

The Difference Between a 504 and IEP

	504 Plan	Individualized Education Plan (IEP)
Basic Description	A blueprint or plan for how a child will have fair/equal access to their education.	A blueprint or plan for a child's special education experience at school.
What It Does	Provides services and changes to the learning environment to meet the needs of the child as adequately as other students. As with IEPs, a 504 plan is provided at no cost to parents.	Provides individualized special education and related services to meet the unique needs of the child. These services are provided at no cost to parents.
What Law Applies	Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 This is a federal civil rights law to stop discrimination against people with disabilities.	The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) This is a federal special education law for children with disabilities.
Who Is Eligible	To get a 504 plan, there are two requirements: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A child meets criteria for a disability (i.e. medical, attention, physical, etc.) 2. The disability must significantly interfere with the child's ability to learn in a general education classroom. Section 504 has a broader definition of a disability than IDEA. That's why a child who doesn't qualify for an IEP might still be able to get a 504 plan. 	To get an IEP, there are two requirements: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A child meets one or more of the 11 special education program disability areas through the WI Department of Public Instruction. 2. The disability must significantly affect the child's educational performance and/or ability to learn and benefit from the general education curriculum.
Who Creates the Program/Plan	A 504 plan is created by a team of people who are familiar with the child and who understand the evaluation data and special services options. This may include, but is not restricted to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Parents/Guardians ● Student ● General Education Teachers ● School Principal ● School Counselor ● School Social Worker and/or School Psychologist ● School Nurse 	There are strict legal requirements about who participates. An IEP is created by an IEP team that must include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Parents/Guardians ● Student (required when 14 years of age or older) ● At least one of the child's general education teachers ● Special Education Teacher ● School Social Worker and/or School Psychologist ● A district representative with authority over special education services
What's in the Program/Plan	There is no standard 504 plan. A 504 plan generally includes the following:	The IEP sets educational goals for a child and describes the special education services the school will provide. Here are some of the most

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Specific accommodations, supports or services for the child ● Names of who will provide each service ● Name of the person responsible for ensuring the plan is implemented 	<p>important things the IEP must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The child’s present levels of academic and functional performance describes how the child is currently performing ● Annual education goals for the child and how the school will track progress ● Services the child will get—this may include special education, related services (i.e. physical therapy, nursing, etc.), supplementary aids (i.e. Assistive Listening Device, Read Aloud Software, etc.) and extended school year services ● Timing of services—when they start, how often they occur and how long they last ● Any accommodations—changes to the child’s learning environment ● Any modifications—changes to what the child is expected to learn or know ● How the child will participate in standardized tests ● How the child will be included in general education classes and school activities
Parent Notice	The school must notify parents about evaluation or a “significant change” in placement.	When the school wants to change a child’s services or placement, it has to tell parents in writing <i>before</i> the change. Notice is also required for any IEP meetings and evaluations.
Parent Consent	A parent’s consent is required for the school district to evaluate a child.	A parent must consent in writing for the school to evaluate a child. Parents must also consent in writing before the school can provide services in an IEP.
How Often It’s Reviewed and Revised	Generally, a 504 plan is reviewed each year and a reevaluation is considered every three years or when needed.	The IEP team must review the IEP at least once a year. The student must be considered for reevaluation every three years to determine whether services are still needed.
Funding/Costs	Students receive these services at no charge.	Students receive these services at no charge.