

TEXAS STATE IEP GUIDE

ARD Committee, FIE Evaluation & Chapter 89 Regulations

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About This Guide

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- Timeline differences: how this state's deadlines differ from federal IDEA
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- iepguide.org guidance: specific steps for using iepguide.org in this state
- Placement checklist: step-by-step placement timeline using iepguide.org

■ iepguide.org — School Placement Research Tool

Search by state, city, district, or school to compare SWD %, SDC program types, severity levels served, and specialist staff availability at iepguide.org

TEXAS — STATE IEP GUIDE


How Texas Differs from Federal IDEA

Texas has its own special education terminology, timeline rules, and governance structure that differ significantly from federal IDEA language. The IEP meeting in Texas is called an ARD meeting. The evaluation is called a Full and Individual Initial Evaluation (FIE). Understanding Texas-specific language is essential because school documents, meeting invitations, and procedural notices will use these terms throughout your child's education.

State-Specific Terminology

These terms appear in official school documents, meeting invitations, and procedural notices in this state:

Term in This State	What It Means
ARD Committee	Admission, Review, and Dismissal Committee — Texas's term for the IEP team
ARD Meeting	Admission, Review, and Dismissal Meeting — Texas's term for the IEP meeting
FIE	Full and Individual Initial Evaluation — Texas's term for the comprehensive evaluation
Educational Diagnostician	A Texas-specific role: a certified specialist who conducts psychoeducational evaluations (replaces the school psychologist role in many Texas districts)
IDEA-B	Federal funding and requirements that Texas must follow — referenced in Texas documents alongside state regulations
SBOE	State Board of Education — sets Texas education rules including Chapter 89 (special education regulations)
Chapter 89	Texas Administrative Code Chapter 89 — the state special education regulations that govern everything alongside federal IDEA
LRE	Same as federal — Least Restrictive Environment

 **KEY TIMELINE DIFFERENCES IN TEXAS**

- Referral to FIE consent (Permission to Evaluate): school must respond within a reasonable time — typically 15 school days
- Consent to FIE completion: Texas requires 45 SCHOOL DAYS (not calendar days) — stricter count but may feel longer due to school breaks
- FIE completion to initial ARD meeting: must be held within 30 calendar days of the FIE completion
- Annual ARD Review: must be held at least once every 12 months
- Re-evaluation (Triennial): every 3 years — ARD committee reviews existing data first before proposing new assessments
- Transfer students: receiving district must convene an ARD within 30 school days if the student has an IEP from another Texas district

STATE EDUCATION AGENCY — TEXAS

- Texas Education Agency — Division of Special Education
- Website: tea.texas.gov/academics/special-student-populations/special-education
- Phone: (512) 463-9414
- Complaints: TEA Special Education Complaints — (512) 463-9414
- Mediation and Due Process: TEA Special Education Hearings — same contact

HOW TO USE iepguide.org IN TEXAS

- **Search iepguide.org by Texas city or school district** to see which campuses have Mild/Moderate or Moderate/Severe special education classrooms, SWD percentages, and on-site specialist staffing before your child's ARD meeting.
- **Texas's 45 school-day FIE timeline can span months during the school year.** Use the first few weeks after signing consent to research school placement options on iepguide.org so you are prepared when the ARD meeting is finally scheduled.
- **Before every ARD meeting:** look up the proposed campus on iepguide.org to compare its SWD %, program type, and specialist staff against other campuses in the district.
- **If the district proposes a different campus:** use iepguide.org to verify the receiving campus has the appropriate program level for your child's needs before the ARD committee finalizes placement.
- Compare Educational Diagnostician and SLP staffing across campuses — iepguide.org shows which campuses have specialists on-site vs. shared across multiple campuses

PLACEMENT TIMELINE — USING iepguide.org IN TEXAS

- STEP 1 — After signing FIE consent, immediately search your child's current campus and nearby campuses on iepguide.org to understand what ARD-eligible programs exist
- STEP 2 — At the ARD meeting, when a campus is proposed, search it on iepguide.org to verify it has the correct program level for your child's disability category
- STEP 3 — Ask the ARD committee: is the Educational Diagnostician and SLP physically on this campus on the days my child needs services, or do they travel from another campus?
- STEP 4 — For students with significant needs, compare service frequency proposed in the ARD document against what similar campuses provide — use iepguide.org to identify campuses with higher SWD % that may have more intensive programs
- STEP 5 — If you are not satisfied with the ARD's proposed campus, invoke your right to delay signing the ARD document and use iepguide.org to identify alternative campuses to request

Legal note: This guide reflects Texas special education rules as of May 2026. Timelines and agency contacts may change. Always verify with your district and consult a qualified special education advocate or attorney for guidance specific to your child's situation.