

What makes a legally defensible IEP goal?

According to existing best practice or consensus from expert practitioners in the field and more importantly current legislation/regulation; a drafted IEP Goal is considered to be "legally defensible" when it is a statement of measurable academic or functional performance designed to meet the child's needs that result from the child's disability to enable the child to be involved in and make progress in the general education curriculum; and or meet each of the child's other educational needs that result from the child disability.

Furthermore, the goal written should clear, specific, and measurable. The goal should be drafted as concrete as possible to avoid any ambiguity about whether or not it has been achieved.

If a component of the IEP is unclear or nonspecific such as a written goal, then a dispute might arise as to whether or not the school is complying with the terms of said IEP and the goal (and or IEP) would not be considered legally defensible due to the ambiguity.

It is recommended best practice that IEP goals should follow the SMART acronym, ensuring that they are **specific, measurable, achievable, results-oriented** and **time-bound**.

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Orientation & Mobility IEP Goals

Here is a potential framework for an IEP goal (that can be modified and adjusted by an O&M) to meet the individual need of a student incorporating the use of digital curriculum apps such as the ones offered by ObjectiveEd.

GOAL

Given access to digital curriculum apps in conjunction with support and supervision from credentialed staff, the student will develop/practice/display a functional level of proficiency in a specific O&M skills/concepts including laterality, directionality, clock and compass concepts, and touch & drag assistive touch finger gesture, in a variety of settings and learning platforms, including both distance and face to face (hybrid) with 100% accuracy in three out of four trials (one trial equals one lesson/attempt) across one academic week/month/ year time period as measured by teacher charted and or collected data.

OR

GOAL

Given access to digital curriculum apps in conjunction with support and supervision from credentialed staff, the student will develop/practice/display a functional level of proficiency in a specific O&M skills/concepts including sensory efficiency, sound identification, sound categorization and memory in a variety of settings and learning platforms, including both distance and face to face (hybrid) with 100% accuracy in three out of four trials (one trial equals one lesson/attempt) across one academic week/month/year time period as measured by teacher charted and or collected data.

PROGRESS

Student will improve their [O&M specific skill] _____ percent per ___ week/month/academic year period, as measured by teacher charted and or collected data (note: digital curriculum app has embedded digital data tracking capability).

ACCOMMODATION

Student makes use of digital curriculum app to support the development of and facilitate the continued retention of specific O&M skill or concept in conjunction with support and supervision from credentialed staff.

Legal Framework/References

Federal Statute: 20 U.S.C. S1414 (d) – Individualized Education Programs

Federal Statute: 20 U.S.C. S1414 (d) –Individualized Education Programs A written statement for each child with a disability that is developed, reviewed, and revised in accordance with this section and that includes –

(I) a statement of the child’s present levels of academic achievement and functional performance, including – (aa) how the child’s disability affects the child’s involvement and progress in the general education curriculum; (bb) for preschool children, as appropriate, how the disability affects the child’s participation in appropriate activities; and (cc) for children with disabilities who take alternate assessments aligned to alternate achievement standards, a description of benchmarks or short-term objectives;

(II.) a statement of measurable annual goals, including academic and functional goals, designed to— (aa) meet the child’s needs that result from the child’ s disability to enable the child to be involved in and make progress in the general education curriculum; and (bb) meet each of the child’s other educational needs that result from the child disability;

(III) a description of how the child’ s progress toward meeting the annual goals described in subclause (II) will be measured and when periodic reports on the progress the child is making toward meeting the annual goals (such as through the use of quarterly or other periodic reports, concurrent with the issuance of report cards) will be provided...