

The IEP Process: Access to Education K-12

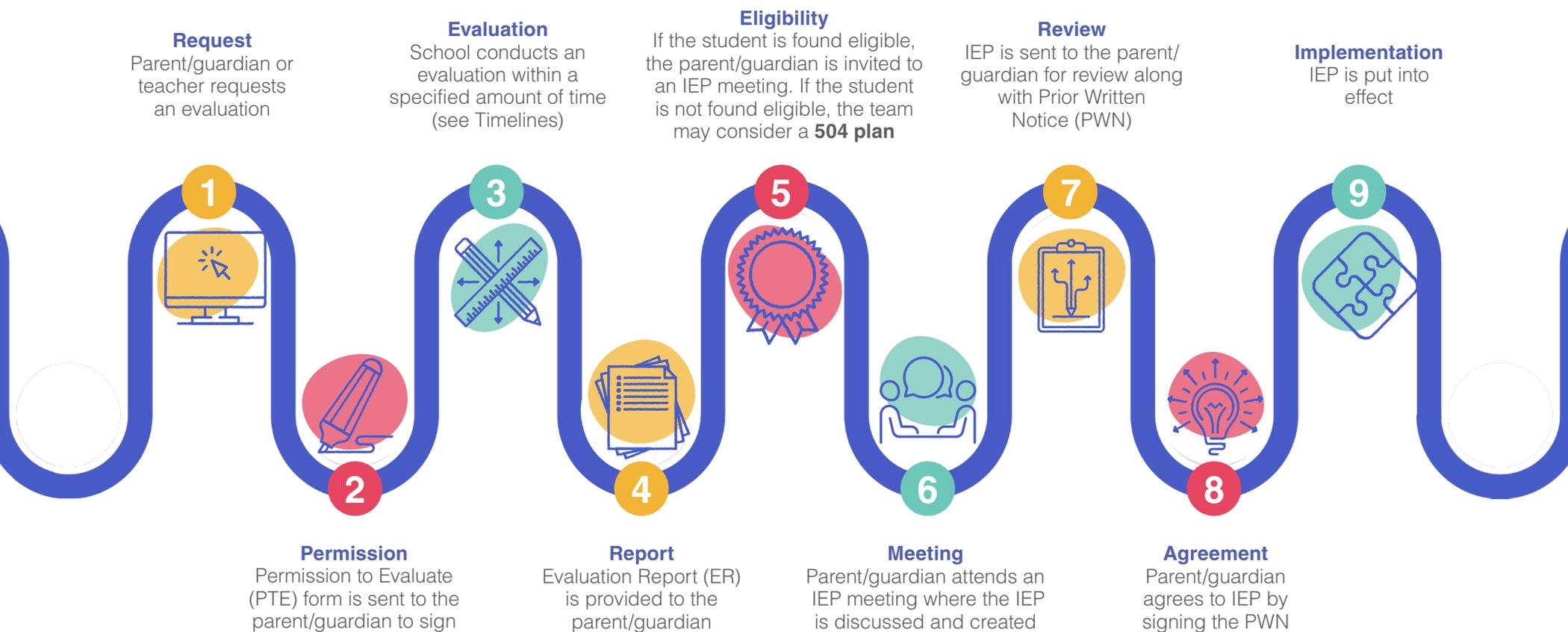


504 Plan

A 504 plan is a formal outline of accommodations a school will provide to allow a student to learn alongside their peers. A 504 plan is governed by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. It is different from an IEP in that it is not part of special education and does not outline individualized instruction. Accommodations outlined in a 504 plan might include changes to the environment or changes to how curriculum is presented. A 504 plan might also include related services, such as physical therapy. Students who do not qualify for services under the definition of special education but still need accommodations to access their education might be provided with a 504 plan.

Individualized Education Plan (IEP)

An IEP is a written document outlining a child's current developmental levels, measurable goals for the current school year, and specific teaching strategies to assist the child in reaching those goals. The IEP also specifies the least restrictive environment (LRE) for the child as determined by the IEP team. The IEP is a legal document under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and should ultimately provide a free and appropriate public education (FAPE). It is a fluid document that is written and revised as appropriate by the IEP team, which always includes the child's parents or guardians.



Timelines: Access to Education K-12*



Evaluation Report: 60 Days	IEP Meeting: 30 Days	Agreement: 10 - 14 Days	Reevaluation: ≤3 Years
<p>Timelines vary by state, but in general, schools have 60 days to complete the ER from the date the PTE is received.</p>	<p>Once the ER is issued to the parent/guardian and the student is found eligible for services, an IEP meeting should be held within 30 days.</p>	<p>After the IEP meeting is held, the parent/guardian typically has 10-14 days to respond to the PWN before the IEP goes into effect.</p>	<p>All students with an IEP must be reevaluated at least every three years. The IEP team may determine that a reevaluation is necessary sooner. At a minimum, the IEP team must meet on an annual basis to review the student's IEP and make any necessary changes. The IEP is a living document, though, and it can be reviewed and revised as needed throughout the year.</p>

Access to Education Workshop

Find more information and resources about 504 plans and IEPs in the MDA Access Workshop called Access to Education: K-12. This and more educational workshops are available on demand at mda.org/accessworkshops.

*Timelines vary by state.