

# Individualized Program Planning

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Parents	
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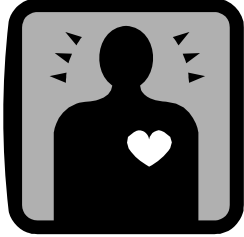
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## Introduction



Students are at the heart of the individualized program planning (IPP) process. When the focus is on students' individual needs, strengths and participation, the IPP process can reap many benefits for all partners.

An effective, student-focused IPP process can:

- focus teachers' energy and encourage well-articulated instructional and assessment plans
- increase understanding of individual students' learning needs and strengths
- enhance communication between teachers, parents and students
- give students the skills and knowledge to be effective self-advocates and participants in their own learning
- help create a long-term vision that can help families with transitions and future planning.

## Purpose

This resource is a revision of the teaching resource *Individualized Program Plans* (1995), Book 3 in the *Programming for Students with Special Needs* series. It aims to create a bridge between the product, the process and the underlying vision of IPPs.

The *Standards for Special Education (Amended June 2004)* outlines required components of an individualized program plan (IPP). Many schools and jurisdictions have their own guidelines for completing these components. Some jurisdictions also use electronic management systems to develop and monitor IPPs. Alberta Education does not mandate a particular format or management system for the IPP process.

This resource provides additional information on the required components, as well as sample strategies that teachers and other educators can use to develop and implement successful, student-focused IPPs. It includes chapters on involving parents and students, collaborating with other members of the learning team, using classroom assessment, selecting accommodations, establishing meaningful goals, planning for transitions and using assistive technology. It also discusses the unique needs for IPP processes in Early Childhood Services (ECS), in junior and senior high settings, and with students who are gifted.

Each chapter contains a number of appendices offering sample tools for enriching the IPP process. These tools should be used selectively and can be adapted to best meet the needs of individual students. Many of these tools will be used informally as part of the development process and not as products in the student's permanent school record.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Chapter 1: Working Through the IPP Process</b>	
Student-focused IPP Process .....	1
Creating a Shared Vision .....	1
Sample strategies for supporting student-focused IPPs .....	2
Essential Information .....	4
Specialized assessment data .....	5
Current level of performance and achievement .....	6
Identification of strengths and areas of need .....	8
Measurable goals and objectives .....	10
Procedures for evaluating progress related to IPP goals .....	10
Identification of coordinated support services .....	11
Medical information .....	12
Classroom accommodations .....	12
Planning for transition .....	13
Review of progress related to IPP goals .....	14
Year-end summary .....	15
Informed parent consent .....	16
Sample Steps in the IPP Process .....	17
Identifying strengths and areas of need .....	17
Setting the direction .....	17
Creating a plan .....	18
Implementing the plan .....	19
Reviewing and revising .....	19
Planning for transition .....	19
Moving Through the IPP Process .....	19
Sample IPP .....	20
Appendices .....	29
1-A Sample IPP Template .....	30
1-B Sample IPP Component Checklist .....	35
1-C Sample IPP Planning Sheet .....	38
Bibliography .....	43
Index .....	45
<b>Chapter 2: Encouraging Parent Involvement</b>	
Identifying strengths and areas of need .....	1
Setting the direction .....	2
Creating a plan .....	3
Implementing the plan .....	3
Reviewing and revising .....	3
Planning for transition .....	4
Getting Off to a Good Start .....	4
Sample strategies for encouraging parental participation .....	5
Sample strategies for increasing parents' comfort levels at meetings .....	7

## TABLE OF CONTENTS—*continued*

Sample strategies for handling conflict and resolving differences with parents .....	8
Resources for parents .....	8
Other resources .....	9
Appendices .....	11
2-A Sample Parent Survey .....	12
2-B Sample Permission Form for Specialized Assessment .....	13
2-C The MAPS Planning System .....	14
2-D Family Goal Setting .....	15
Completed Sample of Family Goal Setting .....	17
2-E Tips for Parents for Participating in the IPP Process .....	19
2-F Solution-focused Meetings .....	21
Sample Planner for Solution-focused Meeting .....	22
Bibliography .....	23
Index .....	25

### Chapter 3: Supporting Student Participation

Introducing the IPP Process .....	1
Sample strategies for introducing the IPP process .....	2
Encouraging Participation in the IPP Process .....	3
Identifying strengths and areas of need .....	3
Setting the direction .....	4
Creating a plan .....	4
Implementing the plan .....	5
Reviewing and revising .....	6
Planning for transition .....	6
Self-advocacy .....	7
Sample strategies for involving students in IPP meetings ....	7
Sample strategies for building self-advocacy skills .....	9
Appendices .....	11
3-A K–W–L+ .....	12
3-B Essential IPP Information .....	13
3-C Know Your Own Strengths Inventory .....	14
3-D Uncover Your Learning Challenges Inventory .....	15
3-E Knowing My Strengths and Challenges .....	17
3-F Self-advocacy Checklist for Elementary/Junior High School .....	18
3-G Goal-setting Organizer .....	19
3-H Sample IPP Report-writing Template .....	20
3-I SHARE Strategy .....	21
3-J Sample Student IPP Meeting Guide .....	22
3-K Be Your Own Self-advocate .....	23
3-L Asking for Help Ticket .....	24



## TABLE OF CONTENTS—*continued*

3-M Be a Problem Solver .....	25
3-N Tips for Parents on Helping Their Children Develop Self-advocacy Skills .....	26
Bibliography .....	27
Index .....	29

### Chapter 4: Creating a Network of Support

Supporting the Learning Team .....	1
School principal .....	1
Classroom teachers .....	2
Teacher assistants .....	2
Other school staff .....	3
Parents .....	3
Specialists .....	3
Health-related services .....	3
Community members .....	4
Facilitating Collaboration .....	4
Sample strategies for facilitating collaboration .....	4
Sample strategies for facilitating effective IPP meetings .....	5
Sample strategies for safeguarding a collaborative process in IPP meetings .....	6
Expanding Your Network .....	7
Community agencies and groups .....	7
Learning opportunities .....	7
Appendices .....	9
4-A Sample Working Agreement for Collaboration .....	10
4-B Sample Strategies for Resolving Impasses .....	11
Bibliography .....	13
Index .....	15

### Chapter 5: Using Classroom Assessment to Support the IPP Process

Classroom Considerations .....	1
Choosing Assessments .....	2
Observing in the Classroom .....	3
Reviewing Student Samples .....	6
Using Teacher-developed Assessments .....	6
Assessing Reading Skills .....	6
Concept about print .....	6
Survey of reading attitudes .....	6
Survey of reading strategies .....	7
Sight words .....	7
Running records .....	7
Informal reading inventories .....	8
Observation .....	9

## TABLE OF CONTENTS—*continued*

Assessing Writing Skills .....	9
Assessing Spelling Skills .....	10
Assessing Mathematics Skills .....	11
Assessing Learning Strategies and Work Habits .....	11
Assessing Social Skills .....	11
Other Diagnostic Assessments .....	12
Sharing Classroom Assessment Results .....	12
Appendices .....	13
5-A Reading Attitudes Interview .....	14
5-B Reading Strategies Survey .....	15
5-C Observation Guide to Reading .....	17
5-D Narrative Writing—Scoring Criteria .....	18
5-E Getting Along with Others Inventory .....	21
5-F Diagnostic Assessment for Primary Programs .....	23
5-G Commonly-used Published Assessment Instruments .....	26
Bibliography .....	31
Index .....	33

## Chapter 6: Selecting Accommodations and Strategies

Environmental Accommodations .....	2
Audio recordings .....	2
Instructional Accommodations .....	3
Assessment Accommodations .....	3
Accommodations for provincial achievement tests .....	4
Accommodations for diploma examinations .....	4
Effective Use of Accommodations .....	5
Barriers .....	5
Strategies to Support Effective Use of Accommodations ..	6
Base decisions on an understanding of student strengths and areas of need .....	6
Use a collaborative process .....	7
Use accommodations consistently and monitor student performance .....	8
Differentiating Instruction .....	8
Planning for differentiation .....	9
Strategy instruction .....	11
Understanding Modified Programming .....	12
Appendices .....	13
6-A Sample General Accommodations .....	14
6-B Sample Academic and Instructional Accommodations .....	16
6-C Sample Guidelines for Using Readers and Scribes ....	18
6-D Accommodations for Writing Provincial Achievement Tests and Diploma Examinations .....	19

## TABLE OF CONTENTS—*continued*

6-E	Sample Questions Parents Might Ask About Accommodations .....	20
6-F	Sample Form for Reviewing the Effectiveness of an Accommodation .....	21
6-G	What Works for Me Inventory .....	22
6-H	Instructional Planning Guide for Differentiation .....	24
	Bibliography .....	29
	Index .....	31
<b>Chapter 7: Making Goals Meaningful, Measurable and Manageable</b>		
	Annual Goals .....	1
	Short-term objectives .....	2
	Make it Meaningful .....	2
	Make it Measurable .....	3
	Elements of measurable goals and objectives .....	4
	Avoiding vague goals and objectives .....	5
	Choosing an area of focus .....	6
	Establishing target dates for short-term objectives .....	7
	Planning for review dates .....	7
	Make it Manageable .....	8
	Choosing measurements .....	8
	Reviewing finished products .....	9
	Administering achievement measures .....	10
	Observing students .....	10
	Interviewing students .....	11
	Considering other variables .....	11
	Deciding when to measure .....	13
	Involving students .....	13
	Sample Strategies for Developing Effective Goals and Objectives .....	13
	Four-square organizer for IPPs .....	13
	ACT-How? .....	15
	IPP storyboard planner .....	16
	3-M checklist for IPPs .....	17
	Appendices .....	19
	7-A: Observable and Measurable Terms Used for Phrasing IPP Goals and Objectives .....	20
	7-B: Four-square Organizer for IPPs .....	21
	Writing Frame for Objectives .....	22
	7-C: ACT-How? .....	23
	7-D: IPP Storyboard Planner .....	24
	7-E: 3-M Checklist for IPPs .....	25
	Bibliography .....	27
	Index .....	29

## TABLE OF CONTENTS—*continued*

### Chapter 8: Planning for Transitions

Key Principles of Planning for Transition .....	1
Inclusion and community .....	1
Deliberate planning .....	1
Collaboration .....	2
Comprehensive scope .....	2
Ongoing education .....	3
Planning for Transition and the IPP Process .....	3
Early planning .....	4
Identifying hopes and dreams .....	4
Exploring possibilities .....	4
Bridging from one stage to the next .....	5
Transition to Elementary School .....	6
Sample strategies to support the transition to elementary school .....	6
Transition to Junior High School .....	6
Sample strategies to support the transition to junior high .....	7
Transition to Senior High School .....	7
Sample strategies to support the transition to senior high .....	8
Transition to Post-secondary Settings .....	8
Sample strategies to support the transition to post-secondary settings .....	10
Supporting Planning for Transition .....	11
Appendices .....	13
8-A Sample Checklist for Comprehensive Planning for Transition .....	14
8-B Sample Checklist for Annual Planning for Transition .....	15
8-C Sample Skills for Successful Transitions from Preschool to Kindergarten .....	16
8-D Sample Student Questionnaire for Planning for Transition in Junior and Senior High School .....	17
8-E Sample Senior High Planning for Transition Inventory .....	18
8-F Sample Parent Questionnaire for Planning for Transition in Junior and Senior High School .....	24
8-G Sample Parent Tips for Encouraging Teens to Think about Transition .....	26
Bibliography .....	27
Index .....	29

### Chapter 9: Infusing Assistive Technology for Learning into the IPP Process

Continuum of Assistive Technology for Learning .....	2
Benefits of ATL .....	3

## TABLE OF CONTENTS—*continued*

Choosing Appropriate ATL Solutions .....	4
Team decision making .....	4
Identifying ATL solutions .....	5
Evaluating ATL solutions .....	11
Assistive technology for learning toolkit .....	12
Creating an ATL Implementation Plan .....	14
Training .....	15
Technical support .....	15
Monitoring .....	15
Making ATL Part of the IPP Process .....	16
Identifying strengths and areas of need .....	16
Setting the direction .....	16
Creating a plan .....	16
Implementing the plan .....	17
Reviewing and revising .....	17
Planning for transitions .....	17
ATL Solutions as Essential IPP Information .....	18
IPP goals and objectives .....	18
Required classroom accommodations .....	18
Required coordinated services .....	19
Transition plans .....	19
Sample IPP .....	19
Looking to the Future: Universal Design for Learning .....	24
For More Information .....	24
Other providers of ATL .....	25
Assistive Technology for Learning Web Sites .....	26
Appendices .....	29
9-A Sample Questions for Parents about Assistive Technology for Learning .....	30
9-B Assistive Technology for Learning Planning Process: Student, Environment and Tasks .....	33
9-C Assistive Technology for Learning Checklist .....	36
9-D Printing and Handwriting Inventory .....	37
9-E Writing Inventory .....	39
9-F Assistive Technology for Learning Investigation: Student Report .....	40
9-G Assistive Technology for Learning Trial Record .....	41
9-H Assistive Technology for Learning Trial Record: Student Report .....	45
9-I Monitoring My Assistive Technology for Learning Use: Student Report .....	46
9-J Parent Feedback on Assistive Technology for Learning .....	47
9-K Record of Assistive Technology for Learning Maintenance Information .....	49

## TABLE OF CONTENTS—*continued*

9-L Assistive Technology for Learning Planning for Transition Checklist .....	50
Bibliography .....	53
Index .....	55

### Chapter 10: Getting Off to a Good Start in Early Childhood Services (ECS)

Understanding the Early Childhood Services IPP .....	1
Programming for young children .....	2
Assessment .....	3
The ECS Learning Team .....	3
Family-oriented programming .....	3
Collaborative decision making .....	4
Developing, Implementing and Monitoring an ECS IPP .....	7
Gathering essential information .....	7
Identifying areas of need and strengths .....	8
Setting the direction .....	11
Creating a plan .....	14
Implementing the plan .....	19
Reviewing, revising and reporting .....	24
Planning for transition .....	27
Sample IPPs .....	28
Profiles for sample early childhood IPPs .....	28
Sample 1 – Ani .....	31
Sample 2 – Caitlin .....	38
Sample 3 – Karen .....	45
Sample 4 – Trey .....	53
Appendices .....	63
10-A Sample IPP Template .....	64
10-B Essential Information Checklist .....	69
10-C Activity and Routines-based Observational Assessment .....	72
10-D IPP Planning Meeting Recording Form .....	73
10-E Instructional Matrix .....	74
10-F Group Monitoring Chart .....	75
10-G ECS Transition Checklist .....	76
Bibliography .....	77
Index .....	79

### Chapter 11: Planning for Students Who are Gifted

Begin with the Program of Studies .....	2
Differentiate Instruction .....	2
Content .....	2
Process .....	3

## TABLE OF CONTENTS—*continued*

Products .....	5
Environment .....	7
Assessment .....	8
Consider Developmental Issues .....	9
Perfectionism .....	9
Underachievement .....	10
Asynchronous development .....	11
Learning difficulties .....	11
Plan for Metacognition .....	12
Consider Career Planning .....	13
Essential Information .....	15
Assessment data .....	15
Current level of performance and achievement .....	15
Identification of strengths and areas of need .....	16
Measurable goals and objectives .....	18
Evaluating student progress .....	20
Coordinated services .....	20
Medical information .....	20
Classroom accommodations and strategies .....	21
Planning for transitions .....	21
Year-end summary .....	21
Sample IPPs .....	21
Sample 1 – Raina .....	23
Sample 2 – Holly .....	29
Appendices .....	35
11-A Sample Parent Perspective .....	36
11-B Differentiated Learning and Teaching Accommodations for Students Who are Gifted .....	39
11-C Sample IPP Template .....	45
Bibliography .....	51
Index .....	53

## Chapter 12: Promising Practices for Junior and Senior High School

Staffing .....	1
Commitment to an inclusive environment .....	1
Teacher contact .....	2
Teacher advisory system .....	2
Professional development .....	3
Communication solutions .....	3
Planning for Transition .....	3
Meaningful goals .....	4
Customized assessment .....	5
Ongoing review .....	5

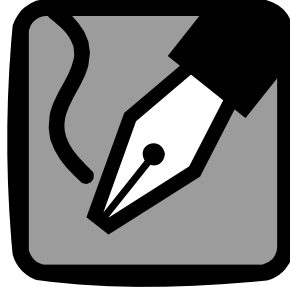
TABLE OF CONTENTS—*continued*

Student Involvement .....	6
Sample strategies for promoting self-advocacy skills .....	6
Sample IPP .....	6
Appendices .....	15
12-A Sample Target Skills for Cross-curricular Goals in Junior and Senior High .....	16
12-B Curriculum Matrix .....	18
12-C Student Accommodations for Junior/Senior High .....	19
Index .....	21

Main Index

Feedback





Getting Started

Chapter 1

# Working Through the IPP Process

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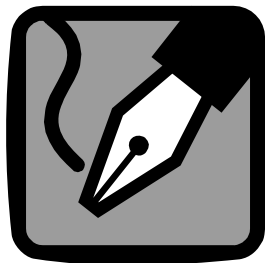
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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Student-focused IPP Process .....	1
Creating a Shared Vision .....	1
Sample strategies for supporting student-focused IPPs .....	2
Essential Information .....	4
Specialized assessment data .....	5
Current level of performance and achievement .....	6
Identification of strengths and areas of need .....	8
Measurable goals and objectives .....	10
Procedures for evaluating progress related to IPP goals .....	10
Identification of coordinated support services .....	11
Medical information .....	12
Classroom accommodations .....	12
Planning for transition .....	13
Review of progress related to IPP goals .....	14
Year-end summary .....	15
Informed parent consent .....	16
Sample Steps in the IPP Process .....	17
Identifying strengths and areas of need .....	17
Setting the direction .....	17
Creating a plan .....	18
Implementing the plan .....	19
Reviewing and revising .....	19
Planning for transition .....	19
Moving Through the IPP Process .....	19
Sample IPP .....	20
Appendices .....	29
1-A Sample IPP Template .....	30
1-B Sample IPP Component Checklist .....	35
1-C Sample IPP Planning Sheet .....	38
Bibliography .....	43
Index .....	45





## Student-focused IPP Process

The most critical component of individualized program plans (IPPs) occurs before any IPPs are planned, written or implemented. Research tells us that being student-focused is the single factor that can make the most difference in the quality of and commitment to the IPP process. A student-focused process involves creating relationships with students and parents that go beyond the IPP document itself. Active participation of students and parents in the IPP process tends to result in:

- friendlier and more positive language
- more achievable and relevant goals that build on strengths
- increased success of implementation.

Embedded in a student-focused IPP process is a foundational belief in the necessity and power of IPPs for individual students. This belief sets the tone and focus for the entire IPP process and helps teachers and others to overcome some of the challenges they may face in supporting students with special education needs. It provides a context within which teachers and administrators can make more powerful and effective decisions about what the IPP process will look like in their schools and jurisdictions, and how they will support it.

## Creating a Shared Vision

Creating a shared vision requires a deliberate effort and a structured dialogue about why we serve students with special education needs, what we believe about these students and what our greatest hopes are for them. Before we can effectively move on to the “how-to” aspect of IPPs, we need to pay attention to the way in which teachers and administrators currently think about and carry out the IPP process. Once we understand this, we can identify a list of attitudes and practices within the school that will support the IPP process, including practices that support positive attitudes and foster commitment. Teachers and administrators can then develop ways to encourage and support these practices. A critical component of this process is the recognition that attitudes, motivation and commitment are a matter of choice. Actions become a reflection of personal leadership that translate intention into reality.

Once the underlying beliefs and attitudes are in place, the school or jurisdiction can begin creating a shared understanding of the mandated requirements and ethical considerations related to IPPs. This involves a fundamental understanding of:

- what an IPP is
- the purpose of an IPP
- the essential elements of an IPP
- the value of an IPP's elements
- how the IPP links assessment to instructional and programming decision making.

This shared understanding allows individual staff members to work together as a team by ensuring they are oriented to a common purpose.

A shared understanding of the IPP process as valuable and student-focused also helps maintain a trusting relationship between teachers and parents and students. Parents and students rely on educators to demonstrate leadership. While educators have a professional obligation to participate in the IPP process, there is also an ethical obligation to do not only what is required but also what is right for each student. This goes beyond just completing the forms to fully engaging in the process. It is from this place that teachers are able to create the most meaningful impact in the lives of students with special education needs.

Promoting a commitment to student-focused IPPs takes time, focus and leadership. While all schools should strive to create a culture that supports an effective IPP process, there will be many paths that individual schools and jurisdictions might take to achieve this outcome. As a starting point, teachers and administrators may consider the following sample strategies.

### Sample strategies

## Sample strategies for supporting student-focused IPPs

- Be solution focused. Use a “how can we do this” perspective to develop creative options for providing the time needed for planning and collaboration.
- Create a forum for discussion where individuals have the freedom to share their feelings and beliefs. This provides an opportunity to release tension about existing challenges and concerns—and to share their hopes and wishes for their students with special education needs.
- Create ways for teachers to reflect on their personal vision before bringing them together to do shared vision work.
- Provide opportunities to explore and discuss core values that support a student-focused IPP process (e.g., respect, hope, honesty). Use this discussion as the starting point to create a compelling vision of the future of IPPs within the school and jurisdiction's missions.
- Align the change process related to IPPs with professional learning community initiatives.
- Identify key individuals within the school and jurisdiction who will champion the commitment to student-focused IPPs.
- Consider using a team leader to encourage all staff to fully participate in discussion and activities.

- Provide sufficient professional development opportunities to develop an understanding of the requirements and best practices.
- Provide in-depth, ongoing leadership and professional development to allow individuals to build and strengthen their professional practice.
- Create mentorship programs that allow more experienced teachers to provide leadership to teachers less familiar or comfortable with the IPP process.
- Create job-alike pairings to allow teachers with similar needs to collaborate, network and support each other.

Creating a foundation for an effective IPP process requires leadership, commitment and collaboration. There must also be an acknowledgement that it takes time to build anything that is worthwhile. The timeline will vary from school to school and jurisdiction to jurisdiction based on a variety of factors, including current attitudes and processes around IPPs, and the availability of leadership. By taking deliberate steps over time, schools and jurisdictions can develop and nurture a shared vision and understanding that allows teachers to move forward into the “how-to” of IPPs with confidence and clarity.

Each student identified as having special education needs must have an IPP. Students with special education needs, as described in section 47(1) of the *School Act*, are those students who are in need of special education programming because of their behavioural, communicational, intellectual, learning or physical characteristics, or a combination of those characteristics.

An IPP is a written commitment of intent by the learning team to ensure appropriate planning for students with special education needs. It is a working document and a record of student progress that contributes to a common understanding and coordination of efforts. The *Standards for Special Education, Amended June 2004* defines an individualized program plan as:

“a concise plan of action designed to address students’ special education needs, and is based on diagnostic information which provides the basis for intervention strategies ...” (p. 4).

Students with special education needs will benefit from a coordinated team approach in the development and implementation of their IPP processes. Throughout this resource, we will refer to this team as the learning team. The *Standards* defines the learning team as “a team that consults and shares information relevant to the individual student’s education and plans special education programming and services as required. The team may consist of the classroom teacher, parents, students (where appropriate), other school and jurisdiction staff aware of the students’ needs, and others as required” (p. 4). The learning team could also include principals, special education coordinators, teacher assistants and health-related professionals such as speech and language pathologists, psychologists, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, and educational specialists.

An IPP is:

- developed to address the specific special education needs of individual learners
- a collaborative team effort involving the student, parents, teachers and other staff who work closely with the student's programming. The individuals involved may change over time, depending on the needs of the student
- a planning document that helps monitor and evaluate a student's education programming and progress
- a document for communicating student growth and progress with parents, students and staff
- a summary of the individualized goals and objectives that a student will work towards during a school year
- a summary of accommodations that will help the student learn more effectively
- an ongoing record to ensure continuity of programming
- a guide for transition planning.

The developmental process of an IPP should begin as soon as a student is identified as having special education needs. Typically, IPPs are developed at the beginning of each school year. Although some information will remain the same from year to year, many components will change from one school year to the next, including assessment data, current level of performance, goals and objectives, transition plans, and year-end summaries.

## Essential Information

The *Standards for Special Education, Amended June 2004* requires that the following essential information be included in the IPP:

- assessment data (diagnostic assessment data used to determine special education programming and services)
- current level of performance and achievement
- identification of strengths and areas of need
- measurable goals and objectives
- procedures for evaluating student progress
- identification of coordinated support services
- relevant medical information
- required classroom accommodations
- transition plans
- formal review of progress at regularly scheduled reporting periods
- year-end summary
- parent signature to indicate informed consent.

### Appendices

See Appendix 1-A for a sample template for recording IPP information. Alberta Education does not mandate a specific format.



The IPP process uses three types of assessments that have distinctly different purposes, and may also involve different members of the learning team, happen at different times of the school year and involve different types of procedures, indicators and data. These three types are: specialized assessment, classroom assessment and assessment of progress related to IPP goals.

- *Specialized assessment* is formal, standardized testing done for diagnostic and programming purposes, and completed by qualified professionals. It includes cognitive and psychological assessments as well as medical and health-related assessments. In addition to standardized tests, specialized assessment could include formal observations that could be used to make a diagnosis. This type of assessment is generally completed every two to five years.
- *Current level of performance* (or classroom assessment) is the annual “snapshot” of how a student is performing in the classroom, in relation to the grade-level program of studies or, for students not on grade-level curriculum, their functioning relative to individualized programming. It is generally completed by the classroom teacher and includes such strategies as informal reading inventories, writing samples, teacher-made tests and classroom observations. Current level of performance can also include standardized tests (known as Level B tests) designed to be administered by qualified classroom teachers. Teachers use this data to assess student growth and to plan for instruction.
- *Assessment of progress related to IPP goals* requires the identification of procedures and sample indicators that the learning team can use to assess a student’s progress on specific IPP goals throughout the school year. This can include strategies such as behaviour observation checklists, collecting and analyzing samples of student work, and specific performance tasks.

### Specialized assessment data

Information in this section of the IPP should be directly related to the identification of the student’s special education needs and the types of programming, supports and services this student might need. This type of assessment should be done every two to five years. The assessment data should include reports from specialized assessment. The IPP needs to reflect the connection between the relevant data and the student’s learning strengths and areas of need.

Possible sources of assessment data from specialists include current educational assessments, medical/health assessments such as vision, hearing, physical, neurological, speech and language assessments, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, behavioural, psychological or psychiatric assessments. Current data is generally considered to be data that has been collected within the last two or three years. Each assessment report should be listed within the IPP and should include the date and source (including the name of the assessment tool and the person who did the assessment).

## Example

For example, a Grade 5 student who appears to have average cognitive functioning, but reads and writes significantly below grade-level expectations, might have a specialized assessment that includes cognitive ability, educational levels in language arts and math, and emotional/social functioning. Assessment information on the IPP might look like the following entry.

### Assessment Data (Specialized Assessment Results)

**WISC-IV (May 200X - Dr. Anyone, University of Anywhere Clinic)**

Full score: average  
(slightly below average on working memory index)

**WIAT-II (May 200X - Dr. Anyone, University of Anywhere Clinic)**

Reading: borderline  
Mathematics: average  
Written language: borderline  
Oral language: average

Moderate learning disability in the areas of reading and written expression

**Behaviour Assessment for Children (BASC) (May 200X - Dr. Anyone, University of Anywhere Clinic)**

Self-report, parent and teacher rating scale placed student at risk for anxiety difficulties

Some jurisdictions may encourage the team to include a summary of specialized assessments, but this information is optional. To ensure accuracy, it is best to quote directly from the report. Summary statements might include the following.

- “Report provides a diagnosis of attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder.”
- “Report affirms average cognitive functioning.”
- “Information indicates a mild to moderate hearing loss.”
- “Report identifies expressive language skills as a significant area of need.”
- “Report supports a diagnosis of oppositional defiant disorder.”

Do not include numerical scores or percentiles for IQ scores; include the range only (e.g., low average, below average).

Adaptive functioning, behaviour, communication and physical development can be reported as developmental levels or percentiles (how an individual student’s performance compares with same-aged peers).

### Current level of performance and achievement

The level of performance, as defined by the *Standards* means “assessed skill development in academic and other areas such as adaptive functioning, behaviour, cognition, communication and physical development” (p. 4).

Levels of performance should be reported annually for each area that has a related IPP goal.

Academic performance in IPPs is most useful when it is reported as grade-level equivalent scores. It may be necessary to break subject areas into different types of skill areas. For example, a current level of performance for language arts might include scores for reading comprehension, decoding, spelling and/or writing. Levels of performance for academic areas that are not identified as areas of need on the IPP will be reported on the report card as well. If a student is working to grade level in a particular core subject area, this should be documented.

This section should also include summaries of classroom assessments that are current (e.g., within one school year). Examples of classroom assessment information that might be relevant include writing samples, math skill inventories, reading miscue analysis, behaviour and work habit checklists, and other informal assessments that link directly with IPP goals.

School jurisdictions and charter schools will be required to report Grade Level of Achievement (GLA) in grades 1–9 language arts, mathematics, social studies and science. GLA will be reported to Alberta Education as a whole number indicating what grade level a student has achieved. Because students do not learn curricular outcomes in a lock-step manner, norm-referenced achievement tests expressed as grade-equivalent scores or decimal numbers (e.g., Grade 3.3) should not be used for GLA reporting.

Some, but not necessarily all, assessments used in the IPP process may also be used in Grade Level of Achievement reporting. For example, certain norm-referenced assessment and decimal scoring may be appropriate to help establish baselines and track growth for some IPP goals but may not be appropriate for Grade Level of Achievement reporting and should never be used as the sole determinant for judging Grade Level of Achievement.

If a grades 1–9 student's modified programming does not follow a graded curriculum, Grade Level of Achievement (GLA) for these students can be reported by indicating the degree of mastery (i.e., all, most, some, none or not applicable) in the following three goal categories:

- foundational skills (e.g., communications, classroom behaviour, gross and fine motor skills)
- academic readiness skills (e.g., readiness skills to prepare student for learning outcomes in the programs of study in Grade 1 and subsequent grade levels)
- life skills (e.g., skills that will assist the student in developing independence in the home, school and community).

Each goal on a student's IPP should be identified if it aligns with one of these categories. Goals should be selected based on student's individual needs, it may not be necessary or appropriate to have a goal from each or all of the three GLA reporting categories.

The sample IPP template on pages 32 and 33 has checkboxes to record GLA-related information.

For more information

For more information on the GLA initiative, visit the Alberta Education Web site at [www.education.gov.ab.ca/ipr/GLA](http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/ipr/GLA).

Example

For example, to identify current level of performance for the Grade 5 student in the previous example, the classroom teacher might use several different assessment strategies to establish a baseline and track growth. The teacher might look at the previous year's report card, and may administer informal assessments such as reading inventories and writing samples at the beginning and end of the school year. Here is one example of how this information might be reported.

### Current Level of Performance and Achievement

#### September

- Grade 4 report card indicates Lee is working at grade level in math and science
- Burns and Roe Informal Reading Inventory indicates he is reading independently with Grade 3 level text
- Reading level affects social studies and Lee needs support to complete grade-level assignments
- Writing sample indicates low output (e.g., less than 20 words in 30-minute September writing sample), no evidence of planning, writing vocabulary tends to be general and he lacks detail in his writing, about 60% spelling accuracy
- Test taking appears to be an area of concern for him. He was absent for the two major unit tests this month and his mom feels that this may have been due to anxiety

For more information

For more information and sample strategies for using classroom assessments to support the IPP process, see Chapter 5: *Using Classroom Assessment to Support the IPP Process*.

### Identification of strengths and areas of need

When describing the student's areas of strength, it is appropriate to include information such as the following:

- strengths in areas such as cognitive processing and communication (e.g., expressive language-speaking)
- student's learning preferences (e.g., visual, auditory, kinesthetic or learns best on his or her own or working with others)
- previously acquired skills (e.g., organizational skills, time-management skills).

It may be appropriate to also include information related to the student's:

- personal characteristics that support learning (e.g., self-motivation, willingness to work with others)
- interests and hobbies
- nonacademic accomplishments.

### Example

The learning team for the Grade 5 student from the previous examples might generate a short list of strengths that could include things like social relationships, and interests both in and out of school. For example:

#### Strengths

- Enjoys working and playing with other students, has many friends
- Likes to build things, especially in science
- Comfortable with the computer, can find all kinds of interesting sites on the Internet
- Excels in sports—hockey and soccer

The description of the student's areas of need should link assessment data to areas of need such as the following:

- broad cognitive and/or processing challenges (e.g., in areas such as verbal reasoning, visual memory)
- skills deficits that relate to the student's special education needs and/or interfere with his or her ability to learn (e.g., in areas such as social skills, attention, emotional control)
- academic skills (e.g., in areas such as reading comprehension, written expression).

### Example

The student's learning team may use information from both specialized assessment and current level of performance to identify specific needs or areas of growth for the Grade 5 student from the previous examples. His list of needs might include the following.

#### Areas of Need

- Strategies to improve reading comprehension across the subject areas, but especially for social studies
- Planning, writing and proofreading strategies to increase quality and quantity of written expression
- Reduce anxiety around test-taking situations

Determining strengths and areas of need should involve input from parents and, when possible, from students.

## Measurable goals and objectives

The goals and objectives are the heart of the IPP process and provide the framework for programming decisions. Goals and objectives must be measurable so that students, teachers, parents and others involved in the IPP process may gauge how well students are progressing toward achievement of their goals. Without measurability, progress cannot be monitored.

Considering the individual needs of students is key to developing meaningful goals. If a student's needs are primarily academic, then select goals in those academic areas most critical to a student's success across settings. If a student's needs are mostly related to social skills, or to the development of personal independence, then choose goals that emphasize these areas. If a student has major needs across subject areas, consider developing cross-curricular goals that will make an impact in each subject area.

### Example

To illustrate this, consider the Grade 5 student from the previous examples who might have three goals—one for reading, one for written expression and one addressing anxiety around tests. The goals might look like this.

#### Goals

**Goal #1:** Lee will independently read and demonstrate understanding of selected Grade 4 level reading passages.

**Goal #2:** Lee will generate at least 20 sentences at grade-level expectations within allotted time for written assignments.

**Goal #3:** Lee will approach unit tests in a calm and confident manner, and will complete at least 80% of all items on the test.

Much of the goal-related information that is currently available on electronic IPP databases are intended as starting points for developing goals and objectives. Often these examples must be rewritten in measurable terms to meet Alberta Education standards.

### For more information

See Chapter 7: *Making Goals Meaningful, Measurable and Manageable* for more information and ideas on writing goals and objectives that are measurable, meaningful and manageable.

## Procedures for evaluating progress related to IPP goals

How student progress will be evaluated is often embedded within the goal statement. For example: "Ted will ask at least three questions during classroom discussion each day for one week." When the benchmark or method is not part of the goal statement, a brief summary of the monitoring plan should be included in the IPP. For example, "Ted will record his completed in-class assignments in his log book for a three-week period and ask his teacher to sign the log at the end of each day. He will share this data with his parents each Friday, as part of his weekly report."

**Example**

Evidence of progress can include, but is not restricted to, checklists, periodic sampling of behaviour, number and types of assignments completed, and analysis of work samples. Student progress should be evaluated several times throughout the school year. For the Grade 5 student from the previous examples, a list of assessment procedures might look like the following.

**Assessment Procedures**

- Reading recognition and comprehension: Burns and Roe Informal Reading Inventory Form A (September), Form B (June)
- Written expression: monthly writing sample with grade-level rubric, word count and spelling accuracy percentage
- Test anxiety: track number of major tests completed with passing marks and number of tests not completed, student interview September, November, March and June

**For more information**

For more information and sample strategies for evaluating student progress, see Chapter 5: *Using Classroom Assessment to Support the IPP Process* on classroom assessment and Chapter 7: *Making Goals Meaningful, Measurable and Manageable* on developing measurable goals.

**Identification of coordinated support services**

Required support services, including health-related services, should be identified on the IPP. The *Standards for Special Education, Amended June 2004* requires that school boards “work together with members of the community, who have an interest in students in schools, to meet the special education needs of students, including students and their families, community agencies, organizations and associations, other education authorities, regional health and children’s services authorities” (p. 8).

The *Standards* also requires obtaining “written informed consent from parents to provide coordinated services to students, when required, and as identified in students’ IPPs” (p. 8).

The IPP should include an ongoing list of what services the student actually receives, with dates, types of service and names of service providers. If a student is in good health and does not require coordinated support services at this time, this should be stated.

**Example**

For example, the Grade 5 student from the previous examples might require limited coordinated support services and this information could be recorded as follows.

**Coordinated Support Services**

- Lee, supported by his parents, attended six-part series on handling anxiety at Anywhere Community Services (November 200X).
- Lee is in good health at this time and does not require additional coordinated support services.



## Medical information

This section of the IPP should include any information relevant to the student's learning needs. For example, it might include a summary of a report that confirms a diagnosis such as AD/HD and might indicate whether or not the student is on daily medication. *Only medical information directly relevant to the student's learning needs should be included on the IPP.*

Be sensitive to individual families' wishes regarding sharing diagnostic information on the IPP document. Some students may not be developmentally ready to understand their specific diagnoses although they may have a basic understanding of their individual needs. This information needs to be handled sensitively and on a case-by-case basis. It should also be indicated if there are no known medical issues at this time.

### Example

For the Grade 5 student discussed in the previous examples, medical information might be recorded as follows.

#### Medical Conditions that Impact Schooling

Lee was screened for possible AD/HD at Anywhere Clinic in November 200X. He has minor attention difficulties but not severe enough to warrant medical treatment at this time.

## Classroom accommodations

Required accommodations must be listed on the IPP. An accommodation is a change or alteration in the regular way a student is expected to learn, complete assignments or participate in classroom activities.

Accommodations include special teaching or assessment strategies, equipment or other supports that remove, or at least lessen, the impact of a student's special education needs. The goal of accommodations is to give students with special education needs the same opportunity to succeed as other students. Accommodations can include simple strategies such as preferential seating near the teacher, modifications to materials such as enlarged print or less text on the pages, or differences in how an individual student is expected to access information or demonstrate learning.



Example

The Grade 5 student discussed in the previous examples might have a number of cross-curricular accommodations, including the following.

**Accommodations and strategies**

*Reading:* Teach strategies for using textbook features, visualization skills and self-questioning to improve comprehension and encourage at-home paired reading, 20 minutes/4 evenings a week

*Writing:* Customize graphic organizers for planning writing, encourage use of electronic spell check in all major written assignments and tests, set up buddy note-taking system (e.g., photocopy buddy's notes and use to revise own notes)

*Test taking:* Provide study planners for review at least three days before major tests, provide extra time, quiet spot, opportunities to ask questions and clarify instructions during test, teach relaxation techniques

Special accommodations requested for the provincial achievement tests or diploma exams are approved only when they are provided throughout the year in regular classroom instruction and are identified on the IPP.

For more information

See Chapter 6: *Selecting Accommodations and Strategies* for more information and sample strategies for selecting accommodations.

**Planning for transition**

Planning for transition begins each September and is an ongoing process throughout each school year. The IPP must contain information about upcoming transitions in the student's learning environment, and plans for preparing and supporting the student for these new situations and challenges. Transitions may involve small changes, such as moving from one classroom to another, to more major transitions, such as moving from a senior high school program to post-secondary training and a new living environment. It might also include potential changes in the day-to-day classroom environment, such as working with a substitute teacher, new kinds of learning activities, such as small group discussions, and new expectations, such as assuming more responsibility for organizing learning materials and independently completing assignments.

## Example

Information about planning for transition for the Grade 5 student discussed in previous examples might look like the following.

### Planning for Transition

Lee will be moving to a middle school next year and he will need to be ready for:

- longer and more complex written assignments
- increased note taking during class activities
- longer and more complex unit tests
- increased reading demands including managing varied reading levels of material
- increased responsibility for organizing and managing materials and information.

These skills will be part of regular classroom instruction throughout the year and we will also look for additional strategies to help Lee manage these new demands.

Lee's mother also reports that Lee expresses concern when substitute teachers replace the regular classroom teacher. Mrs. A. will look at some possible social scripts that might help Lee manage these situations with less anxiety.

## For more information

See Chapter 8: *Planning for Transitions* for more information on planning for transition.

### Review of progress related to IPP goals

Typically, IPP reviews align with the school's regular reporting periods. These are generally scheduled three to four times per year. Specific IPP objectives may be monitored at shorter time intervals, but these results may be reported at the regularly scheduled review. A comment regarding the student's progress should appear on the IPP along with the date of the review. Checkmarks or vague terms such as "ongoing" do not adequately describe what a student has achieved.

## Example

For example, the IPP for the Grade 5 student discussed in previous examples might have three review dates for IPP goals. In this example, the review dates align with the schoolwide schedule for report cards and student progress conferences.

The following entries illustrate how the reading goal for the Grade 5 student from the previous examples might be reported.

### Progress Review

#### November 10

*Achieved.* Lee is independently reading material at the mid-Grade 3 level.

#### March 12

*Achieved.* Lee is doing even better than his objective; he is independently reading material at the early-Grade 4 level, especially factual material.

#### June 15

*Achieved.* Lee is reading independently at the early-Grade 4 level (and even higher if the material is especially interesting to him).

See the sample IPP at the end of this chapter for more examples of how the student's progress is reported as "Achieved" or "Progressing" with descriptive comments.

### Year-end summary

The year-end summary describes what goals, accommodations and strategies were most successful for the student over the past school year. The summary should also include recommendations for new goals, accommodations that should be continued and programming considerations for the upcoming school year.

#### Example

For example, the Grade 5 student discussed in the previous examples might have a year-end summary that contains the following information.

### Year-end Summary

#### June

- Continues to work at grade level in math and science, with minimal support.
- Although Lee's reading fluency is still below grade level, his comprehension has improved and he is using self-questioning strategies, especially when reading high-interest scientific information. He will need additional strategies for more complex narrative material in Grade 6.
- Using his new reading strategies have helped Lee maintain a C average in social studies. He is receiving occasional support with note taking, test taking and completing written longer assignments.
- Although longer writing assignments remain a challenge for Lee, output has increased (e.g., June's sample was 80 words in 30 minutes), he's using planning tools when prompted, writing vocabulary is more specific and he's attempting to provide more detail, and spelling accuracy has increased to about 70%. Now that several other students in the class are using a spell check, he is more willing to use his.
- Lee has written all major tests this term and has passed them all! His parents report he is studying at home more for tests and is feeling more confident about tests.

## Informed parent consent

The *Standards for Special Education, Amended June 2004*, in accordance with the Preamble of the *School Act*, states that parents have a right and responsibility to make decisions respecting the education of their children. “School boards must:

- ensure parents have the opportunity for participation in decisions that affect students’ education
- ensure parents have information needed to make informed decisions
- invite meaningful involvement of parents in planning, problem solving and decision making related to students’ special education programming” (p. 9).

Schools are required to obtain informed written consent from parents to indicate agreement with the IPP. Typically, parents will be invited to sign the IPP at the beginning of the school year when goals and objectives have been developed, and at each reporting period throughout the school year.

*Informed consent means that parents:*

- have all information relevant to the activity for which consent is sought
- understand and agree, in writing, to the carrying out of the activity for which their consent is sought
- understand that the granting of consent is voluntary and may be withdrawn at any time (Alberta Learning 2004, p. 4).

In addition to the IPP process, parents also need to provide informed consent for specialized assessments.

In cases where parents refuse to sign the IPP document or are unavailable to provide this consent, the teacher must document the reasons for the refusal or unavailability and describe the actions undertaken by school staff to obtain consent and/or resolve differences.

### Example

For example, in a case where illness or unavailability prevented a parent from signing the IPP, the information might be documented as follows.

### Note re: Written parent consent

The IPP is unsigned because Ms. Smith has been unable to meet with the learning team due to a chronic health condition. We discussed the option of a phone conference, but that was not possible for her at this time. Copies of the IPP with progress reports were mailed to her home in October, March and June.

In the absence of informed written consent from parents, instruction in the classroom must be based on reasonable practice and teachers must make instructional decisions in the best interests of the student. Many accommodations and instructional strategies included in IPPs are typically routine components of the differentiated instruction that many teachers incorporate daily in their classroom.

For more information

See Chapter 2: *Encouraging Parent Involvement* for more information and sample strategies for involving parents in the IPP process.

Appendices

See Appendix 1-B for a sample checklist of essential information required on the IPP.

## Sample Steps in the IPP Process

One way of looking at the IPP process is as a set of interrelated actions that can be described as the following six steps.

1. Identifying strengths and areas of need
2. Setting the direction
3. Creating a plan
4. Implementing the plan
5. Reviewing and revising
6. Planning for transition

These steps may occur in different sequences or be worked on simultaneously, depending on the individual needs of students. The steps are also cyclic in nature.

### 1. Identifying strengths and areas of need

Because the purpose of IPPs is to establish individualized programming, it is essential to identify the student's strengths and specific learning needs. Knowing what the student's strengths are will help the learning team choose goals, strategies and accommodations that build on these strengths. Knowing what the student's interests and personality traits are might also contribute to more effective programming decisions. Learning needs may include academic needs as well as social, behavioural and other needs.

The learning team should examine information from a variety of sources in order to accurately identify student needs. These sources may include:

- parent observations
- teacher observations
- classroom assessments and products
- specialized assessments.

### 2. Setting the direction

Establishing priorities helps the learning team focus on what is critical for the student to learn this school year. The team establishes these priorities based on all the information that has been gathered to date and the availability of resources.

To determine the most important learning goals, the team considers:

- priority areas to focus on
- possibilities for using this new skill or knowledge in other areas and settings
- related areas of strength
- how this need affects overall learning and achievement
- transferability to other subject areas
- how the skills and knowledge relate to the student's future career goals.

### 3. Creating a plan

Based on a discussion of the student's needs and strengths, as well as the priority areas identified, the learning team will develop a plan that includes long-term goals and short-term objectives for the student. The IPP does not target all learner outcomes, only those considered most critical for independent performance in the most meaningful activities.

Long-term goals are broad statements about achievement, such as:

- by the end of the year, Jace will improve his reading comprehension skills to a Grade 3 level
- by the end of the year, Lee will play and work cooperatively with peers throughout the school day.

Short-term objectives are small, measurable steps that will lead from the child's present performance to the long-term goal. For example, short-term objectives for the same long-term goals above could include:

- by January 31, Jace will independently read one self-selected book and be able to retell the general storyline to another person
- by February 15, Lee will participate successfully in small group math activities and complete all related group tasks without disrupting his classmates.

Typically, a student may have from two to five long-term goals, with each goal having three to five short-term objectives.

For more information

Specific accommodations for supporting the student also need to be identified at this stage of the process. See Chapter 6: *Selecting Accommodations and Strategies* for more information and sample strategies for identifying accommodations.

See Chapter 7: *Making Goals Meaningful, Measurable and Manageable* for more information and sample strategies for developing measurable and meaningful goals and objectives.

Appendices

See Appendix 1-C for a sample planning sheet that can be used in the planning stages of the IPP process.

#### 4. Implementing the plan

In this phase of the process, the learning team reviews the content of the IPP and how progress will be measured. Teachers then put the instructional and assessment strategies into practice, and adjust short-term objectives as needed. Parents and other team members may support the IPP goals at home or in other contexts.

#### 5. Reviewing and revising

Ongoing review and revision are important parts of the IPP process. Review meetings are opportunities to discuss the student's program and consider possible revisions. The year-end review is especially important as the team reviews the education plan and adds written recommendations to the IPP. This is particularly true for students moving from one school to another or making any kind of transition.

Parents or other team members may also request a review of the IPP at any time if they have concerns about the student's progress or if the student is experiencing significant changes in achievement, attitude or behaviour. The IPP can be adjusted or changed at any time throughout the school year as the team deems necessary.

#### 6. Planning for transition

Planning for transition involves identifying the kinds of skills that need to be in place for students to be successful today and in future settings, and developing a plan of action to ensure students acquire these skills and attitudes. Planning for transition involves identifying potential changes within the next school year and outlining strategies for preparing and supporting students through these transitions.

### Moving Through the IPP Process

Jurisdictions across the province may have their own framework for the IPP process. The steps may be titled differently or tasks may be organized in different sequences and combinations.

The following chapters contain additional information and sample strategies for supporting the different stages of the IPP process. Whatever framework or format is used for the IPP process, school jurisdictions must:<sup>1</sup>

- ensure that IPPs are developed, implemented, monitored and evaluated for all students identified as having special education needs
- identify principals as accountable for the delivery and implementation of school-based special education programming and services
- provide teachers of students with special education needs with relevant resources and access to related professional development opportunities

1. From Alberta Learning, *Standards for Special Education, Amended June 2004* (Edmonton, AB: Alberta Learning, 2004), pp. 10–11.

- ensure principals identify teachers whose responsibility it is to coordinate, develop, implement, monitor and evaluate student IPPs
- ensure the school has a process and learning team to provide consultation, planning and problem solving related to programming for students with special education needs
- ensure teachers:
  - involve parents and, when appropriate, students and other professionals in the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of students' IPPs
  - document, in the IPP, the formal review of students' progress, at regularly scheduled reporting periods
  - throughout the year, provide feedback during informal reviews to parents and, when appropriate, students
  - make changes to the IPP, as required
  - obtain written informed parental consent on IPPs to indicate agreement with the IPP
  - in cases where parents refuse consent, document the reasons for refusal and/or actions undertaken by the school to obtain consent and/or resolve concerns
  - ensure IPPs are placed in student records and access to the IPP complies with the *Student Record Regulation and Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy* (FOIP) legislation
- ensure teacher assistants work under the direction of a certificated teacher to realize students' goals, as outlined in their IPPs.

## Sample IPP

This chapter ends with a completed sample of an IPP that illustrates how essential information might be recorded on an IPP document. This sample is for a Grade 5 student with a mild/moderate learning disability who is working on improving reading comprehension, increasing written output and managing anxiety around tests. The classroom teacher is coordinating the IPP process and the school's special education coordinator is consulting on an as-needed basis. The student's parents communicate with the teacher on a regular basis and support the IPP goals at home.

The student became more involved in the IPP process as the year progressed, and some of the comments in the progress notes and year-end summary are direct quotes by the student.



<b>Individualized Program Plan</b>	
<b>Student Information</b>	
<b>Student:</b> Lee Anystudent	
<b>Date of Birth:</b> April 22, 199X	<b>Age as of Sept. 1/0X:</b> 10 yrs., 4 mos.
<b>Parents:</b> Joe and Joan Anystudent	<b>Date I.P.P. Created:</b> September 200X
<b>Grade:</b> 5	<b>Phone #:</b>
<b>Eligibility Code:</b> 54 (mild/moderate learning disability)	
<b>Background information: Classroom context</b>	
<b>School:</b> Anyschool Elementary	
<b>I.P.P. Coordinator and Classroom Teacher:</b> Mrs. Anyteacher	
<b>Additional IPP Team Members:</b> Ms. Anyresource, Special Education Coordinator	
Lee is in a regular stream Grade 5 class in his neighbourhood school. There are currently 22 students; three have been identified as having special education needs. A special education coordinator in the school provides consultation to the classroom teacher, on an as-needed basis.	
<b>Background Information: Parental input and involvement</b>	
October 8 - Parents met with Mrs. Anyteacher to talk about Lee's goals for the year. His parents agreed to use paired reading at home and the team decided to concentrate on increasing quality and quantity of writing during class time and not assign it for homework. Lee demonstrated his new electronic spell check. Parents expressed concerns about Lee's attitudes towards tests and were pleased to hear that all the students in Grade 5 would be learning test-taking strategies this term.	
November 12 - At a student-led conference, Lee showed his portfolio collection of planning tools for writing and he read a self-selected passage from a science reference book he is using for a current research project. Parents congratulated him on his progress and discussed additional study strategies they can try next term.	
March 12 - Parents reviewed writing samples and are pleased Lee is writing more and is using descriptive sentences and more precise vocabulary. They report that Lee is still enjoying the paired reading four nights a week, and their family is learning a lot about exotic animals through the reading.	
June 12 - Had a telephone conference with mom to review final reading scores and progress in writing. She committed to encouraging Lee to read over the summer and commented that both they and Lee are feeling confident about next year's move to middle school.	

## Sample IPP - Lee (continued) page 2/7

<b>Strengths</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Enjoys working and playing with other students, has many friends</li> <li>– Likes to build things, especially in science</li> <li>– Comfortable with the computer, can find all kinds of interesting sites on the Internet</li> <li>– Excels in sports—hockey and soccer</li> </ul>		
<b>Areas of Need</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Strategies to improve reading comprehension across the subject areas, but especially for social studies</li> <li>– Planning, writing and proofreading strategies to increase quality and quantity of written expression</li> <li>– Reduce anxiety around test-taking situations</li> </ul>		
<b>Medical Conditions that Impact Schooling</b>		
Lee was screened for possible AD/HD at Anywhere Clinic in November 200X. He has minor attention difficulties but not severe enough to warrant medical treatment at this time.		
<b>Assessment Data (Specialized Assessment Results)</b>		
<b>Date</b>	<b>Test</b>	<b>Results</b>
May 200X University of Anywhere Clinic Dr. Anyone, psychologist	WISC-IV	Full score: average (slightly below average on working memory index)
May 200X University of Anywhere Clinic Dr. Anyone, psychologist	WIAT-II	Reading: borderline Mathematics: average Written language: borderline Oral language: average  Moderate learning disability in the areas of reading and written expression
May 200X University of Anywhere Clinic Dr. Anyone, psychologist	Behaviour Assessment for Children (BASC)	Self-report, parent and teacher rating scale placed student at risk for anxiety difficulties

Sample IPP - Lee (continued) page 3/7

<b>Current Level of Performance and Achievement</b>	<b>Year-end Summary</b>
<p><b>September</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grade 4 report card indicates Lee is working at grade level in math and science</li> <li>• Burns and Roe Informal Reading Inventory indicates he is reading independently with Grade 3 level text</li>   <li>• Reading level affects social studies and Lee needs support to complete grade-level assignments</li>   <li>• Writing sample indicates low output (e.g., less than 20 words in 30-minute September writing sample), no evidence of planning, writing vocabulary tends to be general and he lacks detail in his writing, about 60% spelling accuracy</li>   <li>• Test taking appears to be an area of concern for him. He was absent for the two major unit tests this month and his mom feels that this may have been due to anxiety</li> </ul>	<p><b>June</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continues to work at grade level in math and science, with minimal support.</li> <li>• Although Lee’s reading fluency is still below grade level, his comprehension has improved and he is using self-questioning strategies, especially when reading high-interest scientific information. He will need additional strategies for more complex narrative material in Grade 6.</li> <li>• Using his new reading strategies have helped Lee maintain a C average in social studies. He is receiving occasional support with note taking, test taking and completing written longer assignments.</li> <li>• Although longer writing assignments remain a challenge for Lee, output has increased (e.g., June’s sample was 80 words in 30 minutes), he’s using planning tools when prompted, writing vocabulary is more specific and he’s attempting to provide more detail, and spelling accuracy has increased to about 70%. Now that several other students in the class are using a spell check, he is more willing to use his.</li> <li>• Lee has written all major tests this term and has passed them all! His parents report he is studying at home more for tests and is feeling more confident about tests.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Coordinated Support Services</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Lee, supported by his parents, attended six-part series on handling anxiety at Anywhere Community Services (November 200X).</li> <li>– Lee is in good health at this time and does not require additional coordinated support services.</li> </ul>	

## Sample IPP - Lee (continued) page 4/7

<b>Goal #1</b>		
<b>Long-term Goal:</b> Lee will independently read and demonstrate understanding of selected Grade 4 level reading passages.		
<b>Short-term Objectives</b>	<b>Assessment Procedures</b>	<b>Progress Review</b>
By November 15 Lee will read selected mid-Grade 3 level reading passages.	Two selected reading passages at mid-Grade 3 level and five comprehension questions	November 10 <i>Achieved.</i> Lee is independently reading material at the mid-Grade 3 level.
By March 15 Lee will read selected end-of-Grade 3 level reading passages.	Two selected reading passages at end-of-Grade 3 level and five comprehension questions	March 12 <i>Achieved.</i> Lee is doing even better than his objective; he is independently reading material at the early-Grade 4 level, especially factual material.
By June 30 Lee will read selected early-Grade 4 level reading passages.	Burns and Roe Information Reading Assessment (Form B)	June 15 <i>Achieved.</i> Lee is reading independently at the early-Grade 4 level (and even higher if the material is especially interesting to him).
<p><b>To assess progress towards long-term goal</b> Burns and Roe Informal Reading Inventory Form A (September), Form B (June)</p> <p><b>Accommodations and strategies to support objectives</b> Teach strategies for using textbook features, visualization skills and self-questioning to improve comprehension and encourage at-home paired reading, 20 minutes/4 evenings a week</p>		

Sample IPP - Lee (continued) page 5/7

<b>Goal #2</b>		
<b>Long-term Goal:</b> Lee will generate at least 20 sentences at grade-level expectations within allotted time for written assignments.		
<b>Short-term Objectives</b>	<b>Assessment Procedures</b>	<b>Progress Review</b>
<p>By November 15</p> <p>Lee will complete a Splashdown or list of key words of at least 15 items as a plan for at least two written assignments in social studies, science and language arts.</p>	<p>Collect three examples for student portfolio and evaluate with grade-level rubric.</p>	<p>November 12</p> <p><i>Achieved.</i> Lee prefers to use key words and he completed at least two plans for written assignments in each subject area.</p>
<p>By March 15</p> <p>Lee will use a planning tool to generate at least 15 ideas and use these ideas to write at least 12 sentences within allotted class time for at least three written assignments in social studies, science and language arts.</p>	<p>Collect three examples for student portfolio and evaluate with grade-level rubric.</p>	<p>March 10</p> <p><i>Progressing.</i> Lee completed two written assignments in social studies and science but finds writing assignments for language arts more challenging. He prefers working with facts and information rather than working with opinions and personal responses.</p>
<p>By June 30</p> <p>Lee will independently generate at least 15 ideas and use these ideas to write at least 20 sentences within allotted class time for at least three written assignments in all core subject areas.</p>	<p>Collect three examples for student portfolio and evaluate with grade-level rubric.</p>	<p>June 15</p> <p><i>Achieved.</i> Lee completed longer writing assignments for three major assignments in social studies, science and language arts.</p>
<p><b>To assess progress toward long-term goal</b></p> <p>Monthly writing sample with grade-level rubric, word count and spelling accuracy percentage</p> <p><b>Accommodations and strategies to support objectives</b></p> <p>Customize graphic organizers for planning writing, encourage use of electronic spell check in all major written assignments and tests, set up buddy note-taking system (e.g., photocopy buddy's notes and use to revise own notes)</p>		

## Sample IPP - Lee (continued) page 6/7

<b>Goal #3</b>		
<b>Long-term Goal:</b> Lee will approach unit tests in a calm and confident manner, and will complete at least 80% of all items on the test.		
<b>Short-term Objectives</b>	<b>Assessment Procedures</b>	<b>Progress Review</b>
<p>By November 15</p> <p>Lee will identify test stresses using self-assessment tools and will demonstrate use of at least one calm-down strategy that he can use during major unit tests.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Track number of major tests completed with passing marks and number of tests not completed</li> <li>Self-monitoring of use of study time and strategies for major unit tests</li> <li>Student interview September, November, March and June</li> </ul>	<p>November 12</p> <p><i>Achieved.</i> Lee completed a "How do I feel about tests" assessment and identified that studying at home would boost his confidence. He reports that the BRAG strategy helps him calm down before a test and he was able to use it for science and social studies unit tests this term.</p>
<p>By March 15</p> <p>Lee will use at least three study tricks to prepare at home for upcoming unit tests (approximately 30 minutes per night for three nights).</p>		<p>March 15</p> <p><i>Achieved.</i> Lee completed study plans for science and social studies unit tests this term. He still has some challenges preparing for math tests but demonstrated increased confidence writing the weekly tests.</p>
<p>By June 15</p> <p>Lee will use the SCORER strategy and will successfully complete at least 80% of all items on major unit tests.</p>		<p>June 15</p> <p><i>Achieved.</i> Lee reports that test taking is no longer a challenge for him. He attended class for all scheduled tests, completed at least 80% of all test items and had passing marks in all subject areas.</p>
<p><b>Accommodations and strategies to support objectives</b></p> <p>Provide study planners for review at least three days before major tests, provide extra time, quiet spot, opportunities to ask questions and clarify instructions during test, teach relaxation techniques</p>		

### Planning for Transition

Lee will be moving to a middle school next year and he will need to be ready for:

- longer and more complex written assignments
- increased note taking during class activities
- longer and more complex unit tests
- increased reading demands including managing varied reading levels of material
- increased responsibility for organizing and managing materials and information.

These skills will be part of regular classroom instruction throughout the year and we will also look for additional strategies to help Lee manage these new demands.

Lee's mother also reports that Lee expresses concern when substitute teachers replace the regular classroom teacher. Mrs. A. will look at some possible social scripts that might help Lee manage these situations with less anxiety.

### Signatures

I understand and agree with the information contained in this Individualized Program Plan.

\_\_\_\_\_

Parents

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

IPP Coordinator/Teacher

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

Principal

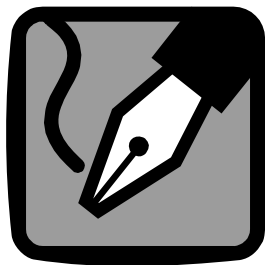
\_\_\_\_\_

Date





## Appendices



These tools are available in PDF format at [www.education.gov.ab.ca/k\\_12/special\\_needs/resource.asp](http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/k_12/special_needs/resource.asp) and on the CD-ROM packaged with the print version of this resource.

## Working Through the IPP Process

The purpose of these sample tools is to enrich the IPP process. These tools should be used selectively and can be adapted to best meet the needs of individual students. Many of these tools will be used informally as part of the IPP development process and not as products for the student's permanent school record.

- 1-A Sample IPP Template
- 1-B Sample IPP Component Checklist
- 1-C Sample IPP Planning Sheet



## Sample IPP Template

<b>Individualized Program Plan</b>	
<b>Student Information</b>	
<b>Student:</b>	
<b>Date of Birth:</b>	<b>Age as of Sept. 1/200X:</b>
<b>Parents:</b>	<b>Date I.P.P. Created:</b>
<b>Address:</b>	<b>Phone #:</b>
	<b>Eligibility Code:</b>
<b>Year of School/Grade:</b>	
<b>Background information: Classroom context</b>	
<b>School:</b>	
<b>I.P.P. Coordinator and Classroom Teacher:</b>	
<b>Additional IPP Team Members:</b>	
<b>Background Information: Parental input and involvement</b>	



Appendix 1-A

Sample IPP Template  
(continued) page 2/5

<b>Strengths</b>		
<b>Areas of Need</b>		
<b>Medical Conditions that Impact Schooling</b>	<b>Coordinated Support Services</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> No current medical conditions that impact schooling	<input type="checkbox"/> None required at this time	
<b>Assessment Data (Specialized Assessment Results)</b>		
<b>Date</b>	<b>Test</b>	<b>Results</b>



Current Level of Performance and Achievement	Year-end Summary
September	June
<p><b>Grade Level of Achievement Reporting Information</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Adapted programming</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Modified programming      <input type="radio"/> graded curriculum      <input type="radio"/> not graded curriculum</p> <p>If student's modified programming does <i>not</i> follow a graded curriculum, indicate category of each goal and achievement level relative to each goal category:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <p><b>foundational skills</b> (e.g., communications, classroom behaviour, gross and fine motor skills)</p> <p>Goals achieved:    <input type="checkbox"/> all    <input type="checkbox"/> most    <input type="checkbox"/> some    <input type="checkbox"/> none    <input type="checkbox"/> not applicable</p> </li> <li> <p><b>academic readiness skills</b> (e.g., readiness skills to prepare student for learning outcomes in the programs of study in Grade 1 and subsequent grade levels)</p> <p>Goals achieved:    <input type="checkbox"/> all    <input type="checkbox"/> most    <input type="checkbox"/> some    <input type="checkbox"/> none    <input type="checkbox"/> not applicable</p> </li> <li> <p><b>life skills</b> (e.g., skills that will assist the student in developing independence in the home, school and community)</p> <p>Goals achieved:    <input type="checkbox"/> all    <input type="checkbox"/> most    <input type="checkbox"/> some    <input type="checkbox"/> none    <input type="checkbox"/> not applicable</p> </li> </ul>	



Appendix 1-A

Sample IPP Template  
(continued) page 4/5

<b>Goal #</b> ____ <b>Long-term Goal:</b>		
Short-term Objectives	Assessment Procedures	Progress Review
<b>Accommodations and strategies to support objectives</b>		
If modified programming does not follow graded curriculum, this goal is related to: <input type="checkbox"/> foundational skills <input type="checkbox"/> academic readiness skills <input type="checkbox"/> life skills		



**Planning for Transition**

Empty space for planning for transition.

**Additional Information**

Empty space for additional information.

**Signatures**

I understand and agree with the information contained in this Individualized Program Plan.

\_\_\_\_\_

Parents

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

IPP Coordinator/Teacher

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

Principal

\_\_\_\_\_

Date



## Sample IPP Component Checklist

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Classroom Context</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Programming description such as student-teacher ratio, instructional groupings, routine support	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Needs more information
Essential Information	Included (please check)
<b>Parental Input</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Parental involvement is documented (including meetings) <input type="checkbox"/> IPP is signed or attempts to obtain parent signature to indicate informed consent are documented	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Needs more information
<b>Strengths</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Academic, social, emotional, behavioural or physical areas that positively impact learning <input type="checkbox"/> Input from parents <input type="checkbox"/> Input from student	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Needs more information
<b>Areas of Need</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Academic, social, emotional, behavioural or physical areas that negatively impact learning <input type="checkbox"/> Needs are expressed in positive terms <input type="checkbox"/> Input from parents <input type="checkbox"/> Input from student	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Needs more information
<b>Medical Information Relevant to Learning</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Medical diagnosis <input type="checkbox"/> Medications <input type="checkbox"/> Other conditions that impact schooling <input type="checkbox"/> No medical information that impacts schooling	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Needs more information
<b>Assessment Data (Specialized Assessment Results)</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Current specialized assessments: name of assessment tool and date administered <input type="checkbox"/> Name of specialist and area of specialization <input type="checkbox"/> Summary of report findings	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Needs more information

This appendix adapted with permission from Edmonton Public Schools, *Individualized Program Plan Guidebook* (Edmonton, AB: Edmonton Public Schools, 2005), pp. 75–77 and Alberta Learning, *Standards for Special Education, Amended June 2004* (Edmonton, AB: Alberta Learning, 2004).



## Sample IPP Component Checklist (continued) page 2/3

Essential Information	Included (please check)
<b>Current Level of Performance and Achievement (Classroom and Informal Assessments)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Student's current level of functioning or level of achievement</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Current pre- and post-classroom assessments: name of tool and date administered</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Summary of findings</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Needs more information
<b>Coordinated Support Services</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Support services offered within the school</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Support services offered outside the school</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Amount of time services offered</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Needs more information
<b>Instructional Accommodations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Individualized instructional accommodations and strategies (e.g., unique expectations, specialized materials, resources, facilities, equipment, assistive technology, personnel)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Aligned with personal strengths, areas for growth and goal statements</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Needs more information
<b>Assessment Procedures</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Assessment procedures for monitoring and evaluating student progress are identified (e.g., observations, work samples, diagnostic or standardized tests, developmental assessments, checklists)</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Needs more information
<b>Accommodations for Assessment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Individual accommodations for assessment are identified (e.g., time, reader, scribe, equipment, testing format)</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Needs more information
<b>Measurable Goals and Objectives</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Consistent with the student's areas of growth and clearly linked to assessment data</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Short-term objectives are measurable and/or observable             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– expected behaviour is described</li> <li>– conditions under which the student will perform the task</li> <li>– criteria for measurement</li> <li>– date that objective is expected to be achieved</li> </ul> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Based on input from teachers, parents and student (where appropriate)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Manageable number of goals and objectives</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> New ones are added/revised as planned ones are reviewed and/or achieved</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Needs more information





Appendix 1-B

## Sample IPP Component Checklist (continued) page 3/3

Essential Information	Included (please check)
<b>Planning for Transition</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> A summary of planned actions to prepare the student for success in upcoming changes to environment is outlined at the beginning of the year</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Transition plan involves family</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Transition plan involves other specialists where appropriate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Needs more information</li> </ul>
<b>Year-end Summary</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Year-end summary includes most effective strategies, areas of continuing concern and recommendations for next year</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Needs more information</li> </ul>



# Sample IPP Planning Sheet

## Background Information

Use to record essential information from student records and staff, parent and student input.

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_

1. School history
2. Medical issues (e.g., vision, hearing, allergies, diagnosis, current medications)
3. General health related to learning (e.g., eating and nutrition, sleep habits)
4. Physical development (e.g., walking, coordination, activity level, participation)

This appendix adapted with permission from Edmonton Public Schools, *Individualized Program Plan Guidebook* (Edmonton, AB: Edmonton Public Schools, 2005), pp. 65–68, 71.



Appendix 1-C

Sample IPP Planning Sheet  
(continued) page 2/5

5. Social-emotional development (e.g., temperament, social skills, problem-solving skills)
6. Specialized assessments and services (e.g., speech, OT, PT, psychological)
7. Classroom assessment of current level of performance and achievement



## Sample IPP Planning Sheet (continued) page 3/5

<b>Additional Staff, Agencies, Professionals and Services</b> In school/out of school support services (name, position, services provided)
<b>Instructional Accommodations and Strategies</b> Individualized accommodations and learning and teaching strategies (aligned with areas of need and goal statements)
<b>Assessment Procedures</b> Individual procedures for monitoring/evaluating student progress (observations, assessment)
<b>Assessment Accommodations</b> Individual accommodations for assessment (e.g., extra time, scribe, equipment, testing format)



Appendix 1-C

Sample IPP Planning Sheet  
(continued) page 4/5

<b>Goal #</b>		
Statement of annual expectations of student growth		
<b>Objectives</b>		
Measurable/observable statements including achievement date, behaviour, conditions and criteria (three to five short-term objectives for each annual goal)		
<b>Objective #1</b>		
<b>Objective #2</b>		
<b>Objective #3</b>		
<b>Review #1</b>	<b>Review #2</b>	<b>Review #3</b>



<b>Planning for Transition</b>
Actions identified at the beginning of the year that will prepare the student for transition throughout the year
<b>Year-end Summary</b>
Most effective strategies and areas for continuing concern
<b>Additional Information</b>
Other relevant information
<b>Parental Involvement and Input</b>

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## INDEX

## A

**academic readiness skills**

- about, 7
- in IPP sample (template), 32–33

**accommodations and strategies**

- about, 12–13
- in IPP planning, step three, 18
- in IPP planning sheet (template), 40
- in IPP sample, 24–26
- in IPP sample components (checklist), 36
- parental consent for, 16–17
- requirement in *Standards*, 4
- in year-end summaries, 15

(See also *Chapter 6: Selecting Accommodations and Strategies*)

**achievement levels** (See performance and achievement levels)**assessments**

- about assessment data, 5–6
- about classroom assessments, 6–8
- about procedures for, 10–11
- in IPP planning, steps one and three, 17–18
- in IPP planning sheet (template), 39–40
- in IPP sample, 22–26
- in IPP sample components (checklist), 35–36
- parental consent requirement in *Standards*, 16
- requirement in *Standards*, 4
- types of, 5

(See also *Chapter 5: Using Classroom Assessment to Support the IPP Process*)

**assistive technology for learning (ATL)**

- as accommodation, 12–13
- in IPP sample, 25–26
- in IPP sample components (checklist), 36

(See also *Chapter 9: Infusing Assistive Technology for Learning into the IPP Process*)

## B

**bibliography on IPPs**, 43

## C

**classroom assessments** (See assessments)**classroom behaviour** (See social skills)**classroom environment**

- information on, in IPP sample, 21
- in IPP sample components (checklist), 35

**communication skills**

in needs and strengths, 8

**consent by parents**

about requirement for, 16

IPP sample signature form, 27

IPP sample signature form (template), 34

for support services, 11

(See also parental involvement in IPP process)

**E****early childhood students**

(See *Chapter 10: Getting Off to a Good Start in Early Childhood Services*)

**F****foundational skills**

about, 7

in IPP sample (template), 32–33

**G****gifted students**

(See *Chapter 11: Planning for Students Who are Gifted*)

**goals and objectives**

about, 10

academic readiness skills in, 7

in IPP planning, steps two and three, 17–18

in IPP planning sheet (template), 41

in IPP sample, 24–26

in IPP sample components (checklist), 36

life skills in, 7

requirement in *Standards*, 4

social skills in, 7

in year-end summaries, 15

(See also *Chapter 7: Making Goals Meaningful, Measurable and Manageable*)

**Grade Level of Achievement scores (GLAs)**

about reports of, 6–8

in IPP sample, 23

**H****hobbies, student**

as needs and strengths, 9

**I****individualized program plans (IPPs)**

about, 1–4

about required elements in, 4–17

about six-step planning process, 17–19

accommodations and strategies, 12–13

- assessment data, 5–6
- assessment procedures, 10–11
- assessments in classrooms, 6–8
- definition in *Standards*, 3
- goals and objectives, 10
- in IPP planning sheet (template), 38–42
- in IPP sample, 20–27
- in IPP sample (template), 30–34
- medical information, 12
- parental consent for, 16–17
- performance and achievement levels, 6–8
- review of, 14–15
- support services, 11
- transition plans, 13–14
- year-end summaries, 15

**interests, student**

- as needs and strengths, 9

**J****junior and senior high students**

(See *Chapter 12: Promising Practices for Junior and Senior High School*)

**L****learning preferences**

- in needs and strengths, 8

**learning strategies** (See accommodations and strategies)**learning team**

- about a shared vision of IPPs, 1–4
- definition in *Standards*, 3
- information on, in IPP sample, 21
- IPP planning process by, 17–20
- IPP planning sheet for (template), 38–42

**life skills**

- about, 7
- in IPP sample (template), 32–33

**M****medical information**

- about, 12
- in IPP planning, step one, 17
- in IPP planning sheet (template), 38
- in IPP sample, 22
- in IPP sample components (checklist), 35
- requirement in *Standards*, 4

**motivation in students**

- in needs and strengths, 8–9

**N****needs and strengths**

- about, 8–9
- in IPP planning, step one, 17
- in IPP planning sheet (template), 38–39
- in IPP sample, 22
- in IPP sample components (checklist), 35
- requirement in *Standards*, 4

**nonacademic accomplishments of students**

- in needs and strengths, 8–9

**P****parental involvement in IPP process**

- about a shared vision of IPPs, 1–4
- consent by parents (*See* consent by parents)
- IPP planning with, 17–19
- IPP planning sheet (template), 42
- IPP sample, 21
- IPP sample components (checklist), 35
- requirement for, 11
- requirement in *Standards* for, 16–17
- (*See also Chapter 2: Encouraging Parent Involvement*)

**performance and achievement levels**

- about, 6–8
- definition in *Standards*, 6
- in IPP planning, step one, 17
- in IPP planning sheet (template), 39
- in IPP sample, 23
- in IPP sample components (checklist), 36
- requirement in *Standards*, 4

**professional development, 3, 19–20****progress reviews** (*See* reviews and revisions)**R****reviews and revisions of IPPs**

- about, 14–15
- in IPP planning, as step five, 19
- in IPP planning sheet (template), 41
- in IPP sample, 24–26
- required in *Standards*, 4

**S****School Act, 3****school administrators and school jurisdictions**

- about a shared vision of IPPs, 1–4
- roles in implementing IPPs, 11, 16, 19–20

**social skills**

- as needs and strengths, 9
- in IPP planning, step one, 17

- in IPP planning sheet (template), 39
- levels of performance and achievement in, 7

**Standards for Special Education**

- IPP requirements in, 3–4, 6, 11, 16

**strengths** (*See* needs and strengths)

**student involvement in IPPs**

- about a shared vision of IPPs, 1–4
- (*See also Chapter 3: Supporting Student Participation*)

**support services**

- about a shared vision of IPPs, 1–4
- about coordination of, 11
- IPP planning, 17–19
- IPP planning sheet (template), 39, 40
- in IPP sample, 23
- in IPP sample components (checklist), 36
- parent consent required for, 11
- requirement in *Standards*, 4, 11
- (*See also Chapter 4: Creating a Network of Support*)

**T**

**teachers**

- about a shared vision of IPPs, 1–4
- (*See also* learning team)

**transition plans**

- about, 13–14
- in IPP planning, step six, 19
- in IPP planning sheet (template), 42
- in IPP sample, 27
- in IPP sample components (checklist), 37
- requirement in *Standards*, 4
- (*See also Chapter 8: Planning for Transitions*)

**Y**

**year-end summary**

- about, 15
- in IPP planning, step five, 19
- in IPP planning sheet (template), 42
- in IPP sample, 27
- in IPP sample components (checklist), 37
- requirement in *Standards*, 4





Building the  
Learning Team

Chapter 2

# Encouraging Parent Involvement

2006

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Counsellors	✓
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Parents	
General Public	



A PDF version of this resource is available on the Alberta Education Web site at [www.education.gov.ab.ca/k\\_12/specialneeds/resource.asp](http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/k_12/specialneeds/resource.asp)

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Identifying strengths and areas of need .....	1
Setting the direction .....	2
Creating a plan .....	3
Implementing the plan .....	3
Reviewing and revising .....	3
Planning for transition .....	4
Getting Off to a Good Start .....	4
Sample strategies for encouraging parental participation .....	5
Sample strategies for increasing parents' comfort levels at meetings .....	7
Sample strategies for handling conflict and resolving differences with parents .....	8
Resources for parents .....	8
Other resources .....	9
Appendices .....	11
2-A Sample Parent Survey .....	12
2-B Sample Permission Form for Specialized Assessment .....	13
2-C The MAPS Planning System .....	14
2-D Family Goal Setting .....	15
Completed Sample of Family Goal Setting .....	17
2-E Tips for Parents for Participating in the IPP Process .....	19
2-F Solution-focused Meetings .....	21
Sample Planner for Solution-focused Meeting .....	22
Bibliography .....	23
Index .....	25



## Chapter 2

# Encouraging Parent Involvement



The *Standards for Special Education, Amended June 2004* clearly states that schools must invite meaningful involvement of parents in planning, problem solving and decision making related to their child's special education programming.

Parents have unique knowledge about their children that provides an invaluable basis for the IPP process. Furthermore, research clearly demonstrates that parents who understand the school philosophy, know the school staff and participate in school activities are more likely to be satisfied with the education that their children are receiving. Parents need meaningful opportunities to participate in all facets of their child's schooling. They often want to be part of the decision-making process, and have access to information and ideas on a continuous, as-needed basis.

For more information

This chapter provides sample strategies for supporting meaningful parent involvement in the IPP process. Additional strategies to support parent participation are contained in other chapters in this resource, including:  
Chapter 8: *Planning for Transitions*  
Chapter 9: *Infusing Assistive Technology for Learning into the IPP Process*.

There are opportunities for meaningful parent involvement at all stages of the IPP process. Consider the following six interrelated steps of the IPP process and how parent involvement can be part of each step.

### 1. Identifying strengths and areas of need

Parents are an invaluable source of information regarding their child. They are their child's first teachers and have witnessed him or her in a variety of social and learning situations beyond the school setting. As a result, they can often provide unique insights and perspectives about their child's strengths and needs. Consider developing a simple survey or questionnaire to gather information from parents.

Appendices

See *Appendix 2-A for a sample parent survey*.

Parents can provide information about their child in areas such as the following:

- strengths and areas of need
- family and educational history that impacts the child's present learning situation
- relevant medical history and health-care needs
- interests, talents and desires of their child
- aspirations and goals they have for their child
- assistance that the family can provide at home to practise, reinforce and maintain skills

- information about community services, after-school situations or caregivers which could impact their child's learning.

Specialized assessments are often used to help identify a student's strengths and areas of need. Schools must request in writing the consent of parents to assess and evaluate children experiencing difficulties with their education program. Parents need to understand the importance of informed consent. To make an informed decision, parents need to consider:

- purpose of assessment
- nature of assessment
- intended use of results
- who has access to results.

It may be helpful to state what particular test will be used to assess the student and any other informal or formal assessment tools which will be used. Notifying parents as to when the assessment will take place will help maintain trust between home and school. If delays arise, keep parents current on timelines.

### Appendices

*See Appendix 2-B for a sample permission form.*

If the student is receiving an assessment or support from outside agencies or medical service providers, this information may also be helpful in identifying needs and developing programming. In order for the learning team to have access to this information, parents will be asked to sign a permission form to release information from these professionals. Parents should be reassured that this information will be kept confidential.

## 2. Setting the direction

Establishing priorities helps the learning team focus on what is critical for the student to learn this school year. The team establishes these priorities based on all the information that has been gathered to date.

To determine the most important learning needs, parents can work with the learning team to consider:

- priority areas to focus on
- possibilities for using this new skill or knowledge in other areas and settings
- related areas of strength
- how this need affects overall learning and achievement
- transferability to other subject areas
- contribution to independence
- age appropriateness
- how long it will take to master this new skill
- how the skills and knowledge relate to the student's future goals.

### 3. Creating a plan

As members of their child's learning team, parents can offer ideas and information in the creation of long-term goals for their child. These goals are what the student might accomplish in one school year. It is important that the team identify what is manageable for the student. This is where a parent perspective can be especially helpful.

All parents have hopes and dreams for their child. Their priorities for their child's learning may differ from those of the classroom teacher. It is important that parents' perspectives are recognized and understood, and that all viewpoints are considered so that the learning team works collaboratively to make the most appropriate programming decisions for individual students. As part of the assessment process, the use of strategies such as the MAPS Planning System creates opportunities for parents to share information about their children.

#### Appendices

*See Appendix 2-C for information on the MAPS Planning System.*

Some parents may wish to set additional goals that they will work on at home. These goals can either support classroom-based goals or focus on education-related skills and behaviours more specific to home and community. These goals may be incorporated into the IPP process but they should not be considered goals that need to be monitored by the classroom teacher or be formally reported in the IPP review. The role of the teacher is to support families in setting goals for their children and encourage parents to monitor, share and celebrate their successes.

#### Appendices

*See Appendix 2-D for a sample goal-setting form to assist parents.*

Parents can often help identify effective accommodations for their child. Ask them about what strategies they use to help their child complete family jobs or homework assignments.

### 4. Implementing the plan

As members of their child's learning team, parents can take an active role in the implementation process. One important way to involve parents is in reinforcing skills and strategies in out-of-school contexts. When parents understand what the long-term goals and short-term objectives of their child's program plan are, they can decide how to best support their child at home.

### 5. Reviewing and revising

Review meetings are opportunities for parents to discuss their child's programming and consider possible revisions. The year-end review is especially important as the team reviews the education plan and adds written recommendations to the IPP. This is particularly true for students moving from one school to another or making any kind of transition.

Parents can also be encouraged to contact the school to request a review of the IPP at any time if they have concerns about their child's progress or if their child is experiencing significant changes in achievement, attitude, behaviour or health. This would allow the team to adjust the IPP to better meet that student's changing needs.

## 6. Planning for transition

Planning for transition involves identifying the kinds of skills and attitudes that need to be in place for students to be successful in future settings, and developing a plan of action to ensure students acquire these skills and attitudes. It may also include specific plans for moving between education placements and programs. As a consistent presence in their child's life, parents play an essential role in planning for and dealing with transitions. In particular, parents may be involved in determining opportunities and supports that are available to the student in the community as he or she gains increased independence.

## Getting Off to a Good Start

At the beginning of the year, some parents may be uncomfortable with formal school meetings, particularly if this is their first meeting. In challenging or difficult situations, parents' care and concern for their child might show up as tension, anxiety or frustration. It's important that teachers remain nonjudgemental and don't make assumptions because the parents' presenting behaviours might not necessarily reflect how they truly feel or how they are actually coping. Teachers need to keep in mind that most parents do not have a background in education and some have little or no experience in working with schools. There may also be emotional barriers and other issues that get in the way of creating an atmosphere of collaboration. These can include:

- parents who struggled at school themselves. They may find it uncomfortable to work in partnership with teachers
- a sense of guilt that they are in some way responsible for their child's difficulties. Some families may still be struggling with feelings of loss and grief as they try to come to terms with their child's special education needs
- family situations which can make participating in their child's education a challenge. These could include such things as being a single parent, shift work, language barriers or families that are dealing with more than one child with special education needs
- cultural beliefs that school and home are separate
- issues of trust. It takes time to develop a level of trust where parents feel comfortable talking about their child
- a lack of confidence in the school's ability to provide adequate support for a student with special education needs

- denial. Some parents find it difficult to believe that their child has different needs than other children, particularly those students whose main difficulties are academic, so they may not experience the same degree of difficulty outside of the school environment.

Ensuring parental involvement requires time, trust and a belief that parents are partners in the planning process. Teachers can take a guiding role, particularly in the early stages of parental involvement, to ensure that parents have positive and meaningful opportunities to become actively engaged and committed to the process. Teachers need to help parents understand the value of an IPP and the role that they can play in ensuring that it accurately reflects the strengths and areas of need of their child. Taking time at the onset to provide information and clarify expectations will foster a sense of openness and partnership with parents. As parents become more comfortable working with their child's learning team, they will more readily share information and perspectives that impact their child's learning.

### Sample strategies

### Sample strategies for encouraging parental participation

- **Maintain an open door policy.** Let parents know that they are welcome to visit the classroom to observe and participate in their child's learning. If there is a sign-in procedure at the office or other jurisdiction protocol, provide this information during the first open house of the school year or through the classroom newsletter. Encourage parents to participate in special day events, expertise sharing, displays and presentations, and other learning opportunities.
- **Acknowledge parents' role and contribution to the team.** It's important that parents hear that their expertise and contributions are valued.
- **Be prepared to answer parents' questions.** Consider the following types of sample questions that parents might ask.
  - How will my input be used?
  - Do we attend all IPP planning meetings about our child? If not, how do we keep informed about information shared and decisions made at those meetings?
  - When are the meetings held and how long are they?
  - How can our child be a part of the IPP process?
  - What kind of special support will there be for my child? Will there be one-on-one support? If so, will this be with a teacher or teacher assistant?
  - Will my child always need an IPP?
  - How is the IPP different every school year? Can it be changed at any time during the school year?
  - How will we know if the IPP is effective?
  - How can I arrange to visit the classroom to see how my child is doing?

- What am I expected to do at home to support my child?
  - What does our signature mean on the IPP document? What happens if we don't sign it?
  - What are our options if we don't agree with the IPP?
  - Will my child need to write provincial achievement tests?
  - Will my child graduate with a Grade 12 diploma?
  - We noticed a transition section on the IPP, but our child has just begun new programming. Why is transition an issue?
- **Make print information about the IPP process, such as *The Learning Team*, available to parents.** In addition to sharing the handbook (or Web link for a downloadable copy of the handbook), selected information can be used in school newsletters or displays. See the end of this chapter for ordering information.
  - **Organize an IPP information session** to ensure that parents understand the IPP process. Schools that have a large number of students with special education needs may find an orientation session for parents to be an effective way to build understanding of and commitment to the IPP process. For example, an orientation session could be an opportunity to:
    - introduce the stages of an IPP
    - review a sample IPP
    - discuss how the IPP should change from one year to the next
    - answer common questions such as those listed above.
 Be sure the parameters of the session are clear and that parents understand it is an introduction to the process, not a time to discuss individual students and their specific needs.
  - **Use parent–teacher meetings as opportunities for developing partnerships.** When possible, offer parents a choice of meeting times and communicate directly with them through a written notice or phone call. Give them sufficient time to arrange their schedule. Make sure the meeting notice gets to parents. Even the most conscientious student may neglect to pass a message along and a follow-up phone call may be necessary. Always provide information on how to contact the school if the meeting needs to be rescheduled. If possible, consider including an agenda or brief overview of the planning meeting content. This is helpful for parents as they consider the kinds of questions they want to ask and the issues they would like to discuss.
  - **Make effective use of IPP meetings.** Manage the IPP meetings so that there is time for questions and discussion. Use these meetings as an opportunity to share information about the child's special learning needs. The more knowledgeable parents are about their child's learning challenges, the better partners they can be. Resources might include: copies of articles of interest for them to read at home, information about upcoming conferences or relevant parent workshops, and new Web sites that might be of interest. Consider having someone keep notes of the action items and provide a copy to all team members.



- **Ensure that parents understand the kinds of decisions that need to be made when developing an IPP** and then ask them to choose which areas of the IPP they would like to have input into. For example, parents may wish to share their child's strengths, areas of need, information about how he or she learns best, medical information, successful strategies used at home and goals they would like to see addressed in the IPP. Encourage parents to speak with their child about his or her strengths, areas of need and potential goals, and share this information as well.

### Appendices

*See Appendix 2-E for sample tips for parents for participating in the IPP process.*

### Sample strategies

#### Sample strategies for increasing parents' comfort levels at meetings

- Arrange meetings at mutually convenient times in a comfortable and appropriate setting.
- Consider parents' comfort level when determining the number of staff to attend meetings.
- Provide parents with an agenda a day or two in advance. This allows them time to think about the items to be discussed and to collect relevant information to bring to the meeting.
- Consider what information parents might have that could be of value. Include a list of questions with the meeting notice or proposed agenda, such as:
  - Have there been changes at home that you want to share (such as a new family member, a change in a parent's work schedule, new after-school activities or day-care arrangements)?
  - Are there new supports in place for the child (such as a tutor or time spent with a mentor or older student)?
  - Has there been a change in medication or dosage?
- Encourage parents to create a list of questions they want answered during the first and subsequent meetings.
- Use the arrangement of chairs and tables to establish an atmosphere of collaboration.
- Use chart paper and markers to record notes and decisions made during the meeting.
- Value the information which parents share, and allow adequate time within meetings for thoughtful reflection and discussion.

School boards are required to make every reasonable effort at the school and jurisdiction level to resolve concerns collaboratively with parents. However, despite these efforts there may be differences of opinion about the education of children with special education needs between parents (or in some cases, an older student) and the school. When this happens, there are a number of strategies for successfully resolving these differences. The first course of action is to try and resolve issues directly with the people who are working with the student. This means meeting as a learning team and looking for win-win solutions.

## Sample strategies

## Sample strategies for handling conflict and resolving differences with parents

- Establish that the child's interests must come first at all times.
- Express motivation to resolve the difference for future mutual benefit (e.g., "I appreciate your willingness to ..." or "I'm committed to finding a plan that will work for everyone").
- Deal specifically with solutions to the identified issues and be prepared to offer alternatives.
- Focus on the issues, and not the emotions and the personalities involved.
- Give parents opportunities to state their understanding of the situation and then paraphrase what you have heard.
- Ensure your understanding of their concerns and perspectives is accurate.
- Sometimes a disagreement occurs as a direct result of misunderstanding. Always clarify exactly what the issue is before jumping ahead to solutions.
- Decide what you can compromise on. Effective resolution usually requires some form of compromise on both parties' behalf.
- Be sure that your expectations are realistic and reasonable.
- Explicitly state you are committed to the agreed-upon solutions and encourage parents to also do this.

## Appendices

See Appendix 2-F for more information on solution-focused meetings and a sample meeting planner.

## Resources for parents

There are a number of Alberta Education print and online resources that can provide information and ideas that parents can use to participate more effectively in their child's IPP process. All of these resources are available for purchase from the Learning Resources Centre at [www.lrc.education.gov.ab.ca/](http://www.lrc.education.gov.ab.ca/) or telephone 780-427-2767.

- *The Learning Team: A handbook for parents of children with special needs* (2003) provides practical information on building a learning team, the IPP process, transition planning, resolving differences and keeping informed. It can be downloaded as a PDF file from Alberta Education's Web site at: <http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/educationguide/special-ed/partners>.
- *The Journey: A handbook for parents of children who are gifted and talented* (2004) offers information and strategies that parents can use to nurture their child's learning and emotional well-being at home, in school, and in the community. It can be downloaded as a PDF file from Alberta Education's Web site at: [http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/K\\_12/curriculum/resources/TheJourney/journey.asp](http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/K_12/curriculum/resources/TheJourney/journey.asp).

- *A Handbook for Aboriginal Parents of Children with Special Needs* (2000) provides Aboriginal parents with information about the education of their child with special education needs, as well as tips to enhance communication between home and school. It can be downloaded as a PDF file from Alberta Education's Web site at [http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/k\\_12/curriculum/AboriginalParentHandbook.pdf](http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/AboriginalParentHandbook.pdf).
- *The Parent Advantage: Helping children become more successful learners at home and school, grades 1–9* (1998) includes strategies parents can use to help their child improve organizational, reading, writing, spelling, math, test-taking and project skills.

### Other resources

- *Our Words, Our Ways: Teaching First Nations, Métis and Inuit Learners* (2005) offers information and sample strategies that teachers can use to help their Aboriginal students be successful learners. This resource provides information on Aboriginal cultures and perspectives, and discusses the importance of family and community involvement. It includes shared wisdom from Elders and Aboriginal scholars, and related stories shared by teachers of Aboriginal students. It also includes information on learning disabilities and recognizing the gifts of individual students. It can be downloaded as a PDF file from Alberta Education's Web site at: [http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/k\\_12/curriculum/OurWords.asp](http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/OurWords.asp).



## Appendices



These tools are available in PDF format at [www.education.gov.ab.ca/k\\_12/special\\_needs/resource.asp](http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/k_12/special_needs/resource.asp) and on the CD-ROM packaged with the print version of this resource.

## Encouraging Parent Involvement

The purpose of these sample tools is to enrich the IPP process. These tools should be used selectively and can be adapted to best meet the needs of individual students. Many of these tools will be used informally as part of the IPP development process and not as products for the student's permanent school record.

- 2-A Sample Parent Survey
- 2-B Sample Permission Form for Specialized Assessment
- 2-C The MAPS Planning System
- 2-D Family Goal Setting  
Completed Sample of Family Goal Setting
- 2-E Tips for Parents for Participating in the IPP Process
- 2-F Solution-focused Meetings  
Sample Planner for Solution-focused Meeting



## Sample Parent Survey

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Name \_\_\_\_\_

The following questions are designed to help your child's learning team begin the Individualized Program Planning (IPP) process. We value your input and invite you to think about the following questions in preparation for the learning team meeting.

1. What are your child's strengths and interests?
2. Describe successes your child had in school.
3. Describe any challenges your child had in school.
4. What are your child's learning needs for this school year? (These could be skills that your child needs to acquire or improve on.)
5. What type of learner is your child? How does your child learn best?
6. Does your child display any behaviours that are of concern to you? If so, please explain how you deal with this type of behaviour at home.
7. What are your goals and hopes for your child this year?
8. Where do you see your child five years from now?
9. Is there any other information that could help us gain a better understanding of your child?
10. Are there any specific concerns that you would like us to address at this meeting? If so, please explain.

Thank you for sharing your ideas.



Appendix 2-B

## Sample Permission Form for Specialized Assessment

Dear Parent:

We are requesting your permission to schedule a specialized assessment for your child in the following areas.

- Educational (for reading, writing, spelling and math)
- Speech and language
- Fine and gross motor
- Behavioural
- Social-emotional
- Cognitive
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

These assessments will be conducted by our jurisdiction assessment team within the next six weeks. Each of the assessments will take approximately two hours and will be done in a one-to-one situation with your child. At that time we will talk with your child and explain why we are doing these assessments and how this information will help the teacher understand his or her learning needs better.

Upon completion of the assessments, we will arrange a meeting with you and members of the assessment team to discuss the results and make plans for improving your child's school success.

Please return the signed form below to the school office by October 30, 200\_.

Thank you for your ongoing support. Please feel free to contact me if you have additional questions or concerns about these assessments. The best time to reach me is in the morning between 10 and 11 a.m. at [phone number] or [e-mail address].

Sincerely,

Principal

### Permission for specialized assessment

I give permission for my son/daughter \_\_\_\_\_ to be assessed by the jurisdiction special education assessment team for the purpose of \_\_\_\_\_.

I understand that the granting of my permission is voluntary and that I may withdraw it at any time.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent's signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



## The MAPS Planning System

- MAPS is a seven-question process for planning for a child's school success. Usually all seven questions are the basis of the planning framework, although there may be some flexibility in the order of the questions or whether a question is used or not. The format will depend on the needs of the individual student and his or her family.
- This process takes a minimum of two hours and typically occurs in one or two sessions.
- Information and ideas are recorded on chart paper during the process and copies are made for team members as part of the follow-up.

### The Seven Questions

1. What is your child's history?  
(Parents' input on this question is vital. Invite them to share their child's history, including key milestones.)
2. What is your dream for your child's future?  
(Invite parents to share the vision of their child's future, maybe five years from now, or in adulthood. This will help set direction and identify meaningful goals.)
3. What are your fears for your child's future?  
(It is important for everyone to understand these fears and potential barriers so the team can work together to overcome them.)
4. What are three key words that describe your child?  
(Parents identify what is most important about their child in their eyes.)
5. What are your child's strengths, gifts and abilities?  
(Ask parents to share examples of what their child can do, what he or she likes to do and what he or she does well.)
6. What are your child's needs?  
(Identify needs from the parents' perspectives and then prioritize.)
7. What would an ideal day at school look like for your child, and what must be done to make it happen?

### Wrap-up

As a group, identify specific actions to be initiated and prioritize them. Identify who will be responsible for what and set reasonable timelines.

---

Adapted with permission from Mary A. Falvey et al., *All My Life's a Circle: Using the Tools: Circles, MAPS and PATH* (Toronto, ON: Inclusion Press, 1997) and from John O'Brien and Jack Pearpoint, *Person-Centred Planning with MAPS and PATH: A Workbook for Facilitators* (Toronto, ON: Inclusion Press, 2002). MAPS is one of a family of Person-Centred Planning tools that focus on the capacities (gifts) of a person—then turn it into a plan of action. Books, videos, DVDs and other support materials are available from Inclusion Press, <http://inclusion.com>.





Appendix 2-D

# Family Goal Setting

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Name \_\_\_\_\_

**My child has these five strengths:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

**My child has these five areas of need:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

**Goal #1**

A. My first goal for my child this school year is:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

This is what I will do at home to help achieve this goal:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

How I will know my child has successfully accomplished this goal:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



Appendix 2-D

## Family Goal Setting (continued) page 2/4

Goal #2

B. My second goal for my child this school year is:

---

---

This is what I will do at home to help achieve this goal:

1. 

---
2. 

---
3. 

---

How I will know my child has successfully accomplished this goal:

---

---

---

---

I would like to discuss these goals at each reporting period as part of the IPP process.

Yes    No

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent's signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

- I need more information! Please send home a sample of what a completed family goal setting sheet might look like.
- I need more ideas. Let's work on this together at the IPP meeting.



Appendix 2-D

## Completed Sample of Family Goal Setting

Student's Name Anne Example

Date September XX, 2XXX

Parent's Name Anne Parent

My child has these five strengths:

1. team member (successful goalie of her soccer team)
2. very helpful around house
3. enjoys school
4. excellent with money
5. good sense of humour

My child has these five areas of need:

1. organizational skills
2. control of her temper
3. willingness to read independently
4. needs more confidence
5. self-edit own writing

Goal #1

A. My first goal for my child this school year is:

To find books she enjoys reading (to the end)

This is what I will do at home to help achieve this goal:

1. Discuss what kinds of books she likes (and what kind she doesn't)
2. Library card - monthly trips
3. Encourage quiet bedtime reading

How I will know my child has successfully accomplished this goal:

I have to tell her "Turn off your light and stop reading!" at bedtime.



Appendix 2-D

Completed Sample of Family Goal Setting  
(continued) page 4/4

Goal #2

B. My second goal for my child this school year is:

Safe play on the playground

This is what I will do at home to help achieve this goal:

1. Encourage participation in structured noon-hour activities
2. One month without playground problems earns one lunch at Dairy Queen
3. Every day, ask: Morning - "What do you plan to do at noon?"  
Afternoon - "How did noon-hour go?"

How I will know my child has successfully accomplished this goal:

No notes home from the lunch room supervisor

Fun lunches at Dairy Queen every month

I would like to discuss these goals at each reporting period as part of the IPP process.

Yes  No

*Anna Parent*

Parent's signature

Date

- I need more information! Please send home a sample of what a completed family goal setting sheet might look like.
- I need more ideas. Let's work on this together at the IPP meeting.



Appendix 2-E

## Tips for Parents for Participating in the IPP Process

Individualized program planning (IPP) is the process by which families, teachers and other school staff work as a team to meet the individual needs of students with special education needs. As a parent, you are an important member of your child's learning team.

You can participate in the IPP process by:

- providing information about your child's past experience and his or her goals, interests and areas of need
- having regular contact with your child's teacher
- taking an active role in the decisions made for your child
- learning about the services and resources available
- working with your child at home to support the goals set through the IPP process
- actively participating in IPP planning meetings, using strategies like those described below.

### Before IPP meetings

- Discuss the positive elements in the individualized program plan with your child.
- Find out about your child's involvement and role in the meeting. Decide if your child will benefit from participating in the meeting or at least part of the meeting.
- Review the comments from your child's last report card, and goals and objectives from the last IPP. What progress have you seen? Note any areas of concern.
- Ask your child questions such as the following. (If your child attends the meeting, he or she may be able to give this input directly.)
  - What do you like best about school? What do you feel are your successes?
  - Are there any problems that we need to find some solutions to? What are some changes that would help you learn better at school?
  - What goals do you have for yourself?
- Be prepared. Write a list of questions and concerns that you want to discuss, including questions like the following. Prioritize your concerns.
  - Whom should I call if I have concerns about my child's school program?
  - Will the IPP be reviewed at every report card time?
  - What kinds of changes in our home does the school need to know about?
- If you need additional support, consider arranging for another person to accompany you. This person can offer a different perspective, hear important points you may miss or take notes.

### At IPP meetings

- Ask if there are any new assessments, reports or observations.
- Ask about your child's strengths, interests, areas of growth, areas of need and friendships.
- Ask any other questions you have about your child's progress or programming.
- Share your present and future goals for your child.
- Discuss any specific concerns you have about your child.
- Share any home conditions that may impact your child's performance or behaviour at school and any recent documents or medical updates.
- Share samples of your child's work completed at home, if you think this can contribute to a better understanding of your child. Teachers often have samples of student work to share, but if not, ask to see samples.



## Tips for Parents for Participating in the IPP Process (continued) page 2/2

### At the close of IPP meetings

- Establish mutually agreed upon goals and strategies for your child.
- Find out how you can support your child at home.
- Take notes on recommendations and timelines, such as additional services or assessments.
- Verbally summarize your understanding and interpretation of the decisions made, actions to be taken, timelines, and roles and responsibilities of each participant.
- Give feedback to the people working with your child in areas where you noted positive effort, growth or change.
- Sign the IPP to indicate your agreement with the plan. If you do not agree with the IPP and do not wish to sign, the school has an obligation to document the reasons for your decision and what actions are taken to resolve the issue.
- Ask for a copy of the IPP to refer to at home.
- Decide on the next meeting date.

### After IPP meetings

- Give your child feedback from the meeting.
- Discuss what needs to happen in order to reach the IPP goals. Discuss what your child's role is and also how the school staff and your family will support the plan.

### To review the effectiveness of your child's IPP, consider these questions

- How does the IPP build on my child's strengths?
- How does the IPP address the individual needs of my child?
- Does the IPP focus on key goals for my child?
- How are accommodations tailored to the strengths, areas of need and learning style of my child?
- What is an appropriate balance for my child? (Each student should participate in the regular curriculum as much as possible with accommodations to support success.)
- Does the IPP use more than one source of assessment data to determine strengths and areas of need?
- Does my child have social and behaviour needs that should be addressed in the IPP?
- How does the IPP address planning for transition?
- If there are several teachers responsible for my child's education program, are there procedures for all of them to have access to the IPP so they can use it to plan instruction, monitor progress, and contribute to evaluating and changing goals and objectives?
- Does the IPP use a number of strategies to measure and communicate my child's progress?
- Is progress on IPP goals monitored frequently? If objectives are met, are new ones set? If my child is not demonstrating progress, does the team review the program and make changes?

For more information and strategies for participating in your child's education, check out *The Learning Team: A handbook for parents of children with special needs* (2003), [www.education.gov.ab.ca/educationguide/spec-ed/partners](http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/educationguide/spec-ed/partners). This resource is also available for purchase from the Learning Resources Centre at [www.lrc.education.gov.ab.ca](http://www.lrc.education.gov.ab.ca) or 780-427-5775.



Appendix 2-F

## Solution-focused Meetings

Solution-focused meetings can be an effective way to resolve particularly difficult situations, or when it is important to promote communication among all learning team members. Ensuring input from all members of the learning team in an open, honest and respectful manner will contribute to increased commitment to the IPP process by teaching staff, parents and the student.

A solution-focused meeting uses a process such as the following.

1. One member of the learning team agrees to act as the facilitator for the meeting. This individual needs to be positive, attentive, task-oriented, and have the ability to clarify issues and summarize. It is also important that the facilitator help each team member stay on topic and work toward appropriate, practical solutions.
2. The facilitator begins the meeting by inviting the learning team member who initiated the meeting to state clearly and concisely what the concern is. It is important to find out specifically what the team member wants to happen as a result of this meeting.
3. The team members ask questions to clear up any uncertainties they may have as to exactly what the issue is or what the related circumstances are. The facilitator may need to encourage team members to look for factors that appear to trigger or contribute to the problem, and to identify and analyze conditions that seem to alleviate the problem. As part of this analysis, team members may also identify the strengths of the student and available resources.
4. Once the problem or issue is clearly defined, the learning team uses a round table brainstorming session to generate suggestions for how the problem may be solved. All ideas are recorded on chart paper. It is important at this stage of the process to let ideas flow freely and not to comment directly on any one idea.
5. The facilitator and the referring teacher review the strategies together and then rate each suggestion by assigning a number value to it.  
For example:
  - 1 = an idea or strategy that the teacher and/or parent wants to try
  - 2 = an idea or strategy that has merit, but is not a priority
  - 3 = an idea or strategy that has already been tried and didn't seem to resolve the issue
  - 4 = an idea or strategy not immediately practical at this time.
6. The learning team develops an action plan for each strategy selected, including materials and resources required, persons responsible, and dates for follow-up and review.
7. The facilitator closes the meeting by thanking everyone and asking for feedback on the process. The team generally agrees to meet for a progress review in four to six weeks.

Adapted with permission from Gordon L. Porter et al., "Problem Solving Teams: A Thirty-Minute Peer-Helping Model," in Gordon L. Porter and Diane Richler (eds.), *Changing Canadian Schools: Perspectives on Disability and Inclusion* (North York, ON: The Roeher Institute, 1991), pp. 224–228.



Appendix 2-F

## Sample Planner for Solution-focused Meeting

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Referring learning team member \_\_\_\_\_

Learning team members participating in meeting


Student name \_\_\_\_\_

A. Key concern

---



---



---

B. What we would like to see happen/change

---



---



---

C. Description of student's strengths and priority areas of need

Strengths	Areas of need	Other resources

D. Potential strategies

What can make this happen?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> </ul>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------

E. Follow-up meeting \_\_\_\_\_



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## INDEX

### A

#### Aboriginal students

resources for parents of, 9

#### accommodations and strategies

parental involvement strategies, 3

(See also *Chapter 6: Selecting Accommodations and Strategies*)

#### assessments

parental consent for, 2

parental consent form (template), 13

(See also *Chapter 5: Using Classroom Assessment to Support the IPP Process*)

#### assistive technology

(See *Chapter 9: Infusing Assistive Technology for Learning into the IPP Process*)

### B

#### bibliography and resources, 6–9, 23–24

### C

#### conflict management

about strategies for, 7–8

solution-focused meetings for (template), 21–22

#### consent by parents

elements of, 2

permission form for assessments (template), 13

### E

#### early childhood students

(See *Chapter 10: Getting Off to a Good Start in Early Childhood Services*)

### G

#### gifted students

resources for parents of, 9

(See also *Chapter 11: Planning for Students Who are Gifted*)

#### goals and objectives

about parental involvement strategies, 1–3, 7

family goal setting (template), 15–18

MAPS questions for parents on (template), 3, 14

meeting planner to identify, 22

parent survey of (template), 12

(See also *Chapter 7: Making Goals Meaningful, Measurable and Manageable*)

**H**

*A Handbook for Aboriginal Parents*, 9

**I**

**individualized program plans (IPPs)**

planning process for, 1–4

(See also *Chapter 1: Working Through the IPP Process*)

**information sessions for parents**, 6–7

**J**

*The Journey: A handbook for parents of children who are gifted and talented*, 9

**junior and senior high students**

(See *Chapter 12: Promising Practices for Junior and Senior High School*)

**L**

**learning team**

about planning for IPPs by, 1–4

meetings of (See meetings of learning team)

roles in parental involvement, 5–6

*The Learning Team*, 8

**M**

**MAPS**, 3, 14

**meetings of learning team**

about strategies for effective, 5–8

conflict management planner (template), 21–22

conflict management strategies, 7–8, 21

MAPS questions for parents (template), 3, 14

parent survey for (template), 12

tipsheet for parents on (handout), 19–20

**N**

**needs and strengths**

about parent identification of, 1–2, 7

family goal setting (template), 15–18

MAPS questions for parents on (template), 3, 14

meeting planner to identify, 22

parent survey of (template), 12

parental involvement strategies, 1–2

teacher identification of, 5

**P**

**parental involvement in IPP process**

about involvement in planning process, 1–5

about strategies for, 5–8

conflict management planner (template), 21–22

conflict management strategies, 7–8, 21

family goal setting (template), 15–18  
 informed consent by, 2  
 informed consent form (template), 13  
 MAPS questions for parents (template), 3, 14  
 meetings with learning team (*See* meetings of learning team)  
 questions from parents, 5–6  
 resources for parents, 6–9  
 survey of parents (template), 12

*The Parent Advantage*, 9

**program specialists**

assessments by, 2

**R**

**resources for parents**, 6–9

**reviews of IPPs**

about parental involvement in, 3–4  
 meetings for (*See* meetings of learning team)

**S**

**school jurisdictions**

roles in IPPs, 7

*Standards for Special Education*, 1

**strengths** (*See* needs and strengths)

**students**

MAPS questions for parents about (template), 3, 14  
 (*See also Chapter 3: Supporting Student Participation*)

**support services**

parent consent for, 2  
 parent consent for (template), 13  
 (*See also Chapter 4: Creating a Network of Support*)

**T**

**teachers**

roles in parental involvement, 5–6  
 (*See also* meetings of learning team)

**transition plans**

parental involvement in, 4  
 (*See also Chapter 8: Planning for Transitions*)

**Y**

**year-end summary**

parental involvement in, 3–4





Building the  
Learning Team

Chapter 3

# Supporting Student Participation

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introducing the IPP Process .....	1
Sample strategies for introducing the IPP process .....	2
Encouraging Participation in the IPP Process .....	3
Identifying strengths and areas of need .....	3
Setting the direction .....	4
Creating a plan .....	4
Implementing the plan .....	5
Reviewing and revising .....	6
Planning for transition .....	6
Self-advocacy .....	7
Sample strategies for involving students in IPP meetings ....	7
Sample strategies for building self-advocacy skills .....	9
Appendices .....	11
3-A K–W–L+ .....	12
3-B Essential IPP Information .....	13
3-C Know Your Own Strengths Inventory .....	14
3-D Uncover Your Learning Challenges Inventory .....	15
3-E Knowing My Strengths and Challenges .....	17
3-F Self-advocacy Checklist for Elementary/Junior High School .....	18
3-G Goal-setting Organizer .....	19
3-H Sample IPP Report-writing Template .....	20
3-I SHARE Strategy .....	21
3-J Sample Student IPP Meeting Guide .....	22
3-K Be Your Own Self-advocate .....	23
3-L Asking for Help Ticket .....	24
3-M Be a Problem Solver .....	25
3-N Tips for Parents on Helping Their Children Develop Self-advocacy Skills .....	26
Bibliography .....	27
Index .....	29



## Chapter 3

# Supporting Student Participation



There are many benefits to involving students in their own IPP process. Active student participation can:

- give the learning team insight into student needs, strengths, goals, preferences and dreams as they set direction, create and implement a plan, review and revise the IPP, and plan for transitions
- help students to better understand and articulate their individual strengths and areas of need
- increase student understanding of how accommodations can support learning
- lay the groundwork for building self-advocacy skills
- increase student commitment to IPP goals and action plans, and sense of personal accountability for learning
- increase the willingness of parents to be actively involved in their child's IPP process, which results in the sharing of useful information and insights, and more opportunities for parents to support their child's IPP goals and objectives at home and in the community.

Active participation can range from attending part of the planning meeting to preparing agendas, taking full responsibility for chairing meetings and providing major input into identification of strengths, areas of need, accommodations, goals and objectives. The level of a student's involvement will vary depending on his or her age, developmental level, abilities and motivation, but should increase each year.

For more information

This chapter provides sample strategies for supporting student participation in the IPP process. Additional strategies to support student involvement are contained in a number of other chapters in this resource, including:

Chapter 2: *Encouraging Parent Involvement*

Chapter 6: *Selecting Accommodations and Strategies*

Chapter 8: *Planning for Transitions*

Chapter 9: *Infusing Assistive Technology for Learning into the IPP Process*

Chapter 12: *Promising Practices for Junior and Senior High School.*

## Introducing the IPP Process

Introducing students to the IPP process is the first step in promoting their participation. To effectively participate in the IPP process, students need to understand:

- their own special learning needs and what this means
- the purpose of the IPP
- the benefits of having an IPP
- the steps in the process

- who is on their learning team and what their roles are
- the format and types of information recorded on the IPP document.

### Sample strategies

### Sample strategies for introducing the IPP process

- Begin the discussion by talking about how all people are different, from the way they look, to their talents, likes and dislikes, and even the way they learn.
- Help students identify concrete examples of their learning strengths and describe some of their learning challenges such as reading comprehension, ability to focus or getting ideas down on paper.
- Encourage students to share their thoughts concerning their learning strengths and challenges, and to feel comfortable asking any questions they may have.
- Consider using a graphic organizer such as a K–W–L+ chart to help students organize information and questions about their individual learning needs.

### Appendices

*See Appendix 3-A for a sample K–W–L+ chart.*

- Invite members from advocacy groups or students who have successfully moved on to speak about their own special education needs. Students may feel motivated to ask questions or share concerns with individuals who have similar learning needs.
- Brainstorm types of plans (e.g., house building plans, exercise plans, study plans) and discuss what things plans have in common (e.g., steps for making changes). Discuss how an IPP helps students, parents and teachers plan for a student's success at school.
- Have students draw a picture of themselves and then surround their portraits by drawing or writing the names of people who help them learn. Brainstorm additional people who could be added to their circle. This is their circle of support. Then ask them to underline all of the people who work directly with them in the classroom, plus their parents—this is their learning team.
- Give students a list of essential information that must be included on an IPP. Ask students to check off the types of information that they have contributed, the types of information they would like to contribute to but have not had the opportunity to do so, and the types of information they would like to know more about.

### Appendices

*See Appendix 3-B for a sample list of essential IPP information.*

## Encouraging Participation in the IPP Process

Students can be actively involved in all stages of the IPP process. Some students will be eager and able to participate, while others will need a more gradual introduction. The learning team will need to decide what strategies, supports and types of participation will best suit their students' needs and abilities.

### 1. Identifying strengths and areas of need

A basic foundation of the IPP process is creating opportunities for students to identify and share their perspectives, knowledge and concerns about their strengths and areas of need. Students should also be encouraged to share their interests and goals, and their hopes and dreams for the future. This kind of information can help the learning team develop meaningful future-oriented goals and effective transition planning.

#### Sample strategies

Sample strategies for involving students in identifying strengths and needs

- Discuss how people often take time to get to know others, but seldom spend equal time getting to know themselves. Talk with students about how their involvement in their IPPs will likely teach them a few things about themselves.
- As a class activity, brainstorm strengths that different students in the classroom may demonstrate. Provide a graphic organizer for students to record and organize their reflections on their personal strengths.

#### Appendices

See Appendix 3-C for a sample graphic organizer for recording personal strengths.

- Provide an inventory of potential learning challenges and have students reflect on their own behaviour in relation to these skills. Encourage students to highlight skills they would like to work on this school year. This information can become the focus of an IPP goal.

#### Appendices

See Appendix 3-D for a sample inventory of potential learning challenges.

- Provide students with feedback that helps them understand how they learn best (e.g., "You seem to remember better when you get a chance to see the information"). Help them summarize this information.

#### Appendices

See Appendix 3-E for a sample graphic organizer for summarizing learning strengths and challenges.

- Explain assessment results so students gain an understanding of their abilities and needs, and the implications for their schooling and lives.

## 2. Setting the direction

Students often know best what they need and want to be more successful learners. Depending on their development level and willingness to participate, they can contribute to an understanding of what skills and behaviours need to be part of their annual goals.

### Sample strategy

#### Sample strategy for involving students in setting priorities

- Present students with a number of skills (e.g., reading textbooks, research skills, asking questions in class). Have students decide which ones are most important and which ones they feel most committed to working towards.

## 3. Creating a plan

Creating a plan includes identifying goals, objectives and accommodations for the student. Involving students as much as possible in creating the plan helps to ensure that IPP goals and objectives are relevant, and increases students' commitment to achieving these goals and objectives. Similarly, encouraging students to actively participate in selecting accommodations increases the likelihood that students will use the accommodations effectively and consistently in the classroom. Often students feel self-conscious about doing things differently than peers; involving students in the selection process provides opportunities for them to learn about and become comfortable with these differences.

### Sample strategies

#### Sample strategies for involving students in setting long-term goals

- Introduce the general concept of goal setting by brainstorming successful people and listing examples of goals or accomplishments these individuals have achieved.
- Discuss why goal setting is important. Share research findings that goal setting can increase self-confidence, make people feel happier and decrease stress. Some students may be motivated by learning how successful athletes use goal setting.
- Help students begin to identify their long-term goals by asking them what success would look like or what would make them very proud of themselves in a year's time.
- If appropriate, share assessment data with students to help them link long-term goals to their specific areas of need.
- Help students identify potential roadblocks that they may face as they work towards reaching their goals. Brainstorm potential solutions for each of the roadblocks identified.

### Sample strategies

#### Sample strategies for involving students in identifying accommodations

- Give students a list of potential accommodations and have them use one colour to highlight the accommodations that they know work well for themselves, and another colour to identify things that they would be willing to try.
- Challenge students to identify additional accommodations that are not on the sample list.
- Set up a demonstration to help students understand the purpose of accommodations. Post a sign with medium-sized print on one wall of the classroom. Ask 10 students, including several students who wear glasses, to line up against the opposite wall. Explain that on the signal, each student should walk toward the sign until he or she can read it and then stop. Before you give the signal, ask students who are wearing glasses to take them off. Then, give the signal and wait until students reach a place where they can read the sign. Discuss how different people need to stand in different places. Then, ask students to put their glasses back on and move backward to a place where they can read the sign with their glasses. Discuss how being able to choose where to stand and being able to wear glasses are both types of accommodations in this situation. Use this opportunity to discuss the issue of fairness. Does standing closer or wearing glasses give some students an unfair advantage over other students? How does this relate to other accommodations that students may need in the classroom?

#### 4. Implementing the plan

Students have to be at the heart of implementing their IPP. They need to understand the goals they are working toward and have a clear picture of what success will look like. As much as possible, they also need to learn how to monitor their progress, and identify what is helping and what is not helping them in their learning.

### Sample strategies

#### Sample strategies for involving students in the implementation of their IPP

- Develop checklists and simple tools for students to observe and record their own behaviour. Not only is this efficient, but it creates a deeper understanding of what types of attitudes, behaviours and skills help them be more successful learners.
- Provide direct instruction in specific self-advocacy skills such as asking for what you need, being able to explain your special learning need and suggesting alternate assignments.

### Appendices

*See Appendix 3-F for a sample student checklist of self-advocacy skills.*

- Encourage older students to use their own words and develop their own action plans to set goals and track their progress. These goals could be aligned to their IPP goals or other goals that are especially meaningful to them.

## Appendices

See Appendix 3-G for sample student goal-setting template.

### 5. Reviewing and revising

Contributing to reviewing and revising the IPP, including participating in IPP review meetings, can provide important opportunities for students to reflect on their own learning. Maximizing student involvement in review meetings also provides team members with valuable insight into students' perspectives on the success of their current programming, and ensures that revisions to the IPP are made with this information in mind.

## Sample strategies

Sample strategies for supporting students in reviewing and reporting on their IPP goals

- Schedule a regular time during IPP meetings for students to give a report on their progress towards reaching goals. Help students prepare for the meeting by role-playing what they might say and what kinds of questions they might be asked.
- Encourage students to use agenda books or monthly letter-writing templates to monitor and record their progress. Students can use these writing frames to create a report for their parents about how they are meeting their goals and objectives.

## Appendices

See Appendix 3-H for a sample report-writing template.

### 6. Planning for transition

Students are the most important people in the planning for transition process. They are the ones who have the greatest stake in what is planned and decided, and they need ongoing opportunities to express their opinions, expectations, questions, choices and concerns. As much as possible, students need to be involved in their own transition planning from an early age. As students gain independence and move towards post-secondary settings, this involvement is essential.

## Sample strategies

Sample strategies for involving students in planning for transition

- Provide students with opportunities to gather information so that they are able to make well-informed decisions about future learning environments. Encourage students to visit different school sites, interview individuals and arrange for guest speakers to discuss different options.
- Encourage students to explore and share goals for the future. They may do this by talking about goals, creating a picture or word collage, or writing a journal entry from the perspective of an ideal day in their future lives.
- Help students identify what skills they will require to make their goals a reality. Developing these skills can then become part of the transition plan.



## Self-advocacy

It is essential that students with special education needs understand the importance of speaking up and asking for what they need. For example, many post-secondary institutions report that too few students with special education needs take advantage of the resources and accommodations available because they lack the skills to advocate on their own behalf. Individuals who know how to ask for what they need have a better chance of receiving it. This is true whether a person is ordering food at a restaurant or attending his or her first day at a post-secondary institution.

There are a number of reasons why students with special education needs may not self-advocate effectively. For example, students may:

- be unable to clearly describe their abilities, areas of need and the conditions that best promote their learning, either because of language difficulties, poor social skills, lack of practice or lack of knowledge of themselves as learners
- not know who to contact to get help, what to ask for or how to best use supports
- not have been directly taught appropriate self-advocacy skills and/or not have someone to coach them through situations where they might need to self-advocate
- have limited confidence in their abilities and as a result, they may be reluctant to ask questions in class or request extra assistance
- be passive in their approach to their education, feeling that their future is beyond their control—this includes relying on their parents and teachers to advocate for them
- be discouraged because they have encountered people who do not understand their special education needs, or why accommodations or assistance may be appropriate.

The first step in building self-advocacy skills is ensuring that students are actively and appropriately involved in IPP meetings from as young an age as possible. Students need to learn how to build relationships with other members of the learning team and articulate their choices during IPP meetings in a clear and respectful manner.

### Sample strategies

### Sample strategies for involving students in IPP meetings

- Teach students strategies for preparing for IPP meetings, such as highlighting portions of the agenda or the IPP that they will share with the team. They can also write out what they would like to say on index cards or graphic organizers.

- Teach specific strategies for participating, such as the SHARE strategy below.  
 Sit up straight (feet on the floor, hands rested on the table).  
 Have a pleasant tone of voice (speak up confidently and politely).  
 Activate your thinking (use the strategies you've learned to help you).  
 Relax (calm yourself down by counting, breathing or visualizing).  
 Engage in eye contact (although you may be reading some of your information, do your best to look at the other people at the meeting as much as possible).

## Appendices

See Appendix 3-I for a template of the SHARE strategy.

- Establish a fail-safe mechanism that students can use if they begin to feel overwhelmed in the meeting. This might be in the form of a subtle gesture that the teacher and student arrange before the meeting which signals the teacher to step in and help.
- Discuss how to handle comments during the meeting that students may not agree with. Teach students to use "I" statements as a constructive way to share their point of view. For instance instead of saying "You don't give me help in your class," students could say "I think that I would do better if I could get more of your time." Discuss how "I-messages" focus on actions and feelings, and do not blame others.
- Use role-playing to rehearse the different components of the IPP meeting and coach students on specific skills such as:
  - greeting people
  - making introductions
  - reviewing the agenda
  - explaining the purpose of the meeting
  - asking for questions or feedback
  - sticking to the agenda
  - keeping track of time
  - summarizing discussions
  - thanking participants.
- Take time to debrief with students after the meeting and review what worked and what the next steps are.

## Appendices

See Appendix 3-J for a sample IPP meeting guide for students.

As students get older, self-advocacy becomes increasingly important. Students with well-developed self-advocacy skills:

- have increased confidence, independence and a greater sense of control over their education
- are able to transfer these skills into career and life environments after high school, and therefore become more successful and independent adults.

Building self-advocacy skills requires both time and a deliberate effort from students and their learning teams.

Sample strategies

Sample strategies for building self-advocacy skills

- Ask students to think about what effective self-advocacy looks like, sounds like and feels like. These ideas can be recorded in a table like the following.

Looks like	Sounds like	Feels like
<i>Standing up straight</i>	<i>Calm, polite voice</i>	<i>A little uncomfortable</i>

- Explicitly teach students specific skills needed for self-advocacy, such as asking for what they need.

Appendices

*See Appendix 3-K for a student tip sheet on self-advocacy skills.*

- Recognize that some students may initially be reluctant or uncomfortable approaching teachers for help. Consider establishing a regular check-in time (e.g., five minutes after class once a week) or providing a communication tool that students can use to initiate contact.

Appendices

*See Appendix 3-L for a sample template students can use to ask for help from teachers.*

- Teach students strategies to monitor their own learning. This is an important first step in being able to identify and describe the kinds of adaptations, accommodations and strategies that will help them be successful in class as well as the workplace.
- Create opportunities for students to experience new and challenging things. Students learn skills for requesting assistance and using positive strategies when they encounter problems or unfamiliar situations.

Appendices

*See Appendix 3-M for a sample tip sheet for students on problem solving.*

- Encourage students to think of advocacy as a “work in progress.” Each experience improves their communication and collaboration skills. Provide opportunities for students to reflect on the self-advocacy skills they are developing throughout the school year.
- Discuss the importance of students recognizing their limitations and seeking support as required. Stress that there are others who can help if students ask.
- Encourage students to be patient. Explain that the learning team takes students’ input very seriously, and will try to make changes to help them, but sometimes finding the information or assistance they need takes time.
- Encourage students to listen to and consider the perspectives of others. Discuss why it is important to build understanding and relationships.
- Help students to celebrate their successes. Increasing students’ self-confidence can help them be better self-advocates.

- Ensure that parents understand the importance of self-advocacy and know strategies they can use to support their child's self-advocacy skills outside of school.

Appendices

*See Appendix 3-N for sample strategies that parents can use to help their children become strong self-advocates.*

## Appendices



These tools are available in PDF format at [www.education.gov.ab.ca/k\\_12/special\\_needs/resource.asp](http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/k_12/special_needs/resource.asp) and on the CD-ROM packaged with the print version of this resource.

## Supporting Student Participation

The purpose of these sample tools is to enrich the IPP process. These tools should be used selectively and can be adapted to best meet the needs of individual students. Many of these tools will be used informally as part of the IPP development process and not as products for the student's permanent school record.

- 3-A K-W-L+
- 3-B Essential IPP Information
- 3-C Know Your Own Strengths Inventory
- 3-D Uncover Your Learning Challenges Inventory
- 3-E Knowing My Strengths and Challenges
- 3-F Self-advocacy Checklist for Elementary/Middle School
- 3-G Goal-setting Organizer
- 3-H Sample IPP Report-writing Template
- 3-I SHARE Strategy
- 3-J Sample Student IPP Meeting Guide
- 3-K Be Your Own Self-advocate
- 3-L Asking for Help Ticket
- 3-M Be a Problem-solver
- 3-N Tips for Parents on Helping Their Children Develop Self-advocacy Skills



## K-W-L+

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>K</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">What I <u>K</u>now about my special learning needs</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>W</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">What I <u>W</u>ant to know about my special learning needs</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>L</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">What I <u>L</u>earned about my special learning needs</p>

+

Why is finding out more about my special learning needs important?  
How will I use this information?



## Essential IPP Information

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

	<i>I contributed information to this part of my IPP</i>	<i>I would like to contribute information to this part of my IPP</i>	<i>I need to learn more about this kind of information</i>
Assessment information about my learning			
My current level of performance and achievement			
My strengths and areas of need			
My goals and objectives			
How we'll evaluate my progress			
Other services I need, including health-related services			
Accommodations			
Medical information			
Review of progress at reporting periods			
Transition plans			
Year-end summary			
How my parents are participating in my IPP process			



# Know Your Own Strengths Inventory

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

A. List four successful experiences you have had in the last 12 months:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

B. List four everyday things you do well:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

C. List two things you could teach someone else:

- \_\_\_\_\_

- \_\_\_\_\_

D. List 10 positive words to describe yourself:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

E. List two things that really matter to you:

- \_\_\_\_\_

- \_\_\_\_\_

F. List two things you can do for yourself that will always make you feel good:

- \_\_\_\_\_

- \_\_\_\_\_

G. List two people who you can count on for help and support:

- \_\_\_\_\_

- \_\_\_\_\_

From Alberta Learning, *Make School Work for You: A Resource for Junior and Senior High Students Who Want to be More Successful Learners* (Edmonton, AB: Alberta Learning, 2001), p. 84.





## Uncover Your Learning Challenges Inventory

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Not yet
1. I come to school every day.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I come to class on time.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I come to class with the materials I need.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I come to class prepared, e.g., textbook read, assignments complete.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. I leave my worries outside the classroom door.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. I can follow written directions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. I can follow spoken directions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. I understand the new ideas the teacher presents.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. I can focus my attention in class.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. I contribute to class discussions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. I take accurate and detailed notes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. My notebooks are organized and complete.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. I am clear and concise when writing.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. My written work is accurate, legible and organized.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. I finish assignments within time limits.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. I know when and who to ask for help.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. I can sit still for long periods of time.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. I do not distract or chat with others.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. I remain calm and focused during tests.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. I do well on tests.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

From Alberta Learning, *Make School Work for You: A Resource for Junior and Senior High Students Who Want to be More Successful Learners* (Edmonton, AB: Alberta Learning, 2001), pp. 82–83.



## Uncover Your Learning Challenges Inventory (continued) page 2/2

A. To get more feedback about my in-class behaviour, I could talk with:

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B. Do teachers ever mention a specific in-class behaviour to you? For example, “Don’t chat with your neighbours” or “You need to bring a pencil everyday.” Write these comments down even if you don’t like them or agree with them—there may be helpful information in this feedback.

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Appendix 3-E

# Knowing My Strengths and Challenges

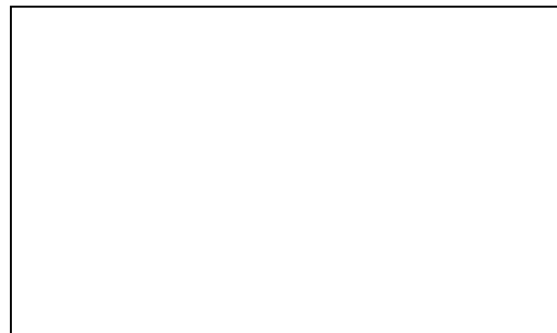
Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Learning Strengths	Learning Challenges

List five things you are good at doing outside of school and draw a picture in the box of one of these strengths.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_





## Self-advocacy Checklist for Elementary/Junior High School

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

- I know what kind of special learning needs I have.
- I can describe my special learning needs to my teacher.
- I attend my IPP meetings.
- I let people know what I am thinking at my IPP meetings.
- I ask for help when I need it.
- I ask questions in class.
- I have started to take on more difficult tasks in school.
- I hand in all my homework on time.
- I am proud of myself and don't let others tease me.
- My calendar, binder and notebooks are organized.
- I have learned new ways to study for tests.
- I make an effort to build good friendships.
- I have a tutor for the subject(s) that I find difficult.
- I have gone to my senior high school and talked to my teachers.
- I am learning new strategies and using accommodations.
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Adapted with permission from Howard Eaton and Leslie Coull, *Transitions to High School: Self-Advocacy Handbook for Students with Learning Disabilities and/or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder* (Vancouver, BC: Eaton Coull Learning Group, Ltd., www.eclg.com, 2000), p. 57.



## Goal-setting Organizer

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Goal

My goal is to ...

#### Is your goal

- Specific?
- Measurable?
- Achievable?
- Realistic?
- Time-based?

### Rationale

I chose this goal because ...

### Action plan

To reach this goal I will ...

### Measurement

How will I know if I am successful?

### Evaluation

What would I do differently in the future?

From Alberta Learning, *Make School Work for You: A Resource for Junior and Senior High Students Who Want to be More Successful Learners* (Edmonton, AB: Alberta Learning, 2001), p. 87.



# Sample IPP Report-writing Template

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

My progress on my IPP goals for the month of \_\_\_\_\_

### Working on my reading goals

1. The strategy I have used the most this month is \_\_\_\_\_
2. I use it when \_\_\_\_\_
3. My novel study is \_\_\_\_\_
4. The best part of the novel is \_\_\_\_\_
5. I completed \_\_\_\_\_ pages for home reading this month.

### Working on my math goals

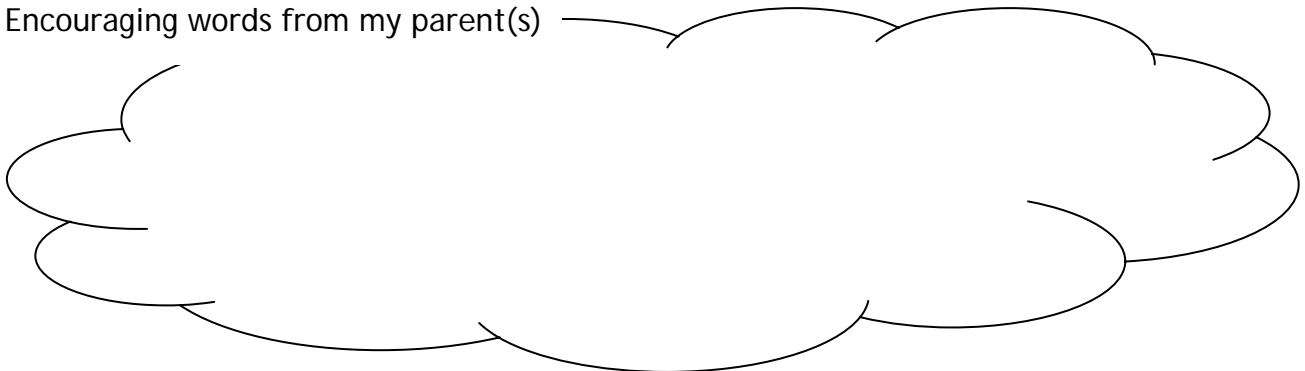
1. This month in math we worked on \_\_\_\_\_
2. I am getting better at \_\_\_\_\_
3. I still need more practice \_\_\_\_\_
4. Unit test mark \_\_\_\_\_

### Working on my getting along with others goals

1. This month's recesses were \_\_\_\_\_  
because \_\_\_\_\_
2. I am most proud that I \_\_\_\_\_
3. Next month I want to get better at \_\_\_\_\_
4. To do this, I will \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Encouraging words from my parent(s)





Appendix 3-I

## SHARE Strategy

Use the following strategy to help remind yourself of what you need to do during IPP meetings.

**S**it up straight (feet on the floor, hands rested on the table).

**H**ave a pleasant tone of voice (speak up confidently and politely).

**A**ctivate your thinking (use the strategies you've learned to help you).

**R**elax (calm yourself down by counting, breathing or visualizing).

**E**ngage in eye contact (although you may be reading some of your information, do your best to look at the other people at the meeting as much as possible).



## Sample Student IPP Meeting Guide

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Before the meeting

- Write and distribute letters of invitation to members of your learning team.
- Create name cards for those attending the meeting.

### During the meeting

- Greet everyone and thank them for attending the meeting.
- Explain the purpose of the meeting.
- Explain your special learning needs.
- Tell why it's important that YOU be involved in your own IPP process.
- Share strengths and challenges listed in the IPP.
- Share medical information that affects your learning.
- Explain types of services you may be receiving.
- Review what the assessment data says about your learning.
- Tell how you will evaluate your progress.
- Share what classroom accommodations work for you.
- Share long-term goals and objectives.
- Discuss your transition plans.
- State when the next IPP review will take place.
- Ask if there are any questions and/or comments.
- Thank everyone for attending.

### After the meeting

- Write thank-you letters to members of your learning team.





## Be Your Own Self-advocate

Being a self-advocate means that there are times when you need to ask for things, such as an alternate assignment, an extension on a deadline or notes from a class you missed. No matter what you're asking for, let the person know that you have thought about the situation and are prepared to contribute to the solution.

By approaching people with a solution, you let them know that you are taking responsibility for your situation and that you don't expect them to solve the problem for you. Be flexible. You may need to negotiate a solution that is acceptable to everyone involved.



When you need something changed in the classroom, it's your responsibility to bring it to the attention of your teacher. Plan and practise what you want to say. Always go with a solution and a positive attitude.

1. State the problem and give an example.
2. Let people know you are working on this problem (so they don't think you're trying to avoid work or are not trying hard enough).
3. Briefly explain your solution to the problem.
4. Ask for their cooperation or permission for this accommodation (solution).

"I am working hard to improve my reading skills but I often misread exam questions. My understanding greatly improves when someone else reads the questions to me. One of the peer tutors would be willing to tape the test questions for me. Would you be willing to give this a try?"

"I work really hard to spell correctly but I need to use an electronic spell checker. I always have one with me in class. Is it okay for me to use it on tests?"

"I need extra time to show all that I know on a test. If I could have an extra half hour to finish the social studies test, it would be a better reflection of what I know. I'd be willing to stay through the lunch hour to do this."



From Alberta Learning, *Make School Work for You: A Resource for Junior and Senior High Students Who Want to be More Successful Learners* (Edmonton, AB: Alberta Learning, 2001), pp. 5, 70.



## Asking for Help Ticket



Dear \_\_\_\_\_,  
(teacher's name)

These are the things that I am having difficulty with:

- understanding my textbook
- knowing what my homework is
- getting my homework done
- listening in class
- taking notes
- passing tests
- completing assignments
- other \_\_\_\_\_

Could we please meet to discuss possible strategies?

Two meeting times that work for me \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Student signature: \_\_\_\_\_



Appendix 3-M

## Be a Problem Solver

Suppose you have a problem with a class or teacher and you don't know quite how to approach the teacher. Take charge one step at a time.

- Know what you want to ask or discuss. Write it on paper if necessary.
- Rehearse your approach and questions or statements in your head and out loud.
- Find a time when the teacher is not busy and is not in a hurry. If necessary, set up an appointment.
- Arrive a minute or two early or be prepared to stay after class.
- Begin with a positive statement. For example, "I'm sincerely interested in learning the information your class offers."
- Then, clearly state what you want or need. For example, "Lately I'm having a hard time understanding and keeping up, and I'm looking for ways to help myself."
- Actively listen to what the teacher suggests. Take notes if necessary.
- Thank the teacher and assure him or her that you will try to put the suggestions into practice.
- Tell the teacher that you will get in touch in two weeks (or an appropriate time) to review your progress.
- Find ways to demonstrate your interest in class. Take part in discussions. Ask thoughtful questions and try to use the teacher's suggestions.
- **MOST OF ALL ...** be positive, courteous, considerate, willing to see the other side and willing to try.

Adapted from *Learning to Learn: Strengthening Study Skills and Brain Power*, IP# 301-4, Copyright 2004 by Incentive Publications Inc., 2400 Crestmoor Road, Suite 211, Nashville, TN 37215, p. 229. Used by permission. Photocopying privileges for use by teachers/students in ECS-Grade 12 only.



## Tips for Parents on Helping Their Children Develop Self-advocacy Skills

Sample strategies that parents can use to help their children become strong self-advocates

- Talk with your child about his or her special education needs and what this means for learning.
- Provide specific feedback that helps your child understand how he or she learns best, such as “You seem to remember better when you get a chance to see the information.”
- Explain assessment results so that your child understands his or her abilities and needs, and the implications for schooling and life.
- Stress that your child is not alone with his or her difficulties. Parents, grandparents, siblings and school staff can all help with learning.
- Describe the assistance that is available to your child in a concrete, realistic, positive manner.
- Discuss ideas for handling possible teasing or resolving other social issues with peers.
- Role-play ways to handle difficult situations at school.
- Seek resources for support and information. Assist your child, as he or she matures, to access these resources and become a self-advocate for his or her own education needs.
- Encourage your child to be an active participant in the learning team by participating in IPP conferences and setting realistic goals as he or she progresses in school.
- Introduce your child to books that deal with challenges similar to those he or she faces. Children’s literature can illustrate human relationships, conditions and situations in a rich and affecting way. Books afford children the opportunity to make connections between the events and characters in the stories, and their own lives. This often lessens their sense of loneliness, confusion or isolation. Wisdom gained through reading and being read to can be applied in children’s own lives.

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## INDEX

## A

**accommodations and strategies**

- student selection of, 4–5
- student self-advocacy for (handout), 23
- (See also *Chapter 6: Selecting Accommodations and Strategies*)

**assessments**

- of goals and objectives (template), 19
- student self-advocacy on (handout), 23
- (See also *Chapter 5: Using Classroom Assessment to Support the IPP Process*)

**assistive technology for learning (ATL)**

- student self-advocacy for (handout), 23
- (See also *Chapter 9: Infusing Assistive Technology for Learning into the IPP Process*)

## B

**behaviour, in-class**

- student inventory of, 3–4
- student inventory of (template), 16

**bibliography, 27**

## E

**early childhood students**

- (See *Chapter 10: Getting Off to a Good Start in Early Childhood Services*)

**essential IPP information (checklist), 13**

## G

**gifted students**

- (See *Chapter 11: Planning for Students Who are Gifted*)

**goals and objectives**

- about student identification of, 4–5
- student goal-setting (template), 19
- student review of (template), 20
- (See also *Chapter 7: Making Goals Meaningful, Measurable and Manageable*)

## I

**individualized program plans (IPPs)**

- introducing students to, 1–2
- involving students in planning, 3–6
- student information in (checklist), 13
- (See also *Chapter 1: Working Through the IPP Process*)

**J****junior and senior high students**

self-advocacy by (checklist), 18

(See also *Chapter 12: Promising Practices for Junior and Senior High School*)

**K****K-W-L+ chart**

to introduce IPPs (template), 2, 12

**M****mathematics skills**

student review of goals (template), 20

**meetings with learning team**

about student participation in, 7–8

student meeting guide (checklist), 22

student tips on SHARE strategy, 8

student tips on SHARE strategy (handout), 21

**N****needs and strengths**

about student identification of, 3–4

challenges inventory (checklist), 15–16

challenges inventory (template), 3

needs organizer using K-W-L+ (template), 2, 12

strengths and challenges organizer (template), 17

strengths inventory (template), 3, 14

**P****parental involvement in IPPs**

about parent support for student involvement, 1

encouragement in student report on goals (template), 20

support for student self-advocacy, 7

support for student self-advocacy (handout), 10, 26

(See also *Chapter 2: Encouraging Parent Involvement*)

**planning process for IPPs**

about student involvement in, 3–6

**problem solving**

strategies for students (handout), 25

**R****reading skills**

student review of goals (template), 20

**reviews of IPPs**

about student participation in, 6

student progress report (template), 20

**role-playing**

for social skills, 8



**S****self-advocacy by students**

- about strategies for, 5, 7–10
- asking for help ticket (template), 24
- parent tipsheet on (handout), 10, 26
- strategies and tips (handout), 23
- strategies for problem solving (handout), 25
- strategies for students (checklist), 18

**SHARE strategy (handout), 8, 21****social skills**

- problem-solving strategies (handout), 25
- SHARE strategy, 8
- SHARE strategy (handout), 21
- student challenges inventory (checklist), 15–16
- student guide for meetings (checklist), 22
- student review of goals (template), 20
- (*See also* meetings with learning team; self-advocacy)

**strengths** (*See* needs and strengths)**student involvement in IPPs**

- about introducing IPPs to students, 1–2
- about participation in IPP planning, 3–6
- essential IPP information (checklist), 13
- meetings with learning team (*See* meetings with learning team)
- parent support for (*See* parental involvement in IPPs)
- self-advocacy (*See* self-advocacy by students)

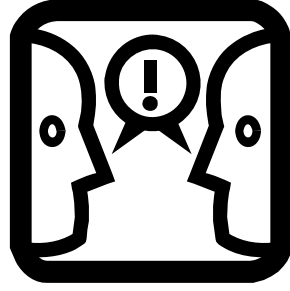
**support services**

- (*See Chapter 4: Creating a Network of Support*)

**T****transition plans**

- about student participation in, 6
- (*See also Chapter 8: Planning for Transitions*)





## Building the Learning Team

### Chapter 4

# Creating a Network of Support

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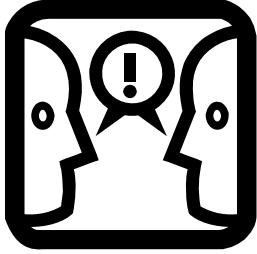
## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Supporting the Learning Team .....	1
School principal .....	1
Classroom teachers .....	2
Teacher assistants .....	2
Other school staff .....	3
Parents .....	3
Specialists .....	3
Health-related services .....	3
Community members .....	4
Facilitating Collaboration .....	4
Sample strategies for facilitating collaboration .....	4
Sample strategies for facilitating effective IPP meetings .....	5
Sample strategies for safeguarding a collaborative process in IPP meetings .....	6
Expanding Your Network .....	7
Community agencies and groups .....	7
Learning opportunities .....	7
Appendices .....	9
4-A Sample Working Agreement for Collaboration .....	10
4-B Sample Strategies for Resolving Impasses .....	11
Bibliography .....	13
Index .....	15



## Chapter 4

# Creating a Network of Support



Collaboration is key to successful planning and implementation of the individualized program planning process. Collaborative teaming can take place at many levels. In addition to teachers, parents and the student, a number of other individuals may be involved in developing and implementing an IPP. The school principal must play an administrative role. Teacher assistants, other school personnel, specialists, health-service providers and community members may also be part of the learning team.

Given that there are constraints on time and resources in schools, it is important to consider the benefits of collaboration, including:

- shared expertise and diverse perspectives—drawing on the knowledge of all team members results in increased understanding and information about:
  - the student (e.g., classroom observations, relationships with peers, developmental stages, test results, normative information, speech and language development)
  - ways to address a broad range of student needs
  - instructional strategies available for team members
- shared decision making—involving all team members in decision making creates greater support for the team and the plan
- shared responsibility—ensuring the team members are jointly responsible for implementing the plan they developed increases buy-in, maximizes instructional time through teaming and organization of personnel and resources, and increases communication and consistency in implementing the IPP.

## Supporting the Learning Team

The following individuals may be part of the learning team at various stages of developing and implementing a student's IPP.

### School principal

Under the *Standards for Special Education, Amended January 2004*, the principal is responsible for special education programming in the school.

The role of the school principal includes:

- ensuring that an IPP is developed, implemented, monitored and evaluated for each student identified as having a special education need
- identifying teachers whose responsibility it is to coordinate, develop, implement, monitor and evaluate student IPPs
- ensuring the school has a process and school-based team to provide consultation, planning and problem solving related to programming for students with special education needs
- ensuring that support personnel, appropriate materials and inservice training are provided as required given the needs of the student.

## Classroom teachers

The role of the classroom teacher is to:

- be accountable for, and develop, plan, implement, monitor and evaluate the IPP, in collaboration with other team members
- assess students' strengths and areas of need through observation, formal and informal assessment, and explain results to other team members
- develop strategies for incorporating goals and objectives into existing classroom activities and routines
- monitor and regularly report on the student's progress, and adapt or modify activities, routines, instructional strategies or objectives, as necessary
- provide teacher assistants with ongoing direction and monitoring regarding program implementation
- ensure that the IPP includes all essential elements required by Alberta Education
- maintain ongoing communication and collaboration with other members of the learning team
- seek guidance and feedback from the learning team, as needed.

## Teacher assistants

Teacher assistants provide supportive and complementary services in the classroom in order to enhance the learning experiences of students, especially those with special education needs.

Generally, teacher assistants are assigned to a program or classroom rather than to an individual student. Assignments may change depending on students' needs, the resources available and other needs in the school or classroom.

Teacher assistants receive all directions and assigned responsibilities from the teacher or principal. Teachers are ultimately responsible for planning, implementing and assessing students' programs. Some roles and responsibilities delegated to teacher assistants could include:

- providing individual support under the direction of the teacher and based on the objectives and goals outlined in the student's IPP
- working with a small group of students to reinforce a concept or skill that the teacher has previously taught to the group
- providing personal care, such as toileting, personal hygiene, dressing or checking the operation of assistive equipment
- assisting with material preparation
- providing information to the teacher about a student's academic performance, behaviour, growth and needs
- supervising students beyond the classroom, such as on the playground or at work-experience sites
- providing behaviour support by reinforcing appropriate behaviour consistent with the teacher's expectations.



### Other school staff

There may be a number of other school staff who support both the student with special education needs and/or the classroom teacher. They could include special education coordinators, resource room teachers and counsellors. Depending on the organization of the school, these individuals could be involved in one or more stages of the IPP process and their level of support could range from daily interaction to an infrequent as-needed consultation.

Depending on the goals identified in the IPP, other school staff such as lunchroom supervisors or bus drivers may play a supporting role in ensuring goals are achieved across a range of situations. For example, a student experiencing social difficulties will need consistent support across the school day and across school environments. If a student is working on a goal such as improving self-control, it is essential that all adults working with the student understand and support the strategies, reinforcement systems and reporting process related to this goal.

### Parents

The role of parents is to:

- advocate for their child's best interests, and communicate their views regarding programming and goals to other team members
- contribute to the direction and focus of the IPP, in collaboration with other team members
- participate in their child's learning team to ensure that selected goals and objectives are reinforced across the child's environments (e.g., daycare, respite, home)
- provide ongoing feedback about the generalization of skills to the home and community environments
- maintain ongoing communication and collaboration with the classroom teacher and other team members
- seek guidance from the learning team, as needed.

### Specialists

Many students with special education needs will require access to a specialist at some point in the IPP process. Depending on the needs of the student, these specialists could include occupational therapists, physical therapists, speech-language pathologists, psychologists, medical doctors, psychiatrists, social workers, behavioural specialists and other health-related professionals. These members of the learning team can help diagnose and provide support for meeting a variety of health and social-emotional needs.

### Health-related services

School jurisdictions make provisions for students to have access to the coordinated support services (including health-related services) they require to meet individualized programming goals. Each school jurisdiction, in partnership with other regional service providers, has its own local procedures for the delivery of these services. The school principal will be able to provide information about coordinated health services.

## Community members

Any individuals in the community who have substantial contact with the student may have an informal role in supporting the student's programming. Coaches, daycare workers, family support workers and other community members may be able to provide information about the student's behaviour in different contexts, and/or contribute to reaching the student's IPP goals in these contexts.

Some students with special education needs may benefit from the individual attention of a mentor. A mentor is an adult or older student who commits to working regularly with a student for a certain period of time, usually one to three hours per week. Mentors who work with a student during school hours look for ways to support that student's classroom learning. Mentors work under the direction of the teacher. They take a personal interest in the student's academic and social development, introduce him or her to new experiences, and act as role models. Mentors are usually volunteers and are often recruited, trained and supported through community agencies, such as Big Brothers or Big Sisters. Mentors can be informal members of the learning team.

## Facilitating Collaboration

A problem-solving approach is often an important component of effective collaboration. The problem-solving cycle begins with identifying and clarifying the problem. Solutions are generated and evaluated, and a plan of action is made. A timeline for implementation and a method for evaluating the plan are established. It is important to get back together to evaluate the plan. Is it working? If necessary, the problem-solving cycle is revisited.

Sample strategies

For more information

### Sample strategies for facilitating collaboration

- Emphasize prereferral activities (opportunities for teachers to raise concerns about a student's progress and engage in problem solving) before there is a formal referral. Provide opportunities for every teacher to participate and receive support.
- Involve parents and the student throughout the process. See Chapter 2: *Encouraging Parent Involvement* and Chapter 3: *Supporting Student Participation* for more information and sample strategies.
- Involve administrators. Their support is essential to success. Leadership is needed to develop schoolwide acceptance of shared responsibility for the success of all students in the school. Supportive structures are necessary to organize a systematic process for collaborative program planning and ensure that there is time for collaboration.
- Have flexible membership drawing on all the expertise in the school. Do not limit the collaboration to formal interactions of a designated team. Encourage regular collaborative problem-solving meetings for smaller teams responsible for implementing and monitoring educational plans.

- Allow team-building time. To develop positive team connections, teams need time to work together. Organizational strategies that facilitate time for co-teaching, consultation and meetings will support the development of effective teams. The team will require ongoing communication strategies, such as communication books, e-mail, newsletters, etc.
- Recognize and develop expertise for ongoing problem solving and support. Specialized expertise is not always easily accessible and building capacity is an important aspect of collaboration. Through collaborative teaming to meet the needs of particular students, team members are exposed to new ideas and solutions to problems. Consider expanding the knowledge base of school personnel through a variety of professional development opportunities, such as study groups, newsletters, internal workshops, external workshops and conferences.
- Encourage the following to contribute to the success of collaborative teaming:
  - willingness to share and exchange expertise and resources
  - acceptance of mutual responsibility and accountability for key decisions, as appropriate
  - small working teams
  - clearly established roles and responsibilities
  - all members contribute, all contributions are valued
  - training and supervision for teaching assistants, volunteers and peer tutors
  - procedures for sharing observations and monitoring progress
  - regular time for planning and communication, especially if instruction is provided outside the regular classroom. (Address transition and generalization, links to classroom instruction, common language and cues for the student.)

### Sample strategies

### Sample strategies for facilitating effective IPP meetings<sup>1</sup>

- Ensure that the meeting has a clear purpose or goal, and that roles and responsibilities are clear for tasks occurring before, during and after the meeting.
- Schedule meetings at a time and place that is convenient for all participants.
- Arrange for round table seating in a comfortable space that is free of noise and distractions.
- Talk informally with each participant before the meeting to ensure that all individuals will be able to attend the meeting and remain for the entire time (as far as possible and necessary), and that all participants have what they need to be adequately prepared.
- Review evaluation results in advance and arrange for support in explaining the results to other team members, if necessary.
- Provide or post a written agenda.

1. Adapted from Nicholas R. M. Martin, *A Guide to Collaboration for IEP Teams* (Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co., 2005), pp. 14–16. Adapted by permission of Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

- Ensure that all participants introduce themselves to one another and explain their roles as members of the team.
- Set and agree on a clear process for problem solving and planning, as well as ground rules regarding issues such as interrupting, leaving the meeting and using cell phones.

## Appendices

See Appendix 4-A for a sample working agreement for collaboration.

- Schedule available time and respectfully redirect participants who wander off-track.
- Maintain an atmosphere of mutual respect, where all participants share in and contribute to a common purpose.
- Take short breaks as needed.
- Restate the outcome of the meeting at the end for clarity and any necessary correction.
- Keep a written record of questions and issues to be addressed at a later date.
- Maintain an open-door policy for airing and sharing between meetings.
- Remind team members that information discussed in the meetings is confidential. Assure participants that this information will be shared thoughtfully and respectfully, and within the bounds of confidentiality.
- Ensure the meeting ends on a positive note; thank participants for their time and contributions.

## Sample strategies

Sample strategies for safeguarding a collaborative process in IPP meetings<sup>2</sup>

- Remind the team of its common purpose and interest: the best educational programming for the child.
- Explore perspectives through statements like “You must have good reasons for that; tell us some of them,” “That seems important to you; help us understand why” or “Say some more about that; in what ways would that be helpful?”
- Clarify areas of agreement through statements like “We all want what is best for the child” or “We all want to make good use of our time.”
- Reframe negatives into more neutral statements: “He never follows through” could be rephrased as “You’d want to be able to trust that the plan would really be implemented.”
- Avoid technical terms and acronyms; clarify when necessary so everyone understands.
- Pay attention to nonverbal communication: body language, facial expressions, tones of voice.
- Watch for mental or emotional overload, and ask if you are not sure. Take a break if necessary or ask the person how the group can be most helpful.

2. Adapted from Nicholas R. M. Martin, *A Guide to Collaboration for IEP Teams* (Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co., 2005), p. 38. Adapted by permission of Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

- If unproductive communication styles are demonstrated, support feelings, share the conflict and remind team members of the ground rules.
- Acknowledge and support team members' feelings, including feeling lost, rushed, disrespected or outnumbered.
- Make an agreement to speak up if at any time members have bad feelings that seem to be interfering with working together.
- Know and use strategies for resolving impasses if the team gets stuck.

### Appendices

*See Appendix 4-B for sample strategies for resolving impasses.*

## Expanding Your Network

Teachers working with students with special education needs can increase their knowledge and resources by looking for support not only within the school system but throughout the community-at-large. There is a range of knowledge, advice and help available from other people, agencies and support services in the community. These connections can help dispel feelings of isolation and frustration, and can give teachers opportunities to build their knowledge base as well as share their knowledge and experiences with others.

### Community agencies and groups

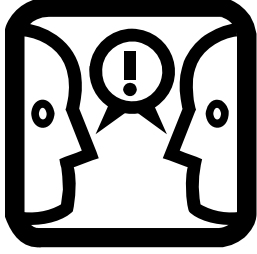
Community agencies can provide a range of support and information. There are many nonprofit organizations that can be found in the phone book or on the Internet whose prime mandate is to support children with special education needs. Many of these organizations offer lending libraries, informational sessions, and liaison and consultation services.

### Learning opportunities

Various organizations and universities offer conferences, symposiums and presentations focusing on children with special education needs. These kinds of events can be valuable opportunities to learn about best practices and research. Consult community agencies and their newsletters, local newspapers or special interest publications for more information. Also consider joining professional organizations for educators working with students with special education needs. These organizations can be a valuable source of support, information and networking opportunities.



## Appendices



These tools are available in PDF format at [www.education.gov.ab.ca/k\\_12/special\\_needs/resource.asp](http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/k_12/special_needs/resource.asp) and on the CD-ROM packaged with the print version of this resource.

## Creating a Network of Support

The purpose of these sample tools is to enrich the IPP process. These tools should be used selectively and can be adapted to best meet the needs of individual students. Many of these tools will be used informally as part of the IPP development process and not as products for the student's permanent school record.

### 4-A Sample Working Agreement for Collaboration

### 4-B Sample Strategies for Resolving Impasses



## Sample Working Agreement for Collaboration

We believe that ...

- everyone has expertise and wisdom
- everyone's voice needs to be heard
- everyone's time is valuable
- individual team members do not have to love a decision but they need to be able to live with it.

We will ...

- listen to understand
- work to find common threads and common ideas
- ask questions that are open and direct
- focus on solid information rather than emotions
- allow time for reflection and questions.

If the team is not able to find common threads and reach a decision that everyone can live with, we will ...

- identify the differences
- discuss reasons for differences
- if possible, identify what would need to change in order for all team members to support the decision.





Appendix 4-B

## Sample Strategies for Resolving Impasses

### Strategy

Admit that the group is at an impasse and invite suggestions.

Encourage participants to verbalize and clarify (without discussion at this point) what they see as obstacles: interests, feelings, expectations, assumptions, perceptions and so on.

Review the decision-making criteria.

Retrace the day's progress to re-establish a positive outlook.

Review the shared risks of leaving the matter unresolved versus the shared benefits of reaching an agreement.

Take a break.

Make agreements about the disagreements. If it seems clear that the impasse cannot be resolved that day, postpone the decision pending further thought and discussion; continue after further evaluation or consultation with other specialists; continue the discussions with a different mix of people or in a different setting; or request mediation.

### Sample Statement

"We seem to be kind of stuck right now. Any suggestions for how we might move forward?"

"Would it make sense to go around the table and just hear from each person what they see as the obstacles to our consensus today?"

"What do you all think would be our best way of approaching this issue? On what basis do you think we should make this decision?"

"May I take a minute to summarize what we have agreed so far?"

"I think we would all like to leave here with a sense of completion and an IPP in place for next year, at least in an initial form. I know none of us want to go away frustrated with the feeling we haven't completed anything. How do other people feel about this?"

"I wonder if a 5-minute stretch break might be a good idea. What do you all think?"

"It seems clear that we are not in agreement about what extended school services are really necessary. What would you think about leaving this part undecided for now and talking more about this at our next meeting?"

Adapted from Nicholas R. M. Martin, *A Guide to Collaboration for IEP Teams* (Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co., 2005), pp. 40–41. Adapted by permission of Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.



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## INDEX

### A

**accommodations and strategies**

(See *Chapter 6: Selecting Accommodations and Strategies*)

**assessments**

(See *Chapter 5: Using Classroom Assessment to Support the IPP Process*)

**assistive technology**

(See *Chapter 9: Infusing Assistive Technology for Learning into the IPP Process*)

### B

**bibliography, 13**

### C

**community members**

role on learning team, 4, 7

### E

**early childhood students**

(See *Chapter 10: Getting Off to a Good Start in Early Childhood Services*)

### G

**gifted students**

(See *Chapter 11: Planning for Students Who are Gifted*)

**goals and objectives**

(See *Chapter 7: Making Goals Meaningful, Measurable and Manageable*)

### H

**health services**

role on learning team, 3–4

### I

**individualized program plans (IPPs)**

about learning team roles, 1–4

learning team collaboration, 1, 4–7

(See also *Chapter 1: Working Through the IPP Process*)

### J

**junior and senior high students**

(See *Chapter 12: Promising Practices for Junior and Senior High School*)

**L****learning team**

- about roles and responsibilities, 1–5
- collaboration benefits and strategies, 1, 4–7
- collaboration strategies (samples), 10–11
- meetings of, 5–7, 10–11

**M****meetings of learning team**

- benefits of collaboration, 1
- strategies for conflict management (handout), 11
- strategies for effective collaboration, 5–7
- strategies for effective collaboration (handout), 10

**P****parents**

- role on learning team, 3
- (See also *Chapter 2: Encouraging Parent Involvement*)

**professional development, 7****program specialists**

- role on learning team, 3

**S****school administrators**

- role on learning team, 1–2, 4

**school staff**

- role on learning team, 3

**special education coordinators**

- role on learning team, 3

***Standards for Special Education***

- principal's role under, 1–2

**students**

- role on learning team, 1, 4
- (See also *Chapter 3: Supporting Student Participation*)

**support services**

- role on learning team, 3–4

**T****teachers**

- role on learning team, 2

**teacher assistants**

- role on learning team, 2

**transition plans**

- (See *Chapter 8: Planning for Transitions*)



Identifying  
Student Needs

Chapter 5

# Using Classroom Assessment to Support the IPP Process

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Administrators	✓
Health-related Professionals	✓
Counsellors	✓
Students	
Parents	
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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Classroom Considerations .....	1
Choosing Assessments .....	2
Observing in the Classroom .....	3
Sample strategies for maximizing the effectiveness of observation in the classroom .....	4
Reviewing Student Samples .....	6
Using Teacher-developed Assessments .....	6
Assessing Reading Skills .....	6
Concepts about print .....	6
Survey of reading attitudes .....	6
Survey of reading strategies .....	7
Sight words .....	7
Running records .....	7
Informal reading inventories .....	8
Observation .....	9
Assessing Writing Skills .....	9
Assessing Spelling Skills .....	10
Assessing Mathematics Skills .....	11
Assessing Learning Strategies and Work Habits .....	11
Assessing Social Skills .....	11
Other Diagnostic Assessments .....	12
Sharing Classroom Assessment Results .....	12
Appendices .....	13
5-A Reading Attitudes Interview .....	14
5-B Reading Strategies Survey .....	15
5-C Observation Guide to Reading .....	17
5-D Narrative Writing—Scoring Criteria .....	18
5-E Getting Along with Others Inventory .....	21
5-F Diagnostic Assessment for Primary Programs .....	23
5-G Commonly-used Published Assessment Instruments .....	26
Bibliography .....	31
Index .....	33



## Chapter 5

# Using Classroom Assessment to Support the IPP Process



Part of the identification process for students with special education needs is specialized assessment that assesses the student's cognitive ability and achievement. While these types of assessments provide data that can be used for identification and placement purposes, they often need to be supplemented with more specific information for making classroom-level instructional or programming decisions, and developing IPP goals. Classroom assessment complements specialized assessment by providing specific data to create an individualized profile of how a student is performing in a variety of contexts.

Effective classroom assessment:

- confirms and clarifies the student's learning strengths and areas of need
- provides specific information for developing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating programming and IPP goals
- can provide *Current Level of Performance* for areas such as reading, writing, spelling, math, social skills, use of learning strategies, time management and work habits
- can provide data for end-of-the-year Grade Level of Achievement reporting (e.g., grades 1–9 language arts, mathematics, social studies and science, and IPP goals related to nongraded curriculum)
- helps the learning team identify appropriate accommodations and supports
- provides information for planning successful transitions.

## Classroom Considerations

Classroom assessment is part of the ongoing teaching-learning process for all students. In addition to conducting the actual assessment, good classroom assessment also involves:

- confirming observations with the student's parents
- identifying environmental factors that may be creating barriers for the student.

There are a number of factors that can affect student performance on assessments which need to be taken into consideration, including distractions, and cultural and linguistic differences. Consider the following guidelines for ensuring that classroom assessments provide basis for sound decision making regarding teaching and learning.

- Conduct assessments in a comfortable, quiet setting at a time when students are physically and mentally prepared to do their best work.
- For measures that will be administered in a large group or whole class setting, take time to ensure that students understand the importance of creating and maintaining a quiet, calm environment so that all students can concentrate.

- Consider what the results of specific assessments mean for individual students. Consider how it compares to similar assessments the student has done. If possible, have the same individual who conducted the assessments interpret the results, and have the same person administer and score each assessment throughout the course of the year.
- Consider the value systems and norms in students' cultures and how this might affect an individual student's performance on a specific type of assessment.
- Recognize the impact of cultural influences on students' responses and test-taking behaviours.
- Where possible, conduct assessments using students' dominant language. Qualified bilingual professionals, when available, are preferable to interpreters.
- Compare information from assessments with information from other sources and observations to gain a more balanced perspective.

## Choosing Assessments

Academic difficulties cannot be identified on the basis of a single test or achievement measure. Similar assessment tools may actually measure very different skills or knowledge. For example, the individual skills being assessed may vary from one particular reading test to the next. One assessment tool may be limited to assessing sight word recognition, another may focus on reading comprehension, and a third may assess several different skill areas in reading.

Furthermore, a student's measured performance may vary widely across tests with different formats that claim to measure the same skills. For example, a student's performance on a multiple-choice measure of spelling may be higher than if the student were required to spell the same words from dictation. Students who are unable to answer content questions on a group achievement test because of poor reading skills may be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of concepts if questions are presented orally. Students who work slowly are penalized by measures with time limits, or where speed or length of response is rewarded. For these reasons, a variety of measures should be used in the assessment process.

Assessment for the development and monitoring of IPP goals generally occurs two or three times per year. To ensure consistency, it is important that the same measure be used for each administration. Some assessment tools have two or more versions that can be alternated.

When choosing classroom assessment measures there are a number of important criteria. Consider the following guidelines.

- Ensure that the measure chosen is consistent with the purpose of the assessment and appropriate for the individual student.

- Ensure that there is congruence between what is being measured and what has been taught.
- Whenever possible, use Canadian versions of achievement measures to increase students' familiarity with the content (e.g., metric units of measure or Canadian events, celebrations and history).
- Consider the test format when choosing assessment tools. Measures vary in the way in which questions are presented and students are required to respond.

School jurisdictions and charter schools will be required to report Grade Level of Achievement (GLA) in grades 1–9 language arts, mathematics, social studies and science. GLA will be reported to Alberta Education as a whole number indicating what grade level a student has achieved. Because students do not learn curricular outcomes in a lock-step manner, norm-referenced achievement tests expressed as grade equivalent scores or decimal numbers (e.g., Grade 3.3) should not be used for GLA reporting.

Some, but not necessarily all, assessments used in the IPP process may also be used in Grade Level of Achievement reporting. For example, certain norm-referenced assessment and decimal scoring may be appropriate to help establish baselines and track growth for some IPP goals but may not be appropriate for Grade Level of Achievement reporting and should never be used as the sole determinant for judging Grade Level of Achievement.

For more information

For more information on this initiative, visit the Alberta Education Web site at [www.education.gov.ab.ca/ipr/GLA/](http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/ipr/GLA/).

## Observing in the Classroom

The teacher's most important assessment strategy is observation and analysis. Everything stems from clear and systematic observation within the classroom (e.g., Are the skills consistently demonstrated? Are inappropriate behaviours consistent? persistent? intense?). The teacher uses observation to maintain an awareness of the uniqueness that individual students bring to the classroom environment and to specific learning tasks. A good observation process allows the student to demonstrate capabilities within an inviting and engaging learning environment.<sup>1</sup>

Observing students in the classroom and other settings can provide valuable information about academic, motor, communication and social skills. To be most useful, conclusions should be drawn from multiple observations made in a number of situations at various times during the day. Having multiple observers can increase the reliability of the information collected and provide a variety of perspectives. For example, it may be helpful to ask an administrator or teacher assistant to come in and observe the student, and add their observations to those of the teacher.

1. Adapted from Ontario Education, *Education for All: The Report of the Expert Panel on Literacy and Numeracy Instruction for Students with Special Education Needs, Kindergarten to Grade 6* (Toronto, ON: Queen's Printer for Ontario, 2005), p. 24. Adapted with permission.

## Sample strategies

Sample strategies for maximizing the effectiveness of observation in the classroom<sup>2</sup>

- Observe students' learning in a continuous, systematic, planned and open manner throughout the school year.
- Obtain descriptive information on a student's learning at a point in time that shows how the student is progressing towards a learning outcome or specific intervention.
- Communicate with the student to encourage him or her to take further risks in the classroom.
- Use observation to encourage greater time on-task, which correlates highly with achievement.
- Repeatedly observe a site-specific inappropriate behaviour or pattern of behaviour to determine whether or not it may be a barrier to learning.
- Determine whether the inappropriate behaviour occurs in a variety of learning settings (e.g., mathematics class at 9:20 a.m. compared with observations made in environmental studies class conducted after lunch).
- Approach the students' learning of a task without bias in terms of personal perceptions of, or reaction to, possible inappropriate behaviours. Be as specific and as objective—nonjudgemental—as possible.
- Know what you want to observe, and design a framework to maximize information that will help enhance student learning. Observations should be factual, and include data that teachers can readily manage and use immediately after the observation period. Limit how many things you observe at the same time.
- Set specific outcome targets in advance. For example, you may choose to observe the frequency of social interaction during a specific group activity.

## Sample strategy

One strategy for classroom assessment is an ecological assessment. This process involves observing and assessing the student's functioning in the classroom and in other environments to learn how different environments or activities affect the student's performance. Consider the following sample questions to help direct an ecological assessment.

- Where does the student experience the most difficulty?
- Where does the student experience the least difficulty?
- What is expected of the student in each environment or activity?
- What differences exist in the physical environment, instructional and assessment methods, materials, staffing ratio, activities, rules and routines where the student has the most and least difficulty?
- What are the implications for instructional planning?
- Are there changes that can be made to the learning environments that will enhance the student's performance?

2. Adapted from Ontario Education, *Education for All: The Report of the Expert Panel on Literacy and Numeracy Instruction for Students with Special Education Needs, Kindergarten to Grade 6* (Toronto, ON: Queen's Printer for Ontario, 2005), p. 25. Adapted with permission.

There are a number of common observational methods, including the following.

- *Anecdotal records*—describing incidents or behaviours, including what occurred before, during and after the incident. Anecdotal records should be as objective as possible. Observers should try to write in concrete, narrative terms without making interpretations about the student’s feelings or motives.
- *Event recording*—tallying the number of times a particular behaviour occurs during a given time period, such as a class period or a school day (e.g., the number of times a student gets out of his or her seat).
- *Duration recording*—recording how much time a student spends demonstrating a behaviour of concern (e.g., talking to others, rocking in desk) or a behaviour to be encouraged (e.g., on-task behaviour). Observers should try to record the duration as precisely as possible.
- *Checklists and rating scales*—checklists typically involve noting whether or not a particular characteristic is present or absent, while rating scales involve noting the degree to which the characteristic is present or how often a specific behaviour occurs. Many checklists and rating scales may be developed locally or found in published resource manuals.

Consider the following types of questions when making observations of inappropriate behaviours.<sup>3</sup>

*How often have I observed a particular behaviour?*

Consider frequency and consistency (e.g., of time and duration) to help determine how much of a barrier a particular off-task or inappropriate behaviour might be.

*Do particular behaviours seem to occur randomly or is there a pattern?*

Consider whether or not the behaviours are observed only during specific tasks or activities, subjects, times of day, days of the week. A pattern of situation-specific observations is different from observations made across situations.

*Are behaviours intense enough that they interfere with learning tasks?*

Consider that students may demonstrate inappropriate behaviour when approaching new tasks. Those who have particular difficulty learning new things will take longer and may need more time to “catch on”; or they may need a different view of approaching the new task before they understand it.

The classroom teacher needs to attain a detailed picture of an individual student’s strengths and needs from observational data and information from clinical reports and other assessments. Teachers need to check their observational data against information gathered from other sources to confirm patterns revealed by observation and assessment.<sup>3</sup> They can then

3. Adapted from Ontario Education, *Education for All: The Report of the Expert Panel on Literacy and Numeracy Instruction for Students with Special Education Needs, Kindergarten to Grade 6* (Toronto, ON: Queen’s Printer for Ontario, 2005), pp. 25–26. Adapted with permission.

further investigate discrepancies, and call in other experts, as needed. This will provide the learning team with starting points for investigating discrepancies and deciding on what additional assessment might be needed.

## Reviewing Student Samples

Teachers often review samples of student work, errors or activities to identify students' strengths and areas of need.

- *Work samples*—including portfolio reviews, writing samples, homework, journals, art projects and completed vocational products.
- *Error analysis*—examination of student responses to determine whether there is a pattern of errors and, if so, what the cause may be. Error analysis is commonly used in mathematics, reading and spelling.
- *Activity samples*—including presentations, performance during individual or group activities, or videotaping students while they complete tasks.

## Using Teacher-developed Assessments

Teachers frequently develop and use their own assessments to determine students' skills and knowledge before and after instruction on a particular topic. These assessments may include paper-and-pencil tests, informal inventories, questionnaires and surveys.

## Assessing Reading Skills

There are a variety of ways to assess a student's reading skills. Consider the following sample measures.

### Concepts about print

In Kindergarten and Grade 1, the basic concepts a student understands about print are a starting point for reading. A concepts about print (CAP) assessment involves observations about the student's awareness of critical concepts such as which way to go, where to start reading and where to go next. Fountas and Pinnell (1996) suggest that this assessment be carried out in a shared reading situation with the teacher and student sitting together and the teacher reading a story with the help of the student. Through the process, the teacher can assess "word-by-word matching in reading, book handling skills, locating words in print, distinguishing between the idea of letter and word, the meaning of punctuation and other print details" (p. 77).

### Survey of reading attitudes

Students' attitudes about reading are valuable information in developing IPP goals as well as monitoring progress in reading throughout the year. Commercial reading attitude surveys are available for both elementary and secondary students. Many teachers choose to create their own surveys to gather the specific information they need about the reading attitudes of the students they teach.



### Appendices

*See Appendix 5-A for a sample reading attitude survey.*

### Survey of reading strategies

Information about the kinds of reading strategies a student uses can be gathered using a reading strategies survey. Such a survey provides insight into the student's metacognitive awareness of his or her reading process. The information gathered can be combined with teacher observations in order to gain a more complete picture of the student's reading ability.

### Appendices

*See Appendix 5-B for a sample survey of reading strategies.*

### Sight words

A number of word lists exist to assess a student's ability to read words by sight. One of the most common is the Dolch list. These lists group words by grade level, and can be used to determine a student's grade level ability to recognize words in isolation. Sight word recognition can be checked regularly throughout the school year. As well, teachers can look for opportunities to observe the student's ability to read these words in context in the classroom.

### Running records

Running records, or oral reading records, are a record of a student's reading of a particular text. The teacher listens to a student read the passage and records the student's errors on a record sheet. Common types of errors include word omissions or additions, mispronunciations and word substitutions. A completed running record is illustrated on the following page.

Accurate Reading	✓ (or) / text word
Substitution	spoken word text word
Attempt	attempt text word
Self-Correction	spoken word (SC) text word
Insertion	spoken word spoken word ^ (or) —
Omission	— text word
Repetition	text word R
Skip and Return	text word   SK ← // ...
Asks for Help	text word   A
Told the Word	text word   T
Try Again	[spoken word spoken word...] text word text word... ] TA
Teacher Prompt	text word   (TP)

✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓  
 Once there was a mother goat  
 ✓ ✓ ✓ s-several ✓  
 who had seven little kids.  
 ✓ ✓ ✓ call — ✓ ✓  
 One day she called to her kids,  
 ✓ ✓ ✓ (TP)  
 "I have to go out  
 ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓  
 to look for food.  
 Don't  
 Do not open the door  
 when ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓  
 while I'm away, or the wolf will come in  
 ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓  
 and eat you up."

Running records allow teachers to determine the “just right” level of books for a student. By counting up the number of errors and dividing by the total number of words in the passage, the teacher can get an indication of the level of difficulty of the text for the student. Generally, 90–100 percent accuracy suggests a book is at the independent level, 80–90 percent accuracy suggests the book is at the instructional or “just right” level, and below 80 percent accuracy reflects a book that is too hard for the student at this time.

Running records also provide teachers with information about the student’s ability to self-monitor when reading. By examining the student’s self-corrections and self-talk during the reading of the passage, the teacher gains insight into the student’s awareness of his or her reading process.

## Informal reading inventories

Several informal reading inventories are available commercially. Frequently used inventories include the *Qualitative Reading Inventory (QRI)*, *The Burns/Roe Informal Reading Inventory* and *Jerry L. Johns Reading Inventory*. Each of these resources combines a number of assessment strategies that are useful for both elementary and secondary assessment, including:

- sight word recognition sections
- oral reading passages that can be timed or used to record errors, along with comprehension questions to monitor understanding

- silent reading passages and accompanying comprehension questions that allow teachers to compare performance for oral and silent reading and to determine which types of questions (e.g., recall, inference, analysis) the student finds easy and those that present a particular challenge.

## Observation

Watching students as they read can be a practical and effective way to gain a more holistic understanding of reading strengths and difficulties.

### Appendices

See Appendix 5-C for sample questions to guide observations of student reading.

## Assessing Writing Skills

Writing samples are commonly used to measure a student's achievement in writing. Consider the following sample steps for using writing samples to assess student writing.

1. Provide students with a picture prompt or sentence starter.
2. Explain that the writing sample will be done independently with no class brainstorming or discussion.
3. Establish a specific time frame. For example:
 

A. Planning	10 minutes
B. Writing draft	30 minutes
C. Revising	10 minutes
4. Have students write a first draft. Encourage them to double-space and write on one side of the page only.
5. Encourage students to edit their own work in coloured pen. Encourage the use of COPS and proper editing symbols. Consider setting a target for number of revisions. For example: *Make at least five changes or additions to your first draft.*
6. Provide writing tools such as electronic spell checkers, dictionaries and word banks during the revision time only.
7. Have students date, title and record the number of words written. Consider including a short student reflection.

Writing samples can be collected at the beginning of the year to assess strengths and areas of need, and to gather information for setting an IPP goal. Additional samples can be gathered at various points during the year (e.g., monthly or three times per year) to monitor progress. To use writing samples to inform IPP goals and monitor growth, it is important to analyze content, organization and language, not just writing mechanics. Remember that elements like punctuation and spelling are only one part of achievement; difficulties in these areas do not prevent the overall success of the writing. For example, 80 percent correct spelling is generally considered readable. Because features like content and organization are more subjective, it can be helpful to use a rubric to guide the assessment process.

Appendices

See Appendix 5-D for a sample rubric adapted from a provincial achievement test scoring guide for Grade 3 writing.

Sample strategies

In addition to this overall analysis, teachers may also review writing samples to identify difficulties or changes in specific areas such as length of writing or revision skills. Consider the following sample strategies for assessing writing samples.

- Compare word counts from one sample to the next.
- Underline misspellings and compare percentages of correct spellings from one sample to the next (if the same word is misspelled more than once, count it only once).
- Target a specific skill such as descriptive words or transitional sentences and identify examples within each writing sample.
- Examine revisions. Does the student make effective changes to his or her own writing?

## Assessing Spelling Skills

A number of measures exist for assessing and monitoring a student’s abilities in spelling. Consider the following sample measures for assessing spelling.

- Graded word lists, such as the Schonell Spelling Test. Most graded word lists can be administered individually, in small groups or in a whole class setting.
- Analysis of student writing samples. This analysis lets teachers assess students’ spelling skills within the context of their daily writing and to identify words that are particularly challenging for students.
- ‘Best try’ booklets, in which students write their best try for a word they wish to use in their writing and the teacher then provides the correct spelling together with an impromptu mini-lesson. These booklets allow teachers to monitor a student’s mastery of specific spelling patterns and become a record of a student’s spelling growth over the course of the year.

Name	<u>P.J.</u>	Date	<u>Nov 6</u>
<i>Best Try</i>	<i>Spelling</i>	<i>Word Bank</i>	
<u>ntilijent</u>	<u>intelligent</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	
_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## Assessing Mathematics Skills

Assessing a student's math skills for the purpose of formulating an IPP goal can be done in a number of ways. Many published math programs include a cumulative review for each grade level. This review can be used at the beginning of the year as a pre-test to determine those concepts the student understands and those which are challenging. The review can then be administered again at the end of the year to assess the student's growth. Some teachers create their own cumulative review for this purpose by compiling sample questions from each of the units covered over the course of the year.

Pre-tests for specific skills or concepts can also be used before a unit is taught to determine what students already know and where the challenges are. This information can be used to create short-term IPP objectives, or to help students set appropriate goals for the upcoming unit.

## Assessing Learning Strategies and Work Habits

Learning strategies and work habits include skills, behaviours and attitudes related to tasks such as:

- note taking
- studying
- test taking
- project management
- organization
- time management.

These types of skills, behaviours and attitudes are important for the success of students with special education needs, particularly as they transition to high school and post-secondary settings, and are often included as IPP goals or objectives. One way to assess learning strategies and work habits is using self-assessment checklists and rating scales. Students can use the information they gain from completing these self-assessments to inform their learning goals during the year, while teachers can use the information to develop and monitor IPP goals.

## Assessing Social Skills

Social skills can be assessed in a number of ways, including self-assessment checklists, teacher observation, anecdotal records, surveys and student self-monitoring. For example, a checklist could be completed by two or more teachers and the student, and results compared and discussed.

## Appendices

*See Appendix 5-E for a sample inventory of social skills.*

## Other Diagnostic Assessments

Diagnostic assessments are published assessment instruments that teachers can use to more accurately identify a student's learning difficulty and then be better able to choose the most appropriate types of instructional strategies and accommodations to support the student's individual strengths and areas of need.

Alberta Education has authorized a number of diagnostic assessments in the area of literacy for students in Kindergarten to Grade 3. These assessments can be used by the classroom teacher and may be helpful in the IPP process.

## Appendices

*See Appendix 5-F for a list of authorized resources to support primary programs (Kindergarten to Grade 3).*

Alberta Education also provides a list of commonly used instruments for assessing students in Alberta in the areas of academic achievement, adaptive behaviours, and receptive and expressive language. These assessments can be used by classroom teachers who have some training to use the instrument. A number of the instruments require graduate training.

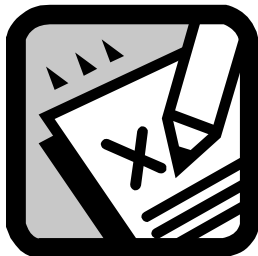
## Appendices

*See Appendix 5-G for a list of commonly-used published assessment instruments.*

## Sharing Classroom Assessment Results

Classroom assessment results are typically shared with the student, parents and with other school personnel directly involved with the student. It is important that the results of the assessment be presented in a clear, meaningful way, and that there be time to reflect on the information and ask questions about results.

## Appendices



These tools are available in PDF format at [www.education.gov.ab.ca/k\\_12/special\\_needs/resource.asp](http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/k_12/special_needs/resource.asp) and on the CD-ROM packaged with the print version of this resource.

# Using Classroom Assessment to Support the IPP Process

The purpose of these sample tools is to enrich the IPP process. These tools should be used selectively and can be adapted to best meet the needs of individual students. Many of these tools will be used informally as part of the IPP development process and not as products for the student's permanent school record.

- 5-A Reading Attitudes Interview
- 5-B Reading Strategies Survey
- 5-C Observation Guide to Reading
- 5-D Narrative Writing—Scoring Criteria
- 5-E Getting Along with Others Inventory
- 5-F Diagnostic Assessment for Primary Programs
- 5-G Commonly-used Published Assessment Instruments



## Reading Attitudes Interview

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. How do you feel about reading?
2. What kinds of books do you like to read?
3. Who are your favourite authors?
4. How do you decide what book to read?
5. How often do you decide what book to read?
6. a. Do you know someone who is a good reader?  
b. What makes \_\_\_\_\_ a good reader?
7. If you knew someone who was having trouble reading, how would you help them?
8. Do you think you are a good reader? Why or why not?
9. What would you like to do better as a reader?

Reproduced with permission from a form by Christa Svenson, Lawton Site, R.J. Scott/Lawton Campus, Edmonton Public Schools, Edmonton, Alberta.





Appendix 5-B

## Reading Strategies Survey

	Usually	Sometimes	Never
1. I study the title and pictures or photographs, and try to predict what the selection is about.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I try to predict what is going to happen next in the selection.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I break new words into familiar chunks in order to pronounce words properly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I think about movies, TV shows or books that might be similar in some way.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. I study the illustrations, photographs or diagrams for information.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. I reread when I don't understand.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. I imagine myself right in the story.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. I conference with others to clear up confusing parts.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. I think about how the story is like something I have experienced.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. I try to figure out the main idea of the selection.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. I try retelling the story in my head.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. I look up new words in the dictionary.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. I self-correct when I mispronounce a word.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. I ask questions about what I read.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. I change my reading rate to adjust for the task or text.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

This appendix reproduced with permission from Edmonton Public Schools, "AISI Middle Literacy Project" (Edmonton, Alberta, 2001).



Reading Strategies Survey  
(continued) page 2/2

16. How has your reading changed this year?

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17. What strategy helps you the most when reading?

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18. What do you need to continue to work on?

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Appendix 5-C

## Observation Guide to Reading

When observing a student's reading, you may want to check for the following.

- Does the student use any prereading activities, e.g., look at title, look at pictures, skim the page?
- Does the student hesitate to begin?
- Does the student appear comfortable reading? Is the student easily frustrated?
- Do the student's eye or head movements suggest a lot of backtracking when reading?
- Does the student squint or keep the book close to his or her face?
- Does the student use a finger or pencil for tracking?
- Does the student have difficulty with basic reading skills: sight vocabulary, decoding skills?
- What types of words are recognized/not recognized?
- What aspects of decoding are difficult for the student?
- What does the student do when encountering a word he or she doesn't know: Substitute another word? Sound it out? Skip it?
- Are miscues grammatically correct? For example, if the student misreads a word, is it the proper tense?
- Does the student leave out or change words?
- Is the student reading for meaning?
- Does the student replace the correct word with a different word that maintains meaning or one that looks similar but has a different meaning?
- Are words read in a monotone, without intonation?
- Are words phrased appropriately?
- Does the student self-correct without prompting?

Adapted with permission from The Learning Centre–Calgary and Alberta Vocational College–Calgary, *Asking the Right Questions: Assessment and Program Planning for Adults with Learning Difficulties (Revised Edition)* (Calgary, AB: The Learning Centre–Calgary and Alberta Vocational College–Calgary, 1995), p. 110.



## Narrative Writing—Scoring Criteria

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Writing sample # \_\_\_\_\_

Content	
<b>5</b> standard of excellence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• events/actions consistently appropriate</li> <li>• details specific and consistently effective</li> <li>• captivates and holds reader's interest</li> </ul>
<b>4</b> approaches standard of excellence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• events/actions appropriate</li> <li>• details specific and generally effective</li> <li>• engages and generally holds reader's interest</li> </ul>
<b>3</b> acceptable standard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• majority of events/actions appropriate</li> <li>• details are general but are appropriate</li> <li>• generally holds reader's interest</li> </ul>
<b>2</b> does not meet acceptable standard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• context is vaguely established and may not be sustained</li> <li>• some events/actions appropriate</li> <li>• details are few and may be repetitive</li> <li>• does not hold reader's interest or is confusing/frustrating for reader</li> </ul>

Organization	
<b>5</b> standard of excellence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• beginning captures reader's attention, clearly establishes events, characters, setting and provides for direction of writing</li> <li>• connections and/or relationships between events, actions, details and/or characters are consistently maintained</li> <li>• ending ties events and/or actions together</li> </ul>
<b>4</b> approaches standard of excellence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• beginning clearly establishes events, characters, setting and provides direction for writing</li> <li>• connections and/or relationships between events, actions, details and/or characters are maintained</li> <li>• ending provides an appropriate finish for events</li> </ul>
<b>3</b> acceptable standard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• beginning provides information about events, characters, setting</li> <li>• connections and/or relationships between events, actions, details and/or characters are attempted</li> <li>• ending is predictable and/or contrived but is connected to events</li> </ul>
<b>2</b> does not meet acceptable standard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• introduction provides little information or is confusing</li> <li>• connections and/or relationships between events, actions and details is missing</li> <li>• ending is missing or unconnected to events and actions</li> </ul>



Appendix 5-D

## Narrative Writing—Scoring Criteria (continued) page 2/3

Sentence Structure	
5 standard of excellence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• standard and effective sentence construction throughout</li> <li>• sentence type and length effective and varied throughout</li> </ul>
4 approaches standard of excellence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• standard sentence construction throughout</li> <li>• sentence type and length usually effective and varied</li> </ul>
3 acceptable standard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• most sentences are standard construction</li> <li>• sentences may vary in type and length but are generally common construction</li> </ul>
2 does not meet acceptable standard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• some thought units are standard sentences, but many are not</li> <li>• sentences, if present, are basic subject/verb constructions, without qualifiers</li> </ul>
Vocabulary	
5 standard of excellence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• words and expressions are descriptive and consistently precise and effective</li> </ul>
4 approaches standard of excellence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• words and expressions are descriptive and generally specific and effective</li> </ul>
3 acceptable standard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• words and expressions are clear and usually more general than specific</li> </ul>
2 does not meet acceptable standard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• words and expressions are simple and may be repetitive or difficult to discern</li> </ul>



## Narrative Writing—Scoring Criteria (continued) page 3/3

Conventions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• end punctuation and capitalization</li> <li>• spelling</li> <li>• clarity</li> </ul> <p><i>Proportion of error to length and complexity of response must be considered.</i></p>	
5 standard of excellence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• end punctuation and capitalization correct</li> <li>• most words spelled correctly</li> <li>• spelling and grammatical errors do not affect clarity and effectiveness of written text</li> </ul>
4 approaches standard of excellence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• end punctuation and capitalization essentially correct</li> <li>• most familiar words spelled correctly; spelling errors are understandable “slips”; unfamiliar words may be spelled phonetically</li> <li>• spelling and grammatical errors have minimal effect on clarity and effectiveness of written text</li> </ul>
3 acceptable standard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• conventional end punctuation and capitalization usually correct</li> <li>• many familiar words spelled correctly; unfamiliar words spelled phonetically</li> <li>• spelling and grammatical errors may affect clarity of written text</li> </ul>
2 does not meet acceptable standard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• inconsistent or no evidence of end punctuation and capitalization</li> <li>• many misspellings; errors suggest uneven control of spelling rules</li> <li>• errors interfere with clarity and effectiveness of written text</li> </ul>

### Weighting

- Content \_\_\_\_\_ × 2 = \_\_\_\_\_
- Organization \_\_\_\_\_ × 2 = \_\_\_\_\_
- Sentence structure \_\_\_\_\_ × 1 = \_\_\_\_\_
- Vocabulary \_\_\_\_\_ × 1 = \_\_\_\_\_
- Conventions \_\_\_\_\_ × 1 = \_\_\_\_\_

Total \_\_\_\_\_ ÷ 7 = \_\_\_\_\_/5



Appendix 5-E

# Getting Along with Others Inventory

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## In class

	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Not yet
• I arrive in class on time.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• I bring needed books and supplies.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• I greet other students as I enter the classroom.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• I answer questions with a few sentences.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• When I start a conversation, I check that the other people appear interested.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• I limit small talk to before and after class.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• I sit up straight.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• I remove distracting hoods and hats.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• I make eye contact with others.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• I show active listening by nodding my head and turning to the speaker.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• I volunteer at least two answers per class.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• If I've missed directions, I look to other students for clues.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## With partners and in small groups

• I am willing to work with a variety of partners.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• I try to make others feel comfortable by making small talk.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• I show that I'm willing to work with others by moving closer.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• I am polite to people I would rather not work with.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• I listen carefully to directions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• I clarify directions with my partners.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• I make a rough plan.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

This appendix from Alberta Learning, *Make School Work for You: A Resource for Junior and Senior High Students Who Want to be More Successful Learners* (Edmonton, AB: Alberta Learning, 2001), pp. 95–96.



## Getting Along with Others Inventory (continued) page 2/2

### With partners and in small groups (cont.)

- |                                                             | Always                   | Usually                  | Sometimes                | Not yet                  |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| • I check the deadlines.                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • I use a quiet voice.                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • I stay with my group and focus on the task.               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • I resist complaining about the assignment.                | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • I do my share of the work.                                | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • I volunteer ideas.                                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • I show good listening.                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • I encourage others to contribute their ideas.             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • I refrain from put-downs of other people's ideas.         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • I am willing to try new roles, even if I'm uncomfortable. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • I support my partners in group presentations.             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

### Solving problems

- |                                                                               |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| • I use all my skills to build a positive working relationship with partners. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • I let partners know when I think we have a problem.                         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • I am willing to make a new plan and start over.                             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • If necessary, I'll share my concerns with the teacher.                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

### Getting connected

- |                                                                     |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| • I participate in at least one extracurricular activity each term. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|





Appendix 5-F

## Diagnostic Assessment for Primary Programs (November 2004)

Early language and mathematical thinking is intuitive and constructivist in nature, and develops as children experience the world around them. There are stages in the development of literacy and numeracy.

The purpose of diagnostic assessments is to identify students' strengths and weaknesses so that classroom teachers can select appropriate instructional strategies to overcome weaknesses and build on the strengths of the learner. These assessments emphasize process-oriented activities that focus on higher level thinking skills rather than on product-oriented activities emphasizing the mastery of discrete skills.

Primary program resources authorized for diagnostic assessment help Kindergarten to Grade 3 teachers assess the reading and numeracy levels of students, and plan instruction to meet identified gaps in their learning.

With the exception of the SRA Literacy Launcher, the following resources are available for purchase from the Learning Resources Centre. Order online at [www.lrc.education.gov.ab.ca/](http://www.lrc.education.gov.ab.ca/) or telephone 780-427-5775.

### Authorized Diagnostic Assessment Resources

#### Alphakids Reading Assessment Kit (2002)

Grades K, 1, 2

Distributor: Scholastic Canada Ltd.

##### Alphakids Reading Assessment Kit: Levels 1–24

Includes: teacher's guide; reading assessment video, 24 readers (Face Painting, My Hats, Let's Go!, A Bone for Buddy, The Goat, Sebastian Learns to Fly, Play Ball, Two Snakes, Shovelling Snow, Baby Bear Goes for a Walk, Camping, Worm Song, The Sun in the Sky, What Do You See?, Lines, My Street, Predators, Message on a Rocket, Starfish, Betty Boots, Going Fast, Queen Bertha, My Worm Farm, The Pizza Shop)

Order #  
508129 \$221.55\*

#### Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA K–3) (Print)

Grades K, 1, 2, 3

Distributor: Pearson Education Canada

##### Developmental Reading Assessment Grades K–3 Box Kit

Includes: teacher resource guide, DRA continuum, DRA alternative texts BLM with 20 benchmark books, Developmental Reading Assessment BLM with 20 benchmark books

Order #  
428202 \$165.35\*

##### Training Video Facilitator's Guide: Developmental Reading Assessment K–3, Developmental Reading Assessment Alternative Texts

558520 \$340.65\*

##### Leveled Libraries: Emergent Stage: Levels Pre-A–2

Level Pre-A includes 6 titles, Level A includes 57 titles, Level 1 includes 23 titles, Level 2 includes 53 titles (continued)

558489 \$397.30\*

★ prices subject to change



## Diagnostic Assessment for Primary Programs (continued) page 2/3

<b>Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA K–3) (continued)</b>	<b>Order #</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <p><b>• Leveled Libraries: Early Stage: Levels 3–10</b>            Level 3 includes 100 titles, Level 4 includes 64 titles, Level 6 includes 37 titles,            Level 8 includes 22 titles, Level 10 includes 30 titles</p> </li> </ul>	558497    \$775.45*
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <p><b>• Leveled Libraries: Transitional Stage: Levels 12–24</b>            Level 12 includes 37 titles, Level 14 includes 39 titles, Level 16 includes 26            titles, Level 18 includes 13 titles, Level 20 includes 26 titles, Level 24 includes            33 titles</p> </li> </ul>	558504    \$652.90*
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <p><b>• Leveled Libraries: Extending Stage: Levels 28–44</b>            Level 28 includes 18 titles, Level 30 includes 17 titles, Level 34 includes            6 titles, Level 38 includes 4 titles</p> </li> </ul>	558512    \$198.65*
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <p><b>• E*Assessment: Real Assessment in Real Time</b>            Includes 57 student books, benchmark books, teacher’s guide, phonics            assessment blackline masters, E*Assessment CD–ROM (Windows/Macintosh            version), M125 Handheld Palm Pilot</p> </li> </ul>	541468    \$673.40*

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**PM Benchmark Kit 1 (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.) (2004)**  
**Grades K, 1, 2, 3**  
**Distributor: Nelson Thomson Learning**

<p><b>PM Benchmark Kit 1 (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.)</b>            Includes 30 readers: Look at Me, The Balloons, Wake up, Father Bear, Little Cat            is Hungry, Sam and Little Bear, The Merry-Go-Round, Little Rabbit’s Party, The            Cat and the Mice, Stuck in the Ditch, Lost at the Shopping Mall, Late for School,            Soccer at School, The Fox and Chicken-to-Go, The Water Slide, Little Steg, Great            Lion and Tiny Mouse, Harry the Tow Truck, The Vacation Surprise, Tom and the            Sack, The Skating Twins, The Wind and the Sun, Tricks with a Kite, Giraffes, The            Cave Beside the Waterfall, Jack and the Beanstock, The Game of Soccer, Rikki-            tikki-tavi, Mount Saint Helens Blows Its Top May 18, 1980, Forging the River, 65            Million Years Ago, teacher’s notes, 30 reading record/comprehension assessment            record forms</p>	<b>Order #</b> 525933    \$197.80*
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Appendix 5-F

## Diagnostic Assessment for Primary Programs (continued) page 3/3

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### PM Benchmark Kit 2 (2002)

Grades 1, 2, 3

Distributor: Nelson Thomson Learning

#### PM Benchmark Kit 2

Includes 30 readers: On the Table, At the Zoo, Kate Goes to a Farm, The Big Plane, Little Teddy Helps Mouse, Nick's Snowman, Baby Bear and the Big Fish, My Big Sister, Clever Little Dinosaur, The Helpful Bulldozer, Tom's Train Ride, Buying a New House, The Best Runner, Little Hen, Mouse and Rabbit, Skip Goes to the Rescue, The Classroom Play, The Greedy Dog and the Bone, Harvest Mice, The Old Cabin in the Forest, Leo the Lion Cub, Kwan the Artist, Trees on Our Planet, The Miller, His Son and Their Donkey, A New Skatepark, Beavers, A Great Sense of Smell, Preparing for a Day in the Forest, Tracks by the Stream, Cyclone Tracy Destroys Darwin, Black Beauty Encounters a Steam Train, teacher's notes, 30 reading record/comprehension assessment record forms

Order #

525941    \$203.95\*

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### SRA Literacy Launcher (Levels Pre-K–2) (Online Resource)

Grades K, 1, 2

Distributor: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Ltd.

Vendor-direct—for accessibility and pricing inquiries, contact 905–430–5083.

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## Commonly-used Published Assessment Instruments

This list provides a number of commonly used instruments for assessing students in Alberta which have adequate statistical and diagnostic properties. The list is not intended to be exhaustive or limiting, however, if teachers use other instruments as their core or primary instruments, they are responsible for ensuring that the instruments have adequate statistical and diagnostic properties, and are at least as effective as those listed.

The following levels indicate *publishers'* guidelines for qualifications needed to use assessment instruments.

- A – some training to use testing instrument
- B – some graduate training

### Academic Achievement

Standardized instruments that are multiple-choice format are generally discouraged except for screening purposes. Greater diagnostic information is obtained when students have to write, say or manipulate materials to provide answers.

Instrument	Level	Administration	Grade or Age Range	Comments
The Brigance System	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual, some group sections</li> <li>• Criterion-referenced</li> <li>• Time varies</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use only relevant sections for situation</li> </ul>
Brigance Inventory of Early Development (revised) Brigance Comprehensive Inventory of Basic Skills Brigance Inventory of Essential Skills Brigance Life Skills Inventory Brigance Employability Skills Inventory			Birth to mental age 7 Pre-K–Grade 9 Grade 6 to adult Secondary + Secondary +	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yellow</li> <li>• Canadian edition–Green</li> <li>• Red</li> <li>• Blue</li> <li>• Grey</li> </ul>
GORT–D Gray Oral Reading Test–Diagnostic	B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual</li> <li>• 50–90 minutes</li> <li>• Alternate forms</li> </ul>	Ages 5–12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seven subtests assess meaning cues, function cues and graphic/phonemic cues</li> </ul>
KeyMath–Revised A Diagnostic Inventory of Essential Mathematics	B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual</li> <li>• 35–50 minutes</li> <li>• Alternate forms</li> </ul>	Ages 5–22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diagnostic</li> <li>• Canadian norms, also French version with Canadian norms</li> <li>• 13 subtests assess basic concepts, operations and applications</li> </ul>



Appendix 5-G

## Commonly-used Published Assessment Instruments (continued) page 2/5

Instrument	Level	Administration	Grade or Age Range	Comments
K-TEA/NU Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement Comprehensive Form	B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individual</li> <li>Comprehensive form 45–70 minutes</li> </ul>	Ages 6–22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comprehensive form – diagnostic</li> <li>Assesses reading decoding, reading comprehension, mathematics computation, mathematics applications, spelling</li> </ul>
PIAT-R/NU Peabody Individual Achievement Test	B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individual</li> <li>60 minutes</li> <li>Half subtests are multiple choice</li> </ul>	Ages 5–22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Diagnostic</li> <li>Assesses general information, reading recognition, reading comprehension, spelling, mathematics, written expression</li> </ul>
SDMT 4 Stanford Diagnostic Mathematics Test	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Group</li> <li>Multiple choice and written response</li> </ul>	Grade 1 to high school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Six levels, colour-coded</li> <li>Assesses mathematics concepts and applications, computation</li> </ul>
SDRT 4 Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Group</li> <li>Multiple choice</li> </ul>	Grade 1 to high school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Six levels, colour-coded</li> <li>Assesses vocabulary, comprehension, phonetic analysis, scanning</li> <li>three optional informal instruments – reading strategies, reading questionnaire, story retelling</li> </ul>
TERA-3 Test of Early Reading Ability	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individual</li> <li>15–30 minutes</li> </ul>	Ages 3–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alternate forms</li> <li>Assesses alphabet, conventions, meaning</li> </ul>
TEWL-2 Test of Early Written Language	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individual</li> <li>30–45 minutes</li> </ul>	Ages 4–10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Two equivalent forms</li> <li>Assesses basic writing, contextual writing</li> </ul>
TORC-3 Test of Reading Comprehension	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individual</li> <li>30 minutes per subtest</li> </ul>	Ages 7–17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Diagnostic</li> <li>Assesses general vocabulary, syntactic similarities, paragraph reading, sentence sequencing</li> <li>Supplementary tests – vocabulary in mathematics, social studies, science, directions of schoolwork</li> </ul>



## Commonly-used Published Assessment Instruments (continued) page 3/5

Instrument	Level	Administration	Grade or Age Range	Comments
WDRB Woodcock Diagnostic Reading Battery	B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual</li> <li>• 60 minutes</li> </ul>	Ages 4–95	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diagnostic</li> <li>• 10 subtests selected from Woodcock–Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery-Revised: Tests of Achievement (WJ-R ACH)</li> </ul>
WIAT and WIAT–II Wechsler Individual Achievement Test	B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual</li> <li>• 45–90 minutes</li> </ul>	Ages 5–19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diagnostic</li> <li>• Canadian norms, linked with Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (WISC)</li> <li>• Assesses basic reading, reading comprehension, mathematics reasoning, listening comprehension, oral expression, spelling, written expression</li> </ul>
WJ III ACH Woodcock– Johnson Tests of Achievement	B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual</li> <li>• 60 minutes</li> </ul>	Ages 2–90+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diagnostic</li> <li>• 12 tests in standard battery, extended battery adds 10 more</li> <li>• Must use computer program for scores and discrepancies</li> </ul>
WRMT–RNU Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests	B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual</li> <li>• 45 minutes</li> </ul>	Ages 5–75	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diagnostic, two levels</li> <li>• Assesses word identification, word attack, word comprehension, passage comprehension</li> <li>• Form G adds visual-auditory learning, letter identification</li> </ul>



## Commonly-used Published Assessment Instruments (continued) page 4/5

### Adaptive Behaviour Instruments

Adaptive behaviour instruments are most often used to review the impact of cognitive, physical and sensory disabilities upon day-to-day functioning, in and out of the classroom. Look for instruments that include assessment of functioning in the school setting.

Instrument	Level	Administration	Grade or Age Range	Comments
ABS-S2 AAMR Adaptive Behavior Scale– School Edition	B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Questionnaire or structured interview</li> <li>• 60–120 minutes</li> </ul>	Ages 3–21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Part 1 – assesses nine areas of personal independence</li> <li>• Part 2 – social maladaptation</li> <li>• Standardization primarily on students with mental retardation</li> </ul>
SIB-R Scales of Independent Behaviour	B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Questionnaire or structured interview</li> <li>• 15–60 minutes</li> </ul>	Infancy to mature adult	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Three forms – full scale, short, early development</li> <li>• Not focused on functioning in school</li> </ul>
ABAS, ABAS 2 <sup>nd</sup> ed. Adaptive Behavior Assessment System	B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Questionnaire</li> <li>• 15 minutes</li> </ul>	Birth–89 (2 <sup>nd</sup> ed.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher and parent forms</li> <li>• Assesses communication, community use, functional academics, home living, health and safety, leisure, self-care, self-direction, social, work</li> </ul>
SFA School Function Assessment	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rating scale and profile</li> <li>• Criterion-referenced</li> </ul>	Elementary grades	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Designed for students with disabilities</li> <li>• Ratings of participation, physical task supports, cognitive/behaviour task supports and activity performance</li> </ul>



## Commonly-used Published Assessment Instruments (continued) page 5/5

### Receptive and Expressive Language Instruments

Instrument	Level	Administration	Age Range	Comments
BBCS-R Bracken Basic Concept Scale	B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individual</li> <li>30 minutes</li> </ul>	Ages 2½–7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>11 subtests measuring basic concepts and receptive language</li> </ul>
CASL Comprehensive Assessment of Spoken Language	B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individual</li> <li>30–60 minutes</li> </ul>	Ages 3–21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>15 subtests in four categories – lexical/semantic, syntactic, supralinguistic, pragmatic</li> </ul>
CELF-3 and CELF-4 Clinical Evaluation of Language Function	B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individual</li> <li>30–60 minutes</li> </ul>	Ages 5–21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Receptive and expressive language</li> <li>Four core subtests, six supplementary subtests</li> </ul>
ITPA-3 Illinois Test of Psycholinguistic Abilities	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individual</li> <li>45–60 minutes</li> </ul>	Ages 5–12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Six subtests of spoken language and six subtests of written language</li> </ul>
OWLS Oral and Written Language Scales	B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individual</li> <li>15–40 minutes</li> </ul>	Ages 3–21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Three subtests – listening comprehension, oral expression, written expression</li> </ul>
PLS-4 Preschool Language Scale	B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individual</li> <li>20–45 minutes</li> </ul>	Birth–6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assesses total language, auditory comprehension, expressive communication</li> </ul>
TELD-3 Test of Early Language Development	B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individual</li> <li>20 minutes</li> </ul>	Ages 2–7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assesses receptive and expressive language</li> </ul>
TOAL-3 Test of Adolescent and Adult Language	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individual</li> <li>60–180 minutes</li> </ul>	Ages 12–24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10 areas of language covering listening, speaking, reading, writing</li> </ul>
TOLD-P3 Test of Language Development, Primary	B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individual</li> <li>60–120 minutes</li> </ul>	Ages 4–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spoken language only</li> <li>Assesses understanding and meaningful use of words, grammar, pronunciation</li> </ul>
TOLD-I3 Test of Language Development, Intermediate	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individual</li> <li>30–60 minutes</li> </ul>	Ages 8–12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assesses receptive and expressive language</li> </ul>



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## INDEX

### A

#### academic readiness skills

classroom observations of, 3–5

#### accommodations and strategies

(See *Chapter 6: Selecting Accommodations and Strategies*)

#### Adaptive Behavior Assessment System (ABAS), 29

#### Adaptive Behavior Scale–School Edition (ABS–S2), 29

#### Alphakids Reading Assessment Kit (K–2), 23

#### anecdotal records, 5

#### assessments

about classroom assessments, 1–3

assessment instruments, 23–30

classroom observations, 3–5

Pre-K–3 diagnostic resources, 12

of student samples, 6

(See also *specific subject areas*)

#### assistive technology

(See *Chapter 9: Infusing Assistive Technology for Learning into the IPP Process*)

### B

#### bibliography, 31

#### Bracken Basic Concept Scale, 30

#### Brigance System, 26

#### Burnes/Roe Informal Reading Inventory, 8–9

### C

#### classroom observations

about, 3–5

#### Clinical Evaluation of Language Function (CELF), 30

#### communication skills

classroom observations of, 3–5

#### Comprehensive Assessment of Spoken Language, 30

#### cultural issues

in classroom assessments, 1–2

### D

#### Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA K–3), 23–24

#### duration recordings, 5

**E****early childhood students**

assessment instruments for, 23–30

concepts about print, 6

diagnostic resources for, 12

(See also *Chapter 10: Getting Off to a Good Start in Early Childhood Services*)

**ecological assessments, 4****event recording, 5****G****gifted students**

(See *Chapter 11: Planning for Students Who are Gifted*)

**goals and objectives**

frequency of assessments, 2

(See also *Chapter 7: Making Goals Meaningful, Measurable and Manageable*)

**Grade Level of Achievement scores (GLAs)**

report of GLAs in IPPs, 3

**Gray Oral Reading Test–Diagnostic, 26****group instruction**

social skills self-inventory for (checklist), 21–22

**I****Illinois Test of Psycholinguistic Abilities (ITPA–3), 30****individualized program plans (IPPs)**

assessments in, 1–2

GLA reports in IPPs, 3

(See also *Chapter 1: Working Through the IPP Process*)

**J****Jerry L. Johns Reading Inventory, 8–9****junior and senior high students**

social skills self-inventory for (checklist), 21–22

(See also *Chapter 12: Promising Practices for Junior and Senior High School*)

**K****Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement (K–TEA/NU), 27****KeyMath–Revised: A Diagnostic Inventory of Essential Mathematics, 26****L****language arts**

(See reading skills; spelling skills; writing skills)

**learning strategies**

assessment of, 8

**M****mathematics skills**

- assessment instruments for, 26–28
- classroom assessment of, 11

**motor skills**

- classroom observations of, 3–5

**O****observations, classroom, 3–5****Oral and Written Language Scales (OWLS), 30****P****parents**

- confirmations of assessments by, 1
- sharing assessment results with, 12
- (See also *Chapter 2: Encouraging Parent Involvement*)

**performance and achievement levels, 3****PM Benchmark Kits 1 & 2 (K–3), 24–25****Preschool Language Scale (PLS–4), 30****Q****Qualitative Reading Inventory (QRI), 8–9****R****reading skills**

- about assessment of, 6–9
- assessment instruments for, 8, 23–25, 30
- observation guide (template), 17
- print concepts assessments, 6
- reading attitudes survey (template), 6–7, 14
- reading strategies survey (template), 7, 15–16
- running records (oral reading), 7–8
- sight words, 7

**S****Scales of Independent Behaviour (SIB–R), 29****Schonnell Spelling Test, 10****School Function Assessment (SFA), 29****social skills**

- about assessment of, 11–12
- assessment instruments for, 29–30
- classroom observations of, 3–5
- student self-inventory (template), 21–22

**spelling skills, 10****SRA Literacy Launcher (Pre-K–2), 25****Stanford Diagnostic Mathematics Test (SDMT 4), 27****Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test (SDRT 4), 27**

**students**

sharing assessment results with, 12  
(See also *Chapter 3: Supporting Student Participation*)

**support services**

(See *Chapter 4: Creating a Network of Support*)

**T****teaching assistants**

classroom observations by, 3–5

**Test of Adolescent and Adult Language (TOAL–3)**, 30

**Test of Early Language Development (TELD–3)**, 30

**Test of Early Reading Ability (TERA)**, 27

**Test of Early Written Language (TEWL)**, 27

**Test of Language Development, Primary and Intermediate (TOLD–P3 and I3)**, 30

**Test of Reading Comprehension (TORC)**, 27

**transition plans**

(See *Chapter 8: Planning for Transitions*)

**W**

**Wechsler Individual Achievement Test (WIAT and WIAT–II)**, 28

**Woodcock Diagnostic Reading Battery (WDRB)**, 28

**Woodcock Johnson Tests of Achievement (WJ III ACH)**, 28

**Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests (WRMT–RNU)**, 28

**work habits**

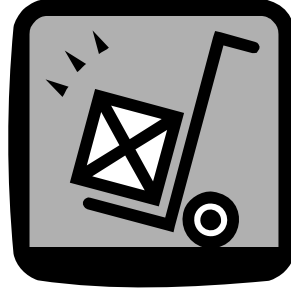
assessment of, 11

**writing skills**

assessment instruments for, 27, 30

assessment of (rubric), 18–20

assessment of writing samples, 9–10



## Identifying Student Needs

### Chapter 6

# Selecting Accommodations and Strategies

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This resource is primarily intended for:

Teachers	✓
Administrators	✓
Health-related Professionals	✓
Counsellors	✓
Students	
Parents	
General Public	



A PDF version of this resource is available on the Alberta Education Web site at [www.education.gov.ab.ca/k\\_12/specialneeds/resource.asp](http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/k_12/specialneeds/resource.asp)

Print copies of this resource can be purchased from the Learning Resources Centre. Order online at [www.lrc.education.gov.ab.ca/](http://www.lrc.education.gov.ab.ca/) or telephone 780-427-5775.

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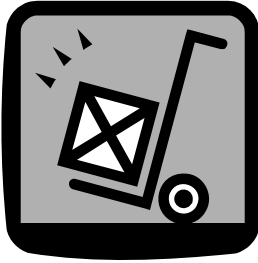
## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Environmental Accommodations .....	2
Audio recordings .....	2
Instructional Accommodations .....	3
Assessment Accommodations .....	3
Accommodations for provincial achievement tests .....	4
Accommodations for diploma examinations .....	4
Effective Use of Accommodations .....	5
Barriers .....	5
Strategies to Support Effective Use of Accommodations .....	6
Base decisions on an understanding of student strengths and areas of need .....	6
Use a collaborative process .....	7
Use accommodations consistently and monitor student performance .....	8
Differentiating Instruction .....	8
Planning for differentiation .....	9
Strategy instruction .....	11
Understanding Modified Programming .....	12
Appendices .....	13
6-A Sample General Accommodations .....	14
6-B Sample Academic and Instructional Accommodations .....	16
6-C Sample Guidelines for Using Readers and Scribes ....	18
6-D Accommodations for Writing Provincial Achievement Tests and Diploma Examinations .....	19
6-E Sample Questions Parents Might Ask About Accommodations .....	20
6-F Sample Form for Reviewing the Effectiveness of an Accommodation .....	21
6-G What Works for Me Inventory .....	22
6-H Instructional Planning Guide for Differentiation .....	24
Bibliography .....	29
Index .....	31



## Chapter 6

# Selecting Accommodations and Strategies



An accommodation is a change or alteration in the regular way a student is expected to learn, complete assignments or participate in classroom activities. Accommodations include special teaching or assessment strategies, equipment or other supports that remove, or at least lessen, the impact of a student's special education needs. The goal of accommodations is to give students with special education needs the same opportunity to succeed as other students.

Once a student has been identified with a special education need, accommodations should be considered to ensure that the student can access the curriculum and demonstrate knowledge to the best of his or her abilities. Good accommodation decisions are grounded in good instructional decisions.

Typically, accommodations will span all the subject areas and instructional settings that the student is engaged in. Accommodations described in the IPP should include only strategies and supports that differ from what is typically provided in the classroom. It is important to record these key accommodations in the IPP to ensure that the student has access to these significant accommodations on an ongoing basis and that he or she will be eligible to receive these same accommodations during provincial assessments.

Selecting appropriate accommodations involves asking systematic questions about individual students, such as:

- What helps this student learn or perform better?
- What does this student say about what helps him or her learn or show what he or she knows?
- What does this student's parents say about how their child learns?
- What gets in the way of this student demonstrating skills and knowledge?
- What has this student been taught to use?

There are three general types of accommodations:

- environmental accommodations, e.g., alternative seating, adaptive devices
- instructional accommodations, e.g., providing copies of notes, alternative reading materials
- assessment accommodations, e.g., extra time, oral tests.

There can be an overlap in these types; it's possible that a specific accommodation could be both environmental and instructional, and could also affect assessment.

## Environmental Accommodations

The classroom should be nurturing, supportive and successful for all students. To help make this true for students with special education needs, teachers may need to provide various environmental accommodations. Environmental accommodations may be related to the resources and materials the student uses or to the layout and use of classroom space.

Sample environmental accommodations include:

- enlarging reading materials
- arranging for a scribe to write down what the student dictates
- encouraging the use of manipulatives, such as objects for counting
- providing pencil and pen grips
- providing desktop number lines and alphabet charts
- providing access to computers for word processing, spell checkers, graphics, organizers
- providing different types of paper, such as paper with grids, dotted middle lines or raised lines
- using carrels or tables for students who need a quiet spot free from distractions
- allowing a student to stand rather than sit for selected activities
- rearranging the seating plan on a regular basis until the best location for a student is identified.

## Audio recordings

Alberta Education, through the Learning Resources Centre (LRC), makes available audio versions of a limited number of student textbooks. These resources, in both audiocassette and CD format, are available on a cost-recovery basis. This audio service is available for students who have an IPP and have audio resources identified as a needed accommodation. Schools who buy the audio resources must agree to use them exclusively for the student for whom they were bought. This service is referred to as “Audio Assistance for Students with Perceptual Disabilities.” Under the *Copyright Act of Canada*, a perceptual disability is a disability that prevents or inhibits an individual from reading a literary, musical, dramatic or artistic work in its original format including a disability resulting from an impairment relating to comprehension or the inability to hold or manipulate a book.

For more information

For more information on “Audio Assistance for Students with Perceptual Disabilities,” visit [www.lrc.education.gov.ab.ca/pro/audio/audio\\_index.htm](http://www.lrc.education.gov.ab.ca/pro/audio/audio_index.htm).

## Instructional Accommodations

Instructional accommodations are changes to the way information and concepts are presented or practised to ensure that each student has the opportunities and support he or she needs to learn. This may involve modifying teaching strategies or learning activities in a variety of ways.

Sample instructional accommodations include:

- varying the amount of material to be learned or practised
- breaking instruction into steps
- pairing written instructions with oral instructions
- using peer partners or tutors
- demonstrating or modelling a sample of the required task or activity
- posing questions that require different levels of thinking
- using role-playing to practise new skills
- using advance organizers.

### Appendices

*See Appendices 6-A and 6-B for a list of other sample accommodations.*

## Assessment Accommodations

Some students require accommodations that allow classroom assessments to measure and communicate student growth and achievement clearly and realistically. Some students will know what they need in order to demonstrate their knowledge in the classroom and in testing situations. It is important to provide an opportunity for students and parents to suggest or respond to proposed assessment accommodations.

Sample assessment accommodations include:

- allowing extended time
- allowing breaks during the test
- reducing the number of questions
- breaking a test into parts and administering them at separate times
- providing a taped test and making students aware that they may listen to part or all of the tape more than once
- providing a reader or a scribe

### Appendices

*See Appendix 6-C for sample guidelines for using readers and scribes.*

- providing an opportunity to record answers
- providing more detailed instructions and confirming the student's understanding of the test process
- administering the test in a small group setting or to an individual student
- administering the test in a separate room, free from distractions
- providing noise buffers (e.g., headphones).

## Accommodations for provincial achievement tests

Students may be eligible to receive certain accommodations during provincial achievement tests (PATs), provided that:

- the student is identified with an exceptional student code or has had special education needs identified through a psychometric or medical assessment, conducted by a qualified professional, and
- the accommodations being requested are recorded on the student's IPP and being used in the classroom throughout the year.

### Appendices

See Appendix 6-D for a list of allowable accommodations for provincial achievement tests and diploma exams.

Requests for accommodations for PATs are approved at the jurisdiction level. To arrange accommodations for a student, the principal must submit a request to the superintendent. This request should include the name of the student and specific accommodations required. If the request involves special format materials (large print, Braille or CD), the principal should complete a Request for Special Format Materials form and submit it to the superintendent for sign-off. Once the request is approved, the form should be forwarded to the Learner Assessment Branch of Alberta Education before the deadline so the appropriate materials can be supplied.

### For more information

For more information about accommodations for PATs, including timelines and information about accommodations for students who are not identified with an exceptional student code, visit [www.education.gov.ab.ca/k\\_12/testing/achievement/ach\\_gib/accom.asp](http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/k_12/testing/achievement/ach_gib/accom.asp).

## Accommodations for diploma examinations

As with PATs, students receiving certain accommodations in the classroom may be eligible for these same accommodations during diploma examinations. In order to be considered, the accommodations requested must be identified in the student's IPP and provided in the classroom throughout the year. *For a list of allowable accommodations, see Appendix 6-D.*

### Appendices

Requests for accommodations for diploma examinations are approved by Alberta Education. To apply for accommodations for a student, the principal must submit the Application for Accommodations for Students with Special Diploma Examination Writing Needs form to the Special Cases and Accommodations section by the posted deadline (applications received after that deadline will be denied). The application is then reviewed by Alberta Education staff, taking into consideration a number of factors, including:

- the exceptional student code as indicated in the student's IPP (the IPP itself does not need to be submitted)
- the accommodations routinely provided to the student in the classroom (as indicated on page 1 of the application form)

For more information

- information regarding professional and medical assessments completed on the student, for students who do not have an exceptional student code (results of a psychometric or medical assessment, conducted by a qualified professional, must be submitted with the application form).

For more information about accommodations for diploma examinations, including deadlines, visit [www.education.gov.ab.ca/k\\_12/testing/diploma/dip\\_gib/accommodations.asp](http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/k_12/testing/diploma/dip_gib/accommodations.asp) or contact the Special Cases and Accommodations section by calling (780) 427-0010 or toll free by dialing 310-0000.

## Effective Use of Accommodations

Teachers play a key role in helping students identify and use accommodations appropriately. Similarly, parents, students and other members of the learning team have a role in selecting, monitoring and evaluating the use of accommodations.

### Barriers

Understanding some of the common barriers to the effective use of accommodations is an important starting point. Common barriers include the following.

#### Misunderstanding the purpose

- Parents, students and teachers sometimes perceive that accommodations give students with special education needs an unfair advantage over other students. In reality, accommodations give the student the same opportunity to succeed as other students.
- Parents, students and teachers may also believe that accommodations replace the need to acquire or develop basic skills. Although accommodations are necessary for many students, it is important to balance the use of accommodations with the teaching and practice of basic literacy, numeracy and study skills so that students can develop these skills to their fullest potential.

#### Selecting accommodations that are not appropriate

- Deciding on appropriate accommodations is not an easy task. Many teachers, psychologists and other personnel report having difficulty translating assessment information into appropriate accommodations. As a result, there is a tendency to rely on the same basic accommodations for all students with particular kinds of special education needs (e.g., learning disabilities), rather than individualizing the accommodations to match the specific learning needs and strengths of the student.

### Not involving the student in the process

- Teachers and other school staff often report that it is difficult to involve students in the decision-making process. However, research indicates that students benefit most from accommodations when they participate in the selection process. Often a student who would benefit from an accommodation does not make full use of it because he or she is self-conscious about doing things differently than peers. Involving students in the selection process provides opportunities for them to learn about and become comfortable using accommodations. It will also help them become better advocates for themselves in future learning situations.

### Using accommodations inconsistently

- When accommodations are not used consistently, it is difficult for teachers to determine if they are helping. Also, students need time and opportunities to learn how to use accommodations effectively in a variety of situations, not just on major assignments, such as tests or exams.

### Overusing accommodations and possibly reducing expectations

- When too many accommodations are used, particularly at the elementary level, it can reduce expectations for student learning. For example, always providing a scribe might limit opportunities for a student to develop skills and confidence in writing.

Sample strategies

## Strategies to Support Effective Use of Accommodations

There are several important considerations related to the selection, implementation and monitoring of accommodations that will help overcome the barriers described above.

### Base decisions on an understanding of student strengths and areas of need

- Use information from both formal and informal sources when selecting accommodations. Consult with parents about what they do to help their child complete tasks at home.
- Identify student strengths and learning preferences, and use them to determine appropriate accommodations. Talk with students about what helps them learn better. Understanding students' needs is important in determining what type of accommodation is necessary; however, it is equally important to align the specific accommodations with students' strengths and learning preferences. The chart on the next page shows an example of how learning strengths could be used to select accommodations for students with memory difficulties.



Sample accommodations for students with memory difficulties	<i>Consider these accommodations for students who learn best by</i>		
	seeing	hearing	doing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide one instruction at a time.</li> </ul>		✓	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Build routines into the day for recording information in day-timers or assignment books.</li> </ul>	✓		✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide memory aids for frequently used information such as key vocabulary and schedules.</li> </ul>	✓		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use visual cues, such as colour coding, photos and drawing sequences, charts and videos.</li> </ul>	✓		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use auditory and kinesthetic cues in combination. Combine songs with movement and dance patterns.</li> </ul>		✓	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide regularly scheduled reviews of procedures and concepts (e.g., review previously learned skills and ideas at the start of each day, review new information at the end of the day).</li> </ul>		✓	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make lists of reminders regularly, and note dates and assignments on a calendar.</li> </ul>	✓		✓

- Consider accommodations that are more typically associated with students with visual, hearing or mobility challenges. For instance, students with learning disabilities may benefit from large print materials or the use of a FM system to amplify sound.
- Select accommodations that are the least intrusive for students. If possible, avoid accommodations that isolate students from peers or draw unnecessary attention.

### Use a collaborative process

- Educate parents and students about the benefits of using accommodations. Be honest about the difficulties students may encounter.
- Involve relevant specialists in selecting appropriate accommodations based on their knowledge of students' strengths and areas of need, and the demands of the setting.
- Ask parents and students about their preferences regarding accommodations. Respect parents' and students' opinions and attitudes toward accommodations. If the student is not comfortable with an accommodation, it is important to revisit his or her strengths and supports, and then brainstorm alternative accommodations that the student will commit to trying for a period of time before the next review meeting.

## Appendices

See Appendix 6-E for sample questions that parents might ask about accommodations.

### Use accommodations consistently and monitor student performance

- Prioritize the introduction of accommodations if more than one accommodation is used. Let students become familiar with one accommodation before introducing another.
- Consult with students about the use of accommodations after they have tried them for a period of time. Compare student performance before and after.
- Set a time to formally review students' performance using accommodations.

## Appendices

See Appendix 6-F for a set of sample questions for reviewing the effectiveness of an accommodation.

- Teach students how to use accommodations, especially if they involve assistive technology or assistance from personnel (e.g., scribes or readers). Often an accommodation will be introduced as part of a student's IPP goals. For example, for students needing to build organizational skills, the correct and consistent use of a particular strategy might be the focus of a goal or objective such as, "Suzanne will use a binder-checklist with her study buddy every Friday afternoon to reorganize or add any missing items in her LA binder." Once the student has mastered the use of the strategy or equipment, it will be listed as an accommodation in the IPP.

## Differentiating Instruction

Many students with special education needs can achieve the specific learning outcomes of the programs of study, participate in the same kinds of assessment and evaluation activities as their peers, and earn the grades they need to pass and graduate. However, these students may need additional support through adapted programming. The terms "adaptations" and "accommodations" are often used interchangeably. For the purpose of IPPs, accommodations refer to strategies, equipment or other supports that are essential for the student to receive an appropriate education.

*Adaptations refer to ongoing, instructional support that may be either planned or informal, and are generally not recorded in the IPP.*

Adapted programming may be developed and used to support an individual student or a group of students in a specialized or regular stream classroom. Frequently, by using features of adapted programming for the whole class, regular classroom teachers can differentiate instruction so that each student in the classroom has the best opportunity to learn according to his or her needs and abilities. In Alberta classrooms, there may be several students in any classroom who are working below or above grade level and these levels

of readiness may vary across subjects. Ability, learning preferences, strengths and interests vary between students and even within an individual over time. When adapted programming is used to differentiate instruction, all students have equally engaging learning tasks.

Like adapted programming for an individual student, *differentiated instruction involves adjusting instruction to support individual strengths and areas of need*. Many teachers use differentiated instruction to provide a variety of paths for their students to acquire and demonstrate new concepts and skills. Students learn how to take greater responsibility and ownership for their own learning, and participate in all kinds of peer teaching and cooperative learning activities.

To prepare for differentiation, teachers need to collect information about students' readiness levels, strengths, interests and learning preferences. Depending on the age of students, this can be done by surveying past records of student performance, conducting an interest inventory, asking students to respond to an open-ended questionnaire about their learning preferences, or gaining information informally through observation and discussion.

Appendices

See Appendix 6-G for a sample inventory to use with students.

### Planning for differentiation

Teachers can use a framework such as the following to plan for differentiation in the classroom.

1. Identify underlying concepts.

In this step, teachers should identify what concepts they would like all students in the class to understand by the end of the learning activity or unit. It is important to separate the *concepts* from the content used to develop these concepts. Different content may be necessary for students with different levels of skill, however, at the end of the learning activity, all students should have a similar understanding of the concept, taking into consideration the level at which they are working.

Sample strategies

2. Choose instructional strategies.

The concepts should be presented in such a way that all students are able to gain an appropriate degree of knowledge. Consider the following samples of effective instructional strategies for differentiating instruction.

- Present new material in short periods of time through varied activities.
- Use materials at a variety of difficulty levels.
- Begin instruction at the individual student's current level of functioning.
- Stand close to students who need extra help.
- Modify pace of instruction.

- Simplify instructions.
- Write instructions on board.
- Ask students to repeat instructions or paraphrase what has been presented.
- Demonstrate, model or act out instructions.
- Complete the first example with students.
- Use a multisensory approach. For example, a lesson on recycling might include a video about recycling, a display of recycled products and a hands-on activity.
- Present concepts in as concrete a way as possible.
- Use pictures and concrete materials.
- Use different coloured chalk or pens.
- Break information into steps.
- Provide additional time to preview materials and/or complete tasks.
- Adapt level of questioning.
- Use advanced organizers and graphic organizers.
- Provide brainstorming opportunities that allow students to learn from and build on the ideas of others.

### 3. Choose strategies for student practice.

Use a variety of practice activities and, wherever possible, provide students with guided choices for practice. This may require adapting how students participate, providing adapted materials or adapting goals for individual students. Each student should participate according to his or her level of skill.

The following chart shows examples of different modes for student practice.

Verbalize	Write	Create	Perform	Solve
Oral report Panel discussion Debate Games Brainstorming Oral questions and answers Interviews	Research paper Poems Essays Stories Diaries Plays Cookbooks	Diorama Collage Painting Model Pictograph Mural Bulletin board Games Inventions	Simulation Role-play Drama Pantomime Puppet show Radio Commercials	Puzzles Problems Riddles Games Brainteasers Charades

### 4. Choose strategies for assessment and evaluation.

- Identify a variety of ways students can demonstrate their mastery of the objectives and their understanding of the concepts. The criteria for evaluation should be determined by the student's needs and abilities.

## Strategy instruction

Accommodations and adapted programming can provide students with special education needs the opportunity to explore concepts, participate in the classroom and demonstrate knowledge according to their ability levels. However, for many students it is also important to help them increase their ability levels by building a repertoire of cognitive strategies they can use to be more effective learners. *Cognitive strategies are tactics that support learners as they develop and internalize procedures for performing higher-level tasks.* There are a wide variety of cognitive strategies to choose from, especially in the areas of reading comprehension, problem solving, study skills and test taking. For sample strategies, see the following Alberta Education resources:

For more information

- *Teaching Students with Learning Disabilities* (1996), Book 6 in the *Programming for Students with Special Needs* series, pages 91–215
- *Unlocking Potential: Key Components of Programming for Students with Learning Disabilities* (2003), pages 53–71
- *Teaching Students with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder* (2004), Book 10 in the *Programming for Students with Special Needs* series, pages 27–49, 51–71 and 73–109.

Teaching cognitive strategies can help students with special education needs take ownership for their role in learning, and become more active and purposeful learners, thinkers and problem solvers. Strategy instruction is initially teacher-driven, with the teacher providing structured opportunities to learn, practise and develop strategies. However, students should be encouraged to become aware of and monitor their own strategic processes as much as possible. Students need to know the purpose and limitations of the strategies, as well as when and where to use different strategies, so that they can eventually learn to rely on themselves rather than on the teacher.

Consider the following guidelines for teaching learning strategies.

- Match strategies to the requirements of the learning task. For example, if the learning goal involves retaining the main ideas in a piece of factual writing, the student might be directed to use a chunking strategy to increase the amount of information held in short-term memory. The strategy must be developmentally appropriate for the student.
- Provide strategy instruction consistent with the student's current knowledge and skill level. While learning strategies designed for specific content areas can be effective, initially more general learning strategies should be taught.
- Provide opportunities for extensive practice in strategy use. Practice helps students to spontaneously produce the strategy and to generalize the strategy across a wide range of content areas and situations.
- Prompt students to use specific strategies at appropriate times. Some students with special education needs may require explicit prompting to help develop their ability to transfer the strategy to different but related tasks (Gagné and Driscoll 1988).

- Record strategies that work particularly well for individual students in their IPP. This is valuable information that teachers in future grades can use to ensure they are building on students' previous success.

## Understanding Modified Programming

Even with accommodations, differentiated instruction and learning strategies, not all students with special education needs are able to meet all of the requirements of the regular programs of study. Some students may not be able to work at grade level or pass the required courses for graduation. These students may require a modified program to meet their educational needs.

*A modified program has learning outcomes that are significantly different from the provincial programs of study and are specifically selected to meet the student's special education needs. Changes to the outcomes are designed to provide the student the opportunity to participate meaningfully and productively across a variety of learning experiences and environments. Modifications may include changes in instruction level, content and/or performance criteria.*

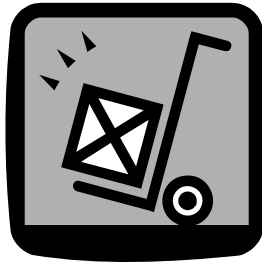
Common examples of modified programming include:

- modifying learning outcomes by simplifying key concepts, major understandings and skills in content areas
- omitting assignments that require timed situations or limiting assignments to a certain type
- adapting or simplifying texts to address students' level of ability and understanding
- lowering the reading level of assignments, quizzes or tests.

For more information

Students who are gifted may also require modified programming. See Chapter 11: *Planning for Students Who are Gifted* for more discussion of the IPP process for students who are gifted.

## Appendices



These tools are available in PDF format at [www.education.gov.ab.ca/k\\_12/special\\_needs/resource.asp](http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/k_12/special_needs/resource.asp) and on the CD-ROM packaged with the print version of this resource.

# Selecting Accommodations and Strategies

The purpose of these sample tools is to enrich the IPP process. These tools should be used selectively and can be adapted to best meet the needs of individual students. Many of these tools will be used informally as part of the IPP development process and not as products for the student's permanent school record.

- 6-A Sample General Accommodations
- 6-B Sample Academic and Instructional Accommodations
- 6-C Sample Guidelines for Using Readers and Scribes
- 6-D Accommodations for Writing Provincial Achievement Tests and Diploma Examinations
- 6-E Sample Questions Parents Might Ask About Accommodations
- 6-F Sample Form for Reviewing the Effectiveness of an Accommodation
- 6-G What Works for Me Inventory
- 6-H Instructional Planning Guide for Differentiation



## Sample General Accommodations

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Completed by \_\_\_\_\_

### Environmental

- Seat student near teacher
- Seat student in an area with minimal distractions
- Seat student near a positive peer model
- Stand near student when giving instructions
- Provide access to study carrel
- Use a desktop easel or slant board to raise reading materials
- Allow student to move around the classroom
- Modify text materials by adding, adapting or substituting information
- Make materials self-correcting
- Highlight important concepts and information and/or passages
- Prepare recordings of reading/textbook materials, tasks
- Provide an extra textbook for home use
- Provide graph paper or large spaced paper for writing
- Allow use of personal word lists, cue cards
- Increase use of pictures, diagrams, concrete manipulators
- Increase print size in photocopying
- Provide a visual summary of the daily schedule
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

### Instructional

- Vary amount of material to be learned
- Vary amount of material to be practised
- Vary time for practice activities
- Use advance organizers and graphic organizers
- Provide an outline or study guide
- Use assignment notebooks or homework checklists
- Repeat directions or have student repeat directions
- Shorten directions
- Highlight instructions
- Pair written instructions with oral instructions
- Reduce number of tasks required in assignments
- Break long-term assignments into shorter tasks
- Use strategies to enhance recall, e.g., cues, cloze





Appendix 6-A

## Sample General Accommodations (continued) page 2/2

### Instructional (continued)

- Accept dictated or parent-assisted homework assignments
- Provide extra assignment time
- Provide models of written work or other assignments to guide students (e.g., sentence, paragraph, book report, short story, poem, essay)
- Permit student to print
- Provide a student buddy for reading
- Provide access to peer or cross-aged tutoring
- Provide time with a teacher assistant
- Provide nonverbal reminders for student to stay on task
- Provide immediate positive reinforcement for behaviour (e.g., verbal praise, tangible reinforcers, notes home, progress charts)
- Implement self-monitoring systems so student takes responsibility for own behaviour
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

### Assessment

- Adjust the test appearance, e.g., margins, spacing
- Adjust the test design (T/F, multiple choice, matching)
- Adjust to recall with cues, cloze, word lists
- Vary test administration, e.g., small groups, individual
- Record test questions
- Reduce number of test items or select items specific to ability level
- Give extra test time
- Permit breaks during tests
- Adjust readability of test
- Allow alternative formats such as webs or key points in place of essays or long answers
- Read test questions
- Allow use of a scribe or a reader
- Allow oral exams
- Practise taking similar test questions
- Other \_\_\_\_\_



## Sample Academic and Instructional Accommodations

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Completed by \_\_\_\_\_

Reading Difficulties	Written Expression Difficulties	Fine and Gross Motor Difficulties
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Use less difficult/alternative reading material</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Identify/define words prior to reading</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Reduce amount of reading required</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Allow alternative methods of data collection (dictation, interviews, fact sheets)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Set time limits for specific task completion</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Enlarge text of worksheets, reading material and tests</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Limit words on a page</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Extend time to complete assignments</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Read directions several times at start of assignments and tests</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide additional repetition and guided practice of directions, skills and concepts</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Use assistive technology (optical character recognition system, books on tape/CD, screen readers)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Reduce volume or requirements for written work, e.g., by accepting an outline or point-form notes</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Break long-term assignments into manageable tasks</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Extend timelines for completing assignments</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Offer alternative assignments</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Allow student to work on homework at school</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Allow alternative methods of data collection (dictation, interviews, fact sheets)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Permit use of scribe or word processor for answers</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Waive spelling, punctuation and paragraphing requirements</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Use assistive technology (word processor, spell-check device, grammar-check device, text-to-speech software)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Use assistive and adaptive devices (slant boards/desktop easels) to display written material               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– pencil or pen adapted in size or grip diameter</li> <li>– alternative keyboard</li> <li>– portable word processor</li> </ul> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Set realistic and mutually agreed-upon expectations for neatness and organization</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Reduce or eliminate the need to copy from a text or board               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– provide copies of notes</li> <li>– permit student to photocopy a peer's notes</li> <li>– provide carbon/NCR paper to a peer to allow a duplicate copy of notes to be made</li> </ul> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Extend time to complete assignments</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Alter the size, shape or location of the space provided for answers</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Accept keyword responses instead of complete sentences</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Allow student to type answers or to answer orally instead of in writing</li> </ul>

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Sample Academic and Instructional Accommodations  
(continued) page 2/2

Attention Difficulties	Memory Difficulties
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide alternative seating               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– near teacher</li> <li>– facing teacher</li> <li>– at front of class, between well-focused students, away from distractions</li> </ul> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide additional or personal work space (quiet area for study, extra seat or table, “time-out” spot, study carrels)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Permit movement during class activities and testing sessions</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide directions in written form               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– on board</li> <li>– on worksheets</li> <li>– copied in assignment book by student</li> </ul> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Set time limits for specific task completion</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Extend time to complete tests and assignments</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Use multiple testing sessions for longer tests</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Use place markers, special paper, graph paper or writing templates to allow student to maintain position better or focus attention</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide cues, e.g., arrows, stop signs, on worksheets and tests</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide a quiet, distraction-free area for completing assignments and tests</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Allow student to wear noise buffer device such as headphones to screen out distracting sounds</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide checklists for long, detailed assignments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide a written outline</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide directions in written form               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– on board</li> <li>– on worksheets</li> <li>– copied in assignment book by student</li> </ul> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide a specific process for turning in completed assignments</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide checklists for long, detailed assignments</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Read and discuss standard directions several times at start of exam</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide cues, e.g., arrows, stop signs, on worksheets and tests</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Allow student to use reference aids such as dictionaries, word processors or vocabulary cue cards</li> </ul>



## Sample Guidelines for Using Readers and Scribes

If a **reader** is used as an accommodation to assist a student during an assessment or test, consider the following guidelines.

- The reader must read the test questions verbatim (exactly as they appear on the test). A reader may not add emphasis, inflection, or read in such a way as to prompt or guide the student. A reader may not ask leading questions, provide suggestions, provide interpretations or provide word definitions of any kind.
- The reader must read in such a way that the student understands the beginning and end of each sentence and paragraph. Without leading the student, the reader must be aware of and obey all punctuation, and read in such a way that the student understands the use and purpose of the punctuation.
- The reader may spell words when asked to do so by the student. Spelling of words may be necessary for commonly misspelled words and similar sounding words such as “to,” “two” and “too,” or “there,” “they’re” and “their.”
- The reader may repeat readings as often as necessary and must read consistently in the same way each time.
- Students should complete the test in the allotted time.
- A test that is administered using a reader should take place in a separate writing area so that other students who are writing the test are not disturbed.

If a **scribe** is used as an accommodation to assist a student in completing an assignment or test, consider the following guidelines.

- The scribe must record the student’s response verbatim (exactly as the student dictates). A scribe may not reword, correct grammar, add punctuation, indicate paragraphs or otherwise change a student’s answer.
- If the student uses a word that the scribe is not familiar with, the scribe should ask the student to spell it.
- A scribe may not ask leading questions, or provide suggestions or interpretations of any kind.
- The student must indicate the beginning and end of each sentence and paragraph as well as indicating all punctuation marks.
- The student shall review the scribed work and make changes if necessary. At this time, if a student indicates a specific spelling of a word, or makes changes to grammatical elements, sentence structure or paragraph placement, the scribe shall change the response to reflect the student’s instructions.
- A test that is administered using a scribe should take place in a separate writing area so that other students who are writing the test are not disturbed.

For information on using readers and scribes on provincial achievement tests and diploma exams, visit [www.education.gov.ab.ca/k\\_12/testing/achievement/ach\\_gib/accom.asp](http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/k_12/testing/achievement/ach_gib/accom.asp).



Appendix 6-D

## Accommodations for Writing Provincial Achievement Tests and Diploma Examinations

Alberta Education has approved the following accommodations for eligible students during provincial achievement tests and diploma examinations.

Accommodation 1:	CD version of the test for student with visual impairment
Accommodation 2:	CD version of the test for student with learning or physical disability
Accommodation 3:	additional writing time
Accommodation 4:	<b>Diploma examinations:</b> word processor <b>Provincial achievement tests:</b> calculator/multiplication table (for Grade 6 Mathematics Part A only)
Accommodation 5:	scribe
Accommodation 6:	large-print version
Accommodation 7:	Braille version
Accommodation 8:	reader
Accommodation 9:	sign language interpreter
Accommodation 10:	taped response

**Note:** Isolation (i.e., writing the test alone in a distraction-free space) is no longer considered to be an accommodation. Schools may choose to provide it for any student who needs it, either alone or in conjunction with other approved accommodations.

For the most up-to-date information, visit

[www.education.gov.ab.ca/k\\_12/testing/achievement/ach\\_gib/accom.asp](http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/k_12/testing/achievement/ach_gib/accom.asp).



## Sample Questions Parents Might Ask About Accommodations

- What are accommodations?
- Have my child's classroom accommodations been documented on his or her IPP? Why is this important?
- What are the benefits and limitations of using accommodations with my child?
- How have my child's strengths been considered when choosing accommodations?
- How can my child be involved in the selection and evaluation of accommodations?
- Which accommodations are priorities for my child and should be introduced first?
- How will the team make sure other school staff working with my child understand and use these accommodations?
- How does this accommodation fit into the overall culture of my child's classroom? How will my child's accommodations be explained to other children in the class? Will other students in the class be receiving similar accommodations?
- How/when will you be reviewing and evaluating the accommodations?
- How can I reinforce use of accommodations at home?



Appendix 6-F

## Sample Form for Reviewing the Effectiveness of an Accommodation

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher name \_\_\_\_\_

Type of accommodation \_\_\_\_\_

1. Does the student want to use the accommodation? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Does the student have easy access to the accommodation whenever needed? \_\_\_\_\_
3. How often does the student access the accommodation? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Can the student use the accommodation independently? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Does the student require monitoring while using the accommodation? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Does the accommodation seem to be facilitating independence? How? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. Is the accommodation transferable to other classes/grades? \_\_\_\_\_
8. Is it improving the student's quality of learning? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Are there barriers to the use of the accommodation? Specify. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. What can be done to address the barriers? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Student's comments \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Parent's comments \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Teacher's comments \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Other \_\_\_\_\_

Update \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Record a summary of this information on the IPP so that the accommodations that benefit this student will be provided for next year's programming plan.*

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## What Works for Me Inventory

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### A. How I look after myself

- How much sleep do I need? \_\_\_\_\_
- What kind of food makes me feel the most alert? \_\_\_\_\_
- What snacks are good energy sources? \_\_\_\_\_
- What times of the day do I need to eat? \_\_\_\_\_
- What time of the day do I have the most energy? \_\_\_\_\_
- What time of the day do I have the least energy? \_\_\_\_\_
- What type of exercise makes me feel energized? \_\_\_\_\_
- What kinds of activities help me relax? \_\_\_\_\_

### B. Tools that help me learn

- What writing tool works best for me (type of pen, pencil, colour of ink)? \_\_\_\_\_
- What kind of paper helps me keep organized (wide-ruled, unlined, wide margins, prepunched)?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- What colour paper do I find the easiest to read? \_\_\_\_\_
- What binder system works for me? \_\_\_\_\_
- What other supplies help me keep organized, e.g., white-out, self-stick removable notes, ruler?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- What calculator works best for me, e.g., size, features? \_\_\_\_\_
- What spell checker works best for me? \_\_\_\_\_
- What is my favourite dictionary? \_\_\_\_\_
- What other reference books help me learn? \_\_\_\_\_
- What computer programs are helpful to my learning? \_\_\_\_\_

### C. In the classroom

- What seat in the classroom works best for me? \_\_\_\_\_
- What do I read best from?  
\_\_\_ chalkboard \_\_\_ overhead \_\_\_ projector \_\_\_ chart paper \_\_\_ my own copy
- Does the colour of ink (or chalk) make a difference? \_\_\_
- Does the type of printing, e.g., printed, handwritten or typed, make a difference?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Does the size and spacing of print make a difference? \_\_\_\_\_

From Alberta Learning, *Make School Work for You: A Resource for Junior and Senior High Students Who Want to be More Successful Learners* (Edmonton, AB: Alberta Learning, 2001), pp. 85–86.





Appendix 6-G

What Works for Me Inventory  
(continued) page 2/2

D. Rank in order from 1 to 12 which directions work best for me:

- \_\_\_ teacher explains aloud
- \_\_\_ teacher writes directions on the board
- \_\_\_ teacher does example on the board
- \_\_\_ teacher asks another student to demonstrate
- \_\_\_ teacher asks all students to try a sample at their desks
- \_\_\_ I read the directions while the teacher reads them
- \_\_\_ I read the directions on my own
- \_\_\_ teacher shows me at my desk
- \_\_\_ another student explains a second time and answers my questions
- \_\_\_ I watch what another student does
- \_\_\_ I try it on my own and then check with the teacher
- \_\_\_ I try it on my own and then compare with another student

E. Tricks I use to keep myself organized:

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F. Tricks I use to keep myself focused and on task in class:

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G. Special things that teachers can do to help me learn:

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## Instructional Planning Guide for Differentiation

As you design learning activities, consider students' individual needs and learning profiles to determine the strategies and adaptations that will contribute to success.

### Key Concepts

- Identify the key concepts of the learning activity.
  - Consider how the activity has been designed to motivate and engage student interest.
  - Determine how to present an overview of the learning activity.
  - Ensure that the learning activity provides opportunities for students to relate the key concepts to their own experiences or understanding.
  - Build in opportunities to make connections between what the students know and what they are learning.

### Outcomes

- Determine the outcomes that students can reasonably accomplish.
  - Select fewer outcomes, partial outcomes or outcomes from a different grade level if necessary.
- Determine what the students will be able to demonstrate as a result of this learning activity.
  - Consider the accommodations, modifications and adaptations necessary to ensure student success in achieving all or part of the outcomes.

### Assessment

- Decide what evidence will show whether the students have achieved the outcomes.
- Determine the best way for students to demonstrate their learning.
  - Provide assessment options for students to “show what they know.”
- Make necessary preparations for alternative testing procedures, resources and materials.
  - Does the student need:
    - \_\_\_ a tape recording of the test
    - \_\_\_ a scribe to write down his or ideas or answers
    - \_\_\_ the test questions read aloud
    - \_\_\_ a time extension
    - \_\_\_ fewer questions?
- Record important assignment and text due dates on a master calendar and have students transpose these dates into their agendas.
  - Show students how to plan for longer assignments by “back-planning” on a calendar.
  - Show students how to study for an upcoming test.
  - Provide students with a study guide of important skills and concepts.

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Appendix 6-H

## Instructional Planning Guide for Differentiation (continued) page 2/4

- Determine the focus of the assessment for evaluation purposes.  
For example, if you are evaluating students on their understanding of the content of material, do not penalize for spelling errors or missing punctuation.
- Select or develop rubrics, exemplars and checklists to support student evaluation.
- Provide immediate, specific and constructive feedback.
  - Emphasize the quality of work and perseverance rather than the quantity.
- Provide opportunities for student self-reflection and self-evaluation.
  - Consider necessary alternate assessment options to accommodate different learning styles, interests or strengths.
  - Share assignment criteria lists, checklists, standards and exemplars with students.

### Learning Activities

- Select appropriate instructional strategies and learning activities that will create opportunities for students to successfully achieve the target outcomes.
  - Decide how students will demonstrate their learning.
  - Ensure opportunities for students to use different learning modalities, e.g., visual, auditory, etc.
  - Present and support key concepts and instructions using demonstration, oral and written steps, exemplars of completed assignments.
  - Break down assignments or tasks into smaller, more manageable parts.
  - Give clear, concrete instructions.
    - \_\_\_ Provide a visual reference of the sequence of key steps in completing the assignment.
    - \_\_\_ Provide a checklist of assignment parts for students to self-monitor as tasks are completed.
    - \_\_\_ Support written instructions with picture prompts or highlight directions using a colour-coding system.
    - \_\_\_ Tape record directions or lectures for playback.
    - \_\_\_ Repeat instructions.
    - \_\_\_ Have students recall instructions in sequence.
  - Model and demonstrate to ensure understanding of directions.
  - Check in with student regularly to check on task understanding, and to provide feedback and clarification on specific aspects of the assignment.
  - Highlight key points of lesson orally and visually.
  - Select extension activities that will reinforce and extend learning.
  - Write assignments and homework on chart or blackboard. Ensure that students write down assignments in their agendas.
  - Help students stay on task by employing a cueing strategy.
- Consider how the students will be organized for instruction and the type of grouping that will be most effective (partner, small group, large group).
  - Use flexible groupings to determine the best fit for a particular activity. Decisions about grouping students may be based on the following factors, including learning preferences, interests, readiness, learning needs.



### Resources

- Decide on the resources that will be used for the learning activity including oral, print, media texts and community resources.
  - Locate necessary materials and resources to support different reading levels, learning styles and student needs.
  - Consider using a graphic organizer to present information.
- Prepare resources to assist students with learning difficulties.
  - Rewrite materials at a lower reading level.
  - Provide an advanced organizer for note taking, e.g., fill-in-the-blank or cloze style.
  - Highlight passages of text.
  - Reformat handouts and tests as necessary. For example, provide lines for written responses, put one question per page, rewrite questions or information at a lower reading level, enlarge print and spacing between lines of print.
  - Determine Web-based supports (e.g., simulations).
- Ensure that students have the assistive tools and devices to support their learning style or areas of need.
  - \_\_\_ highlighters, calculators, self-stick removable notes, ruler, markers, erasable pens, adapted scissors, graph paper, special lined paper, pencil grip, date/number line taped to desk
  - \_\_\_ a copy of the lecture notes
  - \_\_\_ enlarged or reduced text
  - \_\_\_ scribe
  - \_\_\_ tape recording
  - \_\_\_ picture prompts
  - \_\_\_ manipulatives
  - \_\_\_ overlays
  - \_\_\_ computers

### Timeline

- Determine an approximate timeline for the learning activity.
  - Determine whether there is a need to compact or extend the study based on student interests or areas of need.
- Consider the pace of the learning activity and the areas of need of the students.
  - Consider ways to change the pace and allow students to focus on task for more condensed periods of time if necessary.
  - Prepare an assignment sheet with task increments and timeline to guide students' completion of the assignment.
  - Provide opportunity for frequent breaks if necessary.
  - Provide time warnings for task completion.
  - Extend deadlines for those students who require more time to complete assignments.



## Instructional Planning Guide for Differentiation (continued) page 4/4

### Learning Environment

- Consider the classroom environment and individual student work space.
  - Provide a quiet work station like a study carrel or corner of the classroom.
  - Plan seating arrangements for those students with attention issues, considering traffic patterns and overt distractions, e.g., windows, door, hallway, computer.
  - Partner students with a peer for support and guidance.
- Consider the organization of notebooks, textbooks, materials and supplies.
  - Provide an alternate place for students to keep books and supplies, e.g., storage tub or book bins.
  - Create a system for colour-coding notebooks.
  - Provide a consistent place to hand in assignments.



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## INDEX

### A

#### accommodations

- about, 1, 5–8, 15
- assessment accommodations (*See* assessment accommodations)
- environmental accommodations (*See* classroom environment)
- how to select, 1
- instructional accommodations (*See* instructional accommodations)
- modified programming, 12
- parent questions about (handout), 20
- during PATS and diploma exams, 4–5, 19
- review of student use of, 8
- review of student use of (template), 21
- student inventory (template), 22–23
- types of (checklist), 14–15

#### assessment accommodations

- about, 3–5, 15
- in differentiated instruction, 10
- in differentiated instruction (checklist), 24–27
- modified programming, 12
- (*See also Chapter 5: Using Classroom Assessment to Support the IPP Process*)

#### assistive technology

- in differentiated instruction (checklist), 26
- (*See also Chapter 9: Infusing Assistive Technology for Learning into the IPP Process*)

#### attention difficulties

- accommodations for (checklist), 17

#### audio recordings, 2

### B

#### bibliography and resources, 11, 29

### C

#### classroom environment

- about environmental accommodations, 2, 14
- differentiated instruction, 8–10
- differentiated instruction planning (checklist), 24–27
- student inventory of strategies (template), 22–23

#### cognitive strategies, 11–12

**D****differentiated instruction**

- about planning for, 8–10
- planning guide (checklist), 24–27

**diploma examinations**

- accommodations during, 4–5
- approved accommodations (handout), 19
- use of readers and scribes (tipsheet), 18

**directions and instructions**

- in differentiated instruction, 25
- student inventory of strategies (template), 23

**E****early childhood students**

- (See *Chapter 10: Getting Off to a Good Start in Early Childhood Services*)

**environmental accommodations** (See classroom environment)**G****gifted students**

- (See *Chapter 11: Planning for Students Who are Gifted*)

**I****individualized program plans (IPPs)**

- reports of accommodations in, 1, 4, 8
- summary of accommodations in (template), 21
- (See also *Chapter 1: Working Through the IPP Process*)

**instructional accommodations**

- about, 3, 14–15
- accommodations (checklist), 16–17
- cognitive strategies, 11–12
- differentiated instruction, 8–10
- differentiated instruction planning (template), 24–27
- modified programming, 12
- student practice modes (chart), 10

**J****junior high students**

- (See *Chapter 12: Promising Practices for Junior and Senior High School*)

**L****learning preferences**

- accommodations suited to, 7

**learning strategies**, 11–12

**M**

**memory difficulties**

accommodations for (checklist), 6–7, 17

**modified programming, 12**

**motor skills**

accommodations for difficulties (checklist), 16

**P**

**parental involvement in IPP process**

accommodation recommendations by, 7

parent questions on accommodations (handout), 20

(See also *Chapter 2: Encouraging Parent Involvement*)

**provincial achievement tests (PATS)**

accommodations during, 4

approved accommodations (handout), 19

use of readers and scribes (tipsheet), 18

**R**

**reading skills**

accommodations for difficulties (checklist), 16

accommodations for PATs and diploma exams, 19

use of readers and scribes (tipsheet), 18

**reviews and revisions to IPPs**

accommodations review by students, 8

review form (template), 21

**S**

**scribes**

use of (tipsheet), 18

**senior high students**

diploma exams (See diploma examinations)

(See also *Chapter 12: Promising Practices for Junior and Senior High School*)

**strengths and needs**

accommodations related to, 6

**student involvement in IPP process**

accommodations selected by, 5, 7

instruction in use of accommodations, 8

student inventory of strategies (template), 22–23

(See also *Chapter 3: Supporting Student Participation*)

**support services**

collaboration for instructional strategies, 7

(See also *Chapter 4: Creating a Network of Support*)

**T**

**transition plans**

accommodations summary in, 21

(See also *Chapter 8: Planning for Transitions*)

**V**

**visual disabilities**

- accommodations during provincial exams (*See* diploma examinations; provincial achievement tests)
- audio recordings, 2

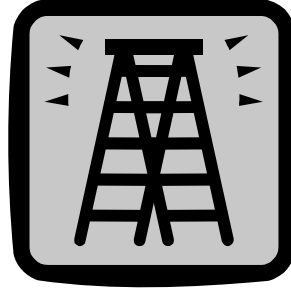
**W**

**work habits**

- student inventory of strategies (template), 22–23

**writing skills**

- accommodations for difficulties (checklist), 16
- accommodations for PATs and diploma exams, 19
- use of readers and scribes (tipsheet), 18



Identifying  
Student Needs

Chapter 7

# Making Goals Meaningful, Measurable and Manageable

2006

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

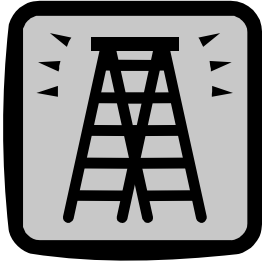
Annual Goals .....	1
Short-term objectives .....	2
Make it Meaningful .....	2
Make it Measurable .....	3
Elements of measurable goals and objectives .....	4
Avoiding vague goals and objectives .....	5
Choosing an area of focus .....	6
Establishing target dates for short-term objectives .....	7
Planning for review dates .....	7
Make it Manageable .....	8
Choosing measurements .....	8
Reviewing finished products .....	9
Administering achievement measures .....	10
Observing students .....	10
Interviewing students .....	11
Considering other variables .....	11
Deciding when to measure .....	13
Involving students .....	13
Sample Strategies for Developing Effective Goals and Objectives .....	13
Four-square organizer for IPPs .....	13
ACT-How? .....	15
IPP storyboard planner .....	16
3-M checklist for IPPs .....	17
Appendices .....	19
7-A: Observable and Measurable Terms Used for Phrasing IPP Goals and Objectives .....	20
7-B: Four-square Organizer for IPPs .....	21
Writing Frame for Objectives .....	22
7-C: ACT-How? .....	23
7-D: IPP Storyboard Planner .....	24
7-E: 3-M Checklist for IPPs .....	25
Bibliography .....	27
Index .....	29





## Chapter 7

# Making Goals Meaningful, Measurable and Manageable



The goals and objectives component of the IPP provides a functional, working document that a teacher can use in planning, developing, implementing and assessing programming for individual students. Goals and objectives that are meaningful, measurable and manageable allow teachers to plan, organize and deliver instruction to meet those goals and objectives, and greatly increase students' chances of success. Meaningful, measurable and manageable goals and objectives also ensure that everyone on a student's learning team has the same expectations for what the student will be doing over the school year, and make it easier to see and communicate what progress the student has made.

A number of school jurisdictions use a version of the SMART acronym to outline the characteristics of a meaningful, measurable and manageable goal or objective.

Specific:	written in clear language
Measurable:	provides information for describing, assessing and evaluating student achievement
Achievable:	realistic for the student
Relevant:	meaningful for the student
Time-limited:	can be accomplished in a specific time period

## Annual Goals

An annual goal is a statement of one *specific* learning outcome that a student could realistically be expected to accomplish in *one year*. It is not a statement of ongoing or lifelong needs. When written effectively, an annual goal is a positive statement (what a student will do) that describes an observable event, allowing the student's learning team to say with certainty whether or not the student has achieved the goal.

Annual goals may be determined at the beginning of the school year or soon after a student is identified as having a special education need. Some schools and jurisdictions find it beneficial to develop new goals and objectives in May for the following school year. With this system it will be necessary to revisit the plan in the fall because summer events, student growth or the new classroom context may be different from what was anticipated. Once annual goals are written, they may be added to or modified throughout the school year—there are many factors that may result in unexpected progress (or lack of progress) by a student, and the IPP process needs to be flexible to respond to and accommodate these factors.

## Short-term objectives

Short-term objectives are the stepping-stones between the current level of performance and the annual goal. They are the pieces necessary to achieve the annual goal and act as indicators that the goal is being achieved. Generally, each long-term goal would be supported by two to five short-term objectives.

Well-written objectives describe concrete, teachable components. Daily instruction is then geared toward achieving the objectives. Some objectives will be sequential while other objectives will simply be related. For some students, and in some situations, it may not be necessary for one objective to be fully mastered before beginning work on the next or a related objective.

Since goals and objectives are based on the needs of the individual student, they vary greatly from one student to the next, depending on the developmental level of the student, the learning context, the future plans of the family and many other factors. A new skill or behaviour that might be an appropriate annual goal for one student could be a short-term objective for another.

## Make it Meaningful

Goals and objectives need to be meaningful to students, their families and their school programming. They should be future-oriented and reflect actual skills that students will need in current and future learning and living environments. Ultimately, attaining the goal should help students become more independent. As much as possible, goals and objectives should be stated in the positive, and incorporate students' strengths and interests. This means using language that students and their parents understand and relate to, and providing a context and rationale that is authentic and respectful.

To be meaningful, goals for students who require IPPs need to be somewhat different from what same-aged peers would be expected to do. For example, a number of Grade 6 students might share a common goal of passing certain unit tests or achieving a Grade 6 level on provincial achievement tests. To make this goal more meaningful for a student with special education needs, it is necessary to identify specific skills and behaviours that will increase the student's success, such as effective test preparation, overcoming test anxiety or the ability to use assistive technology to access grade-level reading material. After a student has mastered these particular skills, they may move from goals and be listed as recommended strategies that support continued success.

In other words, goals and objectives should be closely tied to a student's strengths and/or areas of need. For example, if a student is identified as having a behaviour disorder, it is essential to include at least one goal related to the development of positive alternatives to the challenging behaviour. Strengths and areas of need should be identified based on an analysis of information about the student's assessed level of academic performance or behavioural functioning. It is critical that the assessment information that is used be current, specific, realistic and impartial.

Formal assessments completed as part of the original assessment process to identify students' specific special education needs are a starting point for identifying specific goals. Additional assessment, including classroom assessment, will be needed to generate more specific data that identifies students' current needs in the classroom. Often it is this type of informal assessment, that provides the most relevant baselines and instructional focuses for individual students.

For more information

For more information on classroom assessment, please see Chapter 5: *Using Classroom Assessment to Support the IPP Process.*

Not only does assessment drive the selection of goals, but the type of goal that is determined also influences the selection of assessment measures to use throughout the year. For example, if a student with a behaviour disorder has anger management difficulties, an assessment that provides a baseline of how often, when and with what intensity outbursts happen would provide useful information for both planning of interventions and monitoring progress.

## Make it Measurable

Effective goals and objectives are written in measurable terms. This means that someone else could read this goal and know **specifically** what the learning team wanted a student to achieve or demonstrate. Measuring something means performing an action of some type. For example, to measure someone's weight, that person must stand on a scale; to measure how fast an individual can run means having the individual actually run a certain distance and time that individual's performance. Two important questions to keep in mind when writing measurable goals and objectives are "What do we want this student to be able to do?" and "How will we know that the student has accomplished this?"

Although goals are more general than objectives, they should still be specific enough to provide direction. Measurable goals:

- clarify the specific programming outcomes the student will achieve
- facilitate the development of measurable objectives, which provide direction for instruction
- provide clear expectations for students, parents and teachers about the focus of the IPP so they can more effectively participate in and support planning, intervention and monitoring for student growth

- provide clear criteria so the learning team can say definitively whether the goal was achieved.

## Elements of measurable goals and objectives

Goals and objectives should include a clear indication of the action, context, terms and timeline. Individual teachers, schools or jurisdictions may phrase goals and objectives differently or use different terminology to describe these elements, but each of these components is essential for goals and objectives to be measurable.

**Action:** what the student will know or be able to do, such as:

- *identify the main character in a story*
- *write numerals from 1 to 10*
- *manage zippers*
- *complete written assignments*
- *speak in a calm voice.*

**Context:** when, where or under what conditions the student will do the action, such as:

- *in daily reading assignments*
- *from the board*
- *independently*
- *by the end of class*
- *during class instruction*
- *with other students during small group activities.*

**Terms:** the criteria for successful achievement; how well, how many times or how long the student is expected to perform the task, such as:

- *during two out of three consecutive 80-minute periods*
- *on two occasions during a one-week period*
- *for 15 minutes each day*
- *on two out of three submitted assignments*
- *with 80% accuracy.*

The standard of performance is often determined by the nature of the task. Complete mastery of a task may not be essential before proceeding on to the next task. Remember that it is rare that a student would be expected to complete a task with 100% accuracy at all times (with the exception of some behaviours related to safety). Mastery of skills is generally considered to be 85%.

**Timeline:** the expected achievement date for an objective or for a goal if the goal is written for a shorter period of time than the current school year (e.g., By February 1, the student will ...).

Example

Consider the following examples of measurable goals and objectives, and how they identify the action, context, terms and timeline.

Sample Annual Goals (by the end of the year)	Sample Short-term Objectives
Will read 240 words on a personalized word list of survival sight words with 85% accuracy	By April 15, Marta will correctly read the following survival words: exit, push, pull, Women's, Ladies, washroom, Information, with 80% accuracy.
Will correctly punctuate written work with 85% accuracy	By February 9, Rakesh will correctly use periods and question marks to punctuate written work with 50% accuracy.
Will calculate double-digit subtraction questions with 85% accuracy	By March 2, Raina will calculate double-digit subtraction questions with regrouping with 70% accuracy.
Will work independently at his desk for at least 15 minutes with minimal verbal cues from teacher	By December 12, Jay will work on written assignments at his desk when asked by the teacher for at least 5 consecutive minutes on 5 consecutive school days.

### Avoiding vague goals and objectives

A key consideration for developing effective goals and objectives is whether, if several people evaluated the student's performance, they would come to the same conclusion about achievement. For example, if the goal was "When teased, Richard will walk away without verbal response," observers would likely agree about whether or not Richard achieved that goal. In contrast, if the goal was "Richard will cope appropriately with being teased," evaluators would have more difficulty agreeing whether or not certain responses demonstrated appropriate coping.

Consider the following examples of vague annual goals:

- improve reading comprehension
- achieve a high level of self-help skills
- increase on-task behaviour
- enhance self-esteem
- improve math skills.

These statements are written in open-ended or subjective terms, and do not provide a tangible benchmark of where the student is currently functioning or a clear direction about where to begin planning for the student. These types of statements are not functional for the student or teacher, and make it difficult, if not impossible, to judge whether or not the student has achieved the goal.

The same considerations are true for developing effective objectives, particularly for behavioural goals. A vague behavioural objective, such as a statement about a student being “on task” does not provide any direction about what specifically the student is expected to do. “On task” might refer to remaining seated, completing work or any number of other behaviours. It is critical that the desired behaviour is described specifically, so that the student knows what is expected, and the teacher is able to plan and teach for goal mastery, measure progress and determine whether or not the program is working.

To avoid vague goal statements and objectives, ensure that you have included all of the components of measurable goals or objectives, and choose active verbs that clearly describe a behaviour.

## Appendices

*See Appendix 7-A for a sample list of active verbs.*

### Choosing an area of focus

Most IPPs contain three to five annual goals, but the number will vary depending on the needs of the individual student. In general, the more extensive a student’s needs, the more goals might be needed; however, even in the case of a student with multiple needs, it is best to restrict the number of goals to a reasonable number. In most cases, it is difficult to adequately address more than five to eight goals. When determining the number of goals, it is important to remember that the IPP is only a reflection of the priorities for the student within the total program, and not a description of everything that will be taught.

When the learning team lists areas of need for a student, there may be too many to manage all at once, or some may be dependent upon the achievement of others. In order to prioritize the student’s needs, the team should consider:

- the overall importance of the goal in the long term
- the most pressing current need
- prerequisite or related skills for other goals
- the next developmental skill.

Typical areas of focus include:

- self-help skills (including choice making and personal advocacy)
- prosocial skills (e.g., getting along with others, managing emotions)
- communication
- academic skills (e.g., reading, writing, math, study skills)
- work habits.

If a grades 1–9 student’s modified programming does not follow a graded curriculum, Grade Level of Achievement (GLA) for these students can be reported by indicating the degree of mastery (i.e., all, most, some, none or not applicable) in the following three goal categories:

- foundational skills (e.g., communications, classroom behaviour, gross and fine motor skills)
- academic readiness skills (e.g., readiness skills to prepare student for learning outcomes in the programs of study in Grade 1 and subsequent grade levels)
- life skills (e.g., skills that will assist the student in developing independence in the home, school and community).

Each goal on a student's IPP should be identified if it aligns with one of these categories. Goals should be selected based on a student's individual needs; it may not be necessary or appropriate to have a goal from each or all of the three GLA reporting categories.

It is important that annual goals be realistic and achievable. The learning team needs to evaluate the student's current level of performance and how the student has been progressing so far several times throughout the year. Goals can and should be modified throughout the year based on the student's progress or changing needs.

### Establishing target dates for short-term objectives

Each objective should include a target date for achieving that particular objective. Target dates should be far enough in the future to be able to make progress, and close enough to be able to check to see if the program is on track and allow for modifications as necessary. Most often target dates are set in four- to 12-week periods, but this will vary for different objectives. Sometimes target dates coincide with report card dates, but it is not necessary that all objectives align with these timelines.

A target date is when the objective is reviewed and revised. At this time, revisions should be documented and, if necessary, a new objective and target date set.

An objective that is not achieved may simply be an indicator that something in a student's programming needs to be revised. For example, a prerequisite skill is missing, other strategies or materials are needed, the student was absent for a period of time, or too much progress was expected too quickly. Consistent monitoring and revision of objectives and target dates demonstrates the team's ongoing attention to setting realistic expectations and providing relevant instruction toward achieving a student's annual goals.

### Planning for review dates

IPP reviews are conducted by a student's learning team to determine if overall the IPP plan is still appropriate for the student. Based on this review, the team can make decisions about whether any revisions or modifications need to be made to a student's IPP. Questions related to goals and objectives that might be asked at an IPP review include:



- Are the annual goals still the most appropriate for the student?
- Is the student making adequate progress on the objectives for these goals?
- What is working well and what are the areas of need from an instructional perspective (materials, strategies, different objectives)?
- Is there any new information since the team last met?

## Make it Manageable

“Not everything that is countable counts...”

– Albert Einstein

Goals must not only be measurable, but must actually be measured. How manageable the monitoring and assessment strategy is for a goal will influence whether or not that goal actually gets measured. A confusing or time-consuming data-collection system may result in no data being collected at all. Some measurement statements may not lead to collection of meaningful data, or may not provide the information necessary to determine what modifications are needed if progress is slow or absent. Since meaningful data is related to accountability, it is important to ensure that the measurable outcome component of an IPP goal accurately and easily measures the intent of the goal.

When developing a plan to measure goals, consider questions such as the following:

- What questions need to be addressed through data collection?
- What will it take to conclusively show that the goal was achieved and the student is ready to move on? What is the minimum level of performance the student needs to demonstrate?
- How can the data best be collected?
- What are the possible obstacles to success of the student? How can we measure these obstacles and the impact they are having?

## Choosing measurements

When planning how a goal or objective will be measured, consider the following guidelines.

- **Ensure the measurement is as unobtrusive as possible** and can be made by the classroom teacher in the natural learning setting, within the regular classroom routine and without undue interruption to instruction and learning.
- **Use measures that are easy to understand** (e.g., number of times versus aggregated scores) and that align with the original assessment of needs that is driving this goal.



- **Choose a unit of measurement that is meaningful** to students, parents and the classroom setting. When possible, use natural units such as 4/5 days a week, rather than a more arbitrary unit such as 7/9 days.
- **Be cautious with percentages.** If percentages are used to record infrequently occurring behaviours, the data may overstate the case. On the other hand, if percentages are used with behaviours that occur very frequently, the observation will be time-consuming and the results potentially inaccurate. For example, it would be difficult to record subtle exchanges such as the total number of times a student is invited by other students to join in, not to mention the number of *opportunities* for such a behaviour to occur. For many goals, it is more manageable and accurate to count the number of times a certain observable behaviour occurs, rather than calculate a percentage.
- **Aim for rich data.** Consider measurements that will show not only whether criteria are achieved, but if not, why not.
- **Be willing to reinforce and celebrate small successes.** When setting behavioural goals, consider the impact of the behaviour on the student and the learning environment, as well as the length of time the student has demonstrated this behaviour. Goals that address low intensity behaviours of long standing (e.g., call-outs, nonaggressive use of inappropriate language, etc.) should be directed toward achieving incremental reductions.
- **Target complete nonoccurrence for goals addressing high intensity behaviours that put the student or others at risk.** If it is necessary to address a reduction or elimination of a behaviour, use the “Fair–Pair” rule. This rule suggests that for every behaviour that is targeted for reduction or elimination, identify a corresponding positive or prosocial behaviour to teach or increase in frequency.
- **Focus on how the expected changes will best be seen.** Data should be collected in the easiest but also the most effective manner. The following four strategies for gathering data can be effective and manageable ways to measure student progress:
  - reviewing finished products
  - administering achievement measures
  - observing the student’s performance while completing a task
  - interviewing a student.

Sample strategies

### Reviewing finished products

One of the most common ways to gather data is to review some type of completed product such as a writing assignment, a unit test or a research project. It often works well for determining accuracy and frequency of specific errors such as computation or spelling mistakes. When looking at finished products, consideration may be given to quality, quantity or both.

The main advantage of reviewing finished products is the permanence and durability of the data source. However, reviewing a finished product alone might not provide needed information about the process or strategies that the student used to complete the assignment. For example, it may not provide information about how many errors the student made before getting the correct answer or how long it actually took the student to complete the assignment. Therefore it is important to not only look at a completed product, but also to gather information about *how* it was created and how easy or difficult it was for the student to do.

### Administering achievement measures

The progress of some goals and objectives can be measured effectively with specific achievement tests that align closely with the learning outcomes embedded in the goals and objectives. For example, a jurisdiction writing test such as Edmonton Public's Highest Level of Achievement Tests (HLATs) may provide both a grade level score and a performance level. Since the tests are administered annually, scores can be compared to determine how much growth there has been in an individual student's writing ability.

### Observing students

Another common way to gather data is by observing a student doing a task and noting specific information about what occurs. The two main ways to record information gathered through observation are anecdotal recording and event recording.

**Anecdotal recording** is simply writing a record of what takes place. Anecdotal recording is less objective than many types of data gathering and is useful for activities that do not occur very often. It is important that the person doing the observing includes the same information each time he or she does an observation. Wright (1960) suggests the following guidelines for anecdotal recording.

1. Begin by describing the setting so that it is easier to recall what the context of the observation was. Describe the location of the student in relation to other students or the teacher, the activity that is going on, the noise level, and other significant factors.
2. Include everything the student says and does, including to whom and about what.
3. If there are other students or adults present, note everything they say and do in relation to the observed student.
4. Clearly differentiate any interpretations or impressions from the objective facts of the observation.
5. Indicate the time involved as precisely as possible. "Mary took a long time to write each spelling word" will mean different things to different people; "Mary took approximately three minutes to write each spelling word" communicates more useful information.

Anecdotal recording can be made more manageable by targeting specific behaviours or skill areas. Simple recording formats that include columns for important information such as the time, setting, persons involved, outcome, etc., can also be helpful in focusing the anecdotal record keeping process.

**Event recording** means noting each time a specific event occurs. Event recording can be used to count and document a wide range of behaviours, as long as the event or behaviour is discrete—in other words, something is happening that can be seen and that has an obvious beginning and end.

Event recording can be an accurate and practical way to gather information. There are a number of creative ways for teachers to discreetly record this kind of data without interrupting instruction, such as making a check mark on a card or transferring beans from one pocket to the other and then recording the total at the end of the instruction.

**Probe data** means setting a planned and manageable schedule to collect observations or other forms of data on skills or behaviours that occur too frequently for continuous recording. For example, a teacher might want to collect data on the frequency of a student’s interruptions during the first block after lunch every Friday. Similarly, as an indicator of organizational skills, a teacher may do four binder checks over one reporting period for three students with learning disabilities. This sampling of behaviour can provide a useful “snapshot” of a student’s performance.

For more information

For more information on observing, see Chapter 5: *Using Classroom Assessment to Support the IPP Process*.

### Interviewing students

Sometimes interviewing is a simple and effective way to gather necessary information, especially from students who are not strong readers or writers. A structured interview uses a planned and sometimes standard set of questions. However, the open-ended nature of these questions, and the ability to use additional spontaneous probing questions, creates a flexibility that can generate richer data. Interviews can provide in-depth information on specific experiences, as well as information about how the student reflects upon and understands the experience. For example, well-developed interview questions can be used to debrief a research project or science inquiry. Interviews can also provide insight into individual students’ attitudes and beliefs about certain aspects of learning, such as how they view reading, the strategies they use to solve difficult problems in math or how they make decisions when faced with a specific social challenge.

### Considering other variables

When developing measures, consider other variables that can be measured, such as speed, accuracy, spontaneity and duration.

### Measuring speed

The rate or speed at which a student completes a task may be significant in determining the student's growth and level of performance. For example, if it is reported that a student completes five math equations correctly, this could be interpreted as the student demonstrating mastery. However, if the collected data also reports that the student spent an hour and a half completing those five equations, then mastery would not be assumed. To be truly measurable, some goals will require that speed be part of the conditions that indicate success.

### Measuring accuracy

When it is important to measure accuracy as part of a student's performance, it will be necessary to compare what happens in different learning situations and at different intervals of the school year. This may be as simple as looking at the percentage of misspelled words on a student's written assignment. However, it is important to consider other factors such as how the student ensured accuracy (e.g., did he or she use a spell checker) or what other factors might have influenced the student's performance (e.g., emotional state). To identify and judge these factors, it may be necessary to observe the student at work.

### Measuring spontaneity

If part of a student's goal is to initiate communication, make a request or take other spontaneous actions, observation can be an effective way to collect this data. In some instances, it may also be necessary to document the number and types of *opportunities* to take the action that were available to the student. It may also be necessary to ask additional questions about factors that may have impacted on the student's performance. For example, to increase efficiency, school staff often try to make materials readily available to students; as a result, a student with an IPP goal of spontaneously requesting materials may have less opportunity or reason to achieve that goal. If the IPP goal clearly states that certain spontaneous actions are a desired behaviour, staff will be more aware of how they can support this learning by building in authentic opportunities for students to learn and practise these new behaviours.

### Measuring duration

If an IPP goal requires a student to maintain interest, attend to an event or persevere with a task, observation can be an effective way to gather this data. Observation may also provide information on what is affecting the duration of the behaviour. For example, were there visual distractions? Did the student become tired? Were there too many steps in the task so the student became overwhelmed?

Some students may be able to help monitor their own ability to attend by logging the time they start an activity and the time they stop. Stopwatches, timers and other tools may be used by an observer or, when possible, the student, to document and increase the ability to persevere or attend.

## Deciding when to measure

Frequent data collection increases the chances of seeing patterns and trends in the data and using this information to make decisions about instruction and interventions, but it is important that the frequency of data collection not have a negative impact on the manageability of measuring a goal. Generally, it is not necessary that data collection be continuous or ongoing. It might be once a day, every few days, once a week or at the end of the reporting period. The frequency of the data collection will depend on how many opportunities there are to perform the specific action, the amount and speed of change expected, and the time available to collect it. The learning team will need to determine an appropriate schedule for data gathering.

## Involving students

As much as possible, students should be involved in the gathering and analysis of data related to their goals and objectives. This involvement increases students' self-knowledge, encourages the development of self-monitoring skills and may increase motivation. Simple checklists, placing counters in jars and bar graphs are some of the strategies students can be taught and encouraged to use.

Sample strategies

## Sample Strategies for Developing Effective Goals and Objectives

There are numerous templates and strategies for developing meaningful, measurable and manageable goals. Consider the following four sample strategies:

- Four-square organizer
- ACT-How?
- IPP storyboard planner
- 3-M checklist for IPPs.

### Four-square organizer for IPPs

Edmonton Public Schools has developed a four-square organizer for identifying the elements of a measurable objective. Information from the organizer can then be transferred to a writing frame to create a short-term objective statement. This organizer describes a short-term objective as containing the following components:

- **achievement date**—the date an objective will be achieved
- **expected behaviour**—what the student will know or be able to do when the objective is achieved. The expected behaviour must be measurable and/or observable (e.g., points to, writes, counts, reads, attends, names)
- **conditions** under which the student will perform the task (e.g., one-to-one assistance, with prompting, independently, with specialized equipment)
- **criteria** for measurement—the standard of performance that defines success (e.g., 10 times over a two-week period, according to the directions, in at least three natural settings, with 80 percent accuracy).

### Four-square Organizer for IPPs<sup>1</sup>

Goal A : Henry will read a variety of Grade 4 level texts with fluency and 90% accuracy.

Objective 1

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>ACHIEVEMENT DATE</b></p> <p><i>by October 30, 200x</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>EXPECTED BEHAVIOUR</b></p> <p><i>Henry will read Grade 3 text material</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>CONDITIONS</b> under which the student will perform the task</p> <p><i>to the teacher assistant</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>CRITERIA</b> for measurement</p> <p><i>90% accuracy</i></p>

### Writing Frame for Objectives

Goal A : Henry will read a variety of Grade 4 level texts with fluency and 90% accuracy.

Objective 1

Achievement Date: *October 30, 200x*

Expected behaviour: *Henry will read Grade 3 text material*

Conditions under which the student will perform the task: *to the teacher assistant*

Criteria for measurement: *90% accuracy*

**Appendices**

See Appendix 7-B for a blackline master of the four-square organizer and writing frame.

1. Forms adapted with permission from Edmonton Public Schools, *Individualized Program Plan Guidebook* (Edmonton, AB: Edmonton Public Schools, 2005), pp. 43, 45.

### ACT-How?

Another popular template for developing objectives is based on the acronym ACT-How? Consider the annual goal “Sandy will write stories at the Grade 4 level, meeting criteria on class-generated rubric.” An objective supporting this goal might look like:

- Action:** Sandy will compose five short stories  
**Context:** using a word prediction program (CoWriter) and a word processor with spell check  
**Terms:** of at least fifteen complete, correct sentences  
**How:** Evaluation of writing sample using class-generated rubric

### ACT-How?

Long-term goal:

*Sandy will write stories at the Grade 4 level, meeting criteria on class-generated rubric.*

Short-term objective # 1

**A** Action – What does the student need to do?  
*Sandy will compose five short stories*

**C** Context – Where or when does the student need to do this action?  
*using a word prediction program (CoWriter) and a word processor with spell check*

**T** Terms – What are the indications that will show the student achieved this objective?  
*of at least fifteen complete, correct sentences*

### HOW?

**H**ow will we collect the data to show student achievement of this objective?  
*Evaluation of writing sample using class-generated rubric*

Appendices

See Appendix 7-C for a blackline master of the ACT-How template.



## IPP storyboard planner

The third sample template is a one-page organizer that creates a storyboard illustrating how a goal and its objectives are linked to current level of functioning, accommodations and strategies, and assessments.

### IPP Storyboard Planner

#### Current level of performance

*Omar finds independent work a challenge. When given time to work by himself on assignments, he becomes distracted, initiating conversations with classmates. This has become increasingly a concern as he finishes approximately 1/5 assignments.*

#### Assessment tools/strategies

*Self-monitoring of completed assignments (with teacher verification)*

#### Objectives

1. *Omar will work independently in an assigned "quiet corner" for at least 30 minutes without reminders to stay on task for 5 consecutive L.A. periods.*

Review date November 30     Mastered     Not yet

2. *Omar will work independently in an assigned seat among his classmates for at least 30 minutes without needing verbal reminders for on-task behaviour for 5 consecutive L.A. periods.*

Review date March 30     Mastered     Not yet

3. *Omar will satisfactorily complete at least 80% of in-class assignments for a two-week period in L.A.*

Review date June 30     Mastered     Not yet

#### Supporting instructional strategies and accommodations

1. *Strategic seating arrangements*
2. *Behaviour contract that includes teacher support will be provided twice during each writing task*

#### Annual goal

*Omar will complete 80% of his in-class assignments at a satisfactory level for all core subjects in a one-month period.*

#### Final review date \_\_\_\_\_

Mastered     Not yet

Comments

Appendices

See Appendix 7-D for a blackline master of the IPP storyboard planner.



### 3-M checklist for IPPs

The final sample strategy in this chapter is a checklist that the learning team can use to assess if the goals and objectives they develop have “sticking power” or are 3-M—meaningful, measurable and manageable.

**Is the IPP goal or objective a 3-M goal or objective? Is it ...**

#### Meaningful?

- Is meaningful to the student and his or her family
- Reflects an actual skill or behaviour that the student will need in current or future learning and living environments
- Will help the student become more independent
- Is specific to the student’s areas of need
- Builds on the student’s strengths and interests
- Is stated in student-friendly language

#### Measurable?

- Describes an observable performance or behaviour (what the student will be doing)
- Describes any important conditions under which the behaviour must occur
- Contains measurable criteria which specify the level at which the student’s performance will be acceptable
- Identifies how to measure whether the goals and objectives have been accomplished
- Will yield the same conclusion if measured by several people
- Allows a calculation of how much progress is made
- Can be measured without additional information

#### Manageable?

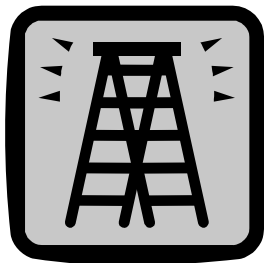
- Can be measured in the natural learning setting within the regular classroom routine
- Can be measured by the classroom teacher without undue interruption to instruction or learning
- Does not require additional mathematical calculations
- Uses a unit of measurement that is meaningful to students, parents and other teachers
- Involves student in the gathering and analysis of data, if possible

Appendices

See Appendix 7-E for a sample checklist for meaningful, measurable and manageable goals.



## Appendices



These tools are available in PDF format at [www.education.gov.ab.ca/k\\_12/special\\_needs/resource.asp](http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/k_12/special_needs/resource.asp) and on the CD-ROM packaged with the print version of this resource.

## Making Goals Meaningful, Measurable and Manageable

The purpose of these sample tools is to enrich the IPP process. These tools should be used selectively and can be adapted to best meet the needs of individual students. Many of these tools will be used informally as part of the IPP development process and not as products for the student's permanent school record.

- 7-A Observable and Measurable Terms Used for Phrasing IPP Goals and Objectives
- 7-B Four-square Organizer for IPPs Writing Frame for Objectives
- 7-C ACT-How?
- 7-D IPP Storyboard Planner
- 7-E 3-M Checklist for IPPs



## Observable and Measurable Terms Used for Phrasing IPP Goals and Objectives

Able to	Explains	Predicts
Analyses	Expresses	Prepares
Applies	Follows (e.g., directions, rules)	Prints
Arranges	Generalizes	Produces
Assesses	Gives (e.g., support, reasons)	Proposes
Calculates	Greets	Ranks
Chooses (between, from)	Groups	Rates
Classifies	Identifies (e.g., objects, emotions)	Reacts appropriately
Compares	Illustrates	Reads
Constructs	Indicates	Recites
Copies	Initiates (e.g., conversation, activity)	Relates
Counts	Interacts	Repeats
Creates	Investigates	Responds to
Decides	Lists	Selects
Defines	Locates	Shares
Demonstrates	Maintains (e.g., eye contact, self-control)	Shows
Describes	Makes	Solves
Designs	Matches	Speaks
Determines	Measures	Specifies
Develops	Names	States (e.g., names of, reasons for)
Differentiates	Orders	Takes (e.g., turns, care of)
Discriminates	Organizes	Tells
Discusses	Participates	Traces
Distinguishes	Points to	Translates
Draws	Practises	Uses (e.g., time, manners, objects)
Engages in		Verbalizes
Estimates		Writes
Examines		



Appendix 7-B

# Four-square Organizer for IPPs

Long-term goal: \_\_\_\_\_

Objective \_\_\_\_\_

<p><b>ACHIEVEMENT DATE</b></p>	<p><b>EXPECTED BEHAVIOUR</b></p>
--------------------------------	----------------------------------

<p><b>CONDITIONS</b> under which the student will perform the task</p>	<p><b>CRITERIA</b> for measurement</p>
----------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------

Short-term objective: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

This appendix adapted with permission from Edmonton Public Schools, *Individualized Program Plan Guidebook* (Edmonton, AB: Edmonton Public Schools, 2005), pp. 43, 45.



# Writing Frame for Objectives (continued) page 2/2

Goal \_\_\_\_\_: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Supporting Objectives

Achievement date: \_\_\_\_\_

Expected behaviour: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Conditions under which the student will perform the task:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Criteria for measurement: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Achievement date: \_\_\_\_\_

Expected behaviour: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Conditions under which the student will perform the task:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Criteria for measurement: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Achievement date: \_\_\_\_\_

Expected behaviour: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Conditions under which the student will perform the task:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Criteria for measurement: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



Appendix 7-C

## ACT-How?

Long-term goal:

---

---

Short-term objective # \_\_\_\_\_

**A** Action – What does the student need to do?

**C** Context – Where or when does the student need to do this action?

**T** Terms – What are the indications that will show the student achieved this objective?

### HOW?

**H**ow will we collect the data to show student achievement of this objective?



# IPP Storyboard Planner

Individualized Program Planning

Current level of performance

---



---



---

Assessment tools/strategies

Objectives

1. 

---

---

Review date \_\_\_\_\_  Mastered  Not yet

2. 

---

---

Review date \_\_\_\_\_  Mastered  Not yet

3. 

---

---

Review date \_\_\_\_\_  Mastered  Not yet

Supporting instructional strategies and accommodations

Annual goal

---



---



---



---

Final review date \_\_\_\_\_

Mastered  Not yet

Comments

---



---



---





Appendix 7-E

## 3-M Checklist for IPPs

Is the IPP goal or objective a 3-M goal or objective? Is it ...

### *Meaningful?*

- Is meaningful to the student and his or her family
- Reflects an actual skill or behaviour that the student will need in current or future learning and living environments
- Will help the student become more independent
- Is specific to the student's areas of need
- Builds on the student's strengths and interests
- Is stated in student-friendly language

### *Measurable?*

- Describes an observable performance or behaviour (what the student will be doing)
- Describes any important conditions under which the behaviour must occur
- Contains measurable criteria which specify the level at which the student's performance will be acceptable
- Identifies how to measure whether the goals and objectives have been accomplished
- Will yield the same conclusion if measured by several people
- Allows a calculation of how much progress is made
- Can be measured without additional information

### *Manageable?*

- Can be measured in the natural learning setting within the regular classroom routine
- Can be measured by the classroom teacher without undue interruption to instruction or learning
- Does not require additional mathematical calculations
- Uses a unit of measurement that is meaningful to students, parents and other teachers
- Involves student in the gathering and analysis of data, if possible



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## INDEX

### A

#### academic skills

as area of focus, 6–7

#### accommodations and strategies

IPP storyboard planner for, 16

IPP storyboard planner for (template), 24

(See also *Chapter 6: Selecting Accommodations and Strategies*)

#### anecdotal records for assessments, 10–11

#### annual goals

about, 1–2

IPP sample, 5

writing tips on, 5–6

#### area of focus

how to choose, 6–7

#### assessments and measurements

about, 3–6

about speed, accuracy, spontaneity, duration, 11–12

how to choose, 8–9

use of finished products for, 9–10

use of interviews with students, 11

use of jurisdictional tests, 10

use of observations of students, 10–11

when to measure, 13

(See also *Chapter 5: Using Classroom Assessment to Support the IPP Process*)

#### assistive technology

(See *Chapter 9: Infusing Assistive Technology for Learning into the IPP Process*)

### B

#### bibliography, 27

### C

#### classroom observations, 10–11

#### communication skills

as area of focus, 6–7

### E

#### early childhood students

(See *Chapter 10: Getting Off to a Good Start in Early Childhood Services*)

#### event recording for assessments, 11

**F****Fair-Pair rule**

for social skills, 9

**four-square organizer for IPPs (planner)**, 13–14, 21–22

**G****gifted students**

(See *Chapter 11: Planning for Students Who are Gifted*)

**goals and objectives**

about, 1–2, 5

annual goals, 1, 5–7

area of focus for, 6–7

IPP sample, 5

manageable, 8, 17

meaningful, 2–3, 17 (See also meaningful goals and objectives)

measurable, 3–6 (See also assessments and measurements)

objectives, 1–2, 5, 7

planners for (See planners for goals and objectives)

review of, 7–8

timelines for, 1, 4, 7

writing tips on, 5–6, 20–22

**Grade Level of Achievement (GLA) reports**, 6–7

**I****individualized program plans (IPPs)**

IPP sample goals and objectives, 5

planners for writing (See planners for goals and objectives)

(See also *Chapter 1: Working Through the IPP Process*)

**instructional strategies**

objectives related to, 2

**interviewing students**

for assessment of goals and objectives, 11

**IPP storyboard planner**, 16, 24

**J****junior and senior high students**

(See *Chapter 12: Promising Practices for Junior and Senior High School*)

**L****life skills**

as area of focus, 5–6

**M**

**3-M checklist for IPPs (planner)**, 17, 25

**manageable goals and objectives**

about, 8, 17

checklist for, 17, 25

planners for (See planners for goals and objectives)

writing tips (See writing tips)

**meaningful goals and objectives**

- about, 2–3
- checklist for, 17, 25
- planners for (*See* planners for goals and objectives)
- units of measurement as, 9
- writing tips (*See* writing tips)

**measurable goals and objectives**

- about, 3–6
- checklist for, 17, 25
- how to choose measurements, 8–9
- planners for (*See* planners for goals and objectives)
- terminology for (handout), 20
- when to measure, 13
- writing tips (*See* writing tips)

**O**

**objectives**

- about, 1–2
- IPP sample objectives, 5
- planners for (*See* planners for goals and objectives)
- target dates for, 4, 7
- writing tips for (*See* writing tips)

**observations of students**

- about strategies for, 10–12
- observable terms in goals and objectives, 20

**P**

**parental involvement in IPP process**

- meaningful terms for, 2, 9
- (*See also Chapter 2: Encouraging Parent Involvement*)

**percentages**

- in measurements, 9

**planners for goals and objectives**

- 3-M checklist for IPPs, 17
- 3-M checklist for IPPs (checklist), 25
- ACT-How? action/context/terms, 4–5, 15
- ACT-How? action/context/terms (template), 23
- four-square organizer, 13–14
- four-square organizer (template), 21–22
- IPP storyboard planner, 16
- IPP storyboard planner (template), 24

**probe data for assessments, 11**

**R**

**readiness skills**

- as area of focus, 6–7

**review dates for goals and objectives, 7–8**

**S****self-advocacy**

as area of focus, 6–7

**SMART goals and objectives, 1****social skills**

as area of focus, 6–7

Fair–Pair rule, 9

**storyboard planner, 16, 24****strengths and needs**

goals and objectives related to, 3

**student involvement in IPP process**

about strategies for, 13

celebrations of successes, 9

(See also *Chapter 3: Supporting Student Participation*)

**support services**

(See *Chapter 4: Creating a Network of Support*)

**T****terminology in goals and objectives**

list of, 20

**timelines**

goals and objectives, 4, 7

**transition plans**

(See *Chapter 8: Planning for Transitions*)

**W****work habits**

as area of focus, 6–7

**writing tips**

on goals and objectives, 5–6

on objectives (template), 21–22

on terms to use (handout), 20





Looking to the Future

Chapter 8

# Planning for Transitions

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Key Principles of Planning for Transition .....	1
Inclusion and community .....	1
Deliberate planning .....	1
Collaboration .....	2
Comprehensive scope .....	2
Ongoing education .....	3
Planning for Transition and the IPP Process .....	3
Early planning .....	4
Identifying hopes and dreams .....	4
Exploring possibilities .....	4
Bridging from one stage to the next .....	5
Transition to Elementary School .....	6
Sample strategies to support the transition to elementary school .....	6
Transition to Junior High School .....	6
Sample strategies to support the transition to junior high .....	7
Transition to Senior High School .....	7
Sample strategies to support the transition to senior high .....	8
Transition to Post-secondary Settings .....	8
Sample strategies to support the transition to post-secondary settings .....	10
Supporting Planning for Transition .....	11
Appendices .....	13
8-A Sample Checklist for Comprehensive Planning for Transition .....	14
8-B Sample Checklist for Annual Planning for Transition .....	15
8-C Sample Skills for Successful Transitions from Preschool to Kindergarten .....	16
8-D Sample Student Questionnaire for Planning for Transition in Junior and Senior High School .....	17
8-E Sample Senior High Planning for Transition Inventory .....	18
8-F Sample Parent Questionnaire for Planning for Transition in Junior and Senior High School .....	24
8-G Sample Parent Tips for Encouraging Teens to Think about Transition .....	26

Bibliography .....	27
Index .....	29

## Chapter 8



# Planning for Transitions

Transitions are any events that result in changes to relationships, routines, expectations or roles. Transitions occur throughout the life cycle, including during school years. Although they are a normal part of life, these changes can be difficult for students, especially students with special education needs. To minimize difficulties, planning for transition is an essential component of all IPPs from early childhood services (ECS) to senior high school. The goal of planning for transition is to enable students to prepare for and successfully make changes between different stages of their education and life, such as starting school, moving from grade to grade, changing schools, completing school or living independently, and/or entering the workforce. This planning is ongoing and begins at the start of each new school year and evolves throughout the year.

## Key Principles of Planning for Transition

Thoughtful planning for transition involves a number of key principles.

Effective planning for transition is:

- thoughtful and deliberate
- collaborative
- comprehensive in scope
- supported by ongoing education.

## Inclusion and community

The principle of inclusion encourages and facilitates the provision of natural, community-based supports for students with special needs. A commitment to inclusion ensures that transition programming, activities and strategies promote the acceptance and participation of individuals with special needs within the social and economic life of the community.

## Deliberate planning

In order for transitions to be successful, they must be carefully and deliberately planned. Deliberate planning means several things, including the following.

- Planning for transitions should start well in advance of the actual transition.
- Regardless of the specific transition being made, programming decisions need to be based on an understanding of individual students, including their strengths and areas of need, and the goals and dreams of the students and families.
- Similar to the development process for IPPs, planning for transition should be dynamic and ongoing since transition objectives may change.
- A written record of planning for transition, including transition goals and strategies, should be included as part of the student's IPP.

## Collaboration

Collaboration involves creating supportive relationships and taking a problem-solving approach to planning for transition. Successful transitions require input from a variety of people, including parents, students, special and regular education teachers, and community-based personnel, such as career counsellors or post-secondary school admissions officers. Drawing on the knowledge of various team members results in informed decision making, the acceptance of joint responsibility and a stronger circle of support for the student. The membership of the transition support team may change over time, depending on the student's needs, and staff and agency changes. It is important that the team be committed to follow up and meet at various stages of the student's transitions.

Shared responsibility among students, families, schools, communities and government is at the heart of collaborative planning for transition. Shared responsibility means that resources are combined to maximize the opportunities available to students before and after they leave school. It also ensures that those involved in planning for transition, programming and activities have shared goals, and overlapping and jointly-owned responsibilities.

For more information

Visit [www.child.gov.ab.ca/acyi/page.cfm?pg=index](http://www.child.gov.ab.ca/acyi/page.cfm?pg=index) to see the Alberta Children and Youth Initiative cross-ministry *Guidelines to Support the Successful Transitions of Children and Youth*.

As students move through school, they need to become increasingly involved in and responsible for planning their own transitions. Research has consistently shown that student involvement in the planning process helps students develop a better understanding of their own learning needs, and provides opportunities for them to develop much-needed self-advocacy and problem-solving skills.

## Comprehensive scope

Students with special education needs may face a variety of challenges as they make transitions into new settings, including academic, social, vocational and interpersonal difficulties. As a result, planning for transition should focus not only on the academic skills, but also on other knowledge and skills needed for success, including the ability to:

- monitor their own performance
- problem solve in new situations
- interact appropriately with peers and adults
- understand and explain their learning strengths, and the type of supports and accommodations that will help them in dealing with their special education needs.

Comprehensive planning for transition must also focus on continuity. Effective planning ensures that what happens at one stage in a process builds successfully on the previous stages and sets necessary groundwork for future stages. In particular, planning for transition should recognize that

### Appendices

*See Appendix 8-A for a sample checklist for comprehensive planning for transition.*

### Ongoing education

Successful transitions require an awareness and understanding of the issues and challenges facing students with special education needs as they move through the different levels of schooling and prepare for post-secondary opportunities. Individuals and organizations that are involved in planning for transition must have the knowledge and understanding needed to effectively support the student's transitions.

Students also need ongoing educational opportunities to help them identify and explore their own strengths and interests, take personal responsibility for their learning, and develop skills such as communication and time-management skills. As well, students need opportunities to learn about and explore career options, and begin a career development planning process with activities such as compiling a personal career portfolio.

## Planning for Transition and the IPP Process

Planning for transition can be incorporated into the IPP process in a number of ways. For example, planning for transition:

- serves as a focus for identifying student needs by exploring questions such as “What skills and behaviours will this student need in future environments?”
- can be incorporated into goals and objectives. For example, skills needed for successful transition from Kindergarten to Grade 1 might form the basis of a young student's long-term goals. Aspects of career exploration or work experience might be incorporated in goals for a middle school student and developing self-advocacy skills might be a goal for a student in senior high school
- should be reflected in the accommodations section by identifying supports students will need to be successful in future environments
- can be summarized in a separate section of the IPP, which identifies changes that are upcoming and the learning team's plans for helping the student successfully make these changes.

Successful transitions depend on:

- early and systematic planning
- consciously identifying hopes and dreams
- thoroughly exploring a variety of possibilities
- using appropriate strategies to help students move from one stage to the next.

## Early planning

Successful transitions require planning well in advance of the actual move. This ensures that planning is always future-oriented, that there is program continuity throughout a student's school years, and that necessary programming and supports are in place. For example, the transition from senior high school to post-secondary settings requires informal planning beginning early in a student's education, and formal planning starting in junior high school. This gives students and their families time to become familiar with available services and settings, and time to put the necessary plans into action so students will reach their goals.

Early planning also involves helping students to understand at a young age that changes and challenges are part of life. Learning to manage transitions at an early age creates behaviours that are flexible, adaptable and capable in a world that is rapidly changing. Students also need encouragement and support to achieve small but measurable successes. Celebrate students' abilities and build on strengths. Personal skills and attitudes do affect an individual's approach to lifelong learning and ability to deal with change—helping students become more self-confident and self-aware ensures that they will be better able to set realistic goals and develop the skills necessary to achieve those goals.

## Identifying hopes and dreams

It is important to identify students' strengths, abilities and talents, and incorporate them into programming decisions. Helping students to identify dreams and hopes for the future is equally important, especially in planning for the transition between senior high school and a more independent adult life.

Teachers and parents should talk to students about their thoughts on post-secondary training, entering the work force, options for living situations, and the kinds of recreational and leisure activities they would like for the future. Teachers also need to understand and respect the family's wishes and preferences for their child, and encourage them to articulate a family vision for the future.

## Exploring possibilities

Some individuals with special needs require specialized living and work settings as adults. Consider a variety of possibilities that may be available as students move from one stage to the next. When students are still in junior high school, the learning team can start investigating the community services available for adults with special needs, including vocational and residential options in the local area and other areas. For many students, the families will take the lead role in planning for transition. When the student is in senior high school, the family may start meeting with different adult service providers to explore options in more detail.



The learning team needs to be informed about the various possibilities by asking questions. For example, during planning for students' transitions from junior to senior high school, ask what kind of community-based work experience is available in the senior high school program. Evaluate how each option meets the skills, needs, interests and goals of the student.

### Bridging from one stage to the next

Transition may be a challenging time for students. Parents are the one constant factor as students move from one setting to another. Since they know their child best, parents will be aware of the areas where their child needs further support and reinforcement to cope with new challenges. This could include strengthening self-advocacy and decision-making skills, independent problem solving and positive feelings about their own abilities.

Successful transitions begin by providing students and their families with information prior to the actual changes. For example, parents should know about new programming prior to major changes. It can be helpful to provide parents and students with school handbooks at the beginning of the school year or upon entry to the school. These handbooks may contain homework policies, recommended study routines and timetables.

As students move from one learning environment to another, the learning team may have many questions. Here are some sample questions to consider.

- How will the student's progress be measured?
- Will the student follow the regular grade curriculum?
- How long will the student stay in this learning environment?
- What plans do we need to make for future placements?
- Will there be other students in the class with learning needs similar to this student's?
- How can we ensure that teachers are aware of this student's individual learning goals and dreams for the future?

Students in transition need to know that there are support systems in place for them if they face personal or academic difficulties. Reassure students that there will be teachers or employers ready to support them in this new segment of life. Encourage families to involve siblings, extended family members, friends or others who can contribute to the student's successful transitions.

#### Appendices

*See Appendix 8-B for a sample checklist for annual planning for transitional.*

## Transition to Elementary School

For students receiving special needs programming through ECS, the move to Kindergarten will likely be the first major transition. These students may be anxious about being in a larger setting and uncomfortable staying without their parents.

Parents may also be anxious about the transition into elementary school and may have a variety of questions such as the following.

- What happens when my child arrives at school?
- What happens at lunch?
- Where is my child's classroom located? May I go to the classroom to help her or him get settled?
- Who supervises the playground and what kinds of activities do students do?
- What kinds of opportunities do students have to work together?
- What kind of special support is available for my child?

### Sample strategies

#### Sample strategies to support the transition to elementary school

- Be prepared to answer parents' questions such as those listed above.
- Identify the skills students will need in the next environment. Share this list of skills with parents and other members of the learning team, and plan ways to help the students learn these skills.

### Appendices

*See Appendix 8-C for a sample list of preschool to Kindergarten transition skills.*

- Listen to students' concerns about transitions. Discuss upcoming transitions and highlight the positive aspects of new environments. Consider ways to reassure the student. For example, a parent might send a picture or special toy to ease the transition of going to a new school. The Kindergarten teacher may arrange to meet early in the new school year to support the child's adjustment to the classroom.
- Communicate with the receiving teachers about the student's strengths and areas of need. If the student already has an IPP, discuss its contents and the accommodations required in the upcoming year. If possible, schedule a meeting at the end of the school year and a follow-up progress meeting for early fall.

## Transition to Junior High School

The transition to junior high brings many changes such as multiple teachers, larger schools, new subject areas and an increased expectation of independence.

As a student with special education needs enters junior high, it is not uncommon for the student to have questions such as the following.

- What happens when I get to school?
- Do I use a locker?
- How many teachers will I have?
- How many classrooms will I use?
- Is there a school cafeteria? What does it cost to have lunch at school?
- What kinds of activities can I join?

### Sample strategies

### Sample strategies to support the transition to junior high

- Encourage students to identify their learning strengths and interests.
- Give students opportunities to monitor their own progress and share their perceptions with the learning team.
- Teach students strategies for time management, note taking, test preparation and test taking.
- Explore appropriate assistive technologies and create opportunities for students to develop keyboarding skills.
- Discuss adaptations and accommodations that have been successfully used in the past, keeping in mind the demands of a junior high classroom.
- Ensure that specific supports that need to be in place at the beginning of the year are included in the transition component of the IPP.
- Take advantage of an orientation day if the new school provides one. These sessions may include a tour of the school and an opportunity to meet teachers and receive information about rotations, clubs and other school-related activities.
- Host a team meeting with the receiving school in order to share information about students, including strengths, interests, dreams and areas of need.
- Ensure that students have a safe place to express their opinions, expectations, questions, choices and concerns about the transition.

### Appendices

*See Appendix 8-D for a sample student questionnaire.*

## Transition to Senior High School

As students approach senior high school, they need to take increased responsibility for their learning. They also need to begin exploring options for the future, including career paths, and identifying resources and services they will need to reach their goals.

Students entering senior high school may have questions such as the following.

- Where is my homeroom, gym, library, administration office and other key points in the school?
- Is there a cafeteria in the school?

- What kinds of sports and clubs are at the school?
- Where do I go for help if I am having difficulty with a class?
- Do the senior high school teachers know about my learning needs and the adaptations I had at my old school?
- What will happen with my IPP?
- What courses do I need to graduate?

### Sample strategies

## Sample strategies to support the transition to senior high

- Create opportunities for the student to begin exploring career options.
- Educate students and their parents about multiple paths in senior high school and which ones lead to different post-secondary studies.
- Provide students with access to learning and study strategies.
- Ensure students have access to appropriate adaptations and assistive technologies where needed.
- Create opportunities for students to begin developing self-advocacy skills.

### Appendices

*See Appendix 8-E for a sample tool for recording information needed for transition.*

## Transition to Post-secondary Settings

Planning for Transition at the senior high school level is critical for students with special education needs. At this level, the IPP process must be a comprehensive and well-coordinated plan that goes beyond one year and beyond just preparing a student for graduation. Planning for transition needs to outline what the student will be taking and doing in school as well as how to prepare the student for life after senior high school. As a part of this type of planning the learning team needs to:

- identify and plan for the programs of study and educational experiences the student will be participating in from Grade 9 to the end of senior high school
- develop a plan for post-school adult life based upon the student's dreams and interests
- identify and begin to coordinate needed services, programs and supports before the student leaves the senior high school setting.

Planning for transition often involves investigating opportunities for post-secondary training. Over the last decade, the range of post-secondary options available to all students has greatly expanded. Colleges, universities, community agencies and private training companies are now more willing and able to offer appropriate training opportunities for adults with special needs.

A number of colleges and universities now have specialized services to support students with special needs. Some institutions' application forms

have a box to check or a line to complete that identifies a disability. The institution's disability services office then contacts the student to discuss what kind of support will be needed. If the application form does not have a place for self-disclosure, students (and if necessary, their parents) will need to contact the disability services office.

For most students, Canada Study Grants and Alberta Human Resources and Employment (AHRE) funding will cover disability-related supports that students need to complete their education. To ensure this funding, students will need documentation about their disability and the supports they received in senior high school. If they do not have sufficient documentation, they will have to be assessed so appropriate supports can be identified. These assessments are coordinated by the institution's disability services office and can take up to four months to complete.

The disability services office will use information from documentation and assessments to develop a service plan. This plan, also known as an education plan or accommodation plan, outlines the supports students are eligible for. Every student's plan is different and could include services such as the following:

- note taking
- alternate format texts (Braille, large print, audio)
- exam accommodations
- assistive technology
- interpreters
- captioning services
- tutoring.

Post-secondary institutions may also offer some or all of the following services for students with special needs:

- orientations for new students with disabilities
- student-run disability organizations (for more information, see the National Educational Association of Disabled Students Web site at [www.neads.ca](http://www.neads.ca))
- advocacy for students, if necessary (most disability services offices believe that students need to be equal partners in their education and will encourage students to be their own self-advocates)
- Inclusive Post Secondary Education (IPSE) programs that provide adults with intellectual disabilities the opportunity to participate in a modified post-secondary educational experience. In IPSE programs, students are included in regular college or university classes as auditing students and are supported to participate to their fullest potential. Their education goes beyond the classroom to encompass four main components:
  - relationship opportunities
  - life-enriching experiences
  - career development and education
  - scholarship and/or financial information about potential sources of funding.

For more information

IPSE programs are currently available at University of Alberta, Grant MacEwan College, University of Calgary, Lethbridge Community College and Red Deer College. Check the Web sites of these institutions for current programs offered.

- Transitional Vocational Programs that prepare individuals with mild developmental disabilities to obtain and maintain employment. The program is provided on a full-time basis up to a maximum of 52 weeks. The programs integrate theoretical and practical learning through:
  - classroom instruction which may include training in employability skills, transferable occupational skills (such as keyboarding and computer skills, use of tools and equipment, safety, etc.), job-search and retention skills, and independent living skills
  - work experience designed to give students experience consistent with their interests and abilities, and their long-range career goals. The preferred work experience is in a competitive work site rather than a sheltered work or school environment.

Transitional Vocational Programs are currently available at Keyano College, Lakeland College, Mount Royal College, Norquest College, Olds College, Red Deer College and the Fairview Campus of the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT). Check the Web sites of these institutions for current programs offered.

### Sample strategies

## Sample strategies to support the transition to post-secondary settings

- Help students explore opportunities for post-secondary studies and other community-based services.
- Encourage the student to take senior high school courses that will be academically challenging and create options for post-secondary training.
- Ensure students have the necessary documentation to receive appropriate support in post-secondary settings.
- Consider questions such as the following to explore and evaluate post-secondary opportunities.
  - How will this agency or program meet this student’s learning and vocational needs?
  - What is their philosophy and is it compatible with the student and his or her family’s values and goals?
  - What kind of success has this agency or program had?
  - What is their commitment to individualized programming?
  - What supports and accommodations do they provide?
  - What is their commitment to community-based programming?
  - What are the criteria for admission?
  - Is there a waiting list? If so, how long?
  - What are the qualifications and training of the service providers?
  - How are parents and family members involved in service delivery?
  - How long does the follow-up and support of the agency or program last?
  - What are the costs and fees of the program?

## Supporting Planning for Transition

There are a variety of ways for parents, teachers and other members of the learning team to support planning for transition.

Parents can support their children in the transition process by:

- attending transition meetings and ensuring that their child is an active participant in the process
- reviewing the transition plan and discussing questions or concerns
- asking questions and offering opinions during the meeting using appropriate tone of voice and turn taking, so students see what advocacy looks like
- teaching their child how to appropriately express disagreement with suggestions and resolve these types of differences effectively
- helping their child identify interests, challenges and future goals

### Appendices

*See Appendix 8-F for a sample tool for gathering and organizing information from parents.*

- encouraging their child's independence at home and across settings
- keeping track of questions, concerns, expectations, suggestions and/or comments about the transition process
- thinking about services and special materials or resources their child is going to need throughout his or her school career and then as an adult, and sharing this information with team members.

### Appendices

*See Appendix 8-G for parents' tips about talking to their teen about transitions.*

Principals, teachers and specialists can support the transition process by:

- ensuring students and parents have the information they need to prepare for changes and to choose post-secondary options
- encouraging and facilitating input and support from community service providers.

### For more information

Visit [www.alis.gov.ab.ca/learning/pset/planning.asp](http://www.alis.gov.ab.ca/learning/pset/planning.asp) for information for parents and students on planning for post-secondary studies.

One or more service providers may be involved in the planning for transition process, including counsellors, career coaches and work experience coordinators. These individuals may assist in planning for transition by:

- attending planning for transition meetings and providing information to the learning team
- providing information to schools regarding available services and how to access them
- identifying service gaps and assisting in locating resources to address the needs.





## Appendices



These tools are available in PDF format at [www.education.gov.ab.ca/k\\_12/special\\_needs/resource.asp](http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/k_12/special_needs/resource.asp) and on the CD-ROM packaged with the print version of this resource.

## Planning for Transitions

The purpose of these sample tools is to enrich the IPP process. These tools should be used selectively and can be adapted to best meet the needs of individual students. Many of these tools will be used informally as part of the IPP development process and not as products for the student's permanent school record.

- 8-A Sample Checklist for Comprehensive Planning for Transition
- 8-B Sample Checklist for Annual Planning for Transition
- 8-C Sample Skills for Successful Transitions from Preschool to Kindergarten
- 8-D Sample Student Questionnaire for Planning for Transition in Junior and Senior High School
- 8-E Sample Senior High Planning for Transition Inventory
- 8-F Sample Parent Questionnaire for Planning for Transition in Junior and Senior High School
- 8-G Sample Parent Tips for Encouraging Teens to Think about Transition



## Sample Checklist for Comprehensive Planning for Transition

### Beginning of Junior High

- Identify learning preferences and the necessary adaptations to be a successful learner.
- Begin to look at career interests and skills, complete interest and career inventories, and identify additional education or training requirements.
- Select/review high school courses.
- Participate in job-shadowing activities.
- Explore options for post-secondary education and admission criteria.
- Identify interests and options for future living arrangements, including support.
- Learn to effectively communicate your interests, preferences and needs.
- Be able to explain special education need(s) and the accommodations needed.
- Learn and practise informed decision-making skills.
- Investigate assistive technology tools that can increase community involvement and employment opportunities.
- Broaden your experiences with community activities and expand your friendships.
- Pursue and use local transportation options outside of family.
- Investigate money management and identify necessary skills.
- Acquire Social Insurance Number and the ability to communicate personal information.
- Identify and begin learning skills necessary for independent living.

### Beginning of Senior High

- Identify community support services and programs.
- Invite adult service providers and other people who support you to the IPP transition meeting.
- Gather more information on post-secondary programs and the support services offered, and make arrangements for accommodations to take any entrance tests.
- Determine the need for financial support.
- Enroll in driver training, if appropriate.
- Learn and practise appropriate interpersonal communication and social skills for different settings (employment, school, recreation with peers, etc.).
- Begin a résumé and update it as needed.
- Practise independent living skills (e.g., budgeting).
- Identify needed personal assistant services and, if appropriate, learn to direct and manage these services.
- Know your special education need(s) and keep documentation.

### Last Year of Senior High

- Identify the post-secondary school or program and make arrangements for accommodations.
- Practise effective communication by developing interview skills, asking for help and identifying necessary accommodations at post-secondary work environments.
- Participate in community activities.
- Consider supported employment placements.
- Take responsibility for arriving on time to part-time job, appointments and social activities.
- Assume responsibility for health care needs.
- If 18, register to vote.



Appendix 8-B

## Sample Checklist for Annual Planning for Transition

Name \_\_\_\_\_ School year \_\_\_\_\_

### September to December

- Initiate discussion with parents and students about Individualized Program Plan (IPP) and planning for transition.
- Develop an IPP for the student. The transition plan should be built into the IPP.
- Ensure the programming decisions are based on the understanding of the student's strengths, areas of need and goals as well as those of the student's family.
- Ensure students are aware of their learning strengths and the types of supports and accommodations available to them in dealing with their learning difficulties.
- Review the IPP and transition plans at the time of the first report card.
  - Successful transitions require planning well in advance of the actual move.
  - Planning should be future orientated to ensure program continuity and that the student knows what's coming up.
  - Make sure that planning for transition is an active part of the school program.

### January to March

- Plan ongoing formal and informal discussions with parents and students throughout the school year to ensure the student's emotional, social and academic needs are being met.
- Ensure assessments are completed as required by each student.
- Discuss transition plans for each student with a program consultant or school administrator prior to spring break.
- Communicate placement options available for the student to his or her parents.
- Where possible, contact the receiving school prior to year end and share pertinent information.
- Gain as much information as possible about the new program and share it with parents and students.

### March to June

- Ensure documentation is in place prior to the move. This may include the following:
  - registration form
  - current and preceding IPPs
  - current assessment results
  - medical information
  - classroom assessment results
  - listing of supports in place to accommodate the student's learning, e.g., counselling, teacher assistant, speech therapy, mentorship support.
- Encourage parents to visit the program in advance by making an appointment with the new site.
- Have students write about what they like, where their strengths lie and where they experience difficulty to share with the new teacher.

Adapted with permission from Edmonton Catholic Schools, "Transition Plan" (Edmonton, Alberta, 2003).



## Sample Skills for Successful Transitions from Preschool to Kindergarten

### Social Behaviours and Classroom Conduct

- Understands role as part of group
- Respects others and their property
- Interacts and defends self without aggression
- Plays cooperatively; shares toys and materials
- Expresses emotions and affection appropriately
- Takes turns; participates appropriately in games
- Is willing to try something new
- Follows class rules and routines
- Lines up and waits appropriately
- Imitates peer actions
- Sits appropriately
- Plays independently

### Communication Behaviours

- Follows two- to three-part directions
- Initiates and maintains peer interactions
- Modifies behaviour when given verbal feedback
- Asks peers or teachers for information or assistance
- Recalls and follows directions for tasks previously described
- Follows group instructions
- Relates ideas and experiences
- Answers questions
- Communicates own needs and wants

### Task-related Behaviours

- Finds materials needed for tasks
- Does not disrupt peers during activities
- Complies quickly with teacher instructions
- Generalizes skills across tasks and situations
- Follows task directions in small or large group
- Replaces materials and cleans up work space
- Monitors own behaviour; knows when a task is done
- Begins and completes work at appropriate time without extra teacher attention
- Makes choices
- Stays in own space
- Follows routine in transition
- Uses a variety of materials
- Seeks attention appropriately
- Attends to teacher in a large group

### Self-help Behaviours

- Recognizes when a problem exists
- Locates and cares for personal belongings
- Avoids dangers and responds to warning words
- Takes outer clothing off and puts it on in a reasonable amount of time
- Tries strategies to solve problems
- Feeds self independently
- Cares for own toileting needs



Appendix 8-D

## Sample Student Questionnaire for Planning for Transition in Junior and Senior High School

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

1. What classes do you enjoy the most? Why?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What classes do you least enjoy? Why?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. Do you ask for help when needed? Who usually helps you?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. Describe your special education needs.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. What kind of job would you like to have when you finish high school?



## Sample Senior High Planning for Transition Inventory

### Current School Program

Examine the student's current school program in light of the student's vision for the future. Course selections, resource support, classroom accommodations, content modifications and other relevant issues need to be considered.

- Is the student identifying academic areas of interest related to his or her goals for the future?
- Is the student enrolled in courses that will give him or her the opportunities to move toward his or her goals?
- Does the student require additional support to succeed academically?
- Is the student moving toward independence?
- Is the student developing specific academic skills to realize his or her goals?
- Is the student aware of the necessary learning strategies for success?
- Is the student developing knowledge of the use of technology appropriate for his or her special education needs?
- Is the student in need of a reduced course load in order to be successful?
- Is there a need for the student to have knowledge of distance or online courses and/or summer schools that are available?

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This appendix adapted with permission from New Brunswick Department of Education, *Resource for the Transition of Students with Exceptionalities from School to Work or Post Secondary Education and Adult Life* (Fredericton, NB: New Brunswick Department of Education, 2001), pp. 20–24, 27–29.



## Sample Senior High Planning for Transition Inventory (continued) page 2/6

### Post-secondary

Consider the skills and areas related to applying to a post-secondary institution, including course selection, requesting transcripts, working with guidance counsellors, preparing information required by student services departments at post-secondary institutions and choosing appropriate campuses.

- Will the student require documentation identifying the modifications made to his or her current program to be forwarded to post-secondary institutions?
- Will the student require documentation identifying the accommodations given to support him or her in the current program to be forwarded to post-secondary institutions?
- Will the student require assistance in researching post-secondary institutions to ascertain commitment to making accommodations for his or her particular disability?
- Does the student have a good match between high school courses and career aspirations or training prerequisites?
- Is the student developing the skills necessary to enable him or her to approach the faculty or student services department of a post-secondary institution and articulate the nature of his or her special education needs and the accommodations or services required to address his or her needs?
- Is the student developing time management, organization, study skills or note taking?
- Is the student aware of restrictions that may apply to scholarship or student loan applications (minimum course load)?
- Is the student exploring his or her technological needs and services for post-secondary studies and/or the Canada Study Grants for Students with Disabilities?
- Is there a need for current (within 2–3 years) assessment or related documentation for access to post-secondary services?
- Is the student developing a résumé and references for his or her personal career portfolio?
- Is the student exploring post-secondary/career information sessions and documenting this in a personal career portfolio?
- Does the student need to arrange a campus visitation?



## Sample Senior High Planning for Transition Inventory (continued) page 3/6

### Co-/extracurricular Activities

Identify activities in which the student is currently involved at school or activities which may assist in developing skills for the future.

- Is the student currently involved in any clubs, groups or associations within the school?
- Is the student evaluating his or her likes or dislikes with regard to the school activities in which he or she is involved?
- Are there other activities at school that the student would like to be involved in?
- Does the student have or is he or she developing a circle of friends at school?
- Is there anything required to assist the student in becoming aware of and more involved in activities at school?

### Employment

- Is the student developing a personal career portfolio?
- Has the student identified or is the student taking part in activities that address career- and job-awareness exploration experiences?
- Is the student involved in volunteer, part-time or summer employment?
- Is the student developing a résumé, and recording the names and addresses of potential references?
- Is the student involved in work-experience opportunities at school?
- Are the student and his or her parents exploring the supports that would be required in the workplace?
- Is the student being mentored, or does he or she have assistance in volunteering in job and/or career interest areas?





Appendix 8-E

## Sample Senior High Planning for Transition Inventory (continued) page 4/6

### Personal Management

Consider the personal management skills required for adult life, such as social skills awareness, peer relationships, living arrangements, banking skills, budgeting, voting, etc. In most cases, the student's family will have the major responsibility for this area.

Evaluate those activities that are performed on a regular basis.

- Is the student acquiring the knowledge and skills for planning and preparing a nutritious meal?
- Is the student acquiring the knowledge and skills to manage proper care of his or her clothing?
- Is the student acquiring the knowledge and skills to manage his or her financial affairs?
- Is the student acquiring the knowledge and skills to maintain a residence room, an apartment or home independently?
- Is the student developing an awareness of, and an ability to make arrangements for, accommodations related to his or her disability?
- Is the student acquiring knowledge of and developing skills for personal grooming?
- Is the student acquiring knowledge of and developing skills regarding social relationships?
- Does the student and/or parent need assistance in locating community resources regarding appropriate housing?
- Is the student or parent investigating the technical equipment the student will need for independent living?



## Sample Senior High Planning for Transition Inventory (continued) page 5/6

### Community Resources

Community clubs, groups or teams can be a source of social support for a student in the future. In general, the student's family will have the major responsibility for this area.

- Are the student and/or the parents developing an involvement with, or awareness of, the various local community service clubs, self-help groups or social groups that may be of assistance in helping to support the student in the future?
- Are the student and/or the parents developing an involvement with, or awareness of, self-help and advocacy groups available in the community or provincially/nationally?
- Do the student and/or the parents need further guidance and assistance in contacting community resources for support?

### Funding/Support

A transition plan needs to consider what skills related to researching funding sources, investigating scholarships, bursaries, loans, awards, Canada Study Grants, Training and Employment Support Services or Youth Futures funding, among others, are needed by students and/or their parents.

- Are the student and/or the parents developing skills regarding budget formation and management, and the predicting and tracking of expenses related to loans or support payments?
- Are the student and/or the parents developing a familiarity with municipal, provincial and federal services and youth programs?
- Are the student and/or the parents developing a familiarity with application procedures for scholarships or bursaries?
- Are the student and/or the parents developing a familiarity with application procedures for student loans, employment insurance, disability pension or other support funds?
- Are the student and/or the parents developing an awareness of possible tax deductions related to the student's special needs?
- Are the student and/or the parents developing an awareness of the financial considerations available through various public and private agencies (e.g., bus pass for public transportation)?



Appendix 8-E

## Sample Senior High Planning for Transition Inventory (continued) page 6/6

### Interagency Linkages/Services

Explore the service resources available either in the local area or at a post-secondary institution.

- Are the student and/or the parents investigating or initiating contact with the coordinator of services for the disabled or the student services department at the post-secondary institution that the student is interested in attending?
- Is the student in need of career counselling or other services?
- Are the student and/or the parents identifying the agencies that may provide assistance in reaching the student's personal goals as an adult?

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

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Appendix 8-F

Sample Parent Questionnaire for Planning for Transition in Junior and Senior High School (continued) page 2/2

Leisure/Recreation

1. What types of leisure activities does your son or daughter participate in:

- |                                          |                                      |                                            |
|------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hobbies         | <input type="checkbox"/> Team sports | <input type="checkbox"/> Individual sports |
| _____                                    | _____                                | _____                                      |
| _____                                    | _____                                | _____                                      |
| _____                                    | _____                                | _____                                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Performing arts | <input type="checkbox"/> Clubs       |                                            |
| _____                                    | _____                                |                                            |
| _____                                    | _____                                |                                            |
| _____                                    | _____                                |                                            |

Community Involvement

1. Check the following consumer services your daughter or son can use independently:

- |                                             |                                      |                                  |
|---------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grocery store      | <input type="checkbox"/> Bank        | <input type="checkbox"/> Library |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Restaurant         | <input type="checkbox"/> Post office | <input type="checkbox"/> Stores  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Beauty/Barber shop |                                      |                                  |

2. Does your son or daughter have a:

- Social Insurance Number
- Driver's licence
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

3. What type of transportation can your daughter or son use?

- Personal car
- Family car
- Public transportation
- Bicycle



## Sample Parent Tips for Encouraging Teens to Think about Transition

Teens need to think about the things that they would like to do in the future; teens with special needs are no different. The following are some ideas for parents that will assist them in helping their child think about and plan for the future.

- Begin thinking about your teen’s future in a holistic way that includes much more than just a work placement.
- Help your teen to think about adult life, that is, interests, what matters, with whom friendships or other relationships might be, or how time would be spent.
- Think of planning for the future as a process. Focus on accomplishing small steps towards a goal. Remember that once a decision is made, it doesn’t mean that it can’t be changed if things don’t work out or if your child changes his or her mind.
- Look at the “messages” about your teen’s future that your child is receiving from all sources. Consider and develop the positive messages that you want understood.
- Watch your teen to see what he or she loves to do and encourage your teen to develop this as a natural strength. Emphasize these strengths when you begin to consider employment options.
- Encourage yourself to think beyond what you think is realistic for your teen’s future life, so you won’t leave out any options. You may be surprised.
- Treat barriers as challenges that may cause you to try something new.
- Be very conscious of the skills your teen is demonstrating, for example, self-awareness skills, life skills, job skills. Help develop these skills even more. They can be a great source of support in future life.
- Allow your child the opportunity to make mistakes. We all learn from our mistakes and become better people because of them. In learning to deal with mistakes in a positive way, your teen will be learning a very important skill necessary for his or her future ability to be independent.
- Be a good role model and talk with your teen about the activities you are engaged in, and find interesting and fun.
- Encourage your teen to volunteer and gain work experience.
- Listen to what your teen is telling you about his or her dreams for the future.
- Teens with special needs are like other teens in that they need your help and guidance to think about the possibilities for the future and to develop as much as possible towards independence.

For more information, see *Lasting Gifts: Parents, Teens and the Career Journey* (Alberta Human Resources and Employment, 1995).

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## INDEX

### A

#### **accommodations and strategies**

- about transition plans in, 3
- in post-secondary transition plans, 9–10, 19
- in transition plans (checklists), 14–15
- (See also *Chapter 6: Selecting Accommodations and Strategies*)

#### **assessments**

- calendar for planning, 15
- (See also *Chapter 5: Using Classroom Assessment to Support the IPP Process*)

#### **assistive technology**

- in post-secondary transition plans, 9–10
- (See also *Chapter 9: Infusing Assistive Technology for Learning into the IPP Process*)

### B

#### **bibliography, 27–28**

### C

#### **calendar**

- for planning for transition (checklist), 15

#### **career planning**

- as ongoing education, 3
- in transition plans for post-secondary (checklist), 19–20, 23

#### **communication skills**

- transition plans for preschool to Kindergarten (checklist), 16

### E

#### **early childhood students**

- about planning for transition for elementary school, 6
- student skills for transition from preschool to Kindergarten (checklist), 16
- (See also *Chapter 10: Getting Off to a Good Start in Early Childhood Services*)

#### **extracurricular activities**

- in transition plans for post-secondary students (checklist), 20

### F

#### **funding for post-secondary education supports**

- planning for, 9
- planning for (checklist), 22

**G****gifted students**

(See *Chapter 11: Planning for Students Who are Gifted*)

**goals and objectives**

transition plans in, 3

(See also *Chapter 7: Making Goals Meaningful, Measurable and Manageable*)

**I****individualized program plans (IPPs)**

about transition plans in, 1

planning process, 3–5

planning process (calendar), 15

planning process (checklist), 14

(See also *Chapter 1: Working Through the IPP Process*)

**IPSE programs (inclusive post secondary education), 9–10****J****junior high students**

about transition plans for, 6–7

parents of, planning with (questionnaire), 24–25

parents of, tips for (handout), 26

planning for transition for (checklist), 14

planning for transition for (questionnaire), 17

(See also *Chapter 12: Promising Practices for Junior and Senior High School*)

**L****life skills**

parent questionnaire for planning for transition (template), 24–25

personal management skills (checklist), 21

**P****parental involvement in IPPs**

about, 1–2

about parent roles, 4–6, 10–11

parent questionnaire for planning for transition (template), 24–25

senior high planning for transition (checklist), 20–23

tips for parents of teens (handout), 26

(See also *Chapter 2: Encouraging Parent Involvement*)

**post-secondary students**

about transition planning for, 8–10

funding for, 9

funding for (checklist), 22

planning for transition (inventory), 18–23

planning for transition (questionnaire), 17

**S**

**school administrators**

planning for transition by, 11

**self-help behaviours**

ECS transition plans for preschool to Kindergarten (checklist), 16

**senior high students**

about transition plans for, 7–8

parents of (questionnaire), 24–25

planning for transition (checklist), 14

planning for transition (inventory), 18–23

planning for transition (questionnaire), 17

(See also *Chapter 12: Promising Practices for Junior and Senior High School*)

**social skills**

ECS transition plans for preschool to Kindergarten (checklist), 16

personal management skills (checklist), 21

**student involvement in IPP process**

about planning for transition with, 1–5

junior high students (*See* junior high students)

post-secondary students (*See* post-secondary students)

senior high students (*See* senior high students)

planning for transition (questionnaire), 17

(See also *Chapter 3: Supporting Student Participation*)

**support services**

about planning for transition with, 1–2, 5, 11

planning for transition (questionnaire), 22–23

(See also *Chapter 4: Creating a Network of Support*)

**T**

**task-related behaviours**

ECS planning for transition for preschool to Kindergarten (checklist), 16

**teachers**

planning for transition by, 2, 4, 11

**transition plans**

about, 1–3

about planning process, 3–5

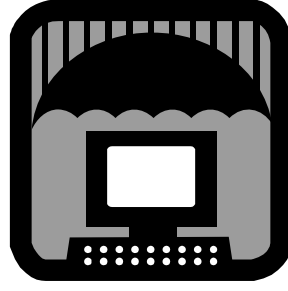
calendar for (checklist), 15

planning process (checklist), 14

student questionnaire (template), 17

**transitional vocational programming, 10**





Looking to the Future

Chapter 9

# Infusing Assistive Technology for Learning into the IPP Process

2006

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This chapter was developed in consultation with the I  
Can Assistive Technology Centre (Kathy Howery).

This resource is primarily intended for:

Teachers	✓
Administrators	✓
Health-related Professionals	✓
Counsellors	✓
Students	
Parents	
General Public	



A PDF version of this resource is available on the Alberta Education Web site at [www.education.gov.ab.ca/k\\_12/specialneeds/resource.asp](http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/k_12/specialneeds/resource.asp)

Print copies of this resource can be purchased from the Learning Resources Centre. Order online at [www.lrc.education.gov.ab.ca/](http://www.lrc.education.gov.ab.ca/) or telephone 780-427-5775.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

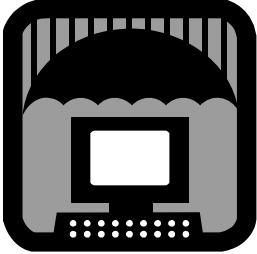
Continuum of Assistive Technology for Learning .....	2
Benefits of ATL .....	3
Choosing Appropriate ATL Solutions .....	4
Team decision making .....	4
Identifying ATL solutions .....	5
Evaluating ATL solutions .....	11
Assistive technology for learning toolkit .....	12
Creating an ATL Implementation Plan .....	14
Training .....	15
Technical support .....	15
Monitoring .....	15
Making ATL Part of the IPP Process .....	16
Identifying strengths and areas of need .....	16
Setting the direction .....	16
Creating a plan .....	16
Implementing the plan .....	17
Reviewing and revising .....	17
Planning for transitions .....	17
ATL Solutions as Essential IPP Information .....	18
IPP goals and objectives .....	18
Required classroom accommodations .....	18
Required coordinated services .....	19
Transition plans .....	19
Sample IPP .....	19
Looking to the Future: Universal Design for Learning	24
For More Information .....	24
Other providers of ATL .....	25
Assistive Technology for Learning Web Sites .....	26
Appendices .....	29
9-A Sample Questions for Parents about Assistive Technology for Learning .....	30
9-B Assistive Technology for Learning Planning Process: Student, Environment and Tasks .....	33

9-C	Assistive Technology for Learning Checklist .....	36
9-D	Printing and Handwriting Inventory .....	37
9-E	Writing Inventory .....	39
9-F	Assistive Technology for Learning Investigation: Student Report .....	40
9-G	Assistive Technology for Learning Trial Record .....	41
9-H	Assistive Technology for Learning Trial Record: Student Report .....	45
9-I	Monitoring My Assistive Technology for Learning Use: Student Report .....	46
9-J	Parent Feedback on Assistive Technology for Learning .....	47
9-K	Record of Assistive Technology for Learning Maintenance Information .....	49
9-L	Assistive Technology for Learning Planning for Transition Checklist .....	50
	Bibliography .....	53
	Index .....	55



## Chapter 9

# Infusing Assistive Technology for Learning into the IPP Process



*“The success of technology has more to do with people than machines. All the right parts and pieces together won’t work miracles by themselves. It is people who make technology powerful by creatively using it to fulfill their dreams.”*

– Alliance for Technology Access 1996, p. 8

Assistive technology for learning (ATL) is defined as the devices, media and services used by students with physical, sensory, cognitive, speech, learning or behavioural disabilities to actively engage in learning and to achieve their individual learning goals. ATL is a subset of a broad range of technologies that enhance students’ learning. ATL assists students in performing functions that would otherwise be difficult or impossible to accomplish independently. ATL is directly related to the delivery of learning outcomes in the Alberta programs of study.

Like other technologies, ATL ranges from simple tools to complex systems. It could be as simple as providing a pencil grip for writing or as complex as a computer with screen reading software for reading and learning.

Arguably, all technology can be described as assistive technology—it assists us in doing something better, easier or faster.

Assistive technology for learning is different from educational or instructional technology. Assistive technology for learning can be distinguished from other types of technology used with students in the classroom. Educational technology is generally used by all students. ATL is more specialized and often more complex technology that allows access to learning for students who have barriers due to their disabilities. However, there is some overlap. ATL can have benefits as an instructional tool for all students. For example, text-to-speech software can benefit all students who are learning to write and keyboard. Likewise, students with special education needs may benefit from educational technology such as reading instruction software programs, but they may also need assistive technology for learning, such as a specialized mouse or keyboard, to access these programs. Without this assistive technology, they would be unable to participate independently in this educational activity.

*“For people without disabilities, technology makes things easier. For people with disabilities, technology makes things possible ...”*

– National Council on Disability

Areas where assistive technology for learning may positively impact a student's success in learning include but are not exclusive to:

- printing and handwriting
- reading
- writing
- studying
- math.
- computer access
- vision
- hearing
- communication

## Continuum of Assistive Technology for Learning

The term assistive technology for learning represents a continuum of tools ranging from low- to high-tech. Low-tech and many mid-tech tools are often available in office supply stores or electronics stores, and are common in most classrooms. Other mid-tech tools are available only from specialized vendors. High-tech tools are frequently computer-based solutions that focus on the specialized needs of an individual student, although there are cases in which a high-tech tool provided for one student can benefit other students in the classroom. For example, a sound-field FM amplification system, which uses a classroom speaker system to boost the voices of the teacher and individual students, allows the voices to be clearly heard by all students in the classroom, not only the individual student with hearing difficulties.

Some examples of ATL are shown on the sample continuum below.

### Sample Continuum of Assistive Technology for Learning

#### Low-tech

- Raised line paper
- Alternative writing surfaces (e.g., white boards)
- Alternative writing implements (e.g., magnetic letters, alphabet stamps, magnetic words)
- Materials to support memory, focus and organization (e.g., sticky notes, highlighters, webs)



#### Mid-tech

- Tape recorders
- Calculators
- Talking calculators
- Talking spell checkers
- Audio books
- Dedicated word processors
- Simple voice playback devices (e.g., talking picture frames)



### High-tech

- Specialized software such as:
  - talking word processors
  - word prediction software
  - screen reading software
  - scan-and-read software
- Dedicated communication devices
- Specialized computer access such as:
  - touch screens
  - alternative keyboards
  - switch adapted mice
  - refreshable Braille display

Many students with special education needs require both low-tech and high-tech solutions to be successful learners. The general rule is to begin with the lower-tech solutions and progress to more complex technologies only if the low-tech options do not adequately reduce barriers to learning. For example, the best solution for a student whose handwriting is difficult to recognize might be a portable word processor with memory, rather than a more costly laptop.

## Benefits of ATL

To understand how assistive technology for learning can create positive outcomes for students with sensory, physical, cognitive or other learning challenges, consider the following stories of students who are using ATL in the classroom. In each case, having appropriate ATL tools and supports is creating opportunities for the student to participate, learn and succeed.

#### Adam's story

Adam is a Kindergarten student with cerebral palsy who communicates by using a voice output communication device. He is learning to write by attaching his speech device to the classroom computer. Adam also uses many low-tech tools, such as alphabet boards to participate in writing activities, page fluffers to help him turn the pages of books and a light pointer attached to a baseball cap so that he can point to things in the classroom.

#### Daniel's story

Daniel is a Grade 6 student who struggles with reading, although when materials are read to him, he can understand grade-level concepts very well. Daniel uses scan-and-read software to access print materials in the classroom. This allows him to be independent with reading tasks as he can scan materials on his own. He can read e-books and other electronic materials independently and can do research on the Internet.

Daniel also has difficulties printing and spelling. He uses a dedicated word processor to ensure his writing is readable. For more complex writing, the talking word processor helps him to hear what he is writing so he can correct his own errors. He also uses the word prediction software if he is struggling to spell a word. This technology is helping Daniel demonstrate what he knows, and be a more independent, confident and successful learner.

### Stepha's story

Stepha is a Grade 10 student with partial paralysis caused by a vehicular accident. Stepha cannot hold a pencil but she can type with two fingers as long as she has a keyguard to help guide her hands. Stepha has learned to be very fast with this two-finger typing method. She writes using a dedicated word processor. She takes notes and types her assignments on her portable dedicated word processor. She then transfers this data to a computer to edit and print. Stepha also uses math processing software to write math equations and do computations. She has customized keyguards for all of her devices so that it is easier for her to target the keys. Stepha is a strong writer and hopes to go on to be an English major at university.

## Choosing Appropriate ATL Solutions

Investigating whether or not individual students might benefit from ATL, and which ATL would be most appropriate in meeting their needs, is an ongoing process that involves working as a team to explore alternatives, gather information and set up opportunities for students to try potential ATL solutions across learning environments.

### Team decision making

Evidence shows that ATL plans are more likely to be well-implemented when the student's entire learning team is involved in the initial decision making. Teachers, parents and the students themselves should all be involved in identifying and selecting ATL solutions. As with any kind of accommodations, the ultimate goal of assistive technology for learning is to help students become more independent, so it is essential that they participate as fully as possible in the selection, implementation and monitoring of ATL solutions. Students may be reluctant to use certain tools because they fear it will make them stand out in the classroom; involving students in decision making increases the likelihood that they will use the technology effectively and consistently. Parents should also be as involved as possible in decision making around ATL by thinking about, advocating for and actively supporting their child's use of assistive technology for learning. Because of the specialized knowledge as well as the potential expense involved, it may be most effective to involve students and parents once some viable possibilities have been identified.

### Appendices

*See Appendix 9-A for sample questions for parents about assistive technology for learning.*

Specialists such as occupational therapists, vision teachers or speech-language pathologists may be brought in to support the school team in ATL decision making, especially for children with more complex needs. For example, occupational therapists may provide assistance in exploring ATL tools for writing, including computer modifications and low-tech supports like pencil grips, slant boards and specialized writing materials. Speech-language pathologists may help the team identify low- and high-tech systems for a student with communication difficulties. Audiologists and vision consultants can provide expertise for students who need to overcome sensory barriers to learning. Physical therapists can assist in mobility issues and may have expertise in computer access solutions for students with physical challenges.

In addition, school or jurisdiction technology personnel should be included in the consideration process. These individuals can provide advice and support to the learning team. Some jurisdictions also have ATL specialists who are available to provide information to the team. There are a number of ways schools and jurisdictions can build capacity in the area of ATL, including providing access to conferences, workshops, online resources and information, and facilitating sharing of expertise with other schools and jurisdictions.

See pages 24–28 for a listing of sample Web sites and resources for ATL that may be helpful to school teams needing more information.

## Identifying ATL solutions

As the learning team begins exploring potential ATL solutions, a standard set of investigative questions, such as the SETT Framework developed by Joy Zabala, can serve as a tool for gathering and organizing data. The SETT Framework considers the student, the environment, the tasks and then the tools needed by the student to address the tasks. Using the questions in the framework, the learning team can generate a list of basic ATL tools and strategies to help the student be better able to complete identified tasks in the school environment.

### SETT Framework<sup>1</sup>

#### The STUDENT

- What does the student need to do (that he or she is unable to do now and that assistive technology for learning may be able to support)?
- What are the student’s special education needs?
- What are the student’s current abilities?

#### The ENVIRONMENT

- What materials and equipment are currently available in the learning environment?
- What is the physical arrangement?

1. Adapted from Joy Zabala, “Introduction to the SETT Framework,” *Resources for Assistive Technology in Education*, 1995, <http://sweb.uky.edu/~jszaba0/SETTintro.html> (Accessed August 2004). © Joy Smiley Zabala. Used with permission. For more information, contact by e-mail to [joy@joyzabala.com](mailto:joy@joyzabala.com).

- What is the instructional arrangement? Are there likely to be changes?
- What supports are available to the student?
- What resources are available to the people supporting the student?

#### The TASKS

- What activities take place in the environment?
- What activities support the student's learning?
- What are the critical elements of the activities?
- How might the activities be modified to accommodate the student's special education needs?
- How might technology support the student's active participation in those activities?

#### The TOOLS

- What low-tech, mid-tech and high-tech options should be considered when developing a system for a student with these needs and abilities doing these tasks in these environments?
- What strategies might increase student performance?
- How might these tools be tried out with the student in the environments in which they will be used?

#### Example

Consider the example of a Grade 6 student named Marti, who is struggling with writing tasks due to a fine motor disability. Here is how the SETT Framework might be used to explore ATL solutions that would best meet her needs.

Beginning with “S” for “Student,” the learning team would look first at Marti's learning needs and strengths, as illustrated in the following list.

Student
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• significant fine motor problems</li> <li>• academically strong student</li> <li>• very motivated to achieve</li> <li>• main area of need is completing writing assignments</li> <li>• has many great ideas but struggles to get them down on paper in a way that others can read and that is fast enough</li> <li>• important to her to be independent</li> </ul>

From this list, Marti's team identifies completing writing assignments as the main barrier to her success at school.

Next, the team would consider Marti's current learning environments and the types of tasks she has to complete in each. The following chart demonstrates how this information could be organized.

Environments	Tasks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• she moves from class to class</li> <li>• computer available in Marti's core classes (teacher's computer)</li> <li>• needs to be able to complete written assignments at home</li> <li>• TA is available to scribe upon request</li> <li>• jurisdiction has access to occupational therapist consultation</li> <li>• regional health centre has AT lending library</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• written work in language arts and social studies</li> <li>• note taking in all core classes</li> <li>• homework for all subject areas</li> </ul>

For the next part of the SETT Framework, the team focuses on Marti's identified need—writing assignments—and identifies a list of potential tools. The team then identifies the type of function that the student needs from these tools and analyzes how each tool matches the need. See chart below.

**Student:** Marti                      **Area of established need:** Written assignments

Potential tools	Function				Availability
	allows student to move easily from environment to environment	increases student's independence	increases student's speed	allows student to demonstrate her ability	
Pencil grips	✓	✓	x	x	A
Slant board	?	✓	x	x	S
Raised line paper	✓	✓	x	x	S
Scribe	✓	x	✓	✓	S
Teacher's computer with <i>Sticky Keys</i>	x	✓?	✓	✓	A
Laptop computer	✓	✓	✓	✓	N
Word prediction software	?	✓	✓	✓	N
Dedicated word processor	✓	✓	✓	✓	

**Key:** A – available to ALL students  
 S – available through special programming  
 N – tools which need to be acquired if assessment data establishes student need

The team then makes a short list of tools that would best meet the student's needs. For example, from the data above the team determined that a laptop, word prediction software and/or a dedicated word processor offered the best potential ATL solution for this student. The next step is to look at required services to support each type of potential ATL. See the following chart.

Tools	Services required for effective use		
	Student	Staff	Family
Laptop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• connection to school network</li> <li>• monitor battery life</li> </ul>		
Word prediction software	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• training on how the software works</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• access at home</li> </ul>
Dedicated word processor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• training</li> <li>• connection to computer/printer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• awareness</li> <li>• technical support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• awareness</li> <li>• technical support</li> </ul>

For more information

For more information on the SETT Framework, go to [www.joyzabala.com](http://www.joyzabala.com).

Appendices

See Appendices 9-B to 9-F for sample forms to use for identifying what kinds of ATL solutions an individual student might benefit from.

When discussing tool options, the team may need to get more information on what ATL tools are available. Begin by exploring what you already have. In many instances, there are tools available in the classroom that can be used in a different way and therefore become assistive technology for learning for a student. For example, all computers have accessibility options available in the control panels. Changes can be made in keyboard and mouse control panels.

For more information

For more information on built-in accessibility features, see:

- <http://www.microsoft.com/enable/> – for Windows systems
- <http://www.apple.com/accessibility/> – for Macintosh systems.

Continue to look for other ideas. Consider tools across the continuum and seek out information on new tools as they emerge. A list of potential ATL tools, such as the ones below<sup>2</sup>, can help teams to come up with new ideas. Tools are listed from simpler to more complex.

### Reading

- Changes in text size/space/colour/background colour
- Book adapted for page turning (e.g., with page fluffers, three-ring binder and folders)
- Use of pictures with text
- Talking electronic devices for single words
- Scanner and talking word processor
- Electronic books

2. Adapted with permission from Wisconsin Assistive Technology Initiative, *The W.A.T.I. Assessment Package* (Oshkosh, WI: Wisconsin Assistive Technology Initiative, 2004), pp. 54–55.



### Organizing and studying

- Print or picture schedules
- Low-tech aids to find materials (e.g., colour tabs, coloured paper or folders)
- Highlight text (e.g., markers, highlight tape, ruler)
- Voice output reminders for tasks, assignments, steps to tasks
- Software for manipulation of objects/concept development – may use alternate access method such as touchscreen
- Software for organizing ideas and studying
- Hand-held devices with scheduling software

### Mathematics

- Abacus, math line
- Calculator/calculator with printout
- Talking calculator
- Onscreen calculator
- Software with cueing for math computations
- Tactile/voice output measuring devices
- Software that provides onscreen manipulation
- Math processing software

### Printing and handwriting

- Variety of pencils and pens
- Pencils with adaptive grips
- Adapted paper (e.g., raised lines or highlighted lines)
- Slant board
- Prewritten words or phrases
- Templates
- Portable word processor
- Computer with word processor

### Alternative computer access

- Keyboard with accessibility options
- Keyguard
- Alternative keyboard
- Dowel, mouth stick, headpointer with keyboard
- Word prediction, abbreviation/expansion to reduce keystrokes
- Alternative mouse (e.g., touchscreen, trackball, trackpad, joystick)
- Onscreen keyboard
- Switch with Morse code
- Switch with scanning
- Voice recognition

### Spelling and writing

- Word cards, word book, word wall
- Pocket dictionary, thesaurus
- Electronic dictionary/spell checker

- Word processor with spell check and grammar check
- Talking word processor
- Software with talking spell checker
- Word prediction software to facilitate spelling and sentence construction
- Multimedia software for production of ideas
- Voice recognition software

### Vision

- Eyeglasses
- Magnifier
- Large print books
- Closed circuit television
- Screen magnification software
- Screen colour contrast
- Screen reader, text reader
- Braille materials
- Braille translation software
- Enlarged or Braille/tactile labels for keyboard
- Alternate keyboard with enlarged keys
- Braille keyboard and note taker
- Refreshable Braille computer display

### Hearing

- Pen and paper
- Computer/portable word processor
- Signalling device
- Closed captioning
- Real-time captioning
- Computer-aided note taking
- Flash alert signal on computer
- Personal amplification system/hearing aid
- Personal FM system
- Sound-field FM

### Communication

- Communication board with pictures/words/objects
- Eye gaze frame
- Simple voice output device
- Voice output device with sequencing
- Voice output display with multimessage capability
- Voice output device with speech synthesis

In some cases, the learning team may need to seek out the advice and assistance of consultants with specific expertise in ATL.

When identifying possible ATL tools, remember that one student may use several different technologies to accomplish different tasks. For example, students with visual impairments may use a variety of tools such as a Braille keyboard and screen reading software, as well as a talking calculator and talking word processor. Start with what students need to be able to do and then consider tools from simple to complex that will allow them to do that task.

## Evaluating ATL solutions

Once a number of possibilities have been identified, the learning team must evaluate the options and determine the technologies that are most likely to be effective for the particular student. When evaluating assistive technology for learning, it is important to consider what services and supports are needed in addition to the devices. Appropriate use of ATL requires an understanding not only of what the things are, but also of how to use them effectively to make a difference for students.

Additional questions that the learning team may ask when gathering information include the following.

- What are the educational goals for this student?
- What does this student need to be able to do in order to meet these goals?
- What needs to be in place so that teachers and others can help this student do the tasks necessary to accomplish these goals?
- What has been tried to address these needs?
- What technology is currently available and could it be customized to meet the student's needs?
- If there is more than one tool that does the same type of thing, which tool will be best for this student?
- How will this tool help the student to increase his or her level of independence?
- What skills will the student need in order to use the tool effectively?
- Will the student require specific training in order to acquire the skill? If so, who will provide the training?
- Is the technology needed throughout the school environments? At home? In the community?
- What specific training will school staff and parents need to support the use of this technology? How will this training be provided?
- What people in the school or jurisdiction have the expertise to support the ATL process? Who will support the student's use of the ATL?
- How will this technology grow with the student?
- Is the solution cost-effective?
- What strategies will need to be used to implement the tools consistently and effectively?
- How will we measure how well the ATL is working? What will success look like?

The general rule of ATL purchases, like most other major purchases, is *don't buy it until you try it*. Real trials of the ATL need to be done before purchasing the equipment for the student. Trials not only demonstrate how well the solution may work for the student, but also help the team to understand what needs to happen to support ongoing implementation of the ATL. There are a number of possibilities for trying out ATL tools, including the following:

- locating a demo version of software—many companies have demo CDs that will run for a limited period of time
- borrowing the equipment on a short-term loan—many ATL vendors will provide short-term loans of equipment to try with students; some school jurisdictions and health facilities also have lending libraries of equipment
- accessing the tool through the school's ATL toolkit.

### Assistive technology for learning toolkit

Ideally, the selection and implementation of assistive technology for learning should begin at the school or jurisdiction level. One idea that is gaining support in various school jurisdictions is creating an ATL toolkit. An ATL toolkit consists of a set of easy-to-use, cost-effective media and devices that assist teams when considering ATL options for students. By putting together an ATL toolkit, schools may be able to address the needs of a number of individual students without having to refer them for an ATL evaluation by a specialized team. The toolkit would be readily available for school staff to try with a student in classroom environments. School teams can use the sample list of ATL tools from the preceding pages as a starting point for creating their own ATL toolkits.

In order for the toolkits to be effectively used, there will need to be training for school staff.

Assistive technology for learning allows students to do things that, due to their disability, would otherwise be difficult or impossible for them to accomplish. Evaluating the effectiveness of the technology means focusing on how well students can perform those tasks with the technology in place.

#### Sample strategies

Consider the following sample strategies for effectively conducting trial runs to evaluate ATL tools.

- Clearly define how the team expects the technology to affect student performance. Consider changes across many dimensions—will the student be faster? More accurate? More spontaneous? Produce more legible work or speech output? Or be able to do things independently? Know what type of change is realistic. Not all variables will change equally. For example, scan-and-read software may not help students read faster or more than they would if they had someone reading to them, but it may allow them to read independently.

- Consider the typical environments where the student will be using the technology. Doing a trial of software in a quiet room with no other distractions will not give an appropriate picture of how it will really work for the student in a busy classroom with other students.
- Use a template to record information during learning trials, particularly if several options are being evaluated.

### Appendices

See Appendices 9-G and 9-H for sample forms to record data gathered during ATL trials.

### Sample strategies

In addition to trials themselves, there are a number of strategies for gathering information to evaluate ATL tools, including the following (Reed, Bowser and Korsten 2002).

- **Interviewing students.** After students have participated in trials of the ATL tools identified, ask students which technology they preferred. While not all students are capable of providing this kind of feedback, when it is possible, this information can help ensure that individual students are willing to use the tools selected, and help the team to understand what is or is not acceptable or helpful to them.
- **Reviewing finished products created by students.** This is the most commonly used method of gathering information. Students' work can be evaluated to see the difference in the product when using ATL. This method can work well for looking at quality and quantity of output. However, looking only at finished products may not tell the whole story, such as how long a task took or how many errors needed to be corrected.
- **Observing students' performance completing the task.** Observing students allows teachers to see changes in the process of the task completion. It involves taking the time to watch a student "in action," and making systematic notes about the events observed.
- **Videotaping students completing the task.** This type of data recording can show many things about qualitative change in the student's ability to accomplish the task. It can also create an opportunity to watch and discuss a tape in a group, making it more possible for discussion and a shared understanding that could lead to better decision making.

It is critical that relevant data be collected to make the best selection possible for an individual student. A magazine ad or article, a Web site reference or a vendor recommendation simply does not provide enough information for making an ATL decision for an individual student. Consider the following example to understand the importance of testing out and reflecting on ATL solutions before making decisions.

## Joyce's story

Joyce is a Grade 9 student who has a physical impairment that makes writing difficult. Her team wanted her to try to use speech recognition software on a laptop computer. Joyce learned to use the software at home on her desktop computer and was getting quite good at composing essays and papers for English and social studies.

Because of the apparent success with this ATL system, the school purchased Joyce a laptop with the software for Joyce's use. Joyce tried to use this system in her English class. The results were not good. First, the computer would run out of battery power at critical times. Joyce's classes were 80 minutes long. Her battery typically only lasted one hour. So, she moved her desk closer to the wall so that she could plug in at the beginning of each class.

Then, Joyce had difficulty talking into her computer while her teacher was talking. The computer "heard" other voices and this caused problems for the recognition feature. Joyce could correct these errors in class, but she found it difficult to talk and attend at the same time. Also, her talking, although quiet, was disruptive to other students seated near her.

Most importantly, Joyce was uncomfortable using this technology in class. She didn't want people to "hear" what she was writing, especially first drafts. Joyce was happy to use speech recognition at home to do longer assignments, but this was not the most appropriate tool for her to use in the classroom.

## Creating an ATL Implementation Plan

If ATL tools are to be used effectively, planning for implementation is critical. An implementation plan usually involves the following four components:

- training the student to use the ATL
- training staff to understand and support the student's use of the ATL
- developing a technical support plan for managing equipment that the student will be using
- monitoring the effectiveness of the ATL tool.

It is also important that the team be proactive. Ensuring that appropriate ATL and training and support for new classroom staff is in place prior to a student's transition will save time, reduce frustration and be more cost-effective over the long term.

Putting the ATL implementation plan into action requires the learning team to think through questions about how the student will use the ATL, such as the following.

- What specific things need to happen to ensure that the ATL tools will be used effectively?
- Who will be responsible for seeing that these things happen?

- What tasks is the student going to use this technology for?
- Where is the student going to use the technology?
- What set-up and supports are necessary?

## Training

The student is obviously a key person who will need training on the ATL tools, but it is just as important to make plans for training other people who will be working with the student on a regular basis. This includes teachers and teacher assistants, and parents if the student will be using his or her ATL at home. When the people who support the student on a daily basis do not understand the student's technology tools, assistive technology for learning use can seem too difficult or cumbersome and is more likely to be abandoned (Scherer 1993).

## Technical support

The team also needs to identify where to go for technical support. They also need a plan for troubleshooting and device maintenance. If the student and the team know where to turn for help, it is more likely that the equipment will be used. Assistive technology for learning devices with minor problems (such as dead batteries that no one knows how to change) may be put on the shelf for days or weeks until a consultant can look at it. When the team sets up a system that can deal with anticipated (and sometimes unanticipated) technical problems, the student's use of the ATL is much more likely to be successful.

## Monitoring

Change will happen for a number of reasons, including the following.

- The students themselves will change. They will mature, develop new skills and have different needs.
- The environments in which students function will change. Every year students attend new classrooms, the demands in those classrooms are different and the supports in those classrooms are different.
- Tasks will change. Each year will bring different curricular demands as well as different expectations for participation and changing definitions of what success looks like.

As students' needs change, their assistive technology for learning needs will also change. For this reason, ongoing monitoring of a student's ATL solutions is critical.

### Appendices

*See Appendices 9-I and 9-J for sample tools for gathering and organizing information for the monitoring process.*

The SETT Framework can be used for ongoing review and adaptation. During times of transition, the team can use the framework to gather and review information.



## Example

## Making ATL Part of the IPP Process

If students are to benefit from assistive technology for learning, the thinking about and planning for ATL needs to happen throughout the IPP process. The example below illustrates how Daniel's learning team used assistive technology for learning as an integral component of his IPP process.

### 1. Identifying strengths and areas of need

Daniel is a Grade 6 student who is struggling with reading and writing. Daniel's learning team explores the following questions.

- Will assistive technology for learning enable Daniel to be a more independent reader and writer?
- Will assistive technology for learning allow Daniel to work at a grade level more consistent with his cognitive ability?

### 2. Setting the direction

Using the SETT Framework to guide their decision making, the team decided that Daniel could benefit from ATL to support writing and reading.

### 3. Creating a plan

There are several different tools available that have the potential to help Daniel be a more independent reader and allow him to check his own legible writings. The following ATL tools were identified as having the potential to benefit Daniel:

- word prediction software
- talking word processing software
- scan-and-read software.

After trying out different demo versions of each type of software, it became obvious that one program with the ability to read scanned text, convert text to speech and perform word processing, worked best. It was the easiest for Daniel to use and also was the most cost-effective.

The plan for using the software was documented in Daniel's IPP as both a writing goal and a reading goal.

Writing goals:

- Daniel will demonstrate that he can use the features of Software X to support his writing.
- Using word prediction software, Daniel will independently complete class writing assignments with at least five complete sentences.

Reading goal:

- Using scan-and-read software, Daniel will read textbooks and other grade-level materials independently in social studies.



#### 4. Implementing the plan

Daniel, three of his teachers and one teacher assistant were trained on the software that was chosen. Daniel, two of his teachers and his mother were also interviewed by his IPP coordinator to share what outcomes they observed from Daniel's use of this technology.

Daniel needed further support to operate his ATL system more independently and the school arranged for a volunteer student teacher to help Daniel learn how to use the software. The school tech support teacher was also trained on the software and the system requirements (e.g., scanner, printer) so that she could support Daniel and his teachers.

With teacher support, Daniel will begin to maintain his own log of ATL strategies that work and device information.

#### Appendices

*See Appendix 9-K for a sample tool for maintaining a log of ATL information.*

#### 5. Reviewing and revising

The learning team continued to monitor Daniel's progress by asking the question: Does ATL continue to be effective at helping meet Daniel's learning needs?

All team members agreed that the software was helping Daniel be a more independent reader. He would eventually need more training so he could use the scanning system independently. Daniel's IPP was revised to make the scan-and-read software an accommodation.

His writing, although better, was still not reflective of his cognitive ability. The text to speech, talking spell checker and word prediction software had potential to be helpful but Daniel didn't consistently use the tools in the most productive way. A demo version of voice recognition software was introduced but Daniel does not currently have the skills to use this software independently. IPP goals continued in the area of using ATL to support and build on writing skills.

#### 6. Planning for transitions

Daniel will be moving to junior high within the next year and the demands for independent reading will increase.

The SETT process was used again with specific focus on what new tasks Daniel will have in the upcoming junior high environment. The resulting decision was that Daniel will need a laptop computer and a scanning station in order to make materials available in each classroom. The new school worked with Daniel's current teacher to create an ATL system that would best meet Daniel's needs in his new school.

The team arranged for his receiving language arts teacher to come and observe Daniel using the ATL in his current classroom. This will also be an opportunity for his current Grade 6 teacher to talk to the receiving teacher about skills that Daniel will need to make a successful transition to junior high.

#### Appendices

See Appendix 9-L for a sample tool for planning transitions.

## ATL Solutions as Essential IPP Information

Information about assistive technology for learning can be part of the essential information required in the IPP for a student with special education needs, including goal statements, required classroom accommodations, identification of coordinated support services and transition plans.

### IPP goals and objectives

A goal related to assistive technology for learning could include learning how to best use the tool.

#### Example

For example:

- *Daniel will demonstrate that he can independently use scan-and-read software to access reading material assigned in class.*
- *Using scan-and-read software, Daniel will independently read Grade 6 level materials for his social studies class, including the textbook and various other reading materials.*

ATL could also be a condition or provide a context for a related goal.

### Required classroom accommodations

Once the appropriate ATL tools are identified, it is important to document their use as effective accommodations for an individual student.

For example, once Daniel's use of scan-and-read software had been well established and proved to be effective across environments, the essential information about ATL could move from the goal statement to the accommodations list.

#### Example

For example:

- *Daniel needs the following classroom accommodations:*
  - *scan-and-read program X to independently read classroom materials*
  - *teacher assistant support to scan materials approximately 30 minutes per day.*

## Required coordinated services

Human resources, knowledge and other support that make the ATL system work should be listed under the required coordinated services.

### Example

For example:

- *Daniel requires the services of:*
  - *jurisdiction tech coordinator (annual maintenance of scanner, headphones and laptop computer)*
  - *jurisdiction ATL specialist (annual consultation).*

## Transition plans

It is important that all ATL tools and services are included in the IPP and are reviewed on a regular basis by the learning team. Documenting the ATL tools and strategies used successfully by students will help maintain success as these students transition through their school years.

### Example

For example:

- *Daniel will continue keyboarding instruction with the goal of typing 25 wpm.*
- *Team will investigate potential use of laptop for junior high.*

## Sample IPP

This chapter ends with a compiled sample of an IPP that illustrates how assistive technology for learning might be a focus on an individualized program plan. This sample is for a Grade 6 student of average ability who has a mild physical disability and is having difficulty managing longer writing assignments independently. The classroom teacher is coordinating the IPP process, and the school technology coordinator and the district occupational therapist are working with the student and her parents. The major focus of the IPP is increased independence as this student prepares for transition to junior high.

<b>Individualized Program Plan</b>	
<b>Student Information</b>	
<b>Student:</b> Martine S.	<b>Age as of Sept. 1/0X:</b> 11 yrs., 4 mos.
<b>Date of Birth:</b> April 21, 199X	<b>Date I.P.P. Created:</b> Sept. 200X
<b>Parents:</b> Joe and Joan S.	<b>Eligibility Code:</b> 58
<b>Grade:</b> 6	(mild physical disability)
<b>Background information: Classroom context</b>	
<b>School:</b> Any Elementary School	
<b>I.P.P. Coordinator and Classroom Teacher:</b> Ms. Teach	
<b>Additional IPP Team Members:</b> Ms. Tech (School Technology Coordinator) Ms. Move (District Occupational Therapist)	
<b>Background Information: Parental input and involvement</b>	
<p><i>September 200X</i> Parents met with Ms. Teach to discuss Martine's desire to work more independently this year. They report she is very comfortable on computer at home and inquire about possibly using a computer at least in language arts.</p> <p><i>October 200X</i> Parents, Martine and Ms. Teach met with school technology coordinator and district occupational therapist to discuss potential assistive technology for learning options. Martine agreed to do 3-week trials of a) computer with Microsoft Word, b) computer, Microsoft Word and word prediction software, and c) dedicated word processor (Alphasmart Neo).</p> <p><i>February 200X</i> Martine reports she is feeling confident with her Alphasmart and parents note she appears to be happy with her new level of independence.</p> <p><i>June 200X</i> Telephone conference to confirm junior high placement for September. Parents plan to meet with Martine and her new teachers in early September.</p>	

Sample IPP - Martine (continued) page 2/4

<b>Strengths</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>highly motivated and driven to be independent</li> <li>strong verbal skills</li> <li>working at grade level</li> </ul>		
<b>Areas of Need</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>technology tools to support independently completing longer writing assignments (currently receives teacher assistant support in language arts and social studies)</li> </ul>		
<b>Medical Conditions that Impact Schooling</b>		
Mild spastic cerebral palsy that affects fine motor control and fatigue level		
<b>Assessment Data (Specialized Assessment Results)</b>		
<b>Date and Assessor</b>	<b>Test</b>	<b>Results</b>
June 200X Dr. Motor	Bruiniks-Ozeretsky Test of Motor Proficiency	moderate fine motor delay
June 200X Dr. Toni	Test of Non-verbal Intelligence-3 (TONI-3)	58 <sup>th</sup> percentile
<b>Current Level of Performance and Achievement</b>		<b>Year-end Performance</b>
<i>Results from Grade 5 report card:</i> Language Arts: 78% (with teacher assistant support)		<i>Results from Grade 6 report card:</i> Language Arts: 80% (with ATL support)
<b>Coordinated Support Services</b>		
Consultation with district occupational therapist, Ms. Move, on as-needed basis		

## Sample IPP - Martine (continued) page 3/4

<b>Goal # 1</b>		
<b>Long-term Goal:</b> By June 200X, Martine will use appropriate technology to complete writing assignments independently and within reasonable timelines to grade level expectations.		
<b>Short-term Objectives</b>	<b>Assessment Procedures</b>	<b>Progress Review</b>
By November 15 Martine will try out three different tools to complete writing assignments and will participate in evaluation of which tool works best for her.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>collect and use classroom rubric to compare three writing samples completed using each of the three trial tools</li> <li>student interview to determine preferred tool</li> </ul>	November 15 Martine is able to produce longer, more accurate assignments using the dedicated word processor. Although word prediction does not increase speed or accuracy of writing, we'll continue to make it available as Martine reported it allowed her to compose with less fatigue and this also would allow her to continue to learn to use the software.
By February 15 Martine will independently use her chosen tool to complete at least 50% of her written assignments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>use classroom rubric to compare current writing sample with writing sample from September (completed with no ATL)</li> <li>log of completed written assignments, noting lengths and time to complete</li> </ul>	February 15 Martine is able to use the dedicated word processor with minimal assistance. She required occasional support to connect the device to the printer. She rarely uses word prediction as she feels it slows her down.
By June 15 Martine will independently use her chosen tool to complete at least 80% of her written assignments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>log of completed work, noting length, time to complete and awarded mark</li> </ul>	June 15 Martine is able to complete all written work independently, maintaining a 75% overall average.
<b>Accommodations and strategies to support objectives</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>three-week trials of three different ATL tools</li> <li>access to chosen tool and related peripherals (e.g., printer, cables) plus instructional support from technical coordinator</li> </ul>		

Sample IPP - Martine (continued) page 4/4

<b>Planning for Transition</b>	
September 200X Martine wants to be more independent and be able to work without teacher assistant support in junior high. She is now using the family computer for writing and editing at home, and the team will look at a dedicated word processor for Grade 6. If needed, the team will explore other technologies such as speech recognition software if Martine is not able to keep up with increased demands in junior high.	
<b>Year-end Summary</b>	
June 200X Martine learned to use her Alphasmart Neo independently and by year-end she was completing all written assignments with no assistance. She maintained her overall language arts performance at a comparable level to that of last year. Martine says that she is comfortable with the idea of taking the Alphasmart to junior high and she feels confident it will help her maintain her independence in this new setting.	
<b>Signatures</b>	
I understand and agree with the information contained in this Individualized Program Plan.	
_____	_____
Parents	Date
_____	_____
IPP Coordinator/Teacher	Date
_____	_____
Principal	Date

## Looking to the Future: Universal Design for Learning

There is a growing understanding among educators that special education needs can be accommodated by adopting the principles of *universal design*, which originated in the field of architecture. This means that instructional materials and activities should be designed so that students with broad differences in their abilities to see, hear, speak, move, read, write, understand language, attend to information, organize, engage and remember, can achieve their learning goals.

Universal design for learning means flexible curricular materials and learning activities that provide alternative ways to participate for students with differences in abilities and backgrounds. These alternatives are not added afterwards; they are built into the design of the materials, equipment, instruction and activities.

As learning environments and resources become more universally designed and accessible to all, the need for assistive technology for learning will change. What is a critical specialized tool for an individual student today may be part of how all instruction is provided in the future. Technology is always changing. The promise of universal design for learning is that changing technology will better address the needs of *all* learners.

For more information

### For More Information

**Alberta Consortium for Rehabilitative and Assistive Technology**  
www.acrat.ca

This Alberta initiative focuses on assistive technologies and the role they play in enabling participation in society by persons with disabilities.

#### **Materials Resource Unit, Learning Resources Centre**

www.lrc.education.gov.ab.ca/pro/visual\_imp/visual\_imp\_index-p.htm  
The Materials Resource Unit (MRU) for the Visually Impaired loans alternate format resources (Braille, audio, electronic resources and large print), kits, specialized equipment and professional resources to assist Alberta schools in the delivery of an educational program for ECS–Grade 12 students with visual impairments.

#### **Regional Educational Consulting Services (RECS) Teams**

RECS provide educational support services for children/students:

- aged 2.5 to 20 years
- in a school or ECS program
- meeting the criteria for Alberta Education exceptional student codes (41, 43, 44, 45, 46, 55, 56) and requiring the support of a multidisciplinary team. RECS are not available for ECS children/students with a severe delay involving language (code 47) unless there is evidence that the child/student has severe needs that are not reflected by the current code



- with mild/moderate disabilities (at Réseau provincial d'adaptation scolaire only).

RECS provide the following services:

- assessment to determine a student's strengths and areas of need for programming purposes
- consultation to schools as part of the learning team
- inservice to provide information on a wide range of topics that will support schools in providing positive learning opportunities and experiences for children/students.

For more information, contact your RECS team:

- CASE (Coordinated Assessment Services for the Exceptional), Grande Prairie, 780-513-7310
- ERECS (Edmonton Regional Educational Consulting Services), Edmonton, 780-472-4455
- REACH (Regional Educational Assessment and Consultation Services), Calgary, 403-777-6983
- RÉSEAU (Réseau provincial d'adaptation scolaire, Francophone), Edmonton, 780-487-3200

### Student Health Initiative

[www.education.gov.ab.ca/shi/](http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/shi/)

The goal of the Student Health Initiative is to improve access to and enhance the provision of integrated health and related support services for children with special health needs so that they can participate fully in their educational programs to attain their potential and be successful at learning.

### Other providers of ATL

#### Augmentative Communication and Educational Technology Service (ACETS)

The Augmentative Communication and Educational Technology Service (ACETS) of the Alberta Children's Hospital, located in Calgary, is a multidisciplinary team that works in collaboration with families, therapy teams and caregivers. ACETS provides assessment, consultation, education, advocacy support and short-term intervention in augmentative and alternative communication strategies, and may include a combination of no technology, low technology and high technology. For more information, call 403-943-7023 or fax 403-244-0935.

#### I CAN Assistive Technology Centre

[www.capitalhealth.ca/icancentre](http://www.capitalhealth.ca/icancentre)

The I CAN Centre at the Glenrose Hospital in Edmonton provides assessment, consultation, training, follow-up, education and research in assistive technology, specifically augmentative communication, adapted computer access, environmental controls and specialized power mobility. Other services include an equipment pool for short-term loans, a resource library, and workshops for teachers and other professionals.

## Assistive Technology for Learning Web Sites

### **Alliance for Technology Access (ATA)**

[www.ataccess.org/](http://www.ataccess.org/)

The Alliance for Technology Access (ATA) is a network of community-based resource centres, developers, vendors and associates dedicated to providing information and support services to children and adults with disabilities, and increasing their use of standard, assistive and information technologies.

### **Assistive Technology Strategies, Tools, Accommodations and Resources (ATSTAR) Program**

[www.atstar.org](http://www.atstar.org)

The Assistive Technology Strategies, Tools, Accommodations and Resources (ATSTAR) Program is designed to increase ATL expertise through technology-enhanced learning environments.

### **Assistive Technology Training Online**

<http://atto.buffalo.edu>

The Assistive Technology Training Online Project provides Internet-based training in both general and specific areas of adapted computer use.

### **California State University at Northridge, Center on Disabilities**

[www.csun.edu/cod/](http://www.csun.edu/cod/)

Located at California State University at Northridge, the Center on Disabilities develops and publishes materials of interest to the field of disability, and sponsors conferences, seminars and workshops.

### **Center for Applied Special Technology**

[www.cast.org](http://www.cast.org)

This site is a resource for expanding educational opportunities for individuals with disabilities through Universal Design for Learning.

### **Closing the Gap**

[www.closingthegap.com](http://www.closingthegap.com)

This Web site spotlights resources in computer technology, special education and rehabilitation. The Web-searchable resource directory is a database of over 2000 hardware and software products.

### **Georgia Project for Assistive Technology**

[www.gpat.org](http://www.gpat.org)

This federally funded project of the Georgia Department of Education, Division for Exceptional Students, provides a range of technical support services in the area of assistive technology for learning to state school system personnel and their students. A variety of helpful resources and forms are available.

### **LD Online**

[www.ldonline.com/](http://www.ldonline.com/)

This interactive Web site provides resources on learning disabilities to parents, teachers, children and other professionals. The site includes books, articles, videos and a newsletter.

### **National Assistive Technology Research Institute**

<http://natri.uky.edu/>

The National Assistive Technology Research Institute conducts assistive technology research, translates theory and research into practice, and provides resources for improving the delivery of assistive technology services. The Institute is operated by the Department of Special Education and Rehabilitation Counseling at the University of Kentucky.

### **Oregon Technology Access Program**

[www.otap-oregon.org/](http://www.otap-oregon.org/)

This program provides training, information, technical assistance and resources regarding the uses of technology for children with disabilities.

### **Quality Indicators for Assistive Technology Services**

[www.qiat.org](http://www.qiat.org)

This consortium is an American grassroots group dedicated to identifying, disseminating and implementing a set of widely applicable quality indicators for assistive technology for learning services in school settings. The listserv provides a national forum for discussion of assistive technology for learning issues. Sign-up information is available on the Web site.

### **Resources for Assistive Technology in Education**

[www.joyzabala.com/](http://www.joyzabala.com/)

This Web page introduces the SETT Framework and provides resources for learning more about assistive technology for learning devices and services in educational settings. It provides links to informational sites as well as sites which provide opportunities for participation in collegial discussions and research on assistive technology for learning.

### **SET-BC**

[www.setbc.org/](http://www.setbc.org/)

SET-BC is a provincial resource program designed to assist school jurisdictions in British Columbia in meeting the technology needs of students with physical disabilities and sensory impairments.

### **Special Education Technology Practice**

[www.setp.net/](http://www.setp.net/)

This is the site of special education technology professor and researcher Dave Edyburn. This site has links to the journal titled *Special Education Technology Practice* and other information regarding the use of technology in special education.

**Special Needs Opportunity Windows (SNOW)**

<http://snow.utoronto.ca/>

The Special Needs Opportunity Windows (SNOW) Project is a provider of online resources and professional development opportunities for educators and parents of students with special education needs.

**Technology and Media Division of the Council for Exceptional Children**

[www.tamcec.org/](http://www.tamcec.org/)

This division of the Council for Exceptional Children works to promote the effective use of technology and media for individuals with exceptional educational needs. The site includes information on conferences and professional publications including the *Journal of Special Education Technology*.

**Texas Assistive Technology Network**

[www.texasat.net/](http://www.texasat.net/)

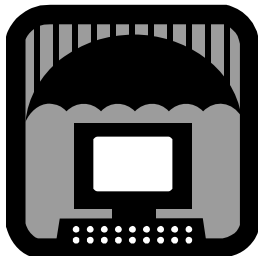
This is a collaborative network between educational service centres in Texas. The site provides links, resources and training materials.

**Wisconsin Assistive Technology Initiative**

[www.wati.org/](http://www.wati.org/)

This statewide project, funded by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, helps school jurisdictions develop or improve their assistive technology for learning services. It includes information on best practices, training materials, resources and sample forms, and provides links to other sites related to assistive technology for learning.

## Appendices

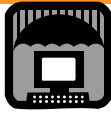


These tools are available in PDF format at [www.education.gov.ab.ca/k\\_12/special\\_needs/resource.asp](http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/k_12/special_needs/resource.asp) and on the CD-ROM packaged with the print version of this resource.

# Infusing Assistive Technology for Learning into the IPP Process

The purpose of these sample tools is to enrich the IPP process. These tools should be used selectively and can be adapted to best meet the needs of individual students. Many of these tools will be used informally as part of the IPP development process and not as products for the student's permanent school record.

- 9-A Sample Questions for Parents about Assistive Technology for Learning
- 9-B Assistive Technology for Learning Planning Process: Student, Environment and Tasks
- 9-C Assistive Technology for Learning Checklist
- 9-D Printing and Handwriting Inventory
- 9-E Writing Inventory
- 9-F Assistive Technology for Learning Investigation: Student Report
- 9-G Assistive Technology for Learning Trial Record
- 9-H Assistive Technology for Learning Trial Record: Student Report
- 9-I Monitoring My Assistive Technology for Learning Use: Student Report
- 9-J Parent Feedback on Assistive Technology for Learning
- 9-K Record of Assistive Technology for Learning Maintenance Information
- 9-L Assistive Technology for Learning Planning for Transition Checklist



## Sample Questions for Parents about Assistive Technology for Learning

### Sample questions to ask myself

#### Investigating assistive technology for learning

- What are the specific problems that my child is encountering in school (such as reading assigned text, writing clearly and legibly, seeing written words, speaking clearly, communicating needs and interests)? What evidence do I have of these difficulties?

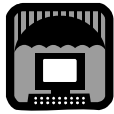
### Sample questions to discuss with my child's learning team

- Could my child perform better if the way difficult tasks were done was changed?
- Are you aware of new solutions (that could include no-tech to high-tech) that might help my child be more successful?
- If there is no one on my child's learning team who is familiar with current ATL solutions, who in the jurisdiction is knowledgeable about assistive technology for learning? How can we access that person?
- What assistive technology for learning, if any, has my child tried? What data did the trial generate? How long did the trial last? Did it make a difference?

#### During the assessment and trial period

- What does my child say about how he or she feels about the assistive technology for learning being tried?
- What changes in my child's performance and attitude, if any, am I seeing at home while my child is using this assistive technology for learning?
- Who is coordinating the assessment and trials to identify the best assistive technology for learning solutions for my child?
- In what environments will my child need assistive technology for learning?
- How long will the trials take? By what date will we know which assistive technology for learning device, if any, will work best for my child?

This appendix adapted with permission from Penny Reed and Gayl Bowser, *Assistive Technology Pointers for Parents* (Winchester, OR: Coalition for Assistive Technology in Oregon, 2000), pp. 11, 23, 29, 35, 41. [www.edtechpoints.org](http://www.edtechpoints.org)



Appendix 9-A

## Sample Questions for Parents about Assistive Technology for Learning (continued) page 2/3

### Sample questions to ask myself

### Sample questions to discuss with my child's learning team

#### After the initial assessment and trials

- |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Did the results of the assessment and trials point us clearly toward the specific assistive technology for learning that could help my child?</li> <li>• Does my child need to use this assistive technology for learning at home as well as at school? For what specific tasks? If yes, how will the use of assistive technology for learning at home impact our family?</li> <li>• Do I need to know how to use the assistive technology for learning my child is using? How much do I need to know?</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For what specific tasks will my child use the assistive technology for learning at school?</li> <li>• When and how often will my child use the assistive technology for learning during the school day?</li> <li>• How long will it take to put the assistive technology for learning into place?</li> <li>• What related service, if any, will my child need in order to use the technology effectively?</li> <li>• What will other students in the classroom be told about my child's use of this technology?</li> <li>• When my child uses this assistive technology for learning in school, what can I do to support his or her success?</li> <li>• If my child uses assistive technology for learning only at school, how will I know how things are going?</li> </ul> |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

#### During ongoing monitoring

- |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What changes, if any, does my child report about how things are going at school since he or she began using assistive technology for learning?</li> <li>• What changes, if any, have I seen at home since my child began using assistive technology for learning?</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What differences are you seeing in my child's performance with the use of assistive technology for learning?</li> <li>• What problems are there, if any?</li> <li>• How are you keeping track of what is working and not working in relation to my child's assistive technology for learning use?</li> <li>• What specific things do I need to know about the assistive technology for learning that my child is using? Who will teach me what I need to know?</li> </ul> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|



## Sample Questions for Parents about Assistive Technology for Learning (continued) page 3/3

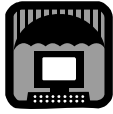
### Sample questions to ask myself

### Sample questions to discuss with my child's learning team

#### Planning for transitions

- Is the assistive technology for learning working for my child in the ways I expected?
  - What have been the benefits of using the assistive technology for learning?
  - What have been the drawbacks, if any, of using the assistive technology for learning?
  - If there were drawbacks, how can we overcome them in the future?
  - Now that my child is using assistive technology for learning at school, what are the other situations or environments where he or she could use the same technology?
- Will my child use the same assistive technology for learning next year?
  - What assistive technology for learning supports will my child need in the future?
  - If my child is making a transition to a new setting, will the same assistive technology for learning be available at the new setting? Are the staff knowledgeable about that specific technology? Is it compatible with other technology in that setting? What needs to be done to ensure the transition is successful?





Appendix 9-B

## Assistive Technology for Learning Planning Process: Student, Environment and Tasks

### A. Student

1. What does the student need to do, but is currently unable to do?

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2. What are the student's strengths, abilities, accomplishments and/or motivators? What "success stories" can you share?

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3. What are the student's unique learning needs?

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4. What strategies or accommodations have been used successfully for this student?

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5. What are the student's long-term goals?

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6. What behaviours (both positive and negative) significantly impact the student's performance?

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7. What strengths, learning preferences, coping strategies or interests need to be considered by the team?

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8. What other issues should be discussed at the team meeting?

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This appendix reproduced from Minnesota Department of Education, *Minnesota Assistive Technology Manual, 2003 Edition* (Minneapolis, MN: Division of Special Education, Minnesota Department of Education, 2003), "Student, Environment, and Tasks Worksheet, Assistive Technology Planning Process." Permission to use is granted if credit is maintained.



## Assistive Technology for Learning Planning Process: Student, Environment and Tasks (continued) page 2/3

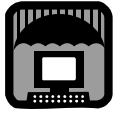
### B. Environment

What learning environments are typical for this student? Select up to three learning environments where strategies, assistive technology products or adaptations are necessary.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

Complete questions in the table below for each environment. Use additional sheets if necessary.

	Environment 1	Environment 2	Environment 3
1. What materials are currently available to the student?			
2. What is the physical arrangement?			
3. How does the instruction generally take place (e.g., lecture, lab work, small groups, etc.)?			
4. What supports are currently available in this environment?			
5. What additional resources are available to support the student?			



Appendix 9-B

Assistive Technology for Learning Planning Process:  
Student, Environment and Tasks  
(continued) page 3/3

**C. Tasks**

Use the table below to identify critical learning tasks. Use additional sheets if necessary.

	<b>Task 1</b>	<b>Task 2</b>	<b>Task 3</b>
1. What learning activities (tasks) take place in the environment that are critical to the student?			
2. What are other ways of completing these tasks?			

**Notes:**

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## Assistive Technology for Learning Checklist

1. Student's performance is improved by (check [✓] all that apply):

- |                                                         |                                                         |                                                        |
|---------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> smaller amount of text on page | <input type="checkbox"/> spoken text to accompany print | <input type="checkbox"/> graphics to communicate ideas |
| <input type="checkbox"/> lowered reading level          | <input type="checkbox"/> enlarged print                 | <input type="checkbox"/> other                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> bold type for main ideas       | <input type="checkbox"/> reduced length of assignment   | _____                                                  |
|                                                         |                                                         | _____                                                  |

2. Assistive technology for learning that has been tried (check [✓] all that apply):

- highlighter, marker, template or other self-help aid
- tape recorder, taped text or talking books to read along
- talking dictionary (e.g., Franklin Speaking Language Master) to pronounce single words
- computer with talking word processing software to:
  - pronounce words
  - speak sentences
  - speak paragraphs

3. Computer availability and use (check [✓] all that apply)

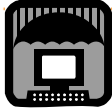
The student has access to the following computer(s):

- |                                         |                                           |
|-----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Windows system | <input type="checkbox"/> Macintosh system |
| _____                                   | _____                                     |

The student uses a computer:

- rarely
- frequently
- daily for one or more subjects or periods
- every day, all day

Adapted with permission from Wisconsin Assistive Technology Initiative, *The W.A.T.I. Assessment Package* (Oshkosh, WI: Wisconsin Assistive Technology Initiative, 2004), pp. 30–31.



## Printing and Handwriting Inventory

1. Student's current printing and handwriting ability (check [✓] all that apply):

- |                                                                   |                                                                |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> holds regular pencil                     | <input type="checkbox"/> copies simple shapes                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> holds pencil when adapted with:<br>_____ | <input type="checkbox"/> copies simple words                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> holds pencil, but does not write         | <input type="checkbox"/> copies from board                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> prints name                              | <input type="checkbox"/> writes on 1" lines                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> writes cursive                           | <input type="checkbox"/> writes on narrow lines                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> prints a few words                       | <input type="checkbox"/> uses spacing correctly                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> writing is limited due to fatigue        | <input type="checkbox"/> adjusts size of writing to fit spaces |
| <input type="checkbox"/> writing is slow and arduous              | <input type="checkbox"/> writes independently and legibly      |

2. Student currently uses the following strategies for writing (check [✓] all that apply):

- |                                                |                                                                      |
|------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> shortened assignments | <input type="checkbox"/> verbal response instead of written response |
| <input type="checkbox"/> scribed by others     | <input type="checkbox"/> writing frames                              |

3. Assistive technology for learning used by student (check [✓] all that apply):

- |                                                   |                                                    |
|---------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> special pencil or marker | <input type="checkbox"/> adapted desk, tray, table |
| <input type="checkbox"/> splint or pencil holder  | <input type="checkbox"/> slant board or easel      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> pencil grip              | <input type="checkbox"/> tape recorder             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> paper with heavier lines | <input type="checkbox"/> computer                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> paper with raised lines  |                                                    |

4. Current keyboarding ability (check [✓] all that apply):

- |                                                                       |                                                                                |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> does not currently type                      | <input type="checkbox"/> uses Touch Window                                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> types slowly, with one finger                | <input type="checkbox"/> uses access software                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> types slowly, with more than one finger      | <input type="checkbox"/> uses adapted or alternate keyboard,<br>such as: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> performs 10-finger typing wpm: _____         | <input type="checkbox"/> uses switch to access computer                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> requires arm or wrist support to type        | <input type="checkbox"/> other: _____                                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> accesses keyboard with head or<br>mouthstick |                                                                                |

This appendix adapted with permission from Wisconsin Assistive Technology Initiative, *The W.A.T.I. Assessment Package* (Oshkosh, WI: Wisconsin Assistive Technology Initiative, 2004), pp. 24–25.



## Printing and Handwriting Inventory (continued) page 2/2

5. Current computer use (check [✓] all that apply):

- never used a computer
- potential to use computer but has not used a computer because:

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- uses computer for games
- uses computer for word processing
- uses spell checker on computer
- uses computer at school for these tasks:

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- uses computer at home for these tasks:

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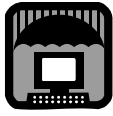
6. Computer availability:

The student has access to the following computer(s):

- Windows system
- Macintosh system

---

7. Summary of student's abilities and concerns related to printing and handwriting:



Appendix 9-E

## Writing Inventory

1. Student's current writing is typically:

- |                                          |                                                  |                                                 |
|------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> single words    | <input type="checkbox"/> sentences               | <input type="checkbox"/> multiparagraph reports |
| <input type="checkbox"/> short phrases   | <input type="checkbox"/> 2–5 sentence paragraphs | <input type="checkbox"/> other: _____           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> complex phrases | <input type="checkbox"/> longer paragraphs       | _____                                           |

2. Student currently has difficulty:

- |                                                                           |                                                                           |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> answering questions                              | <input type="checkbox"/> generating ideas                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> getting started on a sentence or story           | <input type="checkbox"/> working with peers to generate ideas/information |
| <input type="checkbox"/> adding information to a topic                    | <input type="checkbox"/> planning content                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> sequencing information                           | <input type="checkbox"/> using a variety of vocabulary                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> integrating information from two or more sources | <input type="checkbox"/> summarizing information                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> relating information to specific topics          | <input type="checkbox"/> other: _____                                     |
|                                                                           | _____                                                                     |

3. Student currently uses the following strategies for writing:

- |                                                                        |                                                                                                                     |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> verbal responses instead of written responses | <input type="checkbox"/> templates or writing frames to provide the format or structure (both paper and electronic) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> graphics to communicate ideas                 | <input type="checkbox"/> outlines                                                                                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> shortened assignments                         | <input type="checkbox"/> scribing by others                                                                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> story starters                                | <input type="checkbox"/> other: _____                                                                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> webbing/concept mapping                       | _____                                                                                                               |

4. Student currently uses the following assistive technology for learning for writing materials:

- |                                                                                                          |                                                                             |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> word cards                                                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> word processing with spell checker/grammar checker |
| <input type="checkbox"/> word book                                                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> talking word processing                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> word wall/word lists                                                            | <input type="checkbox"/> word processing                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> personal dictionary                                                             | <input type="checkbox"/> voice recognition software                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> electronic dictionary/spell checker                                             | <input type="checkbox"/> other: _____                                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> talking electronic dictionary/spell checker                                     | _____                                                                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> symbol-based software for writing (e.g., Writing with Symbols 2000, Pix Writer) |                                                                             |

Adapted with permission from Wisconsin Assistive Technology Initiative, *The W.A.T.I. Package* (Oshkosh, WI: Wisconsin Assistive Technology Initiative, 2004), p. 26.

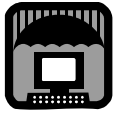


## Assistive Technology for Learning Investigation: Student Report

1. What I want assistive technology for learning to do for me: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What I do now to help with this problem: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Assistive technology for learning I already use: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. What have I already tried that did not work? Why didn't it work? What would have made it better?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Things that other students use or that I have seen that might help me: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. Things I want to tell teachers and others about things I have tried or want to try:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. Questions I want to ask: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Adapted with permission from Gayl Bowser and Penny Reed, *Hey! Can I Try That? A Student Handbook for Choosing and Using Assistive Technology* (Roseburg, OR: Oregon Technology Access Program and Wisconsin Assistive Technology Initiative, 2001), p. 11. [www.edtechpoints.org](http://www.edtechpoints.org)





Appendix 9-G

# Assistive Technology for Learning Trial Record

## Goal for Device Use

Goal for assistive technology for learning device:

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How will we know if the trial is successful?

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What level of achievement is reasonable to expect during the trial period?

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How will we know if the trial is not working (what criteria will we use to stop)?

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Adapted with permission from Penny Reed and Gayl Bowser, *Assistive Technology Pointers for Parents* (Winchester, OR: Coalition for Assistive Technology in Oregon, 2000), p. 53. [www.edtechpoints.org](http://www.edtechpoints.org)



## Assistive Technology for Learning Trial Record (continued) page 2/4

### Learning Environments Where Devices Will Be Used

1. Environment: \_\_\_\_\_

Tasks: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Staff responsible for implementation: \_\_\_\_\_

Days to be used: \_\_\_\_\_

Times to be used: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Environment: \_\_\_\_\_

Tasks: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Staff responsible for implementation: \_\_\_\_\_

Days to be used: \_\_\_\_\_

Times to be used: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Environment: \_\_\_\_\_

Tasks: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Staff responsible for implementation: \_\_\_\_\_

Days to be used: \_\_\_\_\_

Times to be used: \_\_\_\_\_

Adapted with permission from Penny Reed and Gayl Bowser, *Assistive Technology Pointers for Parents* (Winchester, OR: Coalition for Assistive Technology in Oregon, 2000), p. 54. [www.edtechpoints.org](http://www.edtechpoints.org)



Appendix 9-G

### Assistive Technology for Learning Trial Record (continued) page 3/4

#### Devices for Trial

Device #1 \_\_\_\_\_

Date of trial initiation: \_\_\_\_\_ Minimum length of trial period: \_\_\_\_\_

Device trial review date: \_\_\_\_\_

Source of device for trial: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact person for technical assistance for trial: \_\_\_\_\_

Manufacturer: \_\_\_\_\_

Manufacturer technical assistance number: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Device #2 \_\_\_\_\_

Date of trial initiation: \_\_\_\_\_ Minimum length of trial period: \_\_\_\_\_

Device trial review date: \_\_\_\_\_

Source of device for trial: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact person for technical assistance for trial: \_\_\_\_\_

Manufacturer: \_\_\_\_\_

Manufacturer technical assistance number: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Device #3 \_\_\_\_\_

Date of trial initiation: \_\_\_\_\_ Minimum length of trial period: \_\_\_\_\_

Device trial review date: \_\_\_\_\_

Source of device for trial: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact person for technical assistance for trial: \_\_\_\_\_

Manufacturer: \_\_\_\_\_

Manufacturer technical assistance number: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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## Assistive Technology for Learning Trial Record (continued) page 4/4

### Trial Summary

How did the student's performance change when using the devices?

How did the student like using each device? Did the student prefer one of the devices?

What are the advantages of using the devices?

What are the disadvantages of using the devices?

How long can the student be expected to use the devices?

Recommendations from trial:

Adapted with permission from Penny Reed and Gayl Bowser, *Assistive Technology Pointers for Parents* (Winchester, OR: Coalition for Assistive Technology in Oregon, 2000), p. 55. [www.edtechpoints.org](http://www.edtechpoints.org)



Appendix 9-H

## Assistive Technology for Learning Trial Record: Student Report

1. Assistive technology for learning I tried: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What I like about the assistive technology for learning I tried: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What I don't like about the assistive technology for learning I tried: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. If there was more than one tool to try, the one I liked best was: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Why I liked it best: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. If I was the only one using this tool, how did that feel? How did I explain this tool to other students?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. What I want to tell the teachers and others about the assistive technology for learning that I tried:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. Questions I want to ask the teachers and others: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Adapted with permission from Gayl Bowser and Penny Reed, *Hey! Can I Try That? A Student Handbook for Choosing and Using Assistive Technology* (Roseburg, OR: Oregon Technology Access Program and Wisconsin Assistive Technology Initiative, 2001), p. 13. [www.edtechpoints.org](http://www.edtechpoints.org)



Appendix 9-I

## Monitoring My Assistive Technology for Learning Use: Student Report

1. What kind of help will I need in order to use my assistive technology for learning effectively (e.g., tutorials, help from my teacher)?

---

---

---

2. What will I need to learn in order to make my assistive technology for learning work?

---

---

3. What will I need to do every day to make this assistive technology for learning work for me?

---

---

4. Challenges I am having with my assistive technology for learning: \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

5. What I want to tell the teachers and others about my assistive technology for learning:

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6. Questions I want to ask the teachers and others: \_\_\_\_\_

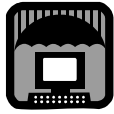
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Adapted with permission from Gayl Bowser and Penny Reed, *Hey! Can I Try That? A Student Handbook for Choosing and Using Assistive Technology* (Roseburg, OR: Oregon Technology Access Program and Wisconsin Assistive Technology Initiative, 2001), p. 17. [www.edtechpoints.org](http://www.edtechpoints.org)



Appendix 9-J

## Parent Feedback on Assistive Technology for Learning

1. Changes in my child's performance since using assistive technology for learning: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Changes in how my child feels about using assistive technology for learning: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Benefits of the assistive technology for learning use: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Drawbacks of the assistive technology for learning use: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Other places and situations in which this assistive technology for learning might be useful:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

This appendix adapted with permission from Penny Reed and Gayl Bowser, *Assistive Technology Pointers for Parents* (Winchester, OR: Coalition for Assistive Technology in Oregon, 2000), p. 39. [www.edtechpoints.org](http://www.edtechpoints.org)



Appendix 9-J

Parent Feedback on Assistive Technology for Learning  
(continued) page 2/2

6. Things I want to share with the team:

My thoughts and feelings: \_\_\_\_\_

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Supporting evidence or data: \_\_\_\_\_

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7. My questions for the team: \_\_\_\_\_

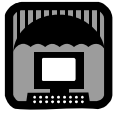
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Appendix 9-K

# Record of Assistive Technology for Learning Maintenance Information

I have a \_\_\_\_\_ I use it to \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## ID Information

Serial number \_\_\_\_\_  
Purchased on \_\_\_\_\_ Warranty good until \_\_\_\_\_  
Purchased from \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone number \_\_\_\_\_ Customer support phone number \_\_\_\_\_  
Fax number \_\_\_\_\_

## Maintenance

Was a maintenance contract purchased?  No  Yes If yes, it is in effect until \_\_\_\_\_  
Maintenance and repair record \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

My service provider for this device is \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone number \_\_\_\_\_  
I will get my device in for repair by \_\_\_\_\_

## Back-up Plan

If my device breaks down, my back-up plan is \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I can contact this person for support \_\_\_\_\_  
at \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Adapted from Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning, *Minnesota Assistive Technology Manual* (Roseville, MN: Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning, 2002), "AT Log for Transition Planning." Permission to use is granted if credit is maintained.



## Assistive Technology for Learning Planning for Transition Checklist

### Setting the Stage for Transition

Early in the school year, students and their families can be introduced to the transition process and students can begin to participate in their own IPP planning process.

#### Self-advocacy

- Students have opportunities to learn how to describe their specific use of assistive technology for learning or related strategies to meet IPP goals.
- Students have opportunities to explain their use of assistive technology for learning or related strategies to appropriate individuals.

#### Independent Educational Strategies

- Discuss the strategies and ATL devices that students use regularly, including barriers to use.
- Student is able to identify appropriate times to use assistive technology for learning.

#### Vocational Planning

- Talk about student's responsibilities and activities at home and in the community, and potential ways to use assistive technology for learning or related strategies to support these activities.
- Select and implement appropriate technology strategies for home and in the community.
- Discuss barriers (both real and perceived) to student's educational or recreational activities.
- Explore additional strategies and devices based on needs.
- If needed, explore and contact appropriate funding sources for purchase, lease and/or maintenance of long-term assistive technology for learning equipment.

### Mid-stage Transition

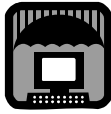
Students and their families continue to build an understanding of the transition process and the new expectations that will be part of the next environment. Students practise skills, gather information and set goals for participating in their next learning and/or work environment.

#### Self-advocacy

- Discuss strategies students and their families can use to independently access information about useful assistive technology for learning and needs (e.g., support groups, Web sites, advocacy and peer groups, library, condition-specific health associations).
- Discuss available services.
- Begin a list of strategies to independently use and support assistive technology for learning devices.

---

This appendix adapted from Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning, *Minnesota Assistive Technology Manual* (Roseville, MN: Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning, 2002), "Assistive Technology Transition Planning Checklist." Permission to use is granted if credit is maintained.



Appendix 9-L

## Assistive Technology for Learning Planning for Transition Checklist (continued) page 2/2

### Educational and Vocational Planning

- Discuss and explore school experiences, favourite subjects, plans for post-secondary studies, ideas for careers.
- Investigate opportunities for career prep courses or volunteering.
- Continue discussion of use of assistive technology for learning devices and strategies for future environments.
- Expand selection and implementation of appropriate technology strategies for home.
- Discuss barriers (both real and perceived) to student's educational and recreational activities.
- Explore additional strategies based on needs.
- If needed, explore and contact appropriate funding sources for purchase, lease and/or maintenance of long-term assistive technology for learning equipment.

### Making the Transition

Students and their families prepare to move from one learning environment to the next with confidence; students use assistive technology for learning effectively and independently.

### Self-advocacy

- Continue discussion of available support services.
- Formalize checklist of assistive technology for learning strategies and interventions for assistive technology for learning support.
- Students maintain assistive technology for learning record book to keep track of assistive technology for learning providers, repair and maintenance providers, vendors.
- Students meet with new teachers before transitions to support continuum of services.

### Vocational Planning

- Learning team members are in agreement of strategies and interventions needed for transition.
- Appropriate service providers participate in and support transition plan.
- Appropriate funding is secured for needed devices and interventions.



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## INDEX

### A

#### accommodations and strategies

- ATL solutions in, 18
- ATL solutions in IPP sample, 22
- (See also *Chapter 6: Selecting Accommodations and Strategies*)

#### Alberta Consortium for Rehabilitative and Assistive Technology, 24

#### Alliance for Technology Access (ATA), 26

#### assessments

- of ATL use (*See* evaluation of ATL)
- in IPP samples, 22
- specialized assessment data in IPP sample, 21
- support teams and resources for, 24–25

#### assistive technology for learning (ATL)

- about, 1–4
- about tools, 8–11
- communication skills tools (list), 10
- evaluation of (*See* evaluation of ATL)
- how to choose, 4–14
- IPP planning process to include, 16–18
- IPP sample with ATL, 19–23
- learning team decision-making process, 4–5
- parental involvement (*See* parental involvement in IPPs)
- planning for implementation, 14–15
- planning for student/environment/tasks (worksheet), 33–35
- planning for transition (checklist), 50–51
- planning for use of ATL (checklist), 36
- resources and Web sites, 24–28
- SETT Framework for selection and monitoring of, 5–8, 16
- student involvement (*See* student involvement in IPPs)
- technical maintenance records (questionnaire), 49
- technical support, 5, 15
- toolkits with ATL samples, 12

#### Assistive Technology Training Online, 26

#### Assistive Technology Strategies, Tools, Accommodations and Resources (ATSTAR) Program, 26

#### ATA (Alliance for Technology Access), 26

#### ATL (*See* assistive technology for learning)

#### Augmentative Communication and Educational Technology Service (ACETS), 25

### B

#### bibliography and resources, 24–28, 53–54

**C**

**California State University at Northridge, Center on Disabilities, 26**

**career planning**

planning for transition to include ATL (checklist), 50–51

**Center for Applied Special Technology, 26**

**classroom observations**

evaluation of ATL, 13

**Closing the Gap**

ATL resource directory, 26

**communication skills**

ATL tools for (list), 10

**computers**

accessibility on operating systems, 8–9

in ATL continuum, 2–3

evaluation of software, 12

evaluation of use of (example), 14

planning for use of (checklist), 36

technical maintenance records of (questionnaire), 49

use for printing and handwriting (inventory), 37–38

**Council for Exceptional Children, Technology and Media Division, 28**

**E****early childhood students**

support services for, 24–25

(See also *Chapter 10: Getting Off to a Good Start in Early Childhood Services*)

**Edyburn, Dave**

Special Education Technology Practice (Web site), 27

**evaluation of ATL**

about issues in, 11–13

evaluation of trial uses (templates), 41–45

questions for parents (questionnaire), 30–32

**G**

**Georgia Project for Assistive Technology, 26**

**gifted students**

(See *Chapter 11: Planning for Students Who are Gifted*)

**goals and objectives**

ATL tools in IPP sample, 22

ATL tools in planning process, 16–18

(See also *Chapter 7: Making Goals Meaningful, Measurable and Manageable*)

**H****handwriting and printing skills**

ATL tools for (list), 9

printing and handwriting (inventory), 37–38

**hearing disabilities**

ATL tools for (list), 10



I

**individualized program plans (IPPs)**

ATL solutions as essential IPP information, 18–19

IPP planning process to include ATL, 16–18

IPP sample with ATL, 19–23

(See also *Chapter 1: Working Through the IPP Process*)

**instructional technology**

comparison with ATL, 1

**interviewing students**

for evaluation of ATL, 13

J

**junior and senior high students**

(See *Chapter 12: Promising Practices for Junior and Senior High School*)

L

**LD Online**

learning disabilities resources, 27

**learning resources**

Web sites and resources, 26–28

**learning team**

decision-making process, 4–5

IPP planning process to include ATL, 16–18

M

**Materials Resource Unit, Learning Resources Centre, 24**

**mathematics skills**

ATL for (student example), 4

ATL tools for (list), 9

N

**National Assistive Technology Research Institute, 27**

O

**Oregon Technology Access Program, 27**

**organizational skills**

ATL tools for (list), 9

P

**parental involvement in IPPs**

about, 4

in IPP sample, 20

parental report on use (questionnaire), 47–48

questions for parents about ATL (questionnaire), 30–32

(See also *Chapter 2: Encouraging Parent Involvement*)

**planning process for ATL**

about, 16–18

for implementation, 14–15

for student/environment/tasks (worksheet), 33–35  
 for use of ATL (checklist), 36

### **printing and handwriting skills**

ATL tools for (list), 9  
 planning for ATL for printing and handwriting (inventory), 37–38

## **Q**

**Quality Indicators for Assistive Technology Services, 27**

## **R**

### **reading skills**

ATL for (student example), 3  
 ATL in IPP planning, 16–18  
 ATL tools for (list), 8

### **Regional Educational Consulting Services (RECS) Teams**

multidisciplinary team, 24–25

### **Resources for Assistive Technology in Education, 27**

**resources on ATL, 24–28**

### **review of IPPs**

about review of ATL in, 17  
 in IPP sample, 22

## **S**

### **school jurisdictions**

ATL personnel support services in, 5, 15  
 ATL toolkits in, 12–13

### **self-advocacy**

planning for transition (checklist), 50–51

### **SET-BC**

ATL program, 27

### **SETT (student/environment/task/tools) Framework**

for ATL decision making, 5–8, 16  
 for ATL decision making (template), 33–35  
 Web site for resources on, 27

### **Special Education Technology Practice, 27**

### **Special Needs Opportunity Windows (SNOW), 28**

### **spelling skills**

ATL for (student example), 4  
 ATL tools for (list), 9–10

### **strengths and areas of need**

ATL tools in planning process, 16  
 in IPP sample, 21

### **Student Health Initiative, 25**

### **student involvement in IPPs**

about decision making with, 4–5  
 student report on ATL use (questionnaire), 46  
 student report on ATL use (template), 40  
 student report on trial ATL (questionnaire), 45

training to use ATL, 15

(See also *Chapter 3: Supporting Student Participation*)

**study skills**

ATL tools for (list), 9

**support services**

ATL services in, 5, 19

multidisciplinary support team (RECS), 24–25

technical maintenance records (questionnaire), 49

technical support personnel, 15

(See also *Chapter 4: Creating a Network of Support*)

**T**

**teachers**

involvement in decision making, 4

planning process for IPPs, 16–18

**teacher assistants**

training in ATL, 15

**Technology and Media Division of the Council for Exceptional Children, 28**

**Texas Assistive Technology Network, 28**

**The I Can Assistive Technology Centre, Glenrose Hospital, Edmonton, 25**

**toolkit, ATL, 12–13**

**transition plans**

about, 19

ATL tools in IPP planning process, 17–19

in IPP sample, 23

planning for (checklist), 50–51

questions for parents about ATL in, 30–32

(See also *Chapter 8: Planning for Transitions*)

**U**

**universal design in ATL, 24, 26**

**V**

**visual disabilities, students with**

ATL resources for, 24

ATL tools for (list), 10

**W**

**Web sites, 26–28**

**Wisconsin Assistive Technology Initiative, 28**

**writing skills**

ATL for printing and handwriting (inventory), 37–38

ATL for (student examples), 4, 6–8, 14

ATL for writing skills (inventory), 39

ATL in IPP planning, 16–18

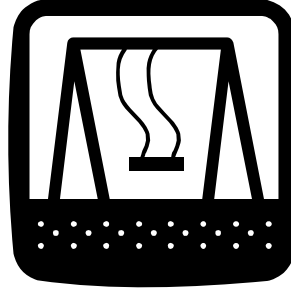
ATL tools for (list), 9–10

IPP sample with ATL for, 19–23

Z

**Zabala, Joy**

(See SETT (student/environment/task/tools) Framework)



Developing  
New Solutions

Chapter 10

# Getting Off to a Good Start in Early Childhood Services (ECS)

2006

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This resource is primarily intended for:

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Administrators	✓
Health-related Professionals	✓
Counsellors	✓
Students	
Parents	
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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

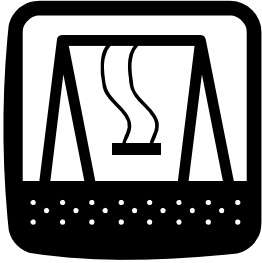
Understanding the Early Childhood Services IPP .....	1
Programming for young children .....	2
Assessment .....	3
The ECS Learning Team .....	3
Family-oriented programming .....	3
Collaborative decision making .....	4
Developing, Implementing and Monitoring an ECS IPP	7
Gathering essential information .....	7
Identifying areas of need and strengths .....	8
Setting the direction .....	11
Creating a plan .....	14
Implementing the plan .....	19
Reviewing, revising and reporting .....	24
Planning for transition .....	27
Sample IPPs .....	28
Profiles for sample early childhood IPPs .....	28
Sample 1 – Ani .....	31
Sample 2 – Caitlin .....	38
Sample 3 – Karen .....	45
Sample 4 – Trey .....	53
Appendices .....	63
10-A Sample IPP Template .....	64
10-B Essential Information Checklist .....	69
10-C Activity and Routines-based Observational Assessment .....	72
10-D IPP Planning Meeting Recording Form .....	73
10-E Instructional Matrix .....	74
10-F Group Monitoring Chart .....	75
10-G ECS Transition Checklist .....	76
Bibliography .....	77
Index .....	79





## Chapter 10

# Getting Off to a Good Start in Early Childhood Services (ECS)



Individualized program plans (IPPs) are important components of quality educational programming for young children with special education needs. Young children have a range of developmental needs and require flexibility in program delivery. Early childhood services (ECS) programming may take place in a variety of environments such as home, inclusive classroom programming in neighbourhood schools and preschools, or specialized sites. Given the wide range of individual needs, potential settings and instructional philosophies among parents and various professionals, it is essential that the child's learning team take a collaborative approach to individualized program planning, implementation, monitoring and reporting.

The learning team refers to the small group of people who consult and share information relevant to the individual child's education, and plan special education programming and services as required. The team may consist of the classroom teacher, parents, the child (when appropriate), other school and jurisdiction staff aware of the child's needs, and child development specialists, as required.

## Understanding the Early Childhood Services IPP

ECS IPPs are developed for children aged 2½ to 6 years of age with mild, moderate or severe disabilities and/or delays, and for children who are gifted and talented. Like an IPP for older students, an ECS IPP is not a daily lesson plan nor is it meant to be all-encompassing. An ECS IPP is an evolving, flexible and future-oriented plan that:

- meets the special education needs of an individual preschool child
- promotes child development by building the child's independence, competence and meaningful participation in daily activities in a variety of environments
- addresses the specific priorities of the child through functional goals which guide classroom activities and routines
- summarizes essential information, including the level of programming, the settings where programming will take place, necessary coordinated support services, and other services to facilitate teaching and learning in the classroom and other environments
- is developed, implemented and evaluated by a collaborative learning team, including parents, teachers, resource personnel and, when possible, the child

- provides an ongoing record to monitor and communicate child growth, and ensure continuity of programming
- guides planning for transition.

IPPs will look different for different children, depending on the type and complexity of needs of the individual child. The essential information required is the same for all children with special education needs, however the IPP process and document will be less involved for children with less complex needs. *Not all sample tools presented may be appropriate or necessary for all children with special education needs.*

### Programming for young children

Appropriate programming for young children varies greatly in terms of the setting and the level of programming provided. Programming also varies in the ways that it meets two different purposes: that of providing a rich learning environment in which children choose activities and progress at their own pace, and that of teaching functional skills to accelerate progress toward particular developmental goals (Niemeyer et al. 1999).

### Settings and levels of programming

Programming should occur in the most natural learning setting possible. This means a setting in which the child is able to learn and acquire skills with his or her peers as much as possible. For many children, this is within an inclusive classroom or the home, with instruction of IPP goals and objectives integrated into existing routines. Other potential environments include child-care facilities or playschools. The most appropriate setting varies with the needs of the child. The level of programming—the number of hours of centre-based programming and/or frequency of family-oriented programming sessions also varies based on the individual needs of the child and is determined by the school authority in consultation with parents.

When making decisions about the setting and level of programming for young children with special education needs, consider factors such as the following:

- developmental needs of the child
- available resources
- parental concerns and preferences
- ways to provide instruction, supports and services within natural learning settings (e.g., in the classroom with peers)
- ways to maintain interaction with children who do not have disabilities, either through the regular setting for instruction or through other frequent and planned contact.

## Assessment

Assessment of ECS children with special education needs is conducted for a variety of purposes including the following:

- to determine need for special education programming, services and funding
- to gain information about the child that will guide the development and implementation of the IPP
- to evaluate the growth and progress of the child in relation to the skills and behaviours targeted in the IPP goals
- to evaluate the effectiveness of services and programming provided.

Consider the following guidelines.

- Use a variety of assessment tools and strategies appropriate to the developmental level and individual needs of the child, including activity-based measures that focus on meaningful skills.
- Assess the child in the most natural settings possible (e.g., where he or she will be using the skill).
- Use a team approach that includes the child's family, teacher, teacher assistant, and sometimes medical and child development specialists.
- Discuss findings with parents and other members of the child's learning team in clear, straightforward language.

## The ECS Learning Team

Best practice and Alberta Education policy identify the certificated teacher as the person responsible for overseeing the development and implementation of the IPP. A number of individuals may work with the teacher at different times and make up the child's learning team. In addition to the teacher, this team typically consists of the parents, teacher assistant and other specialists such as communication, occupational, physiotherapy or family support specialists who have direct involvement in planning, implementing and monitoring the IPP. Other service providers may provide services for the child on an as-needed basis. These service providers are not typically identified as learning team members, although their services may be documented in the IPP as support services for the child.

## Family-oriented programming

Parent and family involvement contributes to the success of the child's educational programming. Parents' knowledge of their child should be sought out and used to assess the child's strengths and areas of need, determine goals and objectives, plan methods of intervention, evaluate ongoing program success and develop transition plans. When parents are meaningfully involved in programming, it increases the likelihood that new skills will be practised across environments, and improves the likelihood that skills will be learned and generalized. Parents are also the members of the child's learning team who remain constant, providing continuity and the ability to advocate for appropriate programming from year to year.

The members of the learning team need to ensure that parents have the information they need to make informed decisions. Teachers also need to ensure that programming is sensitive to the priorities, values and routines of the family, especially when planning activities that require direct family involvement. By building on the family's strengths, teachers can enhance parents' confidence and ability to meet their child's needs.

### Collaborative decision making

Decisions about a child's individualized program plan or its implementation should be made collaboratively. All team members are involved in supporting the IPP goals and objectives, therefore, it is important for team members to understand how these goals and objectives are functional and immediately useful to the child. To encourage the relevance of the IPP and the commitment of individual team members, teachers should attempt to reach a consensus regarding approaches and priorities for the child. At the same time, each team member will have a unique perspective and role in the IPP process. Sample roles are described in the following chart.

### Sample Roles

Parents	Classroom Teacher	Teacher Assistants
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• advocate for their child’s best interests, and communicate their views regarding programming and goals to other team members</li> <li>• contribute to the direction and focus of the IPP, in collaboration with other team members</li> <li>• participate in their child’s learning team to ensure that selected goals and objectives are reinforced across the child’s environments (e.g., daycare, respite, home)</li> <li>• provide ongoing feedback about the generalization of skills to the home and community environments</li> <li>• maintain ongoing communication and collaboration with the classroom teacher and other team members</li> <li>• seek guidance from the learning team, as needed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• is accountable for, and develops, plans, implements, monitors and evaluates the IPP, in collaboration with other team members</li> <li>• assesses children’s strengths and areas of need through observation, formal and informal assessment; explains results to other team members</li> <li>• develops strategies for incorporating goals and objectives into existing classroom activities and routines</li> <li>• monitors and regularly reports on the child’s progress, and adapts or modifies activities, routines, instructional strategies or objectives, as necessary</li> <li>• provides teacher assistants with ongoing direction and monitoring regarding program implementation</li> <li>• ensures that the IPP includes all essential elements required by Alberta Education</li> <li>• maintains ongoing communication and collaboration with other members of the learning team</li> <li>• seeks guidance and feedback from the learning team, as needed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• assist in implementing and monitoring IPP goals and objectives, under the direction of the classroom teacher</li> <li>• assist in developing strategies for incorporating goals and objectives into existing classroom activities and routines</li> <li>• assist in modification and preparation of materials and activities</li> <li>• maintain ongoing communication and collaboration with the classroom teacher, and with members of the learning team, as directed by the teacher</li> <li>• seek ongoing guidance and feedback from the classroom teacher</li> </ul>

(continued)

## Sample Roles (continued)

School or Program Administrator	Program Specialists (e.g., occupational therapists, physical therapists and speech-language pathologists)	Community Service Providers (e.g., daycare, respite)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ensures an IPP is prepared, implemented, monitored and regularly evaluated for each child identified with a special education need</li> <li>ensures that the IPP includes all essential elements required by Alberta Education</li> <li>identifies a teacher as responsible to coordinate, develop, plan, implement, monitor, evaluate and report on the child's IPP, with the ongoing support and feedback of other members of the learning team</li> <li>ensures parents have opportunities to participate in the IPP process</li> <li>ensures the availability of support personnel, specialists, appropriate materials and equipment, and inservice training, as required by the child's developmental and learning needs</li> <li>ensures that the team meets and communicates regularly to review the child's progress, and works collaboratively to resolve issues as they arise</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>participate in the development, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the IPP, in collaboration with other team members</li> <li>assess student strengths and areas of need through observation, formal and informal assessment; explain findings to team members</li> <li>provide educational programming that meets the child's needs through a combination of direct service and consultation</li> <li>develop strategies for incorporating goals and objectives into existing classroom activities and routines</li> <li>support classroom staff and parents in addressing goals and objectives through ongoing training, direction, monitoring and feedback</li> <li>monitor and regularly report on the child's progress, in collaboration with other members of the learning team</li> <li>adapt or modify activities, routines, instructional strategies or objectives, as necessary</li> <li>provide technical assistance and advice to all team members about materials, resources and strategies</li> <li>maintain ongoing communication and collaboration with other team members</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>provide input and support during various points in the IPP process</li> <li>participate in the initial IPP planning meeting</li> <li>gather anecdotal information during the assessment process, to assist in identifying the child's strengths and areas of need</li> <li>work cooperatively with the home and school to address selected IPP goals by supporting the application and practice of new skills across environments</li> <li>monitor the child's progress on goals and objectives, and observe degree of skill generalization across environments</li> </ul>

## Developing, Implementing and Monitoring an ECS IPP

The development, implementation and monitoring of an ECS IPP involves the following interrelated steps.

1. Identifying areas of need and strengths
2. Setting the direction
3. Creating a plan
4. Implementing the plan
5. Reviewing, revising and reporting
6. Planning for transition

Although the requirements for ECS IPPs are consistent for children with mild, moderate or severe disabilities as well as for those who are gifted and talented, the degree of complexity and detail will vary. In general, the greater the needs of the child, the more detailed and comprehensive the IPP will be. The components and ideas discussed in the next few pages are applicable to all IPPs.

### Appendices

*See Appendix 10-A for a sample template of the IPP.*

### Gathering essential information

IPPs for young children should include the following essential information:

- assessment data
- current level of performance and achievement
- identification of strengths and areas of need
- measurable goals and objectives
- level of programming and settings where programming will take place (children with severe disabilities)
- procedures for evaluating child's progress
- identification of coordinated support services (including health-related), if required
- relevant medical information
- required classroom accommodations (e.g., any changes to instructional strategies, assessment procedures, materials, resources, facilities or equipment)
- transition plans
- year-end summary
- parent signature.

### Appendices

*See Appendix 10-B for a sample Essential Information Checklist.*

## 1. Identifying areas of need and strengths

The purpose of initial assessments is to identify the child's developmental levels, and areas of strength and need. At this stage of the process, the team needs to:

- gather information about the child's daily routines and activities across environments, to understand how well he or she functions and where he or she is experiencing difficulties
- administer (or refer for) formal assessments, as required
- begin identifying interests and potential skills that could lead to improved functioning and independence, or will prepare the child for his or her next environment
- begin identifying educational specialists who might be able to contribute to the development and implementation of the child's IPP.

Decisions about goals and interventions should be guided by a variety of assessment strategies, including formal and informal testing and observations. One of the best ways to identify strengths and interests of young children is to identify what objects and activities engage or interest them. Observing the child performing various functional skills in the activities and settings in which these skills are actually required can often provide more relevant and complete data than standardized tests. Informal assessments, such as curriculum- and criterion-based assessments and teacher-made checklists, can also provide qualitative information about how well the child is functioning on a day-to-day basis.

One example of an informal assessment process is an Activity and Routines-based Observational Assessment. A sample Activity and Routines-based Observational Assessment record is shown on the following two pages. The activities of an individual child are recorded for each time period throughout the school day. Questions about observation are noted with brackets and a question mark. Plus (+) and minus (-) signs are used to code observed strengths and needs, and this information is summarized in two lists at the end of the observations.



## Sample Activity and Routines-based Observational Assessment

Location: Classroom/Playground

Time/ Activity	Monday Sept. 15 <sup>th</sup>	Tuesday 16 <sup>th</sup>	Wednesday 17 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday 18 <sup>th</sup>	Friday 19 <sup>th</sup>
9:00 a.m. – Come in from bus, coatroom, bathroom, free play at toys	+ came into class from bus on own – went straight to toys without taking off coat or getting out communication book	– difficulty unzipping and removing coat + loved the cars, trucks and planes, but didn't want to share toys with others	+ said "Hi!" and smiled at me when he came into class – needed assistance with jeans zipper and belt in bathroom	– cried when told to go to the bathroom before going to free play (impatient?) – grabbed peer's toys; didn't seem to know what to do/say	+ said "Hi" and hugged friend Sajad when he came into class – walked away when a peer took his toy
9:30 a.m. – Circle	– called out, interrupted instruction + imitated actions well with Big Book	– / + difficulty imitating repetitive parts of stories, but tried hard to participate + enjoyed the music!	– difficulty maintaining attention during group instruction, distractible/ active + used picture prompt to choose centre	– cried during transition from toys to circle – would not move to circle independently or help to clean up	– difficulty waiting his turn (impulsive) + asked to be snack helper + watched others for cues for actions
10:00 a.m. – Centres	– tried to take all the toys in sand centre + made vehicle noises when playing + counted the cars	+ positive interacting with peers in house centre – cried when time to transition to snack	+ traded puppets with peer – left centre after approximately three minutes (frustrated communicating?)	– didn't like the feel of the wet sand – scratched another child who tried to take his toy	+ stacked five blocks; made a train with blocks; pointed to blue and red; counted three blocks with 1:1
10:20 a.m. – Snack	+ helped hand out napkins + said each child's name	– did not want to touch the Jell-O or try any of it (sensation?)	– difficulty using spoon without spilling (awkward grasp?)	– tried to take peer's snack instead of asking for more	+ asked for snack and juice without prompts – some drooling
10:30 a.m. – Recess	+ appears excited to swing and play on slide and climb (not fearful)	– needed help to come in when bell rang; ran away from T.A. (transition)	– difficulty putting on coat and zipping	+ lined up well to go out (motivated) – did not come in when bell rang; continued to play	– doesn't seem to recognize limits, danger (climbs to top of swing set)

## Sample Activity and Routines-based Observational Assessment (continued)

Location: Classroom/Playground

Time/ Activity	Monday Sept. 15 <sup>th</sup>	Tuesday 16 <sup>th</sup>	Wednesday 17 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday 18 <sup>th</sup>	Friday 19 <sup>th</sup>
10:45 a.m. – Gym	– appears awkward when running	+ smiles and laughs when riding tricycle, good skills	– awkward throwing and kicking ball	– aggressive with peers handing out equipment; grab/hit	+ good at following circle game rules
11:15 a.m. – Art	– not interested in colouring; difficulty holding crayons + imitates his friend Sajad's work	+ shows both concentration and accuracy when cutting with scissors – doesn't follow group directions and cuts everything	– does not seem to know how to ask for what he needs (e.g., ask peers to pass glue, crayons)	– usually needs one-on-one assistance to listen to and follow directions to finish work + accepts help	+ responds quickly to help teacher hand out and put away materials; smiles + glues carefully + selects car/truck stickers
11:30 a.m. – Clean up, bathroom	+ willingly pushes in the chairs at table – difficulty with button	– won't stop work to go to bathroom (transition)	+ habit/toilet trained! – reminder to flush	+ showed off his "big boy" underwear	+ will point to and go to the bathroom when he needs to go
11:45 a.m. – Coats, home time/ bus	– waits for adult to ask him if needs help	+ lined up for and went on bus with no problem	– distracted by peers; last one ready to go	– appears awkward walking to bus (gait?)	– pushed peer out of his way; no words

**Identified areas of strength/interest:**

- demonstrates interest and enjoyment in peers
- smiles and laughs when involved in music/actions/gym/games
- knows some colours, shapes, counting
- chooses vehicles and trikes
- toilet trained
- willing to help/be independent

**Identified areas of difficulty/concern:**

- transition between activities
- self-help (clothing, utensils, asking for help)
- appears awkward (run/walk/kick/throw)
- communicating (wants and needs)
- impulsive/following directions
- sensory issues? (need more information)

See Appendix 10-C for a blank template for observing activities and routines.

## 2. Setting the direction

Setting the direction for an IPP involves grouping and prioritizing strengths and areas of need so that the child's annual goals will be both relevant and manageable. This process occurs through an initial IPP planning meeting in which individuals who have observed or assessed the child come together to share information and assist others in forming a complete picture of the child. The meeting is typically attended by parents, teachers, teacher assistants and involved specialists. If it is practical, community service providers who work regularly with the child (e.g., child-care workers, respite workers) may be included in the meeting and communicated with on an ongoing basis throughout the year. These individuals can provide valuable insight into the child's strengths and areas of need, interests, behaviour and level of independence in other environments, and level of generalization of newly acquired skills. Involving these service providers also allows for more comprehensive implementation of selected strategies and encourages transfer of skills between environments.

### Sample steps for an initial IPP planning meeting

The initial planning meeting may involve a series of steps such as the following.

- Organize participants' observations into two lists: strengths/interests and needs/concerns. These lists should span developmental areas, settings and activities.
- Review the list of needs and concerns, and identify general themes or areas of focus. For example, if a child's list identifies difficulties asking for help, asking for a turn, expressing frustration verbally and several similar concerns, then communication may be identified as an area of focus.
- Prioritize the areas of focus. The areas of highest priority are typically those with the greatest potential to increase independence and functioning during daily activities across environments.
- Select a reasonable number of priorities for the child for the year. The priorities chosen will often span several developmental areas, depending on individual needs. These form the basis of the annual goals for the child's IPP.
- Identify other persons, such as parents and child-care workers, who can target selected skills in their own environments. Because the IPP document focuses on what the classroom teacher is accountable for, information about what will happen outside the learning environment is typically not recorded in the IPP document. If it is recorded, it should be clearly indicated that this is additional support, and is beyond the scope and responsibility of the classroom teacher.

During the meeting, it is important to ensure everyone uses clear language that all participants can understand. Team members may find it helpful to use a form such as the following to record discussion details and decisions, including the focus of the IPP, the skills targeted, and the tentative settings, strategies and persons involved in addressing them. The sample provided is an example of a recording form for a child with severe and/or complex special education needs.

### Sample IPP Planning Meeting Recording Form

Identified Areas of Focus (Become long-term goals)	Areas of Need (Become short-term objectives)	Possible Activities/Routines (May become instructional strategies or part of instructional matrix)	Who will be involved?
Communication: Initiates verbal communication with others	Greeting: Saying hello/goodbye	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hello or bye (gesture, verbal or vocal modes) to family/peers and staff when coming to/from school, home, daycare and bus.</li> <li>Hello/bye when staff or peers come in/out of room, pass in the hallway/office.</li> </ul>	Teacher, TA, SLP, <i>Additional support:</i> parents, primary daycare worker and bus driver
	Vocalize/ verbalize to make requests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accept attempts at speech (or imitations) as required throughout his day.</li> <li>Model words as necessary.</li> <li>Wait until he asks before giving him items.</li> </ul>	Teacher, TA, SLP, Parents, <i>Additional support:</i> daycare worker
	Call people's names, or approximation, to gain their attention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Model calling name by adults and peers. If he doesn't try to call name, adult models for him to repeat.</li> <li>Respond the moment he calls your name.</li> </ul>	Teacher, TA, SLP, Parents
	Expand sentence length	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Model/expand one word to two words when he speaks.</li> <li>Encourage him to repeat/restate your two-word model, but don't insist on it.</li> </ul>	Teacher, TA, SLP, Parents
Fine Motor: Self-regulation	Use strategies to self-regulate sensory input when anxious	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide and model use of several strategies that seem to work at home (fidgets, wiping cloth, gradual exposure without pressure, listen to music).</li> </ul>	Teacher, TA, OT
	Tolerate a greater variety of foods/textures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gradual exposure to various foods/textures (on plate, touch with finger, smell, play with fork, touch with tongue), at snack, lunch, meals at home.</li> </ul>	Teacher, TA, OT, Parents
	Control and self-manage drooling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Subtle verbal and/or visual prompts to swallow, close mouth, breathe through nose.</li> <li>Reminders to wipe mouth with wristband or tissue.</li> </ul>	Teacher, TA, OT, Parents, <i>Additional support:</i> daycare worker

## Sample IPP Planning Meeting Recording Form (continued)

Identified Areas of Focus (Become long-term goals)	Areas of Need (Become short-term objectives)	Possible Activities/Routines (May become instructional strategies or part of instructional matrix)	Who will be involved?
Self-help: Dress/undress independently	Independent dressing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage him to try himself (problem solve) before asking for help. Provide decreasing physical and verbal prompts.</li> <li>Verbal praise for attempts.</li> </ul>	Teacher, TA, Parents, <i>Additional support:</i> daycare worker
	Managing own clothing during toileting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage problem solving before asking for help, provide minimum physical prompts first, then let him finish, verbal praise.</li> <li>Use sequence chart for visual prompts.</li> </ul>	Teacher, TA, Parents
	Asking for help when needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Model word “help” combined with sign or picture for help when he appears frustrated (dressing, toileting, meals, craft times), ask only when needed.</li> </ul>	Teacher, TA, SLP, Parents
Personal/Social: Follow rules of social conduct	Transition between activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide one-minute warning.</li> <li>Use visual daily schedule to prepare him for next activity; he carries card to next activity and puts in “all done” box.</li> <li>Praise and vehicle stickers in reward book for transitioning without incident.</li> </ul>	Teacher, TA
	Awareness and avoidance of dangers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adults point out potential dangers as encountered, explain reasoning to child.</li> <li>If demonstrates unsafe behaviour, explain why not safe and what child should do.</li> </ul>	Teacher, TA, Parents, <i>Additional support:</i> daycare worker
	Sharing and taking turns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher and peers model use of phrases “turn” or “want turn.”</li> <li>Set up environment to encourage sharing of toys or other items. Encourage trading toys or musical instruments, crayons, etc.</li> <li>Adult mediation, praise for compliance.</li> </ul>	Teacher, TA, Parents, <i>Additional support:</i> daycare worker
	Playing with peers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage joining group toys (e.g., train, race track, doll house) and centres for longer before switching.</li> <li>Favourite peers have wanted toys to encourage joining, have peers invite him to come play, provide trucks and cars to entice him.</li> </ul>	Teacher, TA

See Appendix 10-D for a template for recording IPP planning meeting notes.

### 3. Creating a plan

At this stage in the process, the major task is the development of meaningful and measurable goals and objectives by the teacher, with the input of other team members. These goals and objectives are typically compatible with the philosophy and practices of most ECS programs, but the specific content and focus must be educationally relevant and individually meaningful to the child and family. IPP goals and objectives need to focus on the development of functional skills that will increase independence in the current daily environment, and that will prepare the child for future settings. For example, colour recognition is an important part of the typical ECS curriculum, but it is not as relevant to the current and future success of a child with special education needs as the more functional ability to follow two-step instructions or play cooperatively with peers.

ECS goals and objectives, like those written for school-aged students, must also be measurable. This means that someone else could read the goal statement or objective, and know **specifically** what the learning team wanted the child to achieve or demonstrate. Two questions to keep in mind when writing goals and objectives are “What do we want this child to be able to do?” and “What would we see if the child has accomplished this?” In order to be measurable, goals and objectives must include the following elements:

- action (what the child will know or be able to do)
- context (when and under what conditions the behaviour will occur)
- terms ( the criteria for successful mastery: how well, how many times or how long is the child expected to perform the task)
- timeline (the expected achievement date).

When goals and objectives are written in these terms, teachers are able to address them more effectively and children are more likely to experience improved outcomes.

#### Annual goals

The learning team must determine a reasonable number of goals based on the areas of focus selected as priorities during the initial IPP planning meeting. The goals should be compatible with the routines of the current programming, and generalizable across different environments and developmental domains. These goals will represent the best prediction of what a child will be able to accomplish in each area by the end of the school year, however, goals may require revision as the child progresses or his or her needs change.

## Example

Examples of annual goals:

*Communication skills*

- By June 15th, Hajai will use cue cards to initiate requests for preferred activities and objects in the classroom, playground and gymnasium.
- By June 15th, Sarah will repeat an utterance when cued by a peer.

*Cognitive/preacademic skills*

- By June 15th, Toni will produce recognizable approximations of letters and simple objects with pencil and paper.
- By June 15th, Lee will identify and print own name independently.
- By June 15th, John will identify a minimum of 15 examples of environmental print in the classroom, school and community.

*Social/behavioural skills*

- By June 15th, Rick will initiate social interaction with other children at least three times throughout the school day.
- By June 15th, Ray will remain in circle time for 15 minutes and will participate by imitating actions and joining in for choral reading.

*Self-help skills*

- By June 15th, Bernie will dress self in outdoor clothes independently within five minutes or less.
- By June 15th, Anne-Louise will follow toileting routines independently on at least four out of five days in one week.

*Motor skills*

- By June 15th, Rene will walk length of school hall with use of a walker.
- By June 15th, Tyrone will maneuver wheelchair in all school environments without physical assistance.

### Short-term objectives

Short-term objectives represent the skills that will be targeted or the intermediate steps required to achieve the annual goal. Short-term objectives are typically achievable in three to 16 weeks. The learning team should collaborate to develop a reasonable number of objectives for each goal and to identify strategies which may be useful in addressing each objective.

## Example

Examples of short-term objectives:

*Communication skills*

- By February 15th, Caitlin will, when given a choice of three cue cards (including 1 distracter), use the juice and/or specific snack cards to request snack items during four out of five snack periods over five days.
- By February 15th, Akshay will use the ASL sign “want” combined with a pointing gesture, to ask a peer or adult for a turn with a toy or other item, at least 16 times a day on 10 consecutive school days, with adult modelling as required.

*Cognitive/preacademic skills*

- By February 15th, Gregory will, when presented with his name and those of two peers printed on name cards, point to his own name during attendance, helper and centre activities, four days out of five.



- By February 15th, Tony will, when presented with two picture cue cards, choose one activity centre.

*Social/behavioural skills*

- By February 15th, Sasha will raise her hand and silently wait for her turn to volunteer for a task or to answer a group question during circle or story time, at least three times a day for one week.
- By February 15th, Gail will, when asked by teacher, go to assigned work area without protest, at least twice a day for one week.

*Self-help skills*

- By February 15th, Tyrone will independently put on his coat during recess and hometime routines, eight times in one week.
- By February 15th, with verbal prompting, Saager will use words (e.g., help, zip, open, please) to request assistance from peer or adult on nine out of 10 occasions when help is required.

*Motor skills*

- By February 15th, Angela will independently use a tripod pencil grasp 50 percent of the time during printing, colouring or drawing activities over a three-day period.
- By February 15th, Martin will walk across a variety of surfaces between classroom activities, without support, for a distance of least four feet, three or more times per day, for one week.

See the following chart for an illustration of the difference between a nonfunctional and functional behaviour statement.



## Sample Nonfunctional and Functional Behaviour Statements<sup>1</sup>

	<b>Nonfunctional statement</b> <i>content and context not relevant; therapeutic versus educational</i>	<b>Better but still nonfunctional statement</b> <i>more relevant content but context still artificial and not meaningful</i>	<b>More functional statement</b> <i>relevant content; context embedded and integrated in classroom routines</i>
<b>Communication:</b> Request wants and needs			
<b>Expected behaviour</b>	Label food items	Request edibles/treats	Request food/drink; ask for more
<b>Criteria</b>	% correct when pulled out and tested	Number of initiated syntactic expansions when tested	Number of child verbal/vocal initiations observed during routines
<b>Strategies</b>	Massed trials in therapy room	Discrete trial training, present treats in therapy room	Daily opportunities during snack and lunch activities; water fountain after gym class
<b>Fine Motor:</b> Use two hands to perform task			
<b>Expected behaviour</b>	Snips with scissors	Open and close jars	Open/close containers required for activities
<b>Criteria</b>	Measures how far he or she snips paper	Number of successfully opened/closed jars when tested	Amount of assistance/time required to open/close containers
<b>Strategies</b>	Repeated trials in therapy room	Massed trials at table in class	Daily lunch, snack and art activities (e.g., jar during prep, unscrew thermos, open zippered bag, paint pot)
<b>Gross Motor:</b> Walk with improved balance and coordination			
<b>Expected behaviour</b>	Walk on 4" balance beam	Ambulate in hall	Walk independently between activities
<b>Criteria</b>	Measures how far/fast he or she walks on beam	Steps per minute during assessment period	Amount of assistance/time required
<b>Strategies</b>	Repeated trials with assistance in gym	Repeated practice with assistance, in hall	Daily practice between centres, classroom activities; between bathroom and classroom

(continued)

1. Adapted from Richard S. Neel and Felix F. Billingsley, *Impact: A Functional Curriculum Handbook for Students with Moderate to Severe Disabilities* (Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co., 1989), p. 57, Table 8.1. Adapted by permission of Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

## Sample Nonfunctional and Functional Statements (continued)

	<b>Nonfunctional statement</b> <i>content and context not relevant; therapeutic versus educational</i>	<b>Better but still nonfunctional statement</b> <i>more relevant content but context still artificial and not meaningful</i>	<b>More functional statement</b> <i>relevant content; context embedded and integrated in classroom routines</i>
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**Cognitive/Pre-academic:** Number concepts to 10

	<b>Nonfunctional statement</b> <i>content and context not relevant; therapeutic versus educational</i>	<b>Better but still nonfunctional statement</b> <i>more relevant content but context still artificial and not meaningful</i>	<b>More functional statement</b> <i>relevant content; context embedded and integrated in classroom routines</i>
<b>Expected behaviour</b>	Trace numbers 1 to 10	Count sets of blocks	Count number of items required for activities
<b>Criteria</b>	Rate of accurately traced numbers when tested	Percent or rate correct when tested	Rate of accuracy in activities (e.g., matched number of cups with number of peers)
<b>Strategies</b>	Massed trials, individual table work	Massed trials, one-on-one at table in class	Daily practice during snack, circle and art (e.g., cups, food items, napkins, mats, papers)

**Social:** Initiate interaction with others

	<b>Nonfunctional statement</b> <i>content and context not relevant; therapeutic versus educational</i>	<b>Better but still nonfunctional statement</b> <i>more relevant content but context still artificial and not meaningful</i>	<b>More functional statement</b> <i>relevant content; context embedded and integrated in classroom routines</i>
<b>Expected behaviour</b>	Point to a picture of a boy/girl	Point to and name pictures of peers	Greet peers and adults
<b>Criteria</b>	% correct when pulled out and tested	Percent correct during discrete trials	Rate/frequency of child initiations, various forms
<b>Strategies</b>	Massed trials, one-on-one at table	Massed trials, one-on-one at table in class	Daily opportunities during arrival and meeting others (gesture/vocal and eye contact)

**Self-help:** Dress/undress independently

	<b>Nonfunctional statement</b> <i>content and context not relevant; therapeutic versus educational</i>	<b>Better but still nonfunctional statement</b> <i>more relevant content but context still artificial and not meaningful</i>	<b>More functional statement</b> <i>relevant content; context embedded and integrated in classroom routines</i>
<b>Expected behaviour</b>	Name clothing articles	Coat off/on	Dress for outside activities
<b>Criteria</b>	% correct when pulled out and tested	Number of times correct or % of steps done independently	Amount of assistance and/or time required
<b>Strategies</b>	Massed trials, one-on-one at table	Repeated practice, with assistance, in coatroom	Daily practice during various routines (recess, lunchtime, home time, field trips)

#### 4. Implementing the plan

Once the IPP has been created, the learning team must work to implement the plan and help the child achieve the goals and objectives identified. Consider the following guidelines for implementing an IPP:

- ensure that the strategies and procedures used to address goals and objectives are compatible with the child's individual needs and the ECS setting
- integrate or embed instruction into existing routines and activities, across learning environments, as much as possible
- create opportunities for child-led learning by allowing flexibility in programming and structure
- revise IPP objectives and practices as necessary, based on ongoing monitoring and evaluation
- ensure teacher assistants understand their roles and responsibilities in implementing and supporting programming, and establish a plan for ongoing communication between teacher assistants and the classroom teachers
- design the learning environment to ensure safety and to promote active engagement, learning and participation
- ensure that learning team members and other school staff have the time, ongoing training and support necessary to provide effective programming within the classroom, and to collaboratively develop and plan the programs and strategies which will be implemented.

#### Determining appropriate types of programming

As much as possible and practical, children should remain within their regular learning environment for instruction. Consider the following three types of instruction.

- **Embedded instruction.** Children's needs are often best addressed through the typical activities and routines that take place in the natural learning environment, whether it be the home, classroom, daycare or playschool. Embedded instruction should be the first option considered.
- **Embedded instruction with minor changes.** If the child's needs cannot be addressed within existing routines and activities, consider adapting or adding new materials, components or supports. For example, change lyrics of daily songs to include communication targets, add tongs to snack centre to target a particular fine motor skill or use a "secret word" that includes a targeted speech sound to request an activity.
- **Individual instruction.** If goals and objectives cannot be addressed within the regular routine and environment, even with appropriate adaptations, then individual instruction may be necessary. In this case, every effort should be made to ensure that the instruction takes place in the most natural learning environment possible, such as at a table in the classroom.

## Research-based Reasons Why Instruction and Therapies Should be Integrated

- Children learn the skills they need in the places they will use them.
- Children have increased opportunities for practice.
- Children don't miss out on classroom activities or instruction by being pulled out for therapy or instruction.
- Integration facilitates the full inclusion of children in preschool environments, and does not single a child out.
- Specialists can model what they do to help children increase their independence and skill level, so the classroom teacher can work on these specific skills when specialists leave.
- Specialists can see whether or not the strategies they have developed for use in the classroom are feasible, and whether they are working efficiently for the child.
- Additional staff are not required for implementation, as individual instruction should not interfere with the flow of classroom instruction.
- Teachers and specialists focus on objectives and skills that are immediately useful for a child, and which promote participation and competence throughout the child's day.
- Skills can be assessed authentically, when and where they are used in the real world.
- Teachers and specialists can work together more often to address problems as they arise.
- Teachers and specialists can provide interventions when and where they are needed.
- Strategies can be used across a variety of settings (home, school, daycare), and are compatible with a wide range of goals, objectives, activities and routines that promote skill acquisition and generalization.
- Teachers and specialists don't require a special time set aside to work on IPP objectives. This flexibility allows them to choose times and opportunities optimal for learning such as when the child is interested, motivated and ready to learn.
- Teachers may find it to be a more efficient and effective way to address a number of individual IPP goals, particularly when several children in one ECS classroom have IPPs.

### Integrating instruction

When instruction is integrated effectively, the teacher should be able to address goals and objectives without disrupting the regular routines of the ECS program. In fact, integrating instruction can allow teachers to better balance a number of educational priorities and objectives simultaneously. Consider the following guidelines when planning for integrated, activity-based instruction.

- Ensure that IPP goals and objectives are functional and tied to daily routines. This allows a wider range of activities to be used to teach specific skills.
- Make use of existing routines and activities. For example, rather than pulling a child out of class to work on a physiotherapy goal such as “ascending and descending stairs,” the teacher and specialist could address this goal within the context of existing routines, such as walking down the stairs to the bus and up the stairs leading to the school.
- Adjust classroom routines and activities to ensure that goals are targeted frequently throughout the course of the day. For example, to increase the number of times a student practises ascending and descending stairs, the teacher could place a step stool, riser or small set of stairs in front of the art supplies cupboard or beside calendar numbers that are located out of reach. Similarly, counting skills could be addressed during snack time by having the child count the number of crackers or juice cups needed for the class.

### Planning for integrated instruction

Integrating specific instructional strategies into existing classroom routines may be challenging to plan and coordinate initially. The learning team may find it useful to use a planning tool such as an instructional matrix to ensure that opportunities for instruction are identified. An instructional matrix is a method of synthesizing the information needed to integrate IPP instruction and strategies into the daily classroom schedule. Matrices are a visual reminder to staff of the opportunities for targeting skills throughout the day. It is a planning strategy that encourages integrating the curriculum of the ECS program with the individual goals and objectives of children with IPPs.

You can use the following steps for creating and using an instructional matrix.

1. Identify appropriate activities and routines to teach the goals and objectives from the IPP. Consider:
  - ongoing daily routines (e.g., transitions, circle time)
  - child-selected or child-initiated activities (e.g., centres, free play)
  - planned activities (e.g., activities designed to target specific skills such as art activities).
2. Plan relevant strategies and instruction to provide opportunities to practise targeted skills within activities and routines. Document this information on an instructional matrix.

3. Set up the environment for success by adapting existing routines and materials, or by modifying or adding components to activities, as necessary.
4. Implement instructional strategies identified on the instructional matrix throughout daily routines.
5. Develop and carry out a monitoring plan.

The following sample charts show how the goals and objectives for two children are integrated across daily activities and routines including arrival, centre time, breakfast, storytime, and music and movement activities.

### Sample of Instructional Matrices<sup>2</sup>

Child	Targeted Behaviours in Goals and Objectives	Daily Program Activities and Routines				
		Arrival	Centre Choices	Breakfast	Stories/ Books	Music and Movement
Trevor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Manipulates two small objects</li> <li>Walks up and down stairs</li> <li>Uses problem-solving strategies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unbuttons coat</li> <li>• Walks down bus steps</li> <li>• Walks up classroom steps</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Puts caps on markers</li> <li>• Walks up and down indoor climbing structure</li> <li>• Identifies solution to peer's problem</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Takes off and puts lids on plastic food containers</li> <li>• Walks up and down steps at sink to wash hands</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responds to adult's questions about problems in stories</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participates in Hoots and Snickers game</li> <li>• Plays musical chairs</li> </ul>

2. Adapted from Diane Bricker with Kristie Pretti-Frontczak and Natalya McComas, *An Activity-Based Approach to Early Intervention* (Second Edition) (Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co., 1998), pp. 96–97, Figure 6.3. Adapted by permission of Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

Child	Targeted Behaviours in Goals and Objectives	Daily Program Activities and Routines				
		Arrival	Centre Choices	Breakfast	Stories/ Books	Music and Movement
Kylie	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sits balanced without support</li> <li>Uses toilet</li> <li>Plays near other peers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sits in seat on bus</li> <li>Goes to bathroom with adult</li> <li>Sits next to peer on bus</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Selects centre with other peers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sits in chair at table</li> <li>Sits near peer at table</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sits on beanbag chair in book corner</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sits on carpet square during circle</li> <li>Sits near peers at circle</li> <li>Participates in musical games such as London Bridge</li> </ul>

Appendices

See Appendix 10-E for a template of an instructional matrix.

Coordinated educational services

In ECS programs for children with special education needs, services are provided under the direction of the certificated teacher, but may be implemented by a number of persons including teacher assistants, specialists and parents. Therefore, the coordination of educational services is crucial. School authorities have the primary responsibility for:

- ensuring coordinated service delivery is provided under the direction of certificated teachers
- ensuring the ideas, recommendations and suggestions of parents, specialists and service providers are considered in the development of IPPs
- identifying the type, frequency and format (where and when) of services to be provided on IPPs
- requesting services are delivered in the most natural setting possible
- ensuring that services directly support the goals and objectives in the IPP.

Consultation and direct instruction

There are many ways that specialists support children’s areas of need in the classroom. These activities typically fall into two general categories: consultation and direct instruction. In a consultation approach, the specialist’s role is to provide advice and to ensure that interventions are adequate to meet the needs of the child. The teacher and specialist work collaboratively to develop instructional strategies and alter the school environment to enable the child to better succeed. In contrast, direct instruction involves working directly with the child, either during typical classroom routines, during group activities within classroom routines, one-



on-one in the classroom, or in a small group or individual pull-out outside of the classroom. Often a combination of consultation and direct instruction may be needed to effectively address the individual needs of a child.

### 5. Reviewing, revising and reporting

The classroom teacher has the primary responsibility for ensuring that the child's needs are being adequately met within the learning environment, and for reviewing, revising (if necessary) and reporting on the IPP. Teachers need to meet and communicate regularly with other learning team members throughout the year, whether formally or informally. The learning team will:

- assess whether the child's goals and objectives are adequately addressed through current strategies, supports and programming
- monitor and review the continued relevance of current goals and objectives
- monitor and review the safety, suitability and usage of equipment and materials
- work together to ensure continuity of programming and use of strategies among staff members
- consult and collaborate regularly to discuss progress and identify what, if anything, could be altered to improve outcomes for the child
- discuss findings from ongoing observations and assessments, focusing on how the data relates to the child's progress toward achieving objectives and ability to function in the classroom
- monitor any changes to routines or environments, or new information gained from assessments, which may necessitate changes in goals or the way they are addressed in the school day
- provide team members and others with relevant training, guidance and feedback, as appropriate.

### Monitoring

An integrated and collaborative approach to programming has many benefits, but it can make monitoring and assessing targeted skills more challenging. Using forms is one way to help team members to more easily identify, monitor and keep data on a child's progress. Team members need to work together to develop monitoring plans that are manageable and tailored for their own purposes. A monitoring plan should consider the following.

- **Development and use of functional data collection forms**  
Forms should be tailored to suit the targeted goals and the setting where they will be used. Forms should be quick and easy for all team members to use in the course of performing their usual duties.
- **Accessibility of forms during daily activities**  
Forms should be readily accessible so that instruction can continue while data is being collected.
- **Scheduled data collection times**  
Data should be collected regularly, using identical criteria, to ensure consistency between observers.



- **Data summarization**  
Data should be summarized on a regular basis to determine whether the child is progressing toward meeting criteria and achieving objectives.
- **Consistency of implementation**  
Continuity of programming implementation between staff members is essential for the child to be successful. Frequent informal communication between team members promotes consistency and a group awareness of any changes affecting programming implementation.

One example of a form that could be used for monitoring is the Activity and Routines-based Observational Assessment form described on page 8. In this case, the form could be adapted to provide a systematic approach to anecdotal recording tied to specific IPP goals or objectives. A teacher, specialist and/or teacher assistant could target one child to observe at periodic intervals (e.g., once every two weeks). A group monitoring chart is another strategy that could be used. Consider the following completed sample chart. This chart describes the action to be monitored, indicates level of assistance (graduated manual assistance, model, verbal assistance, independent), the number of times that indicates success (e.g., three out of three attempts), and a checkbox for recording whether or not the skill was observed.

It is important to choose data collection strategies that will provide meaningful data, and are manageable and can be consistently applied in the context of a busy classroom.

Sample Group Monitoring Chart<sup>3</sup>

Child	Fine Motor	Gross Motor	Cognitive	Expressive Language	Receptive Language	Personal/Social	Self-help
<i>Jackie</i>	Puts small objects in I  3/3 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Squats with support GMA  3/3 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sorts objects into same/ different M  3/3 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Uses action words M  3/3 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Shows red/ green I  3/3 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Gives object to friend when requested GMA  3/3 <input type="checkbox"/> 1	Washes hands VA  3/3 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>Li</i>	Completes four-piece puzzles I  3/3 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Three steps, same foot placement I  3/3 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Imitates the function of new objects/ toys I  3/3 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Names objects/actions M  3/3 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Shows category (animal, family) M  4/5 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Plays with friend, three minutes I  1/1 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Scoops food with spoon I  1/1 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>Sarrie</i>	Matches circle/round I  3/3 <input type="checkbox"/> 2	Walks 0.5 m on tiptoes, carrying object M  3/3 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Makes forms with playdough M  1/1 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Describes object/action and quality M  3/3 <input type="checkbox"/> 1	Follows command using one object and location VA  3/3 <input type="checkbox"/> 1	Takes two turns with friend VA  2/2 <input type="checkbox"/> 1	Uses fasteners, zippers, snaps VA  3/3 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>Maddy</i>	Sorts by shape (circle) VA  3/3 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Hops in place (three hops) M  3/3 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Names objects removed GMA  5/5 <input type="checkbox"/> 1	Describes actions of others, -ing verb M  3/3 <input type="checkbox"/> 1	Shows tall/short M  3/3 <input type="checkbox"/> 2	Attempts pretend play with friend, two minutes I  1/1 <input type="checkbox"/> 0	Drinks with one hand, some spilling I  1/1 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>Jeffrey</i>	Cuts with scissors, two inches I  3/3 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Hops with support GMA  3/3 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Imitates circle, horizontal line I  3/3 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Describes shape, colour of objects M  3/3 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Shows objects by usage VA  3/3 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Cooperative play, five minutes I  1/1 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Prepares snack with little guidance VA  1/1 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

GMA: Graduated manual assistance—some level of physical assistance provided, but will be systematically faded as the child gains independence.

M: Model—an adult will demonstrate how to perform the task or skill.

VA: Verbal assistance—adult provides verbal assistance or direction to help a child perform a task or skill.

I: Independent—the child will complete the task without the assistance of an adult, where he or she previously required more support.

3. Adapted from “Monitoring Child Progress in Early Childhood Special Education Settings” by Sharon A. Raver, *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 36, 6, 2004, p. 54, Figure 1. Copyright 2004 by The Council for Exceptional Children. Adapted with permission.

See Appendix 10-F for a template of a sample form for group monitoring.

### Revising

IPPs are evolving documents that grow and change with the needs of the child, therefore, a component of the reviewing and monitoring process may include the *revision* of goals and objectives. Goals and objectives may be:

- increased—to ensure that the child continues to make gains
- decreased—if conditions have changed and the goal no longer represents a reasonable expectation
- altered/replaced—if the goal or objective has been accomplished or is no longer relevant to the child's needs.

To ensure optimal learning and the best use of resources, programming interventions may also require revision. Strategies and activities that target objectives require ongoing monitoring and should be adjusted *as the need arises*, not only during regularly scheduled reporting periods.

Equipment must also be monitored on an ongoing basis and modified as needed. Consider questions such as the following.

- Has the child physically outgrown the equipment?
- Are the child and staff member using it appropriately and safely?
- Is equipment maintained in good working condition?
- Does the equipment still serve the use for which it was intended?
- Does it still meet the child's needs?
- Do new routines and activities require modified or additional equipment?

### Reporting

In addition to ongoing informal communication between team members, teachers will need to formally report on the child's progress on IPP goals and objectives at regularly scheduled reporting periods (usually three times a year). At this time, comments, findings and recommendations are written to reflect the child's functional use of targeted skills, and are reviewed and discussed with the parents and other learning team members in clear language. During the reporting period, the teacher will also add documentation to the IPP regarding the type, frequency and format of services provided, and the child's current level of development and achievement relative to his or her goals and objectives.

## 6. Planning for transition

Effective planning for transition can help ease the difficulties of transitions from one program, classroom or setting by supporting parents and children through the various stages of this process. Typically, an ECS transition plan is designed to assist the family and child in anticipating and preparing for changes related to his or her next placement. However, there are a number of potential transitions that should be considered, such as moving to longer instructional days, changing staff or changing transportation routines. Like the IPP in general, transition plans should be developed collaboratively at

the beginning of the school year to ensure that transition-related decisions best meet the child's needs, and reflect the priorities and beliefs of the family.

Planning for transition begins in September and should be done annually. Each year might target different types of transitions that are anticipated and some transitions, such as moving schools or into a Grade 1 program, may require more comprehensive and detailed planning.

### Appendices

See Appendix 10-G for a sample checklist for ECS planning for transition.

## Sample IPPs

This chapter ends with four completed samples of IPPs that illustrate how essential information might be recorded on an IPP document for a child receiving special education programming in an early childhood setting.

### Profiles for sample early childhood IPPs

#### Sample 1

**Ani** is a five-year-old boy with a mild developmental delay and moderate language delays. He attends a regular-stream afternoon kindergarten classroom with same-age peers in his rural neighbourhood school.

All individualized instruction takes place within regular classroom routines and activities. Some teacher assistant support is available in the classroom.

His areas of particular need are in the areas of communication, social and play skills, and transitions.

#### Sample 2

**Caitlin** is an active four-year-old girl with severe behavioural needs, and moderate expressive and receptive language delays. She is fully integrated with typically developing same-age peers three mornings per week in a community playschool.

The hamlet's remote location makes access to specialized professionals difficult. Caitlin's IPP is coordinated by the Kindergarten teacher at a neighbouring elementary school, who also supervises and supports the playschool teacher in administering and evaluating Caitlin's IPP goals and progress. There is little teacher assistant time, with the majority of assistance received coming from a rotating schedule of parent volunteers. Caitlin's primary needs include behavioural and coping strategies, social interaction skills, and language skills.

#### Sample 3

**Karen** turns five in two months and has just entered Kindergarten. She was diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder and moderate intellectual delays when she was four years old.

Since the age of four, she has daily tantrums that include screaming, kicking and throwing herself on the floor. Karen often becomes agitated when the environment becomes busy or noisy. Interestingly, the noises of bouncing balls and running feet in the gym do not bother her. Although she has tantrums when she is over-stimulated or when she does not get what she wants, she is easily redirected or calmed in a quieter area of the classroom. Both family and playschool staff use stroking her head gently to calm her. She appears to have a diminished response to pain. For example, when she fell and bruised her knee, she did not react.

Karen enjoys manipulating sensory play objects, such as water and beads, but she does not play functionally with toys unless directed by adults although she spontaneously talks on a toy telephone.

Karen's attention span varies, but it is especially short for activities with a social component, such as circle time or group stories. She is currently communicating through echolalia, gestures and limited functional speech, e.g., "No," "I need help" and "Get the other one." Karen's parents are particularly interested in the development of her expressive and receptive communication skills.

Karen requires verbal prompts to use the toilet, assistance pulling up her pants and prompts to wash her hands after toileting. Karen sometimes runs off, so parents and school staff must be vigilant about closing doors and ensure that Karen is supervised closely on the playground.

#### Sample 4

**Trey** is a four-year-old with cerebral palsy involving both legs and his right hand, a global developmental delay and a mild hearing loss in both ears.

Trey is attending preschool in an early childhood setting where there are eight children with identified special education needs and eight typically developing preschoolers.

Trey has limited ability to communicate with teachers and peers. He can point with his left hand, can vocalize to get attention and to protest, and is beginning to make some word approximations. Trey is very expressive with his face and body, and can demonstrate clearly when he is enjoying an activity. His mom reports that she can usually tell what Trey wants by reading his body language and interpreting his vocalizations. The family has made a communication book which tells people how Trey communicates, but staff and other children in the class still find it difficult to clearly read Trey's communicative behaviours.

An activity-based assessment from September indicates that he is not able to participate effectively in circle time or to communicate effectively with peers during free play. Trey is making some choices by pointing to objects or areas of the room that he wishes to go to. Staff are encouraging him to use the sign "want" as a request and to vocalize to indicate the choice. He often has choices made for him and his peers seldom understand his attempts to communicate.

It is difficult to determine what Trey's receptive language skills are. He can answer yes/no questions by demonstrating acceptance or refusal, but these responses are not always clear and limit his participation in circle and story time activities.

Trey's learning team is considering what types of assistive technology strategies, devices and supports might help him be a more effective communicator in his preschool environment.

## Sample 1 - Ani

<b>Individualized Program Plan</b> Any School Jurisdiction	
<b>Child Information</b>	
<b>Child:</b> Ani P.	<b>Age as of Sept. 1/0X:</b> 5 yrs., 7 mos.
<b>Date of Birth:</b> January 9, 200X	<b>Date I.P.P. Created:</b> September 28, 200X
<b>Parents:</b> Noori and Jay P.	<b>Eligibility Code:</b> 30
<b>Year of E.C.S.:</b> 2nd	(mild/moderate disability/delay)
<b>Background information: Programming context</b>	
<p><b>School/Program:</b> Kindergarten Class - Any Elementary, Anyville, AB</p> <p>Ani is attending the afternoon Kindergarten in his neighbourhood school. There are 18 children; three children are learning English as a second language. No other children in the class are currently identified as having special education needs.</p> <p><b>I.P.P. Coordinator and Classroom Teacher:</b> Ms. Joy Teacher</p> <p><b>Additional IPP Team Members:</b> Pearl Speech (Speech-language pathologist)</p> <p><b>Number of hours of centre-based programming</b>    475 hours</p> <p><b>Number of sessions of family-oriented ECS programming</b>    6 sessions (total 9 hours)</p>	
<b>Background Information: Parental input and involvement</b>	
<p><i>September 14/200X:</i> Mrs. P. identified the family's primary areas of concern as Ani's communication skills, his ability to socialize and play with same-age peers, and his dressing skills. Team committed to maintaining a daily communication book which Ani will transport between home and school.</p> <p><i>February 22/200X:</i> Mr. and Mrs. P. reviewed goals and progress. They are pleased that Ani seems to be making friends at school.</p> <p><i>June 22/200X:</i> Year-end meeting with Mrs. P. by telephone. She supports Ani's next year placement in Grade 1 at Any Elementary. Ani will be participating in summer daycamp through the aftercare program at the school. The family feels this will help him build his social skills and strengthen the friendships he made in school this year.</p>	

## Sample 1 - Ani (continued) page 2/7

<b>Strengths</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>enjoys school, is motivated to learn and usually willing to do his best work</li> <li>eager to please, and follows parent and teacher requests when he understands what is being asked of him</li> <li>fine and gross motor skills are areas of relative strength for him</li> <li>responds well to praise and structure both at home and at school</li> <li>sometimes watches others as social models when he is unsure of what to do next</li> <li>is beginning to show interest in social interaction with other children</li> <li>has a particular interest in transportation toys (e.g., cars, planes, trains)</li> </ul>		
<b>Areas for Growth</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>independence with following classroom routines</li> <li>independent dressing skills (e.g., outerwear for recess and home time)</li> <li>sustained attention to instruction and tasks</li> <li>increased communication skills, particularly expressive language skills (e.g., asking and answering questions)</li> <li>increased frequency of communication (e.g., initiations with peers and adults)</li> <li>increased socialization and play skills (e.g., initiating, trading, sharing, turn taking)</li> </ul>		
<b>Medical Conditions that Impact Schooling</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>mild asthma - Zedotin medication taken at home each morning; inhaler available at school (administered on an as-needed basis)</li> </ul>		
<b>Assessment Data (Specialized Assessment Results)</b>		
<b>Date and Specialist</b>	<b>Test</b>	<b>Results</b>
March 29, 200X Dr. M. Anyman, Psychologist Anyclinic	Vineland Adaptive Behaviour Scales-Interview Edition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>mild cognitive delay with communication disorder</li> <li>mild adaptive behaviour delay (2%ile)</li> </ul>
April 7, 200X Pearl Speech, Speech-language Pathologist	Preschool Language Assessment Instrument (PLAI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>moderate/severe language delay, 2%ile (PLAI, CELF-P)</li> <li>communication delay, 6%ile</li> </ul>
April 15, 200X Tam Job, Occupational Therapist Sharon Physio, Physical Therapist	Peabody Developmental Motor Scales, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Ed. (PDMS-2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>low average fine motor (20%ile) and gross motor skills (24%ile)</li> </ul>



## Sample 1 - Ani (continued) page 3/7

<b>Current Level of Performance and Achievement</b>
September 200X
<p>Carolina Curriculum for Preschoolers with Special Needs - 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. (CCPSN-2)</p> <p>Social-emotional: Current level of functioning approximately at the 3.5-year-old level</p> <p>Self-help: Current level of functioning approximately at the 3.0-year-old level</p> <p><b>Teacher observation</b> Activity-based assessment conducted by teacher indicates that Ani relies on his mother to take off his jacket and guide him to circle at the beginning of class. Throughout the day he needs constant adult prompting to follow classroom transition routines. Ani prefers to play by himself and seldom initiates communication or play with peers.</p>
<b>Coordinated Support Services</b>
Speech-language consultation, including collaborative problem solving, monitoring and recommendations provided to the classroom teacher during four visits per year, Any Outreach Services
<b>Instructional Accommodations and Strategies</b>
<p>General programming accommodations and strategies include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– implementation of speech-language recommendations integrated into classroom plans and activities</li> <li>– use of instructional matrix for integrated instruction</li> <li>– preferential seating</li> <li>– increased wait time when asking/answering questions</li> <li>– additional time and support to complete tasks, as required</li> <li>– graduated use of gestural, visual, verbal and manual (physical) supports and prompts, as required</li> <li>– use preferred activities and items to create natural opportunities for communication and socialization</li> </ul>

## Sample 1 - Ani (continued) page 4/7

<b>Goal #1</b>		
<b>Long-term Goal:</b> By June 25, Ani will ask and answer simple questions of others throughout the school day.		
<b>Short-term Objectives</b>	<b>Assessment Procedures</b>	<b>Progress Review</b>
1. By November 30, Ani will correctly <i>answer</i> simple "who" and "what" questions posed to him, at least twice a day for 2 weeks.	Teacher records the accuracy and frequency of answers, throughout the day	November 22 <i>Achieved.</i> Ani can generally answer simple who/what questions posed to the group.
2. By March 30, Ani will <i>ask</i> permission using simple yes/no questions (e.g., "Can I __?") with visual and verbal cueing as needed, at least once a day for 2 weeks.	Teacher records the use and frequency of questioning during centre times	February 22 <i>Achieved.</i> Ani is able to ask permission using scripts with prompting.
3. By June 30, Ani will <i>ask</i> simple "wh" questions using "who" or "what" (e.g., "What he doing?"), with modelling and verbal cueing as needed, once a day for 2 weeks.	Teacher records the use and frequency of questioning during centre times	June 22 <i>Progressing.</i> Ani typically omits the question word when asking questions (e.g., "You going?" vs. "Where you going?"). He is still relying heavily on adult cueing and prompts to initiate asking a question.
<p><b>Accommodations and instructional strategies to support these objectives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Look for opportunities throughout the day to ask Ani "who" and "what" and "where" questions during story time, and show-and-share time.</li> <li>• Use visual cues to support verbal questioning (e.g., Boardmaker® symbols "who," "what" and/or ASL signs).</li> <li>• Ask Ani direct questions during the "Who came to school today?" song in circle time, and include the phrase "Where are we going?" in transition songs and encourage children to answer in chorus.</li> <li>• If Ani participates in activities or takes items without permission, intervene by using cues to encourage questioning to ask for permission, e.g., quizzical body language and facial expressions to indicate "what?", followed by a verbal prompt "What do you need to ask?".</li> </ul>		

## Sample 1 - Ani (continued) page 5/7

<b>Goal #2</b>		
<b>Long-term Goal:</b> By June 25, Ani will increase his social interactions with peers to at least three times a day on arrival and during play time.		
<b>Short-term Objectives</b>	<b>Assessment Procedures</b>	<b>Progress Review</b>
1. By November 30, Ani will verbally greet at least one peer upon arrival OR say goodbye upon departure, with adult and peer modelling and cueing, at least once for 8 of 10 consecutive school days.	Teacher records the frequency of child initiations during classroom routines	November 22 <i>Achieved.</i> Ani enjoys social interaction and attention, and is motivated to approach peers.
2. By March 30, Ani will successfully ask peers if he can join <i>them</i> in play, at least once a day, 4/5 days for 2 weeks, with verbal prompting, and adult and peer modelling.	Teacher records the frequency of child initiations during play activities	February 22 <i>Progressing.</i> Ani continues to have difficulty with knowing what to say when he wants to join others in play. Teach the script, "Can I play with you?" next term.
3. By June 30, Ani will successfully ask a peer to join <i>him</i> in play, at least once a day, 3/5 days for 2 weeks, with verbal prompting, and adult and peer modelling.	Teacher records the frequency of child initiations during play activities	June 22 <i>Achieved.</i> Ani enjoys the social aspect of asking others to join him in play.
<p><b>Accommodations and instructional strategies to support these objectives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Model saying "Hi"/"Bye" and waving upon arrival and at home time, especially to Ani.</li> <li>• Alter circle stories and transition songs to include student participation of "Hi"/"Bye" and waving.</li> <li>• Encourage Ani to greet and say goodbye to his bus driver, staff in the hallway, classroom visitors.</li> <li>• Provide modelling by asking Ani to join you in play during free play, gym, recess and centre activities.</li> <li>• Use toys such as cars to entice him to join others in play.</li> <li>• Cue Ani by suggesting he ask a peer to join him in play.</li> </ul>		

## Sample 1 - Ani (continued) page 6/7

<b>Goal #3</b>		
<b>Long-term Goal:</b> By June 25, Ani will demonstrate greater independence during classroom transitions.		
<b>Short-term Objectives</b>	<b>Assessment Procedures</b>	<b>Progress Review</b>
1. By November 30, Ani will independently follow recess routines (e.g., line up to go out, come in with the bell), with only visual or verbal prompts, 7/10 days over 2 weeks.	Teacher records observations of his level of independence in particular tasks during transitions	November 22 <i>Achieved.</i> Ani often watches his peers to see what they are doing when he is unsure of what to do. He is also motivated by his sticker chart.
2. By March 30, Ani will take his outerwear off upon arrival and after recess, without manual/physical assistance, 8/10 times over 5 days.	Teacher records observations of his level of independence in undressing upon arrival and after recess	February 22 <i>Achieved.</i> Ani benefits from the use of visuals and verbal prompts to maintain his attention until task completion. Will decrease verbal prompts over the next few months.
3. By June 22, Ani will put on his outerwear before recess and at home time (except for fasteners), with assistance in positioning his coat and verbal or visual cues, 8/10 times over 5 days.	Teacher records observations of his level of independence in dressing at recess and home time	June 22 <i>Progressing.</i> Ani continues to have difficulty putting on his jacket. He would likely benefit from the added practice of working on independent dressing skills at home and at daycare.
<p><b>Accommodations and instructional strategies to support these objectives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Point to his daily visual schedule to indicate "What is next."</li> <li>• Direct Ani to look at what his peers are doing and encourage him to follow suit with verbal prompts, such as, "Look. What are your friends doing?"</li> <li>• Use a sticker reinforcement system and praise for coming in from recess "by himself."</li> <li>• Use verbal redirection, removal of potential distracters and praise for persevering with tasks.</li> <li>• Point out his visual dressing sequence to maintain his attention and to ensure he dresses in the correct order (e.g., snow pants before boots).</li> <li>• Add "dress up" clothing to centres (house, space ship, etc.) for added practice dressing and undressing.</li> </ul>		

Sample 1 - Ani (continued) page 7/7

<b>Planning for Transition</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work toward independence in self-help skills and in following classroom routines</li> <li>• Develop school-readiness skills (raise hand, line up at the door, dressing skills)</li> <li>• Schedule psychological and speech-language reassessment to determine range of appropriate Year One placement options for the fall</li> <li>• Explore Year One options which would meet Ani's needs</li> <li>• Parent visitation of potential Year One programs and selection of an appropriate placement</li> <li>• Receiving teacher visitation to current classroom and/or meeting with current teacher in June, to discuss student's needs, and effective instructional strategies and supports</li> <li>• Pass on year-end assessment reports to receiving school</li> <li>• Arrange transportation for the fall</li> </ul>	
<b>Year-end Summary</b>	
<p>Ani benefits from the use of verbal and visual prompts such as visual daily schedule, sequencing charts and gestures. He also learns tasks and routines more quickly when modelled by staff and his peers. He responds well to verbal encouragement, praise and tangible reinforcers such as stickers.</p>	
<b>Additional Information</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Ani received ECS programming through the community program during the 200X/200X school year in his community playschool (Any Playschool).</li> <li>– He currently attends Any Daycare in the mornings and after school; contact person: Mr. Day.</li> </ul>	
<b>Signatures</b>	
<p>I understand and agree with the information contained in this Individualized Program Plan.</p>	
_____ Parents	_____ Date
_____ IPP Coordinator	_____ Date
_____ Teacher (if different from IPP Coordinator)	_____ Date
_____ School or Program Administrator	_____ Date

## Sample 2 - Caitlin

<b>Individualized Program Plan</b> Any School Jurisdiction	
<b>Child Information</b>	
<b>Child:</b> Caitlin S.	<b>Age as of Sept. 1/0X:</b> 4 yrs., 9 mos.
<b>Date of Birth:</b> November 9, 200X	<b>Date I.P.P. Created:</b> October 3, 200X
<b>Parents:</b> Kimberly and James S.	<b>Eligibility Code:</b> 42
<b>Year of E.C.S.:</b> 2 <sup>nd</sup>	(severe emotional/behavioural disability)
<b>Background information: Programming context</b>	
<p><b>School/Program:</b> Any Community Playschool, Anyville, AB</p> <p><b>I.P.P. Coordinator:</b> Ms. Bev Kinder (Kindergarten teacher at Any School)</p> <p><b>Additional IPP Team Members:</b> Ms. Erin Play (Playschool teacher)</p> <p>Sharon Speech (Speech-language pathologist)</p> <p>Donna Behave (Behavioural/educational consultant)</p> <p>This community playschool offers programming three mornings per week. There are ten children in the program, ranging in age from three-and-a-half to five. There are two children identified as having special education needs. The program is staffed by one playschool teacher. There are usually two parent volunteers each week. Ms. Kinder, the Kindergarten teacher at Any Elementary, is coordinating Caitlin's IPP and she meets with the playschool teacher monthly.</p> <p><b>Number of hours of centre-based programming</b> 325 hours</p> <p><b>Number of sessions of family-oriented ECS programming</b> 4 sessions (total 6 hours)</p>	
<b>Background Information: Parental input and involvement</b>	
<p><i>September 22/0X:</i> Telephone conference with Ms. S. The Shorts' main areas of concern for Caitlin include her level of frustration and acting out behaviours, her ability to get along and play appropriately with her peers, appropriate social skills, and her ability to communicate effectively. Ms. Play agreed to make time to chat informally with Mr. and Mrs. S. once a week at pick-up times re: new skills and instructional strategies to support skill generalization between home and playschool.</p> <p><i>March 22/0X:</i> Parents unavailable for conference. Updated IPP progress report mailed to parents.</p> <p><i>June 21/0X:</i> Parents report they are pleased with Caitlin's improved social skills and also note she is interacting more positively with her younger brother at home. Parents will be using social stories and other positive behaviour strategies throughout the summer. They will meet with the new Kindergarten teacher and bring Caitlin's "All About Me" book in late August.</p>	

## Sample 2 - Caitlin (continued) page 2/7

<b>Strengths</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• strong self-help skills (e.g., dressing, utensil use, toilet trained, hand washing)</li> <li>• good understanding of basic preschool concepts (e.g., colours, numbers, shapes)</li> <li>• good at imitating and repeating verbal models</li> <li>• likes to be independent</li> <li>• enjoys playing with dolls (e.g., Barbies) and playing house</li> </ul>		
<b>Areas for Growth</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• expressive and receptive communication skills</li> <li>• the ability to follow the schedule of others</li> <li>• independence in transitioning from one activity to another</li> <li>• the development of appropriate coping behaviours to better handle feelings of frustration</li> <li>• appropriate play and social skills (e.g., play cooperatively with peers, turn taking, sharing)</li> <li>• sustained attention to instruction and tasks</li> <li>• fine motor skills</li> </ul>		
<b>Medical Conditions that Impact Schooling</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ritalin-SR 20 mg. Taken at home each morning (for AD/HD)</li> <li>• Neuleptil 10 mg. Taken at home at bedtime (for sleep difficulties)</li> </ul>		
<b>Assessment Data (Specialized Assessment Results)</b>		
<b>Date and Specialist</b>	<b>Test</b>	<b>Results</b>
April 28, 200X Dr. L. Grow, Development Pediatrician Any Clinic	Neuropsychological assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– severe obsessive compulsive disorder</li> <li>– attention-deficit/ hyperactivity disorder</li> </ul>
April 28, 200X Dr. Jan Biggar, Psychologist Any Clinic	WPPSI-III	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– low average cognitive ability</li> <li>– broad independence in age-appropriate range</li> <li>– very serious level of maladaptive behaviours</li> </ul>
April 29, 200X Pearl Moves, Occupational Therapist Any Clinic	Beery-Buktenica Development Test of Visual-Motor Integration (VMI)	below average fine motor skills (standard score 81)
April 29, 200X John Talk, Speech and Language Therapist Any Clinic	Preschool Language Scale-IV (PLS-IV), Language Sample	moderate expressive and receptive language delay, 5%ile

## Sample 2 - Caitlin (continued) page 3/7

**Current Level of Performance and Achievement****September 200X**

Activity-based observation by teacher indicates Caitlin struggles with transitions and following classroom routines. During free play she often is frustrated with other classmates and responds with negative behaviours such as screaming, grabbing toys or hitting.

*Social skills:* plays parallel and occasionally associatively, adept at constructive and dramatic play, but has difficulty playing games with rules, does not yet understand the need to share or take turns.

*Self-help skills:* dresses/undresses self (except for fasteners), toilet trained, does not yet pick up toys after play

*Preschool concepts:* knows 4/8 colours, rote counts to 10, counts 5 objects, draws circle, imitates a square

**Coordinated Support Services**

- ongoing feedback and supervision of playschool teacher Erin Play by Bev Kinder, supervising Kindergarten teacher, Any School
- educational and behavioural collaborative problem solving and consultation, on an ongoing and as-needed basis
- speech-language (Sharon Speech) and educational/behavioural (Donna Behave) consultation, spring of 200X

**Instructional Accommodations and Strategies**

- positive reinforcement behaviour system (e.g., sticker chart)
- implementation of educational and behaviour and speech recommendations within playschool routines and activities
- provide Caitlin with verbal and graphic prompts of what will be happening next in advance of activity changes
- use social stories to help Caitlin understand and predict classroom routines and experiences
- additional supervision during recess, field trips and other less-structured activities
- additional time and assistance to complete fine motor tasks, as required
- use of quiet time away from activities to help manage level of frustration



## Sample 2 - Caitlin (continued) page 4/7

<b>Goal #1</b>		
<b>Long-term Goal:</b> By June 15, Caitlin will increase use of appropriate verbal communication to indicate when she is upset, frightened or frustrated.		
<b>Short-term Objectives</b>	<b>Assessment Procedures</b>	<b>Progress Review</b>
1. By November 30, when asked, Caitlin will tell a teacher she is feeling stressed, instead of acting out.	Teacher records number of times Caitlin is able to verbally express that she is stressed	November 15 <i>Progressing.</i> Caitlin needs reminders to use her words to explain to teachers when she is feeling stressed.
2. By March 30, Caitlin will use words to show she is upset, rather than physically acting out.	Teacher records frequency of physically acting-out incidents and notes decrease	March 22 <i>Progressing.</i> Caitlin is using her words to express her frustration more often. She has reduced acting-out incidents to less than 2 per week.
3. By June 30, Caitlin will verbally express to peers that she does not want to do something or doesn't like their behaviour at least three times a week.	Teacher records the frequency of appropriate interactions with peers over sample time period	June 30 <i>Progressing.</i> Caitlin has reduced her negative interactions with peers by about 50%.
<p><b>Accommodations and instructional strategies to support these objectives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage Caitlin to “use her words” when experiencing negative feelings. Monitor Caitlin’s behaviour and encourage her to tell how she is feeling during times of stress. Use open-ended questions to encourage her to expand her use of language.</li> <li>• Create opportunities for Caitlin to deliver simple messages to peers within the context of classroom activities (e.g., “It’s your turn at the water table.”).</li> <li>• Monitor interactions between Caitlin and peers, and encourage Caitlin to “use her words” to tell friends if she doesn’t like something.</li> <li>• Post and cue Caitlin to attend to social stories re: appropriate interactions with peers.</li> </ul>		

## Sample 2 - Caitlin (continued) page 5/7

<b>Goal #2</b>		
<b>Long-term Goal:</b> By June 15, Caitlin will demonstrate increased coping skills for transitioning between activities, accepting nonpreferred activities and taking turns.		
<b>Short-term Objectives</b>	<b>Assessment Procedures</b>	<b>Progress Review</b>
1. By November 30, Caitlin will make transitions between classroom activities (e.g., stop activity, clean up, then move on), without incident or need for physical assistance, at least three times a day for two weeks.	Teacher/teacher assistant records frequency of independent transitions on her daily behaviour charts	November 29 <i>Achieved.</i> She has made excellent progress in this area and we will aim for independent transitions at least six times a day during the next term.
2. By March 30, Caitlin will accept a nonpreferred item or classroom activity without incident or need for physical assistance, at least three times a week for three weeks.	Teacher/teacher assistant records observations on accepting nonpreferred items and activities throughout the day	March 22 <i>Progressing.</i> Caitlin continues to have difficulty following the agenda of others and accepting nonpreferred items or activities. Current success rate averages twice a week.
3. By June 30, Caitlin will wait quietly for one other peer to have his or her turn before receiving her turn, 6/10 times over a period of two weeks.	Teacher/teacher assistant records frequency of waiting for a turn during selected centre time	June 1 <i>Achieved.</i> She is beginning to understand the need to wait her turn.
<p><b>Accommodations and instructional strategies to support these objectives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When Caitlin is showing signs of becoming overwhelmed or frustrated, cue her to ask for help by pointing to help card.</li> <li>• Provide one-minute warnings before transitions.</li> <li>• Reference her daily visual schedule to ensure she understands which activity is next.</li> <li>• Provide verbal prompts to stop and clean up, and allow Caitlin to ring the transition bell if she has followed the prompts.</li> <li>• Draw a ☺ on her daily visual schedule each time she transitions "on her own."</li> <li>• Daily practice waiting for her turn during various classroom activities.</li> <li>• Ensure that Caitlin receives the centre, food or equipment she prefers when waiting for one peer to have his or her turn before her in circle, snack and gym, with praise for waiting quietly.</li> </ul>		

## Sample 2 - Caitlin (continued) page 6/7

<b>Goal #3</b>		
<b>Long-term Goal:</b> By June 30, Caitlin will increase positive interactions with peers by asking peers to join her in play, asking politely for toys and items, and giving turns and items to others.		
<b>Short-term Objectives</b>	<b>Assessment Procedures</b>	<b>Progress Review</b>
1. By November 30, Caitlin will select one peer to join her in play, at least once during each centre and gym period over the course of two weeks.	Teacher/teacher assistant records frequency in which she chooses a partner during centres and gym	November 29 <i>Progressing.</i> Caitlin will ask a peer to join her in centres, but has more difficulty doing this during gym activities, as she seems to have more difficulty staying focused in the gym environment.
2. By March 30, with minimal adult prompting, Caitlin will ask for a turn with an item or toy and wait for a response (rather than taking it from her peer), at least once during each free play and centre time for a period of two weeks.	Teacher/teacher assistant records observations of her ability to ask for turns during free play and centres	March 22 <i>Achieved.</i> Caitlin is motivated to ask for a turn with a toy or item, when she realizes that she will not have access to it otherwise.
3. By June 30, with adult coaching, Caitlin will give a turn to a peer with a toy or item when asked, at least three times a week for a period of two weeks.	Teacher/teacher assistant records observations of her ability to give up turns and share throughout the day	June 22 <i>Achieved.</i> Caitlin is beginning to understand that she must share items with others so that others are also willing to share with her.
<p><b>Accommodations and instructional strategies to support these objectives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Model the script “Come play with me,” along with the physical cues of taking peer’s hand and leading him or her to activity.</li> <li>• Model requesting items and requesting turns.</li> <li>• Ensure Caitlin only has access to play items after requesting them.</li> <li>• Create opportunities for trading toys and materials during free play and other activities by signalling with a bell and cueing all children to ask their partner to trade items using the script, “May I have a turn?”</li> <li>• Initially, give peers very short turns with the target toy or item, and then return the item to Caitlin. Gradually increase the length of the turn as frustration tolerance increases.</li> </ul>		

## Sample 2 - Caitlin (continued) page 7/7

**Planning for Transition**

- Schedule speech-language reassessment to assist in determining range of appropriate Kindergarten placement options for September 200X.
- Identify and develop school-readiness skills (e.g., wait for a turn, ask permission, come in from recess).
- Arrange a meeting in June 200X between the receiving Kindergarten teacher, parents and the current playschool teacher to discuss Caitlin's needs, and to plan for and arrange supports for the coming school year.
- Forward year-end assessment results and her "All About Me" package to the receiving teacher.
- Arrange for transportation to and from the new school.

**Year-end Summary****June 200X**

*Social skills:* majority of play is still parallel but can sustain partner play for 5-7 minute intervals at several play centres

*Self-help skills:* beginning to clean up after self when she sees other children doing this

*Preschool concepts:* skills on par with grade-level expectations including knowing 8/8 colours, counting 10 objects, drawing various shapes, and identifying letters and initial sounds

Caitlin's behaviour has improved with consistent and predictable classroom routines and behavioural expectations. She works for ☺ on her behaviour chart, and responds well to verbal praise and positive adult attention. Consistent behavioural expectations and strategies will be key to her success in the upcoming school year.

**Signatures**

I understand and agree with the information contained in this Individualized Program Plan.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parents

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
IPP Coordinator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Teacher (if different from IPP Coordinator)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
School or Program Administrator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Sample 3 - Karen

<b>Individualized Program Plan</b> Any School Jurisdiction	
<b>Child Information</b>	
<b>Child:</b> Karen	<b>Age as of Sept. 1/0X:</b> 4 yrs., 10 mos.
<b>Date of Birth:</b> December 19, 200X	<b>Date I.P.P. Created:</b> October 200X
<b>Parents:</b> Betty and Hugh	<b>Eligibility Code:</b> 44
<b>Year of E.C.S.:</b> 2 <sup>nd</sup>	(severe physical or medical disability)
<b>Background information: Programming context</b>	
<b>School/Program:</b> Any Elementary School	
<b>I.P.P. Coordinator and Classroom Teacher:</b> John Kinder	
<b>Additional IPP Team Members:</b> Jane Assist (Teacher assistant)	
Karen is attending a morning Kindergarten with a class of 18 typically-developing peers. A full-time teacher assistant provides support, usually by working with small groups of two to four children. Karen is often in these small groups. She attends a daycare program in the afternoon and has a full-time assistant in that setting.	
<b>Number of hours of centre-based programming</b> 500 hours	
<b>Number of sessions of family-oriented ECS programming</b> 8 sessions (total 16 hours)	
<b>Background Information: Parental input and involvement</b>	
<i>September 15:</i> Parents participated in IPP development meeting. Will work on expressive and receptive language skills at home. Will share list of functional words and actions two times a month between home and school.	
<i>November 18:</i> Discussed strategies for building functional vocabulary. Brainstormed ideas for calm-down strategies and will use stuffed toy.	
<i>March 30:</i> Parents report Karen is beginning to use communication book at home and with extended family, including grandparents.	
<i>June 12:</i> Reviewed progress on all goals and brainstormed ideas for summer activities that will continue to reinforce language skills, positive peer interactions and following simple routines.	

## Sample 3 - Karen (continued) page 2/8

<b>Strengths</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>imitative language</li> <li>strong gross and fine motor coordination (relative to language and social skills)</li> <li>will attend to activities she is interested in for long periods of time</li> <li>interest in how things work</li> <li>imitates drawing shapes</li> </ul>		
<b>Areas for Growth</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to further develop receptive language</li> <li>to develop functional expressive language</li> <li>to learn to anticipate routines and changes</li> <li>to decrease tantrums, learn calming strategies</li> <li>to increase interaction with peers</li> </ul>		
<b>Medical Conditions that Impact Schooling</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Autism spectrum disorder (diagnosed at age 3 through the Any Clinic)</li> </ul>		
<b>Assessment Data (Specialized Assessment Results)</b>		
<b>Date and Specialist</b>	<b>Test</b>	<b>Results</b>
May 200X Dr. Development Any Clinic, Anytown	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vineland Adaptive Behaviour Scales</li> <li>Childhood Autism Rating Scale</li> <li>Checklist from the Carolina Curriculum for Preschoolers with Special Needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>age-equivalent scores between 9 months (communication) and 36 months (motor skills)</li> <li>scores fall in the severe range</li> <li>approximate age equivalencies               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>communication: 12 months</li> <li>social adaptation: 12 months</li> <li>cognition: 18 months</li> <li>gross motor: 40 months</li> <li>fine motor: 32 months</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## Sample 3 - Karen (continued) page 3/8

<b>Current Level of Performance and Achievement</b>
September 200X
<p>Preschool concepts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– can follow simple oral directions</li> <li>– can imitate with echolalia; some imitations are situation-appropriate</li> <li>– makes patterns by lining or stacking objects</li> <li>– uses crayons, scissors, paintbrushes and pours water</li> <li>– puts on shoes and jacket with assistance</li> </ul>
<b>Coordinated Support Services</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• receives program assistant support in afternoon daycare</li> <li>• consultation with district autism specialist, 3 times a year, plus as-needed basis</li> <li>• annual consultation with district speech-language consultant</li> </ul>
<b>Instructional Accommodations and Strategies</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have a designated quiet/calm-down area in the classroom</li> <li>• use a daily log book to communicate between home and school</li> <li>• use visual supports, e.g., concrete objects, photographs, drawings, picture communication symbols, to provide support for Karen in processing oral information</li> <li>• provide a 5-minute verbal warning paired with a visual cue to assist Karen with anticipating and preparing for transitions between classroom activities</li> <li>• picture sequence or visual script of instructional routines</li> <li>• provide peers with specific instruction and ongoing coaching about how to communicate and interact with Karen</li> <li>• build personalized communication book of photos that Karen can use in variety of situations</li> </ul>

## Sample 3 - Karen (continued) page 4/8

<b>Goal #1</b>		
<b>Long-term Goal:</b> By June 30, Karen will demonstrate increased understanding of language by identifying at least 50 actions and objects in the classroom, and following single step instructions using these actions and objects during familiar routines.		
<b>Short-term Objectives</b>	<b>Assessment Procedures</b>	<b>Progress Review</b>
1. By November 30, Karen will follow instructions related to the classroom arrival routine (e.g., take off coat, hang up coat and backpack, put on indoor shoes, go to sit in designated spot for morning circle) at least 4 days per week, with minimal prompting.	Teacher/teacher assistant observation	November 15 <i>Achieved.</i> Karen independently follows the morning arrival routine with minimal prompting.
2. By March 30, using pictures paired with verbal cues, Karen will identify at least three classroom centres on 4/5 days over 2 weeks.	Teacher/teacher assistant observation	March 15 <i>Achieved.</i> Karen accurately identifies at least six centres and their related activities.
3. By June 30, when asked, Karen will choose the correct object from a list of functional and high interest objects with 90% accuracy on 10 different trials.	Data collection checklist for both home and school	June 15 <i>Partly achieved.</i> Karen particularly enjoyed learning new words in a "Find a _____" game format. She can identify approximately 75% of the words from her list of 50 words during classroom and home activities.
<p><b>Accommodations and instructional strategies to support these objectives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop picture prompts for major classroom routines and review each day, beginning with arrival routine.</li> <li>• Introduce picture prompts for at least 10 learning centres plus additional pictures of related activities for each centre.</li> <li>• Verbally label functional and high interest objects throughout the day and play "Find a _____" game.</li> </ul>		



## Sample 3 - Karen (continued) page 5/8

<b>Goal #2</b>		
<b>Long-term Goal:</b> By June 30, Karen will use single words to label and request preferred activities at least 3 times a day.		
<b>Short-term Objectives</b>	<b>Assessment Procedures</b>	<b>Progress Review</b>
1. By November 30, Karen will request an object by pointing to its photograph in her communication book and verbalizing its name on at least 5 occasions over 1 week.	Teacher/teacher assistant records each observed incident	November 15 <i>Achieved.</i> Karen is using her communication book to express wants at least three times a day.
2. By March 30, when presented with three photographs of centre-time activities, Karen will point to and name her activity of choice on 4 out of 5 centre times over 2 weeks.	Teacher/teacher assistant records each observed incident	March 15 <i>Achieved.</i> Karen can choose and name preferred activity, using photos.
3. By June 30, Karen will independently select centres using classroom's centre board.	Teacher/teacher assistant records observations during centre time	June 15 <i>Emerging.</i> When using classroom's centre board to choose activity, Karen tends to choose water centre only and needs staff prompting to vary choice.
<p><b>Accommodations and instructional strategies to support these objectives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue using personal communication book with single photos of classroom objects, routines and activities.</li> <li>• Create opportunities for Karen to communicate her choice of learning centre activities each day.</li> </ul>		

## Sample 3 - Karen (continued) page 6/8

<b>Goal #3</b>		
<b>Long-term Goal:</b> By June 30, Karen will increase the amount of time she spends in structured classroom group activities, e.g., circle time, music, stories, and increase her tolerance for the proximity of peers during play activities.		
<b>Short-term Objectives</b>	<b>Assessment Procedures</b>	<b>Progress Review</b>
1. By November 30, Karen will join her classmates at the beginning of circle and story time, and remain in the group activity without protest for the first 5 minutes on 4/5 days over a 2-week period.	Teacher and/or teacher assistant observation	November 15 <i>Achieved.</i> Karen is remaining in these activities for 5 minutes. Continue to use visual timer and activity reward to gradually increase time.
2. By March 30, Karen will remain at preferred play centres in the presence of a peer for 5 minutes without protest or attempts to leave on 4/5 days.	Teacher and/or teacher assistant observation	March 30 <i>Achieved.</i> Karen is able to remain at the centre, with a peer, for up to 15 minutes.
3. By June 30, Karen will remain at preferred play centres in the presence of 2 or more peers for 5 minutes without protest or attempts to leave on 4/5 days.	Teacher and/or teacher assistant observation	June 15 <i>Emerging.</i> Karen will tolerate the presence of more than 1 peer depending on the level and type of activity. The water centre remains a challenging area and she needs close supervision. At this point she can only tolerate 1 peer's presence at the water centre. Will continue to work on use of calming strategy.
<p><b>Accommodations and instructional strategies to support these objectives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use visual timers.</li> <li>• Reward successful participation in structural group activities with activity reward.</li> <li>• Supervise play centres, especially water, and use verbal prompts to support Karen's parallel play with peers.</li> <li>• Do Functional Behaviour Analysis (FBA) of any challenging behaviour that occurs during group activities in order to take proactive steps to help Karen better manage these activities.</li> </ul>		

## Sample 3 - Karen (continued) page 7/8

<b>Goal #4</b>		
<b>Long-term Goal:</b> By June 30, Karen will independently use a self-calming strategy to decrease tantrum behaviours to less than two tantrum incidents per week.		
<b>Short-term Objectives</b>	<b>Assessment Procedures</b>	<b>Progress Review</b>
1. By November 15, when modelled by the TA and supported by a visual instructional routine, i.e., picture sequence of self-calming behaviours, Karen will imitate the self-calming sequence on 90 percent of occasions.	Teacher and/or teacher assistant observation Log of in-class tantrum incidents	November 15 <i>Achieved.</i> Karen is using a self-calming technique, using a stuffed animal, with adult modelling.
2. By March 30, when prompted verbally and supported by a visual instructional routine, Karen will initiate self-calming behaviours resulting in less than two tantrum incidents per week.	Teacher and/or teacher assistant observation Log of in-class tantrum incidents	March 30 <i>Achieved.</i> Karen is experiencing less than two tantrums per week and is able to use a self-calming technique with minimal adult prompting.
3. By June 30, Karen will transition from a preferred activity to the next activity in her picture schedule without screaming or tantrums on 4/5 days for 2 consecutive weeks.	Teacher and/or teacher assistant observation Log of in-class tantrum incidents	June 30 <i>Emerging.</i> Karen is making successful transitions approximately 50% of the time. Continue training with picture sequences to support transitions between activities.
<b>Accommodations and instructional strategies to support these objectives</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visual cues for instructional routines.</li> <li>• Teach self-calming behaviour (cuddling stuffed animal).</li> </ul>		

## Sample 3 - Karen (continued) page 8/8

**Planning for Transition**

- Karen will practise using her photograph communication book on each visit to interact with the Grade 1 teacher.
- Karen will visit the Grade 1 class once a week from March to the end of the year.
- Karen's family will facilitate 2 visits to the school in August before the first week of school.

**Year-end Summary****Preschool concepts**

- is following simple 3-step directions that are familiar to her
- many imitations are situation-appropriate
- continues to make patterns and can do 1:1 number correspondence
- completes basic art projects
- independently dresses

Karen is participating in majority of Kindergarten learning activities and has increased her positive interactions with other children. She is handling basic transitions effectively and has had less than 3 physical outbursts in the last 2 months of the school year. She is using her communication book with adults and is spontaneously using single words to communicate with peers.

**Signatures**

I understand and agree with the information contained in this Individualized Program Plan.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parents

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
IPP Coordinator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Teacher (if different from IPP Coordinator)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
School or Program Administrator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Sample 4 - Trey

<b>Individualized Program Plan</b> Any School Jurisdiction	
<b>Child Information</b>	
<b>Child:</b> Trey T.	<b>Age as of Sept. 1/0X:</b> 4 yrs., 1 month
<b>Date of Birth:</b> August 3, 200X	<b>Date I.P.P. Created:</b> September 30, 200X
<b>Parents:</b> Doug and Sharon T.	<b>Eligibility Code:</b> 43
<b>Type of Funding:</b> Program Unit Funding (severe multiple disability)	
<b>Year of E.C.S.:</b> 1 <sup>st</sup>	
<b>Background information: Classroom context</b>	
<p><b>School/Program:</b> Early Education Program, Any Elementary School</p> <p>Special education classroom placement with E.C.S. teacher and 2 full-time teacher assistants. There are 8 children with special education needs and 8 typically developing children in this class. The centre-based programming takes place mornings, 2½ hours per day.</p> <p><b>I.P.P. Coordinator and Classroom Teacher:</b> Shane Teacher</p> <p><b>Additional IPP Team Members:</b> Wendy Help and Dawn Assist, teacher assistants Gloria Job, occupational therapist Allison Speech, speech-language pathologist Mark Physio, physical therapist Shannon Parent, family support consultant</p> <p><b>Number of hours of centre-based programming:</b> 500 hours</p> <p><b>Number of hours of family-oriented ECS programming:</b> 10 sessions (total 15 hours) per year, first Wednesdays of the month (goals are to assist the family in locating needed resources, to ensure skill generalization and continuity of programming between the home and school environments, and to review progress)</p>	
<b>Background information: Parental input and involvement</b>	
<p><i>September 27/0X:</i> Mr. and Mrs. T. identified Trey's communication skills and his ability to interact with peers as major areas of concern. They would like to see independent walking skills as a major programming area. The family is interested in exploring use of assistive technology to help Trey communicate and participate. The team agreed to use a daily home and school communication book to share information about Trey's activities.</p> <p><i>March 15/0X:</i> To allow Trey to share information independently on a daily basis, the team decided to pre-program his voice output communication device with short phrases containing messages between home and school. Parents note that Trey is showing more enthusiasm for going to school in the mornings and getting him on the bus is much easier and faster than it was in September.</p> <p><i>June 14/0X:</i> The family shared information about the summer program Trey will be attending. He seems to like the swimming pool and they are hoping the aquatic part of the program will be beneficial to his mobility.</p>	

## Sample 4 - Trey (continued) page 2/9

<b>Strengths</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• making progress in learning to walk with walker</li> <li>• enjoys and is motivated to interact and socialize with adults and children, at home and at school</li> <li>• responds well to adult verbal prompts</li> <li>• motivated by train toys</li> <li>• expressive with face and body</li> </ul>		
<b>Areas of Need</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• gross motor skills (mobility, trunk stability)</li> <li>• expressive and receptive communication skills</li> <li>• play skills</li> <li>• self-help skills</li> <li>• fine motor skills</li> <li>• following classroom routines</li> </ul>		
<b>Medical Conditions that Impact Schooling</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cerebral palsy; uses his left hand almost exclusively</li> <li>• Mild bilateral hearing loss</li> <li>• Administered oral Baclofen (10 mg), at home in the morning and at noon, to reduce muscle tone</li> </ul>		
<b>Assessment Data (Specialized Assessment Results)</b>		
<b>Date and Specialist</b>	<b>Test</b>	<b>Results</b>
November 13, 200X Darren Ear, Audiologist Any Health Region	Hearing assessment	mild bilateral hearing loss (26-40 db) unaided in the better ear over normal range of speech
May 12, 200X Dr. Douglas Kidlove, Pediatrician Any Preschool Assessment Service		Diagnosis: spastic triplegia cerebral palsy with severe global developmental delay
May 12, 200X Dr. Develop, Psychologist	Bayley Scales of Infant Development-II	severe cognitive delay, developmental age of 16 months, with some successes at the 20 to 22 month range
May 12, 200X Sharon Talk, Speech-language Pathologist	Preschool Language Scale-IV (PLS-IV) Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals-P2 (CELF-P2)	severe expressive/receptive language delay, <1%ile

## Sample 4 - Trey (continued) page 3/9

**Current Level of Performance and Achievement**

Carolina Curriculum Assessment (September 200X) indicates:

- Severe delay in self-help skills and social-emotional development

Activity and routine-based observation indicates:

- Trey is unable to effectively participate during circle and story activities
- Trey is unable to effectively communicate with peers during centre and free play
- Trey needs more opportunities for daily use of the walker.

**Coordinated Support Services**

- ongoing collaborative consultation with school-based team re: speech-language, occupational and physical therapy
- 15-20 minute individual physical therapy integrated into the regular gym class
- provide recommendations and guidance to Trey's respite home, as requested by parents

**Instructional Accommodations and Strategies**

General classroom accommodations and strategies include:

- classroom broadcast F.M. system
- adaptive equipment: walker, orthotics for both feet, adapted seating, slant desk, modified utensils, voice output devices (e.g., Big Mack)
- preferential seating to accommodate hearing loss
- supported seating to enable participation
- visual supports for language and communication displays using Picture Communication Symbols (PCS)
- additional time and assistance to complete motor tasks, as required
- use of sensory items (e.g., stuffed toy) to help Trey manage anxiety

## Sample 4 - Trey (continued) page 4/9

<b>Goal #1</b>		
<b>Long-term Goal:</b> By June 30, Trey will increase his ability to communicate with adults and peers using a total communication approach (e.g., vocalizations, gestures, PCS and voice output devices).		
<b>Short-term Objectives</b>	<b>Assessment Procedures</b>	<b>Progress Review</b>
1. By November 30, Trey will independently use appropriate communication strategies to gain the attention of adults when needed, at least 10 times a week for two weeks.	Teacher or TA records the frequency of verbal, physical or gestural initiations, during snack, bathroom breaks, and when dressing	November 22 <i>Achieved.</i> Trey responded to natural reinforcement of this behaviour and this helped him achieve this goal by early November.
2. By March 30, Trey will use vocalizations, word approximations or his Big Mack voice output device during snack and circle time, to ask for his turn, at least twice a day for two weeks.	Teacher or TA records the frequency and type of vocal initiations, during snack and circle time	March 22 <i>Achieved.</i> Trey prefers to use word approximations.
3. By June 30, Trey will use vocalizations, word approximations or his Big Mack voice output device to seek interaction with a peer during free play at least once a day for two weeks.	Teacher or TA records the frequency and type of responses, during free play activities	June 22 <i>Achieved.</i> Trey is consistently requesting a peer to "come and play" using his Big Mack during free play
<p><b>Accommodations and strategies to support long-term goal</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor Trey to anticipate when he wants to communicate with others and provide him with appropriate messages on his Big Mack to support his interaction during circle and snack time, e.g., come and play with me, hi, it's my turn, juice please, good morning, etc.</li> <li>• Trey should know what is recorded on his Big Mack before he uses it. Whenever possible, have him choose his message from a communication display and have him listen to it as part of the prompt to encourage him to use it to participate.</li> <li>• Accept verbal responses or appropriate gestural responses when they are clearly understandable.</li> </ul>		



## Sample 4 - Trey (continued) page 5/9

<b>Goal #2</b>		
<b>Long-term Goal:</b> By June 30, Trey will increase his active participation in circle time and free-play activities.		
<b>Short-term Objectives</b>	<b>Assessment Procedures</b>	<b>Progress Review</b>
1. By November 30, Trey will choose a song at circle time twice a week, from among 4 choices illustrated on Picture Communication Symbol cards.	Teacher or TA records on the group monitoring chart Trey's choice and his response to the choice	October 22 <i>Achieved.</i> Trey chose a song each time he was asked. Sometimes it took him up to three minutes and he seemed to be influenced by peers' suggestions.
2. By March 30, Trey will answer and comment on circle activities using a 4-item communication display 2 out of 3 times each day for a month during circle.	Teacher or TA records use of communication device including appropriateness and correctness of response	March 22 <i>Achieved.</i> Trey's favourite response to a circle activity is "Fun!"
3. By June 30, upon arriving in the classroom, Trey will share a message from home recorded on his voice output device with an adult or a peer of his choice (indicated by pointing or verbalizing).	Staff greeting him in the morning record on a data sheet in Trey's cubby his communication partner, ability to initiate and ability to successfully share the message	June 22 <i>Achieved.</i> Trey appears to enjoy sharing a message with three select peers. The majority of his messages are about the family puppy.
<p><b>Accommodations and strategies to support long-term goal</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• During circle time, language-related activities will be supported with Picture Communication Symbols for all children.</li> <li>• Ensure that every circle time, Trey has at least 2 opportunities to answer questions and 1 opportunity to make a comment. Provide appropriate vocabulary items and make Trey aware of the meaning of any new symbols. Model the use of communication displays when communicating with Trey, e.g., "this is funny" while pointing to the symbol of "funny."</li> <li>• Provide Trey with opportunities to expand his use of Picture Communication Symbols from circle time to choices for free-play activities.</li> <li>• Give Trey enough wait time to process a request and complete a task.</li> <li>• When possible, remove potential distracters.</li> </ul>		

## Sample 4 - Trey (continued) page 6/9

<b>Goal #3</b>		
<b>Long-term Goal:</b> By June 25, Trey will increase his interactions with peers to at least 3 interactions per day.		
<b>Short-term Objectives</b>	<b>Assessment Procedures</b>	<b>Progress Review</b>
1. By November 30, Trey will join his peers in parallel play with a common toy (e.g., blocks, train, sand table), at least once a day for 5 days, with verbal prompting as required.	Teacher or TA records the frequency of parallel play during centre time	November 22 <i>Achieved.</i> Trey requires only minimal verbal cues to play with peers.
2. By March 30, Trey will choose a partner for selected activities (e.g., lining up at the door, during play), at least twice a day for 5 days, with verbal prompting as required.	Teacher or TA records instances of choosing a partner throughout the day	March 22 <i>Progressing.</i> Although he chooses a partner when lining up at the door, he requires a great amount of adult prompting to select a play partner for other activities throughout the day.
3. By June 30, Trey will join and imitate others in parallel play (e.g., stacking and knocking down blocks), at least once a day for 4 of 5 days, with peer and adult modelling, and verbal prompting as required.	Teacher or TA records the frequency of imitations during centre time	June 22 <i>Emerging.</i> Although he often plays parallel to peers, he is not imitating their play.
<p><b>Accommodations and strategies to support long-term goal</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limit the number of toys available to children, to increase the likelihood that children will play together. Provide preferred toys, such as trains, to his peers so that Trey will be more motivated to join them.</li> <li>• During transitions and unstructured play periods, request that Trey select a partner by approaching a potential partner, offering his hand, making eye contact while vocalizing and moving to the activity with him or her.</li> <li>• Use verbal prompts such as "Look at what your friends are doing!" during unstructured play periods.</li> </ul>		

## Sample 4 - Trey (continued) page 7/9

<b>Goal #4</b>		
<b>Long-term Goal:</b> By June 30, Trey will use his walker to move from the classroom to other areas of the school.		
<b>Short-term Objectives</b>	<b>Assessment Procedures</b>	<b>Progress Review</b>
1. By November 30, Trey will walk independently across a variety of surfaces between activities within the classroom, with the aid of his walker, 3 or more times per day for 5 consecutive days.	Teacher or TA records frequency of transitions	November 22 <i>Achieved.</i> He generally experiences less difficulty walking across lino than on carpeted areas.
2. By March 30, Trey will walk independently across a variety of surfaces between activities within the classroom, using classroom items and furniture for stability (e.g., tables, walls), 3 or more times per day, for 5 consecutive days.	Teacher or TA records observations of how Trey makes transitions throughout the day	March 22 <i>Achieved.</i> Despite his success, he continues to demonstrate some anxiety and tentativeness when walking without his walker. He will benefit from continued practice at school and at home.
3. By June 30, Trey will walk independently across a variety of surfaces to and from the gym, with the aid of his walker and 1 rest break each direction, 3 times a week, for a month.	Teacher or TA records observations of how Trey travels to the gym throughout the school day	June 22 <i>Progressing.</i> He is able to walk to the gym with his walker but, depending on his level of fatigue and the time of day (later in the day being more difficult for him), he requires 2 rest breaks about half the time.
<p><b>Accommodations and strategies to support long-term goal</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure his safety, have Trey begin transitions a few minutes before his peers.</li> <li>• Encourage Trey to walk from activity to activity using existing classroom furniture and equipment for stability and balance rather than his walker.</li> <li>• Provide a rest break on the hallway bench at the midpoint of each trip, to ensure Trey does not overtire.</li> <li>• Monitor Trey's fatigue and ability to expend energy in other activities during the day. The amount of time in the walker may need to be reduced if he is too tired to participate in other activities.</li> </ul>		

## Sample 4 - Trey (continued) page 8/9

<b>Goal #5</b>		
<b>Long-term Goal:</b> By June 30, Trey will increase his independence at school by joining classmates willingly at the beginning of the school day and trying tasks on his own before requesting help.		
<b>Short-term Objectives</b>	<b>Assessment Procedures</b>	<b>Progress Review</b>
1. By November 30, Trey will separate from his family members without incident (e.g., no crying or clinging) upon arrival at school, and willingly join his classmates at least 4 days a week over the period of a month, with minimal support from staff.	Teacher or TA records frequency of independent transitions, upon arrival at school each day	November 22 <i>Achieved.</i> Trey willingly joins his classmates when he arrives at school. Mom now has to remind him to wave good-bye!
2. By March 30, Trey will attempt tasks independently before looking to an adult for assistance, at least 3 times a day for a week, with verbal prompts as required.	Teacher or TA records the frequency of his independent attempts at assigned tasks throughout the day	March 22 <i>Progressing.</i> Trey continues to look to others to solve his problems and complete his tasks. He will benefit from consistent adult expectation that he complete tasks as independently as possible in all environments.
3. By June 30, Trey will attempt tasks independently before looking to an adult for assistance, at least 5 times a day for a week, with minimal prompting from adults.	Teacher or TA records the frequency of his independent attempts at assigned tasks throughout the day	June 22 <i>Progressing.</i> Trey is completing tasks independently at least 3 times a day. He is more likely to demonstrate independence in hands-on activities. He responds positively to minimal verbal prompts of staff and peers. Two other children have started to offer these prompts on their own and, as a result, Trey is actually asking for less adult assistance throughout the school day.
<b>Accommodations and strategies to support long-term goal</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When dropping him off at the beginning of the school day, encourage family members to show Trey his daily visual schedule and point out that they will return to pick him up at the end of the day (as shown on the last photo of his schedule).</li> <li>• Use distracters, such as a novel toy, to occupy him as he leaves his family.</li> <li>• Before he becomes frustrated, offer to help complete the task with Trey's assistance (hand over hand).</li> </ul>		

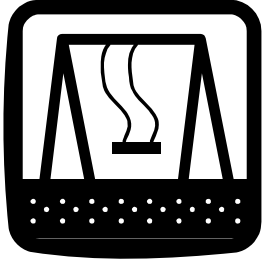
Sample 4 - Trey (continued) page 9/9

<b>Planning for Transition</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <i>June 200X</i>: Review progress on current IPP goals and objectives with the learning team, to determine areas of growth, areas of continued need and new areas for development in the coming year</li> <li>– <i>March 200X</i>: Discuss with parents all available placement options for next fall</li> <li>– <i>May 200X</i>: Arrange for Trey to visit the new classroom and meet his new teacher</li> <li>– <i>June 200X</i>: Current and receiving teachers meet to discuss student needs and instructional strategies, adaptive equipment and supports, and transfer year-end assessment summaries and adaptive equipment to receiving teacher</li> </ul>	
<b>Year-end Summary</b>	
<p>Activity and routine-based observation indicates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trey is beginning to participate in circle time</li> <li>• with adult support, Trey is beginning to communicate with peers</li> <li>• Trey is using walker at least 3 times during class time.</li> </ul> <p>Trey will continue to benefit from the additional practice and support that he receives at home. His parents are eager to implement shared strategies at home including providing extra time and supervision for transitions, the use of visual supports for language, and the use of preferred objects or activities as motivators (e.g., train toys, social reinforcement of his peers).</p>	
<b>Additional Information</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Trey currently receives overnight respite care every other weekend. Contact person: Mrs. Debbie Home.</li> </ul>	
<b>Signatures</b>	
<p>I understand and agree with the information contained in this Individualized Program Plan.</p>	
<hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 5px;"/> Parents	<hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 5px;"/> Date
<hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 5px;"/> IPP Coordinator	<hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 5px;"/> Date
<hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 5px;"/> Teacher (if different from IPP Coordinator)	<hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 5px;"/> Date
<hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 5px;"/> School or Program Administrator	<hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 5px;"/> Date



## Appendices

# Getting Off to a Good Start in Early Childhood Services (ECS)



These tools are available in PDF format at [www.education.gov.ab.ca/k\\_12/special\\_needs/resource.asp](http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/k_12/special_needs/resource.asp) and on the CD-ROM packaged with the print version of this resource.

The purpose of these sample tools is to enrich the IPP process. These tools should be used selectively and can be adapted to best meet the needs of individual students. Many of these tools will be used informally as part of the IPP development process and not as products for the student's permanent school record.

- 10-A Sample IPP Template
- 10-B Essential Information Checklist
- 10-C Activity and Routines-based Observational Assessment
- 10-D IPP Planning Meeting Recording Form
- 10-E Instructional Matrix
- 10-F Group Monitoring Chart
- 10-G ECS Transition Checklist



## Sample IPP Template

<b>Individualized Program Plan</b>	
<b>Child Information</b>	
<b>Child:</b>	<b>Age as of Sept. 1/0X:</b>
<b>Date of Birth:</b>	<b>Date I.P.P. Created:</b>
<b>Parents:</b>	<b>Phone #:</b>
<b>Address:</b>	<b>Eligibility Code:</b>
<b>Year of E.C.S.:</b>	
<b>Background information: Programming context</b>	
<b>School/Program:</b> <b>Teacher delivering programming:</b> <b>I.P.P. Coordinator (Certificated Teacher):</b> <b>Program Administrator:</b> <b>Additional IPP Team Members:</b>	
<b>Number of hours of centre-based programming _____</b> <b>Number of sessions of family-oriented ECS programming _____ = total hours _____</b>	
<b>Background Information: Parental input and involvement</b>	





Appendix 10-A

Sample IPP Template  
(continued) page 2/5

<b>Strengths</b>		
<b>Areas of Need</b>		
<b>Medical Conditions that Impact Schooling</b>		
<b>Assessment Data (Specialized Assessment Results)</b>		
<b>Date</b>	<b>Test</b>	<b>Results</b>



<b>Current Level of Performance and Achievement</b>
<b>Coordinated Support Services</b>
<b>Instructional Accommodations and Strategies</b>



Appendix 10-A

Sample IPP Template  
(continued) page 4/5

<b>Goal # _____</b> <b>Long-term Goal:</b>		
Short-term Objectives	Assessment Procedures	Progress Review
1.		
2.		
3.		
<b>Accommodations and strategies to support this goal</b>		



<b>Planning for Transition</b>	
<b>Year-end Summary</b>	
<b>Signatures</b>	
I understand and agree with the information contained in this Individualized Program Plan.	
_____ Parents	_____ Date
_____ IPP Coordinator (Certificated Teacher)	_____ Date
_____ Teacher (if different from IPP Coordinator)	_____ Date
_____ Program Administrator	_____ Date



## Essential Information Checklist

Child: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Program: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

IPP coordinator (if different from teacher): \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Programming Context</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Programming description such as child-teacher ratio, groupings, routine support, etc.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Needs more information
Essential Information	Included (please check)
<b>Programming Information</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Certificated teacher responsible for IPP <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher who delivers programming (if different from above) <input type="checkbox"/> Program administrator <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher assistant (if applicable) <input type="checkbox"/> Number of hours of centre-based programming <input type="checkbox"/> Number of sessions of family-oriented ECS programming and total hours	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Needs more information
<b>Parental Involvement</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Parental involvement is documented (including meetings) <input type="checkbox"/> IPP is signed or attempts to obtain parent signature are documented <input type="checkbox"/> Family-oriented programming is documented	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Needs more information
<b>Strengths</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Language/communication, social, emotional or physical areas that positively impact learning <input type="checkbox"/> Emergent literacy and numeracy skills <input type="checkbox"/> Interests of child considered <input type="checkbox"/> Input from parents	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Needs more information
<b>Areas of Need</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Language/communication, social, emotional or physical areas <input type="checkbox"/> Developmentally appropriate emergent literacy and numeracy skills <input type="checkbox"/> Needs are expressed in positive language <input type="checkbox"/> Input from parents	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Needs more information

This appendix adapted with permission from Edmonton Public Schools, *Individualized Program Plan Guidebook* (Edmonton, AB: Edmonton Public Schools, 2005), pp. 75–77 and Alberta Education, *Standards for Provision of Early Childhood Special Education* (Field-review draft, 2005).



## Essential Information Checklist (continued) page 2/3

Essential Information	Included (please check)
<b>Medical Information Relevant to Learning</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Medical diagnosis</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Medical information that impacts learning</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Medications</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable or no medical information that impacts learning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Needs more information</li> </ul>
<b>Specialist Assessments</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Current specialist assessments: names of assessment tools, types of observations and date administered</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Name of specialist and area of specialization</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Summary of report findings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Needs more information</li> </ul>
<b>Program-based Assessments and Evaluation of Progress</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Current pre- and post-classroom assessments: name of tool or type of observation and date administered</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Summary of findings</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Child's current level of functioning</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Assessment procedures for monitoring and evaluating child progress on IPP goals are identified (e.g., observations, work samples, diagnostic or standardized tests, developmental assessments, checklists)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Needs more information</li> </ul>
<b>Coordinated Support Services</b> (Additional staff, agencies, specialists and services) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Type and format of support services offered within the program setting</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Type and format of support services offered outside the program setting</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Amount of time services offered (level of support)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Needs more information</li> </ul>
<b>Instructional Accommodations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Individualized instructional accommodations and strategies (e.g., unique expectations, specialized materials, resources, facilities, equipment, assistive technology, personnel)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Aligned with child's personal strengths, areas for growth and goal statements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Needs more information</li> </ul>



## Essential Information Checklist (continued) page 3/3

Essential Information	Included (please check)
<p><b>Measurable and Meaningful Goals and Objectives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Consistent with the child's area of growth and clearly linked to assessment data</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Meaningful to child and his or her family</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Consistent with child's level of development</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Reflects an actual skill or behaviour that the child needs in order to participate and actively engage in current or future learning</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Short-term objectives are measurable and/or observable               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Expected behaviour is described</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Conditions under which the child will perform the task</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Criteria for measurement</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Date that objective is expected to be achieved</li> </ul> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Based on input from teachers and parents</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Manageable number of goals and objectives</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> New objectives are added or revised as current objectives are reviewed and/or achieved</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Language is positive and family-friendly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Needs more information</li> </ul>
<p><b>Planning for Transition</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Begins in September and is ongoing</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Describes child's transition needs across environments</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> A summary of planned actions to prepare child for success in upcoming changes to environment is outlined</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Transition plan involves family</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Transition plan involves other specialists where appropriate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Needs more information</li> </ul>
<p><b>Year-end Summary</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Year-end summary includes most effective strategies, areas of continuing concern and recommendations for next year</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Needs more information</li> </ul>



## Activity and Routines-based Observational Assessment

Location:

Observer:

Time/ Activity	Monday Date:	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday

Identified areas of strength/interest:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Identified areas of difficulty/concern:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_







# Instructional Matrix

Individualized Program Planning

Child	Targeted Behaviours in Goals and Objectives	Daily Program Activities and Routines				



Appendix 10-F

## Group Monitoring Chart

Child	Fine Motor	Gross Motor	Cognitive	Expressive Language	Receptive Language	Personal/Social	Self-help
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Individualized Program Planning


- GMA: Graduated manual assistance—some level of physical assistance provided, but will be systematically faded as the child gains independence.
- M: Model—an adult will demonstrate how to perform the task or skill.
- VA: Verbal assistance—adult provides verbal assistance or direction to help a child perform a task or skill.
- I: Independent—the child will complete the task without the assistance of an adult, where he or she previously required more support.

Adapted from “Monitoring Child Progress in Early Childhood Special Education Settings” by Sharon A. Raver, *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 36, 6, 2004, p. 54, Figure 1. Copyright 2004 by The Council for Exceptional Children. Adapted with permission.



## ECS Transition Checklist

Below is a list of activities to assist the learning team to prepare the child and his or her family for anticipated changes associated with future settings and programming.

Completed	Activity	Timeline
<input type="checkbox"/>	Discuss the transition process with parents and staff.	Fall of Current School Year  End of Current School Year
<input type="checkbox"/>	Identify and address skills likely required in future settings.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Develop IPP goals and objectives to address future needs.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Conduct comprehensive assessments to determine eligibility for year one programming, if applicable.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Discuss assessment results and implications, if applicable.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Contact principal of neighbourhood school, if applicable.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Begin to visit potential settings and programming options.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Select appropriate setting and programming based on availability, program eligibility and family preference.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Confirm program placement.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Review requirements for supports and services in new setting, such as changes to physical environment to ensure accessibility (e.g., ramps, change table, seating, need for teacher assistant).	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Arrange visits of receiving teacher to current programming setting, and/or child and parents to future placement.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Prepare and forward year-end information package, records and/or school file to receiving teacher.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Confirm transportation arrangements, if required.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Follow-up phone call to parents.	

Adapted with permission from C. Martin, M. Mohs and S. Wheaton, *Hazeldean Early Education Transition Handbook* (Edmonton, AB: Edmonton Public Schools, 1998).

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## INDEX

### A

#### accommodations and strategies

- as essential IPP information (checklist), 7, 70
- in IPP samples, 33–36, 40–43, 47–51, 55–60
- (See also *Chapter 6: Selecting Accommodations and Strategies*)

#### assessments

- about ECS assessments, 3
- data collection forms, 24–27, 75
- as essential IPP information (checklist), 7, 70
- in IPP samples, 32–36, 39–43, 46–51, 54–60
- of needs and strengths, 8
- observational assessments, 9–10
- observational assessments (template), 72
- roles of program specialists in, 6
- roles of teachers in, 5
- for planning for transition, 76
- (See also *Chapter 5: Using Classroom Assessment to Support the IPP Process*)

#### assistive technology

- in IPP sample, 53
- (See also *Chapter 9: Infusing Assistive Technology for Learning into the IPP Process*)

### B

#### behaviour statements

- functional and nonfunctional (chart), 17–18

#### bibliography, 77–78

### C

#### classroom observations

- data collection forms, 24–27, 75
- observational assessments, 9–10
- observational assessments (template), 72

#### communication and language skills

- behaviour statements on (chart), 17
- group monitoring chart, 25–26
- group monitoring chart (template), 75
- as IPP area of focus (organizer), 12
- in strengths and needs (checklist), 69

### E

#### embedded instruction, 19

**G****goals and objectives**

- about IPP goals and objectives, 14–16
  - as essential information in IPPs (checklist), 7, 71
  - instructional matrix for (template), 74
  - integrated instruction to implement, 21–23
  - learning team roles in, 5–6
  - planning meetings to identify, 11–13, 73
  - review and revision of, 24–27
  - writing tips on behaviour statements (chart), 17–18
- (See also *Chapter 7: Making Goals Meaningful, Measurable and Manageable*)

**I****individualized program plans (IPPs)**

- about ECS IPPs, 1–3
  - about ECS IPP roles and responsibilities, 3–6
  - IPP essential information (checklist), 7, 69–71
  - IPP form (template), 64–68
  - IPP implementation guidelines, 19–24
  - IPP sample for 4-year-old with cerebral palsy and hearing loss, 29–30, 53–61
  - IPP sample for 4-year-old with severe behavioural needs, 28, 38–44
  - IPP sample for Kindergarten student with autism spectrum disorders, 29, 45–52
  - IPP sample for Kindergarten student with mild to moderate delays, 28, 31–37
  - planning process for (*See* planning process for IPPs)
- (See also *Chapter 1: Working Through the IPP Process*)

**instructional strategies**

- about programming for young children, 2–3
- instructional matrix for, 21–23
- instructional matrix for (template), 74
- integration of instruction and therapy, 20–23
- planning meetings to identify, 11–13, 73
- types of, 19

**L****language skills**

(*See* communication and language skills)

**learning teams**

- about learning teams, 1–2
- about roles, 3–6
- meetings of, 11–13
- meetings of (template), 73
- planning process for IPPs (*See* planning process for IPPs)



**M****medical information**

- as essential IPP information (checklist), 7, 70
- in IPP samples, 32, 39, 46, 54

**motor skills**

- as area of focus in IPPs (organizer), 12
- behaviour statements on (chart), 17
- group monitoring chart, 25–26, 75

**N****needs and strengths**

- as essential information in IPPs (checklist), 7, 69
- identification of, 8–10, 73
- in IPP planning form, 12–13
- in IPP samples, 32, 39, 46, 54

**P****parental involvement in IPPs**

- about IPP roles, 3–5
- consent required from, 7
- essential information from (checklist), 7, 69
- in IPP samples, 31, 38, 45, 53
- planning for transition (checklist), 76
- planning meetings with, 11–13, 73
- (See also *Chapter 2: Encouraging Parent Involvement*)

**planning process for IPPs, 7–28**

- about six-step planning process, 7
- coordination of support services, 23–24
- essential information in IPPs (checklist), 7, 69–71
- goals and objectives, 14–18
- instructional strategies, 19–23
- meetings for, 11–13, 73
- needs and strengths, 8–10
- planning for transition, 27–28
- review of, 24–27

**program specialists**

- about IPP roles and responsibilities, 3–6
- consultation and instructional roles, 23–24
- integrated instruction by, 20–22
- planning meetings with, 11–13, 73
- specialist assessments as essential IPP information (checklist), 70–71
- specialized assessment results in IPP samples, 32, 39, 46, 53

**R****reviews and revisions to IPPs**

- process for, 24–27
- in sample IPPs, 34–36, 41–43, 48–51, 56–60

**S****school administrators**

about IPP roles and responsibilities, 3–6, 23

**self-help behaviours**

as area of focus in IPP (organizer), 12–13

behaviour statements on (chart), 18

group monitoring chart, 25–26, 75

in IPP samples, 33, 40, 51, 55

**service providers**

about IPP roles and responsibilities, 3–6

coordinated services from, 23

planning meetings with, 11–13, 73

**social skills**

as area of focus in IPP (organizer), 13

behaviour statements on (chart), 17–18

group monitoring chart, 25–26, 75

(See also self-help behaviours)

**support services**

about IPP roles and responsibilities, 3–6

consultation and instructional roles, 23–24

coordination of support services, 23–24

as essential IPP information (checklist), 70

integration of instruction and therapy, 20–22

planning meetings with, 11–13, 73

roles of, 6, 23–24

(See also *Chapter 4: Creating a Network of Support*)

**T****teachers**

about IPP roles and responsibilities, 3–5

planning meetings with, 11–13, 73

**teacher assistants**

about IPP roles and responsibilities, 3–5

planning meetings with, 11–13, 73

**therapists**

(See program specialists)

**transition plans**

about, 27–28

as essential IPP information (checklist), 7, 71

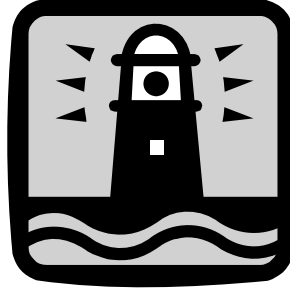
in IPP samples, 36–37, 42, 44, 51–52, 61

planning for transition (checklist), 76

(See also *Chapter 8: Planning for Transitions*)

**Y****year-end summary**

as essential IPP information (checklist), 71



Developing  
New Solutions

Chapter 11

# Planning for Students Who are Gifted

2006

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School District  
Edmonton School District

This resource is primarily intended for:

Teachers	✓
Administrators	✓
Health-related Professionals	✓
Counsellors	✓
Students	
Parents	
General Public	



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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Begin with the Program of Studies .....	2
Differentiate Instruction .....	2
Content .....	2
Process .....	3
Products .....	5
Environment .....	7
Assessment .....	8
Consider Developmental Issues .....	9
Perfectionism .....	9
Underachievement .....	10
Asynchronous development .....	11
Learning difficulties .....	11
Plan for Metacognition .....	12
Consider Career Planning .....	13
Essential Information .....	15
Assessment data .....	15
Current level of performance and achievement .....	15
Identification of strengths and areas of need .....	16
Measurable goals and objectives .....	18
Evaluating student progress .....	20
Coordinated services .....	20
Medical information .....	20
Classroom accommodations and strategies .....	21
Planning for transitions .....	21
Year-end summary .....	21
Sample IPPs .....	21
Sample 1 – Raina .....	23
Sample 2 – Holly .....	29
Appendices .....	35
11-A Sample Parent Perspective .....	36
11-B Differentiated Learning and Teaching Accommodations for Students Who are Gifted .....	39
11-C Sample IPP Template .....	45
Bibliography .....	51
Index .....	53



## Chapter 11

# Planning for Students Who are Gifted



All students have the right to an education that is appropriate to their ability, including students whose *strengths* create exceptional learning needs. For programming purposes, students who are gifted in cognitive and academic areas are considered to have special education needs and require an Individualized Program Plan.

For more information on Alberta Education’s Special Education Coding Criteria, see [www.education.gov.ab.ca/k\\_12/specialneeds/](http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/k_12/specialneeds/).

Students who are gifted deserve and require differentiated programming and accommodations to meet their exceptional learning needs.

To be coded as gifted, students must meet Alberta Education’s and the school jurisdiction’s specific criteria for this special education category. Generally, students registered in alternative arts or athletics programs, or specialized academic programs, such as the International Baccalaureate Program or Advanced Placement, are not coded as gifted. If a student does not receive a special education code, it is not mandatory to develop an IPP for that student.

For more information

Several other chapters of this resource contain information, sample strategies and tools that are helpful for programming for students who are gifted. Relevant sections can be found in:

Chapter 1: *Working Through the IPP Process*

Chapter 2: *Encouraging Parent Involvement*

Chapter 3: *Supporting Student Participation*

Chapter 7: *Making Goals Meaningful, Measurable and Manageable.*

However, the IPP process for students who are gifted is somewhat unique. Compared to the process for students with other types of special education needs, the IPP process for students who are gifted typically:

- has fewer goals
- focuses more on strengths and interests
- uses different types of accommodations and differentiation
- has a greater degree of student involvement.

This chapter focuses on some of the unique elements of IPPs for students who are gifted, including how to plan for differentiation, developmental concerns, metacognition and career planning.

For more information

The strategies and information in this chapter are based on a number of findings in the research on giftedness and gifted education. For a summary of current research completed by the Centre for Gifted Education at the University of Calgary, visit Alberta Education's Web site at [www.education.gov.ab.ca/k\\_12/special/aisi/pdfs/UofC\\_Literature\\_Synopsi\\_s.pdf](http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/k_12/special/aisi/pdfs/UofC_Literature_Synopsi_s.pdf).

## Begin with the Program of Studies

Programming for students with special education needs builds on the provincial program of studies—the knowledge, skills and attitudes that a student is expected to learn at specific grade levels. With thoughtful planning, the program of studies has potential to appropriately challenge students who are gifted. However, the content, learning activities and/or instruction may need to be adjusted to meet an individual student's ability level and learning needs. Look for specific learning outcomes that can create opportunities for students who are gifted to explore a concept or skill in greater depth and/or breadth.

## Differentiate Instruction

Differentiated learning for students who are gifted means enhanced opportunities for thinking and learning, not just more work to do. Differentiating instruction involves thoughtfully modifying the following elements:

- content
- process
- products
- environment
- assessment.

Although these elements are interrelated and influence one another, it is helpful to consider them separately.

### Content

The *content* is what students are studying and are expected to learn. Students who demonstrate that they already know some content or can learn the content in much less time than their classmates, will benefit from content differentiation. Differentiating content for students who are gifted means that topics are explored in greater depth or breadth. For example, this could happen by using more advanced texts and resource materials. Differentiated content can be part of an IPP goal or can be identified as an accommodation.

There are a number of ways to differentiate content for students who are gifted, including making it more:

- abstract
- complex
- interrelated
- constrained (Harvey 2000, pp. 70–71).



### Making content more abstract

Abstract content focuses less on specific, factual information and more on concepts and generalizations. Building in abstraction means encouraging students to consider ideas in general terms, and to move more fluidly between facts and broad understandings. For example, a student who is gifted in math could quickly move beyond manipulatives into identifying patterns and relationships. Thinking in more abstract terms can provide greater challenge and complexity for students.

### Making content more complex

Content can be made more complex by introducing additional variables, other considerations, different sources and alternate viewpoints to a learning task. The original content remains, but is compared, contrasted or combined with other information or concepts. For example, a basic learning activity of surveying the class to find out how many students come to school by walking, biking, bussing or by car could be made more complex by asking students to gather additional information in the survey and use this to compare distance from school with various modes of transport.

### Making content interrelated

Students who are gifted often spot the potential for applying ideas or methods from one field of study to others. Teachers can build on this ability by looking for potential connections from one subject to the next, and challenging students to use knowledge, process and skills in different combinations. For example, students could take science knowledge about weather and climate, and use it in a social studies inquiry about how people adapt to their environment.

Interrelatedness can also be explored across space and/or time. For example, students could be challenged to think about how humans adapt to their physical environments across geographic regions or what meaning humans have ascribed to weather conditions throughout history.

### Making content more constrained

Interestingly enough, making content more constrained can sometimes present as many worthwhile challenges as making it more complex. By lessening the degrees of freedom in an activity, it is possible to concentrate students' focus and encourage them to go more deeply into a particular aspect of the curriculum. For example, a basic assignment to write a poem about traffic during rush hour could be channeled into a more constrained assignment of writing the poem only about the traffic sounds during rush hour.

### Process

The *process* is how students make sense of concepts, generalizations and learning outcomes. It is how the teacher adapts the instructional strategy and what type of learning strategies the students use. Differentiated process focuses on such things as higher order thinking skills, open-ended and problem-solving tasks, and learning at more complex levels. Process can be

## Sample strategies

differentiated in a variety of ways, including creating opportunities for choice, collaboration and meaningful research. Students benefit from opportunities to make choices, set goals, engage in self-reflection and participate in self-assessment. Many students who are gifted will benefit from processes that develop effective study, organizational and interpersonal skills. Flexible pacing, questioning techniques, anomalies and paradoxes, tiered assignments, and independent projects are all effective strategies for differentiating process.

## Flexible pacing

This strategy allows students to move through the graded curriculum at a different rate. Flexible pacing can take a variety of forms. Some examples include:

- allowing students to complete some outcomes more quickly and spend additional time on more challenging activities
- allowing students to do a deeper exploration of specific learning outcomes that are especially meaningful to them
- moving students to an appropriate starting point in the program of studies based on pretesting
- compacting or streamlining the grade-level program of studies to eliminate repetition of previously learned materials
- allowing students to move up a grade in one or more subject areas.

The goal of all of these flexible pacing strategies is to provide opportunities for students to spend more time on outcomes and activities that will enrich their learning. When considering options for flexible pacing, a gradual process may be most effective. For example, teachers could start by accelerating students through small chunks of curriculum and then move onto larger chunks after a number of successful experiences.

## Questioning techniques

Questions that draw on advanced levels of information require leaps of understanding and challenge students' thinking. Open-ended questions invite critical and creative thinking, and nurture the development of students' capacities to frame their own questions.

## For more information

For more information on using Bloom's taxonomy with students who are gifted, see pages 6–7 in this chapter.

## Anomalies and paradoxes

Presenting anomalies and paradoxes can also peak the interest of students who are gifted. Glitches in logic upturn a tidy view of the world and create opportunities for students to enter into a deeper inquiry, become immersed in the principles and build a clearer understanding of a particular aspect of a field of study (Harvey 2000, p. 70).

## Tiered assignments

Tiered assignments are parallel tasks that have varied levels of complexity, depth, abstractness and support. Students work on different levels of

activities, all focused on the same essential concept or learning outcome. These types of assignments allow students who are gifted to work at a more challenging level. Tasks from one tier to the next should differ in level of complexity, not simply be more or less work.

Designing a tiered assignment involves selecting a skill or concept, developing basic learning activities and then creating higher-level variations by changing variables such as using advanced materials, moving toward a more abstract concept, reducing support, making it more open-ended, and/or making it faster paced.

**Example**

For example, a tiered assignment for a Grade 2 science class studying communities might offer the following types of activities.

- | <b>Tier 1</b>                                                                                                       |           | <b>Tier 2</b>                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe an ant community in pictures or words.</li> </ul>                   | <i>or</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe an ant community using at least three sentences with at least three describing words in each sentence.</li> </ul>                                |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use a Venn diagram to compare an ant community to your community.</li> </ul> | <i>or</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make a PowerPoint explaining how what you learned about ant communities helps you understand living and working together in a human community.</li> </ul> |

### Independent projects

Independent projects let students identify issues or topics of interest, plan an investigation and synthesize the findings. Projects can offer enrichment and meaningful engagement for many students who are gifted. It is important to recognize that students may need to be taught the skills to do this kind of independent work.

### Products

The *products* of learning are the ways in which students explore and demonstrate their understanding of content and process. Differentiating products means providing opportunities for students to demonstrate their thinking and learning in different ways, including written, oral, manipulative, discussion, display, dramatization, artistic, graphic representation and service learning.

For example, conventional writing assignments may not be the best way for some students to show their learning. Some students may think quicker than their hands can write. An action product, such as a PowerPoint slide show, videoconferencing or a performance, could be a better type of learning experience for these students.

Students who are gifted often need to produce what Dr. Joseph Renzulli calls “real-life products” for real audiences. These products go beyond the typical research paper or report to alternatives that develop individual students’ talents and curiosities, and can be shared and used by others. The main purpose for designing alternate products is to:

- broaden the range of students’ experiences
- expand students’ ways of learning and of expressing themselves
- challenge students in their areas of strength
- create opportunities for students to explore hidden talents and use gifts they might not otherwise use
- allow students to learn in a deeper and more advanced way through their preferred learning style
- create opportunities for students to develop organization and time-management skills.

#### Higher-order thinking

Bloom’s taxonomy (Bloom 1956) provides a useful framework for designing learning activities that promote higher levels of thinking related to both process and product. Bloom proposes that at the most basic level we acquire knowledge and comprehension. At higher levels we learn how to apply principles and to analyze, evaluate and synthesize. Assuming that students have no background in a topic of investigation, they would move from knowledge and comprehension to application before working with the higher-order skills of analysis, evaluation and synthesis. The latter three levels are associated with critical thinking. Consider how the following chart of this taxonomy of thinking can be used to plan for differentiating products and processes for students who are gifted.

## Taxonomy of Thinking<sup>1</sup>

Category	Definition	Trigger Words	Products
<b>Synthesis</b>	Reform individual parts to make a new whole.	Compose • Design • Invent • Create • Hypothesize • Construct • Forecast • Rearrange parts • Imagine	Lesson plan to teach other students • Song • Poem • Story • Advertisement • Invention • Other creative products
<b>Evaluation</b>	Judge value of something vis-à-vis criteria. Support judgement.	Judge • Evaluate • Give opinion • Give viewpoint • Prioritize • Recommend • Critique	Decision • Rating • Editorial • Debate • Critique • Defence • Verdict • Judgement
<b>Analysis</b>	Understand how parts relate to a whole. Understand structure and motive. Note fallacies.	Investigate • Classify • Categorize • Compare • Contrast • Solve	Survey • Questionnaire • Plan • Solution to problem or mystery • Report • Prospectus
<b>Application</b>	Transfer knowledge learned in one situation to another.	Demonstrate • Use guides, maps, charts, etc. • Build • Cook	Recipe • Model • Artwork • Demonstration • Craft
<b>Comprehension</b>	Demonstrate basic understanding of concepts and curriculum. Translate into other words.	Restate in own words • Give examples • Explain • Summarize • Translate • Show symbols • Edit	Drawing • Diagram • Response to question • Revision • Translation
<b>Knowledge</b>	Ability to remember something previously learned.	Tell • Recite • List • Memorize • Remember • Define • Locate	Quiz or test • Skill work • Vocabulary • Facts

### Environment

The *environment* refers to the physical and social setting where learning takes place, as well as the conditions under which a student is working. Students who are gifted benefit from learning environments in which they have opportunities to:

- gain understanding of self and others
- explore their own learning strengths and needs
- learn and practise coping skills that assist in their growth and development

1. Adapted from Benjamin S. Bloom et al., *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: Book 1 Cognitive Domain*, published by Allyn and Bacon, Boston, MA, Copyright © 1956, by Pearson Education, adapted by permission of the publisher and adapted from *Teaching Gifted Kids in the Regular Classroom: Strategies and Techniques Every Teacher Can Use to Meet the Academic Needs of the Gifted and Talented (Revised, Expanded, Updated Edition)* (p. 133) by Susan Winebrenner © 2001. Used with permission of Free Spirit Publishing Inc., Minneapolis, MN; 1-866-703-7322; www.freespirit.com. All rights reserved.

- take risks and see mistakes as learning opportunities
- practise leadership and service within the school community.

For some students, an enriched learning environment can be provided within the regular classroom by replacing or extending the regular programs of study with activities that foster higher level thinking skills and problem solving. This type of individualized programming can address learning needs without drawing undue attention to differences. Teachers may also choose instructional strategies and learning activities that challenge students who are gifted while benefiting other students in the class as well. For example, activities such as debates, which involve students in creative and challenging learning, may be connected directly to learning outcomes in a variety of subjects.

Other students will benefit from programming that involves one or more alternative learning environments such as the following.

- *Cluster grouping*: Small groups of students receive advanced instruction in reading, mathematics or other content, or work on alternate assignments.
- *Pull-out classes*: Students attend separate classes focused on special areas of emphasis for students with similar interests or abilities.
- *Out-of-grade placement*: Students are placed with a higher grade for certain subjects such as language arts, mathematics and/or science.
- *Online or distance education courses*: Students access electronic classrooms via the computer, using e-mail, video conferencing and direct linkage with teachers.
- *Seminars and special projects*: Students participate in interdisciplinary studies, special interest groups or other projects.
- *Mentorships*: Students work with a resource teacher, specialist, parent volunteer or community member to work on a project, develop skills in a specific field and build career awareness.
- *International Baccalaureate (IB)*: Students participate in special academic programs that are internationally developed and recognized for academic rigour.
- *Advanced Placement (AP)*: Students participate in senior high school courses that follow the prescribed AP program and students who successfully complete examinations in the program may apply for advanced credit or placement at post-secondary institutions.
- *Full-time classes or schooling-within-schools*: Students receive instruction full-time in special classes for students who are gifted, housed in local schools or district sites.
- *Schools for the gifted*: Students attend specialized schools dedicated to gifted education.
- *Post-secondary courses/dual enrollment*: Students take higher-level courses at a college or university while attending high school.

## Assessment

Differentiating assessment for students who are gifted can mean making these students more active partners in their own assessment process. Teachers can involve students in developing and/or using criteria or rubrics

that will enable students to reflect on their own work and make adjustments throughout the learning process. Portfolios and other multidimensional strategies can also be used to differentiate the assessment process. The goal is to generate rich and dynamic data to inform programming decisions for individual students.

### Consider Developmental Issues

Typical developmental issues faced by all students also exist for students who are gifted. These issues are sometimes complicated by the exceptional learning needs and characteristics many students who are gifted demonstrate, particularly during adolescence. Students who are gifted may face a variety of challenges, including perfectionism, underachievement, uneven or asynchronous development and learning difficulties.

Students who may be more at risk emotionally, socially and academically include:

- divergent thinkers who suggest ideas logical to them, but unusual to classmates
- creative high achievers, particularly those with artistic gifts, who may experience feelings of isolation or depression, and may be subject to anxiety, insomnia, feelings of worthlessness, loss of energy or decreased ability to concentrate.

### Perfectionism

Perfectionism is a pattern of characteristics and behaviours that includes compulsiveness about work habits, over-concern for details, unrealistically high standards and rigid routines (Kerr 1991, p. 141). Perfectionism can develop at various stages for various reasons, but for many students it is simply a part of their personality. Too often, it is assumed that parents cause their child's perfectionism with their own unrealistic expectations. However, many perfectionist children are the product of relaxed, easy-going parents with realistic expectations. It seems possible that certain individuals are simply born with the type of temperament that leads to perfectionistic tendencies.

Not all perfectionism is negative. Linda Silverman, a researcher on social-emotional dimensions of individuals who are gifted, believes that perfectionism is the least understood aspect of giftedness. It is often perceived as a problem to be fixed. Silverman suggests that perfectionism is part of the experience of being gifted, and has amazing potential to bring an individual toward either achievement or despair. It would be unwise to try to root out perfectionism completely, for it can be used in a positive way to achieve excellence.

However, perfectionism can become a serious issue for some students who are gifted. To monitor the effects of perfectionism, the learning team needs to ask questions like "Are these behaviours barriers for this student?" and "Do they prevent this student from experiencing success and happiness?"



The student's parents and teachers can also watch for warning signs that perfectionism is creating problems, such as the student:

- being unable to feel satisfaction because in his or her own eyes he or she never does things well enough
- setting unrealistic standards for himself or herself based on his or her advanced reasoning ability even though other skill areas may not be as well-developed
- feeling inferior or defeated if he or she does not meet the high standards he or she has set
- becoming so terrified of doing something wrong, he or she becomes unwilling to try new things and actually accomplishes very little
- in extreme cases, developing compulsive behaviours that require professional medical or psychological assistance.

For more information

For more information and sample strategies that teachers and parents can use to help students who are gifted cope with perfectionism, see *The Journey: A handbook for parents of children who are gifted and talented* (Alberta Learning, 2004), available at [www.education.gov.ab.ca/k\\_12/curriculum/resources/TheJourney/journey.asp](http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/resources/TheJourney/journey.asp).

## Underachievement

In relation to giftedness, the term “underachieving” describes the performance of students who express their giftedness in extracurricular activities or at home but whose achievement level at school falls far below their cognitive ability. This discrepancy is not caused by an underlying learning disability, attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder or any other disorder that may be affecting their achievement. Rather, students underachieve in school for a variety of reasons.

A common assumption is that boredom with schoolwork is the cause of underachievement, and that the solution is to increase the difficulty and workload for the student. This can be counterproductive for students who are already disengaged. It is important for the learning team to consider the many factors that may be influencing an individual student's behaviour.

Some specific causes of underachievement in students who are gifted include:

- poor self-image
- lack of a future vision or dream to work toward
- problems within the family that divert students' thinking and effort
- feelings of anxiety
- the desire to fit in with their peer group
- the desire to rebel
- the desire to avoid participating in special programming
- feelings of stress based on the need to please others or their own unrealistic expectations
- disinterest in subject-area topics and related learning activities
- work that is too easy or too difficult



- work that is meaningless and repetitive to the student, resulting in little effort
- fear of failure.

Students who underachieve can be disruptive or withdrawn in the classroom. They may engage in power struggles with their teachers. Or they may become apathetic, surrendering their passion for learning and not completing tasks. One of the most serious consequences of underachievement is not graduating from senior high school. It is important that students have meaningful and challenging work to do at school and receive appropriate guidance and support at home.

For more information

For more information and sample strategies for helping students overcome underachievement, see *The Journey: A handbook for parents of children who are gifted and talented* (Alberta Learning, 2004), available at [www.education.gov.ab.ca/k\\_12/curriculum/resources/TheJourney/journey.asp](http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/resources/TheJourney/journey.asp).

### Asynchronous development

Asynchrony is uneven development in the rates of intellectual, emotional and physical development. Asynchronous development can be a characteristic of students who are gifted. This means students may:

- be more complex and intense than peers
- feel out-of-sync with same-age peers and age-appropriate learning activities and topics
- demonstrate different maturity levels in different situations, which could result in difficulties adjusting emotionally and socially.

These tendencies can increase with the student's degree of giftedness, and can make students vulnerable to feelings of frustration and/or social isolation. Students who experience asynchronous development need a sensitive and flexible approach to teaching in order to develop to their full potential. The greatest need of students who experience asynchronous development is an environment where it is safe to be different.

### Learning difficulties

Some students who are gifted also have learning difficulties such as learning disabilities, attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder (AD/HD) and Asperger's Syndrome. These twice-exceptional students often have difficulty reaching an academic level that matches their measured potential, and their giftedness may go unidentified or be ignored.

Students who are simultaneously gifted and have a disability can pose a special challenge for both teachers and parents. It is important that the student's learning team work to understand his or her dual exceptionality and collaborate to ensure that the student's IPP process creates the support the student needs to work to the best of his or her ability. It is important that these students have goals that address both their exceptional strengths and their exceptional needs.

For more information

For more information and sample strategies for students who are gifted and have learning challenges, see *The Journey: A handbook for parents of children who are gifted and talented* (Alberta Learning, 2004), available at [www.education.gov.ab.ca/k\\_12/curriculum/resources/TheJourney/journey.asp](http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/resources/TheJourney/journey.asp).

## Plan for Metacognition<sup>2</sup>

Involving students in the development of their own IPPs creates opportunities for these students to

- make choices, set goals and engage in self-assessment
- gain awareness of their thinking in various learning contexts
- demonstrate responsibility for learning.

In *The School as a Home for the Mind*, Art Costa describes metacognition as “our ability to know what we know and what we don’t know. It is our ability to plan a strategy for producing what information is needed, to be conscious of our own steps and strategies during the act of problem solving, and to reflect on and evaluate the productiveness of our own thinking ... When students experience the need for problem-solving strategies, induce their own, discuss and practise them to the degree that they become spontaneous and unconscious, their metacognition seems to improve” (1991, pp. 87, 88).

Metacognition involves three critical aspects of thinking about or being aware of our own thinking. These three aspects are planning, monitoring and evaluating. Involving students in their own goal setting creates opportunities for them to explore and apply all metacognitive processes. The following lists show how IPP planning is linked to each of these critical aspects of thinking.

### Planning:

- forming a goal
- selecting actions to reach that goal
- sequencing actions
- identifying potential challenges
- predicting results

### Monitoring:

- keeping the goal in mind
- keeping one’s place in sequence
- knowing when a short-term objective has been achieved
- deciding when to go on to the next action and selecting the appropriate action
- keeping track of errors or challenges
- knowing how to recover from errors and overcome obstacles

2. Adapted from handout on “Programming for High Ability Learners” by Janet Thomas, Edmonton Public Schools (Edmonton, Alberta, June 2004).

*Assessing and evaluating:*

- assessing achievement of goals
- judging accuracy and adequacy of the results
- evaluating appropriateness of actions taken
- assessing handling of challenges
- judging efficiency of the plan

Sample strategies

There are many ways to encourage metacognitive thinking for students throughout the IPP process, including the following sample strategies.

- Create opportunities for students to make authentic choices about what and how they learn.
- Structure learning activities so students have opportunities to plan strategies prior to the activity, share progress during the activity and evaluate strategy after the activity.
- Encourage students to reflect on and evaluate their learning experiences.
- Encourage students to identify what they have done well and to take credit for their efforts and accomplishments.
- Encourage students to reframe “I can’t” type of thinking to the more proactive “What I need to do is ...”

For more information

For more information and strategies on differentiating instruction for students who are gifted, see *Teaching Students Who are Gifted and Talented* (Alberta Learning, 2000), Book 7 of the *Programming for Students with Special Needs* series.

## Consider Career Planning

The need for early opportunities for career planning is strongly supported in the research literature on gifted education. There are a number of issues that may make career development challenging for students who are gifted, including the following.

- *Multipotentiality*  
Many young people who are gifted have multiple passions or talents and it can be difficult to identify or decide on a career path that will accommodate these diverse interests.
- *Personal investment*  
The types of careers that many individuals who are gifted tend to aspire to often require extensive post-secondary training. Such education often involves great personal, social and financial costs.
- *Geographical and socioeconomic mobility*  
For many young people who are gifted, particularly those from rural areas, pursuing the occupations they are interested in means having to leave their home communities. This can create conflicted feelings.

- *Expectations of others*  
The career expectations of parents, teachers and peers can exert tremendous pressure on young people who are gifted.
- *Innovativeness*  
Many new career options are the direct result of the ingenuity of individuals who are gifted. For example, the field of bio-mechanical engineering did not exist until someone combined interests in biology, mechanics and engineering. Technological breakthroughs are constantly making new career paths possible. If necessary, individuals who are gifted need to be prepared to “invent” their own careers. However, combining several disciplines into one career path requires greater investment than focusing on a single discipline.

Dr. Michael Pyryt, of the Centre for Gifted Education at the University of Calgary, proposes a number of essential career development components for students who are gifted. They include the following.

- *Self-awareness and self-concept development*  
Individuals who are gifted can make thoughtful career choices by developing awareness of their personal aptitudes and interests. Tools for enhancing self-awareness include standardized personality inventories, such as Holland’s Vocational Preference Inventory, or informed questionnaires, such as the Career Issues Survey.
- *Overcoming sex-role stereotypes*  
It is important that young people who are gifted, particularly young women, develop positive expectations for success in their future career path. There are a number of techniques for encouraging girls to broaden their thinking about career options, such as providing mentors and same-sex career days for young women.
- *Creative problem solving*  
Training young people in creative problem solving can build their capacity for dealing with career-related challenges.
- *Interpersonal effectiveness*  
An effective style of communicating can help individuals who are gifted handle the many social and professional situations they will face in their careers. They need to develop assertiveness, flexibility, empathy and awareness of their own feelings.
- *Time and stress management*  
These skills can help individuals who are gifted cope with challenges of personal investment, geographic mobility and the expectations of others. Young people need to learn a variety of strategies so they can choose what works best for them.
- *Content acceleration*  
Allowing young people who are gifted to accelerate their education is one way to reduce the heavy time and financial commitments required to pursue many professions. Potential opportunities for acceleration include early entrance to university, part-time university course work, distance education, Advanced Placement and acceleration in a specific subject area or at a specific grade level.

These essential components of career development can help young people who are gifted to overcome some of the challenges that they may face. These components should be considered in planning for transition and developing goals for junior and senior high students who are gifted.

### Essential Information

IPPs for students who are gifted must include the same essential components as IPPs for students with other special education needs. However, the actual content and focus of the information will differ.

For more information

For a detailed discussion of essential information, see Chapter 1: *Working Through the IPP Process*.

### Assessment data

The assessment information recorded in this section of the IPP document should relate directly to the student's exceptional learning needs, and the types of programming and supports required. Specialized assessments for students who are gifted generally come from educational psychologists and educational specialists. Each specialized assessment should be listed in the IPP and should include the date, the name of the assessment tool and the name of the person who conducted the assessment.

When filling in assessment data, it is important to be sensitive to sharing specific IQ information and other types of information. Identify the range only (e.g., average, high average, superior, very superior) and do not include numerical scores or percentiles.

### Current level of performance and achievement

Current levels of performance should be reported for each subject area or behaviour that has a related IPP goal. Teachers may also choose to include information on the student's performance in other core subject areas as a baseline.

Be cautious interpreting grade-level scores because they may not accurately reflect some students' advanced performance because most subject area tests do not score out-of-level and are not designed to assess learning outcomes beyond a single grade level.

This section should also include summaries of relevant classroom assessments such as writing samples, math skills inventories, portfolio examples, and teacher and student observations that link directly with IPP goals.

## Identification of strengths and areas of need

It is essential that the learning team use multiple sources of information to identify an individual student's complex strengths and areas of need. As much as possible, involve students in the process, so they begin to identify and understand their own strengths and interests. Look for ways to identify not only academic needs, but also social, emotional and psychological needs.

Consider the following types of questions.

- What strengths and talents does this student demonstrate?
- What is happening now in the student's educational programming?
- What led to this student being identified as gifted?
- What modifications, if any, are necessary or desirable?
- What kind of data will give a fuller picture of this student (academic, social, emotional, psychological)?
- What does this student's particular interests and accomplishments tell us about this student's learning needs?
- How can information about the student's abilities, interests and motivation inform instructional planning?

For students who are gifted, needs are often related to strengths rather than weaknesses. A need can be an extension of a strength or can involve learning to use an accommodation or strategy to support that strength. Some school jurisdictions prefer to use the term "Areas to develop" on IPPs for students who are gifted, rather than the more typical "Areas of need."

Some students will have strengths and talents in areas that may not be part of the school programming and may be most effectively addressed outside of the school system. Even if the school does not provide specific enrichment to support these talents, there are ways the school can support the student, such as through flexible timetabling to accommodate coaching and competitions, related work experience and/or alternative programs.

The following chart illustrates sample characteristics and the type of learning needs that may be associated with them. Teachers can use this information as starting points for developing individual goals or identifying appropriate accommodations and support strategies.

Characteristic <sup>3</sup>	Learning Need
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>unusual retentiveness ...</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>exposure to quantities of information</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>advanced comprehension ...</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>access to challenging learning activities</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>varied interests ...</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>exposure to a wide range of topics</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>high level of verbal skills ...</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>opportunities for in-depth reflection and discussion</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>accelerated pace of thinking ...</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>individually paced learning</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>flexibility of thought processes ...</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>challenging and diverse problem-solving tasks</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>goal-directed behaviours ...</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>longer time-spans for tasks</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>independence in learning ...</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>more independent learning tasks</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>analytical thinking ...</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>opportunities for higher-level thinking</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>self-motivation ...</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>active involvement in learning</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>emotional sensitivity ...</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>opportunities to explore and reflect on affective learning</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>interest in adult issues ...</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>exposure to real world issues</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>holistic thinking ...</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>integrated approach to learning</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>avid reader ...</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>access to diverse materials</li> </ul>

There are a wide variety of tools and strategies that students can use to identify and assess their own strengths, needs and areas of interest. Creating opportunities for students to participate in this part of the IPP process will help students learn about themselves and advocate for their own exceptional education needs.

For more information

See Chapter 3: *Supporting Student Participation* for more information and sample tools for student participation.

Parents should also be involved in identifying their child's strengths and areas of need. Parents can often provide information and insight in areas such as:

- personality traits
- family and educational history that impacts the student's present learning situation
- interests, talents and desires
- family aspirations and goals for their child
- assistance that the family can provide at home to reinforce and extend skills and concepts

3. Chart reproduced from *Bright Futures Resource Book: Education of Gifted Students* (1996) (p. 30) with the permission of the State of Victoria, Department of Education and Training. Copyright is vested in the State of Victoria, Department of Education and Training. "To the extent permitted by law the State of Victoria (Department of Education and Training) excludes all liability for any loss or damage, however caused (including through negligence) which may be directly or indirectly suffered in connection with the use or publication of, or reliance on, the copyright materials owned by the State of Victoria that are in this publication."



- community involvement, such as music lessons, that could support and enrich the student's learning.

Appendices

See Appendix 11-A for a sample set of questions that parents can consider.

For more information

See *The Journey: A handbook for parents of children who are gifted and talented* (Alberta Learning, 2004), available at [www.education.gov.ab.ca/k\\_12/curriculum/resources/TheJourney/journey.asp](http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/resources/TheJourney/journey.asp), for information and sample strategies that parents can use to be involved in the IPP process for their child who is gifted.

## Measurable goals and objectives

Students who are gifted typically have a smaller number of IPP goals than other students with special education needs. Students in grades one and two might have a single goal, students in grades three through 11 might have two or three goals and students in their last year of senior high school might have a single goal focused on transition. Many of the short-term objectives of each goal often tend to be related, rather than sequential.

For more information

For more information on determining goals, see Chapter 7: *Making Goals Meaningful, Measurable and Manageable*.

Students who have a disability in addition to their giftedness may require a larger number of goals than other students who are gifted. When developing goals, the learning team should begin with strength goals and then move to supporting goals.

When developing goals, the learning team needs to be alert to possible mismatches in expectations and abilities. For example, a very young student who is gifted might have strong skills in developing stories and persuasive arguments but his written expression may be hampered by his ability to handwrite or keyboard. In this case, the student's current fine motor skills are actually developmentally appropriate; it is his advanced narrative skills that are causing the mismatch. Therefore, it would be developmentally inappropriate to have this student attempt to become more adept at handwriting or keyboarding. A more appropriate goal would focus on identifying effective ways for the student to record and communicate, such as using appropriate assistive technology or graphic representation. In the same vein, a student who is gifted in a specific area, such as mathematics, should not be expected to excel in nonstrength areas, such as language arts or artistic expression. Average performance in a specific subject should not be considered a weakness and should not be a focus of an IPP goal.

Example

For examples of measurable goals and objectives, see Sample IPP 1, pages 23–29 and Sample IPP 2, pages 30–34.



It is important to involve students who are gifted in setting IPP goals and monitoring their progress as much as possible. Participating in their own goal setting helps students who are gifted to:

- practise higher-order thinking
- engage in metacognitive thinking
- take more ownership for their learning
- set realistic expectations and temper perfectionism
- celebrate and value their gains and progress
- become more motivated and take increased responsibility for future learning.

For more information

For sample strategies and tools for building student participation, see Chapter 3: *Supporting Student Participation*.

Students need varied opportunities to learn about and explore goal setting, in addition to the IPP process.

Student involvement in their own goal setting can be promoted:

- as part of an ongoing process
- in learning logs, journals and communication books
- through individual student-teacher conferences
- during class time, within specific subject areas or types of learning activities (e.g., spelling, keyboarding, study skills, mathematics, research projects, physical education, music) or in areas of personal growth (e.g., leadership skills, self-management, organization)
- in classroom discussions and celebrations of individual and group accomplishments
- by teachers and other adults modelling how they use the goal-setting process in their own work and personal lives.

As students become more involved in goal setting, they learn that goals need to be both realistic and optimistic for maximum benefit. High achieving students who are gifted sometimes strive for excellence or goals that may not seem reasonable from another person's perspective but may be entirely possible for that student.

It is helpful to focus on making goals specific and measurable, especially for students new to goal setting or those who have unrealistic expectations for themselves. For example, help a student transform a vague goal such as "I will be fast at keyboarding" into a more measurable goal such as "By January 30, I will keyboard at 25 words per minute on three trials on Superkey."

As students learn the process and language of goal setting, they also learn that goals may be:

- adjusted at any time, according to changing circumstances
- related to many areas of life, including personal, athletic, financial and organizational

- monitored through graphs, log books and other data-recording strategies
- short- or long-term (and long-term goals can be broken down into short-term objectives, as in plans for a long-term research project)
- set by an individual or a group.

### Evaluating student progress

Students may derive great satisfaction from meeting challenges or from focusing intensely on the process necessary to attain the goal. For some students who are gifted, the process of pursuing a goal to the best of their ability is so rewarding that actual attainment of the goal is of secondary importance.

When evaluating progress, it is important to consider the goals from the student's perspective. For example, a reflective student who takes much time to plan before beginning a project may be consolidating ideas and goals in a purposeful way, but not within the time generally allotted. Conversely, a learner who is curious and heads off to perform a task with little planning may return some time later with the task incomplete, but may have learned many other unexpected things as he or she attempted the task.

As much as possible, students who are gifted should be involved in evaluating their own progress. Often a completed project will be assessed for the demonstration of certain skills or understandings related to a goal. Students can help create criteria or rubrics to evaluate these products and measure their own progress.

Be cautious using test or term marks as main indicators of growth for students who are gifted. Many of these students may already have high averages (e.g., in the 90–98 percent range) and there is little benefit in focusing on moving a mark up only one or two points. It would be more productive and rewarding to focus on another kind of indicator.

### Coordinated services

The majority of students who are gifted may not require coordinated health-related services. If this is the case, this should be noted on the IPP. If students are receiving services, the IPP should include a brief description of these coordinated services, including the frequency and duration.

A number of students may access additional enrichment at the community level but it is not necessary that this information be documented on the IPP unless the school is coordinating this service. This might include specialized services such as mentorships or video conferencing.

### Medical information

This section of the IPP should include any information relevant to the student's learning needs. For example, it might include a summary of a report that confirms a diagnosis such as AD/HD and might indicate whether or not the student is on daily medication. *Only medical information directly relevant to the student's learning needs should be included on the IPP.*

Be sensitive regarding sharing diagnostic information such as AD/HD or mental health conditions on the IPP document. Some students may not be developmentally ready to understand their specific diagnoses although they may have a basic understanding of their individual needs. This information needs to be handled sensitively and on a case-by-case basis. It should also be indicated if there are no known medical issues at this time.

### Classroom accommodations and strategies

Required classroom accommodations must be listed on the IPP. Students who are gifted generally benefit from the use of accommodations and strategies that are especially tailored to support their particular learning strengths and preferences. Many of these strategies have been discussed in the differentiating instruction section of this chapter, pages 2 to 9.

#### Appendices

*See Appendix 11-B for a list of sample accommodations and strategies for students who are gifted.*

### Planning for transitions

Planning for transitions begins each September, at each grade level, and is an ongoing process throughout the school year. Planning involves identifying potential transitions, both big and small, and developing strategies for students and teaching staff that will ensure these transitions are smooth and effective.

### Year-end summary

The goal of the year-end summary is to ensure that students continue to build on their successes from school year to school year. Consider open-ended questions such as the following:

- What are the highlights and celebrations of this year?
- What worked well?
- What was not effective?
- What goals require ongoing focus next year?
- What new goals should be explored next year?

Like most parts of the IPP process, the year-end summary can be completed as a collaborative effort involving teachers, the student and parents.

### Sample IPPs

This chapter ends with two completed samples of IPPs that illustrate how essential information might be recorded on IPP documents for students who are gifted.

The first sample is for a student who excels in science and is attending a combined Grade 5/6 class in her neighbourhood school. This student was an active participant in her own IPP process and she completed the reviews of her own objectives—her comments are in a handwriting font on the sample.

The second sample is for a Grade 11 student who is managing her own IPP and is based on a sample IPP shared by Maria Pistotnik, Edmonton Catholic Schools. Working with a teacher-advisor, she set her own goal, which focuses on planning for transition, and recorded her own progress.

**Appendices**

*See Appendix 11-C for a sample IPP template for students who are gifted.*

Sample IPP 1 - Raina

<b>Individualized Program Plan</b>	
<b>Student Information</b>	
<b>Student:</b> Raina	
<b>Date of Birth:</b> January 01/19XX	<b>Age as of Sept. 1/200X:</b>
<b>Parents:</b> Kim and Trevor	<b>Date IPP Created:</b> September 200X
<b>Grade:</b> 5	<b>Eligibility Code:</b> 80 (gifted and talented)
<b>Background information: Classroom context</b>	
<b>IPP Coordinator and Classroom Teacher:</b> Ms. Teach	
<b>Additional IPP Team Members:</b> Ms. Read (teacher-librarian)	
Raina attends her neighbourhood school. She is in a combined Grade 5/6 classroom with 22 students.	
<b>Background Information: Student and parent involvement</b>	
September 28 - Raina chaired her first IPP meeting of the year and presented a mind map showing the five Grade 5 science topics and related subtopics she is interested in investigating this year.	
February 15 - Raina presented a 20-minute PowerPoint presentation of a classroom chemistry investigation at her learning conference. Her learning team had lots of interesting questions for her!	
June 15 - The final IPP meeting of the year was a telephone conference call with Raina, her parents, Ms. Teach and Ms. Read. Raina expressed satisfaction with her level of challenge this year and her parents were pleased she was able to pursue her passion in science more rigorously through independent investigations.	

## Sample IPP 1 - Raina (continued) page 2/6

<b>Strengths</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– enthusiastic, self-motivated learner</li> <li>– active participant in group activities, especially in science</li> <li>– applies previous learning to new situations</li> <li>– adept at using technology</li> <li>– enjoys reading complex science-related information</li> </ul>		
<b>Areas for growth</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– strategies for using inquiry approach so she can work more independently on science topics and projects that she is interested in</li> <li>– opportunities to develop and demonstrate patience with students who may learn differently or more slowly than she does</li> </ul>		
<b>Medical Conditions that Impact Schooling</b>		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No current medical conditions that impact schooling		
<b>Coordinated Support Services</b>		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> None required at this time		
<b>Assessment Data (Specialized Assessment Results)</b>		
<b>Date</b>	<b>Test</b>	<b>Results</b>
November 200X Any Clinic Dr. Bright	WISC-IV	– very superior range in all four subscales

Sample IPP 1 - Raina (continued) page 3/6

Current Level of Performance and Achievement	Year-end Summary
September	June
<p>Raina identifies science as her passion and she scored 80+% on pretests of all five science units for the year. She expresses a strong interest in pursuing independent scientific investigations as an alternative to some classroom activities.</p> <p><i>Burns and Roe Informal Reading Inventory</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;">grade level equivalent</p> <p>reading recognition                      8.2 reading comprehension                  7.5</p> <p><i>Results from Grade 4 report card:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Language Arts (Grade 4)              A</li> <li>– Math (Grade 5)                            A</li> <li>– Social Studies (Grade 4)                A</li> <li>– Science (Grade 4)                        A</li> <li>– French (Grade 4)                         B</li> </ul>	<p>She completed at least two self-selected investigations for each science unit and her log book entries indicate she is developing strong question-asking skills, and is able to create hypotheses and reflect on her own learning. She received positive feedback from her study group and they asked many questions during her presentations. See also Raina’s June review for Goal #1.</p> <p>Raina reports she is finding challenge in both social studies and language arts.</p> <p><i>Results from Grade 5 report card:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Language Arts (Grade 5)              A</li> <li>– Math (Grade 6)                            A</li> <li>– Social Studies (Grade 5)                A</li> <li>– Science (Grade 5)                        A</li> <li>– French (Grade 5)                         B</li> </ul>
<b>Student Year-end Summary</b>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What are the highlights and celebrations of this year?</li> <li>2. What worked well?</li> <li>3. What was not effective?</li> <li>4. What will require ongoing focus next year?</li> <li>5. What new goals should be explored next year?</li> </ol> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Presenting my investigation of weather warnings to my study group.</i></li> <li>2. <i>Not doing spelling and vocabulary gave me extra time for my investigations.</i></li> <li>3. <i>Sometimes I wanted to investigate topics that didn’t relate to the Grade 5 topics—this was frustrating!</i></li> <li>4. <i>I’d like to continue doing more scientific investigations.</i></li> <li>5. <i>I’d like to get a science mentor at the university.</i></li> </ol> <p><i>Raina</i></p>	

## Sample IPP 1 - Raina (continued) page 4/6

<b>Goal #1</b>		
<b>Long-term Goal:</b> By June 30, 200X, through evidence gathered in her learning log entries, Raina will demonstrate the ability to apply the six-step scientific investigation process.		
<b>Short-term Objectives</b>	<b>Assessment Procedures</b>	<b>Progress Review</b>
1. By October 30, Raina will demonstrate an understanding of what a research question is by generating a list of potential research questions related to the science units under study.	– list of research questions measured against class criteria for “power thinking questions”	October 15, 200X <i>I made a list of 20 powerful questions for the Wetlands Unit.</i> <i>Raina</i>
2. By February 28, Raina will demonstrate an understanding of the six-step scientific investigation process by creating plans for at least one scientific investigation in each science unit under study this term.	– two scientific investigation action plans measured against class criteria for “action plans for investigation”	February 15, 200X <i>I made detailed plans for three investigations this term.</i> <i>Raina</i>
3. By June 20, Raina will demonstrate the ability to reflect on and analyze results by creating and maintaining a learning log for each scientific investigation.	– analysis of three log books to be done collaboratively by Raina and Ms. Read using student-generated criteria – feedback from science study group	May 15, 200X <i>I shared my three log books with my science study group—they said they learned lots from my work.</i> <i>Raina</i>
<b>Accommodations and strategies to support this goal</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Instruction and guided practice in six-step scientific investigation process               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Define problem</li> <li>2. State hypothesis</li> <li>3. Develop and carry out plan</li> <li>4. Collect data</li> <li>5. Analyze and interpret results</li> <li>6. Reflect on learning</li> </ol> </li> <li>– Regularly-scheduled conferences to review learning log with teacher-advisor (e.g., 1/week)</li> <li>– Designated space in school science project room</li> <li>– Participation in cross-grade science study group 1/month</li> <li>– Opportunities to share learnings from investigations with classmates</li> </ul>		



Sample IPP 1 - Raina (continued) page 5/6

<b>Goal #2</b>		
<b>Long-term Goal:</b> By June 30, 200X, Raina will choose or make suggestions for more challenging assignments at least three times in each unit of study in social studies and language arts.		
<b>Short-term Objectives</b>	<b>Assessment Procedures</b>	<b>Progress Review</b>
1. By October 30, Raina will choose the higher-order thinking assignments on any tiered assignment.	– student record of challenge assignments in social studies and language arts	October 30 <i>I like Ms. Teach's tic-tac-toe activity organizers in language arts and social studies. I can always find at least one interesting assignment.</i> Raina
2. By March 30, Raina will use Bloom's taxonomy to generate higher level learning activities that will challenge her.	– student record of suggestions for modifying assignments—to be discussed with teachers in 1:1 conference	March 15 <i>Sometimes it's not easy to find a new way to explore things. I find making a list of "big questions" about the topic helps.</i> Raina
3. By June 30, Raina will meet with teacher at the beginning of a unit and identify three strategies for "going deeper" in selected learning outcomes for that unit.	– student/teacher list of strategies for two units	June 5 <i>I liked meeting with Ms. Teach at the beginning of language arts and social studies units to figure out ways I could "stretch" my learning.</i> Raina
<b>Accommodations and strategies to support this goal</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Advanced level novel study (Grade 8) and access to resource material at higher reading level</li> <li>– Access to class computer, library resources</li> <li>– Instruction and opportunity to work with Bloom's taxonomy</li> <li>– Regular use of tiered assignments</li> </ul>		

## Sample IPP 1 - Raina (continued) page 6/6

**Additional accommodations and strategies**

- Compact spelling instruction to create extra time for independent project work
- Work with Grade 6 learning group in math

**Planning for Transition**

- In next school year, Raina will do Grade 7 math by distance education and will continue to participate in selected problem-solving activities with her Grade 6 peers.
- During Grade 6 year, Raina and her parents will explore options for junior high placements that will best meet Raina's exceptional learning needs.

**Signatures**

I understand and agree with the information contained in this Individualized Program Plan.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parents

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
IPP Coordinator/Teacher

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Principal

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Sample IPP 2 - Holly

<b>Individualized Program Plan</b>	
<b>Student Information</b>	
<b>Student:</b> Holly S.	
<b>Date of Birth:</b> April 28, 19XX	<b>Age as of Sept. 1/200X:</b> 16 years, 4 mos.
<b>Parents:</b> John and Mabel	<b>Date IPP Created:</b> September 30, 200X
<b>Grade:</b> 11	<b>Eligibility Code:</b> 80 (gifted and talented)
<b>Background information: Classroom context</b>	
<b>School:</b> Any Senior High	
<b>IPP Coordinator and Classroom Teacher:</b> Ms. Future	
<b>Additional IPP Team Members:</b> Ms. Research (Teacher-Librarian) and Ms. Post Sec, (Counsellor) will provide support on an as-needed basis.	
<b>Background Information: Student and parent involvement</b>	
<p><i>I met with Ms. Future on September 12 and we worked out a plan for career exploration. We will meet for 30 minutes once a month (11:30 on first Tuesday of month) to discuss how I am doing with my career portfolio development. H.S.</i></p> <p><i>I shared my career portfolio (as a work in progress!) at my March learning conference. H.S.</i></p>	

## Sample IPP 2 - Holly (continued) page 2/5

<b>Strengths</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– self-motivated learner</li> <li>– enjoys working independently</li> <li>– many interests</li> <li>– adept at using technology</li> <li>– receiving appropriate challenge in core subject areas through IB program</li> </ul>		
<b>Areas for growth</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– strategies for narrowing career options in order to begin researching and choosing potential post-secondary programs</li> </ul>		
<b>Medical Conditions that Impact Schooling</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– seasonal allergies that may affect attendance</li> </ul>		
<b>Coordinated Support Services</b>		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> None required at this time		
<b>Assessment Data (Specialized Assessment Results)</b>		
<b>Date</b>	<b>Test</b>	<b>Results</b>
April 200X Any Clinic Dr. Bright	WISC-IV	– very superior range in all four subtests

Sample IPP 2 - Holly (continued) page 3/5

Current Level of Performance and Achievement		Year-end Summary	
September		June	
<p><i>Career Development</i> I feel overwhelmed with my career choices and have no idea what kind of university program I want! H.S.</p> <p><i>Academic</i> Final marks - Grade 10 I'm maintaining a 94% average.</p>		<p><i>Career Development</i> I have a much clearer idea of where I'm going in terms of a career and I've narrowed my university choices down to four. H.S.</p> <p><i>Academic</i> Final marks - Grade 11 My current term average is 94%.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What are the highlights and celebrations of this year? <i>I collected lots of information in my portfolio that I can use in my scholarship applications next fall.</i></li> <li>2. What worked well? <i>It helped to see sample portfolios that other students had done.</i></li> <li>3. What was not effective? <i>Sometimes all the library computers were booked—this was frustrating.</i></li> <li>4. What will require ongoing focus next year and what new goals should be explored next year? <i>I'd like to do a mentorship next year with someone at the university working in linguistics and/or anthropology. I think this would help me get a better picture of the type of work that is possible in these fields of study. H.S.</i></li> </ol>	
Differentiated Learning and Teaching Accommodations			
<p><b>Content</b></p> <p>Make it more</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> abstract</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> complex</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> interrelated</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> constrained</p> <p><b>Assessment</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> collaboratively developed rubric</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> student developed criteria for portfolio</p>	<p><b>Process</b></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Flexible pacing through IB program</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Selected compacting</p>	<p><b>Products</b></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> independent research project</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> _____</p>	<p><b>Environment</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Cluster grouping</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Pull-out classes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Out-of-grade placement</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Online courses</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Special projects career portfolio development</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Mentorship</p>

## Sample IPP 2 - Holly (continued) page 4/5

<b>Goal #1</b>		
<b>Long-term Goal:</b> <i>By June 30, I will demonstrate an in-depth understanding of my learning strengths, potential career choices and related post-secondary programs through a career portfolio.</i>		
<b>Short-term Objectives</b>	<b>Assessment Procedures</b>	<b>Progress Review</b>
1. <i>By November 30, I will demonstrate an understanding of my own learning strengths and interests through my personal reflections on my in-depth learning and interest inventory.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <i>completed learning inventories</i></li> <li>– <i>1:1 conference with teacher/career advisor</i></li> </ul>	<p>November 15</p> <p><i>I found lots of great sites on the Internet to build my learning inventory. I found it quite interesting and I'm surprised how much. H.S.</i></p>
2. <i>By March 30, I will identify four to six potential careers from my learning profile. I will begin to research each of these potential careers.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <i>list of four to six potential careers and reflections of how they align with my strengths, interests and passions</i></li> <li>– <i>1:1 conference with teacher/career advisor</i></li> </ul>	<p>March 30</p> <p><i>I was able to narrow my choices down to six potential careers (although three of them are hyphenated titles and combine two or three careers!). H.S.</i></p>
3. <i>By June 30, I will identify four potential post-secondary programs that could support my current career focus.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <i>list of four potential post-secondary programs and explanation of how each could support my identified career goals</i></li> <li>– <i>1:1 conference with teacher/career advisor</i></li> </ul>	<p>June 30</p> <p><i>I'm excited about the four post-secondary programs I've identified! I'll be writing to start applying for admission and scholarships next fall. H.S.</i></p>
<p><b>Final review of goal</b></p> <p>Holly's presentation of her career portfolio indicates that she has a clear vision of her potential career choices and the related training needed to support these choices. Her reflections in the portfolio demonstrate that she is able to critically reflect on her own interests and experiences, and link this to potential career choices. Her portfolio is an inspiring model for other students. Ms. Future</p>		

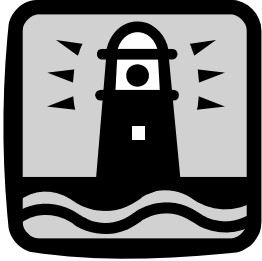
Sample IPP 2 - Holly (continued) page 5/5

<b>Planning for Transition</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Next year I have to apply for admission to university programs plus apply for scholarships. H.S.</i></li> </ul>	
<b>Year-end Summary from Teacher-advisor</b>	
<p>From our 1:1 monthly discussions this year, it is evident that the IB courses provided Holly with appropriate challenge and opportunities to pursue content in complex and interrelated ways. She has become quite skillful at developing meaningful and measurable criteria for independent projects, and she reports that this self-assessment strategy helps her create better plans and reflect more critically on her own learning.</p> <p>The whole career portfolio development process has helped her focus her planning for post-secondary. I support her request for a mentorship next year and will help her identify a potential placement for the beginning of the term.</p>	
<b>Signatures</b>	
I understand and agree with the information contained in this Individualized Program Plan.	
_____ Student	_____ Date
_____ Parents	_____ Date
_____ IPP Coordinator/Teacher-advisor	_____ Date
_____ Principal	_____ Date





## Appendices



These tools are available in PDF format at [www.education.gov.ab.ca/k\\_12/special\\_needs/resource.asp](http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/k_12/special_needs/resource.asp) and on the CD-ROM packaged with the print version of this resource.

# Planning for Students Who are Gifted

The purpose of these sample tools is to enrich the IPP process. These tools should be used selectively and can be adapted to best meet the needs of individual students. Many of these tools will be used informally as part of the IPP development process and not as products for the student's permanent school record.

- 11-A Sample Parent Perspective
- 11-B Differentiated Learning and Teaching Accommodations for Students Who are Gifted
- 11-C Sample IPP Template



Appendix 11-A

# Sample Parent Perspective

Individualized Program Planning

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

As part of your child's learning team, you can provide information for your child's individualized program planning (IPP) process. Please use the questions below as a beginning and bring these sheets to your child's IPP meeting. Thank you.

1. What do you feel are your child's strengths and exceptional gifts?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. What do you feel are the important areas of growth for your child this year? (Are there academic, social or emotional areas in which he or she needs to develop?)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Please describe skills that your child uses at home regularly (e.g., reading, making crafts, using computers, etc.).

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\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

This appendix adapted with permission from Red Deer Catholic Regional Division #39, "Individual Program Planning--Sheet for Parents" (Red Deer, Alberta).



Appendix 11-A

Sample Parent Perspective  
(continued) page 2/3

4. Does your child have any behaviours that are of concern to you or other family members? If so, please describe.

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5. What are your child's favourite activities?

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6. What are your child's special talents or hobbies?

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7. What are your major hopes for your child this year?

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Sample Parent Perspective  
(continued) page 3/3

8. What are your child's goals and dreams for the future?

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9. Is there other information that would help us gain a better understanding of your child?

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10. Are there any concerns that you would like to discuss at the next IPP meeting?

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Appendix 11-B

## Differentiated Learning and Teaching Accommodations for Students Who are Gifted

	Mathematics	Language Arts	Science	Social Studies	
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Content
					Make activities more complex (e.g., comparative studies, more variables)
					Accelerate activities from concrete to abstract, move quickly
					Modify outcomes from a higher grade level
					Extend activities beyond the regular program of studies
					Increase range and variety of topics available
					Increase quantities of information available
					Increase the variety of information available
					Use tiered assignments according to student readiness
					Investigate related themes or ideas from various disciplines
					Explore related ethical issues
					Do an in-depth study of a related self-selected topic
					Develop expanded library research skills
					Develop expanded Internet research skills

This appendix adapted with permission from the work of David Harvey, Elk Island Public Schools Regional Division No. 14 (Sherwood Park, Alberta, 2005).



## Differentiated Learning and Teaching Accommodations for Students Who are Gifted (continued) page 2/6

	Mathematics	Language Arts	Science	Social Studies	
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Process
					Use pretesting to reduce or eliminate unnecessary learning activities
					Decrease the amount of review
					Decrease the amount of repetition
					Organize mini-tutorials
					Develop a learning contract
					Compact curriculum (e.g., at class, small group or individual level)
					Use computer-based instruction (e.g., distance learning, The Learning Equation)
					Create opportunities for higher level thinking skills
					Increase time span for assignments
					Increase opportunities for primary research and data collection
					Increase opportunities for in-depth discussion
					Increase opportunities for in-depth reflection
					Increase the diversity of problem-solving opportunities
					Emphasize inquiry processes
					Use mentorship
					Create opportunities to use creativity (e.g., fluency, flexibility, originality, elaboration)
					Create simulations
					Increase opportunities for application to real-world situations
					Use more inductive thinking (e.g., working from the specific to the general)
					Use more deductive thinking (e.g., working from the general to the specific)









Appendix 11-B

Differentiated Learning and Teaching Accommodations for Students Who are Gifted (continued) page 5/6

	Mathematics	Language Arts	Science	Social Studies	
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Physical Environment
					Create interest centres that are available throughout the school day
					Increase access to computer laboratory
					Increase access to library
					Increase access to diverse materials and resources
					Share examples of excellence and exceptional achievement
					Increase access to community resources (e.g., colleges, universities, labs)
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Social and Psychological Environment
					Flexible grouping
					Partner and small group work
					Ability grouping for some tasks
					Interest grouping for some tasks
					Independent work
					Create opportunities for exchange of ideas
					Encourage intellectual risk taking
					Design self-pacing learning opportunities
					Create opportunities for self-reflection
					Offer choice
					Encourage risk taking and experimentation
					Organize self-directed learning that incorporates pursuit of interests
					Explore opportunities for leadership





Appendix 11-C

## Sample IPP Template

<b>Individualized Program Plan</b>	
<b>Student Information</b>	
<b>Student:</b>	<b>Age as of Sept. 1/200X:</b>
<b>Date of Birth:</b>	<b>Date IPP Created:</b>
<b>Parents:</b>	<b>Phone #:</b>
<b>Grade:</b>	<b>Eligibility Code:</b>
<b>Background information: Classroom context</b>	
<b>School:</b> <b>IPP Coordinator/Teacher-advisor:</b> <b>Additional IPP Team Members:</b>	
<b>Background Information: Student and parent involvement</b>	



<b>Strengths</b>		
<b>Areas for growth</b>		
<b>Medical Conditions that Impact Schooling</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> No current medical conditions that impact schooling		
<b>Coordinated Support Services</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> None required at this time		
<b>Assessment Data (Specialized Assessment Results)</b>		
<b>Date</b>	<b>Test</b>	<b>Results</b>



Appendix 11-C

Sample IPP Template  
(continued) page 3/5

<b>Current Level of Performance and Achievement</b>	<b>Year-end Summary</b>
<b>September</b>	<b>June</b>
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What are the highlights and celebrations of this year?</li> <li>2. What worked well?</li> <li>3. What was not effective?</li> <li>4. What will require ongoing focus next year?</li> <li>5. What new goals should be explored next year?</li> </ol>
<b>Differentiated Learning and Teaching Accommodations</b>	
<p><b>Content</b></p> <p>Make it more</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> abstract</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> complex</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> interrelated</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> constrained</p> <p><b>Assessment</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> collaboratively developed rubric</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> _____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p><b>Process</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Flexible pacing</p> <p>_____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Selected compacting</p> <p>_____</p>
<p><b>Products</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> _____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p><b>Environment</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Cluster grouping</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Pull-out classes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Out-of-grade placement</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Online courses</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Special projects</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Mentorship</p>



<b>Goal #</b> ___		
<b>Long-term Goal:</b>		
<b>Short-term Objectives</b>	<b>Assessment Procedures</b>	<b>Progress Review</b>
1.		
2.		
3.		
<b>Accommodations and strategies to support this goal</b>		
<b>Final review of goal</b>		



Appendix 11-C

Sample IPP Template  
(continued) page 5/5

<b>Planning for Transition</b>	
<b>Year-end Summary from IPP Coordinator/Teacher-advisor</b>	
<b>Signatures</b>	
I understand and agree with the information contained in this Individualized Program Plan.	
_____	_____
Student	Date
_____	_____
Parents	Date
_____	_____
IPP Coordinator/Teacher	Date
_____	_____
Principal	Date





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## INDEX

### A

#### accommodations and strategies

- cross-curricular matrix (template), 44
- differentiated instruction as, 2–9, 21
- differentiated instruction in IPP sample, 31
- (See also *Chapter 6: Selecting Accommodations and Strategies*)

#### areas of need and strengths

- about, 16–18

#### assessments

- assessment data in IPPs, 15
- cross-curricular matrix (template), 42–44
- in differentiated instruction, 8
- in IPP sample, 24–27, 30, 32
- self-assessment by students, 4, 16, 33, 44
- self-assessments as metacognition, 12–13
- of student progress, 20
- (See also *Chapter 5: Using Classroom Assessment to Support the IPP Process*)

#### assistive technology

- (See also *Chapter 9: Infusing Assistive Technology for Learning into the IPP Process*)

#### asynchronous development, 11

### B

#### bibliography and resources

- bibliography, 51
- resources for parents of, 18
- resources for teachers of, 1, 13

#### Bloom’s Taxonomy

- adapted for gifted students, 6–7
- questioning techniques and, 4

### C

#### career planning

- about importance of, 13–15
- alternative learning environments for, 8
- IPP sample (Grade 11 student with career portfolio), 22, 29–33

#### Centre for Gifted Education, University of Calgary, 2, 14

#### Costa, Art, on metacognition, 12

**D****differentiated instruction**

- about modifications in, 2–9
- as accommodations in IPPs, 21
- Bloom’s Taxonomy, 4, 6–7
- cross-curricular matrix for, 39–44
- enriched environments, 7–8
- in sample IPP, 31
- tiered assignments, 4–5

**G****goals and objectives**

- about, 18–20
  - in differentiated instruction, 2
  - self-determination of, 12–13
- (See also *Chapter 7: Making Goals Meaningful, Measurable and Manageable*)

**I****individualized program plans (IPPs)**

- about IPPs for gifted students, 1
  - areas of need and strengths, 16–18
  - goals and objectives, 18–20
  - IPP sample (Grade 5 student talented in science), 21, 23–28
  - IPP sample (Grade 11 student with career portfolio), 22, 29–33
  - IPP sample (template), 45–49
  - medical information, 20–21
  - performance and achievement levels, 15
  - planning for transitions, 21
  - support services, 20
  - year-end summary, 21
- (See also *Chapter 1: Working Through the IPP Process*)

**instructional strategies and curriculum**

- about programming, 1–2, 21
- Bloom’s Taxonomy, 4, 6–7
- cross-curricular matrix for, 39–44
- differentiated instruction, 2–9
- enriched learning environments, 7–8
- learning products, 5–7
- metacognition, 12–13
- tiered assignments, 4–5

**intelligence test data in IPPs, 15****J****junior and senior high students**

- planning for transition for, 15
- (See also *Chapter 12: Promising Practices for Junior and Senior High School*)

**L**

**learning difficulties, student**, 11–12

**learning environments**

types of enriched, 7–8

**learning products**

in differentiated instruction, 5–7

in sample IPP, 31

**M**

**mathematics skills**

cross-curricular matrix for, 39–44

**medical information**

about, 20–21

in IPP sample, 30

**metacognition**, 12–13

**P**

**parental involvement in IPP process**

identifying student strengths and needs, 17–18

parent perspective questions (template), 36–38

perfectionism in students and family environments, 9

resources for, 10

in sample IPP, 23, 29

(See also *Chapter 2: Encouraging Parent Involvement*)

**perfectionism**, 9–10

**performance and achievement levels**

reports in IPPs, 15

in sample IPPs, 25, 31

**planning for transitions**

career development in, 15

in IPPs, 21

in sample IPP, 28, 33

(See also *Chapter 8: Planning for Transitions*)

**program of studies**, 2

**Pyryt, Michael**

on career planning, 14–15

**R**

**Renzulli, Joseph**, 6

**S**

**science**

IPP sample (Grade 5 student with scientific investigation), 26

**social skills**

developmental issues in student, 9–12

**students**

developmental issues in, 9–12

involvement in differentiated instruction, 2–9

involvement in IPPs, 16–17, 19

metacognition in, 12–13  
self-assessment by, 4, 16, 33, 44  
typical IPPs of gifted students, 1  
(See also *Chapter 3: Supporting Student Participation*)

**support services**

in IPPs, 20  
(See also *Chapter 4: Creating a Network of Support*)

**T**

*Teaching Students Who are Gifted and Talented*, 13

tiered assignments, 4–5

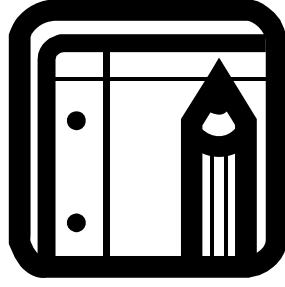
**U**

underachievement in students, 10–11

**Y**

year-end summary

in IPPs, 21, 25, 31



Developing  
New Solutions

Chapter 12

# Promising Practices for Junior and Senior High School

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Parents	
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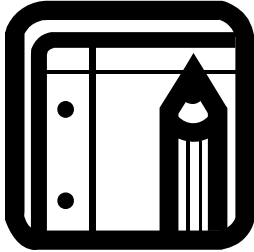
## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Staffing .....	1
Commitment to an inclusive environment .....	1
Teacher contact .....	2
Teacher advisory system .....	2
Professional development .....	3
Communication solutions .....	3
Planning for Transition .....	3
Meaningful goals .....	4
Customized assessment .....	5
Ongoing review .....	5
Student Involvement .....	6
Sample strategies for promoting self-advocacy skills .....	6
Sample IPP .....	6
Appendices .....	15
12-A Sample Target Skills for Cross-curricular Goals in Junior and Senior High .....	16
12-B Curriculum Matrix .....	18
12-C Student Accommodations for Junior/Senior High .....	19
Index .....	21



## Chapter 12

# Promising Practices for Junior and Senior High School



When students with special education needs move from elementary to junior and senior high school, there are some additional factors to consider, such as multiple teachers, larger class sizes, more complex curriculum demands, diploma exams and teachers who may have limited experience in special education as they are specialized in specific curricular areas. All of these changes can mean that the IPP processes typically used in the elementary grades may need to be adjusted. Promising practices to support the IPP process have emerged in three key areas:

- staffing
- planning for transition
- student involvement.

This chapter describes a number of sample strategies and supports in each of these areas that can make the IPP process as manageable and beneficial as possible.

## Staffing

As students move into a learning environment where instruction is provided by multiple teachers, it is important that

- all school staff are committed to creating an inclusive environment
- students and parents have opportunities to communicate with teachers
- teachers build their professional capacity and understanding of special education needs
- communication between various members of the learning team is maintained.

## Commitment to an inclusive environment

At the junior and senior high level, all school staff have an impact on all students in the school. Even though not all staff members will be directly involved in the learning team for any particular student, the entire staff must be committed to creating an inclusive learning environment that supports all students, including those with special education needs. This commitment can be strengthened through awareness activities and the sharing of best practices at staff meetings.

## Teacher contact

It is crucial that all teachers involved with a student are part of the student's learning team as much as possible. By contributing to the development of the student's IPP, all members of the team become more aware of the student's areas of need, goals and objectives. Classroom teachers are then able to use IPPs as instructional guides and contribute to the development of goals and objectives, and the selection of accommodations through their knowledge of the curriculum and grade-level programming challenges.

Many schools have a special education coordinator or resource teacher. Often, these staff complete the IPPs for a large number of individual students in the school, many of whom they will have a limited relationship with and knowledge of. In a number of junior and senior high schools, the role of the special education coordinator or resource teacher is shifting from working directly with students to working with teachers. This shift can go a long way to building capacity of school staff. In this type of model, the special education coordinator takes an advisory role, providing guidance on the development of IPPs, assessment strategies and inservices.

## Teacher advisory system

To ensure that each student with special education needs does get individualized teacher attention in the IPP process, a number of junior and senior high schools are developing teacher advisory systems. The specific way in which the system is set up can vary, but the basic premise is that the school arranges for each individual student with special education needs to be matched with a teacher-advisor. For example, each teacher could have a group of three to 10 students with special education needs that he or she meets with regularly to develop, implement and monitor IPPs. The teacher-advisor would then communicate the student's progress to the parents, other teachers and administration as needed. The teacher-advisor would also address issues regarding student need and assist in the development of self-advocacy skills.

A teacher advisory system has a number of potential benefits, including the following.

- Teachers have personalized contact with students and are able to review student programming, goals and objectives on a regular basis.
- Students have increased contact and individualized teacher attention.
- Teacher-advisors act as liaisons between the student and the special education coordinator or resource teacher.
- Parents have a clear and consistent contact point.
- Involvement of teacher-advisors builds capacity and contributes to the IPP being viewed as a working document and a useful component of programming for students.

## Professional development

As more staff are involved in educating students with special education needs, it becomes both more important and more practical to provide ongoing professional development. Building staff capacity may occur through:

- regularly designated time during staff meetings to share information related to the IPP process, assessing student needs, choosing accommodations and developing self-advocacy skills
- formal inservicing
- informal communication between staff.

## Communication solutions

Communication between learning team members is essential to the success of the IPP process. The learning team needs time to meet in order to develop the goals and objectives of the IPP, and to provide input into the essential elements covered in the IPP. Active participation by all members allows for more positive results and provides all members of the team with a feeling of responsibility regarding the progress and success of the plan.

At the same time, scheduling meetings between all members of the learning team can be challenging and is not always necessary; communication does not have to rely on meetings alone. E-mail and phone calls, as well as creative strategies such as student self-monitoring, checklists and curriculum matrices, can increase communication while making minimal time demands on team members.

## Planning for Transition

Planning for transition at the junior and senior high school level is critical for students with special education needs. At this level, the IPP process must be a comprehensive and well-coordinated plan that goes beyond one year and beyond just preparing a student for graduation. Planning for transition needs to outline what the student will be taking and doing in school, as well as a plan to prepare the student for life after senior high school. As a part of this type of planning, the learning team needs to do the following.

- Identify and plan for the programs of study and educational experiences the student will be participating in from Grade 9 to the end of senior high school.
- Develop a plan for post-school adult life based upon the student's personal goals and interests.
- Begin to identify and coordinate needed services, programs and supports before the student leaves the senior high school setting.

As students approach junior and senior high school, they need to begin exploring career path options, and identifying resources and services they will need to reach their goals. As part of planning for transition, students should be encouraged to articulate their personal goals for what they want

to do when they leave school. Some students may even know the kinds of activities, resources and services they need. This information forms part of the IPP process of planning for transition.

For more information

For more information about planning for transition in junior and senior high school, see Chapter 8: *Planning for Transitions*.

## Meaningful goals

Developing goals and objectives is one of the most important components of the IPP process at the junior and senior high school level. Students can help to define their own goals by sharing their strengths and areas of need. Classroom teachers can use their knowledge of the curriculum and high school programming challenges to assist in developing realistic goals. Parents can contribute by adding insight into their son or daughter's strengths and areas of need to the process.

In order to make goals meaningful, customization is essential. Through assessment and discussion, the team must identify what specifically the student needs to do to be a successful learner, and understand that this may be significantly different from what other students might need to do. Goals may be applicable across the whole school year, however, they should be continually evaluated and updated.

Meaningful goals at the junior and senior high school level need to focus on planning for transition. Meaningful goals:

- are student driven and, where appropriate, student evaluated
- are cross-curricular
- focus on skills and behaviours that students will need in future environments
- help students become more independent, both in the current learning environment and in future environments.

Cross-curricular and cross-environment goals contribute to making the IPP a more useful, functional and future-focused document for both students and teachers. The more environments where the goals and objectives can be utilized, the more likely they will be met successfully. Similarly, the more environments where the objectives can be addressed, the more functional the goals will be. Examples of cross-curricular and cross-environmental goals include:

- study and test-taking skills
- self-advocacy skills
- social skills and positive behaviour.

Appendices

See Appendix 12-A for a list of sample skills to target in cross-curricular goals.

One effective way of selecting and monitoring goals at the junior and senior high level is through a curriculum matrix—a table that identifies all goals and objectives in the student’s IPP, cross-referenced with the student’s classes and environments. A curriculum matrix provides a visual summary of the classes and environments where the goals and objectives are being addressed, and can act as a guide to ensure that goals and objectives are cross-curricular, cross-environmental and addressed throughout the student’s school schedule. Using a curriculum matrix can support students by focusing their attention on goals and objectives covered throughout their school day and week. It can also act as an evaluation device for students and teachers by noting the frequency the objective is addressed and the progress towards the objective.

## Appendices

*See Appendix 12-B for a sample curriculum matrix template.*

### Customized assessment

Classroom assessments can provide useful and meaningful feedback for students when they are clearly linked to goals and provide students with opportunities to reflect on their own learning. For example, a study skills checklist or class participation rubric could be developed collaboratively and completed by two or more teachers and the student. Results could then be compared and discussed, and form the basis for a new goal.

Specialized assessment at the high school level should focus on providing the information and documentation that students will need to be eligible for services and supports at post-secondary institutions. For example, a student with learning disabilities may have to provide documentation of a formal assessment from the last year in order to be eligible for services such as assistive technology.

### Ongoing review

Ongoing review of practices is a regular part of the IPP process at the elementary school level. It is important that this review continue through junior and senior high school to ensure that goals and objectives are being met or modified, that accommodations and remedial instruction are effective, and that other learning options, such as assistive technology, are considered and explored.

## Appendices

*See Appendix 12-C for a sample student accommodations checklist that teachers can use to share information across subject areas about what accommodations are required and being used for individual students.*

## Student Involvement

Many students with IPPs are involved in the process from early on in their education. As students move into junior and senior high school, it becomes increasingly important that they are actively involved in decision making. Senior high school students in particular need to establish greater independence and feel that they have control over their education. Since the IPP process is at the foundation of their education, as much as possible, they need to be the primary contributor to this process.

Ongoing and progressive involvement in the IPP process is also essential in creating the groundwork for self-advocacy skills. In senior high school and beyond, students' ability to explain and advocate for their educational needs can be crucial to their success. Students with well-developed self-advocacy skills:

- have increased confidence, independence and a greater sense of control over their education
- are able to transfer these skills into career and life environments after senior high school and therefore become more successful and independent adults.

### Sample strategies

### Sample strategies for promoting self-advocacy skills

- Continue to teach, model and provide opportunities to practise the self-advocacy skills that students began developing in elementary grades, including understanding of their strengths and areas of need, communication and collaboration skills, and problem-solving strategies. The Alberta Education resource *Make School Work for You* (2001) can further help students establish skills to become more successful learners and self-advocates.
- Encourage students, where appropriate, to monitor their own progress towards goals and objectives through personalized checklists, goal-setting sheets or curriculum matrices (see page 18).
- Provide access to peer mentors—other students with special education needs who have proven themselves to be strong self-advocates.

## Sample IPP

This chapter ends with a completed sample of an IPP that illustrates what an IPP for a senior high school student might look like. The IPP was developed by the Grade 10 student and his teacher-advisor who is also his English language arts teacher.





## Sample IPP - David (continued) page 2/7

<b>Strengths</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>works well with partners</li> <li>active participant in physical education</li> <li>contributes to class discussion</li> <li>willing to participate in after-school math tutoring, as arranged by his parents</li> </ul>		
<b>Areas of Need</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>strategies to increase reading comprehension</li> <li>strategies for proofreading and editing written work</li> <li>strategies for coping with frustration when attempting new learning tasks</li> <li>confidence to ask questions when he is unsure of directions or needs more information to enhance understanding</li> </ul>		
<b>Medical Conditions that Impact Schooling</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>appears to be sensitive to light, particularly harsh fluorescent lights</li> </ul>		
<b>Coordinated Support Services</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>none required at this time</li> </ul>		
<b>Assessment Data (Specialized Assessment Results)</b>		
<b>Date and Assessor</b>	<b>Test</b>	<b>Results</b>
January 200X Dr. Assess Any Clinic	WISC-III	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>average to above average range of intellectual ability</li> </ul>
January 200X Dr. Assess Any Clinic	WIAT-II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>significant difficulties with reading comprehension (does not read for meaning) and written expression</li> <li>working to grade level in math</li> </ul>

Sample IPP - David (continued) page 3/7

Current Level of Performance and Achievement	Year-end Summary																												
September 200X	June 200X																												
<p><i>Final term marks from Grade 9 report card</i></p> <table border="0"> <tr><td>Language Arts 9</td><td>52%</td></tr> <tr><td>Math 9</td><td>65%</td></tr> <tr><td>Social Studies 9</td><td>72%</td></tr> <tr><td>Science 9</td><td>68%</td></tr> <tr><td>Art 9</td><td>72%</td></tr> </table> <p><i>Jerry John Informal Reading Inventory</i></p> <table border="0"> <tr><td>Reading recognition (slow reading rate)</td><td>Gr. 10</td></tr> <tr><td>Reading comprehension</td><td>Gr. 8</td></tr> </table> <p><i>Writing sample</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>demonstrates many ideas and can write quite quickly</li> <li>less than 60% spelling accuracy interferes with reader's understanding</li> <li>limited command of basic grammar—tends to use run-on sentences and minimal punctuation</li> <li>illegible handwriting makes his writing difficult to read</li> </ul> <p><i>Classroom observation</i></p> <p>Teachers report that David does not ask questions in class and they are not sure when he needs more information.</p>	Language Arts 9	52%	Math 9	65%	Social Studies 9	72%	Science 9	68%	Art 9	72%	Reading recognition (slow reading rate)	Gr. 10	Reading comprehension	Gr. 8	<p><i>Final term marks from Grade 10 report card</i></p> <table border="0"> <tr><td>English Language Arts 10-1</td><td>68%</td></tr> <tr><td>Applied Mathematics 10</td><td>68%</td></tr> <tr><td>Social Studies 10</td><td>69%</td></tr> <tr><td>Science 10</td><td>73%</td></tr> <tr><td>Art 10</td><td>80%</td></tr> </table> <p><i>Jerry John Informal Reading Inventory</i></p> <table border="0"> <tr><td>Reading recognition</td><td>Gr. 10</td></tr> <tr><td>Reading comprehension</td><td>Gr. 9</td></tr> </table> <p><i>Writing sample</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>spelling is now 80%+ accurate using spell check</li> <li>fewer grammar errors evident but still tends to use run-on sentences</li> <li>legible and neatly organized using MS Word</li> </ul> <p><i>Classroom observation</i></p> <p>Teachers have noticed that David is asking more questions. Two teachers have commented that his questions are also benefiting other students who might have the same question but not be comfortable asking it.</p> <p>David is using strategies from his ELA class across the subject areas and reports he is feeling more confident and, in his own words, "less stressed" about tests and schoolwork in general.</p>	English Language Arts 10-1	68%	Applied Mathematics 10	68%	Social Studies 10	69%	Science 10	73%	Art 10	80%	Reading recognition	Gr. 10	Reading comprehension	Gr. 9
Language Arts 9	52%																												
Math 9	65%																												
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Applied Mathematics 10	68%																												
Social Studies 10	69%																												
Science 10	73%																												
Art 10	80%																												
Reading recognition	Gr. 10																												
Reading comprehension	Gr. 9																												

## Sample IPP - David (continued) page 4/7

<b>Goal #1</b>		
<b>Long-term Goal:</b> By June 30, David will identify and retell the main idea from a reading selection at a Grade 10 reading level.		
<b>Short-term Objectives</b>	<b>Assessment Procedures</b>	<b>Progress Review</b>
1. By November 30, David will search through a reading passage of less than one page at Grade 10 reading level, and will locate and retell main idea at least 4/5 times.	Read five selected passages and identify main ideas, one per day, over one week (1:1 with Mrs. Read).	November 15 <i>Achieved.</i> Can locate main idea in shorter passages of factual text; narrative text is more challenging for David. Is using highlighting and is doing this independently in both social studies and science.
2. By March 30, David will read a photocopied chapter from a course text, and will locate, highlight and retell at least 80% of main ideas for sections defined by subheadings.	Read assigned chapter, and locate main ideas and retell (1:1 with Mrs. Read).	March 15 <i>Achieved.</i> David reports that he is successfully handling reading assignments in language arts and science. Social studies text remains challenging but David is using highlighting, webbing and keywords to make notes.
3. By June 30, David will use highlighting of keywords and/or note taking to identify and record at least 80% of main ideas in Grade 10 related learning resources.	Read assigned selection and record key ideas (submit to Mrs. Read for assessment).	June 15 <i>Achieved.</i> David reports that webbing is really helping him make notes and use information from assigned reading in core subjects.
<b>Accommodations and strategies to support long-term goal</b>		
Instruction and guided practice in highlighting and identifying main ideas, and webbing and other note-taking strategies.		

Sample IPP - David (continued) page 5/7

<b>Goal #2</b>		
<b>Long-term Goal:</b> By June 30, David will improve the overall quality of his writing assignments by using technology for proofreading and editing.		
<b>Short-term Objectives</b>	<b>Assessment Procedures</b>	<b>Progress Review</b>
1. By November 30, David will increase his keyboarding skills to 20 wpm at 80% accuracy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>sample timed test</li> </ul>	November 15 <i>Achieved.</i> David worked on his tutorial and can type 20 wpm.
2. By March 30, David will use the spell check and grammar check features for all typed assignments in language arts and social studies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>student log recording he used</li> <li>spell check and grammar check features on written assignments over two pages long</li> </ul>	March 15 <i>Achieved.</i> David is using spell check feature with about 90% accuracy but often skips grammar check.
3. By June 30, David's written assignments will be legible, use correct spelling (at least 80% accuracy) and use basic correct grammar (at least 80% accuracy).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>student collected samples of at least four written assignments demonstrating that he's used keyboarding to provide legible work, and has checked and corrected spelling and grammar</li> </ul>	June 15 <i>Achieved.</i> David's longer assignments are legible and the spell check is helping. The grammar check is helping him improve his sentence structure.
<b>Accommodations and strategies to support long-term goal</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>keyboarding instruction (investigate possibility of online tutorial)</li> <li>instruction and practice in the use of spell check and grammar check features</li> </ul>		

## Sample IPP - David (continued) page 6/7

<b>Goal #3</b>		
<b>Long-term Goal:</b> By June 30, David will be a more effective self-advocate by asking at least three questions a week in class to clarify directions or increase understanding.		
<b>Short-term Objectives</b>	<b>Assessment Procedures</b>	<b>Progress Review</b>
1. By November 30, David will ask at least three questions a week privately to clarify assignment directions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>student log of number of questions asked</li> </ul>	November 15 <i>Achieved.</i> David is taking more responsibility for asking for clarification. He likes to do this privately—after class or via e-mail.
2. By March 30, David will ask at least three questions a week in a small group setting to increase his understanding of new skills or topics.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>student log of number of questions asked</li> </ul>	March 15 <i>Achieved.</i> This was challenging for David, but he took responsibility for asking at least one question per week in social studies, language arts and science. He found it most comfortable to do in small groups—especially when the group worked collaboratively to develop questions.
3. By June 30, David will continue to ask at least three questions per week in class and will also jot down at least two questions about content each evening when he reviews his notes in his four core subjects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>student log of number of questions asked</li> <li>discuss questions generated by review of class notes with teacher-advisor once a month</li> </ul>	June 15 <i>Achieved.</i> David's log shows he is reviewing his class notes effectively and formulating questions about the material helps him focus his review.
<b>Accommodations and strategies to support long-term goal</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>set up log to discuss at monthly meetings with teacher-advisor</li> <li>instruction and practice in extracting potential questions from notes</li> </ul>		

Sample IPP - David (continued) page 7/7

**Planning for Transition**

*September*

In junior high David received individualized assistance from the resource room teacher and had occasional scribe support from a teacher assistant. In high school he will receive support for ELA in a small group setting and targeted strategy instruction. He has expressed an interest in developing his keyboarding skills this year so he can complete writing assignments more independently and more efficiently.

*June*

David will be taking Applied Math 20 through summer school in order to reduce his course load in the coming school year. This will create more study time during the day and David will use this to complete reading and writing assignments in ELA and social studies.

Next year David will need to begin identifying potential career choices so he can plan for his post-secondary education.

**Additional Information**

**Signatures**

I understand and agree with the information contained in this Individualized Program Plan.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parents

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
IPP Coordinator/Teacher

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

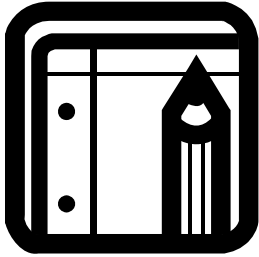
\_\_\_\_\_  
Principal

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date





## Appendices



These tools are available in PDF format at [www.education.gov.ab.ca/k\\_12/special\\_needs/resource.asp](http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/k_12/special_needs/resource.asp) and on the CD-ROM packaged with the print version of this resource.

# Promising Practices for Junior and Senior High School

The purpose of these sample tools is to enrich the IPP process. These tools should be used selectively and can be adapted to best meet the needs of individual students. Many of these tools will be used informally as part of the IPP development process and not as products for the student's permanent school record.

- 12-A Sample Target Skills for Cross-curricular Goals in Junior and Senior High
- 12-B Curriculum Matrix
- 12-C Student Accommodations for Junior/Senior High



## Sample Target Skills for Cross-curricular Goals in Junior and Senior High

### Social skills

- Handling frustration appropriately
- Responding positively to directions and requests
- Using a pleasant tone of voice
- Increasing participation in recreational activities with peers
- Initiating and maintaining conversations

### Self-advocacy

- Identifying a goal and developing an action plan
- Increasing participation in the IPP process
- Proposing alternate assignments or assessment strategies
- Requesting accommodations
- Researching new solutions

### Reading

- Choosing books at appropriate reading level
- Increasing active participation in silent reading activities
- Increasing fluency
- Increasing sight word vocabulary
- Improving reading comprehension with narratives
- Improving reading comprehension with factual information
- Demonstrating effective use of textbook features

### Writing

- Improving legibility
- Increasing quantity
- Improving planning by demonstrating effective use of planning tools (including graphic organizers)
- Demonstrating effective use of proofreading strategies
- Building editing/revision skills (including using checklists)
- Developing persuasive writing skills

### Research skills

- Generating research questions
- Identifying sources
- Recording and organizing information (including using graphic organizers)
- Developing outlines
- Sharing research findings



Appendix 12-A

## Sample Target Skills for Cross-curricular Goals in Junior and Senior High (continued) page 2/2

### Homework

- Increasing homework completion rates
- Increasing independence in completing homework
- Improving quality of completed homework

### Test-preparation and test-taking skills

- Developing study outlines
- Demonstrating effective use of study strategies
- Developing and using study plans
- Reducing test anxiety
- Using test-taking strategies to improve achievement on tests
- Increasing test completion

### In-class participation

- Increasing readiness to work (including having needed supplies and books, starting to work without prompting)
- Increasing completion of in-class assignments
- Increasing independence in completing in-class assignments
- Increasing participation in class discussion
- Increasing number of questions asked in class
- Demonstrating effective use of note-taking strategies
- Organizing binders and other learning materials
- Improving participation in learning activities with a partner
- Increasing participation in small group activities



# Curriculum Matrix

Use this matrix to link students' IPP objectives with opportunities for achieving these objectives across the curriculum areas. List specific objectives along the left axis. Use checkmarks to identify which objectives can be taught, practised and observed during the class time in each subject area or during regular school activities.

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Objectives	Subject Area						Other Environments		
	Mathematics	Science	Social Studies	Language Arts	Physical Education	Health	Library	Breaks	Lunchroom
General comments									



Appendix 12-C

## Student Accommodations for Junior/Senior High

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ IPP Coordinator: \_\_\_\_\_

Student is working toward diploma:  Yes  No

Reading Level: \_\_\_\_\_ Math Level: \_\_\_\_\_

Subject teachers: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

The following is a list of accommodations that may assist in student learning. Only those checked pertain to this student. Please feel free to add any accommodations that you have found to be helpful and to contact the IPP coordinator if you have questions or suggestions.

### A. Seating

- seat at front of class     seat at back of class     seat away from distractions  
 locate near teacher     allow student to stand rather than sit     provide alternate workspace

### B. Instructional Presentation

- adapt pace of lesson     break information into smaller steps  
 highlight key points of information     photocopy notes  
 provide examples completed by other students     provide regular review time in class  
 colour code print material     allow to learn information in smaller chunks

### C. Assignment Completion

- allow extra time     allow use of calculator  
 cover parts of worksheet     provide checklist of steps to complete activity  
 increase white space for answers     reduce amount of information/questions on the page  
 use computer to complete assignments     ensure student records information in agenda

### D. Attention Support

- reduce materials on desk     provide checklist for organizational tasks  
 provide buddy to clarify missed information     use nonverbal or verbal sign to cue student

### E. Behaviour Supports

- provide buddy to model appropriate behaviour     provide positive reinforcement  
 use agenda to communicate with other teachers     use low key approach to intervention

### F. Assessment and Evaluation Procedures

- small chunks of information or simpler concepts    Reduce writing demands through:  
 use individual criteria to evaluate tasks     use of word processor  
 use notes or textbook during tests     allowing point form to replace paragraphs  
 allow extra time on tests     use of scribe  
 send to IPP coordinator for testing

This appendix adapted with permission from the work of January Baugh, Deb Rawlings and Carrie-Anne Bauche, Medicine Hat High School (Medicine Hat, Alberta, 2005).



## INDEX

### A

#### accommodations and strategies

- to assist learning (checklist), 17–18
- in IPP sample, 10–12
- review of, 5

(See also *Chapter 6: Selecting Accommodations and Strategies*)

#### advisors, teacher, 2

#### assessments

- about classroom assessments, 5
- accommodations during (checklist), 17–18
- in IPP sample, 8–9

(See also *Chapter 5: Using Classroom Assessment to Support the IPP Process*)

#### assistive technology

- review of, 5

(See also *Chapter 9: Infusing Assistive Technology for Learning into the IPP Process*)

### C

#### curriculum

- about cross-curricular goals, 4
- cross-curricular matrix, 5, 16
- cross-curricular skills, 14–15

### G

#### gifted students

(See also *Chapter 11: Planning for Students Who are Gifted*)

#### goals and objectives

- about cross-curricular goals, 4
- cross-curricular matrix for, 5, 16
- cross-curricular skills, 14–15
- in IPP sample, 10–12

(See also *Chapter 7: Making Goals Meaningful, Measurable and Manageable*)

### I

#### individualized program plans (IPPs)

- assessment and, 5
- goals and objectives in, 4–5
- IPP sample (Grade 10 student), 7–12
- student involvement in, 1, 6
- planning for transition in, 1, 3–5

(See also *Chapter 1: Working Through the IPP Process*)

**L****learning teams**

- roles of members of, 1–3  
(See also *Chapter 4: Creating a Network of Support*)

**library and research skills**

- about cross-curricular goals, 4
- cross-curricular skills, 14

**M*****Make School Work for You***

- student resource, 6

**medical conditions**

- in IPP sample, 8

**N****needs and strengths**

- in IPP sample, 8

**P****parental involvement in IPP process**

- in IPP sample, 7
- teacher-advisor's contact with parents, 2  
(See also *Chapter 2: Encouraging Parent Involvement*)

**professional development**

- for learning team, 3

**R****reading skills**

- about cross-curricular goals, 4
- cross-curricular skills, 14–15

**reviews and revisions to IPPs**

- importance of, 5

**S****self-advocacy by students**

- about cross-curricular goals for, 4
- cross-curricular skills, 14
- strategies for, 6

**special education coordinator**

- role on learning team, 2–3

**student involvement in IPP process**

- about student involvement, 1, 6  
(See also *Chapter 3: Supporting Student Participation*)

**support services**

- role on learning team, 1–3
- support for accommodations (checklist), 18
- planning for transition for provision of, 5



**T**

**teachers**

- advisory systems, 2
- role on learning team, 1–3

**teacher assistants**

- role on learning team, 1–3
- support for accommodations (checklist), 18

**transition plans**

- importance of, 1, 3–5
- (See also *Chapter 8: Planning for Transitions*)

**W**

**writing skills**

- about cross-curricular goals, 4
- cross-curricular skills, 14



## MAIN INDEX

To find information, go to the chapter number (in **bold**) and the page number.

For example, to find the definition of **academic readiness skills**, go to **1:7** (chapter 1, page 7).

### A

#### **academic readiness skills**

- definition of, **1:7**
- classroom observations of, **5:3–5**
- GLA reports in IPPs, **1:7**
- GLA reports in IPPs (template), **1:32**

#### **accommodations, 6:1–29**

- about, **1:12–13, 6:1–3**
- about types of, **6:14–15**
- about use of, **6:5–8**
- in assessments, **6:3–5, 6:15**
- in assessments, PATS and diploma exams, **1:13, 6:4–5, 6:18–19**
- assistive technology as (*See* assistive technology for learning)
- bibliography on, **6:29**
- differentiated instruction, **6:8–10**
- differentiated instruction for gifted students, **11:2–9**
- differentiated instruction planning guide (checklist), **6:24–27**
- environmental (classroom), **6:1–2, 6:14**
- environmental (classroom) in junior/senior high schools, **12:17–18**
- for gifted students, **11:2–8, 11:21** (*See also* gifted students)
- for junior/senior high students, **12:5**
- for junior/senior high students (checklist), **12:17–18**
- instructional, **6:3, 6:14–17**
- IPP component checklist (template), **1:35–37**
- IPP planning process, in third step, **1:18**
- IPP planning sheet (template), **1:38–42**
- IPP sample, **1:13, 1:24–26**
- IPP sample (template), **1:33**
- IPP storyboard planner to link goals to, **7:16**
- IPP storyboard planner to link goals to (template), **7:24**
- IPP summary of, **6:21**
- modified programming as, **6:12**
- needs and strengths and, **6:6**
- parent involvement in decision making, **6:7**
- parent questions about (handout), **6:20**
- parental consent for, **1:16**
- planning for transition and, **8:3**
- readers and scribes (tipsheet), **6:18**
- review of student use of, **6:8**
- review of student use of (template), **6:21**

## MAIN INDEX—continued

- in *Standards for Special Education*, **1:4**
  - student inventory of (template), **6:22–23**
  - student involvement in, **6:5, 6:7**
  - student self-advocacy for (handout), **3:23**
  - in year-end summaries, **1:15**
- achievement levels.** *See* performance and achievement levels
- adapted instruction**, **6:8–9**
  - See also* instructional strategies
- Adaptive Behavior Assessment System (ABAS)**, **5:29**
- Adaptive Behavior Scale—School Edition (ABS–S2)**, **5:29**
- adaptive behaviours**
  - assessment instruments for, **5:29**
  - See also* foundational skills
- administrators, school.** *See* school administrators
- advisory system, teacher**
  - for junior/senior high students, **12:2**
- advocacy by students.** *See* self-advocacy by students
- Alberta Consortium for Rehabilitative and Assistive Technology**, **9:24**
- Alliance for Technology Access (ATA)**, **9:26**
- Alphakids Reading Assessment Kit (K–2)**, **5:23**
- annual goals.** *See* goals and objectives
- areas of need and strengths**
  - about, **1:8–9**
  - accommodations related to, **6:6**
  - ATL tools to support, **9:16**
  - ECS students, **10:8–10** (*See also* early childhood services)
  - gifted students, **11:16–18** (*See also* gifted students)
  - goals and objectives related to, **7:3**
  - IPP component checklist (template), **1:35–37**
  - IPP planning process, as first step, **1:17**
  - IPP planning sheet (template), **1:38–42**
  - IPP sample, **1:9, 1:22**
  - IPP sample (template), **1:31**
  - parent goal setting related to (template), **2:15–18**
  - parental involvement strategies, **2:1–2**
  - planning for transition and, **8:3**
  - in *Standards for Special Education*, **1:4**
  - student identification of, **3:3–4**
  - student inventories and strategies (templates), **3:12–17**
- assessments**, **5:1–31**
  - about, **1:5–6, 5:1–3**
  - about performance and achievement levels, **1:6–7**
  - about procedures for, **1:10–11, 5:3–5**
  - accommodations for, **6:3–5, 6:15**
  - accommodations for junior/senior high students (checklist), **12:17–18**

MAIN INDEX—*continued*

- accommodations in PATS and diploma exams, **1:13, 6:4–5, 6:18–19**
- accommodations using readers and scribes, (tipsheet), **6:18**
- anecdotal records, **5:5**
- bibliography on, **5:31**
- checklists and rating scales, **5:5**
- in differentiated instruction (checklist), **6:24–25**
- of early childhood students (*See* early childhood services, assessments)
- ecological assessments, **5:4**
- event and duration recordings, **5:5**
- of finished products, **7:9–10, 9:13, 11:5–7**
- frequency of, **5:2**
- of gifted students (*See* gifted students)
- GLA reports in, **1:6–7, 5:3**
- GLA reports in (template), **1:32**
- goal statements and, **1:10** (*See also* goals and objectives)
- IPP component checklist (template), **1:35–37**
- IPP planning process, as first step, **1:17**
- IPP planning sheet (template), **1:38–42**
- IPP sample, **1:5–8, 1:11, 1:22, 1:23**
- IPP sample (template), **1:31, 1:32**
- IPP storyboard planner to link goals to, **7:16**
- IPP storyboard planner to link goals to (template), **7:24**
- mathematics skills (*See* mathematics skills)
- measurements of speed, accuracy, spontaneity, duration, **7:11–13**
- needs and strengths, **1:8–9, 1:17**
- observations of students (*See* classroom observations)
- parental consent for (*See* parent consent, informed)
- planning for transition for junior/senior high students, **12:5**
- reading skills (*See* reading skills)
- resources for, **5:23, 5:26–30**
- spelling skills (*See* spelling skills)
- in *Standards for Special Education*, **1:4, 1:6**
- student self-advocacy for (handout), **3:23**
- teacher-developed assessments, **5:6**
- writing skills (*See* writing skills)
- assistive technology for learning (ATL), 9:1–54**
  - about, **9:1–4**
  - about ATL tools (list), **9:8–11**
  - communication skills tools (list), **9:10**
  - computers (*See* computers)
  - in differentiated instruction (checklist), **6:26**
  - evaluation by parents (questionnaire), **9:30–32**
  - evaluation of ATL, **9:11–13**
  - evaluation of trial uses (templates), **9:41–45**
  - how to choose, **9:4–14**

## MAIN INDEX—*continued*

- IPP sample with ATL, **1:12–13, 9:19–23**
- monitoring use of, **9:15**
- organizational skills tools (list), **9:9**
- parental involvement in IPP process, **9:4**
- parental questions about ATL (questionnaire), **9:30–32**
- parental report on use (questionnaire), **9:47–48**
- planning process as third step, **9:16–18**
- planning for implementation, **9:14–15**
- planning for student/environment/tasks (worksheet), **9:5–8, 9:16, 9:33–35**
- planning for transition (checklist), **9:50–51**
- planning for use of ATL (checklist), **9:36**
- printing and handwriting skills (inventory), **9:37–38**
- student involvement in decision making, **9:4**
- student report on (template), **9:40**
- student report on trial technology (questionnaire), **9:45**
- student report on uses of (questionnaire), **9:46**
- student self-advocacy (handout), **3:23**
- student training to use, **9:15**
- support services for, **9:5, 9:15**
- technical maintenance records (questionnaire), **9:49**
- toolkits with trial samples, **9:12–13**
- Web sites and resources, **9:24–28, 9:53–54**
- Assistive Technology Training Online, 9:26**
- Assistive Technology Strategies, Tools, Accommodations and Resources (ATSTAR) Program, 9:26**
- ATL.** *See* assistive technology for learning
- attention difficulties**
  - accommodations for (checklist), **6:17**
- audio recordings**
  - as accommodations, **6:2, 6:19**
- Augmentative Communication and Educational Technology Service (ACETS), 9:25**
  
- B**
- Behaviour Assessment for Children (BASC)**
  - in IPP sample, **1:5, 1:22**
- bibliographies.** *See* resources for learning teams
- Bloom’s Taxonomy**
  - adapted for gifted students, **11:6–7**
  - questioning techniques and, **11:4**
- Bracken Basic Concept Scale, 5:30**
- Brigance System, 5:26**
- Burns/Roe Informal Reading Inventory, 5:8–9**

MAIN INDEX—*continued*

## C

**California State University at Northridge, Center on Disabilities, 9:26****career planning**for gifted students, **11:13–15**IPP sample (Grade 11 gifted student), **11:22, 11:29–33**transition plans for post-secondary (checklist), **8:19–20**transition plans with ATL (checklist), **9:50–51****Center for Applied Special Technology, 9:26****Centre for Gifted Education, University of Calgary**Web site, **11:2****classroom environment**accommodations in, **6:2, 6:14**accommodations in junior/senior high schools, **12:17–18**ATL decision making framework, **9:5–8, 9:16**ATL planning (template), **9:33–35**learning environments for gifted students, **11:7–8**student inventory of successful strategies (template), **6:22–23****classroom information in IPPs**IPP component checklist (template), **1:35**IPP sample, **1:21**IPP sample (template), **1:30****classroom observations**about strategies for, **5:3–5, 7:10–11**ECS observational assessments, **10:9–10**ECS observational assessments (template), **10:72**for ATL evaluations, **9:13**reading skills observation guide (template), **5:17***See also* assessments**Clinical Evaluation of Language Function (CELF), 5:30****Closing the Gap**ATL resource directory, **9:26****communication skills**ATL tools (list), **9:10**classroom observations of, **5:3–5**ECS area of focus (organizer), **10:13**ECS behaviour statements (chart), **10:17**ECS transition plans for preschool to Kindergarten (checklist), **8:16****community members**role on learning team, **4:4, 4:7** (*See also* learning teams)**community service providers for ECS students**about IPP roles and responsibilities, **10:6**IPP planning meetings with, **10:12–13**IPP planning meetings with (template), **10:73****components in IPPs, 1:4***See also* individualized program plans *and* specific elements

MAIN INDEX—*continued***Comprehensive Assessment of Spoken Language, 5:30****computers**

- about use as ATL, **9:2–3**
- accessibility features on operating systems, **9:8–9**
- planning for use of (checklist), **9:36**
- student computer skills (checklist), **9:37–38**
- student use of laptops, **9:14**
- technical maintenance records (questionnaire), **9:49**
- See also* assistive technology for learning

**conflict management**

- about strategies for, **2:7–8**
- solution-focused meetings (template), **2:21–22**

**consent by parents.** *See* parent consent, informed

**coordinated support services.** *See* support services

**Costa, Art**

- on metacognition, **11:12**

**Council for Exceptional Children, Technology and Media Division,**  
**9:28**

**counsellors.** *See* support services

**cross-curricular goals.** *See* goals and objectives

**D**

**daycare services.** *See* community service providers

**Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA K–3), 5:23–24**

**differentiated instruction**

- about planning for, **6:8–10**
- for gifted students, **11:2–9**
- planning guide (checklist), **6:24–27**

*See also* instructional strategies

**diploma examinations**

- accommodations during, **1:13, 6:4–5**
- approved accommodations for (handout), **6:19**

**directions and instructions**

- in differentiated instruction, **6:25**
- student inventory of successful strategies (template), **6:23**

**E****early childhood services, 10:1–78**

- about, **10:1–3**
- assessments (*See* early childhood services, assessments)
- bibliography on, **10:77–78**
- goals and objectives, **10:14–16, 10:27**
- goals and objectives, behaviour statements (chart), **10:17–18**
- instruction, types of, **10:2–3, 10:19**
- instruction and therapy integration, **10:20**



MAIN INDEX—*continued*

- instructional matrices, **10:21–23**
- instructional matrix (template), **10:74**
- IPP essential information, **10:7**
- IPP essential information (checklist), **10:69–71**
- IPP form (template), **10:64–68**
- IPP implementation guidelines, **10:19–24**
- IPP samples (*See* early childhood services, sample IPPs)
- learning team for, **10:1, 10:3–6, 10:11–13** (*See also* learning teams)
- needs and strengths, **10:8–10**
- parental involvement, **10:3–5, 10:11–13**
- planning for transition, **8:6, 10:27–28**
- planning for transition (checklists), **8:16, 10:76**
- program specialists roles, **10:6, 10:23–24**
- reviewing, revising and reporting, **10:24–28**
- See also* support services
- early childhood services, assessments**
  - about, **10:3**
  - concepts about print (CAP) assessment, **5:6**
  - data collection forms, **10:24–27**
  - group monitoring chart, **10:25–26**
  - group monitoring (template), **10:75**
  - in needs and strengths, **10:8**
  - observational assessments, **10:9–10**
  - observational assessment (template), **10:72**
  - resources for, **5:23–31**
- early childhood services, sample IPPs**
  - 4-year-old with cerebral palsy and hearing loss (Trey), **10:29–30, 10:53–61**
  - 4-year-old with severe behavioural needs and language delays (Caitlin), **10:28, 10:38–44**
  - Kindergarten student with autism spectrum disorders (Karen), **10:29, 10:45–52**
  - Kindergarten student with developmental and language delays (Ani), **10:28, 10:31–37**
- Edyburn, Dave**
  - ATL Web site, **9:27**
- elements in IPPs, 1:4**
  - See also* individualized program plans *and* specific elements.
- environment, classroom.** *See* classroom environment
- extracurricular activities**
  - in transition plans for post-secondary students (checklist), **8:20**
  - See also* needs and strengths

## MAIN INDEX—*continued*

### F

**family involvement.** *See* parental involvement in IPP process

**foundational skills**

definition of, **1:7**

GLA reports on, **1:7**

GLA reports on (template), **1:32**

*See also* social skills

***Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP)***

application to IPPs, **1:20**

### G

**Georgia Project on Assistive Technology, 9:26**

**gifted students, 11:1–49**

about IPPs for, **11:1–2**

areas of need and strengths of, **11:16–18** (*See also* areas of need and strengths)

assessment of, **11:8, 11:15, 11:25**

Bloom’s Taxonomy, adapted for, **11:4, 11:6–7**

career planning for, **11:13–15**

cross-curricular accommodations (matrix), **11:39–44**

developmental issues in, **11:9–12**

differentiated instruction for, **11:2–9, 11:21**

goals and objectives for, **11:18–25**

IPP process, comparison with IPPs for other students, **11:1**

IPP requirement in *School Act*, **11:1**

IPP sample (Grade 5 student talented in science), **11:21, 11:23–28**

IPP sample (Grade 11 student with career portfolio), **11:22, 11:29–33**

IPP sample (template), **11:45–49**

learning environments for, **11:7–8**

learning products from, **11:5–7**

medical information on, **11:20–21**

metacognition planning and, **11:12–13**

parent perspective (sample), **11:36–38** (*See also* parental involvement in IPP process)

parent resources, **2:9, 11:18**

parent view of strengths and needs, **11:17–18**

perfectionism in, **11:9–10**

performance and achievement levels of, **11:15**

planning for transition, **11:21**

program of studies and, **11:2**

resources for teachers of, **11:1, 11:13, 11:18, 11:49**

student involvement in IPPs, **11:16–20** (*See also* student involvement in IPP process)

student involvement in IPPs (sample), **11:30–32**

support services, **11:20**

underachievement in, **11:10–11**

## MAIN INDEX—continued

**GLAs.** *See* Grade Level of Achievement scores (GLAs)

**Glenrose Hospital, Edmonton, 9:25**

**goals and objectives, 7:1–27**

about, **1:10, 7:1–2, 7:5–8**

action/context/terms planning (ACT-How?), **7:4, 7:15**

action/context/terms planning (ACT-How?) (template), **7:23**

area of focus, **7:6–7**

assessment procedures and goal statements, **1:10**

ATL tools in, **9:16–18**

curriculum matrix for, **12:5**

curriculum matrix for junior/senior high students (template), **12:16**

ECS behaviour statements (chart), **10:17–18**

ECS goals and objectives, **10:14–16**

ECS instructional matrices, **10:21–23**

ECS instructional matrix (template), **10:74**

ECS planning meetings for, **10:12–13, 10:73**

family goal setting (template), **2:15–18**

finished products, **7:9–10, 9:13**

finished products from gifted students, **11:5–7**

for junior/senior high students, **12:4–5, 12:14–15**

four-square organizer, **7:13–14**

four-square organizer (template), **7:21–22**

IPP component checklist (template), **1:35–37**

IPP planning process, as second and third steps, **1:17–18**

IPP planning sheet (template), **1:38–42**

IPP sample, **1:10, 1:24–26**

IPP sample (template), **1:33**

IPP storyboard planner to link performance to, **7:16**

IPP storyboard planner to link performance to (template), **7:24**

manageable for learning team, **7:8–13**

manageable/meaningful/measurable (3-M), **7:17**

manageable/meaningful/measurable (3-M) (template), **7:25**

meaningful to learning team, **7:2–3**

measurable elements in, **7:3–8**

parental involvement strategies, **2:1–3** (*See also* parental involvement in IPP process)

planning for transition and, **8:3, 12:4**

review of, **7:7–8**

SMART characteristics of, **7:1**

in *Standards for Special Education*, **1:4**

student identification of, **3:4–6**

student participation strategies, **3:19–20**

timelines, **7:7**

writing tips for, **7:5–6, 7:20–22**

in year-end summaries, **1:15**

## MAIN INDEX—*continued*

### Grade Level of Achievement scores (GLAs)

- reports in IPPs, **1:6–7, 5:3**
- reports in IPPs (template), **1:32**
- See also* assessments

### Gray Oral Reading Test—Diagnostic, **5:26**

## H

### *A Handbook for Aboriginal Parents of Children with Special Needs*, **2:9**

#### handwriting and printing skills

- ATL tools (list), **9:9**
- printing and handwriting (inventory), **9:37–38**
- See also* writing skills

#### health of students. *See* medical information

#### health-related professionals

- role on learning team, **1:3, 4:3–4**

#### hearing disabilities

- ATL tools (list), **9:10**
- ECS sample IPP (4-year-old with cerebral palsy and hearing loss), **10:29–30**
- See also* accommodations

#### hobbies, student

- in IPP needs and strengths, **1:8–9**
- See also* needs and strengths

#### homework. *See* study skills

## I

### I Can Assistive Technology Centre, Glenrose Hospital, Edmonton, **9:25**

### Illinois Test of Psycholinguistic Abilities (ITPA–3), **5:30**

#### individualized program plans (IPPs)

- about, **1:1–3**
- about required elements, **1:4–17**
- about steps in IPP planning process, **1:17–19**
- accommodations, **1:12–13** (*See also* accommodations)
- application of FOIP to, **1:20**
- assessments, **1:5–6, 1:10–11** (*See also* assessments)
- assistive technology in (*See* assistive technology for learning)
- bibliography on, **1:43** (*See also* resources for learning teams)
- essential elements, **1:4–17**
- for early childhood students (*See* early childhood services)
- for gifted students (*See* gifted students)
- for junior/senior high school students (*See* junior and senior high students)
- goals and objectives, **1:10** (*See also* goals and objectives)
- IPP samples, **1:21–27, 9:19–23, 11:23–28, 11:29–33**
- IPP sample (template), **1:30–34**

## MAIN INDEX—continued

- learning strategies, **1:12–13** (*See also* instructional strategies)
- medical information, **1:12** (*See also* medical information)
- needs and strengths (*See* needs and strengths)
- parental consent, **1:16–17** (*See also* parent consent, informed)
- performance and achievement levels, **1:6–7** (*See also* assessments; performance and achievement levels)
- planning process for, **1:17–19, 1:38–42** (*See also* individualized program plans, planning process)
- progress review, **1:14** (*See also* reviews and revisions to IPPs)
- in *Standards for Special Education*, **1:4**, (*See also* *Standards for Special Education*)
- student participation in, **1:1–2** (*See also* student involvement in IPP process)
- support services, **1:11** (*See also* support services)
- transition plans, **1:13–14** (*See also* transition plans)
- year-end summary, **1:15** (*See also* year-end summary)
- instructional resources.** *See* resources for learning teams
- instructional strategies**
  - accommodations in, **6:3, 6:14–17** (*See also* accommodations)
  - adapted instruction, **6:8–9**
  - cognitive strategies, **6:11–12**
  - differentiated instruction, **6:8–10**
  - differentiated instruction for gifted students, **11:2–9**
  - directions and instructions (*See* directions and instructions)
  - ECS instructional matrices, **10:21–23**
  - ECS instructional matrix (template), **10:74**
  - ECS integration of instruction and therapies, **10:20**
  - ECS types of instruction, **10:19**
  - for gifted students (*See* gifted students)
  - goals and objectives related to, **7:2** (*See also* goals and objectives)
  - modified programming, **6:12**
  - student inventory of successful strategies, **6:9**
- intelligence test data in IPPs**
  - on gifted students, **11:15**
  - reports in IPPs, **1:5–6**
- interests, student**
  - in needs and strengths, **1:8–9**
  - See also* needs and strengths
- interviewing students**
  - for assessment of goals and objectives, **7:11**
  - for evaluation of ATL, **9:13**
  - to survey reading attitudes (template), **5:14**
- IPP.** *See* individualized program plans (IPPs)
- IPSE programs (inclusive post-secondary education)**
  - planning for transition for, **8:9–10**

MAIN INDEX—*continued*

## J

*Jerry L. Johns Reading Inventory*, 5:8–9

*The Journey: A handbook for parents of children who are gifted and talented*, 2:9

**junior and senior high students**, 12:1–18

accommodations for, 12:5

accommodations for (checklist), 12:17–18

assessment and, 12:5

career planning (*See* career planning)

cross-curricular goals, 12:4, 12:14–16

gifted students (*See* gifted students)

goals and objectives for, 12:4–5

IPP sample (Grade 11 gifted student), 11:22, 11:29–33

IPP sample (Grade 10 student), 12:7–12

student involvement in IPP process, 12:6 (*See also* student involvement in IPP process)

student self-advocacy, junior high school (template), 3:18 (*See also* self-advocacy by students)

teacher advisory system, 12:2

teacher roles, 12:1–3

transition plans, 12:1–5

transition plans for junior high entrance, 8:6–7

transition plans for junior high entrance (checklist), 8:14

transition plans for parents of (checklist), 8:24–25

transition plans for senior high entrance, 8:7–8

transition plans for senior high entrance (checklist), 8:14

transition plans for senior high entrance (inventory), 8:18–23

## K

**K-W-L+ on student needs**, 3:12

**Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement (K-TEA/NU)**, 5:27

**KeyMath-Revised: A Diagnostic Inventory of Essential Mathematics**, 5:26

## L

**language arts**

assessment instruments, 5:12, 5:23–28, 5:30

cross-curricular accommodations for gifted students (matrix), 11:39–44

cross-curricular matrix for junior/senior high students (template), 12:16

ECS group monitoring chart, 10:25–26

ECS group monitoring chart (template), 10:75

*See also* reading skills; spelling skills; writing skills

**LD Online**

learning disabilities resources, 9:27

**learning resources.** *See* resources for learning teams

## MAIN INDEX—continued

**learning strategies.** *See* instructional strategies

*The Learning Team: A handbook for children with special needs*, 2:8

**learning teams**

about role of, 1:1–3, 4:1–5

ATL decision making by, 9:4–5

collaboration strategies, 4:10–11

collaboration in junior/senior high schools, 12:3

ECS teams, 10:1–6

ECS team meetings, 10:11–13

ECS team meetings (template), 10:73

IPP planning process for, 1:17–19

IPP planning sheet (template), 1:38–42

IPP sample, 1:21

IPP sample (template), 1:30

meetings of (*See* meetings of learning team)

professional development for, 1:3, 4:7, 12:3

resources for (*See* resources for learning teams)

in *Standards for Special Education*, 1:3

**level of performance.** *See* performance and achievement levels

**library and research skills for junior/senior high students**

cross-curricular goals, 12:4, 12:14–16

**life skills**

definition of, 1:7

GLA reports in IPPs (template), 1:7, 1:32

parent questionnaire for planning for transition (template), 8:24–25

**M*****Make School Work for You***

student self-advocacy resource, 12:6

**MAPS**, 2:3, 2:14**Materials Resource Unit, Learning Resource Centre**

ATL for students with visual impairments, 9:24

**mathematics skills**

assessment of, 5:11

assessment resources, 5:26–28

ATL for (student example), 9:4

ATL tools (list), 9:9

cross-curricular accommodations for gifted students (matrix), 11:39–44

cross-curricular matrix for junior/senior high students (template), 12:16

student progress report (template), 3:20

**measurable goals and objectives.** *See* goals and objectives

**medical information**

about, 1:12

on gifted students, 11:20–21

IPP component checklist (template), 1:35–37

## MAIN INDEX—continued

- IPP planning sheet (template), **1:38–42**
- IPP sample, **1:12, 1:22**
- IPP sample (template), **1:31**
- in *Standards for Special Education*, **1:4**
- meetings of learning team**
  - about, **2:5–8**
  - ECS planning meeting form (organizer), **10:12–13**
  - ECS planning meeting recording form (template), **10:73**
  - facilitation strategies, **4:5–7, 4:10–11**
  - parent survey (template), **2:12**
  - parent tipsheet (handout), **2:19–20**
  - parents MAPS questions (handout), **2:14**
  - solution-focused meetings (template), **2:21–22**
  - student meeting guide (checklist), **3:22**
  - student social skills for, **3:7–8**
  - student tips on SHARE strategy (handout), **3:21**
  - See also* learning teams
- memory difficulties**
  - accommodations for, sample IPPs (checklist), **6:7**
  - accommodations for (checklist), **6:17**
- mentors, 4:4**
- metacognition strategies**
  - for gifted students, **11:12–13**
- middle school students.** *See* junior and senior high students
- modified programming, 6:12**
- motor skills**
  - accommodations for difficulties (checklist), **6:16**
  - classroom observations of, **5:3–5**
  - ECS area of focus (organizer), **10:12**
  - ECS behaviour statements on (chart), **10:17**
  - ECS group monitoring chart, **10:25–26**
  - ECS group monitoring chart (template), **10:75**

## N

- National Assistive Technology Research Institute, 9:27**
- nonacademic accomplishments, student**
  - in areas of need and strengths, **1:8–9**
  - See also* areas of need and strengths

## O

- objectives.** *See* goals and objectives
- observations, classroom.** *See* classroom observations
- occupational therapists.** *See* support services
- Oral and Written Language Scales (OWLS), 5:30**
- Oregon Technology Access Program, 9:27**



MAIN INDEX—*continued***organizational skills**

- ATL tools (list), **9:9**
- See also* study skills

**P****parental involvement in IPP process**

- about, **2:1–5, 4:3**
- about strategies for, **2:5–8**
- accommodation decision making, **6:7**
- accommodation questions from parents (handout), **6:20**
- assessment results shared with parents, **5:12**
- ATL decision making and parents, **9:4**
- ATL questions from parents (questionnaire), **9:30–32**
- ATL report from parents (questionnaire), **9:47–48**
- bibliography on, **2:23–24**
- conflict management, **2:7–8**
- consent by parents (*See* parent consent, informed)
- ECS parents in planning meetings, **10:11–13**
- ECS parents on learning team, **10:3–5**
- family goal setting (template), **2:15–18**
- gifted student's parent resources, **2:9, 11:18**
- gifted student's parental perspective (template), **11:36–38**
- gifted student's parental view of strengths and needs, **11:17–18**
- goals and objectives in meaningful terms for, **7:2**
- IPP component checklist (template), **1:35–37**
- IPP planning sheet (template), **1:38–42**
- IPP planning tips (handout), **2:19–20**
- IPP sample, **1:21**
- IPP sample (for Grade 10 student), **12:7**
- IPP sample (template), **1:30**
- parent-teacher meetings (*See* meetings of learning team)
- planning for transition, **8:10–11**
- planning for transition, parent questionnaire for (template), **8:24–25**
- planning for transition for teens, tips for parents (handout), **8:26**
- sample parent survey (template), **2:12**
- self-advocacy by students, tipsheet for parents, **3:26**
- solution-focused meetings (template), **2:21–22**
- in *Standards for Special Education*, **1:16**
- student progress report (template), **3:20**
- teacher advisory system for junior/senior high, **12:2**
- See also* resources for learning teams
- The Parent Advantage: Helping children become more successful learners*, 2:9**
- parent consent, informed**
  - about, **1:16, 2:1**

## MAIN INDEX—*continued*

- for assessments, **2:2**
- for assessments, consent form (template), **2:13**
- for support services, **1:11**
- IPP sample, **1:16, 1:27**
- IPP sample (template), **1:34**
- in *Standards for Special Education*, **1:4, 1:13, 1:16**
- PATs.** *See* provincial achievement tests
- perfectionism**
  - in gifted students, **11:9–10**
- performance and achievement levels**
  - about, **1:6–7**
  - of gifted students, **11:15**
  - GLA reports on, **1:6–7, 5:3**
  - GLA reports on (template), **1:32**
  - IPP component checklist (template), **1:35–37**
  - IPP sample, **1:7–8, 1:23**
  - IPP storyboard planner to link goals to, **7:16**
  - IPP storyboard planner to link goals to (template), **7:24**
  - in *Standards for Special Education*, **1:4, 1:6**
  - See also* assessments
  - transition plans for entrance (questionnaire), **8:17**
- personal advocacy.** *See* self-advocacy by students
- physical therapists.** *See* support services
- PM Benchmark Kits 1 & 2 (K–3), 5:24–25**
- post-secondary students**
  - planning for transition for, **8:8–10**
  - planning for transition to post-secondary (inventory), **8:18–23**
- Preschool Language Scale (PLS–4), 5:30**
- principals.** *See* school administrators
- printing and handwriting skills**
  - ATL tools (list), **9:9**
  - printing and handwriting (inventory), **9:37–38**
  - See also* writing skills
- professional development**
  - for IPP planning team, **1:3, 4:7**
  - for teachers in junior and senior high schools, **12:3**
- program specialists.** *See* support services
- provincial achievement tests (PATs)**
  - accommodations during, **1:13, 6:4**
  - approved accommodations for (handout), **6:19**
- Pyryt, Michael**
  - on career planning for gifted students, **11:14–15**

MAIN INDEX—*continued*

## Q

**Qualitative Reading Inventory (QRI)**, 5:8–9**Quality Indicators for Assistive Technology**, 9:27

## R

**reading skills**

about assessment of, 5:6–9

about assessment resources, 5:23–28, 5:30

accommodations for difficulties (checklist), 6:16

accommodations using readers (tipsheet), 6:18

ATL for, 9:3, 9:16–18

ATL tools (list), 9:8

cross-curricular goals for junior/senior high students, 12:4, 12:14–15

observation guide (template), 5:17

reading attitudes interview (template), 5:6–7, 5:14

reading strategies survey (template), 5:7, 5:15–16

student progress report (template), 3:20

**Regional Educational Consulting Services (RECS) Teams**

multidisciplinary support team, 9:24–25

**Renzulli, Joseph**, 11:6**research skills.** *See* library and research skills**Resources for Assistive Technology in Education, Joy Zabala's**, 9:27**resources for learning teams**

on accommodations and strategies, 6:29

on assessments, 5:23–31

on ATL resources and Web sites, 9:24–28, 9:53–54

on early childhood services, 10:77–78

for parents, 2:8–9

for students, 12:6

on gifted students, 11:1, 11:13, 11:18, 11:49

on goals and objectives, 7:27

on IPPs, 1:43

on parental involvement, 2:23

on planning for transition, 8:27–28

on student participation, 3:27

on support networks, 4:13

**reviews and revisions to IPPs**

about progress reviews, 1:14–15

accommodations reviews, 6:8, 6:21

ATL effectiveness, 9:17

ECS process for, 10:24–28

IPP planning, fifth step, 1:19

IPP sample progress review, 1:15

of junior/senior high student IPPs, 12:5

## MAIN INDEX—continued

parental involvement in, **2:3–4** (*See also* parental involvement in IPP process)  
 parental involvement tipsheet (handout), **2:19–20**  
 in *Standards for Special Education*, **1:4**  
 student progress report (template), **3:20**

### S

**Scales of Independent Behaviour (SIB–R)**, **5:29**

**Schonnell Spelling Test**, **5:10**

**School Act**

requirement for IPPs, **1:3**

**school administrators**

about a shared vision of IPPs, **1:1–3**

conflict management strategies for, **2:7–8**

ECS roles and responsibilities, **10:6**, **10:23**

planning for transition by, **8:11**

professional development for learning teams, **1:3**, **4:7**, **12:3**

roles and responsibilities, **4:1–2**, **4:4**

**School Function Assessment (SFA)**, **5:29**

**school staff**

roles on learning team, **4:3**, **12:1**

**science**

cross-curricular accommodations for gifted students (matrix), **11:39–44**

cross-curricular matrix for junior/senior high students (template), **12:16**

IPP sample (Grade 5 student gifted in science), **11:21**

**scribes**, **6:18**

**self-advocacy by students**

about, **3:5**, **3:7–10**

as cross-curricular goal for junior/senior high students, **12:4**, **12:14–15**

in goals as area of focus, **7:6–7**

planning for transition for ATL (checklist), **9:50–51**

student self-evaluation (checklist), **3:18**

tipsheet for parents on (handout), **3:26**

tipsheets for students on (handouts), **3:23–26**

**self-help behaviours in ECS students**

as area of focus, **10:13**

behaviour statements on, **10:17–18**

group monitoring chart, **10:25–26**

group monitoring chart (template), **10:75**

transition plans for preschool to Kindergarten (checklist), **8:16**

**senior high students.** *See* junior and senior high students

**service providers.** *See* community service providers

**SET-BC**, **9:27**

## MAIN INDEX—continued

**SETT (student/environment/task/tools) Framework (Zabala)**

- for ATL decision making, **9:5–8, 9:16**
- for ATL decision making (template), **9:33–35**
- Web site for resources on, **9:27**

**SHARE strategy for social skills, 3:8, 3:21****SMART**

- characteristics of goals and objectives, **7:1**

**social skills**

- assessment of, **5:11–12**
- assessment of foundational skills, **5:29**
- classroom observations of, **5:3–5**
- cross-curricular goals for junior/senior high students, **12:4, 12:14–15**
- ECS area of focus (organizer), **10:13**
- ECS behaviour statements, **10:17–18**
- ECS group monitoring chart, **10:25–26**
- ECS group monitoring chart (template), **10:75**
- ECS transition plans for preschool to Kindergarten (checklist), **8:16**
- gifted students developmental issues, **11:9–12**
- GLA reports on, **1:7**
- GLA reports on (template), **1:32**
- goals and objectives in, **7:6–7** (*See also* goals and objectives, measurable)
- IPP planning sheet (template), **1:38–42**
- during meetings (*See* meetings of learning team)
- self-advocacy by students, **3:7–10** (*See also* self-advocacy by students)
- SHARE strategy, **3:8, 3:21**
- student inventory of challenges (template), **3:15–16**
- student inventory of skills (template), **5:21–22**
- student inventory of strategies (template), **6:22–23**
- student progress report (template), **3:20**
- See also* foundational skills; student involvement in IPP process

**special education coordinators**

- role on learning team, **1:3, 4:3**
- See also* support services

**Special Education Technology Practice, 9:27****Special Needs Opportunity Windows (SNOW), 9:28****specialists, program.** *See* support services**speech-language therapists.** *See* support services**spelling skills**

- about assessment of, **5:10**
- accommodations, student inventory (template), **6:22–23**
- assessment criteria (rubric), **5:20**
- assessment resources, **5:27–28**
- ATL for students (example), **9:4**
- ATL tools (list), **9:9–10**

## MAIN INDEX—*continued*

### **SRA Literacy Launcher (Pre-K–2), 5:25**

#### ***Standards for Special Education***

- definition of IPP and learning team in, **1:3**
- parental consent and involvement in, **1:4, 1:13, 1:16, 2:1**
- principal's roles under, **4:1–2**
- required elements in IPPs, **1:4**

### **Stanford Diagnostic Mathematics Test (SDMT 4), 5:27**

### **Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test (SDRT 4), 5:27**

**strengths of students.** *See* areas of need and strengths

#### **students**

- in early childhood programs (*See* early childhood services)
- in gifted programs (*See* gifted students)
- in junior and senior high (*See* junior and senior high students)

#### **student involvement in IPP process, 3:1–27**

- about introducing IPPs, **3:1–2**
- about participation in IPP planning, **3:3–6**
- accommodation selection by, **6:5, 6:7**
- accommodations inventory (template), **6:22–23**
- assessment results, sharing with students, **5:12**
- assistive technology selection (*See* assistive technology for learning)
- gifted student involvement in IPPs, **11:16–20** (*See also* gifted students)
- goals and objectives, **7:13**
- goals and objectives planning, **3:4–6, 3:19–20**
- goal-setting organizer for students (template), **3:19**
- IPP student information (checklist), **3:13**
- IPP student information (sample), **1:21**
- of junior/senior high students, **12:1, 12:6** (*See also* junior and senior high students)
- K-W-L+ chart on IPPs (graphic organizer), **3:12**
- learning team roles for students, **4:1, 4:4** (*See also* learning teams)
- meetings, solution-focused (template), **2:21–22**
- meetings, student guide (checklist), **3:22**
- meetings, student social skills for, **3:7–8**
- meetings, student tips on SHARE strategy (handout), **3:21**
- needs and strengths inventory (templates), **3:14–17** (*See also* areas of need and strengths)
- parent tips for IPP planning (handout), **2:19–20**
- personal characteristics in needs and strengths, **1:8–9**
- planning for transition, **8:1–5** (*See also* transition plans)
- planning for transition (questionnaire), **8:17**
- progress report (template), **3:20**
- self-advocacy (*See* self-advocacy by students)

#### ***Student Record Regulation***

- application to IPPs, **1:20**

### **Student Health Initiative, 9:225**

MAIN INDEX—*continued***study skills**

- assessment of work habits, **5:11**
- ATL tools (list), **9:9**
- cross-curricular goals for junior/senior high students, **12:4, 12:14–15**
- student inventory of work habits (template), **6:22–23**

**support services**

- about, **1:11, 4:2–4**
- ATL technical services, **9:5, 9:15, 9:19**
- ATL technical services (questionnaire), **9:49**
- ECS learning team roles, **10:6, 10:22–24**
- ECS planning meetings, **10:12–13**
- ECS planning meetings (template), **10:73**
- for gifted students, **11:20**
- health teams, **9:24–25**
- IPP component checklist (template), **1:35–37**
- IPP planning sheet (template), **1:38–42**
- IPP sample, **1:11, 1:23**
- IPP sample (template), **1:32**
- multidisciplinary support team (RECS), **9:24–25**
- parent consent for, **1:11**
- parent consent for release of data from, **2:2**
- parent consent for (template), **2:13**
- planning for transition for junior/senior high students, **12:5**
- planning for transition with, **8:5, 8:11**
- special education coordinator for junior/senior high students, **12:2–3**
- in *Standards for Special Education*, **1:4, 1:11**
- technical maintenance records (questionnaire), **9:49**

**T****T-chart for self-advocacy, 3:9**

*See also* self-advocacy by students

**teachers**

- about a shared vision of IPPs, **1:1–3**
- about role on learning team, **1:19–20, 4:2, 12:1–3** (*See also* learning teams)
- ATL decision making to include, **9:4**
- ECS planning meeting form (organizer), **10:12–13**
- ECS planning meeting recording form (template), **10:73**
- ECS role on learning team, **10:3–5**
- in junior and senior high schools (*See* junior and senior high students)
- planning for transition by, **8:11** (*See also* transition plans)
- professional development for, **1:3, 4:7, 12:3**
- roles in parental involvement, **2:5–6** (*See also* parental involvement in IPP process)
- solution-focused meetings (template), **2:21–22**

## MAIN INDEX—*continued*

### teacher assistants

- about role on learning team, **1:3, 4:2**
- accommodations support for junior/senior high students (checklist), **12:18**
- ECS planning meeting form (organizer), **10:12–13**
- ECS planning meeting recording form (template), **10:73**
- ECS role on learning team, **10:5**
- solution-focused meetings (template), **2:21–22**
- supervision by teachers of, **1:20**
- training in ATL, **9:15**

**teaching resources.** *See* resources for learning teams

***Teaching Students Who are Gifted and Talented***, **11:13**

**technology.** *See* assistive technology for learning; computers

**Technology and Media Division of the Council for Exceptional Children**, **9:28**

**Test of Adolescent and Adult Language (TOAL–3)**, **5:30**

**Test of Early Language Development (TELD–3)**, **5:30**

**Test of Early Reading Ability (TERA)**, **5:27**

**Test of Early Written Language (TEWL)**, **5:27**

**Test of Language Development, Intermediate (TOLD–I3)**, **5:30**

**Test of Language Development, Primary (TOLD–P3)**, **5:30**

**Test of Reading Comprehension (TORC)**, **5:27**

**tests.** *See* assessments

**Texas Assistive Technology Network**, **9:28**

**therapists.** *See* support services

**transition plans**, **8:1–28**

- about, **1:13–14, 8:1–3**
- accommodations summary in, **6:21**
- assessment and, **12:5**
- ATL tools in, **9:17–19**
- bibliography for, **8:27–28**
- career planning (*See* career planning)
- ECS planning for transition, **10:27–28**
- ECS planning for transition (checklist), **10:76**
- ECS to Kindergarten entrance, **8:6, 8:14**
- ECS to Kindergarten entrance (checklist), **8:16**
- for gifted students, **11:21**
- IPP component checklist (template), **1:35–37**
- IPP planning, annual (checklist), **8:15**
- IPP planning for transitions, **8:3–5**
- IPP planning process, as sixth step, **1:19**
- IPP planning sheet (template), **1:38–42**
- IPP sample, **1:14, 1:27**
- IPP sample (template), **1:34**
- junior high entrance, **8:6–7, 12:3–4**



MAIN INDEX—*continued*

junior high entrance (checklist), **8:14, 14**  
 parental involvement, **2:4**  
 parental questions about ATL in, **9:32**  
 post-secondary entrance, **8:8–10**  
 senior high assessment and, **12:5**  
 senior high entrance, **8:7–8, 12:3–4**  
 senior high entrance and exit (checklist), **8:14**  
 senior high transitions (inventory), **8:18–23**  
 in *Standards for Special Education*, **1:4**  
 student involvement in, **8:1–5**  
 student questionnaire (template), **8:17**  
 support systems for, **8:5, 8:11**

## U

**University of Calgary**

Web site on gifted education, **11:1**

**university students.** *See* post-secondary students

## V

**vision consultants.** *See* support services

**visual disabilities, students with**

ATL resources for, **9:24**

ATL tools (list), **9:10**

audio recordings, **6:2, 6:19**

**vocational planning.** *See* career planning

## W

**Web sites**

on ATL, **9:26–28**

research on gifted students, **11:1**

**Wechsler Individual Achievement Test (WIAT and WIAT–II)**

about, **5:28**

in IPP sample, **1:5, 1:22**

**Wisconsin Assistive Technology Initiative, 9:28****Woodcock Diagnostic Reading Battery (WDRB), 5:28****Woodcock–Johnson Tests of Achievement (WJ III ACH), 5:28****Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests (WRMT–RNU), 5:28**

**work experience coordinators.** *See* support services

**work habits**

assessment of, **5:11**

student inventory of strategies (template), **6:22–23**

*See also* study skills

## MAIN INDEX—*continued*

### writing skills

- about assessment of, **5:9–10**
- accommodations, student inventory of (template), **6:22–23**
- accommodations during classroom assessments, **5:9**
- accommodations during PATs and diploma exams, **6:19**
- accommodations for (checklist), **6:16**
- accommodations using scribes (tipsheet), **6:18**
- assessment criteria (rubric), **5:18–20**
- assessment resources, **5:27, 5:30**
- ATL for printing and handwriting (inventory), **9:37–38**
- ATL for (student examples), **9:4, 9:6–8, 9:14, 9:16–18**
- ATL for students, planning process, **9:16–18**
- ATL for writing skills (inventory), **9:39**
- ATL in IPP sample, **9:19–23**
- ATL tools (list), **9:9–10**
- cross-curricular goals for junior/senior high students, **12:4, 12:14–15**
- spelling (*See* spelling skills)

## Y

### year-end summary

- about, **1:15**
- IPP component checklist (template), **1:35–37**
- IPP planning sheet (template), **1:38–42**
- IPP sample, **1:15, 1:27**
- IPP sample (template), **1:34**
- in *Standards for Special Education*, **1:4**

## Z

### Zabala, Joy

- SETT Framework for ATL decision making, **9:5–6, 9:16, 9:27**

## FEEDBACK

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