

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is a federal law that guarantees free and appropriate public education for children with disabilities. IDEA was previously known as the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EHA).

IDEA's goals

- Ensure students with disabilities receive an education that meets their needs
- Promote the idea that students with disabilities should be educated with their peers
- Provide procedural safeguards to protect the rights of parents and students

IDEA's principles

- **Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE):** Students with disabilities are entitled to a free public education
- **Individualized Education Program (IEP):** Each student has an IEP that outlines how their education will be tailored to their needs
- **Least Restrictive Environment (LRE):** Students with disabilities should be educated in the least restrictive environment possible
- **Appropriate Evaluation:** Students are entitled to an evaluation that is appropriate for their needs
- **Parent and Student Participation:** Parents and students are involved in decisions about the student's education
- **Procedural Safeguards:** Parents have rights to review their child's records and to be notified before meetings about their child's education

Who is eligible for IDEA services?

Many conditions qualify for IDEA services, including autism, deafness, emotional disturbance, and learning disabilities.