



IEP Tip Sheet

Measurable Annual Goals

This tip sheet introduces information about developing measurable annual goals. It includes a brief summary of federal regulations and tips for implementation. To learn more, review the additional resources and check with state law for additional requirements.

What Does IDEA Say?

According to [IDEA Sec. 300.320\(a\)\(2\)](#), each child's individualized education program (IEP) must contain...

- “(i) 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;
- (ii) For children with disabilities who take alternate assessments aligned to alternate academic achievement standards, a description of benchmarks or short-term objectives.”

Essential Elements of Writing Measurable Annual Goals*

Measurable annual goals are developed by the IEP team to address the special education needs outlined in the child's evaluation report and present levels of academic achievement and functional performance (PLAAFP) statement. IEP goals should be appropriately ambitious, in light of the child's circumstances, and address the academic and functional knowledge and skills the student needs to be involved in and benefit from the general curriculum. Key features of measurable goals include the condition, target behavior, and level of proficiency/time frame.

Component	Guiding Questions	Examples
Condition/Context 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under what context will the behavior or skill be expected to occur? • What level of independence is expected to complete the skill or demonstrate the behavior? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When given 30 first-grade sight words • When given a third-grade reading passage • When provided a sixth-grade-level story starter and 4 minutes to write • Independently • With no more than two reminders needed • When prompted
Target Behavior 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do we want the student to be able to do? • Is this a measure of student behavior, not adult behavior? • Is the behavior observable and measurable? • Is it a functionally relevant replacement behavior? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student will read 60 words correctly • Student will use a learned strategy to de-escalate • Student will complete a handwashing routine • Student will be academically engaged
Level of Proficiency/ Timeline 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When will mastery of the skills be expected to occur? • What is the level of accuracy? • How many trials does the student need to demonstrate mastery of the skill? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 95% accuracy • Three consecutive probes • During 4 out of 4 trials • By spring benchmarking • At least 80% of the instructional period • During 8 of 10 peer interactions

*This content was adapted with permission from the National Center on Intensive Intervention's Strategies for Setting High-Quality Academic Individualized Education Program Goals and Strategies for Setting Data-Driven Behavioral Individualized Education Program Goals





Tips for Developing Measurable Annual Goals

- ✓ Focus on a few big goals that address the disability related needs impacting the student’s ability to access and benefit from the general curriculum and achieve post-school success.
- ✓ A single goal may address multiple areas of need.
- ✓ Ensure proposed special education and related services are reasonably calculated to help the student make progress toward the goal.
- ✓ Write goals in a way that they can be frequently monitored using efficient and validated approaches to ensure the IEP team can be responsive to evolving student needs.

Where can you learn more?

 **Questions and Answers (Q&A) on U. S. Supreme Court Case Decision Endrew F. v. Douglas County School District Re-1.** The Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) released this Q&A to give parents and other stakeholders information on the issues addressed in the *Endrew F.* supreme court case and the impact of the Court's decision on the implementation of IDEA.

 **The What and Why of Measurable Annual Goals** (PROGRESS Center). This course is intended to explain the IDEA requirements for measurable annual goals and the critical role of measurable annual goals in the development of a high-quality IEP.

 **Strategies for Setting High-Quality Academic Individualized Education Program Goals** and **Strategies for Setting Data-Driven Behavioral Individualized Education Program Goals** (National Center on Intensive Intervention). These guides explain how educators can establish academic and behavior IEP goals that are measurable, ambitious, and appropriate.

 **Developing IEPs that Support Inclusive Education for Students with the Most Significant Cognitive Disabilities** (TIES Center). This brief covers considerations for developing annual goals that are standards based for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities.

 **PROGRESS Center Website.** The PROGRESS website includes additional information about developing high-quality IEPs and additional tip sheets in this series.



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This material was produced under the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, Award No. H326C190002. David Emenheiser serves as the project officer. The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the positions or policies of the U.S. Department of Education. No official endorsement by the U.S. Department of Education of any product, commodity, service, or enterprise mentioned on this website is intended or should be inferred. This IEP Tip Sheet was updated as of 2/2024.

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