



IEP Tip Sheet

Measuring Progress Toward Annual Goals

This tip sheet discusses measuring progress toward annual goals. It provides a brief summary of federal regulations and tips for implementation. To learn more, review the additional resources and check with state law for additional requirements.

What Does IDEA Say?

According to [IDEA Sec. 300.320\(a\)\(3\)](#), each child's IEP must contain...

"(3) A description of—

- (i) How the child's progress toward meeting the annual goals described in paragraph (2) of this section will be measured; and
- (ii) 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."

Tips for Developing a Monitoring Plan

Students' individualized education programs (IEPs) must describe how progress toward annual goals will be measured, including how and when school personnel will inform parents about that progress (e.g., quarterly reports, concurrent with the timing of report cards).

Things to Do

Do: Use objective measures (e.g., data that can be reported in numbers rather than words).

Examples:

- Behavior observation checklists
- Progress monitoring probes (e.g., reading, mathematics)
- Unit or chapter test scores

Do: Measure frequently and systematically.

Examples:

- Every two weeks
- At least three times per week

Do: Identify an individual with appropriate data collection training.

Examples:

- General education teacher
- Special education teacher
- School psychologist

Do: Clearly identify each relevant setting or context in which data will be collected.

Examples:

- During reading instruction
- On the playground

Do: Maintain a consistent data collection schedule.

Examples:

- Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays at 10:00 a.m.
- Tuesdays during reading

Do: Use the performance criteria from annual goals.

Examples:

- Perform a task with 85% accuracy during three consecutive observations
- Read 95 words correctly per minute with at least 93% accuracy

Things to Avoid

Don't: Use subjective measures.

Examples:

- Anecdotal reports
- Teacher or student perceptions

Don't: Measure so inconsistently or infrequently that data-based changes to services and supports can't occur.

Examples:

- Every nine weeks
- Three times per year

Don't: Assume that an individual has the requisite skills to collect data

Don't: Broadly describe the setting or context (e.g., in the general education setting) or omit it completely.

Don't: Collect data on an inconsistent basis.

Examples:

- Monday at the beginning of reading class (9:00 a.m.) and then Wednesday right before recess (10:30 a.m.)
- At the teacher's convenience
- When the student is in a good mood

Don't: Use different performance criteria than those stated in annual goals.





Where can you learn more?



The Academic and Behavior Progress Monitoring Tools Chart (National Center on Intensive Intervention). These tools charts are intended to assist educators and families in selecting academic and behavioral assessment tools that meet standards for technical rigor and address their specific needs. These tools charts can be considered when an IEP team is determining measures of progress towards IEP goals.



Measuring and Reporting Student Progress (Center for Parent Information and Resources). This resource includes the legal definition from IDEA, guiding questions, and considerations for how progress will be shared with parents. The content is also available in Spanish.



What is Included in the IEP Document? Monitoring and Reporting Student Progress (IRIS Center). This section is one component of the IRIS module, *Developing High-Quality Individualized Education Programs*. It addresses the importance of documenting the effectiveness of a student’s IEP through measurement of progress towards goals, and periodic reporting of that progress to the student’s parents.



Indicators of Progress in the Wake of Andrew F. (PROGRESS Center). This archived webinar shares findings from judicial rulings and professional recommendations as well as potential implications for the field.



PROGRESS Center Website. The PROGRESS website includes additional information about developing high-quality IEPs and additional tip sheets in this series.



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