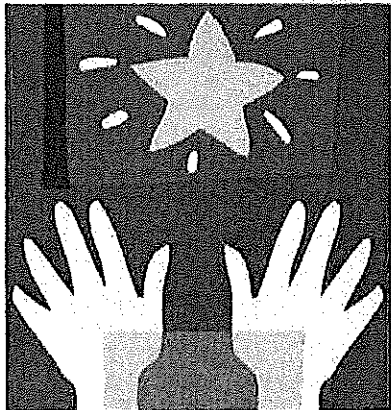


# ASPIRE Toolkit

## A Guide for Family and Student



*Active  
Student  
Participation  
Inspires  
Real  
Engagement*

Thank You for participating in the ASPIRE program for this school year. We hope you will use this Toolkit to increase Self-determination and IEP awareness.

You and Your Child will enjoy working together to:

- Complete a Self-determination Checklist
- Complete a Relationship Map (for identifying supports)
- Create/Review IEP Team Member List
- Create a Vision
- Identify Strengths and Needs
- Walk-Thru the IEP using a Checklist
- Review/Write STRONG Goals (based on strengths and needs)
- Review Accommodations (to help reach goals)

For questions about this Toolkit or the ASPIRE program, you may contact your child's teacher or Jane Grillo, White County Schools Parent Mentor, 706-865-2315 ext 1312 or [jane.grillo@white.k12.ga.us](mailto:jane.grillo@white.k12.ga.us)

## Self-determination Checklist

- With your child complete the rating scale by circling the number 1, 2, or 3 for each area of self-determination.
- Pick at least 3 skills that you scored a 1 or 2 on and decide how you might work on this skill together at home.
- If you need ideas about how to build on a certain skill, ask your child's teacher if they have any ideas.
- Report any progress to the IEP team members when possible.

# Self-Determination Checklist

## Student Self-Assessment



Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Self-Determination skills help you to know*

- yourself*
- your goals*
- supports you need to reach your goals*

Use the following scale to rate the statements below:

- 3 = almost always/most of the time**
- 2 = sometimes**
- 1 = rarely or never**

Rating			
3	2	1	I set goals to get what I want or need.
3	2	1	I make plans for reaching my goals.
3	2	1	I check my progress on how I am doing toward my goals.
3	2	1	I attend my IEP Meetings.
3	2	1	I participate in my IEP Meetings.
3	2	1	I know the goals listed in my IEP.
3	2	1	At school, educators listen to me when I talk about what I want or need.
3	2	1	At home, my parents listen to me when I talk about what I want or need.
3	2	1	I have others in my life who help me to accomplish my goals.
3	2	1	I ask for help when I need it.
3	2	1	I know what I need, what I like and what I enjoy doing.
3	2	1	I tell others what I need, what I like and what I enjoy doing.
3	2	1	I help to make choices about the supports (educational services) and accommodations that I need in school.
3	2	1	I can describe my learning difficulties to others.
3	2	1	I believe I have control to direct my life.
3	2	1	I take care of my personal needs (clothes, chores, meals, grooming).
3	2	1	I make friends with others my age.
3	2	1	I make good choices.
3	2	1	I believe that working hard in school will help me to get a good job.



## Relationship Map

- This planning tool gives you a view of who is in your child's life.
- Work on filling in as many people as you can with your child.
- See if there are any empty spots where your child may need to make new connections.
- This tool can be used to invite people to the IEP meeting, help them explore career opportunities, as well as remind you of all the supports in your child's life.

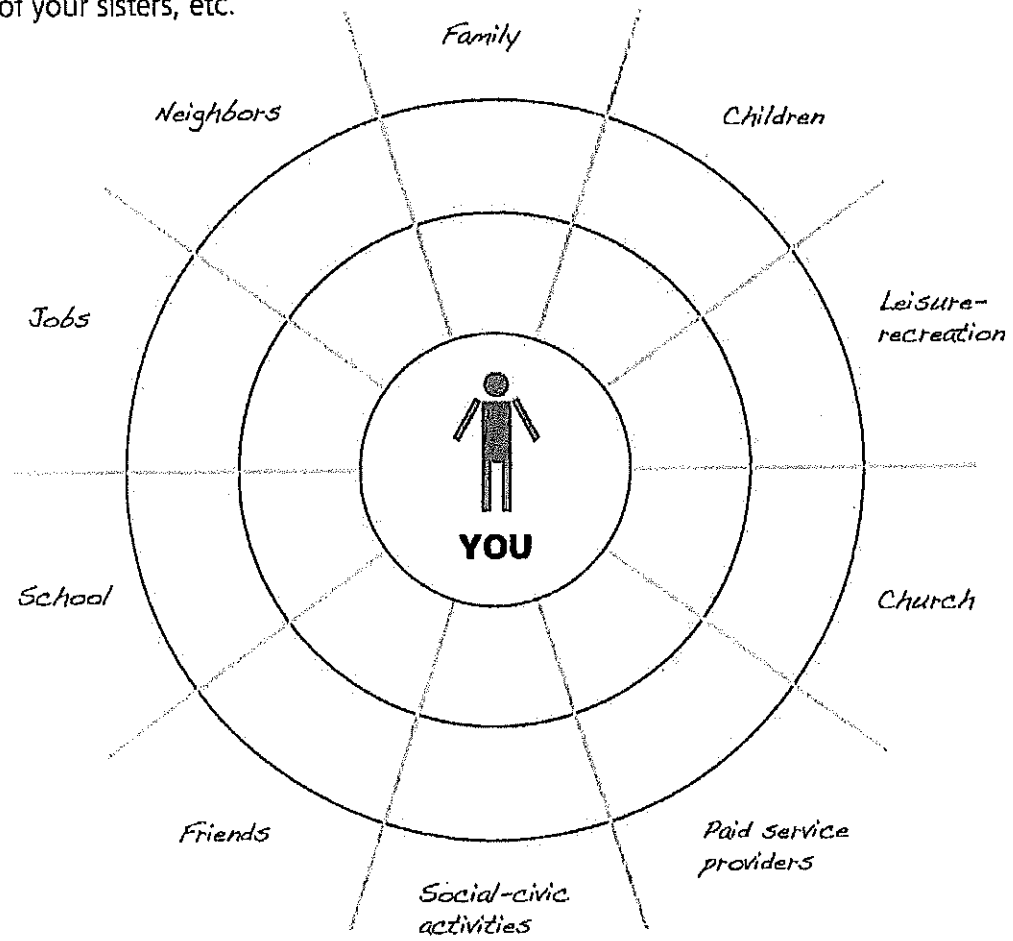
# Activity 1

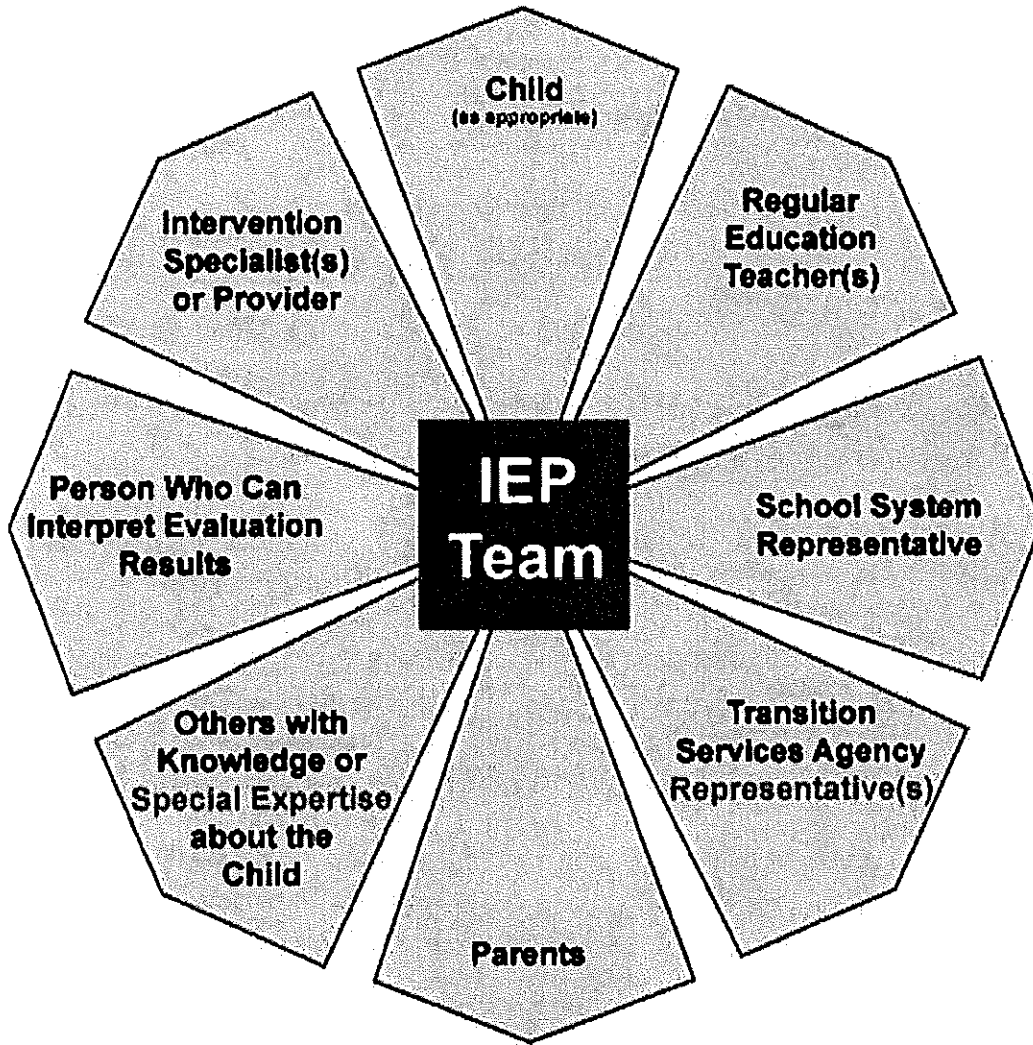
## Relationship map

A Relationship Map is a way to diagram a social network and can show us why it is important to work on community connections. Here are four steps to filling it in —

1. If you were doing a map for yourself, YOU are in the middle
2. In the first, inner-most circle put the people you see the most frequently, love the most, are closest to
3. In the next outer circle put people you associate with but know less well than the inner-most circle
4. In the outer-most circle put people that are acquaintances, people you might know by name but not that well

The different titles of each section represent different life arenas through which you know people. So "Leisure-recreation" does not mean that you have recreation activities, but rather: who do you know through that recreation? If you're on a softball team, who are the other team members, coaches, others you know? "Family" — not just your own family members, but others you know through your family — like friends of your sisters, etc.





Above are those that should be in the meeting by category...You need to know what their names are and what they do.

Who will be a part of your IEP Team Meeting?


I want to personally invite: \_\_\_\_\_

How to reach them: Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

## Create a Vision and Identify Strengths and Needs

- These two activities are part of a Parent to Parent of GA training titled: *Making it Count – A Parent’s Role in the IEP*.
- Take several days to work on these two activities with your child.
- Remember depending on your child’s age or ability you may end up with areas not answered, but complete what you can to:
  - Share your vision for your child in the IEP meeting.
  - Share what you see as strengths and needs; remembering these are the areas that will help them reach their vision when supported.
- Helpful definitions for the skills mentioned in the Strength and Needs activity:
  - Academic Skills – skills needed to do well in educational setting
  - Social Skills – skills needed to interact and communicate with others effectively
  - Functional Skills – “real-life” skills needed to function at home, school, or community
  - Additional Skills – anything you have not yet mentioned





**Making It Count:  
Focusing on a Vision  
and Strengths to Get to  
Measurable Goals**

## **MY VISION FOR MY CHILD AS AN ADULT**

***Remember!***

***We need to dream BIGGER and expect HIGHER!***

**1. HOME ENVIRONMENT** - I envision my child will:

a. live in:

b. live with:

c. be able to:

**2. WORK ENVIRONMENT** - I envision my child will:

a. work in:

b. be employed as:

c. be able to (responsibilities):

**3. COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT - I envision my child will participate in:**

a. places:

b. activities:

c. social events:

**4. RELATIONSHIPS/FRIENDSHIPS - I hope my child will develop friendships and relationships with:**

**5. I would also like my child to:**

**6. I think my child will probably need the following supports and/or environmental modifications**

Referenced:

<http://www.kidstogether.org/vision/visionbuildingworksheet.htm>



**Making It Count:  
Focusing on a Vision  
and Strengths to Get to  
Measurable Goals**

**Strength and Needs IEP Preparation Sheet**

***Remember!  
We need to dream BIGGER and expect HIGHER!***

**My Child's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

	What is my child good at?	What does my child need help with?
	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Needs</b>
<b>Academic Skills</b>		
<b>Social Skills</b>		

	Strengths	Needs
Functional Skills		
Additional Skills		

### Reinforcers and Motivators

Edibles	
TV Programs/Characters	
Places	
Games	
People	
Helper Responsibilities	
Others	

## IEP Checklist

- Have a copy of your child's latest IEP.
- With your child see if you can identify each of the areas that are required to be a part of the IEP document.
- Pick two or three areas to look at each time till you have checked Yes or No beside each statement and made comments as needed based on what you found.
- Remember, the IEP sections/pages may not be in order with the checklist, but each area should be discussed and in terms you understand.
- If you have any No's or comments that need to be addressed before the next IEP meeting, contact your child's teacher to address your questions.

# IEP CHECKLIST FOR PARENTS

*PLAAF Present Level of Academic & Functional Performance*

YES	NO	Comments
YES	NO	Comments
YES	NO	Comments
YES	NO	Comments
YES	NO	Comments
YES	NO	Comments
YES	NO	Comments
YES	NO	Comments
YES	NO	Comments

# IEP CHECKLIST FOR PARENTS

YES	NO	Are the special education services and related services recommended for your child supported by scientific research that supports their effectiveness? If not, what evidence has the school provided to indicate that the services and instructional methods proposed for your child have been found to be effective for children with similar learning difficulties and of similar age?	Comments
YES	NO	Does the IEP state who will be responsible for implementing the services listed?	Comments
YES	NO	Are the appropriate related services addressed on the IEP?	Comments
YES	NO	Do you know how the IEP content will be communicated and shared with the staff responsible for their implementation?	Comments
YES	NO	Are all of the appropriate accommodations listed?	Comments
YES	NO	Does the IEP indicate how your child will participate in state and district testing?	Comments
YES	NO	Have any potential consequences of your child's assessment participation been explained to you? Have you discussed whether your child may or may not be allowed to move on to the next grade or graduate with a regular diploma?	Comments

## STRONG Goals

- Goal setting is a self-determination skill; not just for IEPs.
- This activity will give you and your child an outline to look at when goal setting for personal or educational goals.
- If your child has a personal goal they want to reach using steps, the graphic organizer will give them a place to plan their steps to reaching that goal.
- If in working with your child you find that there is a goal that you would like to talk about during the next IEP meeting, use the activity sheets to write it down so that you won't forget to bring it up to the rest of the IEP team.



# **STRONG Goals**

**S** – State it clearly.

**T** – Time period. How long before you accomplish this goal?

**R** – Requirements. What steps do you need to take to accomplish your goal?

**O** – Overcoming Obstacles. Plan for obstacles in your path.

**N** – Needs review. Review and assess the progress toward your goal

**G** – GOAL ACCOMPLISHED!

# STRONG GOAL PLAN

**S – State your goal clearly. What do you want to accomplish? Finish the next sentence. I want to...** \_\_\_\_\_

---

**T – Time period. How long will it take you to accomplish this goal? Finish the next statement. By \_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_ I will have accomplished what I wrote in the sentence above.**

**R – Requirements. What are the steps I need to take to make my goal happen? Indicate below which steps you will take.**

	What I will do	Who could help me	Things to change
1.			
2.			

**O – Obstacles. What could get in my way? Indicate obstacles that could hinder your progress. What will you do if that happens to help keep you on track toward your goal?**

	What could happen	Who could help me if it happens	What could I do to prevent or fix the issue
1.			
2.			

**N – Needs review. How often will you check to make sure you doing what you need to do? Make a calendar below of when you will check and what you will assess to make sure you are on track toward your goal.**

	Date	I checked on this	Is this happening?
1.			
2.			

**G – GOAL Accomplished!! Tell how you will celebrate accomplishing your goal.**

---

# Reach for Your Goal

## Graphic Organizer

Goal	
Action Steps	1.
	2.
	3.
	4.
	5.
	6.
	7.
	8.
	9.
	10.
Target Date	

## Accommodations:

- Accommodations support your child's learning during instruction and during testing opportunities.
- Use the calendar and conversation starters to talk to your child about their accommodations.
- The additional material is for your information. Included are selected pages from the GaDOE Accommodations Manual so that you will gain a broader view of how accommodations may support learning.
- Use the provided pages to explore accommodations and identify any you want to talk to your child's teacher or IEP team about.

Having ongoing conversations with your child and his/her teacher is important for your child's success in school. Each week talk to your child about school; ask about their weaknesses and what accommodations are making a difference. Use this calendar to mark when you have conversations, make notes of what is shared, and use the conversation starters if needed. Getting in the habit of these conversations **once a week** is a great proactive practice.

Month .....		Year .....				
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

**Notes: (from conversation with child or contacts with teacher)**

---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---

- At-Home Conversation Starters About Accommodations:**
1. "Let's look at your IEP and see if you have any accommodations."
  2. "Did you realize you had these?"
  3. "Do you use \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_ class?"
  4. "Have you spoken to your teacher about these?"
  5. "Do you feel like these help you?"
  6. "How does using \_\_\_\_\_ make you feel in class? More independent?"
  7. "Do you use these every day?"
  8. "Do you talk to your teacher when something is not working?"
  9. "Do you know who your case manager is? He/she can teach you how to talk to your teacher if you have a problem."

## STEP 2: LEARN ABOUT ACCOMMODATIONS FOR INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT

### WHAT ARE ACCOMMODATIONS?

Accommodations are changes in the administration of an assessment in terms of how the student takes or responds to the assessment. Broad categories of accommodations include presentation, response, setting, and scheduling. Accommodations do not change the construct intended to be measured by the assessment or the meaning of the resulting scores. Accommodations are designed to provide equity, not advantage, and serve to level the playing field for students with disabilities. When used appropriately, they reduce or even eliminate the effects of a student's disability; they do not reduce learning expectations.

The accommodations provided to a student must be the same for classroom instruction, classroom assessments, and state assessments. It is critical to note that although some accommodations may be appropriate for instructional use, they may not be appropriate for use on a standardized assessment. There may be consequences (e.g., invalidating a student's test score) for the use of some accommodations during state assessments. It is very important for educators to become familiar with state policies regarding accommodations during assessments.

In Georgia, accommodations may not alter, explain, simplify, paraphrase, or eliminate any test item, reading passage, writing prompt, or answer option. Further, accommodations may not provide verbal or other clues or suggestions that hint at or give away the correct response to the student.

Typically, accommodation use does not begin and end in school. Students who use accommodations will generally also need them at home, in the community, and as they get older, in postsecondary education, and at work. Accommodations for instruction and assessment are integrally intertwined. However, some accommodations are appropriate for instruction and not assessment.

### DESCRIPTION OF ACCOMMODATIONS CATEGORIES

Accommodations are commonly categorized in four ways: presentation, response, setting, and scheduling:

- **Presentation Accommodations** — adjusts the presentation of test material and/or test directions.
- **Response Accommodations** — adjusts the manner in which students respond to or answer test questions.
- **Setting Accommodations** — adjusts the place in which the testing normally occurs.
- **Scheduling Accommodations** — adjusts the time allowance or scheduling of a test.

## FACT SHEET 1: CATEGORY OF ACCOMMODATIONS

CATEGORY OF ACCOMMODATION	WHO CAN BENEFIT
Presentation	Students who benefit most from presentation accommodations are those with print disabilities, defined as difficulty or inability to visually read standard print because of a physical, sensory, or cognitive disability.
Response	Response accommodations can benefit students with physical, sensory, or learning disabilities (including difficulties with memory, sequencing, directionality, alignment, and organization).
Setting	Setting accommodations, which are changes in instructional and assessment locations, can benefit students who are easily distracted in large group settings and who concentrate best in a small group or individual setting. Changes in location also benefit students who receive accommodations (e.g. reader, scribe, frequent breaks) that might distract other students. Students with physical disabilities might need a more accessible location, specific room conditions, or special equipment.
Scheduling	<p>Scheduling accommodations are most helpful for students who need more time than generally allowed to complete activities, assignments, and assessments. Extra time may be needed to process written text (e.g., a student with a learning disability who processes information slowly), to write (e.g., a student with limited dexterity as a result of arthritis), or to use other accommodations or equipment (e.g., assistive technology, audiotape, scribe).</p> <p>Students who cannot concentrate continuously for an extended period or who become frustrated or stressed easily may need frequent or extended relaxation breaks. It may also help to schedule in the morning those classes and tests that require the greatest concentration for students who have difficulty concentrating and staying on task as the day progresses. Scheduling changes might also be helpful for students on medications that affect their ability to stay alert or who have more productive times of the day.</p> <p>Some students with health-related disabilities may have functioning levels that vary during the day because of the effects of medications or diminishing energy levels. For example, blood sugar levels may need to be maintained by eating several times a day at prescribed times. These students could be accommodated by scheduling tests and activities around the eating schedule, or by allowing food to be taken to the classroom or testing site. Students who fatigue easily may need to take some academic classes and tests before rather than after a physical education class or recess, or may need to reduce physical activity.</p>

## FACT SHEET 2: EXAMPLES OF ACCOMMODATIONS BASED ON STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS

STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: BLIND, LOW VISION, PARTIAL SIGHT		
Category	Accommodations to Consider for Instruction	Accommodations to Consider for Assessments
Presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large print</li> <li>• Magnification devices</li> <li>• Braille</li> <li>• Tactile graphics</li> <li>• Human reader</li> <li>• Audiotape or compact disk (CD)</li> <li>• Screen reader</li> <li>• Large print or Braille notes, outlines, and instructions</li> <li>• Descriptive video</li> <li>• Talking materials</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large print</li> <li>• Magnification devices</li> <li>• Braille</li> <li>• Human reader</li> <li>• Screen or text reader (assistive technology)</li> </ul>
Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Express response to a scribe through speech</li> <li>• Type on or speak to word processor</li> <li>• Type on braille or note taking device</li> <li>• Speak into tape recorder</li> <li>• Use calculation devices (e.g., talking calculator with enlarged keys, abacus)</li> <li>• Use personal note taker</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Express response to a scribe through speech</li> <li>• Use word processor (spelling and grammar check disabled)</li> <li>• Type on braille</li> <li>• Use calculator</li> </ul>
Setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change location so student does not distract others</li> <li>• Change location to increase physical access</li> <li>• Change location to access special equipment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change location so student does not distract others</li> <li>• Change location to increase physical access</li> <li>• Change location to access special equipment</li> </ul>
Scheduling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extended time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extended time</li> </ul>



<b>STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: DEAF; HARD OF HEARING</b>		
<b>Category</b>	<b>Accommodations to Consider for Instruction</b>	<b>Accommodations to Consider for Assessments</b>
<b>Presentation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sign language</li> <li>• Audio amplification devices</li> <li>• Screen reader</li> <li>• Visual cues</li> <li>• Written notes, outlines, and instructions</li> <li>• Videotape and descriptive video</li> <li>• Provide advanced organizers and outlines of lectures for student to follow</li> <li>• Use gestures (e.g., point to materials)</li> <li>• Repeat questions and responses from classmates</li> <li>• Allow student to copy notes from classmate</li> <li>• Use captioned versions of instructional films and include script when possible</li> <li>• Give interpreter instructional materials in advance</li> <li>• Learn manual signs and teach them to hearing classmates</li> <li>• Allow student to use telecommunication device</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sign language</li> <li>• Audio amplification devices</li> <li>• Screen or text reader (assistive technology)</li> </ul>
<b>Response</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Express response to scribe or interpreter</li> <li>• Type on or speak to word processor</li> <li>• Use spelling and grammar assistive devices</li> <li>• Use visual organizers</li> <li>• Use graphic organizers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Express response to scribe or interpreter</li> <li>• Use word processor (spelling and grammar check disabled)</li> </ul>
<b>Setting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change location to reduce distractions</li> <li>• Change location so student does not distract others</li> <li>• Change location to increase physical access (e.g., minimize background noise, face student when speaking, speak to student and not to interpreter, and increase wait time for interpreter to finish)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change location to reduce distractions</li> <li>• Change location so student does not distract others</li> <li>• Change location to increase physical access (e.g., minimize background noise, face student when speaking, speak to student and not to interpreter, and increase wait time for interpreter to finish)</li> </ul>

<b>STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: WEAK MANUAL DEXTERITY; DIFFICULTY WITH PENCIL; DIFFICULTY TYPING ON STANDARD KEYBOARD</b>		
<b>Category</b>	<b>Accommodations to Consider for Instruction</b>	<b>Accommodations to Consider for Assessments</b>
Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Express response to a scribe through speech, pointing or by using an assistive communication device</li> <li>Type on or speak to word processor</li> <li>Use adapted keyboard or mouse</li> <li>Speak into tape recorder</li> <li>Use adapted pencil or pencil grip</li> <li>Use written notes, outlines, and instructions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Express response to a scribe through speech, pointing or by using an assistive communication device</li> <li>Use word processor or adapted key board (spelling and grammar check disabled)</li> <li>Use adapted pencil or pencil grip</li> </ul>
<b>STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: READING DISABILITY; DIFFICULTY DECODING</b>		
<b>Category</b>	<b>Accommodations to Consider for Instruction</b>	<b>Accommodations to Consider for Assessments</b>
Presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Human reader</li> <li>Audiotape or CD</li> <li>Screen or text reader (assistive technology)</li> <li>Videotape</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Human reader</li> <li>Screen or text reader (assistive technology)</li> </ul>
Setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Change location so student does not distract others</li> <li>Use written notes, outlines, and instructions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Change location so student does not distract others</li> </ul>
<b>STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: WRITING DISABILITY</b>		
<b>Category</b>	<b>Accommodations to Consider for Instruction</b>	<b>Accommodations to Consider for Assessments</b>
Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Express response to a scribe through speech</li> <li>Type on or speak to word processor</li> <li>Speak into tape recorder</li> <li>Use written notes, outlines, and instructions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Express response to a scribe through speech</li> <li>Use word processor (spelling and grammar check disabled)</li> </ul>

<b>STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: MATHEMATICS DISABILITY</b>		
<b>Category</b>	<b>Accommodations to Consider for Instruction</b>	<b>Accommodations to Consider for Assessments</b>
<b>Response</b>	Use: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Calculator</li> <li>• Visual organizers</li> <li>• Graphic organizers</li> <li>• Math tables and formula sheets</li> </ul>	Use: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Calculator</li> </ul>
<b>STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: PHYSICAL DISABILITY</b>		
<b>Category</b>	<b>Accommodations to Consider for Instruction</b>	<b>Accommodations to Consider for Assessments</b>
<b>Response</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Express response to a scribe through speech, pointing, or by using an assistive communication device</li> <li>• Type on or speak to word processor (including adapted key board)</li> <li>• Speak into tape recorder</li> <li>• Write in test booklet instead of on answer sheet</li> <li>• Use augmentative devices for single or multiple messages (e.g., BIGmack, Jelly Bean switch, or Dynavox)</li> <li>• Use written notes, outlines, and instructions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Express response to a scribe through speech, pointing, or by using an assistive communication device</li> <li>• Use word processor or adapted key board (spelling and grammar check disabled)</li> <li>• Write in test booklet instead of on answer sheet</li> </ul>
<b>Setting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change location to increase physical access</li> <li>• Change location to access special equipment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change location to increase physical access</li> <li>• Change location to access special equipment</li> </ul>
<b>Scheduling</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extended time</li> <li>• Multiple or frequent breaks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extended time</li> <li>• Multiple or frequent breaks</li> </ul>

**STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: EASILY DISTRACTED; SHORT ATTENTION SPAN**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Accommodations to Consider for Instruction</b>	<b>Accommodations to Consider for Assessments</b>
Presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use books on tape or recorded books to help focus on text</li> <li>• Give short and simple directions with examples</li> </ul>	
Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write in test booklet instead of on answer sheet</li> <li>• Monitor placement of student responses on answer sheet</li> <li>• Use materials or devices used to solve or organize responses</li> <li>• Use visual organizers</li> <li>• Use graphic organizers</li> <li>• Highlight key words in directions</li> <li>• Have student repeat and explain directions to check for understanding</li> <li>• Use template</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write in test booklet instead of on answer sheet</li> <li>• Use template or place-marker</li> </ul>
Setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sit in front of room</li> <li>• Change location to reduce distractions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sit in front of room</li> <li>• Change location to reduce distractions</li> </ul>
Scheduling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use short segment test booklets (when available)</li> <li>• Allow for multiple or frequent breaks</li> <li>• Schedule tests in the morning</li> <li>• Cue student to begin working and stay on task</li> <li>• Change testing schedule or order of subtests</li> <li>• Limit reading periods</li> <li>• Schedule activities requiring more seat time in the morning and more hands-on and physical activities in the afternoon</li> <li>• Divide long-term assignments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow for multiple or frequent breaks</li> <li>• Schedule tests in the morning</li> <li>• Change testing schedule or order of subtests</li> </ul>

## 22 Sample Questions to Ask during a Parent-Teacher Conference or IEP meeting

### **Child Information**

Start the conversation by talking about the most important topic: your child.

1. **May I Tell You About My Child?**

No one knows your child better than you do, so it's your job to help your child's teacher learn more.

2. **May I Tell You About What's Going on at Home?**

Situations like illness, divorce or a new baby may affect your child's school experience, so inform your child's teacher of such circumstances.

3. **How Is My Child Doing Socially?**

4. **How Is My Child Doing Emotionally?**

It's also important to ask about your child's emotional health at school. For example, is your child generally happy?

5. **In What Areas Does My Child Need Improvement?**

Your child's teacher sees him from a different perspective than you do. Ask the teacher what personal weaknesses your child needs to work on, and listen to the response with an open mind.

6. **What Do You Think My Child Is Particularly Good At?**

Find out about the good stuff, too. Ask about personal strengths that will extend beyond school.

### **Academic Performance**

Now move onto more school-specific questions.

7. **Is My Child Performing on Grade Level?**

Ask how this compares to grade-level expectations, but don't try to compare your child to other students. Each child is different and has different strengths and learning abilities.

8. **What Do These Assessment Results Really Mean?**

When it comes to standardized testing and other assessment results, ask, 'What does this really mean?'

9. **Is My Child Doing His Best?**

No matter where your child ranks in relation to grade-level, one important analysis of his performance is whether he's putting forth his best effort.

10. **Does My Child Need Extra Help in Any Areas?**

Your child's teacher can tell you if your child is falling behind in a skill or a subject. Armed with that information, you can create a plan with your child to work harder in that area, before it gets too late.

11. **What Can We Do to Provide That Extra Help?**

Work with your child's teacher to create a plan to help your child progress well in school.

## **Special Education Services and Supports**

If your child has special needs, ask need-specific questions.

### **12. Is Everyone Familiar with My Child's IEP?**

All students who receive special education or related services must have an Individualized Education Program in place, which outlines the goals for that child's schooling and how those goals are to be achieved. Everyone discussing it should know what it says.

### **13. What Accommodations Are Being Made for My Child?**

### **14. Is My Child making Progress towards his or her IEP Goals and the Curriculum?**

### **15. Are there Things I can do at Home to Support the IEP goals?**

### **16. What Are the Best ways for me to Stay in Touch with my child's Teachers to be Informed of Academic or Behavioral Progress?**

### **17. What are the Promotion Criteria for My Child? How will he or she be Evaluated According to Grade Level?**

## **Tricky Situations**

If your child is having problems in school or with the teacher, address them head-on.

### **18. May I Share a Concern?**

If you're worried about a situation at school, bring it up with the teacher. Teachers usually appreciate when parents bring an issue to their attention, as long as it's done with respect.

### **19. Can You Fill Me in on This Situation?**

When your child has complaints about what's going on at school ask for clarification from the teacher; often your child's side is the only side you've heard.

### **20. Do You Have Any Advice?**

If you need help with an issue your child is having, ask the teacher for input. Teachers have worked with dozens or hundreds of students, and many have sage advice to share.

## **General Information**

End the conference with these useful queries.

### **21. How Can I Help?**

What can I do to support you in the classroom?

### **22. How Can I Contact You?**

It's good to know how to get in touch with your child's teacher, so find out whether he or she prefers emails, phone calls or written notes.

NYC Department of Education <http://schools.nyc.gov/Academics/SpecialEducation/SEP/meeting/questionstoask.htm>

Care.com contributor Meghan Ross; <http://www.care.com/child-care-20-questions-to-ask-during-a-parent-teacher-conference-p1017-q34098716.html>

## Resources

I'm Determined - [www.indetermined.org](http://www.indetermined.org)

Parent to Parent of Georgia – Making it Count presentation tools for parents concerning their role in the IEP meeting - [www.p2pga.org](http://www.p2pga.org)

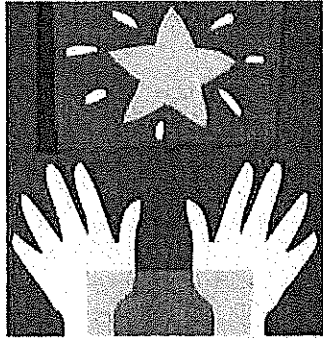
Georgia Department of Education – selected portions of Implementation and Accommodations Manual- <http://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Special-Education-Services/Pages/Implementation-Manual.aspx>

Amado, A.N. (2013). *Friends: Connecting people with disabilities and community members*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota, Institute on Community Integration, Research and Training Center on Community Living. Relationship Map.

ASPIRE: Georgia's Student-led IEP Initiative – [www.gaspdg.org/aspire](http://www.gaspdg.org/aspire)

# ASPIRE Toolkit

## A Guide for Family and Student



*Active  
Student  
Participation  
Inspires  
Real  
Engagement*

Thank You for participating in the ASPIRE program. We hope you found this Toolkit helpful and that the new skills you and your child built will assist you at school, home, and in the community. We need your feedback...

Parent/Guardian, Please answer the three questions below about your completed Toolkit. At the IEP meeting tear this sheet out and leave with your child's teacher. This will help our ASPIRE team provide material to other parents in the future. Thank You!

I brought the completed toolkit to the IEP meeting.

**YES or NO**

Did you find the ASPIRE Toolkit helpful anytime before, during, or after the IEP meeting? Explain. \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

---

---

---

What would you add or change?

---

---

---



# You Have Completed Your Toolkit for Your IEP Meeting

This certificate is awarded to

*You and your parent/guardian have completed this toolkit together so that you will be prepared to share valuable information during your IEP and with IEP team members.*

Upon Completion, bring your Toolkit to Your IEP Meeting:

1. Use the information to share in the meeting.
2. Have your certificate completed by your teacher.
3. You will be invited to a PRIZE Party for completion of Toolkit.



Signature

Date

Signature

Date