



UNDERSTANDING THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AN IEP AND A 504 PLAN

Many families ask about the difference between an IEP and a 504 Plan. Both are designed to support students with disabilities in school, but they provide different types of support. This handout explains the key differences in a clear and simple way for Florida families.

WHAT IS AN IEP?

IEP stands for Individualized Education Program. It is governed by the federal law IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act).

An IEP provides:

- Specialized instruction (not just accommodations)
- Measurable annual goals
- Related services (speech, occupational therapy, physical therapy, counseling)
- Behavior Intervention Plans (when needed)
- Transition planning beginning at age 14 in Florida

WHAT IS A 504 PLAN?

A 504 Plan is governed by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (a civil rights law). It ensures students with disabilities have equal access to education.

A 504 Plan provides:

- Classroom accommodations
- Extended time on tests
- Preferential seating
- Health plans (asthma, diabetes, etc.)
- Behavioral accommodations

QUICK COMPARISON

Feature	IEP	504 Plan
Specialized Instruction	Yes	No
Accommodations	Yes	Yes
Annual Goals Required	Yes	No
Formal Evaluation Required	Comprehensive Evaluation	Less Formal Review
Law	IDEA	Section 504

- IEP provides specialized instruction. 504 Plan provides accommodations only.
- IEP requires measurable annual goals. 504 Plan does not require annual academic goals.



- IEP requires a comprehensive evaluation. 504 Plan requires documentation of a qualifying condition.
- IEP is governed by IDEA. 504 Plan is governed by Section 504.

If you have questions about your child's school support or need guidance understanding your options, please speak with your BCBA or contact our administrative team.

We are here to support your family.

Together, we make it better.