

Getting Ready for Kindergarten and Beyond

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What are your expectations?




Start with the end in mind!



Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)



Individuals with Disabilities Education Act - (IDEA)

Disability is a natural part of the human experience and in no way diminishes the right of individuals to participate in or contribute to society. Improving educational results for children with disabilities is an essential element of our national policy of ensuring equality of opportunity, full participation, independent living and economic self-sufficiency for individuals with disabilities.



Least Restrictive Environment

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)



Educational placement is the setting where your child receives his or her education and services. Schools must place students in the least restrictive environment (LRE). **That means students must be placed in the general education setting to the greatest extent possible to receive supports and services as determined by the individualized education program team.**



BENEFITS OF INCLUSION



Benefits of Inclusion for... Children With Disabilities

1. They are spared the effects of separate, segregated education—including the negative effects of labeling and negative attitudes fostered by lack of contact with typically developing children.
2. They are provided with competent models that allow them to learn new adaptive skills and/or learn when and how to use their existing skills through imitation.
3. They are provided with competent peers with whom to interact and thereby learn new social and/or communicative skills.
4. They are provided with realistic life experiences that prepare them to live in the community.
5. They are provided with opportunities to develop friendships with typically developing peers




Benefits of Inclusion for... **Children Without Disabilities**

- 1. They are provided with opportunities to learn more *realistic and accurate views* about individuals with disabilities.
- 2. They are provided with opportunities to *develop positive attitudes* toward others who are different from themselves.
- 3. They are provided with opportunities to *learn altruistic behaviors* and when and how to use such behaviors.
- 4. They are provided with *models of individuals who successfully achieve* despite challenges.



How to Get Ready

- Research
- Explore Options
- Prepare



Do Your Research

- Review your child's current Individual Education Program (IEP), progress on current goals and school records
- Think about your child's strengths and weaknesses
- Review or create a vision for your child to determine educational priorities



Explore Your Options



- Visit your neighborhood school and other schools and programs that interest you
- Attend Kindergarten Roundup for your neighborhood schools
- Explore enrollment process
- Ask questions about school Inclusion, class size, teacher/student ratio, how supports and services are incorporated



Prepare for the IEP



- Determine when or schedule your transition Individual Education Program (IEP) meeting
- Learn who the key players are at the new school or district who make decisions and can be potential allies
- Look at your child's current evaluation data and determine what added or updated assessments might be needed
- Plan who you will bring with you to listen and take notes
- Create an outline or list of parent concerns and prioritized talking points



Before School Starts



- Ask to meet with your child's teacher to talk about expectations
- Share student bio/snapshot to give teacher and school team added personal information about your child
- Talk to your child's teacher about setting up a school to home communication plan



Prepare your Child

- Talk to your child about the upcoming changes – new building, new schedule (1/2 or full day), new adults and kids
- Read stories together about Kindergarten and school
- Plan a visit to the new building and check out the playground
- Request to visit the classroom and meet the teacher prior to the first day
- Prepare the new supplies and practice the morning routine



Resources: Michigan Alliance for Families

- Laws/Rules:
 - <https://www.michiganallianceforfamilies.org/law/>
- Placement/Least Restrictive Environment:
 - <https://www.michiganallianceforfamilies.org/lre-placement/>
- Inclusion:
 - <https://www.michiganallianceforfamilies.org/inclusion/>



Resources: Michigan Alliance for Families

- Transition to Kindergarten
 - <https://www.michiganallianceforfamilies.org/transition-to-kindergarten/>
- Michigan Alliance for Families Webinars
 - <https://www.michiganallianceforfamilies.org/webinar/>
 - Individual Education Programs, Inclusion, Behavior, Communication and Advocacy



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