



PARTNERING FOR SUCCESS

Navigating the Special Education Journey in Wyoming

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THE FOUNDATION OF YOUR RIGHTS

IDEA (Federal Law)

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act guarantees a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). It mandates that parents serve as meaningful partners in all educational decisions.

Wyoming Chapter 7

Specific state rules defining strict timelines and procedures. These regulations ensure federal IDEA protections are implemented consistently across every Wyoming school district and child development center.



CHILD FIND: THE FIRST STEP

- **A Legal Obligation:** Schools must proactively identify, locate, and evaluate all children (birth to 21) suspected of having a disability.
- **A Duty to Search:** This applies to all children, including those in private schools, homeschooled, or highly mobile (homeless or migrant).
- **Don't Wait:** While schools are required to look, parents can initiate a formal referral anytime they have concerns about their child's progress.



THE SPECIAL EDUCATION ROADMAP

Parents provide essential expertise and consent at every stage of this roadmap.



REFERRAL & INFORMED CONSENT

Starting the Process

A referral is a formal request for an evaluation. It can be initiated by parents, teachers, or school staff.

- Written requests are recommended to establish exact timelines.
- The district must provide "Prior Written Notice" when agreeing or refusing to evaluate.

The Power of Consent

The school cannot test your child without your written permission. You have the right to be fully informed about exactly what testing will look like before signing.



THE EVALUATION CLOCK

60

Calendar Days

The Wyoming Standard

From the date you sign the consent form, the school has exactly 60 calendar days to complete all evaluations and meet to determine eligibility.

Your Insight is Crucial:

You provide the "Home View"—sharing history and social-behavioral strengths that formal assessments might miss.



DEVELOPING THE PLAN (IEP)

SMART Goals

Goals must be measurable and based on your child's baseline data. You, as part of the team, will help define what success looks like.

Accommodations

Deciding on tools and changes in how your child learns to ensure they have equitable access to learning.

Services

The team determines the exact minutes and location of specialized instruction and related services required.



LRE: INCLUSION MATTERS

- **General Education First:** Children with disabilities must be educated with their nondisabled peers to the maximum extent appropriate.
- **Supplemental Support:** Removal to separate classes occurs only if goals cannot be met in the regular class with extra help and support.
- **Holistic Growth:** LRE supports academic achievement and vital social-behavioral development within the school community.



MONITORING SUCCESS

Annual Review

At least once every 12 months, the team meets to review progress, assess needs, and write a new plan based on current data.

Progress Reports

Parents must receive updates as often as regular report cards, utilizing concrete data to show how the child is meeting goals.

Re-Evaluation (Every 3 Years)

The team pauses to determine if new testing is needed to confirm continued eligibility.



YOUR PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS

Your Legal Protection

The Procedural Safeguards notice explains your rights under IDEA. It acts as your legal safety net throughout the special education process.

- Provided at least annually, upon initial referral, or upon request.
- Guarantees your right to review all of your child's educational records.

Core Rights Included

- **Prior Written Notice:** Explanation before a district changes or refuses to change services.
- **Informed Consent:** Permission required before evaluations and placement.
- **Dispute Resolution:** Outlines steps for state complaints, mediation, and due process.



WHEN WE DISAGREE

Disagreements are part of the process. You have formal tools to resolve them:

- **Facilitated IEP:** A neutral facilitator guides the meeting to ensure collaborative communication.
- **Independent Evaluation (IEE):** Request a 2nd opinion from an outside expert at district expense.
- **Mediation:** A neutral third party assists the team in finding common ground.



WYOMING ELIGIBILITY CATEGORIES

CATEGORY GROUPINGS	BRIEF OVERVIEW
Developmental & Cognitive	Autism Spectrum Disorder, Developmental Delay (Ages 3-9), Emotional Disability, Cognitive Disability, and Multiple Disabilities.
Sensory & Learning	Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD), Speech/Language, Hearing, Visual Impairments, and deaf/blindness.
Health & Physical	Other Health Impairment (OHI/ADHD), Traumatic Brain Injury, and Orthopedic Impairments.

Visit the WDE resources for the complete list of 13 categories and state criteria.



STREAMLINED IEP JOURNEY

1. Prep

Organize files, define vision, and list concerns. Request drafts 5 days early.

2. Engage

Clarify jargon, review data, vet SMART goals, and take detailed notes.

3. Finalize

Match final to notes, sign copies, send summary, and track progress reports.



STEP 1: BEFORE THE MEETING SUGGESTIONS

Preparation is Power

- Create and organize a binder
- Request drafts 3-5 days early
- Write your "Parent Vision"
- List specific concerns
- Draft accommodations
- RSVP and invite support



STEP 2: DURING THE MEETING SUGGESTIONS

Active Advocacy

- Bring your materials
- Ask for jargon clarification
- Focus on PLAAFP data
- Verify SMART goals
- Review service minutes
- Take document home to sign



STEP 3: AFTER THE MEETING SUGGESTIONS

Closing the Loop

- Check final against notes
- Sign and return consent
- File your signed copy
- Send a thank you email summary



STEP 4: ONGOING SUPPORT SUGGESTIONS

Stay Connected

- Track progress reports
- Keep a communication log
- Check in with your child
- Request meeting if needed



SUMMARY: THE SPECIAL EDUCATION JOURNEY

1. Legal Foundations

IDEA: Federal mandate for Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE).

Chapter 7: Wyoming-specific regulations ensuring consistent implementation and strict timelines.

2. The Roadmap

From Child Find to IEP Progress, the process is a structured legal journey.

Requires active monitoring, evaluation, and documentation at every milestone.

3. Your Partnership

Parents are Meaningful Partners. Your expertise and Informed Consent are mandatory.

Collaboration between families and schools is the key to student success.



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

**WDE Special
Education Division**



**Wyoming Chapter 7
Rules**



IDEA (Federal Law)



**Wyoming Parent
information Center**

