handbook of goals & objectives
related to essential state of california content standards

compiled by the Association of California School Administrators (ACSA) and the California Association of Resource Specialist and Special Education Teachers (CARS+).
TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION ......................................................................................................... 1
WHY DEVELOP STANDARDS BASED IEPS .......................................................... 2
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .......................................................................................... 2
MICHAEL HOCK ARTICLE ......................................................................................... 3
STANDARDS ................................................................................................................ 7
IMPORTANCE OF ANNUAL GOALS AND SHORT-TERM OBJECTIVES/BENCHMARKS .................................................................................................................. 8
GUIDELINES FOR DEVELOPING ............................................................................. 10
STEPS FOR WRITING ............................................................................................... 13
EXAMPLES ................................................................................................................ 17
HANDBOOK DEFINITIONS ......................................................................................... 20
I.D.E.A. LAW .............................................................................................................. 21
GOALS AND OBJECTIVES/BENCHMARKS FOR MATH, READING AND WRITING .................................................................................................................. 24
When Congress enacted the 1997 amendments to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), they sent a clear message to the public that all students must have the opportunity to access the general curriculum and to participate in the statewide assessment process. Since standards are the basic framework of the general curriculum and the criteria used to define accountability, it makes good sense to use essential content standards to develop Individualized Education Plan (IEP) goals and objectives/benchmarks to coordinate instruction, learning, and assessment.

Standards provide a common language and help bridge the gap between special and general education. Designing standards based IEPs supports students in achieving standards, performing their very best on standards-based district and statewide assessment, being promoted from grade to grade, and eventually graduating/exiting. One must remember, however, that standards are points of focus that guide curriculum. The educational sequence outlined in the State of California Content Frameworks, which are reflected in state-adopted curriculum materials, selected by local districts, determined curriculum. Teachers need to decide how to adapt that curriculum to meet individual student needs and select teaching strategies to ensure student success.

This Goals and Objectives Handbook for the mild to moderately disabled population is a tool that was developed with the collaboration of ACSA administrators, special education and general education teachers and administrators, program specialists, The Pulliam Group and the California Association of Resource Specialists and Special Education Teachers (CARS+). The handbook is a powerful resource geared to providing step-by-step direction, sample goals and objectives/benchmarks, a suggested list of essential content standards developed from the State of California Grade Level Content Standards including those aligned to the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE), and a condensed standards check-off list for easy reference. The handbook not only provides general and special education personnel with accurate procedures on writing goals and objectives/benchmarks for special education students, but it also provides an array of samples based on the essential standards, allowing any district to implement standards-based planning within their current IEP process.

Current Federal special education law, the IDEA 97, requires that students with disabilities receive a "free appropriate public education" (FAPE) in the "least restrictive environment" (LRE), based on the student’s individualized education program (IEP). By using the examples provided, we believe all general and special education staff can reduce their frustration with writing goals and objectives/benchmarks for special education students, but it also provides an array of samples based on the essential standards, allowing any district to implement standards-based planning within their current IEP process.

"...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..."

IDEA '97 [34CFR 300.347 (a) (2) (i)]
WHY DEVELOP STANDARDS BASED IEPs?

Developing standards based Individual Education Plans (IEPs), for the mild to moderate special education population provides a myriad of rewards for students, teachers and administrators. By incorporating "standards" into our IEPs, the IEP can now tie individual student needs to state standards and promote inclusive education for all students. **For the first time IEPs allow general educators and special educators to speak the same language**, by not only providing a positive direction for goals and interventions, but also improving the consistency across classroom, schools and school districts. **The bottom line is that this also satisfies “general curriculum” requirements of the IDEA 97 efficiently and effectively.** One of the bigger rewards is aligning IEP goals and objectives/benchmarks to state or district content standards to improve teaching and learning.

It is the committee’s hope and intent that administrators find this handbook to be a useful document in the efforts to recruit and retain special educators while easing the IEP process for general educators. This handbook includes language from IDEA to provide a useful product in the creation of IEPs.

Thank you to the ACSA Board of Directors for supporting the Pupil Services Special Education Committee efforts in this endeavor. The project has taken three years of commitment, dedication and collaboration. Having the privilege of working with CARS+ and other committee members has been a remarkable experience. The ultimate product models collaborative efforts between administrators and teachers towards a common cause.

Diane K. Youtsey
ACSA Goals and Objectives Project Chair

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The following organizations and individuals should be recognized for their dedication to the project:

- **California Department of Education**
  - Adam Berman, Education Programs Consultant
  - CAHSEE Development Team
  - Diana Blackmon, Special Education Consultant

- **California Association of Resource Specialist and Special Education Teachers (CARS+)**
  - Debbie Baehler, President
  - Silvia L. DeRuvo, Legislative Director
  - Sue Kawasaki, President-Elect
  - Janny Latino, Consultant
  - Donna Lucansky, Past President

- **Loomis Union School District**
  - Laura Bishop, Director of Special Education

- **Palm Springs Unified School District**
  - Cher Koleszar, Coordinator of Special Education

- **Placer County Office of Education**
  - Diane Youtsey, Director
  - Carrie Scalise, Secretary

- **Placer Nevada SELPA**

- **The Pulliam Group**

- **Roseville City School District**
  - Sandy Foster, Special Education Teacher
  - Medea Godbee, General Educator
  - Linda Puroell, Special Education Teacher

- **Southwest SELPA**
  - Bob Farran, Director

- **Tahoe Truckee Unified**
Ten Reasons Why We Should Use Standards in IEPs

By Michael Hock, University of Vermont Special Education Program

In case you haven’t noticed, standards are everywhere. Forty-nine of the fifty states now have statewide standards. Iowa, the lone hold out, has opted for locally developed standards, but has standards none the less. In every school in every town in America, standards are, or likely will be, the basic framework for teaching and learning, the focus of educational reform, and the criteria that defines accountability.

Which, of course, begs the question: “What does this have to do with special education?” Should special education be on the front lines of the standards revolution, or is this a regular education battle? Are students with disabilities full participants or innocent bystanders? This article offers ten reasons why standards should have a prominent place in special education. Be forewarned. Although it might look like a David Letterman top ten, it’s definitely not for laughs. On the contrary, the purpose of this article is to help special education administrators lead the very serious work of making sure standards provide maximum benefit for students with disabilities. That said - from the home office at California Association of Special Educators (CASE), here are the top ten reasons why we should use standards in IEPs:

1. IT’S THE LAW (SORT OF)
The 1997 Amendments to the IDEA don’t specifically require that IEPs be referenced to standards. However, in the section of the amendments that articulates the purpose of special education, the following language has been added by Congress:

“...to ensure access of the child to the general curriculum, so that he or she can meet the educational standards within the jurisdiction of the public agency that apply to all children” [34 CFR 300.2.6 (b)(3)(1)].

The general curriculum thread runs throughout the amendments, touching on evaluation procedures, IEP contents, special education and related services, and the composition of IEP teams. Recall that in all fifty states, in one way or another, standards define the general curriculum. The implications of these rules should be clear. If students with disabilities are going to succeed in the general curriculum and meet the standards that apply to all students, then their IEPs must focus on those standards and provide the learning opportunities they need to meet them.

2. ONE WORD - ACCOUNTABILITY
Accountability takes a variety of forms. Systems-level accountability is characterized by legislated rewards and sanctions tied to test scores, school-wide “report cards” and data-driven action-planning. Student-level accountability uses assessment results as the gateway to higher grade levels and graduation. Invariably standards are the center of accountability, the things students are supposed to know and be able to do, the stuff that assessments assess.

Clearly, special education is not immune to accountability. The IDEA amendments require that children with disabilities participate in accountability assessments [34 CFR 300.138(a)], and stipulates that states must establish performance goals and indicators that include standards [34 CFR 300.1676(a) (2)]. That being the case, doesn’t it make sense to design IEPs that help students meet standards - so they can do their best on standards-based assessments, pass from grade to grade and eventually graduate, and in the process, help prove that their schools and teachers were indeed accountable?

3. THREE WORDS - LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT
Despite the IDEA’s new emphasis on access to the general curriculum, schools must still serve students in the least restrictive environment (LRE), offering a continuum of programs and placements that meet the students’ individual needs. New to the IDEA is the related requirement that the IEP team include at least one classroom teacher “if the child is or might be participating in the general curriculum” [34 CFR 300.343(a) (2)]. It’s the “might be” part of this regulation that is particularly interesting. Presumably, even when a student isn’t...
participating in the general curriculum, the IEP team needs to address the skills and behaviors the student would need to move up the LRE continuum toward the general education environment. That's why the classroom teacher needs to be there. “Might be” suggests movement and connectedness. A common set of standards links every part of the LRE continuum to the general curriculum, and provides the team with a clear and consistent mechanism for gauging progress toward mastering the access skills identified by the classroom teacher.

4. **STANDARDS CAN HELP CLARIFY WHAT WE MEAN BY REGULAR AND SPECIAL EDUCATION**

It's hard to define special education without defining regular education first. Standards provide that definition. Standards can clarify both the content of the general curriculum and the student outcomes that might be expected if the educational system is working up to speed. If the purpose of special education is to provide students with disabilities access to the general education curriculum so they can meet the standards that apply to all children, then it should be clear what special education is all about. Regular education provides an array of learning opportunities so students can meet standards. When that's not enough, special education joins in, providing supplemental and individualized learning opportunities. In some cases, special education provides what might be considered “access opportunities” - supports and services that open educational doors so students with disabilities can benefit from the learning opportunities that are available. Regular and special education are two components of the same big system, helping kids meet the same set of standards.

5. **STANDARDS CAN HELP CLARIFY WHAT WE MEAN BY “STUDENT WITH A DISABILITY”**

The traditional labeling system used in special education works fairly well for determining eligibility. It falls short, however, for planning individualized instruction. What do labels like LD, ED and MR really tell us about what the students knows, where we should start the learning process, or how we should proceed? A standards framework benchmarks what a student should know and be able to do at any given point in his or her career as a learner. When used in the context of special education, standards give definition to the effects of a student’s disability relative to the expectations for students who don’t have disabilities. Those expectations are defined along a fluid continuum.

If we add in the learning opportunities the student needs, we are able to define the student in terms that translate directly into intervention. In math, the student is working on the same standards as classmates, at the same performance levels, but needs classroom accommodations, a reader/scribe for example, to address the language content of word problems. Another student is working on the same standards as classmates, at the same performance levels, but has behavioral needs related to independent work, a manifestation of an attention deficit. A third student is working on the same standards as classmates, but at lower performance levels, and needs remedial help through special education. A fourth student needs to work on pre-requisite standards, oral expression standards for example, before progressing to the standards that are being addressed by classmates, written expression standards for example. Granted, these “labels” don’t roll off the tongue like LD, ED, or MR, but what they lose in brevity, they gain in educational utility. Standards provide labels for kids that communicate what they know and what they need.

6. **STANDARDS CAN PROVIDE A USEFUL STRUCTURE FOR IEP DEVELOPMENT.**

A typical standards framework reads like an educational road map, providing milestones for every grade level, future destinations, and points of interest along the way. Wisconsin’s Fourth Grade Model Academic Standards for English Language Arts, for example, begin with the following performance standard:

> "By the end of grade four, students will use effective reading strategies to achieve their purposes in reading."

That standard is followed by a list of eight benchmarks that cover word recognition strategies, use of context clues, phonemic awareness, comprehension, organization, reading with a purpose, and much more. That is only one of many standards in Wisconsin’s English Language Arts framework, at only one of three grade levels. English Language Arts is

Reprinted with permission from CASE & author, Michael Hock
only one part of Wisconsin’s Model Standards, which also include math, science, social studies, agriculture, family and consumer skills, and many other content areas - nineteen in all.

Not every state has a standards framework as extensive as Wisconsin’s. In some states, South Carolina for example, the standards have less breadth but greater depth. All of Vermont’s standards fit in one booklet. Massachusetts has seven. The fifty standards frameworks are as different as the states that produced them, but they all have one thing in common. They are a gift for special educators. The frameworks provide an exceptional tool for planning IEPs. It’s safe to say that the English Language Arts standard listed above would be at home in at least 90% of IEPs. Those Wisconsin benchmarks are perfect for setting up a pedagogically sound sequence of short-term objectives. Overall, a standards framework can streamline the special educator’s work, succeeding where IEP tools such as objective banks have failed.

7. **STANDARDS CAN PROMOTE CONSISTENCY THROUGH COMMON LANGUAGE**

Initially, some special educators might feel like the “language of standards” is the revenge of regular education for all the jargon that special education has produced over the years. Standards-based school reform certainly has brought its fair share of new terminology into the educational vernacular-content standards, performance standards, alignment, benchmarks, rubrics, etc. New terminology aside, standards can provide a common language for special educators, regular educators, specialists, parents and other team members. When everyone speaks the same language, the chance of confusion is reduced and, in turn, the chance that various team members will work at cross purposes on conflicting or incompatible goals is virtually eliminated. Consistency is the end result of common language. If we apply that consistency across an entire state, IEP’s could have something they’ve often lacked in the past - portability from teacher to teacher, program to program, school to school, and district to district.

8. **STANDARDS CAN PUT A POSITIVE SPIN ON NOT SO POSITIVE BEHAVIORS**

For kids with behavior problems, standards can help IEP teams write goals that focus on what they want the student to DO, not NOT DO. Rhode Island, for example, has standards that address integrity, honesty and courage, as well as “showing courtesy towards others” and “respecting the rights of all people.” Illinois has standards that cover positive communication for “resolving differences and preventing conflicts.” In Massachusetts, all students in grades 5-8 are expected to “describe the personal benefits of making positive health decisions,” and in grades 9-10 to “demonstrate helpful ways to discuss sexuality, violence, and substance abuse.” Standards such as these have the dual advantage of promoting programs that give students power over their own lives, and also helps make it clear that the student is only being asked to do what is expected for all students. Finally, by addressing behavioral issues in the context of workplace standards such as dependability, honesty, productivity, leadership and initiative, students can begin to see the long-term personal implications of those issues.

9. **STANDARDS CAN IMPROVE TEACHING AND LEARNING**

The positive effects that standards have had on teaching and learning in regular education are too numerous to mention in the context of this short article. Many of those innovations in curriculum design, instruction and assessment translate well to the needs of special education students. Not the least of those effects is that standards force classroom teachers to view each student as an individual, and to plan accordingly. That has to be a tremendous benefit for students with special needs, a benefit that is enhanced by using standards in the student’s IEP.

Standards have also promoted innovations in classroom measurement strategies. Authentic portfolio-based assessments, which use analytic rubrics to quantify student performance, have direct application to IEPs. Picture this: at the IEP meeting parents are appraised of their child’s progress with a portfolio of work samples, collected over time, that are scored against common language criteria that reference typical classroom performance. They get it.

On a broader scale, standards can tie special education into the action-planning processes that are a big part of accountability in many
schools and districts. Standards provide a mechanism for aggregating the performance of all the students who access specific programs or services, making it possible to winnow out programs and strategies that don’t work, or validate the ones that do.

10. STICKY NOTES
Many of the special educators who are pioneering the use of standards-referenced IEPs started with a copy of their state’s standards framework, some professional development time, and a packet of those little yellow sticky notes. Seriously. Given the time to review standards in the context of IEP development, teachers begin to see how specific standards link to individual students and typical IEP goals. They find the reading, math, and writing standards that provide an explicit scope and sequence for teaching basic skills. They see the health standard that can provide a positively directed goal for a student with a substance abuse problem. They identify social studies and workplace standards that can give a real world relevance to behavior plans. For future reference, key pages of the standards framework are tabbed and labeled with the sticky notes.

It can be that easy. The end result is an IEP that is anchored in the general curriculum, promotes the use of common language and common goals, and drives innovation in teaching and learning. When the test scores come out, the administrator has the confidence of knowing that at the very least the results reflect the efforts. That makes eleven reasons why we should use standards in IEPs.

Reprinted with permission from CASE & author, Michael Hock
1. **CONTENT STANDARD**

A standard describes what students are expected to know and be able to do in each subject area and grade level. In an effort to improve student achievement, the California Legislature passed AB 265 in 1997, which requires all students in the State to meet standards and pass assessments.

2. **ESSENTIAL STANDARD**

Taken as whole, content standards delineate a broad range of expectations for a particular grade level. An essential standard identifies specific content critical to the special education student’s program through the curriculum. According to this handbook, having just a few essential standards at each grade level provides the staff with a road map through the content standards maze.

3. **HOW STANDARDS AFFECT SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS**

Special education students have a right to access the general curriculum as mandated by IDEA. The IEP team determines the curriculum standard most appropriate for the special education student. Knowledge of essential standards will be helpful to the IEP team in guiding their decision. While providing maximum access to the general education curriculum and standards, a special education student may meet standards at an individualized rate. The students may demonstrate mastery and understanding with alternative assessments at individualized levels as determined by the IEP team.

4. **INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM AND STANDARDS**

Because a student has an Individualized Education Program (IEP), matriculation may be determined by mastery or progress towards individualized educational goals as determined by the IEP team and not necessarily by meeting district grade-level essential standards.

5. **CALIFORNIA HIGH SCHOOL EXIT EXAM**

Essential standards focus on the curriculum elements that will help students prepare for the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE) and facilitate transition into adult life.
WHY ARE ANNUAL GOALS AND SHORT-TERM OBJECTIVES/BENCHMARKS IMPORTANT?

Annual goals and short-term objectives/benchmarks in an IEP allow you to track a child’s progress in school and help determine if a child’s educational program is appropriate. [34 C.F.R. Part 300, App. C, No.37.]

Goals and objectives/benchmarks are also important because they help to form and guide a child’s specific instructional plan. An IEP is not designed to be a detailed instructional plan, but instructional plans must relate directly to IEP goals and objectives/benchmarks. Parents should always participate in developing appropriate IEP goals and objectives/benchmarks. [34 C.F.R. Part 300, App. C, No. 41.]

The goals and objectives define what kind of special education program and related services the school district must provide. The school district must provide the programs and services necessary to meet the goals and objectives/benchmarks in a child’s IEP. If a child needs a particular kind of special education program or service, the school district will provide the program or service if it is necessary to meet an IEP goal or objective/benchmark. [34 C.F.R. Part 300, App. C, No. 45.]

Goals and short-term objectives/benchmarks determine appropriate special education services and areas of instruction. Goals and objectives/benchmarks must be linked to present levels of performance/measurable behaviors and address the student’s involvement and progress in the general curriculum.

PART B Sec. 1414 Evaluations, eligibility determinations, individual education programs, and educational placements

The term “individualized education program” or “IEP” means 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 measurable annual goals, including benchmarks or short-term objectives, related to—
  o 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
  o meeting each of the child’s other educational needs that result from the child’s disability;
ANNUAL GOALS

Annual goals are statements that describe what the student can reasonably accomplish within a twelve-month period.

Annual goals:
- Enable the child to be involved in and progress in the general curriculum
- Meet child’s needs that result from the disability
- Every goal must be written in observable, measurable terms
- Each goal should have at least two short-term objectives/benchmarks
- Baseline data should be recorded for each goal and for each objective/benchmark
- How student’s progress toward goals will be measured
- How the student’s parents will be informed of such progress with the same frequency as progress is reported for general education students [34 CFR (a)(7)(ii)]

Annuals goals should:
- Describe reasonable accomplishments within a twelve month period
- Have a direct relationship to the child’s present level of educational performance
- Be a broad projection or idea of what you want the student to do

For students 14 years or older transition services language must be included in the development of goals and objectives/benchmarks. [20 USC 1414 (d) (1) (A) and (d) (6) (A) (i)]

Short term objectives/benchmarks:
- Determine intermediate steps that will assist the student in accomplishing the goals.
- Are based upon present levels of performance
- Determine evaluation used to show progress
- Drive instruction
- Are measurable
- Are developed from State/district General Curriculum Standards as appropriate
- Can be aligned to California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE)
GUIDELINES FOR DEVELOPING ANNUAL GOALS

1. Develop annual statements that are measurable.

2. Develop goals that correlate directly with the child’s present educational levels.

3. Develop goals that are specific. (Avoid goals too broad or too vague. Such as: improve reading; or, increase self-esteem)

4. Develop goals that capitalize on the student’s strengths. Take into consideration the student’s past and present levels of educational performance, preferences and learning styles.

5. Develop a goal for each area in which the student has an identified need; prioritize the student’s needs according to California Content Standards.

6. Indicate the amount of time anticipated for the student to attain each of the goals.
**SHORT-TERM OBJECTIVES/BENCHMARKS**

Short-term objectives/benchmarks are a description of a learning outcome. They are what the learner is expected to do at the end of a specified period of time. A short-term objective/benchmark is the specific lead-up skill or task that is a step toward the goal. Try to match the projected date of completion (by ___/___/___) with a regular scheduled grading period. Objectives/benchmarks specify a desired **level of measurable/performance behavioral change** on the part of the learner. If the objective/benchmark is attained, the learner will advance toward the corresponding goal.

**NOTE:** The terms “benchmarks” and short-term objective are being used

**GUIDELINES FOR DEVELOPING SHORT-TERM OBJECTIVES/BENCHMARKS**

1. Develop short-term, sequential objectives/benchmarks related to:
   (a) Meeting the student’s needs that result from his/her disability to enable the student be involved in and progress in the general curriculum.
   (b) Meeting the student’s educational needs that result from the child’s disability.

2. Develop short-term objectives/benchmarks to be measurable, intermediate steps between the present levels of educational performance of the student with a disability and the annual goals. Both goals and objectives/benchmarks should align with State or district content standards.

In writing objectives/benchmarks it is important to use verbs that are open to few interpretations and that require an overt, observable action, i.e.:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>write</th>
<th>solve</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>list</td>
<td>recite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>define</td>
<td>construct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>read</td>
<td>compare</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
COMPONENTS TO GOALS AND OBJECTIVES/BENCHMARKS

♦ WHO: student
♦ DOES WHAT: observable behavior
♦ WHEN: by reporting date
♦ GIVEN WHAT: conditions
♦ HOW MUCH: mastery, criteria
♦ HOW WILL IT BE MEASURED: performance data

♦ WHO – Student

♦ DOES WHAT - Observable Behavior – describes what the student will do to complete goal or objective/benchmark:

When given a choice of an activity, “Student” will point and label the item/activity following no more than one (1) prompt on 3/5 trials 100% of the time as measured by teacher recorded data.

♦ WHEN – By Reporting Date

♦ GIVEN WHAT - Conditions – describes the “givens” that will need to be in place for the goal or objective/benchmark to be completed.

When given a choice of an activity, “Student” will point and label the item/activity following no more than one (1) prompt on 3/5 trials 100% of the time as measured by teacher recorded data.

♦ HOW MUCH - Mastery – describes the performance accuracy of the behavior needed for the goal and objective/benchmark to be considered mastered.

When given a choice of an activity, “Student” will point and label the item/activity following no more than one (1) prompt on 3/5 trials 100% of the time as measured by teacher recorded data.

♦ HOW MUCH - Criteria – describes how many times the behavior must be observed for the goal or objective/benchmark to be considered completed.

When given a choice of an activity, “Student” will point and label the item/activity following no more than one (1) prompt on 3/5 trials 100% of the time as measured by teacher recorded data.

♦ HOW WILL IT BE MEASURED – Performance Data
STEPS FOR WRITING IEP GOALS AND OBJECTIVES/BENCHMARKS ALIGNED TO CALIFORNIA CONTENT STANDARDS

1. DETERMINE PRESENT LEVELS
   To determine the present levels of performance, best practice includes using samples, informal assessment and observations or other methods to evaluate the student's present levels of performance. Based on assessment information, this could be the goal or short-term objectives/benchmarks that were mastered by the student in the last year.

   Present Levels of Performance:
   ♦ Are useful for instructional planning.
   ♦ Include academic as well as non-academic areas such as daily living skills, communication, and interpersonal skills
   ♦ Describe the effect of a student’s disability on educational performance
   ♦ Are based on assessment data
   ♦ What is the student’s current baseline?
   ♦ Use formal and informal assessments, work portfolios, teacher observations and data collection to determine baseline in all areas of concern.

2. LOCATE THE STUDENT’S BASELINE LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE IN THE CALIFORNIA CONTENT STANDARDS OR DISTRICT STANDARDS
   Look at the state/district standards in the area being considered and determine where the student needs to develop further skills. The team should be aware of the state/district standards in the grades above and below the student. It will be helpful to use the list of ‘essential standards’ developed in this handbook in conjunction with your district’s standards. These essential standards should drive the team consideration for areas of focus.

3. CONSIDER RATE OF LEARNING
   ♦ How long did it take the student to get there?
   ♦ What can the student achieve in one year’s time?

4. WRITE ANNUAL GOAL
   ♦ At the end of one year, what will the student accomplish?
   ♦ Coordinate the student’s instructional needs with the appropriate state/district content standards.
   ♦ The annual goal must be measurable and observable.

5. DETERMINE FIRST OBJECTIVE/BENCHMARK
   ♦ This is the first step in meeting the annual goal.
   ♦ It must be measurable and observable.
   ♦ Determine due date; consider using general education reporting period deadlines.
6. DETERMINE SECOND OBJECTIVE/BENCHMARK

- This is the second step in meeting the annual goal.
- It must be measurable and observable.
- Determine due date; consider using general education reporting period deadlines.

◆ **REMEMBER** ◆

The IEP goals and objectives/benchmarks are the plan for bridging the gap between where the student is and where he or she needs to be in relation to the standards.

- All annual goals must be written in observable, measurable terms.
- Each annual goal must have **at least** 2 objective/benchmarks.
- Parents must receive documentation of progress on annual goals as frequently as general education students receive progress notices. It makes good sense to align objective/benchmarks with regular reporting periods.
## PRESENT LEVELS OF PERFORMANCE ACTIVITY

The following present level of performance statements are based upon assessment data. Determine if the statements (1) describe what a student can or cannot do; and/or (2) would be useful for instructional planning.

*Please note: This is not a checklist.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Present Level of Performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
<td>He has difficulty in reading.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td></td>
<td>She cannot write her name.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td></td>
<td>He requires constant supervision and needs consistent application of consequences for his behavior.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Her vocational skills are slow to develop.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td></td>
<td>He responds to yes/no questions but does not speak in sentences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td></td>
<td>She has a verbal score of 80.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td></td>
<td>She does not bring her assignment calendar or books to class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td></td>
<td>He reads grade level material at 100 wpm with 5 errors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td></td>
<td>She is below grade level in written language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td></td>
<td>He functions at the 5.8 grade level in reading.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Present levels of performance statements are based on assessment data and are written in objective, measurable terms to the extent possible. They are useful and should easily lead to instructional planning. Present level of performance statements help in the understanding of how the child’s disability affects the child’s involvement and progress in the general curriculum.
### CHECKLIST FOR GOALS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Are the goals clear and understandable?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Are the goals stated in positive terms?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Is there at least one goal for each area of need?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Are the goals based upon the present levels of performance statements?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Are the goals practical/relevant when the student’s academic, social, and vocational needs are considered?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Are the goals measurable?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Do the goals describe what the student can reasonably be expected to accomplish within one year?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Are the goals and objectives/benchmarks aligned with CA and district standards?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Are transition goals based on student preferences and desires?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### CHECKLIST FOR IEP OBJECTIVES/BENCHMARKS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Do the short-term objectives/benchmarks represent a task analysis of the annual goals?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Does each objective/benchmark describe the observable behavior the learner is expected to do?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Does each objective/benchmark specify the level of performance that will be accepted as successful achievement of the objective/benchmark?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Does each objective/benchmark indicate the conditions under which you expect the performance to occur?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Are the objectives/benchmarks measurable and in logical sequence?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Are the objectives/benchmarks positive, specific and realistic?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Have the general education standards been utilized as appropriate when developing the short-term objectives/benchmarks?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Are the objectives/benchmarks aligned with California or district standards?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Do the transition objective/benchmarks represent a coordinated set of activities?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
EXAMPLE OF AN IEP GOAL AND OBJECTIVES/BENCHMARKS

Present Level of Performance – Baseline:
Word Reading Analysis
Reads _____ grade passage with 90% accuracy

IDENTIFY THE STANDARD

Goal:
By January, 2002, given a 100-200-word passage at the _____ grade level, Thomas will read aloud with at least 90% decoding accuracy in 4/5 trials as measured by teacher-charted reading samples.

Short-Term Objective/Benchmark:

- Who: Thomas
- Does What: will read aloud
- When: by June 2001
- Given What: when given a 100-200-word passage at the _____ grade
- How Much: with at least 90% decoding accuracy in 4/5 trials
- How will it be measured: as measured by teacher charted reading samples

Short-Term Objective/Benchmark:

- Who: Thomas
- Does What: will point to specific letters
- When: by September 2001
- Given What: when given a page of text from an early reader (name)
- How Much: with at least 90% accuracy in 4/5 trials
- How will it be measured: as measured by teacher charted observations
The goals and objectives/benchmarks do not have to follow any particular order.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BY WHEN</th>
<th>WHO</th>
<th>DOES WHAT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HOW MUCH</td>
<td></td>
<td>HOW WILL IT BE MEASURED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GIVEN WHAT</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Present Level of Performance – Baseline:
Math number source
Adds/Subtracts 2 digits without regrouping at 80%

IDENTIFY THE STANDARD

Goal:
By January, 2002, given 10 mixed 3-digit addition and subtraction problems with regrouping, Jane will write sums/differences with 80% accuracy in 4/5 trials as measured by criterion assessment/teacher charted records.

Short-Term Objective/Benchmark:
♦ Who: Jane
♦ Does What: will write sums
♦ When: by June, 2001
♦ Given What: when given ten 3-digit addition problems with regrouping
♦ How Much: in 4 out of 5 trials, with 80% accuracy
♦ How will it be measured: as measured by criterion assessment/teacher charted records

Short-Term Objective/Benchmark (Mix and Match)
♦ When: by December, 2001
♦ Who: Jane
♦ Does What: will write sum differences
♦ How Much: in 4 out of 5 trials, with 80% accuracy
♦ How will it be measured: as measured by criterion assessment/teacher charted records
♦ Given What: when given ten 3-digit addition problems with regrouping, followed by ten 3-digit subtraction problems with regrouping
SOME HELPFUL HANDBOOK DEFINITIONS

♦ **Alignment**: In standards-based reform, the concept of connecting educational goals, curriculum, instruction and assessment so that all are consistent and working toward the same purposes.

♦ **Benchmarks**: Grade or age specific exemplars of performance standards, often actual examples of student work, which indicate expected levels of performance toward meeting content standards.

♦ **Conditions**: describes the “givens” that will need to be in place for the goal or objective/benchmark to be completed:  
  “When given a choice of an activity or snack, “P” will point and label the item/activity following no more than one (1) prompt on 3/5 trials 100% of the time as measured by teacher recorded data.”

♦ **Content Standards**: As defined by Goals 2000: Educate America Act of 1994, content standards are “broad descriptions of the knowledge and skills students should acquire in a particular area.

♦ **Criteria**: describes how many times the behavior must be observed for the goal or objective/benchmark to be considered completed:  
  “When given a choice of an activity or snack, “P” will point and label the item/activity following no more than one (1) prompt on 3/5 trials 100% of the time as measured by teacher recorded data.”

♦ **Mastery**: describes the accuracy of the behavior needed for the goal and objective/benchmark to be considered completed:  
  “When given a choice of an activity or snack, “P” will point and label the item/activity following no more than one (1) prompt on 3/5 trials 100% of the time as measured by teacher recorded data.”

♦ **Observable Behavior**: describes what the student will do to complete goal or objective/benchmark:  
  “When given a choice of an activity or snack, “P” will point and label the item/activity following no more than one (1) prompt on 3/5 trials 100% of the time as measured by teacher recorded data.”

♦ **Performance Standards**: As defined by Goals 2000: Educate America Act of 1994, performance standards are “concrete examples and explicit definitions of what students have to know and be able to do to demonstrate that such students are proficient in the skills and knowledge framed by the content standards”.

♦ **Present Levels**: Statement of how the child’s disability affects his or her involvement and progress in the general curriculum is based on assessment information. These could be the goals and short-term objectives that were mastered by the student in the last year.

♦ **Standards-Based**: Planning starts with the standard. Curriculum, instruction and assessment are designed specifically to meet the standard.

♦ **Standards-Referenced**: Planning starts with a specific topic, activity or student priority. “Best match” standards are targeted.

♦ **Progress Reporting**: Parents must receive documentation of progress on annual goals as frequently as general education students receive progress notices.
§300.343 IEP MEETINGS

(a) General. Each public agency is responsible for initiating and conducting meetings for the purpose of developing, reviewing, and revising the IEP of a child with a disability (or, if consistent with § 300.342 (c), an IFSP).

(b) Initial IEPs: provision of services.

(1) Each public agency shall ensure that within a reasonable period of time following the agency's receipt of parent consent to an initial evaluation of a child-

   (i) The child is evaluated: and

   (ii) If determined eligible under this part, special education and related services are made available to the child in accordance with an IEP.

(2) In meeting the requirement in paragraph (b) (1) of this section, a meeting to develop an IEP for the child must be conducted within 30-days of a determination that the child needs special education and related services.

(c) Review and revision of IEPs. Each public agency shall ensure that the IEP team -

   (1) Reviews the child’s IEP periodically, but not less than annually to determine whether the annual goal for the child are being achieved: and

   (2) Revises the IEP as appropriate to address –

      (i) any lack of expected progress toward the annual goals described in §300.347(a), and in the general curriculum, if appropriate:

      (ii) The results of any reevaluation conducted under §300.536:

      (iii) Information about the child provided to, or by, the parents, as described in §300.533(a)(1):

      (iv) The child’s anticipated needs: or

      (v) Other matters.


§300.344 IEP TEAM

(a) General. The public agency shall ensure that the IEP team for each child with a disability includes –

   (1) The parents of the child:

   (2) At least one regular education teacher of the child (if the child is, or may be, participating in the regular education environment):

   (3) At least one special education teacher of the child, or if appropriate, at least one special education provider of the child:

   (4) A representative of the public agency who –

      (i) Is qualified to provide, or supervises the provision of, specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of children with disabilities:

      (ii) Is knowledgeable about the general curriculum: and

      (iii) Is knowledgeable about the availability of resources of the public agency:

   (5) An individual who can interpret the instructional implications of evaluation results, who may be a member of the team described in paragraphs (a)(2) through (6) of this section:

   (6) At the discretion of the parent or the agency, other individuals who have knowledge or special expertise regarding the child, including related services personnel as appropriate: and

   (7) If appropriate, the child.

(b) Transition services participants.
(1) Under paragraph (a)(7) of this section, the public agency shall invite a student with a disability of any age to attend his or her IEP meeting if a purpose of the meeting will be the consideration of-
   (i) The student’s transition services needs under §300.347(b) (1):
   (ii) The needed transition services for the student under §300.347(b) (2): or
   (iii) Both

(2) If the student does not attend the IEP meeting, the public agency shall take other steps to ensure that the student’s preferences and interests are considered.

(3) In implementing the requirements of §300.347(b)(2), the public agency also shall invite a representative of any other agency that is likely to be responsible for providing or paying for transition services.

   (i) If an agency invited to send a representative to a meeting does not do so, the public agency shall take other steps to obtain participation of the other agency in the planning of any transition services.

(c) Determination of knowledge and special expertise. The determination of the knowledge or special expertise of any individual described in paragraph (a)(6) of this section shall be made by the party (parents or public agency) who invited the individual to be a member of the IEP.

(d) Designating a public agency representative. A public agency may designate another public agency member of the IEP team to also serve as the agency representative, if the criteria in paragraph (a)(4) of this section are satisfied.

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1401(30).
1414(d)(1)(A)(7). (B))

§300.346 DEVELOPMENT, REVIEW, AND REVISION OF IEP.

(a) Development of IEP.

(1) General. In developing each child’s IEP, the IEP team, shall consider -
   (i) The strengths of the child and the concerns of the parents for enhancing the education of their child:
   (ii) The results of the initial or most recent evaluation of the child: and
   (iii) As appropriate, the results of the child’s performance on any general State or district-wide assessment programs.

(2) Consideration of special factors. The IEP team also shall -
   (i) In the case of a child whose behavior impedes his or her learning or that of others, consider, if appropriate, strategies, including positive behavioral interventions, strategies, and supports: address that behavior:
   (ii) In the case of a child with limited English proficiency, consider the language needs of the child as those needs relate to the child’s IEP:
   (iii) In the case of a child who is blind or visually impaired, provide for instruction in Braille and the use of Braille unless the IEP team determines, after an evaluation of the child’s reading and writing skills, needs, and appropriate reading and writing media (including an evaluation of the child’s future needs for instruction in Braille or the use of Braille), that instruction in Braille or the of Braille is not appropriate for the child:
   (iv) Consider the communication needs of the child, and in the case of a child who is deaf or hard of hearing, consider the child’s language and communication needs, opportunities for direct communications with peers and professional personnel in the child’s language and
communication mode, academic level, and full range of needs, including opportunities for
direct instruction in the child’s language and communication mode: and
(v) Consider whether the child requires assistive technology devices and services.
(b) **Review and Revision of IEP.** In conducting a meeting review, and, if appropriate, revise a child’s
IEP, the IEP team shall consider the factors described in paragraph (a) of this section.
(c) **Statement in IEP.** If, in considering the special factors described in paragraphs (a)(1) and (2) of this
section, the IEP team determines that a child needs a particular device or service (including an
intervention, accommodation, or other program modification) in order for the child to receive FAPE,
the IEP team must include a statement to that effect in the child’s IEP.
(d) **Requirement with respect to regular education teacher.** The regular education teacher of a child with
a disability, as a member of the IEP team, must, to the extent appropriate, participate in the
development, review, and revision of the child’s IEP, including assisting in the determination of –
(1) Appropriate positive behavioral interventions and strategies for the child: and
(2) Supplementary aids and services, program modifications or supports for school personnel that will be
provided for the child, consistent with §300.347(a)(3).
(e) **Construction.** Nothing in this section shall be construed to require the IEP team to include
information under one component of a child’s IEP that is already contained under another component
of the child’s IEP.

(Authority; 20 U.S.C. 1414(d)(3) and (4)(B) and (e))

§300.347  CONTENT OF IEP
(a) **General.** The IEP for each child with a disability must include -
(1) A statement of the child’s present levels of educational performance, including -
(i) How the child’s disability affects the child’s involvement and progress in the general curriculum (i.e.,
the same curriculum as for non-disabled children):
(2) A statement of measurable annual goals, including benchmarks or short-term objectives, related to -
(i) 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 (i.e. the same curriculum as for non-disabled children), or for
preschool children, as appropriate, to participate in appropriate activities; and
(ii) Meeting each of the child’s other educational needs that result from the child’s disability;
(3) A statement of the special education and related services and supplementary aids and services to be
provided to the child, or on behalf of the child, and a statement of the Program modifications or
supports for school personnel that will be provided for the child –
(i) To advance appropriately toward attaining the annual goals;
(ii) To be involved and progress in the general curriculum in accordance with paragraph (a)(1) of this
section and to participate in extracurricular and other nonacademic activities; and
(iii) To be educated and participate with other children with disabilities and non-disabled children in the
activities described in this section.

IV. OTHER QUESTIONS REGARDING IMPLEMENTATION OF IDEA
-Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and Other Selected Implementation Issues

Interpretation of IEP and Other selected Requirements under Part B of the individuals with Disabilities
Education Act (IDEA: Part B)