A new school year means a new grade level, new teachers, and new goals. This guide provides you, as a parent of a child with a disability, with a quick overview of what you can do to prepare your child for a smooth transition back into school.

**WHAT IS AN IEP?**

**Why is it important?**

**INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PLANS (IEP)**

- Outline individualized learning plans for students receiving special education services
- Define students' needs and services based on a comprehensive evaluation process
- Set reasonable learning goals aligned to grade level expectations

The IEP is developed by a team of individuals that includes key school staff and the student's parents. The team meets, reviews available assessment information, and designs an educational program to address the student's specific educational needs that result from his or her disability.

**HOW CAN I PREPARE MY CHILD FOR a smooth transition back to school?**

**STUDENT LEARNING**

- Review IEP goals with your child and make sure he or she understands expectations for the year
- Contact your child’s teachers and related services providers to share information and answer any questions about your child’s individual needs
- Know your child’s accommodations and practice using them at home
- If your child is just entering high school and may be eligible for an alternative pathway under Act 833 (2014), schedule an IEP meeting within the first 30 days of school to develop additional IEP goals and objectives
How can parents support student learning at home?

Learning does not end in the classroom. At home, parents play a critical role by supporting their children and setting high expectations for learning. As a parent, equip yourself with an understanding of what students should know and be able to do and then have on-going, meaningful conversations about it with your child and your child’s teacher. By taking these small steps, you will help your child become successful both in and outside the classroom.

**Student Conversations**

- What are you learning in _____________ class?
- Do you understand what you are learning?
- Do you get any additional help from your teacher (or related service provider such as speech pathologist) with this topic?
- Do you feel comfortable asking for additional help when you need it?
- Did you leave your classroom to work on anything in small groups? What did you learn?

**Teacher Conversations**

- What types of accommodations and supports does my child receive everyday?
- Is my child able to effectively communicate with you?
- Can you show me an example of my child’s work?
- Is my child making the progress necessary to keep him/her on track with his/her peers?
- What can we do to continue to help my child improve?

**Tools and Resources**

**TO SUPPORT PARENTS AND STUDENTS**

Below are additional resources that you can access to further support your child’s learning at home.

**Louisiana’s Family Support Toolbox Library**
[http://www.louisianabelieves.com/resources/library/family-support-toolbox-library](http://www.louisianabelieves.com/resources/library/family-support-toolbox-library)

**Students with Disabilities Library**
[https://www.louisianabelieves.com/resources/library/academics](https://www.louisianabelieves.com/resources/library/academics)

**Resources for Families of Students with Disabilities**

**Strategies for Success: A Guidebook for Supporting Students with Disabilities**