

INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP) – GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Legal Requirements

The IEP shall show a direct relationship between the present levels of performance, the goals and objectives, and the specific educational services to be provided.

The IEP is a written statement for each student with a disability that is developed, reviewed, and revised in accordance with this section, as required by § 1414(d) of Title 20 of the United States Code, and includes the following:

A statement of measurable annual goals, including academic and functional goals, designed to do the following:

1. Meet the needs of the individual that result from the disability of the individual to enable the student to be involved in and make progress in the general education curriculum.
2. Meet each of the other educational needs of the student that result from the disability of the individual.
3. Beginning not later than the first IEP to be in effect when the student is 16 years of age, and updated annually thereafter, the following shall be included:
4. Appropriate measurable post-secondary goals based upon age-appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment, and, where appropriate, independent living skills.

If appropriate, the IEP shall also include, but not be limited to the following:

1. For s whose native language is other than English, linguistically appropriate goals, objectives, programs and services.

Legal References

EC 56345, 5 CCR 3040

Local Procedures

The most important part of the IEP is the development of appropriate and measurable goals and objectives. The IEP team should ensure that:

1. The assessment is comprehensive.
2. Present levels of performance accurately reflect all areas of assessment findings and are reported in family friendly language.
3. Identified needs are directly related to present levels of performance.
4. Accurate baseline data is established for each area of need. Baseline data should be quantitative, and not subjective.
5. Goals are written to be measurable against the baseline data.

Assessment of Areas of Need

Assessment generally begins by using instruments or methods that are broad in scope. It might begin with a standardized test such as the Woodcock Johnson Psychoeducational Battery in order to get age equivalency scores in math, language arts, etc. But age equivalency alone is not helpful for describing present levels of performance and it is not helpful as baseline data for goals. The next step is to administer some form of curriculum-based measurement (CBM) or a grade-level or content-level standards based common assessment. This informal level of assessment can be developed based on information obtained from the classroom teacher, from a review of work samples, from a review of the

grade level content standards being targeted for the student, etc. It usually involves teacher-made tests designed to assess a student’s present level of performance in the actual classroom curriculum or on specific state content standards. It should result in succinct descriptions of a student’s present levels of performance, both their level of mastery and level of need, for each area evaluated.

Following are examples of good and poor descriptions of student performance levels:

Good Examples:	Poor Examples:
Student reads 40 words correctly per minute in a second grade reading text.	Student reads at 2.2 grade level.
Student writes a topic sentence and 3 supporting sentences with 80% spelling accuracy.	Student needs to learn to write complex sentences.
Student counts, reads and writes whole number to 1000 and identifies place value for each digit.	Student knows numbers and values.
Student will play a board game with one other student, taking turns and sharing materials, for 5 minutes.	Student fights frequently.
Student’s anxiety causes her leave class when she becomes anxious over assignments. Student is most commonly agitated by math assignments.	Student has a diagnosis of anxiety.

Based on the present levels of performance, the IEP team must identify the primary areas of need to be included in the IEP. The IEP goals must address each area of need and be consistent with the present levels of performance. All IEP goals must be linked to grade-level core content standards.

In 2012, the state of California adopted and implemented the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in English and math. In order to make informed decisions about each student’s strengths and needs, the IEP team should consider how the student is performing in relation to the state’s grade level content standards for the grade in which the student is enrolled. There are seven major steps that educators can take to develop a standards-based IEP.

Step 1: Consider the grade-level content standards for the grade in which the student is enrolled or would be enrolled based on age. ASK:

1. What is the intent of the content standard?
2. What is the content standards saying that the student should know and be able to do?

Step 2: Examine classroom and student data to determine where the student is functioning in relation to the grade-level standards. ASK:

1. Has the student been taught content aligned with grade-level standards?
2. Has the student been provided appropriate instruction scaffolding to attain grade level expectations?
3. Were the lessons and teaching materials used to teach the student aligned with state grade level standards?

4. Was the instruction evidence-based?

Step 3: Develop the present level of academic achievement and functional performance. Describe the individual strengths and needs of the student in relation to accessing and mastering the general curriculum ASK:

1. What do we know about the student's response to the academic instruction (e.g., progress monitoring data?)
2. What programs, accommodations (i.e., classroom and testing) and/or interventions have been successful with the student?
3. What have we learned from previous IEPs and student data that can inform decision making?
4. Are there assessment data (i.e., state, district, and/or classroom) that can provide useful information for making decisions about the student's strengths and needs (e.g., patterns in the data)?
5. Consider the factors related to the student's disability and how they affect how the student learns and demonstrates what he or she knows. ASK
6. How does the student's disability affect participation and progress in the general curriculum?
7. What supports does the student need to learn the knowledge and attain the skills to progress in the general curriculum?
8. Is the student on track to achieve grade-level proficiency within the year?

Step 4: Develop measurable annual goals aligned with grade-level academic content standards. ASK:

1. What are the student needs as identified in the present level of performance?
2. Does the goal have a specific timeframe?
3. What can the student reasonably be expected to accomplish in one school year?
4. Are the conditions for meeting the goal addressed?
5. How will the outcome of the goal be measured?

Step 5: Assess and report the student's progress throughout the year. ASK:

1. How does the student demonstrate what he/she knows on classroom, district, and state assessments?
2. Are a variety of assessments used to measure progress?
3. How will progress be reported to parents?

Step 6: Identify specially designed instruction including accommodations and/or modifications needed to access and progress in the general education curriculum. ASK:

1. What accommodations are needed to enable the student and were they effective?
2. Has the complexity of the material been changed in such a way that the content has been modified?

Step 7: Determine the most appropriate assessment option. ASK:

1. What types of assessments are offered in my state?
2. What types of responses do different state assessments require?
3. What are the administrative conditions of the assessment? (i.e., setting, delivery of instructions, time allotted, etc.)
4. What accommodations are allowed on the assessment(s)?
5. Are the accommodations approved for the assessment also used in the classroom?
6. Has the student received standards-based, grade-level instruction?
7. Was the instruction evidence based?

8. What is the student’s instructional level?
9. How different is the student’s instructional level from the level of typical peers?
10. Can the student make progress toward grade-level standards in the same timeframe as typical peers? (If no, consider modified academic achievement standards.)
11. What can be learned from the student’s previous state assessment results?
12. Can the student demonstrate what he/she knows on the assessment option under consideration?

Baseline to Goals

Establishing proper baseline data is the most important step in developing good goals and is often misunderstood. Baseline data should clearly allow a team to measure progress on a goal. Very often, there is quite a stretch between the baseline data and the goal as in the following example:

1. Baseline Data – WJ Reading 2.2
2. Goal – student will read a 3rd grade reading text at the rate of 100 words per minute with 95% accuracy as measured by CBM tracking.

The assumption in this example is that, if the student is reading at the 2.2 grade level, a 3rd grade level goal should be reasonable. Unfortunately making this type of assumption can be a mistake. While going from second grade to third grade doesn’t seem like much of a stretch, it might if the baseline data had been directly related to the goal. The baseline data does not make clear at what rate or accuracy the student is reading 2.2 grade-level texts. That is what happens when a standardized score is used as baseline data for a goal that measures actual performance in classroom curriculum.

As the previous example suggests, there should be a direct link between the baseline data and the goal. The simplest way to think of it is that the baseline data should be the student’s actual present performance level on the goal.

Following are a few examples:

Baseline:	Goal: (abbreviated)
1st. Grade – 100 wpm 95% acc. 2nd. Grade – 95 wpm 90% acc. 3rd. Grade – 55 wpm 60% acc.	3rd. Grade – 95 wpm 90% acc.
Task - Multiplication facts worksheets – 50 facts – time limit 3 minutes Multipliers 1-5 – 45 correct Multipliers 1-7 – 40 correct Multipliers 1-9 – 25 correct	Given a worksheet with 50 multiplication facts with numbers 1-9, complete the sheet in 3 minutes with 90% acc.
Student matches list of 20 grocery items to actual grocery item in the classroom with 100% acc.	Given a shopping list of 20 items, locate items in the grocery store with 90% acc.
Student finds items in a grocery with verbal prompts with 100% acc.	
Student finds items in grocery store from a list of 20 items with 40% acc.	

Student catches a 9” rubber ball from a distance of 3 feet 9 out of 10 trials.	Catch a 9” rubber ball from a distance of 5 feet 8 out of 10 trials
Student catches a 9” rubber ball from a distance of 5 feet 3 out of 10 trials.	
Student takes turns and shares materials while playing a board game in the classroom with one other student.	
Student wanders playground alone during recess	
	Given a structured play situation, student will interact with one other student for 5 minutes during recess.

If the IEP team drafts a goal for a need for which it does not have specific baseline data, best practice is to add that data into the IEP within the next month, once the appropriate personnel has had time to measure and establish the baseline data.

Writing Goals

Once baseline is established, the actual writing of the goal must include 6 key components.

Key Component:	Definition:
1. Who	Student name
2. When	Target completion date (by June 6, 2XXX) (typically the next annual IEP meeting date)
3. When given	Conditions (when given a grade level passage to read)
4. Does what	Observable behavior (will complete a worksheet with single digit addition)
5. Accuracy	Mastery criteria (90% accuracy, 3 consecutive days)
6. How will it be measured?	Assessment/monitoring (CBM, teacher charting, work samples, district and state assessments, etc., including frequency of assessment/monitoring)

Aligning Goals and Objectives with Standards

Students with disabilities must have access to the general education curriculum. One way to accomplish this is to make sure academic goals and objectives are aligned to the CCSS.

Goals for Students Taking the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP)

In order to make sure goals are properly aligned for students taking the CAASPP, teachers are to use the CST assessment blueprints. The assessment blueprints help IEP teams identify which standards are heavily weighted on state assessments. IEP teams are encouraged to cross reference the students' identified areas of need and the standards that are listed on the CST assessment blueprints. IEP teams are encouraged to select standards that are in alignment with current state assessments for the purpose of building relevance for student participation and measurement of student growth in grade level content standards. Results from the state assessments will become another measure of student performance that supports IEP teams in determining whether a student has demonstrated their ability to close their current achievement gap in relation to current grade level content standards. Teachers are to begin the selection process by reviewing the current grade level standard and, based on the identified areas of student needs, either modify a grade level goal by deconstructing the standard into measureable learning targets or trellis down the content standard strand to a lower grade level standard that is aligned to the identified area of need. Goals are not necessary if the student is learning the grade level content without accommodations or modifications. The following example demonstrates how to use the goal bank:

Robert is a 5th grade student who comprehends at 4th grade level, with some difficulty differentiating main idea from details, but decoding skills are below first grade. Grade level goals are appropriate for Robert in the area of comprehension but decoding goals will have to be based on a lower grade level.

Decoding Goal

He can identify 70% of initial sounds but only 50 of medial and final sounds in one syllable words. The first grade standard 1.1.4, "When presented with 25 one syllable words orally, will identify initial, medial and final sounds with 90% accuracy," is appropriate to address this area of need.

Comprehension Goal

Comprehension can be addressed by using grade level goal 5.2.3 and modifying it by including an audio recording of the 5th grade passage, e.g., "...after reading a 5th grade narrative text of 1,000 words or less with an audio tape, Robert will state the main idea of the text, identify four evidentiary statements, and explain why the statements support the main idea with 80% accuracy."

Goals for Students Taking the California Modified Assessment (CMA)

Teachers are to use the same procedures for students taking the CMA as for students taking the CAASPP.

Goals for Students Taking the California Alternate Assessments (CAAs)

Teachers should be familiar with the core content standards that are referenced on the CAA blueprints. They should also be aware of the appropriate assessment level for each of their students. All academic goals must be derived from the appropriate CAA standard. For current information about the content standards that are referenced on the CAA, teachers should visit the CDE website under Testing and Accountability (<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/ca/altassessment.asp>) or the CDE Testing website: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/>.

Goals for Students with Speech and Language Needs

Speech teachers should collaborate with the general education teacher regarding core curriculum and grade level language/vocabulary expectations. They are to cross-reference their proposed goals and objectives with the associated CAASPP assessment blueprints to assure standards-alignment.

Goals for English Learners

Creating EL goals is a multi-step process as follow:

1. Identify the student’s current level of English proficiency from the most current ELPAC test.
2. Based on the students ELPAC English language proficiency level and current grade placement, identify the corresponding ELD standards that align with the assessed area of need.
3. Refer to the ELPAC assessment blueprints to inform the writing of goals and objectives in the area/s of listening, speaking, reading, and/or writing.
4. Refer to the publication called “Meeting the Needs of English Learners with Disabilities” resource book, published by the State SELPA (available in the SEIS Document Library).
5. Select the corresponding ELD standard. (Please note that these standards are aligned to the ELA standards).

Post-Secondary Goals

All students aged 16 or older should have a minimum of one transition goal in each indicator area. These goals should vary and be individualized for each student. The IEP team should not assume that, because a student is high academically, that he or she has no needs in any of the indicator areas.

Non-Academic Needs

A student might have needs that impede his or her ability to access his or her education but are not academic in nature. The IEP team should ensure that appropriate goals are developed in these areas as well. Some areas of non-academic need that IEP teams sometimes neglect to identify are: attendance, social/emotional, and behavioral.

FAQs

Does every service provider have to develop their own goals?

Not necessarily, each service on the IEP should relate to at least one goal in the IEP. If a service provider is supporting an existing goal on the IEP, it is not necessary to write additional goals. Service providers such as occupational therapists and behaviorists often support IEP goals despite not delivering direct services to the student.

Do goals have to be at the student’s grade level?

To the maximum extent possible, grade level goals should be modified in order to meet the student’s needs, but if a student is clearly not able to perform at or near grade level, even by modifying the goal, teachers should write or select a goal from the appropriate grade level. Teams should attempt to align goals with appropriate grade-level CCSS by relying on the scaffolding in the CCSS.

REMINDERS

- Goals must address every area of need identified from the present levels of performance.
- Baseline data and the measurement method listed in the goal must directly relate so that goal progress can be measured.
- Baseline data is the student's current level of performance on the actual goal.
- There are six key components that must be included in every goal and objective.
- Academic goals must be aligned with state standards.
- Staff should check the CDE website periodically throughout the year for changes in CAASPP, CMA, CAA and ELPAC requirements and for writing standards based goals.
- Generally, you do not want to reference a specific program or methodology in a goal.
- Not everything available in SEIS is aligned with state standards nor does it comply with the rules of proper goal development. While they are all credible resources, staff should review them with caution and modify them as appropriate. In particular staff should be careful to avoid:
 1. Copying goals that don't contain the 6 key components.
 2. Including specific methodology in a goal – for example instead of referencing 'SDAIE' say something like 'given an auditory and visual prompt' or instead of a 'sensory diet' say 'given a variety of tactile experiences.'