

# Individualized Services and Support

## **Iris Center Resource**

Supported by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs and located at Vanderbilt University's Peabody College, the IRIS Center develops and disseminates free, engaging online resources about evidence-based instructional and behavioral practices to support the education of all students, particularly struggling learners and those with disabilities. This resource is an excerpt from the online module "*IEPs: Developing High-Quality Individualized Education Programs*".

<https://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/module/iep01/#content>

## **Individualized Services and Support**

After the IEP team has developed the student's annual goals, they can begin to develop the third required component: the statement of the individualized services and supports the student requires to meet these goals. These can include *special education services* and any necessary *related services*, *supplementary aids and services*, and *program modifications*. These services and supports should enable a student to:

- Make progress toward meeting her academic and/or functional annual goals
- Be involved and make progress in the general education curriculum, and to participate in extracurricular (e.g., drama club) and other nonacademic (e.g., attending a school football game) activities
- Participate in these activities with other students, both with and without disabilities

The various types of services to be considered for each student, as outlined in IDEA, are included below. Additionally, we've included examples of each of the four types of services and supports for Yazmina, a high-school student who is blind.

Service	Explanation	Example
Special Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Specially designed instruction that meets the unique needs of a student with a disability in the areas of academics, functional and behavioral skills, and/or secondary transition</li><li>• More intensive and individualized instruction than is typically provided in the general education classroom</li><li>• Provided by an education professional with expertise in individualizing and intensifying instruction, progress monitoring, and data-based decision making</li></ul>	Yazmina receives instruction in specialized skills, including how to read and write in braille. This instruction is provided by a teacher of students with visual impairments (TVI).
Related Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Supportive services necessary for that student to benefit from special education services</li><li>• Examples include transportation, psychological services, speech-language therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, counseling, social work services, and school health services</li></ul>	Yazmina receives orientation and mobility (O&M) services that teach her how to use a cane to travel independently from place to place, among other skills. These services are provided by an orientation and mobility (O&M) specialist.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not allowable: services delivered by a medical doctor or those related to insertion, optimization, or maintenance or replacement of surgically implanted medical devices (e.g., cochlear implant)</li> <li>• Usually provided one or more times per week for short periods of time (e.g., two sessions/week, 30 minutes each)</li> <li>• The student can receive more than one related service, based on her individual needs</li> </ul>	
Supplementary Aids and Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accommodations or modifications that allow the student to access both education-related and nonacademic school-related activities</li> <li>• Can also include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Other types of direct services and supports to the student (e.g., health care assistant for a student with significant health needs)</li> <li>○ Support and training for relevant school staff (e.g., collaborative planning time for teachers)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Yazmina receives numerous accommodations to help her succeed in her general education classes. Some of those include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A larger desk to hold her refreshable braille display</li> <li>• Readings, handouts, and tests provided in alternate formats (e.g., digital text, braille)</li> <li>• Extended time on tests, because braille takes longer to read</li> <li>• A peer sighted guide for all marching band activities (e.g., rehearsals, evening and weekend football games, parades)</li> </ul>
Program Modifications and Supports for School Personnel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supports provided to school personnel to assist them in helping a student achieve his or her annual goals and to be involved in the general education classroom</li> <li>• Can include things like training on special equipment, adaptations to the general education classroom, or specialized training for the general education teacher</li> </ul>	<p>Yazmina’s teachers receive training on how to use her equipment and information on the support that the TVI can provide (e.g., translating worksheets into braille).</p>

### Determining Appropriate Services and Supports

The statement of services in a student’s IEP must be written clearly so that the school’s commitment of resources is apparent to parents and other members of the IEP team. To develop this statement of services, the IEP team should consider the overarching question: What services and supports does the student need in order to achieve her annual IEP goals? To help them answer these questions, they can use the guiding questions below.

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Statement Elements	Guiding Questions	Considerations
Type of Service	<i>What types</i> of services and supports does the student need?	<p>The services should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Address all of the student’s annual goals (e.g., academic, functional, behavior), including those necessary to participate in extracurricular activities</li> <li>• Include any combination of the four types of services (listed above) necessary to address the student’s needs</li> <li>• Address secondary transition needs for students age 16 and older (earlier for states with younger age requirements)</li> <li>• Employ evidence-based practices whenever feasible</li> </ul>
Frequency	<i>How often</i> should these services and supports be provided?	<p>Combined, the frequency and duration of services should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be sufficiently intensive to help the student achieve her annual goals</li> <li>• Be based on the student’s needs, not on service availability. For example, the number of times per week that a student receives speech-language therapy should be based on the amount of time necessary to help her make adequate progress, not on the number of days that an SLP is currently at the school.</li> </ul>
Duration	<i>How much</i> time per day/week is needed for the services and supports?	
Person Responsible	<i>Who</i> will provide the services and supports?	<p>The person responsible should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have adequate training and expertise to be able to deliver the services</li> <li>• Be able to implement evidence-based practices with fidelity</li> <li>• Be able to collect and analyze data and make data-based decisions</li> </ul>
Environment	<i>Where</i> will the services and supports be provided?	<p>When determining environment, the IEP team should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify placement only after specialized instruction, services, supports, frequency, duration, and person responsible have been determined</li> <li>• Make a concerted effort to place—and maintain—the student in the general education setting, with the use of supplementary aids and services when necessary</li> <li>• Recognize that, for some students, placement in more-restrictive settings may be necessary to ensure an appropriate education</li> <li>• Document the reasons for any decision that results in the student’s services being delivered outside of the general education setting</li> </ul>

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Service Start/End Dates	When will services begin and end?	<p>The services should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Start immediately (e.g., the next day), unless there are extenuating circumstances to be resolved (e.g., transportation)</li><li>• Include an end date within one year from the current IEP meeting. This does not mean that the services stop, however. The end date is often planned for the student's annual review, so the services would be updated according to decisions made at that future meeting.</li></ul>
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When determining the student's services, IDEA also requires that the student's IEP team consider the following special factors and address any that are relevant.

- The use of positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS) if the student's behaviors impede her learning or the learning of others
- The language needs of the student if she has limited English proficiency
- If the student is blind or has a visual disability, provide for instruction in and use of braille, unless the team determines after evaluation that braille is not appropriate
- The student's communication needs, and when the student is deaf or hard of hearing, the student's opportunities to communicate directly with peers and teachers as well as to receive direct instruction in his or her language and communication mode.
- Whether a student needs assistive technology devices and services

### ***Endrew* Implications for Determining Special Education Services**

The student at the center of the *Endrew* case, Drew, had significant behavioral challenges, yet he made progress in the private school, which developed a behavioral intervention plan (BIP). His success points to two key considerations for IEP teams when they begin to determine special education services and supports:

1. The services should address *all* of the student's needs
2. The services should include evidence-based practices whenever possible.

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