

TABLE 2.3 A Snapshot of IDEA 2004 Highlights

- Modified criteria for identifying students with specific learning disabilities. Schools can now elect to use a process that determines whether the pupil responds to empirically validated, scientifically based interventions—commonly called response to intervention (RTI)
- Eliminates use of short-term objectives in IEPs except for students evaluated via alternate assessments that are aligned with alternate achievement standards
- IEPs must include a statement of the student's present level of academic achievement and functional performance; annual goals must be written in measurable terms
- Relaxes requirements for participation in IEP meetings
- Multiyear IEPs are permissible
- IEPs to incorporate research-based interventions
- Transition planning to begin with first IEP in effect once student reaches age 16
- Students with disabilities may be removed to an interim alternative educational setting for up to 45 school days for offenses involving weapons, drugs, or inflicting serious bodily injury
- All pupils are required to participate in all state- and districtwide assessments with accommodations or alternate assessments as stipulated in their IEP
- Special educators must be “highly qualified” according to individual state standards
- Resolution session required prior to a due process hearing
- Statute of limitations imposed on parents for filing due process complaints
- Modifies provision of student's native language and preferred mode of communication