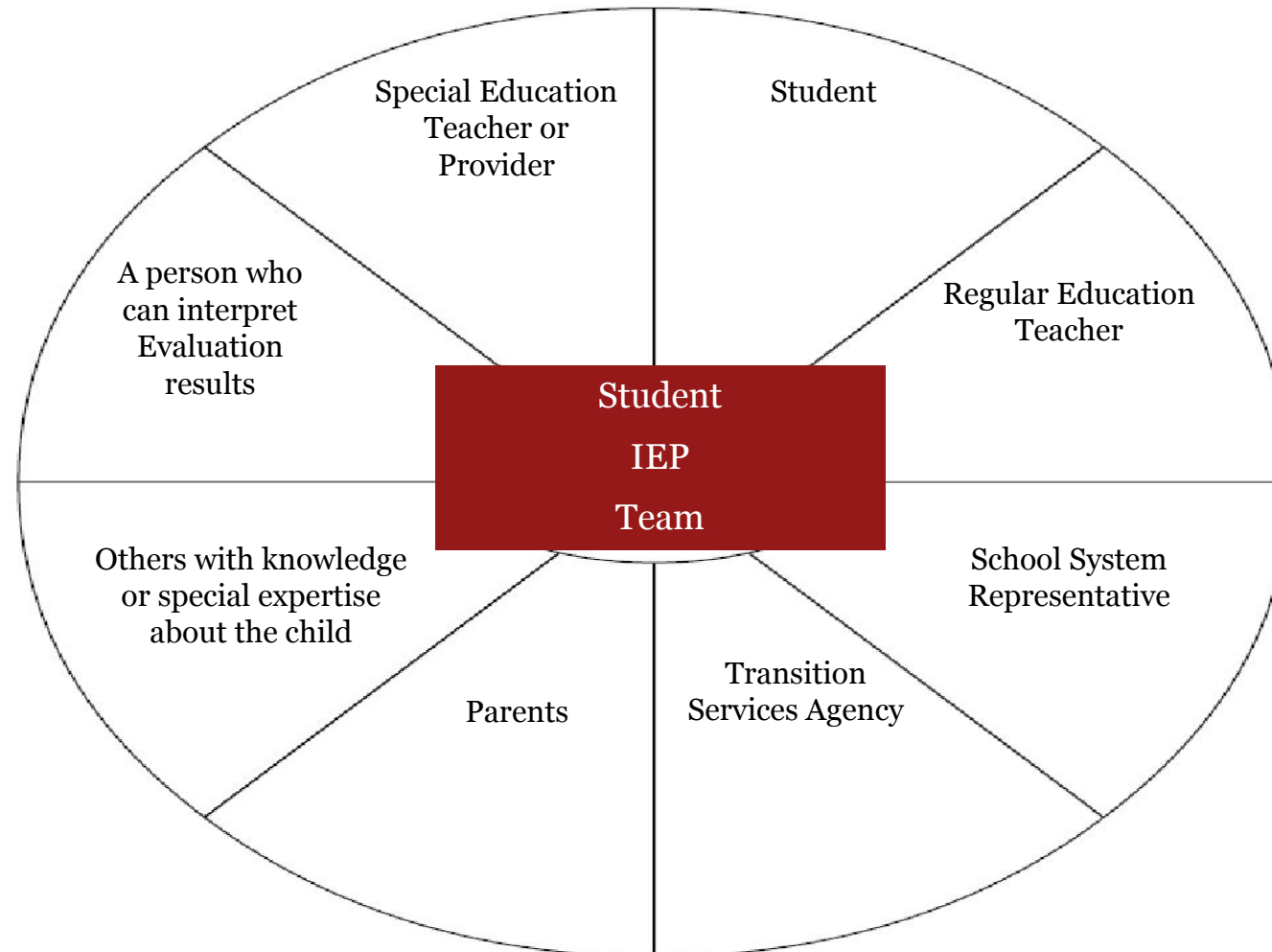
- The child's needs and appropriate goals.
- The extent to which the child will be involved in the general curriculum and participate in the regular education environment and State and District-wide assessments, and
- The services needed to support that involvement and participation and to achieve agreed-upon goals.

The law requires that every child receiving special education services have an IEP.



State and Federal Law require that a written IEP be developed and reviewed annually to meet your child's unique education needs.

The IEP Team



Six principles of IDEA

- ▶ Zero Reject
 - ▶ A rule against excluding any student
- ▶ Nondiscriminatory evaluation
 - ▶ A rule requiring schools to evaluate students fairly to find out if they have a disability and if so how does it impact his/her education
- ▶ Free appropriate public education (FAPE)-
 - ▶ A rule requiring schools to provide an individually tailored education to meet the unique needs of the student



Six principles of IDEA (cont)

- ▶ Least restrictive environment (LRE)-
 - ▶ A rule requiring schools to education students with disabilities with their non-disabled peers to the **maximum extent appropriate**
- ▶ Procedural Due Process-
 - ▶ A rule providing safeguards for students/families against schools actions, including the right to sue in court
- ▶ Parental and student participation-
 - ▶ A rule requiring schools to collaborate with students and parents in developing and carrying out special education plans



FAPE

- Free means at public expense
- Appropriate– what does that mean?
 - BOE v. Rowley (1982)
 - Chevy, not the Cadillac
 - Luke P.
 - Endrew F (2017)
- The key is individualization
 - The IEP/IFSP



LRE (Least Restrictive Environment)

- ▶ First known as mainstreaming
- ▶ Then integration
- ▶ Now referred to as inclusion.
 - ▶ In most cases it benefits both the students with disabilities and those without



LRE Continuum

- ▶ General education (least restrictive)
- ▶ Resource room
- ▶ Special classes
- ▶ Special schools
- ▶ Homebound
- ▶ Hospitals
- ▶ Institutions (most restrictive)
- ▶ * Homebound could be considered most restrictive because there are no other students in the environment, beyond siblings if available)



IEP Contents – All Students

- ▶ present levels of educational performance
- ▶ measurable annual goals, including benchmarks
- ▶ assessment status
- ▶ special education and related services and supplementary aids and services (based upon peer reviewed research to the extent practicable)
- ▶ Accommodations and modifications
- ▶ extent to which the student will not participate with students who do not have disabilities in general education classes



IEP Contents – All students

- ▶ any modifications in the administration of assessments
- ▶ projected dates for beginning the services and program modifications (**frequency, location, and duration**)
- ▶ how progress toward annual goals will be measured and how parents will be informed



IEP Contents – For Some Students

- ▶ transition plans
- ▶ behavior plan
- ▶ ELL needs
- ▶ Braille
- ▶ communication needs
- ▶ assistive technology



Transition Planning Summarized

POSTSECONDARY GOALS

What will the student be doing after high school?

TRANSITION SERVICES/ACTIVITIES AND IEP GOALS/OBJECTIVES

How is the student going to get there?

RESPONSIBLE PERSONS AND TIMELINES

Who is going to help the student and when are things going to be done?



What is Transition Planning ?

A cooperative partnership involving:

- Student and her/his family
- School and post-school personnel
- Local community representatives
- Employers



What is Transition Planning ?

Planning that will allow a student to:

- Choose a living arrangement
- Obtain a career
- Develop independent and community living skills, and
- Access postsecondary education ultimately moving from school to the adult world.



Transition Planning

- Involves thinking past high school into post graduate future
- Should be individualized.
- Outlines total school experience
- Should be STUDENT driven, not professional driven
- Is about student's dreams
- Is based on student's abilities and deficiencies
- **Is not an “add-on” activity**
- Is more than just paperwork



Transition Pointers

- ▶ Student participate in IEP meeting as early and as much as possible.
- ▶ Plan early and start asking questions about student needs in middle school (or sooner).
- ▶ Help the student talk about dreams and goals.
- ▶ All planning should be based on preferences, interests, needs and strengths.
- ▶ Measurable postsecondary goals express what student wants to do after they leaves high school.
- ▶ Work on job skills for employment should be included in educational program.
- ▶ Prepare student to know about the supports and services she will need after high school to assist her with her college coursework.



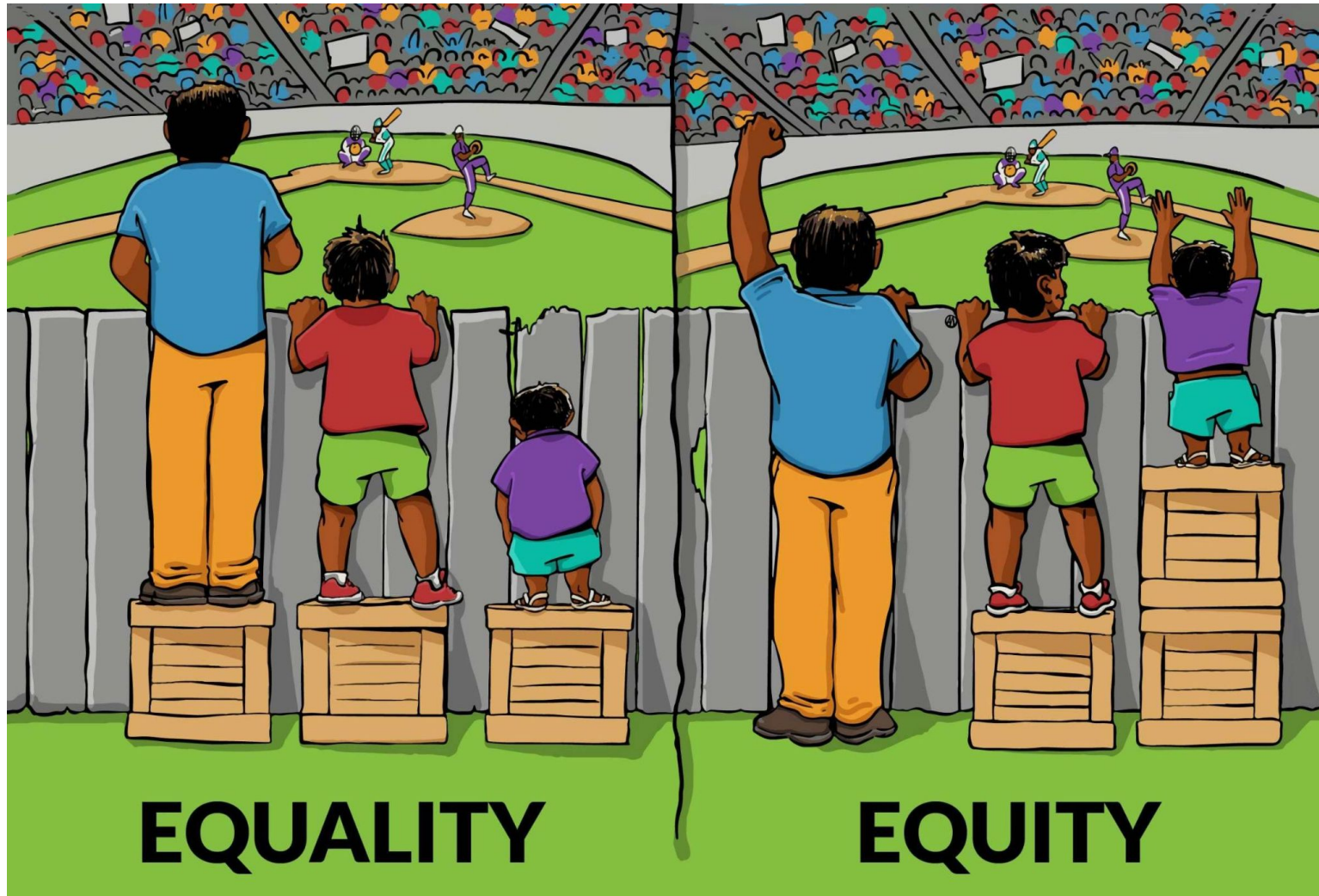
What Does the Law Say about Accommodations and Modifications?

Federal and state laws and regulations require schools to provide accommodations and modifications to make sure that students with disabilities have access to an appropriate education program.

- The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA 2004) requires that students with disabilities have the opportunity to be involved and make progress in the general curriculum.
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 requires that accommodations be provided to students with disabilities, even if they don't have an IEP.
- The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 prohibits discrimination against any people with disabilities.



Leveling the Playing Field



Accommodations

(can apply to all students)

Do not fundamentally change standards in terms of instructional level, content, or performance criteria

Changes are made in order to provide equal access to learning and equal opportunity to demonstrate what is known

Grading is same. *Changes the How*

Modifications

(apply to students with disabilities)

Do fundamentally change standards in terms of instructional level, content, or performance criteria

Changes are made to provide student meaningful & productive learning experiences based on individual needs & abilities

Grading is different. *Changes the What*

More differences....

- Accommodations focus on removing barriers and providing access to the general curriculum.
- Accommodations are designed for students who have barriers that can be removed to help them demonstrate what they know.
- Modifications focus on ensuring meaningful participation in the general curriculum.
- Modifications are designed for students who would benefit from participation in the general curriculum even though it is above their ability level.



SMART Goals

S - Specific

M - Measurable

A - Use Action Words

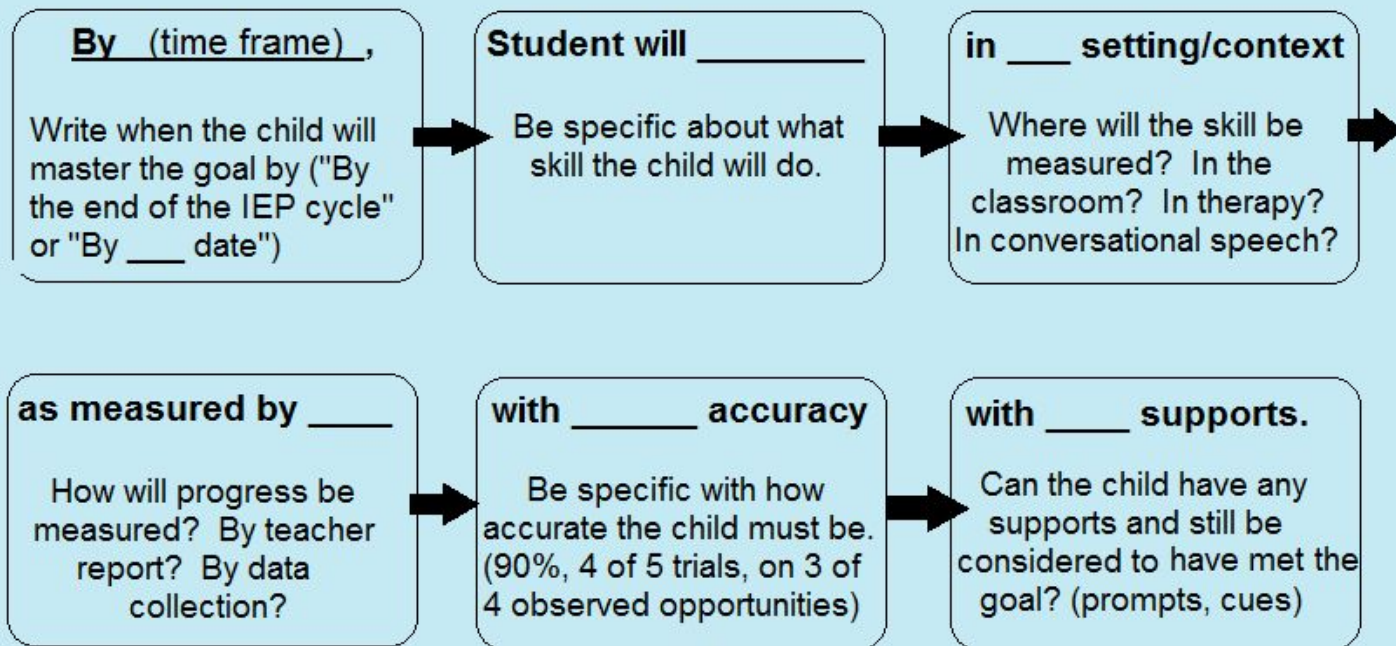
R - Realistic and relevant

T - Time-limited

(Wright & Wright, 2008)



IEP Goal Formula



By _(time frame)_, Student will _____ in _____ setting/context as measured by _____ with _____ accuracy with _____ supports.

Including Baseline (Optional): If your employer requires you to include baseline in goals, add this "...student will increase/decrease _____ from a baseline of _____ to _____..."

By _(time frame)_, Student will increase/decrease _____ from a baseline of _____ with ___ supports to _____ with _____ supports with _____ accuracy as measured by _____.

* Items can be rearranged to help the sentence make logical sense

What We Know About Parent Experiences with the Special Education System

- ▶ IEP meetings can be stressful, especially during transitions
- ▶ The special education system can be overwhelming and confusing
- ▶ Parents may feel like there is a power imbalance
- ▶ Conflict can occur if families feel like their voices are not heard.
- ▶ Transitions are especially challenging.



Seven Principles of Effective Partnership

1. Communication
2. Professional Competence
3. Commitment
4. Advocacy
5. Equality
6. Respect
7. Trust

(Blue-Banning et al., 2014)



Deafblind Specific Parent Experiences (1 of 3)

- ▶ Professionals misunderstanding student needs
- ▶ Lack of Professional Knowledge
 - ▶ Parents taking on role of case manager and sharing knowledge
 - ▶ Interveners
 - ▶ Bringing in support – DB Projects
- ▶ Parent need to push for services

(McKittrick, 2019)



Deafblind Specific Parent Experiences (2 of 3)

- ▶ Need for appropriate goals
 - ▶ “honors classes are not appropriate for children like yours”
 - ▶ “your child does not have the communication skills necessary to [do what the other kids are doing]”
 - ▶ Not enough future focus
 - ▶ Lack of understanding of communication abilities

(McKittrick, 2019)



Deafblind Specific Parent Experiences (3 of 3)

- ▶ Professionals not valuing communication mode
- ▶ Student unable to communicate needs directly
- ▶ Large team of service providers
- ▶ Lack of access to other families
- ▶ Emotional impacts
- ▶ Impact on entire family
- ▶ Transitions (post-secondary and more)

(McKittrick, 2019)



Common Questions

1. When should my child's IEP qualification be "deafblindness"?
2. When should a Teacher of the Visually Impaired be added on my IEP team?
3. When is the appropriate time to focus on the Expanded Core Curriculum?
4. Many questions around the transition from an IFSP to an IEP and what to expect?
5. Is an intervener right for my child?
6. When should my child start to be involved in their IEP meeting?
7. I'm concerned that my child has a disability other than deafblindness. How do I convey that to my IEP team so they can be evaluated?
8. How do I determine appropriate accommodations and modifications? What are classroom considerations?



Expanded Core Curriculum



Interveners

“Interveners provide access to information, communication and facilitate the development of social and emotional well-being for children who are deafblind... Intervener services are provided by an individual, typically a paraeducator, who has received specialized training in deafblindness and the process of intervention. An intervener provides consistent one-to-one support to a student who is deafblind (ages 3 through 21) throughout the instructional day.”

NCDB



Other Considerations

- ▶ Families - recognize the important role you play and listen to your gut
- ▶ IEP team members - strong collaboration leads to increased parent satisfaction and student outcomes
- ▶ Share “About Me” to everyone on the team before school starts and at any transition
- ▶ Communicate, communicate, communicate



Resources

- [National Center on Deaf-blindness](#)
- [National Family Association for Deaf-Blind](#)
- Contact your [state Deafblind Project](#)
- Ava's Voice - [Resources Page](#)
- [Lane of Inquiry](#) - Deafblind Education Research
- [Parent for Parent Information and Resources](#)
- [WrightsLaw](#)
- [Council for Parent Attorneys and Advocates](#)
- [Center for Appropriate Dispute Resolution in Special Education](#)

