



Free Special Education Resources, Consultation, Trainings Your Arizona Parent School Connection

Measurable Goals

Goals provide the basis for instruction, describing what a child needs related to their disability. Goals, contained in an Individualized Education Program (IEP) describe what a student can reasonably accomplish within one year. Evaluations and assessments provide the information needed for writing the Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP) of the IEP. The PLAAFP serves as the basis for selecting and writing the student's IEP goals. What makes a good goal?

- Description of What the Child Will Do
- Functional
- Observable
- Meaningful
- Achievable
- Measurable
- Related to Grade Level State Standards

An easy acronym to remember when writing appropriate goals is **SMART**.

Specific
Measurable
Achievable (but challenging)
Relevant
Timed

- **Specific**
 - * Goals must be directly related to the student's needs that are included in the PLAAFP, the most recent evaluation and the discussion by the IEP team.
 - * Goals must align with on-grade-level State Academic Standards (the general curriculum).
- **Measurable = Quantifiable**
 - * This usually means numbers in some form.
 - Percentages
 - Words per minute
 - Time/amount
 - Scores

- **Achievable but challenging**
 - * Goals should be realistic but a stretch for the student.
 - * Goals should not be a wish list.
- **Relevant**
 - * Goals should be relevant to the student.
 - * Goals should be relevant to the current baseline.
 - * Goals should be aligned within the State grade level Academic Standards.
- **Timed**
 - * Achievable within one year
 - * Progressively measurable on a schedule
 - * Supportive of post-school goals
 - This is beneficial for all students, regardless of age, but mandatory for students 16 years and older.

An example of a measurable goal would be John (a kindergartener) will increase his ability to sequence stories using 3–4 pictures by 30 percent above baseline as measured by teacher observation and data collection. Strand 3, Concept 2. (His baseline as written in the PLAAFP is 45 percent.)

Another factor to consider with the measurability of goals is the collection method. Keep it simple and realistic for the teacher. Failure to measure defeats even the best goals. Keep in mind setting too many priorities means nothing is a priority.

(Excerpted from the WebGoalpresentation available in its entirety online at www.azed.gov/ess; bottom of page under Resources-populations drop down list).

The content does not necessarily represent the policy of the agency, nor should endorsement by the federal government be assumed. The Arizona Department of Education of the State of Arizona does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, disability or age in its programs, activities or in its hiring and employment practices. If you have questions or grievances related to this policy, please contact the Administrative Services DAS at 602-542-3186. This document is in the public domain and may be freely reproduced in its current format. For more information, call the Parent Information Network at 928-679-8102 or 877-230-PINS (7467).