IEP PAPERWORK
CHUNK IT INTO MANAGEABLE PIECES

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Provide Supports to Yourself: Use the Strategies We Teach Our Students

IEP paperwork is something that many special educators dread. The anxiety and worry about how much time it will take, whether they will have all the needed data, whether the IEP will meet the state and district requirements, etc. causes some of us to put off completing the IEP paperwork until right before the deadline.

Sound familiar? Do some of our special education students become overwhelmed when they have a big project or a test? We know exactly what to do to help our students. We teach them how to plan their study time, chunk the material, set interim due dates, and how to use strategies to memorize the material.

We can make IEP paperwork more manageable for ourselves by utilizing similar accommodations and strategies.

> **RESOURCE LINKS:**
> ★ **IEP Meeting Tracker**
> ★ **IEP Goal Progress Sheet**
> ★ **Gen Ed Teacher Report**

Enter Due Dates in Your Calendar

Save yourself anxiety and stress by taking the time to enter IEPs and evaluations into your calendar for the entire school year. Yes, there will be emergency meetings, but having the rest planned out will make that emergency meeting less stressful, too.

The due date you enter first should be at least four weeks before the IEP/Evaluation Due Date. This is when you need to start setting up the meeting with the parents and the IEP team. If your building has designated days for IEP/Evaluation meetings, go ahead and schedule the IEP/Evaluation meeting on a date that is at least a week prior to the due date.

Track Your Progress

Utilize a form or spreadsheet to keep track of each step that you complete during the IEP development process. This is especially helpful when you are working on

several IEPs at once. Click on the IEP Meeting Tracker link in the brown box on the right for an example. ⟶

Note that the example Google Doc can be changed to fit your personalized steps for IEP preparation in your building.

Designate Time for IEP Paperwork Each Week

You have all heard that the way to make sure that you fit exercise or date night into your schedule is to put it in your calendar. Do the same with the work associated with IEPs. Avoid staying up late the night before an IEP meeting and block out one or two times each week to complete IEP paperwork.

IEP Data Collection

It is difficult to develop an appropriate IEP for a student without data.   IEP development will take a lot longer if you do not have data for present levels, goals, and services. Waiting until a few days before an IEP to collect data can also be problematic if the student is absent, there are schedule changes, or something else is added to your plate. Evaluate students' progress toward IEP Goals every 1-3 weeks to ensure that you have good data for progress reports and IEP development.

Special Education Classroom Data

In addition to designating time to complete IEP paperwork in your schedule each week, also plan time for students to complete activities related to their IEP Goals.

Use a a fancy-schmancy IEP Goal Progress sheet if fancy makes you happy. If not, use one that gets the job done. An example of an IEP Goal Progress sheet that gets the job done is in the box below.

IEP Goal Progress Google Sheet

General Education Classroom Data

Need something more specific than "She is a joy to have in class!",

General Education Classroom Data - continued

"He needs to study more for tests.", or "She is showing signs of improvement."? In order to obtain the data you need for progress reports or IEP development, take the time to develop a teacher report form that asks specific questions. It is also better if it is simple for the general education teacher to complete. The most important step is to send out the teacher report form to the teachers in advance.

Click on the link in the box below to see an example of a Google Form teacher report. A Google Form can be especially useful for middle school and high school students who have several different teachers. Make a copy of the form for each student and set it up to create a spreadsheet of the responses. Then instead of searching through all your emails or waiting for the forms to appear in your mailbox, you can view all the response at once in the spreadsheet.

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<u>General Education Teacher Report Form</u>

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Remember Why IEP Paperwork is Important

The IEP is what ensures that your student will be provided what is needed to make gains in the curriculum. The students and parents rely on you to help develop an IEP that meets the student's unique needs.

Remember how important the IEP is to the student's goals when you start to procrastinate completing IEP tasks.
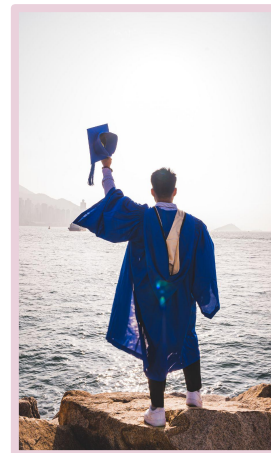
Reward Yourself!

Set short term goals for yourself related to IEP paperwork. Reward yourself after completing an IEP, conducting three IEP meetings in a day, or making it through a difficult meeting. Take the time to do something you enjoy or buy yourself a treat.