BOONE CLINTON JOINT SERVICES

October 2023

Supported Decision-Making Requirements for IEPs

Indiana Code (IC)20-35-6-4, Section 4(a) and (b) requires a case conference committee (CCC) for a student in grades eight through 12 to address decision-making-skills.

During the CCC convening for a student with an IEP or a Section 504 Plan, the committee is required to discuss supported decision-making and other alternative options or programs for the student in lieu of the appointment of a guardian and whether these options are necessary. This conversation regarding supported decision-making must begin in grade eight, or at age 14, whichever comes first. The discussion must take place every year until the student exits high school and is documented within the student's IEP or Section 504 Plan.

In order to facilitate this conversation, local educational agencies (LEAs) may reference the Indiana Department of Education's (IDOE's) Spread the Word: Communicating Choice resource, which is also available within Indiana IEP (IIEP). The discussion that takes place with the student and parent (s) is to be documented within the Create IEP tab in IIEP. A new drop down and text box have been added to this section to facilitate documentation of the discussion.

Take aways:

- The CCC in grades 8-12 must address decision-making skills every year until exit
- At 18, there is a natural transfer of rights.
- Some students continue to need support and there are various levels they can choose.
- Document the discussion on the Create IEP tab

CCC Team has discussed supported decision-making skills and alternatives to appointing a guardian and whether these options are necessary:

Student Age/Grade ✓

Yes, Student is in grade 8 through 12+ or 14 years old (Transition age)

No, Student is not yet in grade 8 or 14 years old

Document the CC

5 Tips to help your teams document Case Conferences

1. <u>Update the present levels every year</u>. Parents can use an outdated present levels to claim that the school did not provide FAPE because the staff did not know the student's present levels on which to base goals.

2. <u>Write the current needs, not future needs</u>. The IEP should address the current needs based on expected outcomes. Although parents may be anticipating what might be needed in the future, IEPs need to address what is needed during the duration of the IEP.

3. <u>Don't name specific classrooms, teachers, or buildings</u>. Staff changes, classrooms change, and location of a program may change.

4. <u>Don't include verbatim statements</u>. Rephrase parent concerns so the statements reflect the parent concerns and do not appear to be an agreement by the school to provide a service. Review teacher comments on student progress and needs and include information relevant to needs and goals, not opinion.

5. <u>Capture major discussion points in the written notes</u>. Record the discussions objectively and fairly. What is written becomes part of the record. Notes do not need to read as a script of the case conference, but should capture discussion points and decisions made by the CCC.

In special education, if it is not written down, there is no evidence it happened.

6 Components that contribute to successful parent partnerships

1. <u>Communication</u>: Be open, honest, and friendly.

2. <u>Professional Competence</u>: Know the best practices and strategies for individual students and share that in communications with parents.

3. <u>Respect</u>: Make positive statements about the student's and parent's strengths.

4. <u>Commitment</u>: Show you care—check-in with parents, make a quick phone call or send a brief email, comment on events you are aware of (ie., birth, death, etc).

5. <u>Equality</u>: Consider the balance of input in long term decision making for a student. Parents will be with the student longer than a teacher.

6. <u>Trust</u>: Treat the child and all members with dignity. Trust is a two-way street.

"Every student can learn, just not on the same day, or the same way."

- George Evans

December 1 count

This year, the count will be Friday, December 1, 2023. In order to count a student for additional special education funding, there must be a current, final IEP. Critical information includes the correct grade level, primary and secondary eligibilities, and LRE.
Also be sure the student's school of legal settlement and educating schools are accurate. This impacts where funding is allocated. Between now and December 1, ensure that information entered into your local student information system is accurate (i.e. Skyward, Harmony, Power School). Joint Services will be working with your local data folks to compare school data with Joint Services data prior to the count to ensure accuracy.

If you had a move in student since last December 1, be sure we have a copy of the move-in IEP. If a student was identified as eligible for special education, be sure we have a copy of the initial IEP, signed by the parent to start services.

Universal Design for Learning

UDL is based on the philosophy that there is no one way in which individuals learn and that lessons, curriculum, and classroom configurations should be designed with the needs of diverse students in mind.

1. **Provide Multiple Means of Representation** – Present content in different ways to give students a variety of options for acquiring information and knowledge.

2. **Provide Multiple Means of Expression** – Ensure students have a variety of ways to demonstrate what they know.

3. **Provide Multiple Means of Engagement** – Create a stimulating learning environment by offering various ways for a student to engage, based on preferences and interests.

Check out The CAST Website for resources and tips to support students in accessing the general curriculum.

Joint Services Annual Trainings

Did you miss the annual trainings for TORs, Administration, or the Referral and Evaluation process?

The presentations are posted on the Joint Services website.

Please reach out if you have questions or would like to review the information.

Alternate Diploma

In May 2021, the Indiana State Board of Education approved a proposed rule amendment for 511 IAC 6-7.1 (Graduation Requirements) to establish an Alternate Diploma. The Alternate Diploma is standards-based and will be available to students with significant cognitive disabilities who are participating in the alternate assessments and satisfy graduation requirements. The first students able to take advantage of the Alternate Diploma will be the 2022-2023 cohort (Class of 2023).

Check out the Alternate Diploma FAQ for more details.

I AM Participation Requirements

IDOE Participation Guidance and Flowchart (**1% of the total corporation enrollment**)

- Review of student records indicates a disability that **significantly** impacts intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior. Adaptive behavior is defined as essential for someone to live independently and to function safely in daily life.

- The student requires extensive, repeated, individualized instruction and support that is not of a temporary nature.

- The student uses substantially adapted materials and individualized methods of accessing information in alternative ways to acquire, maintain, generalize, demonstrate and transfer skills across multiple settings.

- Goals listed in the IEP for this student are linked to the enrolled grade level Indiana Content Connectors (Alternative Achievement Standards).

No Mode of Communication guidance

Parent Survey (Indicator 8)

As part of the Indiana Department of Education's (IDOE's) integrated monitoring system, a parent survey is collected to determine the percentage of parents who report that the local educational agency (LEA) facilitated parent involvement (Indicator 8). LEAs are encouraged to provide parents the survey at least once each school year, for example at the annual case review. The parent letter and the survey are available at the links below.

Parent Letter: Burmese, English, and Spanish

Online Survey: Burmese, English, and Spanish

Paper Survey: Burmese, English, and Spanish

Gaining Access to a student in IIEP

In order to assign a student to a caseload, there are several steps that must be completed prior to JS assigning students to caseloads.

Start the process early so we can assign the student to your caseload ASAP. A **New Student Move In Form** lets us know which students to watch for and submit file transfer requests.

1. The student must enroll in the school and be accurately entered into the local student information system (i.e., Harmony, Power School, Sky Ward).

2. SIS data goes to DEX (IDOE), then PCG uploads the imported student information into IIEP.

3. The student is viewable in IIEP. This is generally 24-48 hours after SIS data is submitted to DEX.

4. Joint Services will request a file transfer from the previous corporation (if they use IIEP). This will occur the same evening the previous corporation accepts the request.

5. The student can be assigned to a TOR and relevant team members.

Remember: Move-in Case Conferences must be held within <u>10 instructional</u> days of enrollment. If you do not have access to the file in IIEP, you can complete a paper version (Bulky IEP).

Any IEP not provided at the conference, must be <u>received by the parent</u> within 10 <u>business </u>days (511 IAC 7-42-6(i)).

All IEPs must be implemented as written (511 IAC 7-42-8(b)).

IEP Development reminders

<u>Use Data:</u> Students coming from other districts will have information from previous evaluations and IEPs within Indiana IEP (IIEP). Check the Documents section for previous years' IEPs and evaluation reports.

<u>Review Previous Goals:</u> Ensure that annual goals are skill-based and measurable. Transition IEPs must have postsecondary goals written as "I" statements.

<u>Review Accommodations:</u> Ensure that classroom and testing accommodations are up-to-date and aligned with the student's needs.

<u>Prioritize the "I" in IEP:</u> Ensure the individualized needs of the student and/or their family are addressed in the development process.

For additional questions or topics for future digests, contact

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