

There are differences between a 504 plan and an IEP, although there are also some similarities.

	504 Plan	IEP
Basic Description	Provides a plan for how a student will access learning in the school environment.	Provides a plan for how a student will receive special education services and supports in the school environment.
Purpose	Provides accommodations and services to the student to ensure that the child can access the learning environment as adequately as non-disabled peers.	Provides individualized special education and related services to students to ensure that the student receives benefit from their education.
Laws	Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 Federal civil rights law intended to prevent discrimination against people with disabilities	The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Federal special education law that provides education to students with disabilities
Eligibility	Requirements: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Student has a diagnosis, or is regarded as having, a physical or mental disability, 2. The disability must impact a major life function (not just learning), 3. The disability must impact the student's ability to access the general education environment 	Requirements: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The student has a one or more of the 13 disabilities defined by IDEA, 2. The disability must adversely impact the student's educational performance, resulting in the need for individualized special education services and supports, 3. The student is discrepant from non-disabled peers in some aspect of educational performance
Evaluation Requirements	Generally, parents provide a diagnosis of the medical condition from a private provider. However, a medical diagnosis or prescription from a doctor is not enough for eligibility. An educational team must review existing information and, with parent consent, collect and review any other needed data to determine eligibility. Evaluations can include: a file review,	Teams meet to review existing information and design the evaluation. No outside diagnosis is required. The educational team may collect information in nine different areas. Evaluations typically involve a file review, direct assessment of the student, observations, interviews, and other components. Written parental consent is required. The

	<p>observations, testing, consultation with treating professionals.</p> <p>Written parental consent is required to complete the evaluation.</p>	<p>evaluation must be completed within 60 school days.</p>
Team	<p>504 plans are drafted by a team of individuals who are familiar with the student. This may include, depending on the child's disability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Parent/guardian ● General education teacher ● Building administrator ● Nurse or other professional <p>For a list of District 25 case managers, click here</p>	<p>The IEP team must include, at minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Parent ● General education teacher ● Special education teacher ● LEA (local education agency representative) <p>It may also include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Psychologist ● Speech Language Pathologist ● Social Worker ● Nurse ● Occupational/Physical Therapist ● Vision/Hearing Therapist ● English Language instructor
Plan	<p>504 plans are structured differently, depending on the school district. District 25 plans include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Description of the student's disability ● Specific accommodations ● Services or supports from school staff, as needed ● Assessment accommodations, if needed ● For students with health needs, an emergency action plan may be attached 	<p>IEPs are very detailed documents that follow a structure determined by IDEA. All IEPs must contain the same elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The student's present levels of academic and functional performance ● Annual, measurable goals in each identified area of need ● Accommodations to the learning environment ● Accommodations to classroom, district, and state assessments ● A list of specific services the student will receive, including where, how often, and who will deliver them ● Percentage of time the student will spend in general education and special education ● How the student will be included in general education and school activities ● Transportation

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Access to extended school year ● Placement in a special education program
Notice	<p>Parents will receive a written invitation to all 504 meetings, typically 10 days prior to the meeting</p> <p>Changes can be made to the plan without written notice or a formal meeting, but typically a meeting is held</p>	<p>Parents are legally entitled to 10 days written notice prior to an IEP meeting, which includes the names and titles of all participants</p> <p>An IEP can only be amended through a formal meeting (with written notice) or with verbal consent from the parent, prior to the change.</p> <p>The District cannot make any changes to an IEP without providing parent with prior written notice or requesting an amendment.</p>
Parent Consent	<p>Parents must consent to the evaluation. District 25 also asks parents to consent to the initial 504 plan.</p>	<p>Parents must consent, in writing, to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● An initial evaluation ● A re-evaluation ● Initial placement
Review/Revision	<p>The state of Illinois requires that 504 plans be reviewed at major transitions (such as moving from elementary to middle school). District 25 reviews all 504 plans on an annual basis, typically at the end of the school year.</p> <p>Re-evaluations occur every 3 years.</p>	<p>The IEP team must meet to review each IEP on an annual basis, one year minus one day from the date of the previous plan.</p> <p>Re-evaluations are conducted every three years to determine if the student is still eligible for services, but may occur as often as every year with parental consent.</p>
Resolving Disputes	<p>Parents can choose from several options for resolving disputes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mediation ● Alternative dispute resolution ● Impartial Hearing ● Complaint filed with the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) ● Lawsuit <p>Parents are encouraged to contact the District's 504 Complaint Manager, Aimée LeBlanc, with complaints that cannot be</p>	<p>IDEA provides a continuum for dispute resolution, which is generally followed in this order:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mediation ● Due process complaint filed with the Illinois State Board of Education ● Resolution session ● Civil lawsuit ● State complaint

	resolved at the building level.	
Funding	<p>Students receive 504 plans at no charge.</p> <p>Districts do not receive extra funding to support eligible students. IDEA funds cannot be used to support students with 504 plans.</p>	<p>Students receive special education services and supports at no charge.</p> <p>Districts receive funding for special education from the federal government, which flows through the state.</p>