Writing Effective & Legally Defensible IEP Goals

District 204
2011
Today’s Agenda

• Importance of goal writing
• Legal Framework
• Reporting on Goals
• Present Academic Achievement and Functional Performance
• Annual Goals
  – Small group activity
• Benchmarks or Objectives
  – Small group activity
Importance of Goal Writing

• Research indicates that when we set appropriate goals and monitor progress, that we are likely to get LARGE improvements in student outcomes

(Fuchs & Fuchs, 1987)

“If you don’t know where you’re going, you will probably end up somewhere else”

Lawrence J. Peter
Importance of Goal Writing

• IEPs are goal documents, not intervention documents
• Goals are translated into appropriate instructional strategies
• Poor goals lead to poor progress monitoring
• And, of course: Because the law says so!
Legal References

Federal Statute: 20 U.S.C. §1414 (d) –Individualized Education Programs

A written statement for each child with a disability that is developed, reviewed, and revised in accordance with this section and that includes –

(I) a statement of the child’s present levels of academic achievement and functional performance, including –

(aa) how the child’s disability affects the child’s involvement and progress in the general education curriculum;

(bb) for preschool children, as appropriate, how the disability affects the child’s participation in appropriate activities;

and

(cc) for children with disabilities who take alternate assessments aligned to alternate achievement standards, a description of benchmarks or short-term objectives;

(Illinois Alliance of Administrators of Special Education, 2010)
a statement of measurable annual goals, including academic and functional goals, designed to—

(aa) meet the child’s needs that result from the child’s disability to enable the child to be involved in and make progress in the general education curriculum; and

(bb) meet each of the child’s other educational needs that result from the child’s disability;

(Illinois Alliance of Administrators of Special Education, 2010)
(III) a description of how the child’s progress toward meeting the annual goals described in subclause (II) will be measured and when periodic reports on the progress the child is making toward meeting the annual goals (such as through the use of quarterly or other periodic reports, concurrent with the issuance of report cards) will be provided.

(Illinois Alliance of Administrators of Special Education, 2010)
Legal References (Cont.)

- Federal Regulations: 34 C.F.R. §300.320 ---Definition of individualized education programs.

  (a) . . . . a written statement for each child with a disability that is developed, reviewed, and revised in a meeting in accordance with §300.320 through §300.324, and that must include—

  (1) A statement of the child’s present levels of academic achievement and functional performance, including –

  (i) How the child’s disability affects the child’s involvement and progress in the general education curriculum (i.e., the same curriculum as for nondisabled children); or

  (ii) For preschool children, as appropriate, how the disability affects the child’s participation in appropriate activities.

  (Illinois Alliance of Administrators of Special Education, 2010)
(2) A statement of measurable annual goals, including academic and functional goals designed to ---

(A) Meet the child’s needs that result from the child’s disability to enable the child to be involved in and make progress in the general education curriculum; and

(B) Meet each of the child’s other educational needs that result from the child’s disability..

(Illinois Alliance of Administrators of Special Education, 2010)
Each IEP shall include:

(1) A statement of measurable annual goals that reflect consideration of the State Goals for Learning and the Illinois Learning Standards (see 23 Ill. Adm. Code 1), as well as benchmarks or short-term objectives developed in accordance with the child’s present levels of educational performance.

(Illinois Alliance of Administrators of Special Education, 2010)
United States Supreme Court Rowley Standard


In this landmark case, the U.S. Supreme Court defined a public school district’s obligation to provide a free appropriate public education (“FAPE”) to a child with a disability as providing access to a basic floor of opportunity sufficient to confer some educational benefit upon the handicapped child. The instruction should be reasonably calculated to enable the child to achieve passing marks and advance from grade to grade.

(Illinois Alliance of Administrators of Special Education, 2010)
Reporting on Goals

• Report cards:
  – normally goal updates are sent at report card time, so always check this box
• Progress reports:
  – Only if appropriate
• Parent conference:
  – Only if appropriate
• Other:
  – DON’T write “quarterly updates” here
Current Academic Achievement and Functional Performance

- Must reference academic achievement and/or functional (including social, emotional and behavioral) performance (34 C.F.R. § 300.320 (1))

- IEP must include how the child’s disability affects the child’s involvement and progress in the general education curriculum; or for preschool children, as appropriate, how the disability affects the child’s participation in appropriate activities (34 C.F.R. §§ 300.320(1) (i) and (ii)).

(Illinois Alliance of Administrators of Special Education, 2010)
Current Academic Achievement and Functional Performance

• Provides a baseline as applicable to the child’s educational needs & for monitoring progress on goals.

• Understandable to everyone who reads it, cross-discipline, parents, other schools
Current Academic Achievement and Functional Performance

**DO:**
- Include what student can do
- Skill specific – relevant to that specific goal
- Measurable
- Data in comparison to typical peers – reference grade or age-level scores or functional skill levels
- Data can come from a variety of sources
- Most recent assessment/IEP data results

**DON’T:**
- List or report grades
Present: The Ugly, The Bad and the Good

• Joe has a specific learning disability in the area of math. He currently is earning a “D” for the third quarter. He does not understand numbers beyond whole numbers.

• Joe is a fourth grade student who has been identified as a child with a specific learning disability in the area of math. He currently knows and understands whole number place values. He struggles with understanding the value of numbers to the right side of the decimal point.

• Joe (a 4th grader) currently knows and understands whole number place values. When given decimals, Joe can identify the value of tenths only, and only with 60% accuracy. As compared with peers who are developing in reading and writing decimals to the thousandths, according to EDM 4th grade expectations.
Present Levels Example: DO

- Hannah reads 15 wpm on R-CBM, which falls below the 10th percentile, for 2nd grade students in IPSD204.
- Dan has verbally requested to go to the office 10 times. Dan currently has 13 office discipline referrals in the first three months of SY2011 for screaming at his teacher after given a math assignment, in comparison to peers who typically earn 0-1 referrals in a year.
- Christian can complete two-step novel directions previewed ahead of time 80% of the time, while typical peers can follow multi-step directions with the initial directive.
- Jose is a first-grader who is able to take 10 steps independently, while peers are able to independently negotiate their environment.
- Suaresh is intelligible with mono-syllabic words, 70% of the time during conversation while only 20% of multisyllabic words are intelligible compared to 9th grade peers whose speech is completely intelligible.
- Mikeilah understands 20% of academic vocabulary after classroom instruction, whereas the typical 10th grader understands 90% of academic vocabulary.
Goal Statement: Required Components

- By when
- Who
- Will do “what” (action verb/observable behavior)
- Given what conditions – what supports
  - e.g. augmentative communication, graphic organizer, calculator, prompts
- At what level of proficiency
- As measured by what measurable method and/or materials
Goal Statement: Example

• By (when) (who) will (action verb), given (what conditions/supports), as evidenced by (measurable procedure and materials) with (level of proficiency).

• By December 2011, Alex will demonstrate increased strength and endurance, given visual and verbal cues, as evidenced by his ability to catch a tennis ball thrown from 3 feet without trapping a ball with 3 out of 4 trials.
Goal Statements: Examples

• By February 2012, John will orally read 50 wrc, given a visual timer, in 4 of 5 trials, as measured by IPSD’s 3rd-grade R-CMB Probes.

• Ben will respond to and follow a 2-step direction, by May 2010, given visual support, by standing up and walking to the instructor in 8 of 10 opportunities, as measured by daily log.

• By May 2010, Juan will verbally respond with a “hi”, to an adult greeting at recess, in 8 of 10 opportunities given gestural and visual cueing, as measured by observational data.

• By March 2011, Sophie will retell the events of a 5 page fictional story, given visual cueing and incorporating the beginning, middle and end, with a score of 4/5 as measured by a retell rubric by March 2011.
Goal Statement: Sample Action Verbs

- Knowledge:
  - Write, list, identify, label, name, state, define
- Comprehension:
  - Summarize, explain, paraphrase, illustrate, describe
- Application:
  - Solve, demonstrate, use, apply, construct, compute
- Analysis:
  - Analyze, classify, compare, contrast, categorize, separate
- Synthesis:
  - Create, invent, develop, hypothesize, design, predict
- Evaluation:
  - Judge, recommend, justify, critique
Goal Statement: Conditions

Example

• Given what:
  – Describe the conditions necessary for the goal or short term objective/benchmark to be completed.
  – Identify when, where, and under what circumstances the observable behavior will occur.

• Examples:
  – “In a small group setting, given a visual prompt”
  – “In a small group setting, given a tap on the shoulder”
  – “Given an age-appropriate topic”
  – “When orally read to”
  – “After hands are positioned on”
Goal Statement: Evaluation Criteria

• How much:
  – Describe the performance accuracy of the action needed for the goal or short term objective/benchmark to be considered completed.
    • The assumption is that this is at 100%, unless a lesser level is stated.
  – Describe how many times the action must be observed for the goal or short term objective/benchmark to be considered completed.
    • Examples:
      – _______ out of _______ trials
      – In _______ consecutive trials
      – On _______ out of _______ days
      – Within _______ minutes
      – _______ times each day
Goal Statements: Procedures

• How measured:
  – Describe evaluation criteria
• Examples:
  – Work samples
  – Scoring guides
  – Standardized tests
  – Curriculum based tests
  – Daily behavior chart
  – Charts
  – Criterion-referenced tests
  – Portfolios
  – Discipline reports
  – Checklists
  – Rubrics
Goal Statements: DO’S

- Designed to meet each of the child’s other education needs that result from the child disability (34 C.F.R. 300.320(2)(i)(B))
- Describes what a child with a disability can reasonably be expected to accomplish within a twelve month period in the child’s special education program (34 C.F.R. 300.346(a)(1))

(Illinois Alliance of Administrators of Special Education, 2010)

- Match criteria to the targeted skill and behavior, including social/emotional and behavioral
- Base goal progress on the baseline
- Use a data-collection strategy that supports the measurability of the goal.
- Focus on one skill/behavior
  - Prioritize to deficits that most greatly impact ability to access gen ed environment and curriculum.
  - Focus of goal must help student develop skills to access and participate, and make progress in gen ed and life in school.
- 12 months
- Communicates what to do to anyone who reads it
Goal Statement: DON’Ts

– Use 80% or 100% arbitrarily
– Write toward curriculum or a specific program, but rather toward a specific skill
– Write goals for use of assistive technology, but rather include it under *given conditions*
Goal Statement: Illinois State Standards

• Type in reference number of standard
• Type in Illinois Learning Standard underneath where put number.
• Get as specific on the standard number as possible.
• Gen Ed Standards found at: www.isbe.net/ils/Default.htm
• IAA Framework Priorities found at: www.isbe.net/assessment/htmls/iaaframework.htm
• It is okay to go on to an additional page
Annual Goal Activity
Benchmarks/Objectives

• Need to choose: benchmark OR objective
Benchmarks/Objectives: Measuring Progress

• Criteria and procedures have to match how collect data

• Evaluation Criteria:
  • DO: has to match how collect data
  • DON’T: use both percentage accuracy and number of attempts

– Evaluation Procedures:
  • DO: has to match how collect data

– Schedule:
  • DO: should be at least weekly for most students for progress monitoring
Benchmarks/Objectives: Differences

**Benchmark**
- Is in sequential order – one skill in goal
- Intermediate steps that student is expected to reach within a specific period of time
  - DO: take into account transition and skill-loss over summer break
  - Percentage correct, trials, backward chaining, level of independence

**Objectives**
- Build on skill that is defined in goal (sub-skills) – discrete components (each including target behavior, condition and criteria).
- Each objective must be reported on at each reporting period.
  - DO: take into account transition and skill-loss over summer break
  - Rubrics, percentage, trials
Benchmarks Example: DO

• By October, 2010, Elsie will read aloud 10 words correctly from the 5th grade Dolch reading word list with 80% accuracy.
• By January, 2011, Elsie will read aloud 15 words correctly from the 5th grade Dolch reading word list with 80% accuracy.
• By March, 2011, Elsie will read aloud 20 words correctly from the 5th grade Dolch reading word list with 80% accuracy.

(Illinois Alliance of Administrators of Special Education, 2010)
Objectives Example: DO

• Sophie will identify numbers 1-12, given a teacher prompt, as measured by a weekly progress monitoring chart.

• Sophie will count by 5’s to 60, given a teacher prompt, as measured by a weekly progress monitoring chart.

• Sophie will identify the hour and minute hands, given a teacher prompt, as measured by a weekly progress monitoring chart.

• Sophie will identify which hour the little hand is pointing to, given a teacher prompt, as measured by a weekly progress monitoring chart.
Benchmarks/Objectives
Activity

• Write a benchmark OR objective for the goal you have edited.
STUDENT NAME:  

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES/BENCHMARKS

Complete for initial IEPs and annual reviews. (Anyone responsible for implementing the IEP (e.g., goals and objectives/benchmarks, accommodations, modifications and supports) must be notified of her/his specific responsibilities.)

REPORTING ON GOALS

The progress on annual goals will be measured by the short-term objectives/benchmarks. Check the methods that will be used to notify parents of the student’s progress on annual goals and if the progress is sufficient to achieve the goals by the end of the IEP year.

☑ Report cards  ☐ Progress reports  ☐ Parent conference  ☐ Other (specify)

□ Weekly goal updates are sent at report card time, so always check this box.

☐ Other (specify)

CURRENT ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AND FUNCTIONAL PERFORMANCE

Results of the initial or most recent evaluation and results on district-wide assessments relevant to this goal: performance in comparison to general education peers and standards.

Reference P/LEP statement
Reference to developmental level
Data driven

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES/BENCHMARKS

The goals and short-term objectives or benchmarks shall meet the student’s educational needs that result from the student’s disability, including involvement in and progress in the general curriculum, or for preschool students, participation in appropriate activities.

Goal Statement # of

By (when) (who) will (action verb), given (what conditions/supports), as evidenced by (measurable procedure and material level of proficiency).

□ do not state standard here

Indicate Goal Area:  ☐ Academic  ☐ Functional  ☐ Transition  Illinois Learning Standard: # write in number

Type in standard here

Title(s) of Goal Implement(s) attach at least one specific title / may add ‘and team’

Short-Term Objective/Benchmark for Measuring Progress on the Annual Goal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation Criteria</th>
<th>Evaluation Procedures</th>
<th>Schedule for Determining Progress</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| % Accuracy  
# of attempts  
Other (specify)  
Pick one that matches data collection | Observation Log  
Data Charts  
Tests  
Other (specify)  
Refers to how data is collected, ‘Other’ could include probes | Daily  
Weekly  
Quarterly  
Semester  
Other (specify) of IEP goals |
| Dates Reviewed | Optional/ can add dates of progress monitoring data review for team use |

IT IS OKAY IF IT IS TWO PAGES
Thank you to all committee members!

- Tulin Akin
- Laura Dodsworth
- Tricia Fagiano
- Lisa Haubert
- Michelle Herner
- Bobbie Johnson
- Andrew Kutemeier
- Elizabeth Mancilla
- Angela Merriweather
- Todd Rzeszutko
- Stacy Sherman
- Jennifer Steffen
- Susan Treharne
- Linda Warning