Understanding Special Education

GAEL: Aspiring Leaders
Winter GAEL January 28, 2017
True or False

- A psychological evaluation is the only evaluation necessary to determine eligibility for special education.
False
Comprehensive Evaluation

- Provides sufficient data to determine whether the student is a student with a disability
- Documents how the disability affects the student’s academic or behavioral performance in school
- Provides appropriate information for the development of an IEP, if eligible
- Conducted by a multidisciplinary evaluation team
True or False

- IDEA requires school staff to consider the results of independent evaluations presented by parents only if the information is comparable to the district’s evaluation.
False
Consideration of Independent Evaluation Information

- IDEA requires consideration of independent evaluations presented by parents
- IDEA does not require that evaluator’s recommendations be written into student’s IEP or programming for child
- Must show through documentation that IEP team considered the results
True or False

- IDEA requires districts to share all evaluation data with parents prior to an eligibility and/or IEP meeting.
False
Evaluation Reports

- IDEA does NOT require that parents be provided with all evaluation reports prior to an Eligibility and/or IEP meeting.
- Parents may be more knowledgeable if they have some evaluation information in advance.
True or False

● At a minimum, the following school personnel are mandatory members of an IEP team meeting:
  ◦ Not less than 1 regular education teacher of the student
  ◦ Not less than 1 special education teacher of the student or if appropriate, 1 special education service provider
  ◦ LEA representative
True
IEP Mandatory Participants

- At a minimum, the following school personnel are mandatory members of an IEP team meeting:
  - Not less than 1 regular education teacher of the student
  - Not less than 1 special education teacher of the student or if appropriate, 1 special education service provider
  - LEA representative
Other Required Members Under Certain Circumstances

- Someone qualified to interpret test results (may be one of other persons already required)
- Others who have knowledge of student or special expertise (at discretion of parent or district)
- The child/student
- Representative of any agency that is likely to provide or pay for transition services (with parent or student consent)
True or False

- An LEA representative must be knowledgeable of specialized instruction and special education resources.
True
LEA Representative Requirements

- Qualified to provide or supervise the provision of specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of the child
- Knows about the general education curriculum
- Know about the availability of resources in the district
True or False

- Excusal procedures are required when any member of the IEP cannot attend or must leave prior to the completion of the meeting.
False
Excusal Procedures

- Excusal procedures apply to required IEP team members only
- Two circumstances may allow a required member to be excused if district and parent agree
  - Members area of curriculum or related services is NOT being changed or discussed
  - Members area of curriculum or related services is being discussed and relevant written input to the IEP team is provided prior to the meeting
True or False

- Parents can only bring other individuals to an IEP meeting after district approval.
False
Parents Inviting Others to IEP Team Meeting

- Parents can invite other individuals who have knowledge of the child or special expertise.
True or False

- School personnel can come to an IEP meeting with a draft IEP developed prior to the meeting.
True
Draft IEPs

- Draft IEPs are acceptable
- It must be clear to parents and all team members that the plan is a draft and all decisions will be made in the meeting
- Changes and additions should be made in the meeting
- Services should NOT be indicated on the draft
True or False

The IEP is required to contain educational goals and objectives, identify specific teachers, school, curriculum and methodology.
False
IEP Content

- Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance
  - Initial or most recent evaluation
  - Results of district and/or statewide assessments
  - Strengths
  - Needs
  - Parental Concerns
  - Impact of disability on involvement and progress in general education curriculum
IEP Content

- Consideration of special considerations
  - Behavior
  - Limited English Proficiency
  - Visual Impairments
  - Communication Needs
  - Assistive Technology
  - Alternative Format Instructional Materials

If any needs identified in these areas, supports and/or services must be provided (BIP)
IEP Content

● Transition Service Plan
● Annual Goals
● Short Term Objectives/Benchmarks (If participating GAA)
● Student Supports
  ◦ Instructional accommodations
  ◦ Classroom testing accommodations
  ◦ Supplemental aids and services
  ◦ Supports for district personnel
IEP Contents

- Assessment (Define participation in grade level, modified or alternative assessments)
- Placement Options (Service not PLACE)
- Extended School Year
- Related Services
IEP Contents

- IDEA does NOT require specific information regarding
  - Teachers
  - Schools
  - Methodology
  - Curriculum
True or False

- Decision making in IEP meetings is not a “voting” process.
True
IEP Team Decision Making

- IEP Team must reach consensus on the development of the IEP
- IEP decisions are NOT based on a vote of team members
True or False

- When determining the placement (special education services) for students currently in a “separate class” (Access) the LRE discussion should begin with the current placement.
False
Placement/Continuum of Services

- IEP team begins by considering how the goals can be met in the general education environment
- Full Continuum of Placements
  - Support in General Education settings
    - Support Services
    - Direct Special Education Services
Placement/Continuum of Services

- Full Continuum of Services (continued)
  - Other Placement Options
    - Special education separate classes
    - Special schools
    - Private Schools
    - Home Instruction
    - Hospitals
    - Residential Services
True or False

- The determination of special education services is based on the amount of “help” the student needs.
False
Placement - Services

- Determination of special education services is based on
  - Specially designed instructional needs, and time required to provide
True or False

- IEP recommendations can be made based upon the availability of services at the school.
False
IEP Recommendations

● Must be determined based on the unique needs of the student as defined in the present level of academic and functional performance
True or False

- The costs involved in the provision of programs and services should be considered in the IEP decision making process.
False
True or False

- Special education services can be specified as “as needed” on the IEP.
False
Services Specification

- Amount of services must be set forth in the IEP in a manner that is specific enough for parents to have a CLEAR understanding of the level of commitment of services on the part of the district.
True or False

- Extended School Year Services (ESY) must be considered twice a year and are provided during the summer.
False
Extended School Year Services

- Must be considered annually
- May be provided during summer, after school, during breaks, weekends, etc.
- Specific factors must be considered in making the determination for ESY
- Decision is connected to the IEP goals that need extended instruction
True or False

- Behavior intervention plans are required for any student with an IEP who exhibits behaviors that impede his/her learning or that of others.
True
Behavior Intervention Plans

- IDEA requires that IEP consider the following for any student exhibiting behaviors that impede his/her learning or the learning of others
  - Strategies including positive behavioral interventions and supports to address the behavior
  - ANY student with a disability, NOT just EBD students
True or False

- A manifestation review is required only when students are expelled.
False
Manifestation Review

- Suspensions beyond 10 days are considered a “change in placement” and require a Manifestation Review.
- Decision DOES NOT terminate the right of the student to receive FAPE.
- Manifestation Review must answer the following:
  - Was the behavior caused by or have a direct and substantial relationship to the student’s disability?
  - Was the behavior a direct result of the system’s failure to implement the IEP?
True or False

- Transition service plans for SWD must be developed and updated annually prior to entering 9th grade or reaching age 16.
Transition Service Plan

- Required component of the IEP for SWD
- Must be developed and updated annually prior to entering 9th grade or reaching age 16.
True or False

- There are no requirements related to transition for SWD prior to the graduation of the student.
False
Summary of Performance

- Upon termination of a student’s eligibility due to graduation, a Summary of Performance (SOP) must be completed.
- Purpose of SOP: provide strategies for successful transition with needed supports.
- SOP must include summaries of:
  - Academic achievements
  - Functional performance
  - Recommendations on how to assist student in meeting post-secondary goals.
True or False

- Providing effective special education services and complying to IDEA is an easy task.
False
Easy is overrated!

- Thank you for the following...
  - Your belief that all students can and will succeed with appropriate instruction and accommodations
  - Your willingness to be creative in meeting the unique needs of SWDs
  - Your willingness to lead staff and parents in thinking differently and having high expectations for ALL students
  - Your commitment to the success of ALL students
Contact me at any time

Zabrina Cannady
Zabrina.Cannady@hcbe.net
478.447.4624
Houston County School District