

Self-Determination

and

STUDENT-LED IEPS

The What, Why, and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

	Self-Determination	Student-Led Individualized Education Program (IEP)
The What	<p>Self-Determination is a combination of skills, knowledge and beliefs that enable a person to engage in goal directed, self-regulated, autonomous behavior. An understanding of one's strengths and limitations together with a belief in oneself as capable and effective are essential to self-determination.</p>	<p>A Student-Led IEP is an IEP in which the student uses the skills learned through self-determination to participate in part or whole in determining their educational plan. IEP case managers support the student prior to the IEP by practicing key components of the IEP. During the IEP, the case manager may provide a supporting role, co-lead or provide the majority of leadership during the meeting. The amount of support is individualized.</p>
The Why	<p>Research has demonstrated that individuals that have participated in direct practice of self-determination skills have greater ability to take control of their lives and assume the role of successful adults in our society. Students show greater confidence, communication skills and self-advocacy skills</p>	<p>When educators and parents begin to engage students in the process of educational planning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students begin to take ownership of their learning.• Students have a better understanding of the "why".• The teacher/student dynamic begins to positively change.

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Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)	
Will the same information be covered in a Student Led IEP?	Information pertinent to creating a new educational program will be covered. At times, the student may provide this information (in part or whole) or it may be student led but supported with additional information from the educational staff.
What if my student is not comfortable with this process/states they do not want to participate?	Case Managers will have a conversation with the student as well as parents regarding this process. Students are not required to lead their IEP. Case managers will practice with the student prior to the meeting as well as provide an agenda with a script or bullet points to support the student.
Should we even discuss my student's disability in front of them? I am not sure if I am comfortable with that.	As students begin to make the transition from school to post-school opportunities, they will be expected to advocate for their needs, explain their disabling condition and how it impacts them. Many students will need to advocate for accommodations as they enter work or higher education. By teaching self-determination and using the IEP process to practice those skills, students are able to find their voice as it relates to their strengths, talents and needs before they enter post-high school settings.
Who do I talk to if I have more questions?	Start with your Student's IEP case manager. If you still have more questions, please reach out to your school's SSD Transition Effective Practice Specialist.
Where do I go to find more resources and learn more about Self Determination and Student Led IEP's?	You can reach out to the SSD Parent Education and Diversity Awareness Program – 314-989-8460, or visit SSD Website, front page, Step 3 covers all aspects of the Transition Process. The link below will take you directly to additional information on Student Involvement in their IEP. http://www.ssdmo.org/step3/student_involvement_iep.html

