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**COLORADO**  
Department of Education

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# Inclusive IEPs for Students with Significant Support Needs

# What Is Special Education?

Special Education is specially designed instruction designed to support **access to**, **participation in**, and **learning from** the **general education** curriculum.



# The Purpose of the IEP

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*Access to and participation in...*

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General  
Education  
Curriculum



Extracurricular  
Activities

Nonacademic  
Activities

# Importance of the IEP

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*The IEP*



# CONSIDER...

## Past IEP Practices

Focus on  
Identifying  
Deficits

Identified  
needs with  
no IEP  
goals

Emphasize  
personnel  
supports

Don't include  
high  
expectations

Doesn't lead  
to inclusive  
practices

Not  
student  
centered

Limited  
Family  
Involvement

Student not  
seen as a gen  
ed student



# CONSIDER...

## Improving IEP Practices

Strengths Based IEPs

Ensure needs have goals or supports

Emphasize natural supports

Includes high expectations

Leads to inclusive practices

Student is an active member of the team

Families are active members of the team

Development in collaboration with gen ed

# Comprehensive Inclusive Education Program Assumptions

- All students are general education students
- General education curriculum is everyone's curriculum
- The IEP is not the student's curriculum
- Students with IEPs must have specially designed instruction tied to general education curriculum
- *Specially designed instruction* means adapting methodology or delivery of instruction of the general education curriculum
- General education curriculum and routines and the IEP comprise a student's full educational program



# Before the Meeting



# Collaboration with Families

- Meet with families before IEP meeting
- Ensure family understands assumptions of comprehensive inclusive education program
- Provide opportunity for family to share their vision for the student
- Agree upon process for ongoing collaboration during the year and support of one another

# Questions to Think About

*What can you do at the beginning of the school year to connect with families?*

*What can you do to build trust with families?*

*How will you determine the family's vision for their child?*

*How do you get everyone on the same page?*

*How will you gather data from student's family members?*

*How will you communicate to parents about their child's school day/progress?*

*How often will you communicate with parents?*

*How do parents want to be contacted?*

# Collaboration with Gen Ed Teachers

- Establishing process for collaboration
- Ensure understanding of assumptions of a comprehensive inclusive education program
- Discuss gen ed standards, units, and objectives that will be addressed
- Discuss context and content of gen ed curriculum and instruction
- Discuss importance of membership and active participation in gen ed classes and school community
- Create a shared vision

# Collaboration with Gen Ed Teachers

- Decide how and what information will be shared
- Identify instructional strategies to use regularly
- Integrated opportunities for peers to teach each other and collaborate
- Use adults to maximize student interdependence
- Create resources that will help implement supports and strategies
- Integrate formative and summative assessments into planning

# Questions to Think About

*What are the expectations and routines in the classroom?*

*What are the ways all learners will be active members of the classroom and school community?*

*What should students care about, know and be able to do by the end of the year?*

*What is important to know about the student?*

*What ways does the student best communicate?*

*Strengths? Interests?  
Present levels of performance across content areas?*



# Questions to Think About

*What instructional strategies can we use across the school year (e.g., prompting strategies, adapted materials, picture-supported communication boards)?*

*How can we leverage peer support to allow student to teach and learn from their fellow students?*

*How can we use teachers and paraprofessional support to empower student interdependence?*

*How can we create a menu of supports and instructional strategies that will help this student be successful?*

*What are the many ways it looks like when the student has learned?*

*How will we continue to evaluate the supports being provided to the student?*

# Involving the Student

- Have student attend meeting (not all or nothing)
- Allow students to take breaks
- Have student participate in meeting
- Partial participation – what are most meaningful parts students can participate in?
- Use AAC and other tech to support students in sharing
- Share pictures/visual supports from home/school
- Practice with students ahead of meeting
- Video record student responses & play during meeting

# Involving the Student



- Meeting agenda
- Invite other school staff, peers based on student's preferences
- Student can choose snacks for the meeting, bring in the water bottles
- Student can choose location of meeting
- Student can make name cards for meeting
- Interview other people who can't be at meeting, make video recordings to share at meeting

# How do you....

- Collaborate with Families?
- Collaborate with Gen Ed Teachers?
- Involve the Student?

# During the Meeting



# Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance

## Requirements of IDEA:

### 1. Describe individual student needs:

- **Strengths based**, with learning supports included
- All suspected areas of need considered (academic, behavior, communication, social, motor, health)
- What is the student able to do current?
- View student as competent and capable
- Wholistic view – gathering data from many people

# Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance

## Requirements of IDEA:

### 2. Provide Baseline Data:

- Specific
- Objective
- Measurable
- Frequent
- Strengths-based
- Comprehensive
- Interdisciplinary

# Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance

## Requirements of IDEA:

### 3. Involvement and Progress in General Education

- References grade-aligned general education content standards whenever possible
- Describes how disability impacts involvement in general education, and what supports are needed to facilitate involvement
- Emphasizes ability written from a strengths-based approach, create a narrative that says, “this is a person that can...”

How do you....

- Gather data from general education teachers to have a more wholistic view of what a student can and cannot do in general education?

# Annual Academic and Functional Goals and Objectives

## **Inclusive IEP Goals Should:**

- Support student involvement and progress in gen ed curriculum
- Meet student's educational needs resulting from their disability
- Promote access to gen ed classroom, curriculum, and grade-level peers
- Support participation in academic, non-academic, and extracurricular components of gen ed
- Be measurable and objective and align with state standards



# Annual Academic and Functional Goals and Objectives

## **Inclusive IEP Goals Should:**

- Be aligned with present levels of performance
- Be useful and necessary with multiple circumstances, situations, and with a variety of people
- Be technically correct (conditions, skills, criteria, considerations, timeline)
- Be goals for the student (not staff or families)
- Reflect student's interests, strengths, and priorities
- Be developmentally age and grade appropriate

How do you....

- Make sure that your IEP goals are inclusive?

# Annual Academic and Functional Goals and Objectives

All students have learning opportunities related to three major learning components:

1. Participating in Routines and Transitions
2. Engaging in Grade-Level Academics and Other Essential Skills
3. Interacting with Others

# Questions to Think About

## **Participating in Routines and Transitions**

*What are the key routines and transitions in the general education classroom and across the school day?*

*What skill/goals could the student be supported to achieve that would enable them to independently/interdependently engage in general education classroom and school routines and transitions?*

# Questions to Think About

## Engaging in Grade-Level Academics and Other Essential Skills

*What are the big ideas, essential vocabulary, and skills taught in reading, math, writing, social studies, and science this school year?*

What big ideas, essential vocabulary, and skills could be prioritized that would enable the student to make **the most progress in the curriculum** in each content area?

What are essential skills that the student needs that will enable **better access to the curriculum** and support independence/interdependence across environments?



# Questions to Think About

## Interacting with Others

What skills/goals could the student be supported to achieve that would enable them to independently/interdependently interact and communicate with others to:

self-advocate, have their needs met?

engage in learning tasks?

socialize and build friendships?

# Elements of a Measurable Goal

1. A description of the **CONDITIONS** under which the behavior will be performed.
  2. The specific observable **BEHAVIOR** to be performed
  3. The **CRITERIA** to indicate the level of performance at which the goal will be achieved
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4. A statement of **GENERALIZATION** indicating additional conditions under which the behavior will be performed to criterion.
  5. A statement of **MAINTENANCE** for the student to perform the task to criterion for a specific period of time



## ***Annual Goal***

*When given a grocery list with 5 or fewer items and a \$10.00 bill, Jessica will select and purchase all the items on the list with fewer than 5 prompts in 3 different grocery stores over a three-week period.*

- **Conditions:** *when given a grocery list with 5 or fewer items and a \$10 bill*
- **Behavior:** *Jessica will select and purchase*
- **Criteria:** *all the items on the list with fewer than 5 prompts*
- **Generalization:** *in 3 different grocery stores*
- **Maintenance:** *over a three-week period*

# Inclusive Goal Example - Routines and Transitions

- **Conditions:** while in the general education environment, such as her Physical Education class, when directed by the teacher,
- **Behavior:** vanna will demonstrate selected skills (e.g., staying with group, following instructions of teacher, emulating selected peers around her)
- **Criteria:** with no prompts, in 3 out of 3 trials
- **Generalization:** during individual and group activities
- **Maintenance:** over a 4-week period

# Inclusive Goal Example - Grade-Level Academics and Other Essential Skills

- **Conditions:** After listening to or reading with assistance, a short passage related to the 7th grade general education curriculum,
- **Behavior:** vanna will answer yes/no questions either verbally or using her augmentative communication system
- **Criteria:** with 85% accuracy, in 3 out of 3 trials
- **Generalization:** in her English and Social Studies general education classes
- **Maintenance:** over a 4-week period

# Inclusive Goal Example - Interacting with Others

- **Conditions:** while participating in groupwork with peers in the general education environment,
- **Behavior:** vanna will use her communication device to interact with others and respond to questions about topics related to the 7<sup>th</sup> grade content being covered in class
- **Criteria:** with only verbal prompts, in 3 out of 3 trials
- **Generalization:** in all classes across her day
- **Maintenance:** over a 4-week period



# Supplementary Aids and Services

- Adjustments to environment or curriculum to make them accessible and meaningful to students
- Enables students to achieve goals, be involved in and make progress in gen ed curriculum and learn alongside students without disabilities in gen ed contexts
- Often treated like a dropped down menu based on what is currently available or what is currently being done
- Necessary supports are well defined and all are trained on how to implement
- Can be training and resources for teams that will help them better support students (i.e., training on AAC devices and co-planning time each week)

# Questions to Think About

*What could we do to make the gen ed setting meaningful, accessible, and a place students could learn in?*

*How can we keep this student in gen ed using whatever supports are necessary?*

*Are these defined in a way that everyone can understand them?*

*What is the team going to need in order to help the student be successful?*

# Questions to Think About

*Is the physical school and classroom accessible?*

*How will the student engage in instruction and activities?*

*Does the student need social, behavioral, or communication supports?*

*Does staff, family, or peers need collaborative support?*

*Are personnel supports necessary?*

*How can supports be systematically faded in favor of more natural supports?*

# Questions to Think About

*Is this service available to everyone?*

*Could this reasonably be provided in generalized contexts?*

*Will it help the student reach their annual goal or promote independence?*

*What are the least intrusive supports that can be provided to allow the student to experience success in the general education classroom?*

# Determining Least Restrictive Environment

- Students with complex disabilities are, first and foremost, general education students
- Special education is a service and not a place, it's not a teacher and it's not a type of student
- Decision should be based on all other things that are discussed within the IEP
- Decision shouldn't be based on current structure(s) of available continuum of placements already available in a district
- We don't decide where a student is going to be taught until we decide what a student needs to be taught and what supports they need to be given in the general education environment

# Questions to Think About

*Are any special education services being provided outside of the general education class? If so, why?*

*How can we offer most special education services within the gen ed classroom?*

*If services are not provided in gen ed, are flexible learning environments that benefit all students provided?*

# Questions to Think About

*How can we avoid removing students from gen ed because they need specially designed instruction?*

*Are you using the phrase, “as needed”?*

*How can we avoid cracks in the continuum?*



How do you....

- Identify supplementary aids and services?
- Determine least restrictive environment?

# After the Meeting



# Questions to Think About

**As the team considers  
the whole  
educational program  
that has been created**

Will the student  
experience  
membership?

Will the student  
be actively  
participating at  
school?

Will the student be  
learning grade-level  
general education  
curriculum?

# After the Meeting

- Regular check-ins
- Communication with team throughout the year
- Follow up on commitments from meeting
- Plan for inclusive implementation – embedding where IEP goals will be worked on throughout a student's day
- Collecting & reporting data on a regular basis
- Using data to inform instruction & services
- Student At-A Glance/Education Day-at-a-Glance

# Questions



# Resources

- **Inclusive IEP Development Worksheet**

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ffU2XUEQ2IJA8gMhSWfvPlywzq\\_YfIGFwXFj7fnd-XU/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ffU2XUEQ2IJA8gMhSWfvPlywzq_YfIGFwXFj7fnd-XU/edit?usp=sharing)

- **Plan for Fading Para Support**

<https://www.njcie.org/s/Developing-a-Plan-for-Fading-Close-Adult-Support.pdf>

- **IEP Tips for Students with Complex Support Needs**

<https://home.edweb.net/webinar/inclusiveeducation20231019/>

- **Comprehensive Inclusive Education: General Education & the Inclusive IEP**

<https://publications.ici.umn.edu/ties/comprehensive-inclusive-education/main>



# Resources

- **Start Your Collaboration Out Right!**

<https://publications.ici.umn.edu/ties/5-15-45/resources/start-your-collaboration-out-right>

- **Sample Education Day at a Glance**

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/18hwGEZmY4pYnW9mzwolXuf-XP1ftqlZ8xx4ZVERwNfQ/edit?usp=sharing>

- **Sample Data Collection Sheets**

[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1JcgRKvo8H2-LK8\\_6hWqg9XsFCLqKOmdbaLclfCC37B4/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1JcgRKvo8H2-LK8_6hWqg9XsFCLqKOmdbaLclfCC37B4/edit?usp=sharing)

- **The 5-15-45 Tool**

<https://tiescenter.org/topics/inclusive-instruction/5-15-45-tool>



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