IEP Goal Writing: Introduction

Fall 2021

Writing Goals Package

- [IEP Goal Writing on Rule Changes Webpage](#)
  - Goal Writing SMART Goals
  - Goal Writing Using Data
  - Goal Writing Grade-Level Standards
  - Supplemental Resources
  - Live Office Hours
- [Proficiency-based Learning](#)
- [Transferable Skills](#)

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Why Do We Develop Goals?

- **Align**: Align student's program with learning standards.

- **Guide**: Guide monitoring of progress toward meeting the standards.

- **Assess**: Assess appropriateness of services in supporting the student in meeting goals.

- **Provide**: Provide meaningful reports to parents about actual growth.

Goal Writing Requirements

- Measurable annual goals related to the child's present levels of academic and functional performance which shall:
  - Use pertinent data.
  - Be written as measurable short-term objectives or benchmarks
    - Projected dates for accomplishment
    - Description of the evaluation procedures
    - Specific data
  - Enable the child to be involved in and progress in the same curriculum as children without disabilities.

Goal Writing Requirements (cont.)

- Enable the child to meet other educational needs that result from his or her disability;

- Be accompanied by a method of reporting the child's progress to the parents at least as often as other parents in the school receive progress reports. A progress report shall inform parents of:

  – Their child's progress toward the annual goals; and
  – The extent to which the progress is sufficient to enable the child to achieve the goals by the end of the year.

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Drafting Goals Prior to Meeting

- Federal Regulations: Discourages schools from preparing draft IEPs (this may hinder full and open communication).

- If any team member has specific goals for the team to consider:
  – Provide all team members with a copy of the goals.
  – Give all team members adequate time to review the proposal before the meeting. This allows them to processes and facilitates conversation.
  – At the beginning of the meeting, clearly state that this is a draft and only contains recommendations. State that all areas are open for discussion.

Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance

Considerations:
- Must include academic and functional performance
- Performance: What a child knows and can do.
- Present Level: A starting point used to determine if the child is making progress (as required by law)
- Includes current, measurable data that corresponds with IEP goals
- State the child's unique needs that result for their disability
- Consider student's strengths and interests
- Must be current, measurable, objective, and specific

Data:
- Use baseline data that is collected over time with reliable, accurate, and valid measures
- Quantitative data (e.g., the number of words read correctly, how many task steps completed correctly in 2 minutes)
- Qualitative data (e.g., observations of engagement, attention, and behavior survey results teacher notes from class observations, parental comments, and student interactions with peers)
- Narrative descriptions

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Academic Achievement and Functional Performance

Academic Achievement

- Includes academic subjects (reading, math, etc.)

Functional Performance

- Includes non-academic area (communication, fine motor, etc.)

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Reflective Questions: Goal Development

- What is preventing this student from participating in a less restrictive environment and/or from progressing in general education curriculum?

- What foundational skill(s) needs cross multiple content areas and settings?

- How many goals are reasonable given the student's abilities and rate of progress?

- Does the student need academic and functional goals?

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Goal Writing Process

- What skill/behavior do you want to see changed? (Goal)

- How frequently should I evaluate performance and adjust? (Schedule)

- How will the performance be recorded? Who will record the performance? (Method)

- How long will it take to demonstrate proficiency? (Criteria Period)

- What is my standard for performance? (Criteria)

- What conditions, behaviors, and criterion will be included?

How many IEP goals?

- The number of goals is individualized.

- Collect and interpret baseline data, then include parents in prioritizing which areas are the most important for the student to achieve.

- Consider how the time allotted for working on goals will affect the student's time spent with peers in the classroom.

Benchmarks and Objectives

Short-Term Objectives:

- Measurable

- Logical breakdown of the major components of the annual goal

- General indicators of progress, not a detailed instructional plan

- Timeframe, conditions, behavior, criteria

- Sequential or parallel

- Comprehensive

Benchmarks:

- Measurable

- Expected performance level

- Major milestones or precursor steps

- Sequential

- Timeframe, condition, behavior

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Proficiency-based Learning

Proficiency-based learning (PBL) centers on demonstrations of specific and transparent learning outcomes in which learning is the constant and time is the variable. When an education system is grounded in PBL, students not only gain the academic and transferrable skills, abilities, and knowledge required for different content areas, but more importantly, the ability to apply their learning in novel and cross-disciplinary contexts necessary for success in career, college, and civic life. Proficiency-based education ensures that all students have the opportunity to be fully engaged and supported in authentic, rigorous learning inside and outside the classroom.

Characteristics of Proficiency-based Learning

- Students make important decisions about learning experiences, how they will create and apply knowledge, and how they will demonstrate their learning, thus developing ownership, independence, and responsibility.

- Assessment is a meaningful and empowering learning experience for students that yields timely, relevant, and actionable feedback.

- Students receive relevant, varied instruction and timely, differentiated support based on their individual learning needs.

- Student progress is based on evidence of proficiency, rather than level of participation, effort, or time spent in the classroom.

- Students learn actively using different pathways and varied pacing.

- Strategies to ensure equity for all students are embedded in the culture, structure, and pedagogy of schools and education systems.

- Learning targets are rigorous, common expectations for learning that clarify what to learn, how deeply to learn it, and how to demonstrate evidence of new learning.

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Proficiency-based Learning and IEP Goals

- Implementing proficiency-based learning models will have the greatest impact on student learning.

- Student-centered learning approach is critical to high quality implementation.

- Meaningful inclusion

  – project design elements

  – teaching practices

- Provide and build peer relationships and real-life skills.

3 Steps for Proficiency-based Learning Connected to IEP Goals

1. Collaborate
2. Differentiate Instruction
3. Embed IEP Goals into Projects

For further information on Proficiency-Based Learning, please visit [Vermont Agency of Education Webpage.](#)

Progress Monitoring

- Describes how the child is progressing towards meeting their annual goals.

- Report Includes: Stated target area, the criteria that was used to measure progress, changes in performance or behavior clearly defined.

- Team decides how data will be collected and reported to measure progress. This assesses how the child is progressing in the educational setting and evaluates instruction.

- Progress monitoring dates (for goals and objectives when appropriate) and how progress will be reported to parents are determined at the IEP meeting and written into IEPs.

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Checklist for IEP Goals

- Parent/Guardian was involved in the creation (and changes) of goals.

- Academic and functional present levels are accurate.

- Academic, social, behavioral, transitional goals are listed as appropriate.

- Goals are written as SMART goals.

- Goals are based on the present levels of performance.

- Goals are standards-based and strength-based.

- Materials, assistance, directions or instructions are provided during assessment of goals are listed.

- Dates and methods of goal progress monitoring is listed.

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