

Special Education



Special Education

- Law
- Special Education Cycle
- Advocacy
- Resources and Support



IDEA

Individuals with

Disabilities

Education

Act



6 Principles of IDEA

- ❖ Free and Appropriate Public Education
- ❖ Appropriate Evaluation
- ❖ Individual Education Program (IEP)
- ❖ Least Restrictive Environment
- ❖ Parents Play Key Role
- ❖ Procedural Safeguards

Rights and Safeguards

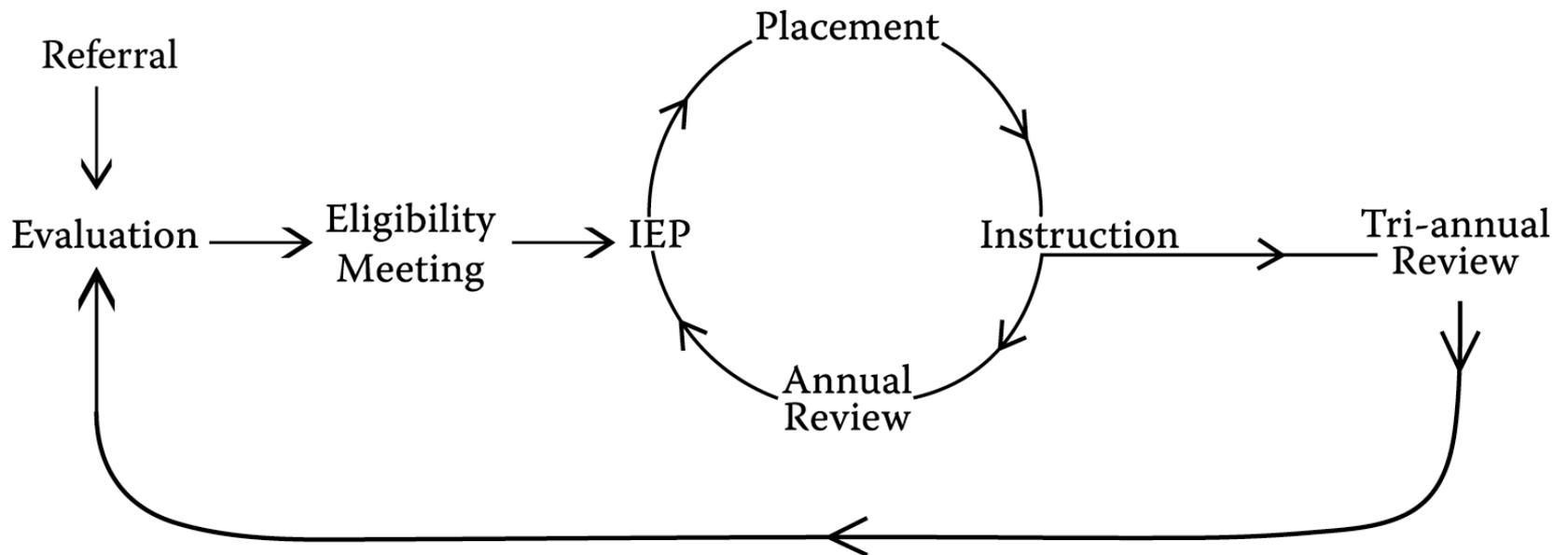
- Prior written notice for evaluations and placement
- Written parental consent
- Parental input
- Access to your child's educational records, including evaluation results
- Independent educational evaluation
- Evaluation free from cultural bias
- Assessment given in language child is comfortable with
- Access to due process hearings

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act

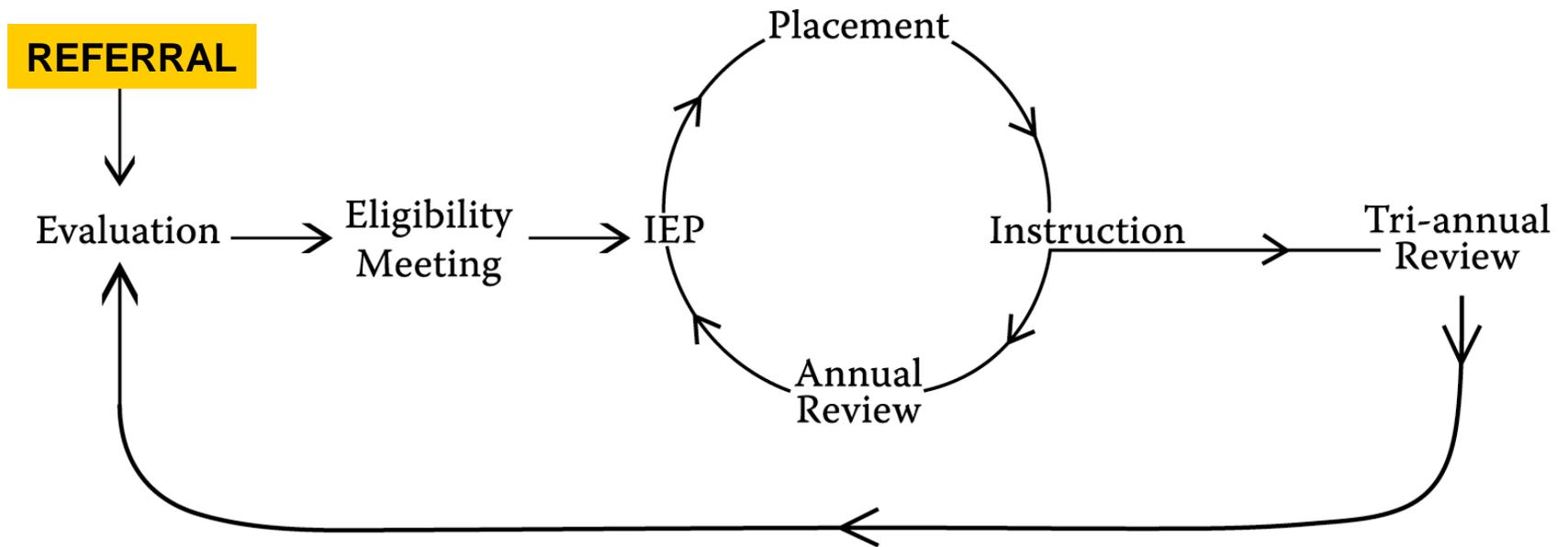


- Civil rights law
- Prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability
- Applies to public schools among other entities
- Has a broader definition of disability than IDEA

The Special Education Cycle

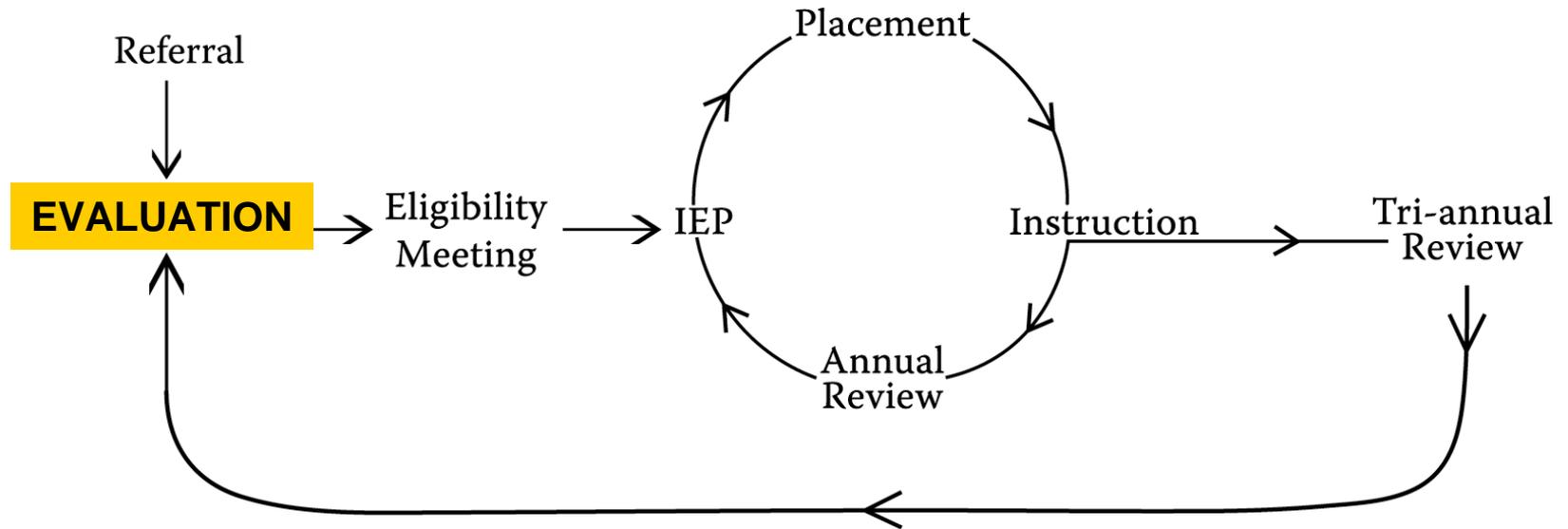


The Special Education Cycle: Referral



The referral is a request to have a child evaluated for special education services.

The Special Education Cycle: Evaluation



The evaluation is a series of tests and assessments the school system will use to determine whether a child qualifies for special education.

Evaluation

A student may be evaluated in these areas:

- Cognitive
- Behavioral
- Physical
- Developmental



Assessing Behavior

Functional Behavioral Assessment

- Process for addressing a student's problem behavior

Behavioral Intervention Plan

- Uses the observations made in the Functional Behavioral Assessment to create a concrete plan of action for managing a student's behavior

Manifestation Determination Hearing

Disruptive behavior is...

a manifestation of disability:

- Return to current placement unless parents and IEP team agree otherwise
- If behavior is interfering with learning, IEP team meets to consider new strategies to address behavior

not a manifestation of disability:

- Child may be disciplined, suspended or expelled as would a child with no disability

Parents as Experts

Can any description of your child be complete without your input?

What do you know about your child that no assessment will show?

How do you feel about speaking to others about your child's strengths and weaknesses?

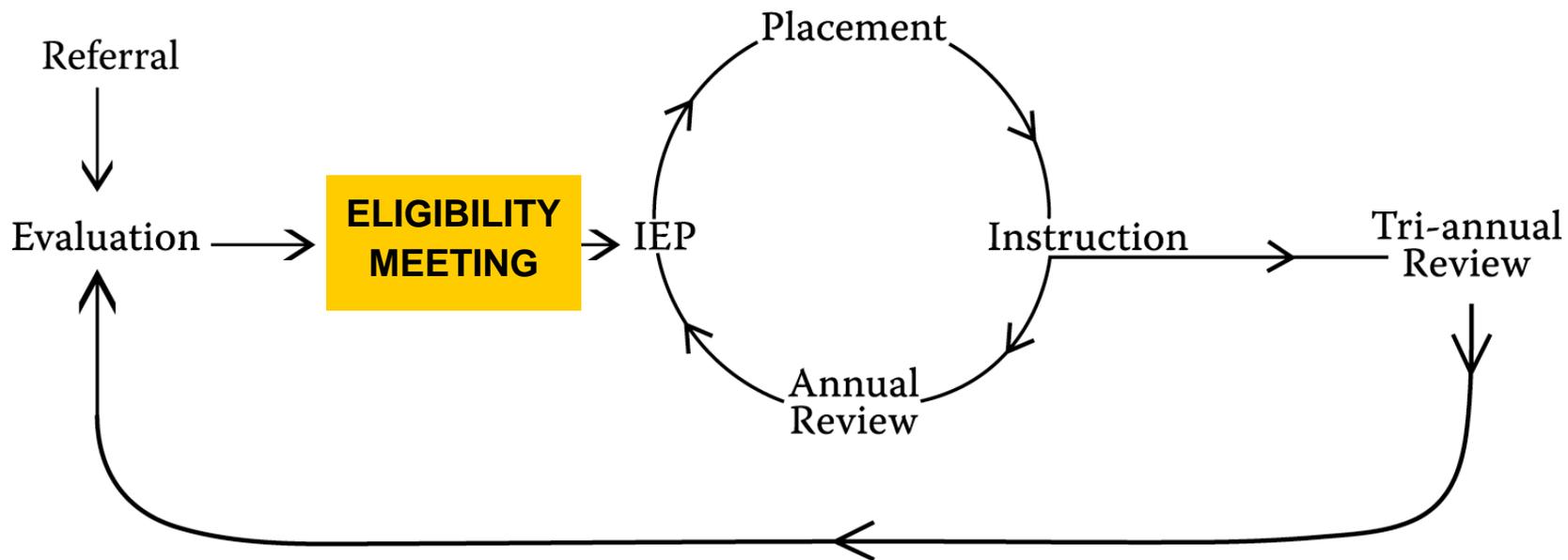
Evaluation Conference

Findings of the evaluation will be discussed

Do you disagree with the assessment?

- Ask informally for more testing to be done
- Request an Independent Educational Evaluation (IEE)
- Have an independent evaluation done at your own expense

The Special Education Cycle: Eligibility Meeting



The Eligibility Meeting is a meeting of the committee that will decide whether your child qualifies for special education.

Preparing for the Eligibility Meeting



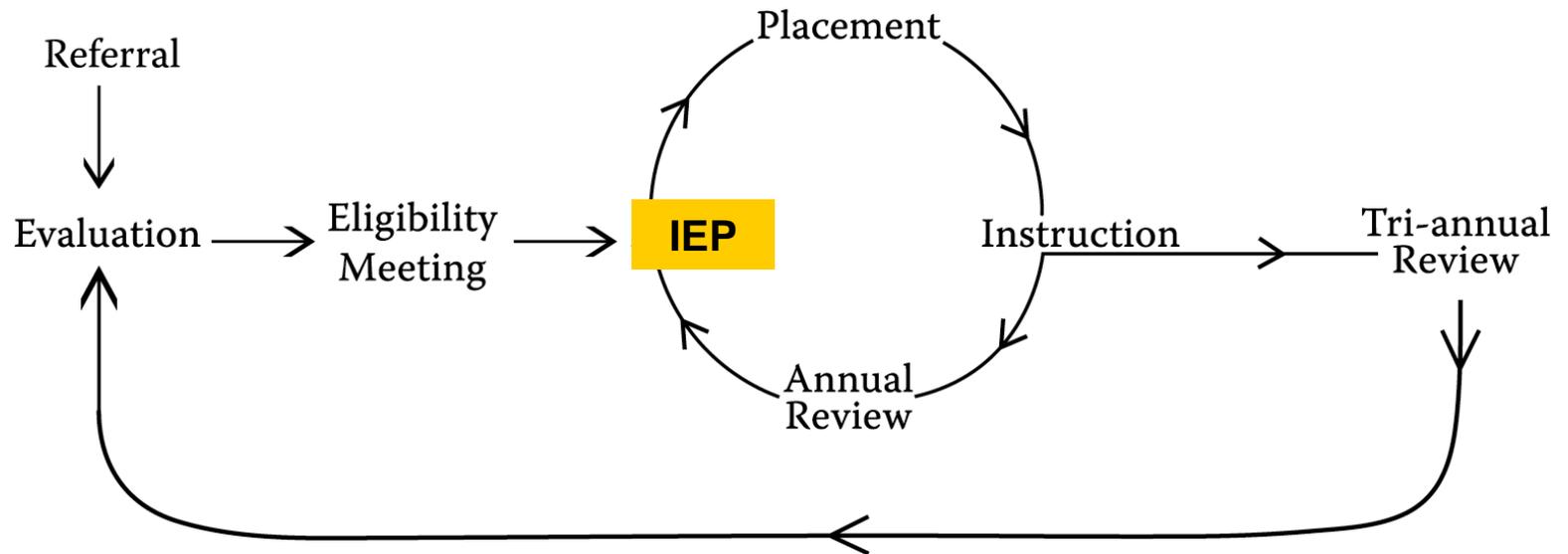
- Be familiar with the results of the evaluation before the meeting
- Write down your ideas about your child's needs and how to meet them before the meeting
- Bring a photo of your child and family

Do you disagree with the eligibility committee?

- Request mediation
- Request a due process hearing



The Special Education Cycle: Individual Education Program



An Individual Education Program (IEP) is an education plan written specifically for your child. It is written at a meeting attended by:

- Parents
- The child's regular teacher
- A special education teacher
- An administrator who can commit the school resources

Elements of an IEP

- Description of the child's current achievement
- Consideration of parental concerns
- Goals that are measurable and specific
- List of related services
- Details of special education placement
- Listed methods of assessing child's achievement
- Projected date to begin services, as well as details concerning frequency and location

Unsatisfied with your child's IEP?

- Sign the IEP, but indicate which parts you object to
- Sign IEP and list parts you object to, stating that you plan to appeal
- Refuse to sign, stating that you plan to appeal

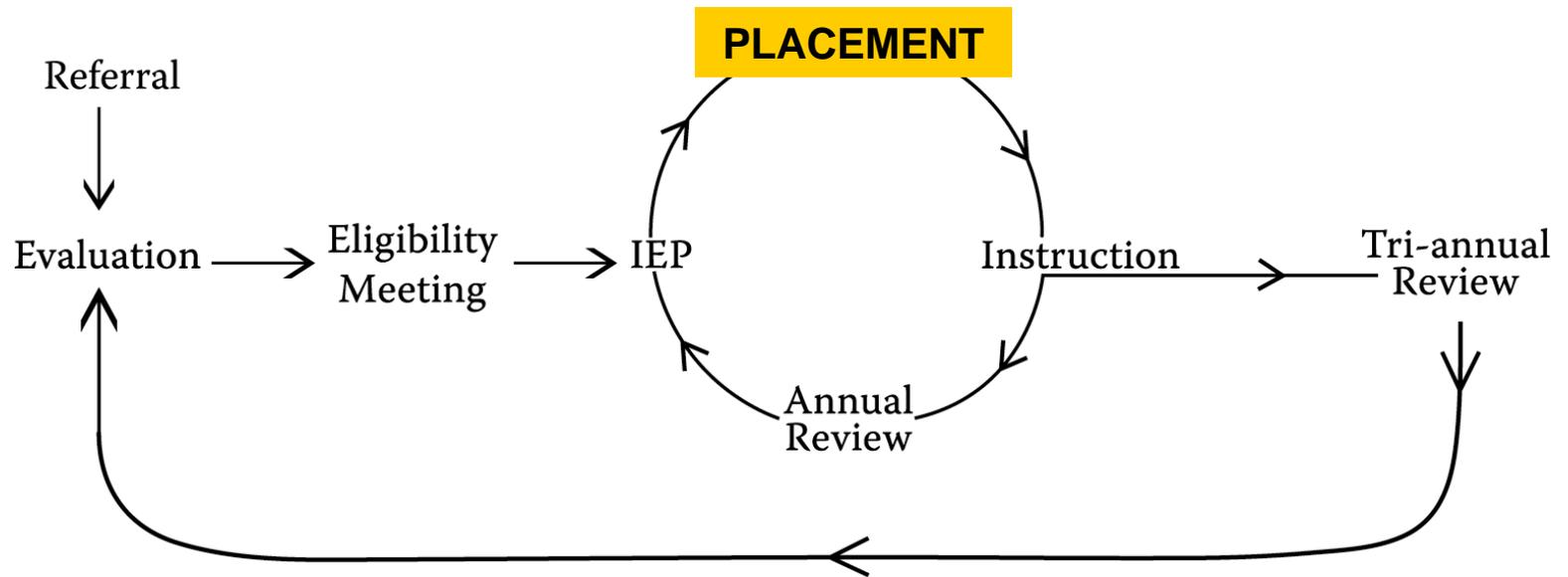


Managing Your Emotions

- Be aware of how you feel about your child's eligibility or IEP meeting
- Bring a spouse or friend
- Contact STOMP
- Create an IEP Notebook

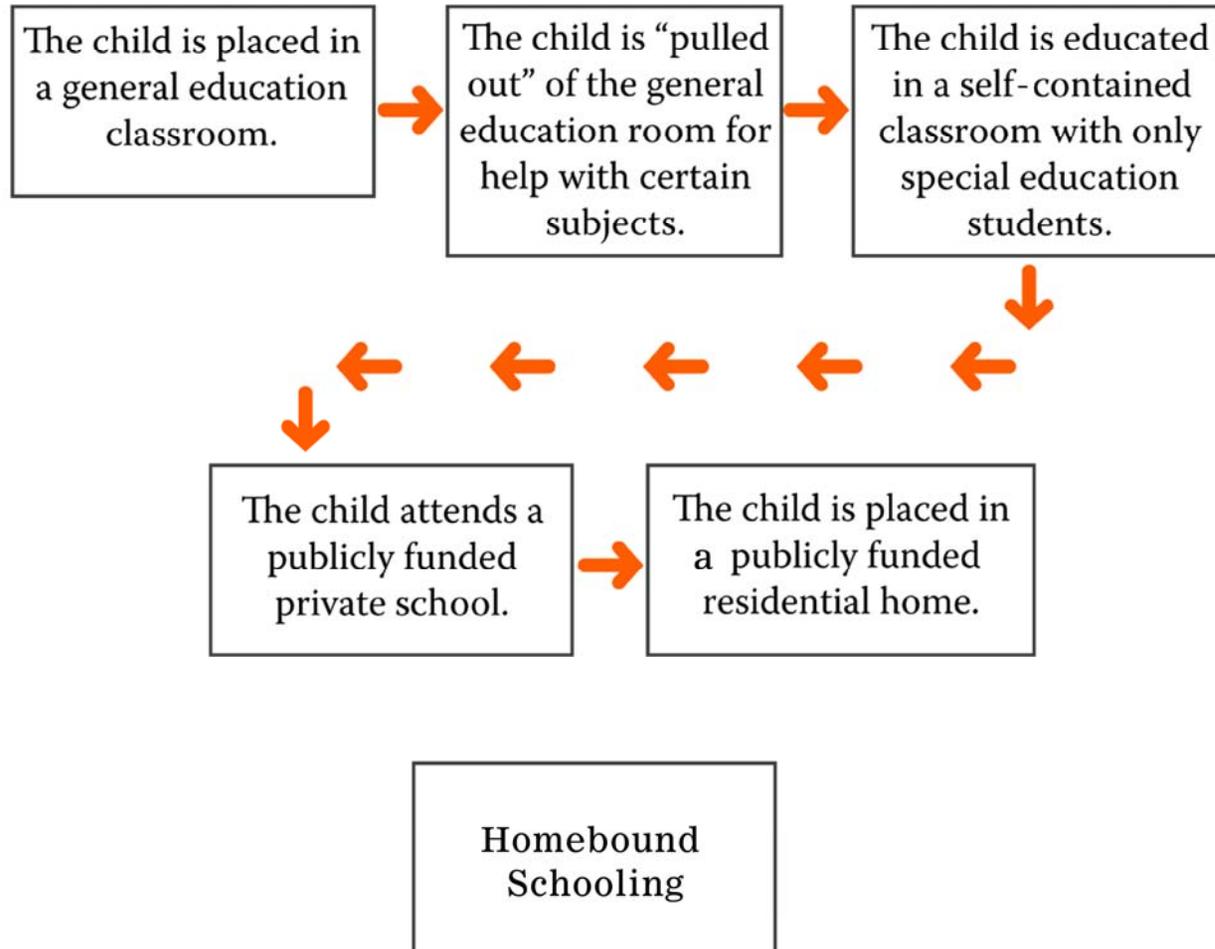


The Special Education Cycle: Placement



Placement refers to the setting in which your child will be educated.

Spectrum of Placement for Special Education



Related Services

- Assistive technology
- Auditory
- Counseling
- Medical
- Occupational therapy
- Orientation and mobility
- Parent counseling and training
- Physical therapy
- Physiological
- Rehabilitative counseling
- School health services
- Social work
- Speech
- Transportation

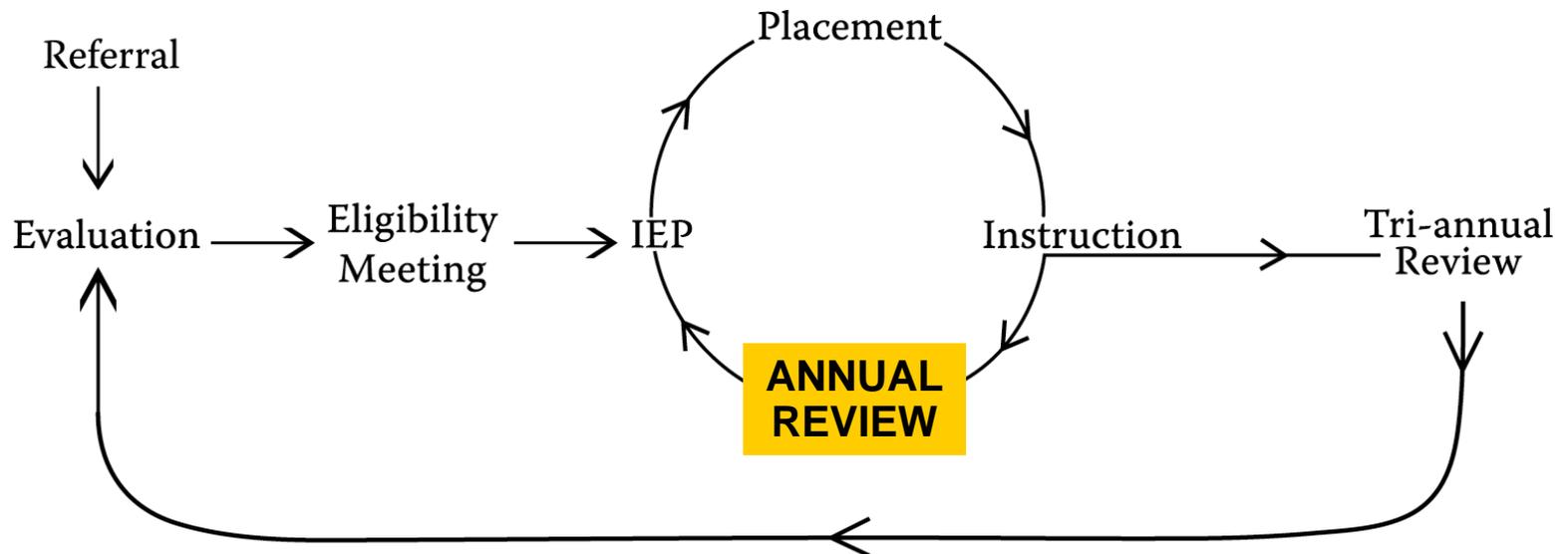
Whew!

- Relax a bit and give your child's educators a little time to get the plan running smoothly
- Establish a relationship of cooperation with the teachers
- Keep in touch with teachers



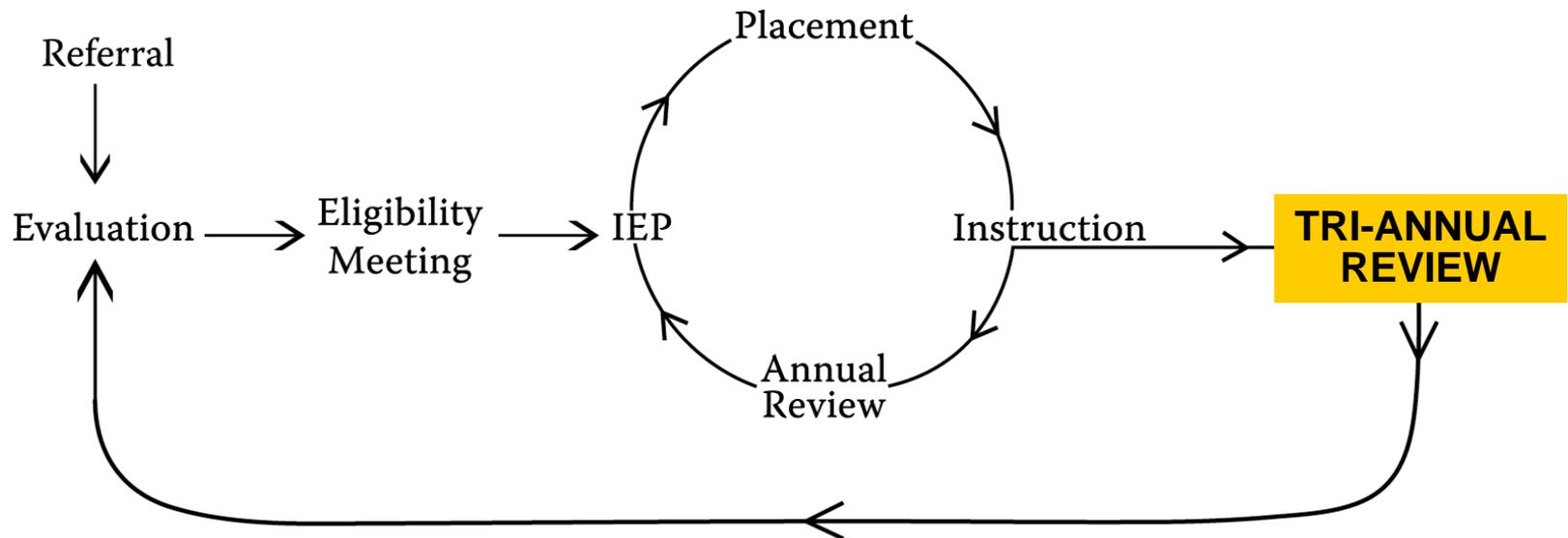
Annual Review

- The school is required to notify you in writing about this meeting
- It is attended by the child's parents, teachers, and a representative of the school system who can commit school resources



Tri-annual Review

- Every 3 years
- An extensive review
- May include new evaluations
- You may request specific evaluations if a new area of disability is suspected



Time to Move

Moving Within State:

Must offer same or comparable services as on current IEP until new system accepts previous IEP or develops new one.

Moving Out of State:

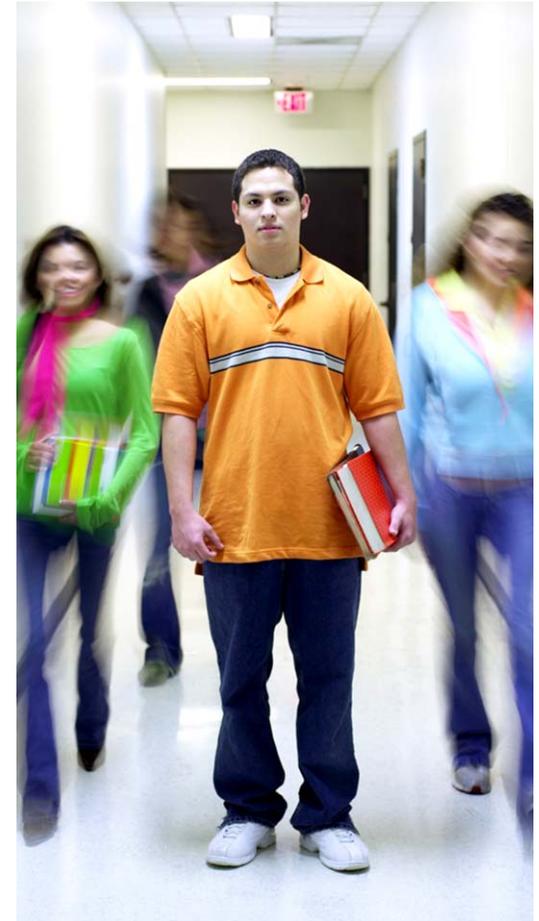
Must offer same or comparable services as on current IEP until new system conducts new evaluation and if appropriate develops a new IEP.



Transition to Adulthood

A New Focus

- Plan for the future
- Explore skills needed to live independently
- Shift IEP to address these needs between the ages of 14 and 16



Options for Grown Children

- College
- Continuing adult education
- Vocational training
- On-the-job training
- Competitive employment
- Supported employment
- Adult day programs
- Centers for independent living

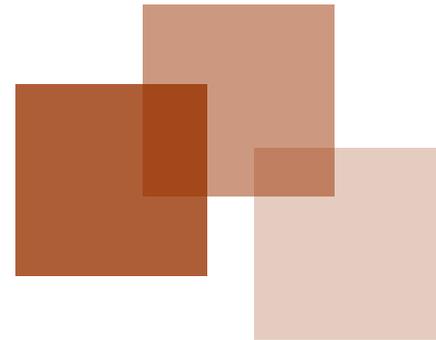
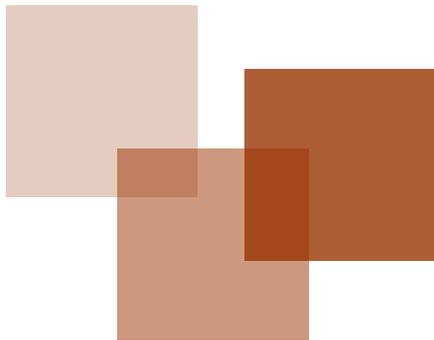
Advocating for Your Child

Parents are...

Active

Emotional

Thoughtful



Advocates are...

Organized

Strategic thinkers

Effective communicators

Clear Communication

- Be attentive when others are speaking
- Use open and receptive body language
- Make eye contact
- Ask questions, and if you don't understand the answers, ask again
- Remain polite
- Speak clearly with a steady voice

Letter Writing

- Use clear everyday language
- Keep it brief
- State purpose of letter in first paragraph
- Explain what action you would like to see
- Include contact information
- Make copies for file



Additional Resources

- The National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities (NICHY)
- Specialized Training for Military Parents (STOMP)
- *Include contact information for your State Protection and Advocacy Agency*
- *Include contact information for your State Parent Training Center*
- *Include information from your local school systems*