



Individualized Education Program Goal Writing


Division of Early Intervention and Special Education Services
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PRESENTED BY

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1

Individualized Education Program Goal Writing



Intended Outcomes

By the end of the session, participants will be able to:

- Understand the purpose and importance of a properly written Individualized Education Program (IEP) goal.
- Describe the types of IEP goals and the use IEP objectives.
- Recognize and describe the five components of an IEP goal.
- Craft IEP goals for a sample student with a disability.

Individualized Education Program (IEP) Goal Writing 10.23.2024 2

2



Presentation Outline

1. Individualized Education Program (IEP) Goals and Objectives
2. Five Components of IEP Goals
3. Engagement Activity

Individualized Education Program (IEP) Goal Writing 10.23.2024 3

3

1. Individualized Education Program (IEP) Goals and Objectives
 2. Five Components of IEP Goals
 3. Engagement Activity

Individualized Education Program (IEP) Goals and Objectives

4

4

Individualized Education Program (IEP) Goals and Objectives

IEP Goals and Objectives

- Developing standards-aligned IEPs requires the team to continuously focus on the grade-level expectations for all students, while also considering the student's current levels of performance.
- All students receive grade-level content and standards, even when there is a significant gap between the enrolled grade and the student's instructional level in a content area.
- Students receive specially designed instruction on the specific skills needed to approach or achieve grade level performance.

Individualized Education Program (IEP) Goal Writing 10.23.2024 5

5


Individualized Education Program (IEP) Goals and Objectives

IEP Goals and Objectives

- While the State standards are the framework guiding instruction for all students, the standards themselves are not IEP goals.
- An IEP goal is an individualized statement of what a student will be able to do at the end of a set time frame.
- Goals typically describe performance of a skill that is required for multiple standards or describes a skill performance that reflects an adaptation of a standard.
- The team must also consider and develop goals that are reflective of the needs of the whole child and do no reflect the development of isolated skills driven by assessment results.

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6


Five Components of IEP Goals 

Progress Monitoring

- Progress monitoring of IEP goals and objectives occurs on an individually determined basis (at least quarterly).
- Analysis of the gap between current performance and grade-level standards and age-appropriate expectations occurs regularly.

Individualized Education Program (IEP) Goal Writing 10.23.2024 7

7


Individualized Education Program (IEP) Goals and Objectives 

Academic Goals

- A grade aligned goal is required for all students in **any academic** area of need.
- In addition to a grade aligned goal in any academic area of need, a student may require a below grade level goal in the same area to bridge the gap in skills.
- The IEP team determines high-priority skills that underlie one or more key grade-level standards that the student is unlikely to master without specially designed instruction.
- The IEP team will then determine how much growth in the skill can be reasonably expected given appropriate instruction and intervention customized to the student's need.
- While a student may not achieve all grade level standards, the goals reflect meaningful progress on skills that are essential to progress in the grade level curriculum.
- For students with the most significant cognitive disabilities participating in the Alternate Framework, these goals are aligned to the grade level Essential Element(s) that represent grade level skills, reduced in depth, breadth, and complexity.

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8


Individualized Education Program (IEP) Goals and Objectives 

Functional Goals

- Goals that are identified for any student whose disability affects non-academic skills such as social-emotional behavior, communication, and engagement.
- IEP teams may identify essential skills that a students needs for communicating knowledge or social engagement, self-regulating their behavior, self-advocating, participating in class or school activities, engaging within the social norms of their community, and using technology for learning and independence.
- These goals target skills that affect the student's access and progress in current and future environments.

Individualized Education Program (IEP) Goal Writing 10.23.2024 9

9


Individualized Education Program (IEP) Goals and Objectives 

IEP Objectives

- Each IEP goal should include objectives that are indicators of milestones for measuring the student's progress over the time frame of the IEP.
- The number of objectives associated with each goal is determined by the team based on the student's need and the nature of the skill.
- There are several approaches to developing objectives, including:
 - Divide the goal into sequential component skills and set time frames for mastery of each one.
 - In many cases these skills are sequential and, when all are mastered, the goal will be achieved.
 - Divide the goal into component skills that may be taught simultaneously (e.g., punctuation, capitalizing, and spacing lead to a goal of writing complete and correct sentences)
 - Set benchmarks that describe incremental changes in the student's performance.
 - These changes may reflect increased rate or accuracy (e.g., number of correct words per minute, amount of time participating in an activity) or decreased levels of prompting or other supports.

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10


Individualized Education Program (IEP) Goals and Objectives 

Preschool IEP Goals and Objectives

- Developing preschool goals, the team focuses on the functionality of learning and development within the context of natural routines and activities.
- The IEP team uses the comprehensive information found in the PLAAFP to develop functional, participation-based goals that include all the following elements:
 - The goal is written in plain language and is jargon-free.
 - The goal emphasizes the positive.
 - The goal describes the child's involvement in age-appropriate activities to address academic and functional areas.
 - The goal is measurable and observable.
 - The goal describes how the child will demonstrate what they know or can do.
 - The goal describes the situations in which the child will demonstrate the goal and does not name a placement or educational environment.

Individualized Education Program (IEP) Goal Writing 10.23.2024 11

11



1. Individual Education Program (IEP) Goals and Objectives

2. Five Components of IEP Goals

3. Engagement Activity

Five Components of IEP Goals

12

12

Five Components of IEP Goals

Five Components of IEP Goals and Objectives

- Annual IEP goals should reflect an "ambitious but achievable" amount of progress over the time of the IEP.
- To be consistently implemented and monitored, annual IEP goals and objectives should contain the following five components: All IEP goals and objectives should include the following 5 components:
 - Condition
 - Behavior
 - Criteria
 - Method of Measurement
 - Timeframe

Individualized Education Program (IEP) Goal Writing 10.23.2024 13

13

Five Components of IEP Goals

Conditions

- A description of the circumstances in which the skill will be measured, including factors such as materials, assistance provided, directions given, and the environment (physical environment or in the context of an activity).
- Conditions may reflect the adaptations that allow the student to approach or achieve grade level expectations.
- Within the objectives, the conditions may reflect decreasing levels of support the student will require to perform the skill over the time of the IEP.

Given a graphing calculator,	With adult support,	Across environments,
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Individualized Education Program (IEP) Goal Writing 10.23.2024 14

14

Five Components of IEP Goals


Behavior

- An observable, measurable action that the student will perform.
- To select the skill or behavior, the IEP team considers what the student will do to demonstrate mastery of the target skill.
- The behavior should then be described in terms that can be consistently measured.

Jessica will decode...	Kevin will label...	Victoria will predict...
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Individualized Education Program (IEP) Goal Writing 10.23.2024 15

15

Five Components of IEP Goals 


Criteria

- Expected level of performance (mastery) and how many times the student must demonstrate that level of performance for the goal/objective to be considered achieved (retention).
- The IEP team considers the skill itself and the student's present performance in order to choose a target that is meaningful, ambitious, and realistic.
- The criteria measured needs to make sense for the skill being observed.
- The criteria for success is directly related to the method of measurement (e.g., percent accuracy, rate, number of occurrences).

With no more than one error	Within five minutes of a verbal prompt	In two out of four trials	Over five consecutive sessions
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Individualized Education Program (IEP) Goal Writing 10.23.2024 16

16

Five Components of IEP Goals 


Method of Measurement

- A reliable and valid tool or other means of objectively determining whether the specified criterion has been met.
- Examples:
 - Frequency count
 - Teacher-created rubrics
 - Teacher data collection sheets
 - Classroom-based assessments when applicable

Informal Procedures: Progress monitoring probe	Classroom-Based Assessments: End of unit benchmark assessment	Observation Record: Antecedent-Behavior-Consequence (ABC) chart
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Individualized Education Program (IEP) Goal Writing 10.23.2024 17

17


Five Components of IEP Goals 

Time Frame

- Each goal and objective must quantify the length of time (by what date) the IEP team anticipates the student will achieve the goal or objective.
- The date should be no more than one year from the time at which the goal is being written but may be less if the team feels the student should achieve the goal in a shorter time frame.

Individualized Education Program (IEP) Goal Writing 10.23.2024 18

18


Five Components of IEP Goals 

Putting it all Together

- Goals and objectives that contain the five components support student achievement by providing clear direction to the implementing team.
- Conditions clarify elements of specially designed instruction that support learning.
- Clear criteria and methods of measurement set the stage for effective progress monitoring.
- Well-designed objectives allow the team to determine if the student is making adequate progress and whether they need to adjust the specially designed instruction.

Individualized Education Program (IEP) Goal Writing 10.23.2024 19

19




1. Individualized Education Program (IEP) Goals and Objectives
2. Five Components of IEP Goals
3. Engagement Activity

Engagement Activity

20

20


Engagement Activity 

Engagement Activity

- You are going to look at some goals and determine which component each goal is missing.
- After determining which component is missing, you will "fill in the blank" with something that makes sense to complete the goal.

Individualized Education Program (IEP) Goal Writing 10.23.2024 21

21

Wrap-Up 

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Individualized Education Program (IEP) Goal Writing 10.23.2024 22

22

Wrap-Up 

Session Evaluation

Evaluation #3: Individualized Education Program Goal Writing



Please scan the QR code to complete the evaluation for today's session.

Specialty Designed Instruction and High-Leverage Practices 09.26.2024 23

23

In accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), all IEPs must include a statement of measurable annual goals, including academic and functional goals, designed to meet the student's needs that result from the student's disability and enable the student to be involved in, and make progress in the general education curriculum (20 U.S.C. § 1414). In order to be consistently implemented and monitored, based on the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) IEP Process Guide, annual IEP goals should contain the following five components.

Component	Description	Examples
Conditions	<p>The circumstances under which the skills be performed.</p> <p>Includes (but not limited to): materials, assistance, directions, or environment.</p>	<p>With access to a calculator...</p> <p>When presented with a third-grade level text...</p> <p>During unstructured social time...</p>
Behavior	<p>The observable, measurable action the student will perform.</p>	<p>Ava will solve ten multiplication facts (2, 3, and 5 facts)...</p> <p>Andy will read the text aloud at a rate of 75 words per minute...</p> <p>Riley will use their Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) device for expressive communication by initiating a greeting to a peer...</p>
Criteria (Mastery & Retention)	<p>The expected level of performance (mastery).</p> <p>How many times the student will demonstrate the level of performance for the goal and objectives to be considered achieved (retention).</p>	<p>With 100% accuracy on three consecutive in-class assignments...</p> <p>With no more than four errors in five trials...</p> <p>Independently, in two out of three opportunities...</p>
Method of Measurement	<p>A reliable or valid tool used for additional means of objectively determining whether the specified criteria has been met.</p>	<p>As measured by student work samples.</p> <p>As measured by running records.</p> <p>As measured by teacher observations and recorded data.</p>

Component	Description	Examples
Time Frame	The date by which the goal/objective will be accomplished.	For a goal, the date should be no more than one year from the time at which the goal is written but may be less if the team feels the student should achieve the goal in a shorter time.

SAMPLE GOALS:

By 2/3/2025, with access to a calculator, Ava will solve ten multiplication facts (2, 3, and 5 facts) with 100% accuracy on three consecutive in-class assignments as measured by student work samples.

By 2/3/2025, when presented with a third-grade level text, Andy will read the text aloud at a rate of 75 words per minute with no more than four errors in five trials as measured by running records.

By 2/3/2025, during unstructured social time, Riley will use their AAC device for expressive communication by initiating a greeting to a peer independently, in two out of three opportunities as measured by teacher observation and recorded data.

Developing IEP Goals

STEP 1: EXAMINE GRADE LEVEL CURRICULUM AND FUNCTIONAL AGE EXPECTATIONS

Use curriculum and other resources to understand Maryland College and Career Ready Standards (MCCRS) for the grade in which the student is enrolled. Also, analyze the standards from earlier and later in the learning progression. Use additional resources to understand age expected functional expectations. For students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, as determined by the school IEP team, familiarize yourself with the Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) Essential Elements (EEs).

STEP 2: UNDERSTAND STUDENT STRENGTHS AND NEEDS

Use information from the Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP) to identify areas of need. Analyze trend data over time as well as other data points from multiple sources.

STEP 3: PRIORITIZE ACADEMIC AND FUNCTIONAL SKILLS

Based on knowledge of age and grade expectations and knowledge of the student, identify which age/grade level standard(s) and/or expectation(s) the student is most likely to have difficulty meeting that will require specially designed instruction (SDI). From these academic and functional skills, prioritize those standards and skills that, when targeted through IEP goals, will accelerate individual student progress to narrow the achievement gap between the student and his or her non-disabled peers. These standards and skills will become the focus of IEP goals and objectives.

STEP 4: DEVELOP IEP GOALS

Based on the targeted standards and skills, develop IEP goals and objectives that include the following components:

- Conditions under which the skills be demonstrated;
- The targeted behavior described in observable, measurable terms;
- The criteria for measuring mastery and retention of the skill;
- The method of measurement; and
- The time frame by which the goal and objectives will be achieved.

For all students with academic area(s) of need, align goals to prioritized MCCRS for each academic area of need.

For students missing critical skills from earlier grades that support current and future learning, align additional academic goals to MCCRS from earlier in the learning progression.

For students whose access, participation and independence in the school environment is impacted by the disability, align functional goals to age/grade appropriate expectations.

For students with the most significant cognitive disabilities who are working toward alternate academic achievement standards with parental consent, align goals to the grade level EEs for the student's grade.

For preschool age students, align academic and functional goals to the Maryland Early Learning Standards.

For students age 14 and over, consider the student's postsecondary aspirations and how annual IEP goals can support transition goals and activities.

STEP 5: DEVELOP OBJECTIVES

Develop objectives based on the needs of the student and how he or she will demonstrate mastery of the IEP goal. Select the number of objectives appropriate to the student and skills that will allow for goal instruction, progress monitoring and inform instructional planning.

Objectives may be:

- Sequential benchmarks of increasing accuracy, fluency or independence; or
- Components of the goal skills; or
- Prerequisite skills.

IEP Goal Development Tool

Use this tool to determine the student's areas of need, identify grade-level based standards to work on, and develop robust IEP goals and objectives.

Key Information Necessary to Develop IEP Goal

Element	Key Information
Identify student's areas of need based on the PLAAFP (Include trend data from previous IEPs, if applicable).	
Compare the student's areas of needs to MCCRS (or EEs, if applicable). Identify which standards may need to be targeted.	
Identify which skills/standards/expectations from the student's grade level standards the student is most likely to have difficulty meeting without SDI.	

Determine the Five Components of the Goal

Component	Goal Content
Condition	
Behavior	
Criteria (Mastery)	
Criteria (Retention)	
Method of Measurement	
Time Frame	

Complete IEP Goal:

Develop Objectives

Note: There are four objective workspaces. Consider the student you are developing the goal and objectives for. They may or may not need all four objectives to achieve their goal.

Component	Objective #1 Content	Objective #2 Content
Condition		
Behavior		
Criteria (Mastery)		
Criteria (Retention)		
Method of Measurement		
Time Frame		

Objective #1:

Objective #2:

Component	Objective #3 Content	Objective #4 Content
Condition		
Behavior		
Criteria (Mastery)		
Criteria (Retention)		
Method of Measurement		
Time Frame		

Objective #3:

Objective #4:

Resources

DLM Essential Elements Unpacked: <https://www.dlmpd.com/dlm-essential-elements-unpacking/>

Maryland Online IEP Learning Modules: Goals and Objectives: <http://olms.cte.jhu.edu/moiep-goals-objectives>

Maryland Statewide IEP Process Guide: https://cdn.elev.io/file/uploads/INpS-TjMN6NtuyYZMB0npYL0putn4BGT_yM3KiRUeAQ/ChQ4pzpy0yBd14TH0IfjHqcGpd29ktvwgbVueRxB45c/IEPProcessGuideMarch2024Updated-RHA.pdf

MCCRS for ELA: <https://www.marylandpublicschools.org/programs/Pages/ELA/standards.aspx>

MCCRS Vertical Progressions for ELA:

<https://www.marylandpublicschools.org/programs/Pages/ELA/progressions.aspx>

MCCRS for Mathematics:

<https://www.marylandpublicschools.org/about/Pages/DCAA/Math/MCCRSM.aspx>