IEP Writing - What goes in this box

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Main Parts of an IEP

Identifying Information - includes IEP dates, eligibility criteria, and eligibility date.

Present Level - includes psychoeducational evaluation results, state test results, and district level test results, strengths, needs, parental input, and impact of disability.

Special Factors - list of criteria

Behavior Plan - if needed

Transition Plan - if needed
Main Parts of an IEP

Goals

Supports

Testing Accommodations

Services

Parental Contact
IEP Compliance

The Present Level is what controls the rest of the IEP.

Rule 1: If it is a weakness - you need a goal and support.

Rule 2: If you have a goal or support - you have to justify it as a weakness.

Rule 3: Every child is unique - IEPs should be unique, too.

Rule 4: I should KNOW the child by what is written in the IEP.
Can you identify the child?

Description of academic, developmental and/or functional strengths:

The student has shown progress with his academics over the last year. He follows the classroom routines and schedule without having to be redirected. When he needs help, he appropriately ask for helps and makes notes as he is being instructed.

In math, he now uses visual aides around the room to assist him, before he ask for help. During reading, he gets excited about some of the activities we do, and will now read in front of a group without hesitating or becoming embarrassed.
Description of academic, developmental and/or functional needs:

In math, the student struggles with multiple digit multiplication and division. He uses visual aides around the room to assist him when needed. This is problematic when he has to test and cannot use the aides in the room. He is not easily frustrated, but will begin to daydream if he does not understand the content.

After reading, he has difficulties answering multiple step questions. When he has these troubles, he is directed to go back into the passage and re-read, highlight/underline the important facts and then try to answer the questions appropriately.
Impact of the disability on involvement and progress in the general education curriculum (for preschool, how the disability affects participation in appropriate activities):

Student is currently being served in the __________classroom to provide him with the necessary support to be successful with his academics. Due to his current achievement levels, the IEP committee thinks it is in his best interest to remain in the ______________setting so that he receives the support he needs to be successful.
Answer...

This child is Autistic and served in a self-contained environment and is working on grade level academic skills.
Can you identify the child?

Description of academic, developmental and/or functional strengths:

The student is very jolly. She is very aware of others around her. She enjoys performing for a crowd. She is able to repeat words and simple phrases. She is able to point to her teachers and repeat their names without making a mistake. She also knows that chorus and art classes are located outside of the classroom. She is using table manners and follows directions in the classroom setting.
Description of academic, developmental and/or functional needs:

The student is a 2nd year 6th grader and will continue to master and polish goals as she readies herself for middle school. When walking to and from the classroom, she does not walk in line with the other classmates. When going to the restroom, she does not initiate any attempt at toileting needs without numerous directions from the instructor. When given a simple direction, she requires repeated instructions numerous times. She requires assistance in getting her tray each day at lunch. She does not recognize letters. She is not able to stay focused long enough to complete an activity. Because of her short attention span, she requires frequent redirection and prompting. She is unable to put a 6-10 piece puzzle together. As a result, she receives constant assistance in the form of hand over hand for tracing, and cuing for the next piece of the puzzle and where it will go. She requires, small group setting, breaking directions into single steps, as well as constant assistance and redirection. After listening to a story or participating in an activity, She exhibits difficulty in correctly answering questions about the story or activity, either using picture choices, verbal responses, or gestures.
Impact of the disability on involvement and progress in the general education curriculum (for preschool, how the disability affects participation in appropriate activities):

Due to the student’s disabilities which include Down Syndrome and speech impairment, she is behind in development as compared to same age peers in self-help, social and academic areas. She is unable to recognize letters or write her name and can not trace them. She is starting to repeat words but is unable to make simple sentences. She requires constant assistance in all self-help, social and academic skills. Skill level is at Kindergarten and below levels. She requires assistance in bathroom and lunchroom as well as enrichment activities.
This child is considered Moderately Intellectually Disabled and is served in a self-contained classroom working on adaptive skills and GAA.
Can you identify the child?

Description of academic, developmental and/or functional strengths:

The student is a very kind young man, who enjoys learning new things. He is becoming more fluent with multiplication and is able to solve one digit by one digit multiplication problems.
Description of academic, developmental and/or functional needs:

The student is easily distracted and this causes him to make multiple mistakes on classwork and tests. He struggles in writing conventions. He struggles to remember capital letters, punctuation, and letter spacing. He also experiences difficulty in reading fluency and comprehension. Because he can be inattentive to classwork and testing small group testing is beneficial.

Impact of the disability on involvement and progress in the general education curriculum (for preschool, how the disability affects participation in appropriate activities):

The student experiences difficulties in maintaining focus when completing classroom tasks such as: reading and math assignments. He is often behind when completing verbal tasks when an instructor or peer is unavailable to help keep him on task.
Answer...

This student has a specific learning disability and is served in the general education environment with support.
IEP Regulations

Guidance is provided from the state about writing IEPs. One place to find information is in the Special Education Implementation Manual found online from the Ga Department of Education Special Education Division:


Part 1 - Section 3 discusses the Parts of the IEP. The remainder of this presentation will draw from this manual and give practical advice to
Present Level

The present levels of academic achievement and functional performance section establishes the starting point or baseline that is used to develop the entire IEP. The remainder of the IEP, including goals and objectives, accommodations, transition services, and placement decisions, should be directly linked to the information contained in the present levels of academic achievement and functional performance.
The results of the initial or most recent evaluation of the child and state and district assessments

This should include a summary of the relevant information from the child’s evaluation (not just a listing of scores). It needs to be no more than 2 years old.

State and District Assessments must include test scores and must indicate what level the student performed at (beginning learner, developing learner, proficient learner, distinguished learner). You should also list the passing criteria for the tests. This should also provide a frame of reference for how the child is performing in comparison to same age peers. If accommodations were used for the test, these should be listed.
Examples of District Assessments

Accelerated Reader
Accelerated Math
Scholastic SRI Exams
Istation ISIP Exams
Grade Level Assessments
Lexile Scores
DIBELS
Grades
A description of academic, developmental, and/or functional strengths

This should include information about the student that a teacher can use to help students succeed. All students have something that they can do.

This DOES NOT include subjective statements such as the student is a “sweet child” or the student “enjoys helping others”.

Students who are categorized as having an intellectual disability should have adaptive strengths to counter balance their adaptive weaknesses.

Think of this section as a time to tell all the good things the student can do, which will help you during your IEP meeting with the parent.
A description of academic, developmental, and/or functional needs

This area should describe SPECIFIC needs that impact achievement and must be addressed through the IEP goals and/or objectives or through accommodations.

This section drives the rest of the IEP - goals will be made from this area, accommodations will be provided from this area, and services will be provided from this area.

You don’t have to list EVERYTHING the student struggles with. However, you need to address the reasons why the student requires service.
Student Needs section

What it is…
A description of what prevents the student from achieving the same results as their nondisabled peers.

What it is not…
A list of standards that the student did not master for given grade level.
Parental concerns regarding the child’s education

What is written should be the result of ongoing communication with the parent regarding the child’s academics, behavior, performance on goals, and/or future plans.

Even if the parent does not attend the meeting or does not provide input at the time of the meeting, this information should be drawn from communication that has occurred over the previous school year.

You should attempt to receive some input from the parent, either through phone conversations or surveys sent home.
Impact of the disability on involvement and progress in the general education curriculum

Most misunderstood section of present level.

This section should describe individual characteristics of the child’s disability that affect his or her classroom performance.

Examples of specific characteristics for a specific learning disability may include short term memory problems, poor organizational skills, and auditory processing problems, etc.

This section must indicate how classroom instruction is impacted by the specific characteristics or deficits of the disability.
Mistakes often made in impact section

Restating the needs/weaknesses of the student.

Stating the student’s eligibility category does not adequately describe the impact on involvement and progress in the general education curriculum.

General statements that do not reflect individual needs but rather are applicable to a large group of students.

Not linking the disability characteristics to the child’s actual ability.
Consideration of Special Factors

The factors to consider are behavior, limited English proficiency, visual impairments, communication needs, deaf/hard of hearing, assistive technology, and alternative format instructional materials.

If needs are determined in any of these areas, the IEP must include a description of the supports and/or services that will be provided to the child.
If yes is checked in special factors...

**Behavior** - you must have a behavior intervention plan in place with an Functional Behavior Assessment either in progress or completed.

**Limited English proficiency** - this is checked if student receives EL or ESOL support. If a student receives these services, invite the provider to the IEP meeting and document in the IEP the supports given.

**Visual Impairments** - this is for VI students, not students with corrective glasses. If instruction in Braille is needed, it should be indicated in IEP, or if it is not required, how VI needs are being met should be addressed.
If yes is checked in special factors...

**Communication needs** - Students who receive speech services should have this checked as yes and how the student is served should be documented.

**Deaf/hard of hearing** - Students who are considered deaf or hard of hearing should have their language ability and communication needs addressed. This may include the use of a sign language interpreter and also will require direct instruction in the student’s language and communication mode. If student needs instruction in communication tools, it should be addressed as well.

**Assistive technology** - Describe any assistive technology devices or tools student uses (for example: word processors, augmented communication devices, calculators, speech to text, etc.). Students who do not need assistive technology should have a statement explaining how their needs are being met without assistive technology.
If yes is checked in special factors...

**Alternative format instructional materials** - Including, but not limited to,

- Braille
- Auditory (books on tape, etc.)
- Large type (for VI students)
- Electronic Text (to be manipulated by assistive technology devices)
Transition Plan

Beginning not later than the IEP **to be in effect** when the student begins **ninth grade** or **turns 16**, or younger if determined appropriate by the IEP team, and updated annually thereafter, the IEP must include

1. Appropriate measurable postsecondary goals based upon age-appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment, and where appropriate, independent living skills.

2. The transition services (including courses of study) needed to assist the child in reaching those goals.
Transition Plan

**Desired Measurable Postsecondary Outcome/Completion Goals**

Should be measurable and related to what the student wants to achieve after graduation. They should be “major life accomplishments” or “completion goals.” Goals should be written in the areas of education/training, employment, and independent living (if appropriate).

They should be clear and understandable, positively stated, and based on academic achievement and functional performance. They must be based on **age-appropriate assessments** and must be practical and relevant to transition needs. Outcome/completion goals can change and become more refined as the student has more experience and gets closer to graduation.
Transition Plan

Preferences, Strengths, Interests, and Course of Study Based on Present Levels of Performance and Age-appropriate Transition Assessments

Should provide an assessment of the skills and interests related to education, employment, training, and independent living skills (as appropriate) and should be conducted in conjunction with the development of the transition components. The initial transition assessment may be prior to the eighth grade and could occur when a reevaluation consideration is conducted. It should also be ongoing and fluid. Assessment tools that clearly describe a student’s strengths and weaknesses and document a student’s interests and perceptions about their skills should be utilized. Surveys and interviews work well for this type of assessment. Also, six characteristics should be considered when conducting a transition assessment.