Writing IEP Goals That Are Observable and Measurable

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IDEA (PL-94-142- Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act)

…a statement of measurable annual goals, including benchmarks or short-term objectives, related to-

- Meeting the child's needs that result from the child's disability to enable the child to be involved in and progress in the general curriculum; and

- Meeting each of the child's other educational needs that result from the child's disability

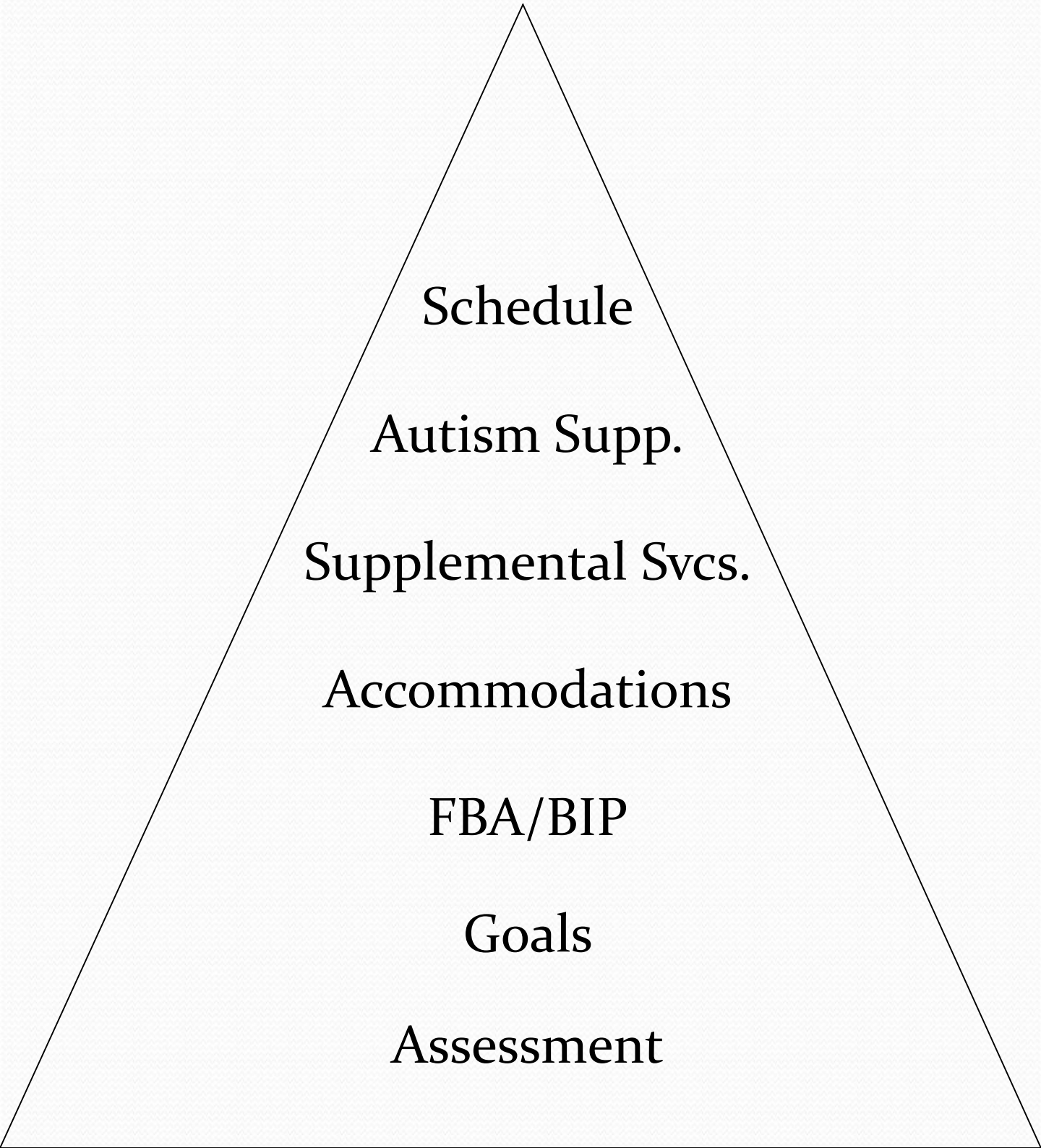
Why Are Goals Important?

- Required by law
- Increase probability of student progress
- Help ARD committee to direct IEP decisions
- Ensure that educational programming will meet the individual needs of the student
- Ensure that student is progressing on gen ed curriculum

Why Are Observability and Measurability Important?

- Reduce disagreements
- Easier to demonstrate progress
- Provide objective information to the ARD/IEP committee
- Accountability
- Improve decision-making

IEP Development



IEP Goals/Objectives

1. Determine present level of performance (assessment)
2. Define new skill or new level of skill to be learned
3. Determine measurement, plan teaching procedure and data collection
4. Write objective
5. ARD/IEP committee accepts
6. Teach and collect data
7. Report progress
8. Back to #1

Assessment

- PLAAFP-The Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (TX)
- PLAAFP- should always be determined before choosing and writing goals/objectives
- Formal Assessment
  - Full Individual Evaluation (FIE)
  - Standardized, Norm-Referenced
- Informal Assessment
  - Published assessment tools(The ABLLS-R, VB-MAPP, Brigance, Local Curriculum Based Tests)
  - Teacher made tests
  - Teacher observation (with data)

Assessment

- Goals/objectives should be prioritized according to comprehensive assessment
- What is the most important skill to teach? Then 2nd most important, etc.
- If you have selected a goal that is not directly linked to assessment, how do you know whether or not it's a priority?

Teaching Procedures vs. Learning Outcomes

- Teaching procedures- a set of procedures designed to produce a desired learning outcome

- Learning outcomes- the result of the teaching procedures

Teaching Procedures vs. Learning Outcomes

- Goal/Objective- a statement of predicted learning outcome
- Goals/Objectives should not describe teaching procedures
- There may be more than one possible teaching procedure for a specific goal/objective.

Teaching Procedure

- Using flashcards to practice memorization of simple addition facts
- Using a number line to teach simple addition

Learning Outcome

- The learner will increase fluency and accuracy in solving simple addition facts

Goal/Objective

- The student will solve 50 simple addition problems with 90% accuracy, within 2 minutes, across 5 consecutive days.

Observable Behaviors

Readily seen by all

- Reading aloud 25 high frequency words
- Singing "The Wheels on the Bus"
- Sitting quietly during circle time
- Stating the Pythagorean theorem

Or

Leave a permanent product that can be seen by all

- Spelling test
- Solving long division problems

Unobservable

- Emotions (sad, happy, anxious)
- Attitudes (defiant, disrespectful)
- Sensations (pain, hunger, etc.)
- Broad undefined terms- on/off-task, pay attention, participate

Measurement

- Specific
- Should be easily understood by any parent or professional
- Objective
- Accurately reflects desired outcome
- Identifies prompt level

Measurable

- Number of correct trials
- Percentage correct
- Number of targets mastered
- Amount of time to begin the response
- Amount of time to complete the response
- Specific prompt level

Measurable

- Percentage of trials
- Duration of time out of instruction
- Frequency
- Consecutive trials

Not Measurable

Subjective words or phrases

- Minimal prompts
- Decreasing prompts
- Demonstrate knowledge of
- Understand concept of
- Increase ability to
- Learn the
- Know

No mastery criteria

Mastery Criteria

- Clearly defines when the skill no longer needs to be directly taught (mastery)
- Includes specific detailed criteria for the student's behavior to meet in order to achieve mastery
- Includes demonstration of mastery of the skill over a period of time
- Should represent significant progress

Formula

1. State the setting

   Direction(s) given by the instructor, if any

   Prompt(s), if any

   Instructional materials

2. State the behavior(s) of student

   Describe a correct response

3. State mastery criteria

   Measurement-data collection

BE SPECIFIC!!!

New or Total?

"New" = added to baseline

"Total" = including baseline

"Opportunities"vs "Trials"

Opportunities- Random times throughout the day when there is an opportunity to engage in the response

Must include measurement of all opportunities and responses

Trials- Situations set up by the instructor, in which the desired response is expected to occur, and then strengthened through reinforcement

Percentage of trials/opportunities is preferable as data for each day can be compared, even when number of trials/opportunities vary from day to day

“Opportunities”vs “Trials”

Opportunities- Data collection may be more complicated and inconvenient

May be difficult to define

Amount of teaching depends on frequency of opportunities

Trials- Data collection may be simpler and easier to manage

The teacher decides on the number of trials each day and, therefore, may have more control over the amount of teaching time.

Baseline

- Present level of performance specific to a particular goal, according to the measurement in the goal

- Required for each goal in order to determine progress

Baseline

Example:

- **Goal**-When shown a motor action such as clapping hands and told “Do this”, the student will imitate the action, for 10 actions, as measured by 3 consecutive first trial of the day probes.

- **Baseline**- The student imitates 3 actions.

Baseline

If you haven't collected baseline data, how do you know that it needs to be a goal?

Example

When shown an object or a picture and asked “What is this?” or “This is a..” the student will correctly state the label of the picture or object within 3 seconds for 6 previously unknown objects or pictures as measured by 3 out of 3 trials over 5 consecutive days.

Example

When the student is in the bathroom and is told “wash your hands” the student will go to the sink and correctly and independently complete all the steps of hand-washing, without prompts, 3 out of 3 trials for 10 consecutive school days.

- The student will use “yes” and “no” correctly for 5 sessions

- When presented with a field of three pictures, the student will correctly follow directions to select a specific picture

- The student will write the upper case alphabet without prompts and with no more than one error for three consecutive days

- The student will transition from one activity to another without anxiety or frustration for 4 out of 5 days
- The student will attend during circle time for at least 5 minutes with no more than 3 verbal redirects for one week
- The student will be able to imitate the actions of others
- The student will say “Hello” to a peer when told “Say hello to….” for 3 consecutive days

- The student will participate in music therapy
- When greeted by another student, the student will return the greeting by saying “hello” or by waving, 4 out of 5 opportunities for 5 consecutive days
- When transitioning from one activity to another, within the classroom, the student will do so without engaging in problem behaviors as measured by no more than one strike toward others per day for 10 consecutive days

- The student will attend to the teacher 100% of the time for 5 consecutive days

- When the student requests and item/activity and is denied access by being told “No, but you can have….”, and offered an alternative preferred item/activity, the student will accept the alternative without engaging in problem behaviors, 90% of trials for 10 consecutive days.

Data Collection

- Should reflect the goal/objective, including mastery criteria and prompt level
- Should be permanently recorded
- Method of data collection should be planned before writing the goal/objective

Reporting Progress

- Progress report should be based on data collection
- Clearly, objectively and empirically states progress toward mastery criteria

Reporting Progress

- The student has mastered 5 motor imitations for a total of 8.
- The student has accepted “no” without engaging in problem behaviors 70% of trials for 5 consecutive days
- The student has mastered 5 new mands for a total of 15

Well before the deadline for the annual ARD, restart the process, beginning with assessment