

## Essential Special Education Resources

### Purpose

This list is designed to provide a basic suite of resources that give an overview of the history, process, and essential elements of special education.

### Understanding Special Education History and State Laws

- [Introduction to Federal and State Laws Impacting Students With Disabilities](#)  
This course is part of a series covering the legal foundations of laws supporting students with disabilities. Those who enroll in this interactive course will be able to do the following:
  - Explain the difference between civil rights laws and funding laws.
  - Identify where the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, or IDEA, fits within the continuum of federal laws.
  - Identify other federal laws that have direct implications for students with disabilities.
  - Understand how state laws may expand federal laws impacting students with disabilities.
- WrightsLaw
  - [The History of Special Education Law in the United States](#)
- Brooks Publishing
  - [What Every Educator Should Know About Special Education Law](#)

### Special Education Definition

- [Special Education Definition \(AOE\) - Video](#)
- [Special Education Definition Slidedeck](#)
- Acronyms
  - (AOE) [Acronyms](#)
  - (Progress Center) [Disability and Special Education Acronyms](#)

### The Special Education Process

- [U.S. Department of Education: A Guide to the Individualized Education Program / The Basic Special Education Process Under IDEA](#)
  - Step 1. Child is identified as possibly needing special education and related services.

### Contact Information:

If you have questions about this document or would like additional information, please contact:

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- Step 2. Child is evaluated.
- Step 3. Eligibility is decided.
- Step 4. Child is found eligible for services.
- Step 5. IEP meeting is scheduled.
- Step 6. IEP meeting is held and the IEP is written.
- Step 7. Services are provided.
- Step 8. Progress is measured and reported to parents.
- Step 9. IEP is reviewed.
- Step 10. Child is reevaluated.

At least every three years the child must be reevaluated. This evaluation is often called a “triennial.” Its purpose is to find out if the child continues to be a “child with a disability,” as defined by IDEA, and what the child’s educational needs are. However, the child must be reevaluated more often if conditions warrant or if the child’s parent or teacher asks for a reevaluation.

- IRIS Center: [10 Basic Steps in Special Education](#)  
Here is the process in 10 basic steps. Once you have the big picture of the process, it’s easier to understand the many details under each step.
- [The Pre-Referral Process: Procedures for Supporting Students with Academic and Behavioral Concerns](#)  
This module highlights the benefits of the pre-referral process—a preventative approach that can eliminate inappropriate referrals to special education—and outlines the six stages most commonly involved in its implementation.

### **The Individualized Education Program (IEP)**

- IRIS Center: [Specifying Related Services in the IEP](#)
- [IEPs: Developing High-Quality Individualized Education Programs](#)  
This module details the process of developing high-quality individualized education programs (IEPs) for students with disabilities. The module discusses the requirements for IEPs as outlined in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) with implications of the Supreme Court’s ruling in *Endrew F. v. Douglas County School District*.
- [IEPs: How Administrators Can Support the Development and Implementation of High-Quality IEPs](#)  
Specifically designed with school administrators in mind, this module offers guidance on how to support and facilitate the development and implementation of high-quality IEPs, including the monitoring of student progress
- Progress Center: [IEP TIP SHEET SERIES](#)
  - [IEP TIPS SHEET- Specially Designed Instruction](#).  
This tip sheet introduces and briefly defines what is needed for the statement of special education defined as specially designed instruction, or SDI and provides tips for implementation.

- [IDEA and the IEP: From Compliance to PROGRESS](#)  
This course provides an overview of the seven required components of the individualized education program (IEP) as outlined in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The course explains how the required components of an IEP are interconnected and critically important for developing high-quality educational programming for students with disabilities, provides tips for developing IEPs that promote progress, and shares resources to learn more.
- [The IEP Team: Who's Who and Other Considerations](#)  
This course provides a review of the team members responsible for collaboratively developing the students individualized education program (IEP) as outlined in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and explains their roles on the IEP Team. This module also reviews some additional considerations for team membership and engagement in the IEP development process.
- IRIS Center: [Specifying Related Services in the IEP](#)
- [Related Services: Common Supports for Students with Disabilities](#)  
This module offers a description of related services and an overview of the benefits they provide to students with disabilities in the general education classroom. It highlights five commonly used related services (Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Speech-Language Pathology Services, Social Work Services, and Psychological Services) and briefly highlights many of the other related services as identified through IDEA '04

### **Access / Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)**

- [Accessing the General Education Curriculum: Inclusion Considerations for Students with Disabilities](#)  
This module highlights classroom considerations that promote access to the general education curriculum for students with disabilities
- IRIS Center: [Least Restrictive Environment \(LRE\) - information Brief](#)

### **Instruction for Students with Disabilities**

- [Intensifying Instruction: What Teachers Need to Know](#)  
This course focuses on reviewing and intensifying instruction. It is part of a series covering instructional practices. These practices were identified through an extensive, systematic meta-analysis\* of the high-leverage practices for students with disabilities. Those who enroll in this interactive course will be able to do the following:
  - Identify when to intensify instruction or intervention to support the development and implementation of specially designed instruction.
  - Describe some components of intensifying instruction by adapting dosage, alignment, and transfer.

- [Delivering Instruction: What Teachers Need to Know](#)  
This course focuses on delivering instruction. It is part of a series covering instructional practices. These practices were identified through an extensive, systematic meta-analysis\* of the high-leverage practices for students with disabilities. Those who enroll in this interactive course will be able to do the following:
  - Define explicit instruction.
  - Describe how to model, provide guided and independent practice opportunities, and use supporting practices within modeling and practice.
- [Providing Instructional Supports: Facilitating Mastery of New Skills](#)  
This module explores the importance of scaffolding and modeling for students as they learn new skills and strategies.
- [Evidence-Based Practices \(3 Parts\)](#)  
These modules discuss the importance of identifying and selecting evidence-based practices.
- [Assistive Technology: An Overview](#)  
This module offers an overview of assistive technology (AT) with a focus on students with high-incidence disabilities such as learning disabilities and ADHD. It explores the consideration process, implementation, and evaluation of AT for these students.

### **Agency of Education Resources**

- [Guidance documents - Special Education Rules Resource Page](#)
- [VT Multi-tiered Systems of Support \(VTmtss\) tools](#)
- [Educational Support Team \(EST\) tools](#)
- [Parent, Family and Community Engagement](#) - tool kit and resources
- [K-12 Evaluation Implementation Guide](#) focuses on the Evaluation Process for school-aged students ages six through 21.