

Individual Education Program (IEP)

1. What day is the annual review date?

The annual review date is the day the meeting is held and the IEP is written.

2. Who can sign the cover sheet of the IEP?

All meeting participant may sign the cover sheet of the IEP. The signatures in this location represent team membership and not consent.

3. Do you have to have a general education teacher at an IEP meeting for a severely cognitively impaired student? What if a student is in a totally self contained classroom?

When addressing a student's placement in the least restrictive environment, the IEP team needs to always be considering opportunities for a student to be with their peers. An IEP team must include not less than one regular education teacher of the student if the student is, or may be, participating in the regular education environment. The district may need to consider inviting a regular education teacher from the class in which the student can participate.

4. Can a district hold two meetings following an evaluation, one to determine eligibility and another to develop the IEP?

Yes, however, both meetings must be conducted within the 30 calendar day timeline.

5. Can adaptive physical education be provided by a regular physical education teacher?

Yes

6. Do progress reports have to go in the student's educational record?

Progress reports are considered part of the student's educational record and must be included as part of the student's record.

7. In a 24 hour program, how do you document configuration of service?

Even in a 24 hour facility the configuration of services needs to reflect what services are being provided based upon the student's program. The student may need to receive instruction in math, reading, written language, employment, independent living or behavioral services. The district and parent should have a clear understanding of what special education services the facility is committed to provide. Each specific service, amount of service and location of service must be included when documenting the special education services to be provided.

8. Are math, reading and writing goals required for a student determined eligible under the category of emotionally disturbed?

The evaluation team must evaluate in all areas of suspected disability to determine if the student is a student with a disability and how the disability impacts the student's education. If the disability impacts any of the areas noted above, the strengths and needs

would be specified in the PLAAFP and an annual goal would be appropriate. Due to the nature of this disability category, social or behavioral goals would be expected.

9. Does assistive technology include devices all the students are “allowed” to use?

If all students are using the same technology it is not an individualized accommodation the student needs. It then is considered universal technology.

10. If the student has met his/her math goals, do I need to write additional math goals?

If, as a result of meeting the math goals, the student is accessing the general curriculum at their age/grade level, the team may recommend reevaluation to determine if the student continues to be a student with a disability. If the student needs a new goal developed, the IEP will need to be amended through the amendment process.

11. In the modifications section, what does the statement mean regarding supports/training, if appropriate, for school personnel?

This section should include specific information or activities needed by school personnel to carry out the students program. This could include in-service training needs, assignment of responsibility for completing a necessary activity etc.

12. Does one write the accommodations twice, once when documenting the accommodations/modifications need by the student to access the general curriculum and again when documenting accommodations for state/district-wide assessments?

The list of accommodations/modification needed by the student to benefit from the educational program may be more extensive then what can be provided for state/district assessments. The team must specify what can be implemented during state/district assessment. Only approved accommodation can be provided and the accommodation provided must relate to the disability. Check with your testing coordinator to ensure the accommodations are approved standard accommodations.

13. What does one do when a student identified with an emotional disability changes placement every three months?

The receiving district must review the current IEP with the parent and determine if the IEP can be implemented as written. If so, the district would implement services and provide FAPE. If not, the IEP team may need to meet and amend the IEP as necessary.

14. Do the percentages on the continuum reflect the amount of time the student spends in the regular classroom or in the special education classroom?

The percent reflects the amount of time the student is in the general classroom.

15. How do you determine the percentage on the continuum for a student who is in the regular education classroom all day but has a full time paraprofessional assigned to them?

The percentage of time on the continuum reflects the amount of time the student is in the general education setting with their peers. The fact that the student has a full time

paraprofessional with them can be documented under “Special Education to be provided” or on the related service page. However, this time is not considered when calculating the continuum percentage.

16. Which continuum boxes do you check for a student attending school who will not graduate, but who requires services until the age of 21?

Calculate the total number hours in their school day and the number of hours they are with non-disabled peers (in school or in the community) vs. the number of hours they spend with only disabled individuals (in the school or in the community). The percentage of time the student spends with non-disabled peers will dictate where they are placed on the continuum.

17. If you do an addendum over the phone with the parent followed by sending the addendum and Prior Notice in the mail, does the parent need to sign the documents and return them to the school?

The parents’ signature is not required when amendments are made using this process.

18. If Limited English Proficient (LEP) is ruled out under SLD, how does it apply to eligibility and how does it apply to special considerations?

The eligibility determination must be made by the team first regardless of the suspected disability category for which they are being evaluated. A child must not be determined to be a child with a disability under Part B if the determinant factor for that eligibility determination is limited English proficiency.

If the team decides that the child’s limited English proficiency is not the determinate factor and there is an identified disability, the team must consider the language needs of the child as the needs relate to the child’s IEP.

19. How do you make general education teachers provide accommodations and modifications?

Each school district shall ensure that the child's IEP is accessible to each regular education teacher, special education teacher, related services provider, and other service providers who are responsible for its implementation. Each teacher and provider described above is informed of:

- (1) His or her specific responsibilities related to implementing the child's IEP; and
- (2) The specific accommodations, modifications, and supports that must be provided for the child in accordance with the IEP.

Issues regarding insubordination must be addressed through the district’s administrative procedures.

20. Who is the general education teacher for a student who is only in an early childhood special education program?

If the preschool program has a regular preschool teacher, this person would be considered the general educator. If the program only has an early childhood special educator, the requirement would not apply.

21. How do you document on the cover sheet of the IEP the minutes per week in special education versus the minutes per week of related services? How do you document the time if the paraprofessional is assigned to the student? How do you document the amount of time if the related service is provided in the general education classroom?

The minutes per week in special education on the cover page of the IEP should correlate with the total number of minutes on the special education service to be provided on the LRE page. The minutes per week in related services should correlate with the total number of minutes on the Related Service page.

The amount of time in the general education classroom is determined when describing the “location” of special education services to be provided.

When describing the special education service to be provided on the LRE page, you must state the “service,” “location” and “amount of time”. For example:

- Reading fluency – general education classroom – 20 minutes 4 times per week (total 80 min/wk)
- Math – resource room – 10 minutes 5 time per week (total 50 min/wk)
- Articulation – general education classroom – 30 minutes weekly (total 30 min/wk)
- Language – speech therapy room – 30 minutes weekly (total 30 min/wk)
 - The total amount of special education time is 3.2 hours per week.
 - Assuming the speech therapist was assigned as person responsible for the articulation and the language service the total amount of time in related service would be 1 hour per week.

The amount of time a paraprofessional is assigned to a student may be documented under “Other Services” on the related service page or under special education services to be provided on the LRE page.

22. What do you do with the IEP file if the parent places the child in a private school in another district?

Every district has a policy for the destruction of records in line with the Family Education Right and Policy Act (FERPA). Generally records must be maintained for a minimum of three years. Refer to your district policy regarding educational records.

23. When writing objectives rather than benchmarks for early childhood, could the long term goal be, “student will increase his cognitive skills by 90% accuracy for the following objects”?

Either the goal or the objectives must contain the three required components, condition, performance and criteria. In either scenario the performance listed above “increase cognitive skills” is not specific (observable or measurable) enough to know if the student ever attained the goal.

24. When behavior impedes learning, do you have to have an annual goal?

The IEP team must consider when developing the IEP whether the student’s behavior impedes his or her learning or that of others. The IEP team is encouraged to be proactive in addressing any behavior issues discussed at the IEP meeting. This could include turning in assignments, completing home work, coming to class on time etc. and does not require an annual goal. It would require the team to describe the “strategies” staff will implement to correct the issue.

For students determined eligible under OHI due to ADD/ADHD or Emotional Disturbance, the IEP team would be expected to develop a behavior goal to address the issues that resulted in the student eligibility. The team would refer to the goal and/or the student’s behavior improvement plan in this section.

25. If the team decides a student requires adaptive PE does the IEP team need to write adaptive physical education goals?

The need for adaptive PE is determined through the results of the fine and gross motor evaluations conducted by the evaluation team. Based upon the PLAAFP’s, the team must decide if the fine/gross motor needs of the student allows them to participate in regular PE or if adaptive PE is necessary. The evaluation results must support the need for adaptive PE. If the team determines the student requires adaptive PE; the team would develop the fine/gross motor goal and determine the individuals responsible for implementing the goal.

26. Are teams required to put the procedure codes in the IEP when it is being developed at the IEP meeting or at the time of reporting?

The team should document the procedure codes during the IEP meeting to inform the parents how progress will be reported.

27. When determining the continuum of placement for students who are 3-5 years old, do we need to follow the reject/accept process? Does the continuum for 3-5 year olds reflect a true continuum?

The accept/reject format must be used when documenting the justification for placement. The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) has indicated the continuum of alternative placements for 3-5 year olds may not reflect a true continuum for all children. The state will continue to treat this as a true continuum until such time more clarification is provided from the federal office.

28. When a child is moving from Part C to Part B and the IEP is developed at age 2 years 9 months, what date is used for the annual review date, the date the services begin or the date of the meeting?

The date of the meeting needs to reflect the actual date the team met to develop the IEP. The annual due date will be 365 days from the day the team met to develop the IEP. Services in the individual family service plan (IFSP) would continue until the child turns 3 years old.

29. Can content standards be used when writing goals?

Annual goals are developed from the student's present level of academic achievement and functional performance acquired through individual comprehensive evaluation. Annual goals must link to the district's general curriculum and content standards and should be written as specific skills affected by the disability and not be the actual standard.

30. If you are making a change in the minutes of a service, how do you document that?

The service to be provided, amount of service and location of service is to be documented under special education services to be provided and/or the related service section of the IEP. The district must follow its procedures for amending the IEP.

31. Does hearing aid maintenance include cochlear implants?

Each school district shall ensure that the external components of surgically implanted medical devices are functioning properly. For a child with a surgically implanted medical device who is receiving special education and related services, a school district is not responsible for the post-surgical maintenance, programming, or replacement of the medical device that has been surgically implanted or of an external component of the surgically implanted medical device.

32. Do you have to give the entire IEP to the general classroom teacher?

There is not a requirement that each service provider receive a copy of the IEP however, each school district shall ensure that the child's IEP is accessible to each regular education teacher, special education teacher, related services provider, and other service providers who are responsible for its implementation. And, that each teacher and provider described above is informed of:

- (1) His or her specific responsibilities related to implementing the child's IEP; and
- (2) The specific accommodations, modifications, and supports that must be provided for the child in accordance with the IEP.

33. Should present levels of performance be a narrative or bulleted list?

There are no regulations regarding the format of the present levels of performance statements. The format is a personal or district preference.

34. Is it acceptable to put grade level in the goal statement?

There are no regulations that prohibit the use of grade level in goal statements. People have strong opinions as to whether including it or not conveys an appropriate meaning. When deciding whether to put grade level in a goal statement the team needs to be considered:

- What do I want to convey by including the grade level that cannot be addressed without using grade level? For example: Do I need to write “The student needs to learn 2nd grade reading strategies” or can I say “Using phonological cues the student will read unfamiliar words” (which is a 2nd grade reading strategy)?

If I am striving to teach a student the skills necessary to reach grade level standards is it necessary to put the grade level I perceive him/her to be functioning at, where I need to get him/her or do I need grade level at all?

35. Is it acceptable to put reading level in the goal statement?

When referring to reading level it will be extremely important to clarify exactly what you mean as there are many different definitions depending on how you are determining that level. Reading level can refer to test of basic lists of words, comprehension of text, oral reading, fluency, grades or ages associated with text, accelerated reader or other reading programs, Lexile levels and the list goes on. As far as if it is acceptable, please refer to the conversation regarding using grade level in the goal statement 36. What are the required components of an annual goal to meet state requirements?

Federal and state regulations require that a goal be a “measurable annual goal” and that you must indicate how progress will be measured. The following components must be included in an annual goal:

Conditions (i.e. procedures used to present information, i.e. when, where, how)

Performance (i.e. specific observable skill the student is expected to accomplish)

Criteria (i.e. how well must the skill be done and how often to acquire mastery)

36. Do all goals have to be connected to standards (academic, social and functional)?

It is not a requirement that all goals be connected to the standards. It is best practice to try to make that connection whenever possible. There may even be areas addressed on the IEP for which the state has not developed standards, for example transition and behavior. It is important that goals are skill based and linked to functional assessment and present levels of performance.

37. If a child has a BIP (Behavior Intervention Plan) do the strategies need to be goals?

If a student’s significant behavior issues result in the development of a BIP, it would be necessary to develop goals to address those concerns. These could certainly come from strategies identified on a BIP.

38. Do you have to list academics strengths/weakness’ on PLAAFP’s page if it is the child’s behavior that is affecting the learning?

PLAAFP's need to include the strengths and weaknesses in the skill areas affected by the disability. If behavior is the skill area affected by the disability, the PLAAFP's must include a list of behavioral strengths and a list of behavior needs/weaknesses. Even though the skill areas affected by the disability may not be academic in nature, the weaknesses listed should reflect the educational impact of the behaviors. The student's progress and/or involvement in the general curriculum must also describe the issues occurring with learning in the general classroom setting.

39. Should the student's skills from the standardized academic testing be written in the PLAAFP's? Can I write scores in the PLAAFPs?

Even though the specific skills will relate to items in the standardized evaluation, the strength and weaknesses listed for each skill area affected by the disability will come from the functional assessment portion of the comprehensive evaluation. Evaluation scores are documented in the district evaluation report and in the eligibility document and should not be in the PLAAFP's.

40. Does "how the student's disability affects the student's involvement and progress in the general education curriculum (i.e., the same curriculum as for nondisabled students)" in the PLAAFP refer to the material taught or the setting?

This refers to the general curriculum accessed by all students of a similar age or grade level. In order for a student to be eligible as student with a disability, the disability must have an impact on student's education. When documenting how the student's disability affect their involvement and progress in the general curriculum answer the questions, is the student receiving instruction in the general curriculum? How is the disability affecting progress in the general curriculum? What core content areas is the disability affecting? What is the observable effect of the disability in the general education setting? For preschool children, the PLAAFP describes how the disability affects the child's participation in age appropriate activities.

41. Do we have to write a goal for every weakness identified in the present level of academic and functional performance (PLAAFP)?

It is not required to write a goal for each concern in the present level of performance. The IEP team must identify the skill areas affected by the disability and develop a goal around the skill(s) the student can reasonably accomplish within a 12 month period. For example, if math is the skill area affected by the disability and the assessment has identified ten specific math skills the student needs to learn in the general curriculum to be at grade level, the team needs to target what skill(s) that student can reasonably accomplish in 12 months. The goal is developed around that specific math skill(s). Should the student meet that goal earlier than 12 months, the team will target a higher level skill in the PLAAFP and develop a new goal. At least one goal should be developed for each skill area affected by the disability in the PLAAFP.