Accessing IEPs
and helpful things to look for

Work Shouldn't HURT

Many staff injuries could be avoided if special education (SPED) assistants had access to the information contained in the Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) of the students they serve. In fact, they have the *right* to this information according to **Oregon Administrative Rule (OAR) 581-015-2220**, which clearly states:

> *(3)   Accessibility of IEPs. Each school district must:*
>
> > *(a)   Ensure that the IEP is accessible to each regular education teacher, special education teacher, related service provider and other service provider who is responsible for its implementation; and*
> >
> > *(b)   Inform each teacher and provider described in (3)(a) of his or her specific responsibilities for implementing the child's IEP and the specific accommodations, modifications and supports that must be provided for or on behalf of the child in accordance with the IEP.*

This language says it is not up to the school district to decide whether or not to provide access. Districts *must* provide access because SPED assistants fall under "related service provider and other service provider who is responsible for its implementation." It also says they must be made aware of their specific responsibilities for implementing the IEP. This means they should not be penalized for not doing something they were not specifically told to do or that was not included in the IEP.

What to look for in an IEP

Special factors — behaviors that impede a student's learning

In developing each student's IEP, the IEP team must consider *(34 CFR 300.324):*

A. Does the student exhibit behavior that impedes his/her learning or the learning of others?	*34 CFR 300.324(a)(2)(i)*
_____ YES	_____ NO

If YES, the IEP addresses the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and other strategies, to address that behavior(s).

This question is key. It lets the educator know there are (or may be) behaviors that put staff and other students at risk of injury and there may be positive behavioral interventions and supports listed below.

Present level of functional performance

Present level of functional performance (not limited to, but may include communication, social skills, behavior, organization, fine/gross motor skills, self-care, self-direction, etc), including the results of initial or most recent formal or informal assessments/observations:
- Strengths of the student
- Needs of the student
- How the student's disability affects involvement and progress in the general education curriculum *34 CFR 300.320(a)(1)*

Narrative and supporting data:

IEP best practices recommend that this section should include a Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA), which is an individualized assessment of the student that results in a

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What to look for in an IEP

hypothesis about the function of a student's behavior and, as appropriate, recommendations for a Behavioral Intervention Plan (BIP). A BIP is an individualized plan, including positive interventions, designed to assist a student to decrease inappropriate behavior and increase or teach an alternative appropriate behavior.

This section contains the specifics SPED assistants need to know about triggers, behaviors and — should the student exhibit these behaviors — how to respond to keep the student, other students and themselves safe.

Program modifications/supports for school personnel

Program Modifications/ Supports for School Personnel 34 CFR 300.320(a)(4)(i)-(iii)	Anticipated Amount & Frequency	Anticipated Location	Starting Date	Ending Date	Provider	Role Responsible for Monitoring

It is the responsibility of the IEP team to determine what types of program modifications or supports are necessary to support staff. The team should specify what those are in this section. This includes attending a conference or training related to a student's needs, additional staff, special equipment or materials, etc. The supports should be specifically defined (e.g., who exactly needs the training, who will facilitate the training, what specifically is the individual being trained on, etc.).