

WHAT ARE IDEA AND SECTION 504?



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The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are laws that provide children with disabilities, including children with special health care needs equal access to education. Each of these laws allows parents to request an evaluation of their child's needs for educational accommodations.

	IDEA	Section 504
What is	Guarantees that children with disabilities receive free and appropriate public education to accommodate their individual needs. Idea also requires school personnel to develop an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) for all eligible students.	Protects the rights of children with special needs in public and private programs. Programs and activities include state and local government programs.
Who is eligible?	IDEA has 13 categories of eligibility for special education services including. Eligibility is determined by school staff, administrators, and social service providers and is based upon state specific criteria.	Eligibility is determined based on the results from the child's evaluation. A child with a physical or mental impairment is considered to have a disability under Section 504.
How do parents of children with special health care needs request accommodations?	Write a letter or email to the school stating their concerns and the areas that they believe their child needs more support in.	Write a letter or email to request an evaluation for special education from the child's school.
Who is involved?	Parents, IEP coordinator, child's teachers, social services team.	Parents, special education coordinator, child's teachers, social services team.
Parents' rights and responsibilities	Request accommodations and advocate for their child to receive appropriate accommodations. Parents should attend all IEP meetings.	Request accommodations and advocate for their child to receive the appropriate evaluations and accommodations. Attend planning meetings.