Introduction

Every year, over eight million parents in the United States face the challenge of "Winning the IEP Game." Parents walk into IEP meetings determined to fight for their child's rights to an appropriate education and too often leave feeling dismissed or completely ignored.

Shockingly, many school districts have an "imperfect idea" of what an appropriate special education should look like. Even more troubling, many administrators know exactly what an appropriate education is, yet they lack the political will or courage to provide it. All too often, budgets take priority over children. Excuses replace solutions. Delay and confusion become the special education department's battle cry. The result is the school district wins, your child loses! This book changes all that!

Winning the IEP Game is not just another book about special education law. It is based on the direct, lived experience of Dr. Robert Closson, Ed.D., who, in his 25-year career as a professional advocate and litigator, has personally facilitated and curated over 2,200 IEP meetings. Every meeting was audio-recorded and analyzed to determine what works and what doesn't. The strategies in this book are drawn from those hard-won lessons, tested in the real-world trenches of professional advocacy.

Please keep in mind, when the district delays, your child waits. When administrators make excuses, your child slips further behind. Every month wasted is more than lost time… growth is denied, and your child's potential is left unrealized. When you apply the lessons in this book, administrators will no longer be able to ignore you or mislead you into believing that an inadequate IEP is good enough for your child. In this world, the district gets schooled, and the parents win!

Make no mistake, "Winning the IEP Game" is not about luck, it's about skill and knowledge. This book provides parents, advocates, and attorneys with concrete, actionable strategies that overcome bureaucratic nonsense and hold the school districts accountable at every step of the IEP process. Getting your special needs child an appropriate special education is not about closing your eyes and hoping for the best, it is about informed, intentional actions that get results. Remember, hope and wish-casting is neither a plan nor an outcome. Only applied knowledge and unwavering persistence will lead you to the results you seek.