

NEW CHANGES TO THE IEP PROCESS

STRONGER VOICE. GREATER ACCESS. TRUE PARTNERSHIP.

Rhode Island law is strengthening the role of families in the Individualized Education Program (IEP) process. While families have always been equal members of the IEP team, these changes strengthen your voice, your access to information, and your ability to inform decisions about your child's education.



WHAT'S NEW FOR FAMILIES

- Once you receive your child's proposed IEP, you have 10 school days to tell the school in writing whether you accept or reject it. If you reject the proposed IEP, then the school cannot move forward with the proposed changes, and the existing IEP will remain in place until you and the school reach consensus.
- Your written consent is required before making any changes to your child's existing IEP. If you fail to respond within 10 school days, then the school can move forward with the changes.
- If a school believes that a parent's refusal to consent to a change to the IEP results in the child being denied a free and appropriate public education, then the school can initiate mediation or due process proceedings.
- You will receive any documents that are to be discussed at an IEP meeting at least three calendar days before the meeting. This includes IEP documents, evaluation reports, and proposed goals (if available), and the materials must be provided in your preferred language. You may waive this right if documents are not yet available, or if there is an urgent need to meet.

This gives families time to review the information, prepare questions, and be informed members of the IEP team.
- Schools now have 63 calendar days (instead of 60) to complete evaluations and hold evaluation meetings to review the reports.
- You can visit or observe proposed placements or programs to make informed decisions. Schools may limit observations for safety or privacy reasons. Schools that limit observations must explain why, and must at least allow a visit when no students are present.

This helps families be informed IEP team members and equal decision-making partners.

WHAT THIS MEANS



These Changes:

- Promote transparency and trust
- Strengthen collaboration between families and schools
- Ensure families can provide meaningful parent input



If You Disagree:

- If you disagree with a proposed IEP in writing within 10 school days, then your child's existing IEP remains in place until you and the school find agreement.
- You can request a meeting to discuss your concerns. You can do this by emailing the case manager and your IEP team.
- The IEP process continues collaboratively through:
 - IEP team meetings,
 - Facilitated IEP meetings,
 - Mediation, and/or
 - Due Process.



Tips for Families:

- Review documents ahead of time and write down questions
- Ask for explanations in plain language
- Requests can be made to observe any new placement
- Email the IEP team and case manager if you disagree or need more time
- Keep copies of all documents and communications



Remember!

- You know your child best.
- These changes ensure that your knowledge, insights, and priorities continue to inform every IEP decision.
- Strong collaborative partnerships between families and schools create the best outcomes for students.

RIPIN is Here to Help!

Please call us at **(401)270-0101 ext. 1025/1026** with any questions.

