

Key Vocabulary Words

Individualized Education Program (IEP)

Explanation: A legally binding document that outlines a student's unique learning needs, the specialized services the school will provide, and the goals for the year. In Grade 12, it heavily emphasizes transition readiness.

Example: "The team is meeting to finalize the student's final IEP before graduation."

Spanish Translation: Plan de Educación Individualizado (IEP)

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

Explanation: The federal law that ensures students with disabilities receive a free appropriate public education. It mandates transition planning for all students starting no later than age 16.

Example: "IDEA requires the district to provide services that help the student transition from high school to work or college."

Spanish Translation: Ley de Educación para Personas con Discapacidades (IDEA)

Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)

Explanation: An educational right requiring schools to provide special education and related services at public expense. These services must meet the student's unique needs and prepare them for future employment and living.

Example: "The student's vocational coach is a key part of maintaining FAPE during his senior year."

Spanish Translation: Educación Pública Gratuita y Apropiada (FAPE)

Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

Explanation: The principle that students with disabilities should be educated with non-disabled peers to the maximum extent appropriate. It ensures that students are only removed from general classrooms when their needs cannot be met there with support.

Example: "The student will attend general education electives to satisfy his LRE requirements while practicing social skills."

Spanish Translation: Ambiente Menos Restrictivo (LRE)

Transition Services

Explanation: A coordinated set of activities designed to help a student move from school to post-school life. This includes instruction, community experiences, and the development of employment or adult living objectives.

Example: "Our transition services this year focus on teaching the student how to use public transportation to get to his job site."

Spanish Translation: Servicios de Transición

Post-Secondary Goals

Explanation: Measurable goals related to training, education, employment, and independent living that the student will pursue after high school. These are updated annually based on age-appropriate transition assessments.

Example: "The student's post-secondary goal is to complete a culinary arts certificate program at the community college."

Spanish Translation: Metas Postsecundarias

Summary of Performance (SOP)

Explanation: A mandatory document provided to graduating students that summarizes their academic and functional achievements. It includes recommendations on how to assist the student in meeting their post-school goals.

Example: "The school will provide the SOP to help the student apply for accommodations at his future workplace."

Spanish Translation: Resumen de Desempeño (SOP)

Self-Advocacy

Explanation: The ability to communicate one's own interests, needs, and rights and to make informed decisions. For 12th graders, this is vital for requesting help in college or the workplace.

Example: "A goal this year is for the student to practice self-advocacy by identifying when he needs a sensory break."

Additional Context: Spanish translation: Autogestión / Autodefensa

Age of Majority

Explanation: The age (usually 18) when legal rights transfer from the parent to the student. The school must notify families about this transfer at least one year before the student reaches this age.

Example: "Since the student is turning 18, we must discuss how rights transfer at the Age of Majority."

Spanish Translation: Mayoría de Edad

Annual Goals

Explanation: What your child is expected to achieve in a year. These provide the roadmap for the student's progress within the current IEP cycle.

Example: "One of our annual goals is for the student to master the steps of an office filing system independently."

Spanish Translation: Metas anuales

Measurable Goals

Explanation: Goals that must be trackable (not just "improve reading"). They include specific criteria to determine if the student has successfully met the target.

Example: "Instead of saying 'improve math,' the measurable goal states he will solve 8 out of 10 budgeting problems correctly."

Spanish Translation: Metas medibles

Accommodations

Explanation: Changes in how your child learns, such as extra time on tests, noise-canceling headphones, or frequent breaks. These do not change the content of what is being taught.

Example: "The student will receive the accommodation of extended time for all of his senior exams."

Spanish Translation: Acomodaciones / Adaptaciones

Modifications

Explanation: Changes in what your child learns, which may involve lowered expectations or a different curriculum. This is used when the standard grade-level material is not appropriate for the student.

Example: "The student's history curriculum includes modifications that focus on identifying key figures rather than writing long essays."

Spanish Translation: Modificaciones

Related Services

Explanation: Support services such as speech-language pathology, occupational therapy, physical therapy, or counseling. These help a student benefit from their special education program.

Example: "The student will continue receiving speech therapy as a related service to improve workplace social skills."

Spanish Translation: Servicios relacionados

Service Minutes

Explanation: How much support your child actually gets, typically calculated per week or per month. This specifies the exact amount of time a student spends with specialists like an SLP or OT.

Example: "The IEP specifies 60 service minutes per week for occupational therapy to focus on fine motor skills."

Spanish Translation: Minutos de servicio / Tiempo de servicio

Progress Monitoring

Explanation: How the school tracks if goals are being met throughout the year. Data is collected regularly and reported to parents to show if the student is making adequate progress.

Example: "Through weekly progress monitoring, we can see that the student is nearing his goal for independent work endurance."

Spanish Translation: Monitoreo del progreso

Receptive Language

Explanation: The ability to understand and process information received from others. It involves comprehending spoken language, written text, and non-verbal gestures.

Example: "The student's receptive language goal focuses on following multi-step directions at his internship site."

Spanish Translation: Lenguaje receptivo

Expressive Language

Explanation: The use of words, sentences, or gestures to convey messages and thoughts to others. It includes the ability to express needs, feelings, and ideas.

Example: "His expressive language skills are being used to help him explain his career interests during transition meetings."

Spanish Translation: Lenguaje expresivo

Pragmatic Language

Explanation: The social use of language, including knowing how to adapt communication style to different listeners and social rules. For autistic students, this often targets professional social interactions.

Example: "We are working on pragmatic language to help him recognize when a coworker is finished with a conversation."

Spanish Translation: Lenguaje pragmático

Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC)

Explanation: Systems and tools used to support or replace speech for individuals with communication difficulties. This includes everything from picture boards to high-tech speech-generating devices.

Example: "The student will use his AAC device to communicate his preferences during his vocational assessment."

Spanish Translation: Comunicación aumentativa y alternativa (CAA)

Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP)

Explanation: A section of the IEP that describes the student's current skills and challenges. It provides the baseline for creating new goals and services.

Example: "According to the PLAAFP, the student can currently work independently for 20 minutes before needing a break."

Spanish Translation: Niveles Actuales de Rendimiento Académico y Desempeño Funcional (PLAAFP)

Procedural Safeguards

Explanation: Legal rights and protections for parents and students to ensure they are partners in the IEP process. These include the right to notice, participation, and due process.

Example: "The school district provided the parents with a copy of the Procedural Safeguards at the start of the meeting."

Spanish Translation: Garantías Procesales

Prior Written Notice (PWN)

Explanation: A formal document given to parents after an IEP meeting detailing the school's decisions. It explains what the school proposes or refuses to do regarding the student's program.

Example: "You will receive a PWN explaining why we are adding more transition support to the student's schedule."

Spanish Translation: Notificación Previa por Escrito (PWN)

Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)

Explanation: A state agency that helps people with disabilities prepare for, find, and keep jobs. VR counselors often join IEP meetings for 12th-grade students to plan for employment after graduation.

Example: "The VR counselor will assist the student with job coaching after he leaves high school."

Spanish Translation: Rehabilitación Vocacional (VR)

Occupational Therapy (OT)

Explanation: A related service that helps students develop the skills needed for daily life and independence. In Grade 12, it often focuses on workplace ergonomics and self-care skills.

Example: "The OT is helping the student develop a sensory diet for his upcoming internship."

Spanish Translation: Terapia Ocupacional (OT)

Speech-Language Pathology (SLP)

Explanation: Services focused on identifying and treating communication disorders. SLPs work with autistic students on social pragmatics and language comprehension.

Example: "The SLP is helping the student practice social scripts for interacting with coworkers."

Spanish Translation: Patología del Habla y el Lenguaje (SLP)

Assistive Technology (AT)

Explanation: Any item or tool used to improve the functional capabilities of a student with a disability. This can include specialized computer software or simpler tools like graphic organizers.

Example: "The student will use a smart-pen as an AT tool to help him record lectures in his senior seminar."

Spanish Translation: Tecnología de Asistencia / Tecnología Auxiliar (AT)

Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA)

Explanation: A process used to identify why a student demonstrates certain behaviors. It identifies the 'function' of the behavior to create effective strategies for the student.

Example: "We conducted an FBA to understand why the student becomes overwhelmed during noisy transitions."

Spanish Translation: Evaluación de Comportamiento Funcional (FBA)

Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)

Explanation: A plan based on an FBA that includes positive behavior supports and strategies to replace challenging behaviors. It provides a consistent roadmap for school staff.

Example: "The student's BIP includes using a visual schedule to reduce anxiety during his transition between school and work."

Spanish Translation: Plan de Intervención del Comportamiento (BIP)

Daily Living Skills

Explanation: Skills needed for self-care and independent living, such as cooking, hygiene, and money management. These are often core goals for students on the autism spectrum in their final year of high school.

Example: "The student is mastering daily living skills like managing a personal bank account using a digital app."

Spanish Translation: Habilidades de la Vida Diaria