



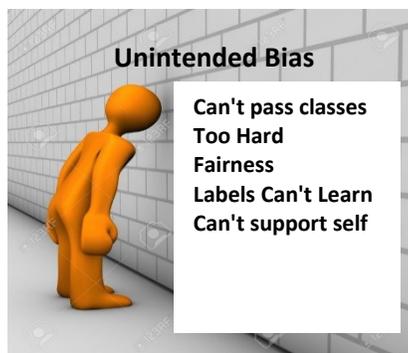
The Diploma and The Power of the IEP

How to advocate for a diploma for youth with disabilities Suggestions for Preparing and Planning to Achieve the High School Diploma

The IEP

Postsecondary Goals
Assessment
Course of Study
Annual Goals
PERSON CENTERED PLANS

The High School Diploma is a ticket to employment and post-secondary education and training. Most students with IEPs can earn a diploma. What are the challenges they face? **Expectations**



How to Use the IEP to Advocate for Students with IEPs who can and should earn a diploma

1. Assessment:

- Does the assessment process focus on attributes or deficits?
- Does the assessment include career interests, skills and traits that motivate the youth to create of a personal plan?
- Does the student research potential career choices and identify education/training needs-defines a career pathway

2. Post-Secondary Goals:

- Does the student list their post-secondary employment and education goals?
- Is career information referenced to align post-secondary education and training goals to career preparation?
- Are all options considered - including community college, industry certification, apprenticeships-considered?

3. Course of Study:

- Does the course of study list classes to achieve the high school diploma? Are dual enrollment courses encouraged?
- If necessary, are waivers (e.g. math, pe) identified that may allow students to achieve the diploma?
- Are all diploma options considered: Does the student qualify for a diploma based on state course requirements?
- Is the student a member of a population of students who can earn the standard diploma through alternative means? Example, Foster youth, members of military families, homeless youth are exempt from LEA standards.

4. Transition Services

- Is the student offered self-advocacy and self-determination training that includes understanding the disability that he/she is coping with and effective accommodations?
- Are the options to utilize instructional strategies, such as universal design, differentiated instruction listed?
- Are recommendations to provide staff training for general education and career-technical educators listed?
- Are transition services that relate to pre-employment transition skills offered?

5. Annual Goals

- Are annuals aligned with state standards?
- Are annual goals that help the student to develop the study skills needed for academic success?

6. Student participation in the IEP

- Is the student voice the focus of the IEP? Are people listening to the student list goals and plans?
- Does the student have the opportunity to share accomplishments that prove he/she can earn the diploma?

7. Parent participation in the IEP

- Are parents and/or adult allies informed about the difference between the diploma and the certificate of completion?