

Special Education Terms and Definitions

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is the federal law that supports special education and related service programming for individuals with disabilities. IDEA ensures that all children with disabilities are entitled to a free appropriate public education to meet their unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment, and independent living.

Free and appropriate public education (FAPE) refers to the legal requirement that public schools provide eligible kids with disabilities the support and services they need (provided in general education settings as much as possible).

Accommodations: Supports and services provided to help a student access the general education curriculum and demonstrate learning (Examples include, but are not limited to Time, Setting, Level of Support, Redecue Response Efforts, Visuals Schedules).

Accommodations don't always have to be formalized through an IEP or 504 plan. *Teachers can provide informal accommodations.*

Modifications for students with disabilities are changes in what a student is expected to learn and demonstrate.

Special education (SPED) is a legal term that refers to instruction specially designed to meet the unique needs of a child with disabilities. Special Education is a *service* and not a *place*.

Least restrictive environment (LRE) is part of IDEA. It states that public schools must educate kids with disabilities in a general education setting as much as possible.

Co Teaching – two teachers working together with groups of students; sharing in planning, organization, delievery, and assessment of instruction, as well as the physical space (Bacharach, Heck & Dank, 2004) There are several models, including, but not limited to Parallel Teaching, One teaches, One Assists, Station Teaching, etc ...

Inclusion vs. Mainstream- Inclusion is a term used to describe the placement of special education students in general edcuation classes for all or nearly all of the school day, providing opportunities for students with disabilities to learn along with their non-disabled peers; mainstreaming is often associated with sending a student from a special education class to a general education class for specified periods.