

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

History

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is a federal law passed in 1975, and reauthorized in 2005, which mandates that all eligible children with disabilities receive a free and appropriate education. IDEA provides funds to assist states in the education of students with disabilities, and requires that these students receive an Individualized Education Program (IEP) based on their unique needs in the least restrictive environment possible. It also provides guidelines for providing related services and outlines due process procedures.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act:

- Raises expectations for children with disabilities by requiring the IEP goals to relate more clearly to regular classroom curriculum.
- Increases parental involvement by requiring their inclusion in eligibility and placement decision,
- Includes children with disabilities in assessments, performance goals, and reports to the public.
- Ensures that regular education teachers are involved in planning and assessing student progress,
- Supports quality professional development for all personnel involved in educating students with disabilities.