UNDERSTANDING RELATED SERVICES:
A Parent Guide

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Understanding Related Services:
A Parent Guide

What are related services?

Related services are support services provided to help students with disabilities benefit from special education. Specific services are included on a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) if the team decides the student needs them.

What are some examples of related services?

Common related services include:

- Speech-language therapy
- Occupational therapy
- Physical therapy
- Transportation
- Counseling and psychological services
- Interpreting services
- Assistive technology services
- Medical services (for diagnostic or evaluation purposes)

Speech and Language Services

Speech-language therapy helps students with:

- Articulation (how sounds are produced)
- Language development (understanding and using language)
- Voice or fluency issues (such as stuttering)
- Social communication skills

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Occupational Therapy (OT)

OT supports students in:

- Fine motor skills (e.g., writing, cutting)
- Sensory processing
- Daily living skills (e.g., dressing, using utensils)
- Independence in the school environment

Physical Therapy (PT)

PT focuses on:

- Gross motor skills (e.g., walking, climbing stairs)
- Mobility and balance
- Use of assistive devices (e.g., walkers or wheelchairs)
- Safe participation in school activities

Transportation Services

These services ensure a child can travel to and from school or a related program. This may include:

- A special bus or van
- A bus aide or monitor
- Door-to-door transportation
- Modifications like wheelchair lifts or harnesses

Counseling and Psychological Services

These include:

- School counseling or social work
- Individual or group therapy
- Behavior intervention plans
- Psychological testing and support

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Interpreting Services

These services help students who are deaf or hard of hearing or who communicate in a language other than English through:

- Sign language interpreters
- Cued speech transliterators (Cued speech is a type of sign language)
- Oral interpreters
- Communication Access in Real Time (CART). (CART is a service that provides instant transcription of spoken language into written text)

Assistive Technology (AT)

AT helps a student access the curriculum and communicate. Examples include:

- Communication devices
- Adaptive keyboards or software
- Visual supports
- Custom tools or equipment

Medical and Health Services

Services that are medically necessary for the student to attend school and learn, such as:

- Administering medication
- Health monitoring (e.g., for diabetes or seizures)
- Evaluations by a qualified medical professional (for IEP planning)

Who decides which related services my child gets?

The IEP team, which includes parents, evaluates the child's needs and determines which services are necessary to support their education. These services are then listed and described on the IEP.

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Who delivers these services?

Speech and language, OT, PT, and counseling and psychological services must be delivered by qualified, licensed professionals.

Still have questions?

Talk to your child's case manager, school psychologist, or IEP team. You can also request an evaluation if you think your child may need a related service.

How can I get help in my language?

Request interpreter services at your child's school or the school district's office. Request translated written information if needed. Information available to all parents in the school district should be available to you as well.

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