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A Primer on Individualized Education Programs for Handicapped Children

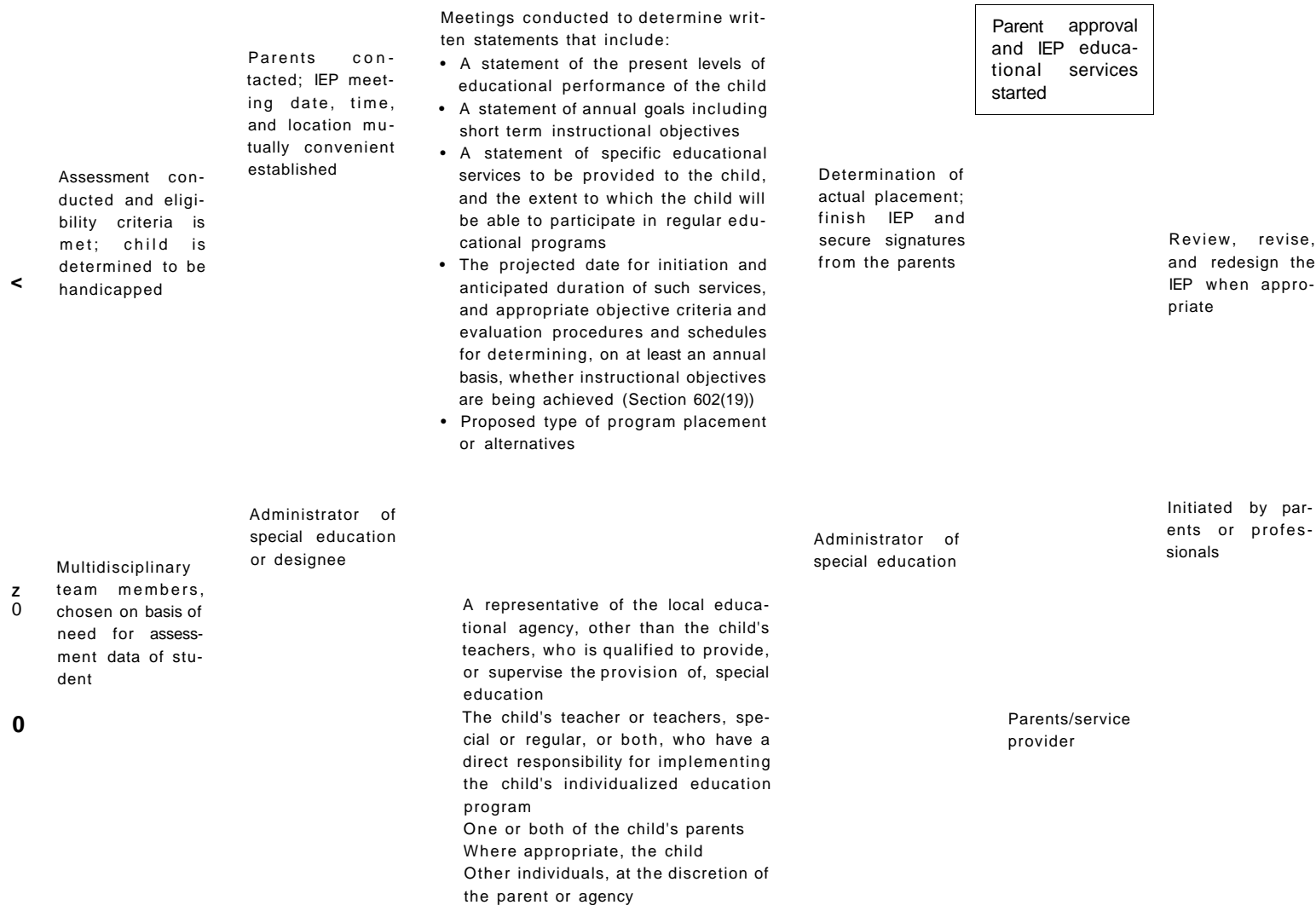


Edited by
Scottie Torres

The Foundation
for Exceptional
Children



Developing an Individualized Education Program (IEP)



Parents contacted; IEP meeting date, time, and location mutually convenient established

Parent approval and IEP educational services started

Determination of actual placement; finish IEP and secure signatures from the parents

Review, revise, and redesign the IEP when appropriate

Administrator of special education or designee

Administrator of special education

Initiated by parents or professionals

Multidisciplinary team members, chosen on basis of need for assessment data of student

A representative of the local educational agency, other than the child's teachers, who is qualified to provide, or supervise the provision of, special education
 The child's teacher or teachers, special or regular, or both, who have a direct responsibility for implementing the child's individualized education program
 One or both of the child's parents
 Where appropriate, the child
 Other individuals, at the discretion of the parent or agency

Parents/service provider

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This primer was developed by
The Foundation for Exceptional Children
and was made possible by a grant from
The William Bingham Foundation

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

ON BEHALF of the Board of Directors of The Foundation for Exceptional Children, it is a great pleasure to present *A Primer on Individualized Education Programs for Handicapped Children*. Contained within this document are the contributions of varied groups of persons, including those who will ultimately be involved in individualized education program activities. The document is intended to serve as a practical guide to the implementation of the individualized education program process and the implementation of individual programs for handicapped children.

The development of this primer could not have occurred without the support of The William Bingham Foundation, which made funding available to The Foundation for Exceptional Children. Thomas H. Gale of The William Bingham Foundation deserves special thanks.

Each of the contributing authors as well must be acknowledged for undertaking the difficult task of translating a federal law into a guide for meaningful education practices.

It is The Foundation for Exceptional Children's hope that this primer will be of assistance in understanding and developing individualized education programs as mandated in Public Law 94-142. We believe that the potential of the individualized education program represents a significant advance for handicapped children as the Nation's schools move to provide each of them with a free and appropriate public education.

James G. Kerkam, Executive Director
The Foundation for Exceptional Children

INTRODUCTION

SEPTEMBER 1, 1978, may become one of the most significant milestones in the history of American education. On that date and thereafter it will be a violation of federal law (Public Law 94-142, The Education for All Handicapped Children Act) to deny any handicapped child a free, appropriate public education and a variety of accompanying rights.

The central core of the Act is a mechanism called the written individualized education program. It is this document that becomes the critical link between the handicapped child and the special education he or she requires. The individualized education program requirement, as the reader will learn from this primer, does not promote a type of curriculum or dictate methodology. It does not require that children be individually taught, nor does it necessarily embrace behaviorism. It is a management tool designed to assure that, when a child requires special education, the special education designed for that child is appropriate to his or her special learning needs, and that the special education designed is actually delivered and monitored.

Special education is serious business that can be highly positive if applied appropriately and can have serious negative consequences if applied without consideration of a child's unique needs. Further, special education is costly, but it is cost beneficial if resources are carefully allocated to improve the capabilities of handicapped children. The individualized education program is a tool that, if used properly, may help assure a better linkage between a child's needs and special education and a more efficient use of resources.

There is nothing educationally revolutionary about the individualized education program. Many educational systems have engaged in similar practices of a more or less formal nature for

years. They may have their own name for it; they may not have operationalized all its requirements; and they may not be using it with all handicapped children. But its seed lies in the basic tenets of education and exists in some degree almost everywhere. The job ahead is not to start anew, but to improve practices so that all handicapped children, wherever they may be, receive the free, appropriate education Public Law 94-142 promises them.

The purpose of this primer is to provide a practical guide to administrators, teachers, and parents on how to meet the individualized education program requirements of Public Law 94-142. Authors have been selected who are representative of the critical actors in the process and who have also been participating over the years in similar activities to develop individualized education programs. We all admit that we do not know everything that needs to be known, and certainly some may find the primer does not answer every question. However, September 1, 1978, is not far off, and we believe that it is necessary to make available a straightforward document that can get people started. We hope we have succeeded.

This primer is organized around the development of an individualized education program. Each section is arranged in sequential order to provide the reader with the necessary information to develop, implement, and monitor an individualized education program for every handicapped child who requires special education and related services. The following material is included.

Chapter 1. UNDERSTANDING THE INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM

A basic explanation is presented of the components of Public Law 94-142 that relate to the de-

velopment of the individualized education program. Abeson and Weintraub preview the background, major issues, and intent of the individualized education program.

Chapter 2. PRESENT LEVEL(S) OF PERFORMANCE AND ASSESSMENT: SOME BASIC CONSIDERATIONS

Higgins presents some basic assumptions about the assessment process and discusses how schools can combine assessment information to report the child's present level of performance when developing the first phase of an individualized education program.

Chapter 3. ANNUAL GOALS AND SHORT TERM OBJECTIVES

Hayes presents a rationale for having written annual goals and discusses how to set priorities necessary to decide the appropriate annual goals that lead to writing short term objectives. Also identified are source materials for developing goals and objectives based on the present level(s) of performance of the handicapped child.

Chapter 4. ARRANGING SPECIFIC EDUCATIONAL SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED

A review of the law and proposed regulations of Public Law 94-142 indicates some specific suggestions for developing the education services necessary to determine appropriate placement. Greer and Torres review the requirements of the individualized education program necessary to identify and provide appropriate services within the local or intermediate education agency.

Chapter 5. EVALUATING INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Lilly presents various aspects of evaluation of the individualized education program as required by Public Law 94-142. Included is a discussion of evaluation responsibilities at the local and state education agency levels. Information is provided that suggests one way to evaluate student progress toward successful achievement of instructional objectives.

Chapter 6. MEETING TO DEVELOP THE INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM

Sherr specifies the necessary components and functions of the meeting to develop the individualized education program and presents some additional suggestions for structuring a successful meeting. A discussion is included of prior staffings, persons involved in the meeting and their responsibilities, meeting outcomes, and required action.

Chapter 7. THE TEACHER'S ROLE IN DEVELOPMENT

Garcia and Pinkelton highlight some important responsibilities and rights that teachers and other personnel responsible for achieving the instructional objectives must know in order to participate actively in the development of the child's individualized education program. Information is outlined for practitioners relating to preparation, production, and implementation of the program.

Chapter 8. BEYOND THE INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM: THE INSTRUCTIONAL PLAN

In order to distinguish between an individualized education program and good instructional planning, Hayes presents some practical suggestions for monitoring pupil progress, providing feedback, and organizing the classroom.

Chapter 9. PARENT PARTICIPATION

Winslow presents some practical suggestions for parents regarding the development of an individualized education program for their child. Included are some assumptions about parents, information regarding due process that parents need to know, how parents can prepare for the meeting, and identification of additional resources for parents.

Chapter 10. DEVELOPING AN ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESS: SOME DECISIONS

Significant decisions must be made by the local or intermediate education agency in order to establish an administrative process for the development of individualized education programs. Torres identifies decision points regarding administrative procedures, personnel issues, and alternative organizational patterns.

1 UNDERSTANDING THE INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM

Alan Abeson

Frederick Weintraub

FOR MANY years, educators, psychologists, physicians, and parents have observed that each and every child possesses and presents individual characteristics that in some ways are unlike those of any other child. John Dewey, in developing a philosophy of American education, spoke of each child as "equally an individual and entitled to equal opportunity of development of his own capacities, be they large or small in range . . . each has needs of his own, as significant to him as those of others are to them" (cited in Abernathy, 1959, p. 254). Recognition of this philosophy and fact, often after hard experience, has led educators to include in their rhetoric frequent references to the wisdom and desirability of developing programs to meet individual needs.

In large measure, the difficulties that teachers encountered in meeting the individual needs of children led to the formation of groups that would reduce the amount of variance encountered. The concept of grouping by age is one such attempt; "homogeneous" grouping by aptitude in selected subject areas is another. Always, however, the children who presented the greatest variance were provided with the least amount of educational service. Gradually, these children were placed in programs that came to be known as special education. To some degree, the assumption underlying these efforts was as faulty as the assumptions underlying homogeneous groupings, since these children, like all children, defied the grouping strat-

egy and continued to present uniquely individual learning needs.

More recent history, however, is replete with new calls, not only for rhetoric regarding individual differences, but also for the actual implementation of individualized education programs for all children. Educators have begun implementing the design and delivery of such programs, often using team teaching, open schools, differentiated staffing, and computer assisted instruction. Critically important has



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been the emphasis on determining the learning strengths and weaknesses and, to some degree, the learning styles of individual children. Diagnostic and prescriptive educational programs, which combine evaluation and programing, have emerged, particularly from special education. Many of these pioneering efforts in both general and special education occurred as special projects, with little opportunity for widespread or comprehensive implementation.

Despite these limitations, the basic intent of individual planning and programing for the education of each child remains unchallenged. This is especially applicable to the education of handicapped children who present perhaps the greatest number and variety of individual differences. In fact, it is recognition of these differences that forms the basis of the field of special education. This relationship is well stated in the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 (Public Law 94-142), where special education is defined as:

specially designed instruction, at no cost to parents or guardians, to meet the unique needs of a handicapped child, including classroom instruction, instruction in physical education, home instruction, and instruction in hospitals and institutions.

Public Law 94-142, as federal law, states the national mandate of providing each handicapped child who is in need of special education and related services with a written individualized education program. By virtue of this Act, however, not all children who have a disability are considered handicapped; only those who by reason of that disability require special education and related services are defined as handicapped.

The key phrases in this definition of special education that impinge upon the individualized education program are "specially designed instruction . . . to meet the unique needs of a handicapped child." By definition, special education is special and only involves instruction that is specially designed and directed to meet the unique needs of a handicapped child. For many children, special education will not be the totality of their education. Furthermore, this definition clearly implies that special education proceeds from the basic goals and expected outcomes of general education. Thus, for example, intervention does not occur because the child is mentally retarded, but because the child

has a unique educational need that requires specially designed instruction.

Equally important to understand is the concept of related services, which are defined in the Act as:

transportation, and such developmental, corrective, and other supportive services (including speech pathology and audiology, psychological services, physical and occupational therapy, recreation, and medical and counseling services, except that such medical services shall be for diagnostic and evaluation purposes only) as may be required to assist a handicapped child to benefit from special education, and includes the early identification and assessment of handicapping conditions in children.

The key phrase here is "as may be required to assist a handicapped child to benefit from special education." This leads to a clear progression: A child is handicapped because he or she requires special education and related services; special education is the specially designed instruction to meet that child's unique needs; and related services are those additional services necessary in order for the child to benefit from special educational instruction.

The intent of the individualized education program provision in the Act must not be misunderstood, nor should it be taken out of the context of the entire law. Essentially, Public Law 94-142 can be described as having four overriding purposes:

- To guarantee the availability of special education programing to handicapped children and youth who require it.
- To assure fairness and appropriateness in decision making about the provision of special education to handicapped children and youth.
- To establish clear management and auditing requirements and procedures regarding special education at all levels of government.
- To financially assist the efforts of state and local government through the use of federal funds.

The central management tool for attaining these purposes is the written individualized education program. As indicated, the Act requires that such a program be developed for every handicapped child who requires special education and related services.

The term *individualized education program* conveys important concepts that need to be specified. *Individualized* means that the program must be addressed to the educational needs of a single child rather than a class or group of children. *Education* means that the program is limited to those elements of the child's education that are specifically special education and related services as defined by the Act. *Program* means that the individualized education program is a statement of what will actually be provided to the child, as distinct from a plan that provides guidelines from which a program must subsequently be developed.

The Act contains a specific definition describing the components of an individualized education program as:

a written statement for each handicapped child developed in any meeting by a representative of the local educational agency or an intermediate educational unit who shall be qualified to provide, or supervise the provision of, specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of handicapped children, the teacher, the parents or guardians of such child, and, whenever appropriate, such child, which statement shall include (A) a statement of the present levels of educational performance of such child, (B) a statement of annual goals, including short-term instructional objectives, (C) a statement of the specific educational services to be provided to such child, and the extent to which such child will be able to participate in regular educational programs, (D) the projected date for initiation and anticipated duration of such services, and appropriate objective criteria and evaluation procedures and schedules for determining, on at least an annual basis, whether instructional objectives are being achieved.

This definition can be divided into two parts for specific examination. The first part sets forth that the individualized education program will be developed in a meeting and further specifies who will be involved in that meeting:

- A representative of the local education agency or intermediate educational unit who is qualified to provide or supervise the provision of special education.
- The teacher or teachers of the child.
- The parents or guardian.
- Whenever appropriate, the child.

The statute specifies the persons to be involved in the development of the individualized education program to insure that those who have information about the child make decisions regarding the services needed that represent the child's best interests.

An administrator of the local education agency must take part to assure that the necessary resources required to implement the program will be made available. These resources include at least time, personnel, space, and dollars. Administrators often bring to the meeting extensive knowledge about resources that exist within the community and beyond the schools. The identification of these resources can facilitate achievement of the objectives and goals specified for each child.

This requirement is intended to relieve the persistent problem of allowing teachers, who have major responsibility for program delivery, to have only a minor voice in the educational planning and placement decisions for handicapped children, whether in regular programs or in self contained settings. Such decisions have often been the purview of professionals other than teachers. Psychologists, physicians, social workers, and administrators often fail to adequately consider the skills of the teacher involved, the present dynamics of the children, the learning environment of the class, and the supportive resources required to achieve the child's instructional needs. If the teacher is an equal partner in program development, then the child's program will better reflect these considerations.

Full and active teacher involvement also has the advantage of establishing a common basis for understanding with the child's parents. Frequently, psychologists or administrators are the exclusive communicators with parents throughout the assessment and placement process. Teachers are in the position of either guessing what was told to parents by other professionals or forced to clear up parent misunderstanding or confusion resulting from other contacts with professionals. The teacher is the front line person and must in the end deal with communication problems. It is more efficient and effective for the teacher to interpret the educational program directly through full involvement in the development of the individualized education program.

Educators have long recognized that parents can make an important contribution to the edu-

cation of their child. This can occur in at least two ways. First, parents possess unique information about the development, nature, and needs of their child. After all, as educators say, the children are usually the school's responsibility for only six hours a day. Because of permanent involvement with the child, parents become the reporters of the child's educational history, which must be weighed as each major program decision is considered. Parents can, if provided with the opportunity, become effective partners with teachers in reinforcing activities and skill acquisition that has occurred during the school day. Further, public policy now makes clear that parents have the right to be active participants in all decision making about the education of their children. They must be provided with the opportunity to convey to the public schools what they feel is appropriate for their children. When disagreement occurs, whether initiated by parent or school, procedural safeguards are available and should be used for resolution.

Too often, children who are recipients of special education services are totally deprived of an opportunity to present their view of the decisions being contemplated and the alternatives being presented. Eliminating children from these processes is primarily a function of habit and perhaps the assumption that they will have nothing of worth to contribute. Yet under the authority of this Act, the opportunity to participate in program development must be provided to the child involved, when appropriate.

Based on these requirements about participants in the process, it should be concluded that the individualized education program is an agreement between all parties and that, while it is not a contract, it is clearly a statement setting forth what will be provided to the child. Substantially altering the provision of services without reconstituting the individualized education program would be a breach of the agreement and would mean that the child was no longer receiving a free, appropriate public education. This is of great significance because only children who are receiving a free, appropriate public education—which in part means "special education and related services . . . in conformity with the individualized education program"—are countable under the Act for fiscal purposes. It is clearly intended that the individualized education program be a manage-

ment device linking the child and appropriate services. Therefore, a child cannot be placed in a special education program unless that child has an individualized education program that sets forth the program to be provided. Conversely, placing a child in a special education program and then developing an individualized education program violates the intent of the Act.

The second part of the definition of individualized education program sets forth the content of the written statement, which must include:

- A statement of the child's present level of educational performance.
- A statement of annual goals, including short term instructional objectives.
- A statement of the specific educational services to be provided.
- The extent to which the child will be able to participate in regular education programs.
- The projected date for initiation and anticipated duration of such services.
- Appropriate objective criteria, evaluation procedures, and schedules for determining, on at least an annual basis, whether instructional objectives are being achieved.

Handicapped children are defined by the Act as children who are "mentally retarded, hard of hearing, deaf, orthopedically impaired, other health impaired, speech impaired, visually handicapped, seriously emotionally disturbed, or children with specific learning disabilities who by reason thereof require special education and related services." This leads to the position that the reason for intervening with such children is only because the child possesses a unique educational need that requires specially designed instruction. It is assumed that if it is determined that a child needs special education, then it is possible to state what that child's unique needs are, what objective is desired, what is required to achieve it, how long it should reasonably take, and how it will be determined whether or not it has been achieved. In addition, it must be demonstrated that what is being offered the child can be reasonably expected to produce the learning objective.

Public Law 94-142 does not require that handicapped children be provided the best education. The law does require, however, that they be provided a special education appropriate to

their needs. Appropriate education should be considered as a special education program that can reasonably be expected to achieve the agreed upon objectives as stated in the individualized education program. The purpose of the meeting in which the program is developed is to achieve consensus among all parties as to whether the proposed program is in fact reasonable.

An additional element of the individualized education program is a description of the extent to which the child will be able to participate in regular education programs. This is consistent with the provision of the Act that assures that to the

maximum extent appropriate, handicapped children, including children in public or private institutions or other care facilities, are educated with children who are not handicapped, and that special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of handicapped children from the regular educational environment occurs only when the nature or severity of the handicap is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.

This concept has commonly become known as the least restrictive alternative. In applying this principle, it is essential that decisions be made on the basis of the individual child's educational needs, not on traditional assumptions about program placement of children with a particular disability. Consistent with the requirement that the individualized education program be developed prior to placement in a special education program is the requirement that placement recommendations not be made solely on the basis of existing program options. Rather, if the program calls for the provision of services in a setting not traditional for a child with a particular handicap or not presently available in the community, that setting must be created or located.

Designing educational programs that deal with individual differences in children has long been an objective of American education. The written individualized education program requirement of Public Law 94-142 further recognizes that objective and mandates that it be implemented for the education of all handicapped children needing special education and

related services. The individualized education program requirements are timely for several reasons. Educators and related service professionals now conduct more thorough assessments of both the abilities and disabilities of children, which describe strengths, weaknesses, abilities, and deficits in learning. Teachers today use the assessment information to teach to both the strengths and weaknesses of children. Specific special education curricular goals and objectives have been defined for more populations of children. In addition, it is possible to describe the specific resources needed to match the child's educational needs with a program to meet the goals and objectives.

Some questions remain regarding implementation of the program when the needed resources are known but are not made available. The right of teachers to assure that such resources be brought to bear for individual children is an issue. A related question is a teacher's right to challenge participation in any activities that are not provided for in the individualized education program. Two additional issues yet to be resolved are professional rights to resist placement of handicapped children in inappropriate settings and the right to seek through contract negotiations necessary conditions that facilitate the development and implementation of the individualized education program.

Successful program development and implementation of the individualized education program involves a commitment among school, parent, and child. This commitment must establish educational goals and programs that are consistent with the special education needs of each individual child. Each child's individual goals will be specified, and the appropriate resources needed will be targeted to meet those goals. Schools, parents, and children will be specifically aware of everyone's responsibility toward achieving the stated educational goals. With the implementation of an individualized education program for each handicapped child, children will no longer be grouped or placed on the basis of arbitrary age limits, etiologic labels, or administrative convenience. Rather, they will be provided with individual programs based on their learning needs. Realizing the goal of providing each handicapped child with a free, appropriate public education means that minimally, through the individualized education

program, all personnel will understand the requirements of the law and in meeting those requirements will discover better understanding of the individual and collective responsibilities that produce learning for children and accountability for themselves.

REFERENCE

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2

PRESENT LEVEL(S) OF PERFORMANCE AND ASSESSMENT: SOME BASIC CONSIDERATIONS

Joseph P. Higgins

THIS chapter will explore some basic assumptions about the assessment process, review selected procedural safeguards regarding evaluation, and explore the requirements of "present level of performance" set forth in the statute and proposed regulations of Public Law 94-142 as they relate to the development of an individualized education program. A discussion of how schools can combine assessment information to report the child's present level of functioning when developing the first phase of an individualized education program will be presented.

ASSESSMENT ASSUMPTIONS

At least seven basic assumptions underlie the process used to collect necessary information to develop a child's individualized education program:

- Assessment information determines eligibility.
- Assessments should be individualized according to the child's presenting behavior.
- Assessment is a continuous process.
- Assessment information comes from multiple sources.
- Labels do not indicate performance levels.
- Assessments should be culturally and linguistically unbiased.
- Assessments should be sensitive to the child's handicapping condition.

Assessment information determines eligibility. The definitions contained in Public Law 94-142 state who can be considered as eligible for special education by listing a series of categorical handicapping conditions such as mentally retarded, emotionally disturbed, deaf, hard of hearing, orthopedically impaired, speech impaired, visually handicapped, and other health impaired. The eligibility criteria of *how* to decide if a child has a particular handicap are primarily dictated by state statute or regulation. It is usually the responsibility of each local or intermediate education agency to conduct the assessment process and collect the types of information required to certify that the child is eligible to receive special education or related services.

Assessments should be individualized according to the child's presenting behavior. Public Law 94-142 does not specify (with the exception of specific learning disabilities) the



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types nor amounts of assessment information required to certify that a child is eligible to receive services. Rather, the intent of the law is that assessment information should be collected on an individual child basis. However, some state statutes specify either the types of personnel required to certify eligibility or the outcome information required. Many states, for example, still require a psychologist's certification of eligibility and an IQ score.

In practice, school systems often fall into a pattern of "running a complete battery" of tests on every child referred, regardless of whether the instrument is measuring needed information. In the process of collecting information required for the development of the child's individualized education program, professionals must take a serious look at the types of information collected. Assessment information collected and reported should be as individual as each child being assessed.

Assessment is a continuous process. Assessment information forms the basis for all long term and short term goals and instructional objectives necessary to meet the child's special education needs. This information should indicate appropriate material and human resources needed to implement the child's individualized education program, which is conceived on a long term basis. Assessment does not occur at any one discrete point in time, but is a continuous process. This minimally requires periodic collection of assessment data and continuous checks on the acquisition of student skills, which provide the basis for the redesign of the child's program.

Assessment information comes from multiple sources. Assessment is a multifaceted process, allowing significant information to come from any number of relevant sources. Practitioners should collect information on how the student functions in the classroom. The information should indicate functioning levels of relevant skills to be acquired as well as the child's social-personal adjustment. Additional information collected from the home and community extends the reliability and validity of the assessment situation.

Labels do not indicate performance levels. In the past, educators have often been caught in the assessment "trap" of conducting only those assessments that reinforce a child's particular handicap. The information collected was then used to indicate the appropriate placement for

the child. Assessment data should be collected only if the information will reveal or lead to the present levels of the child's functioning.

Assessments should be culturally and linguistically unbiased. The assessment process should be adapted to the specific cultural and linguistic conditions of each child. Assessments should take into account the different cultural experiences that each student brings to the school. The assessment process should provide alternative and flexible procedures necessary to identify any cultural experiences that affect educational performance.

Procedures and instruments must be adapted for those handicapped students who cannot successfully perform with traditional materials. Adapted procedures must identify strengths and indicate performance levels of the child. No longer should the practice continue of giving the child who is handicapped a type of test that reinforces the fact that the child is indeed handicapped. How often has a parent or professional referred a child who has vision problems only to learn from some of the assessments that the child "can't see very well"?

Assessments should be sensitive to the child's handicapping condition. Persons conducting assessments must be sensitive to any particular handicapping condition and try to highlight the child's strengths. If the child has little or no hearing and poor speech, for instance, then the person conducting the assessment would not want to use the verbal portion of the WISC.

SELECTED PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS

Additional mandated components of Public Law 94-142 will have a direct relationship on the type of information that is to be collected in order to develop the child's individualized education program. The legal requirements regarding notification to the parents provide the education agency and the parents an opportunity to be informed about the types of assessment that will be conducted, who will collect the information, and the purposes for which it will be used. Parents can share in the process of mutual goal setting and participate in the development of their own child's educational program.

The school has a responsibility to conduct the assessment in the native language of the child and to report the findings orally and in writing in the native language, where appropriate. For

parents who are deaf or blind, the school has the further responsibility to communicate with the family so that the parents understand. These two requirements have implications not only when the assessment information is collected, but also when it is reported.

Assessment information must also be reported in language that is understandable to all persons responsible for developing the individualized education program. For many persons, this will require some practice. Professionals must not rely on diagnostic labels or professional jargon. Parents must learn to become participating members of the team when discussing the child's present level(s) of performance.

Parents have the right of access to all educational information collected and used in decision making regarding their child. They also have the right to an interpretation of how the professional recommendations were derived.

THE EVALUATION TEAM

Sound educational practice calls for team evaluation of each child. Of importance are who the team members are and the specification of their individual responsibilities. The following guidelines should be considered in organizing the evaluation:

- Each public agency responsible for determining that a child has a specific handicap shall use a team to evaluate the child.
- The official responsible for the administration of special education programs for handicapped children at the agency shall appoint the team members.
- The team must include the child's regular teacher or, if a child does not have a regular teacher, a regular classroom teacher licensed or certified by the state educational agency.
- At least one additional individual certified, licensed, or approved by the state educational agency to conduct individual diagnostic examinations of children, such as a school psychologist, speech clinician, or remedial reading teacher, must be included on the team.
- The agency official shall choose team members who have knowledge of the procedures used in the evaluation of children.
- Each individual team member must be qualified to perform the specific diagnostic tasks for which he or she is responsible.

- After the team has completed the evaluation, it shall meet at least once to discuss the evaluation and reach a conclusion as to whether the child has a specific handicapping condition.

CRITERIA

Criteria used by team members to determine whether a child has a handicapping condition must be specified. The assessment areas to be explored must be described, an expectation level of performance must be set up, and team members must reach a consensus of opinion. A team may determine that a child has a handicapping condition only if the child meets the specific eligibility requirements established by state and local policy.

EVALUATION TECHNIQUES

The team should document the "individual standardized diagnostic techniques" or, if these are not available, the techniques used to arrive at the determination of the handicapping condition.

WRITTEN REPORT

While this section requires documentation of all procedures used to determine eligibility, this report should also indicate the child's present level of performance. It is hoped that the team will be able to write its findings in such a manner and with such language that those persons developing the child's individualized education program and specifically determining the present levels of performance will have an easier task. Some of the reporting requirements include:

- The team shall report the result of the evaluation in writing.
- The report must include a statement of whether the child has specific unique learning needs requiring special education; the basis for making the determination; the relevant behavior noted during the observation of the child in the child's regular classroom setting; the relationship of that behavior to the child's academic functioning; and the educationally relevant medical findings.
- Each team member should certify in writing whether the report is accurate and whether it reflects his or her conclusion. If it does not

represent his or her conclusion, the team member must submit a separate statement presenting his or her conclusions.

It will be important for each local and intermediate education agency to review in depth these proposed components. The requirements presented in this section do indicate some procedures that schools will have to follow, not only those concerning certification of eligibility, but also those that dictate the type and amount of assessment information to be collected and reported during the development of the child's program. Schools and parents do not have to "start over" and identify a new process for collecting information. Good professional practices exist, and an exploration of what is and what needs to be will refine the process of determining a child's present level of performance.

While federal and state policies can and often do provide eligibility criteria for handicapped children, little information exists indicating the relationships between assessment information currently collected and the reporting requirements of the individualized education program. As new educational and diagnostic procedures are developed, the information required to plan instruction will change. The discussion of how much and what kind of information to collect is an endless one. Good educational practice, however, allows definition of some of the information procedures and identification of ways to strengthen the information collection system.

REFERRAL

When a school accepts a referral and informs parents that the child is suspected of having a special education need, the information system is triggered. It is at this point that the school should seek documentation of the problem(s) that led to referral and the intervention that was taken prior to referral. This information is essential in the assessment process because it focuses on selected aspects of the child's performance. Based on this information and a review of all current assessment records, at least the following decisions will be made regarding further assessments:

- What kinds of information will be required to program accurately for this child's special education needs?

- How is that information going to be collected?
- Who is responsible for collecting which segments of the information needed?
- How will that information be reported when the child's individualized education program is developed?

The student's teacher should be viewed as one of the primary sources of information regarding both the child's educational and social development. The day to day activities in the educational setting give the teacher an opportunity to observe the child working on specific educational curriculum areas. Observations on the child's learning style, mode of interaction with others, and obvious constraints or barriers to future learning can be reviewed and documented.

It is important to document the child's current and previous learning history, the previous instructional methods used, and any special techniques and/or materials that have proved effective, or especially ineffective.

The teacher can provide information on the student's present level of functioning in all curriculum areas or in a specific area where the student is currently having learning difficulties. If the student is having problems in the area of math, for example, the teacher might identify current levels of educational functioning in that area and then request further assessments to be done by a remedial specialist. However, if the teacher indicates that the child's general functioning level in most or all curriculum areas is significantly below the child's chronological age and grade level, then evaluations of the present level of performance across all curriculum areas would be conducted. As previously mentioned, some caution and thought need to be exercised when requesting assessment information. Specific information that will document the strengths and weaknesses of the current educational performance of the child shall be the only information collected. Information "overkill"—too much repetitive or useless information—can occur if information is not collected with the idea of relating it to the specific learning needs of the child.

For those children who are handicapped but not in traditional school settings, a variety of other types of professionals usually have good assessment information that can contribute to the development of the child's individualized

education program. These people might be social workers, pediatricians, neurologists, or psychologists who work for a human service agency such as Public Health, Welfare, or Mental Health.

Often, based on the known assessment information contained in the child's records and/or reported by the child's teacher(s), other specialists such as psychologists, social workers, occupational or physical therapists, speech clinicians, or others will be required to conduct assessments. Again, it should be stressed that these specialist reports should identify present levels of the child's current performance in each area they are reporting.

DEVELOPING A COMPREHENSIVE PERFORMANCE STATEMENT

After all assessment data have been gathered, the problem of integrating the data into a comprehensive statement(s) of the child's educational performance remains. The statement(s) must provide enough information so that any special instructional services can be determined. Further, the assessment information must be displayed so that when the program is developed, the annual and short term objectives and other requirements can be determined.

There are at least three ways to develop the statement(s).

1. Each person conducting an assessment can prepare a summary of findings with a statement of the "next steps" to follow.
2. A common work sheet can be developed that includes the required areas of performance related to the school curriculum.
3. One member of the assessment team can be required to review all history and assessment documents to develop a general, summarized statement(s) of current levels of educational performance. The designated person would identify discrepancies, gaps, and con-

flicts within the assessment information. In addition, that person would list issues and constraints requiring further discussion and resolution prior to the development of the individualized education program.

Various strengths and liabilities exist within each of these proposed alternatives. The first approach, individual reports, is most reflective of the current information reporting process. That method, however, often leads to lengthy meetings due to an inability to convert useful information into useful practice or results in a "selling match" for a particular technique, method, or approach. The second approach structures the categories of information related to specific curriculum areas. At the meeting, each assessor is able to identify gaps and weaknesses in the current information. Usually, "next steps" for the child are readily identified. The use of a work sheet facilitates interdisciplinary sharing and reporting of information that can be the base for annual goals and instructional objectives. The third method enables significant issues to be collated and allows an interdisciplinary analysis of gaps and conflicts to occur prior to presentation at the meeting. The chief drawback to using one person to coordinate the assessments is that few professionals have cross disciplinary training.

The strength of using either the second or the third system lies in the framework they provide for a better coordinated and profitable meeting to develop the individualized education program. Once the multiple assessment data are presented in a manner that readily indicates the child's present level(s) of performance across domain areas, the process of continued development of the individualized program can take place. The next logical step is the determination of appropriate annual and short term instructional goals that it is estimated a child can reasonably attain within the year.

3

ANNUAL GOALS AND SHORT TERM OBJECTIVES

Josephine Hayes

PERHAPS the most frequently read part of any student's individualized education program will be the section that lists the annual goals and short term objectives. This section makes up the bulk of the program and at meetings may take the longest time to complete. This chapter will list the hows and whys of writing annual goals and short term objectives. Examples of procedures, meant to be illustrative rather than prescriptive, are included.

Historically, handicapped children have gone from one grade to another, often receiving the same instruction at the beginning of each year because the teacher had no way of knowing what the students already knew. Several weeks of assessment and trial and error pass while the teacher tries to get to know the students and organize an instructional program. If the students were recently placed, a psychological report with current information will be available. Such reports usually classify or identify the handicapping condition without telling the teacher what exactly the student can do. Terms like "poor concept formation," "low fund of basic knowledge," and "inability to discriminate essential from nonessential detail" all categorize certain performances of students but are not much help in planning a child's program.

Occasionally, a checklist accompanies a student from one year to the next. Checklists, however, do not tell how long it took the student to learn the skills mastered, or list the most

effective methods or materials to teach the skills, or suggest realistic goals for the next year.

RATIONALE FOR WRITTEN GOALS

Educators of exceptional children now have at their disposal a tool that can make teaching more effective and learning more successful. Public Law 94-142 mandates that annual goals and short term objectives be written for each child as part of the individualized education program. There are at least five benefits of written goals and objectives that should be remembered:

- Written goals and objectives provide accountability.
- Written goals and objectives can motivate students.
- Written goals and objectives facilitate teacher-parent communication.



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- Goals and objectives will make teacher preparation more relevant.
- Goals and objectives help focus learning activities.

Written goals and objectives provide accountability. They may be viewed and reviewed by administrators, parents, and other teachers working with the child. Combined with assessment data, goals communicate what has been and will be taught and what has been learned in a given period of time.

Written goals and objectives can motivate students. Students who are told what they will learn and why are encouraged to try harder, and they feel the interest and concern of their teachers and parents who have worked together to plan the child's program. After each skill is learned, students are praised and are told what they will learn next. Success builds upon success and positive self concept increases.

Written goals and objectives facilitate teacher-parent communication. When the home and the school plan together for the benefit of the child, all involved benefit. When teachers formally and periodically share with parents what their children have learned, the reinforcement to the child is increased. The support of parents for the school grows as well, yielding greater cooperation.

Goals and objectives will make teacher preparation more relevant. Knowing exactly what skills each student needs to learn, the teacher will be better able to prepare lessons that are geared to the students' needs, thereby eliminating unnecessary instruction. A carefully developed individualized education program will provide a reference for teachers that will enable them to judge student progress accurately and provide appropriate instruction for critical need areas. Planning becomes easier in the long run since teachers always know what the students should be able to do by the end of each goal period.

Goals and objectives help focus learning activities. Each activity can be planned to strengthen a specific skill. When the purpose of activities is shared with students, learning becomes intentional rather than incidental. Students become aware that what they are doing is purposeful, not arbitrary, and tasks take on greater meaning for them.

WHERE TO BEGIN

In order to write appropriate goals, the planners must begin with where the student is at the time of planning. Since each program is written for a particular child, it is important to have appropriate assessment data available that indicate the child's present level(s) of performance (see chapter 2). The child's ability includes intellectual, mental, social, and physical capabilities including use of legs, arms, eyes, ears, and speech.

The student's age, grade, and amount of learning to date must be considered when setting goals. Equally important are the student's strengths and weaknesses. These include such things as general health factors, special talents, best mode of learning, and sensory-perceptual functioning. Finally, the student's likes and dislikes must be considered. Knowledge of a student's special interests or hobbies can be used by the thoughtful teacher to help students learn in a way that is most enjoyable to them.

It is often helpful to have a list of curricular areas on hand when setting annual goals. Such a list will enable the program developers to consider pertinent questions that will help them zero in on specific goals and insure that nothing relevant is omitted. Having topic headings on blank forms can also help those reading the individualized education program. Thus, reading skills can be found in the same place on the form for all children in a class or district. Time is saved for the teacher who does not have to search through every form when planning reading instruction for an entire class. The following is a partial topical list of content areas that might appear on a district program planning form.

Reading Skills

readiness
comprehension
vocabulary
word attack

Prevocational-Vocational Skills

job readiness
work experience

Language Arts Skills

writing
spelling
grammar
speech

Arithmetic Skills

numeration
 computation
 application
 measurement
 time

Perceptual Motor Skills

auditory and visual
 sequencing
 memory
 acuity
 discrimination
 association
 eye-hand coordination
 fine motor development

Gross Motor Skills

large muscle activity
 general physical health
 body localization
 directionality
 laterality

Social Skills

social acceptance
 responsibility
 self control
 self concept
 general behavior
 self help skills

A list of curriculum areas provides a structure and helps to avoid random discussion. The purpose of developing an individualized education program must be kept in mind by all or the meeting can go on for hours. A helpful format might list the following across the top of the page: Content Area; Present Level; Annual Goal; Method/Personnel.

The developers of the child's program must know specific present levels of a child's performance. If a report states the child can do simple addition and subtraction, the referring teacher can tell how many digits are involved, whether the child can carry and borrow, and so forth.

Information may come from tests given by psychologists, educational diagnosticians, teachers, or others who have worked with the child, or it may come from teacher or parent observation. Specific statements should be recorded as these are necessary in setting goals. The following examples illustrate specific present levels of functioning:

- Identifies alphabet except M, N, b, d, and n.
- Recognizes numbers to 100.
- Works independently for five minutes.
- Reads word by word instead of reading phrases.
- Can dress self with assistance on shoes and buttons.
- Wets clothing twice daily (once at home and once in school).
- Cannot remember a list of three items when sent to store.

SETTING PRIORITIES

In looking at the student's present level of functioning, parents and teachers begin to see some critical areas that need attention. These should be pinpointed by having both parents and teachers state what they think is most important. These become high priority items. Other areas where weaknesses exist can then be identified.

There are certain conditions or constraints that influence which critical need areas will be targeted. The student's age and the amount of time left in the school system are constraints that planners need to consider. The goals for an 18 year old tenth grade EMH student who cannot read will be quite different than those for a second grade EMH student who cannot read. If it is known that the tenth grader has received reading instruction during previous school years and made little progress, the group will want to try to set annual goals that this student can achieve. Since only about two years remain before this student will be out of school, the group will want to set some goals that will prepare the student for adult life. The kind of decisions made for this tenth grader must be ones that will not limit education, but rather will broaden its scope to meet the student's needs. Vocational skills, job hunting techniques, budgeting, consumer education, and community recreation, for example, may be more appropriate priorities than reading per se. It may be that teaching reading within those content units will achieve results. The emphasis, however, is on preparation for adult life instead of on academic learning.

The amount of learning attained and the previous teaching methods used are also constraints to consider when setting annual goals. A fifth grade learning disabled student with a sight vocabulary of less than 100 words who has attended remedial reading class for a year in

addition to receiving reading instruction in the regular class will probably not be able to catch up in a year or even two. The planners will need to look at what the child's ability is, what methods were used to teach reading, what emotional or home/family conditions exist, and then make the best estimate of what the child will be able to learn in a year given all these factors.

Another constraint to be considered during the planning process is the amount of time the student will spend in the special education program. As the individualized education program is developed, placement needs become apparent. While no formula readily presents itself, there must be some correspondence between the number and levels of the annual goals set and the amount of time available for instruction. Planners need to consider whether goals can be met within the regular program with consultation for the teacher, with a few hours a week of supplementary instruction, or with more hours of direct instruction by a specialist. Placement decisions must be based on the concept of least restrictive environment. A child shall be removed from the regular program only when it is determined to be appropriate.

DECIDING ANNUAL GOALS

The next step involves looking at each present level statement. Everyone should determine what the student should be able to do by the end of the year, considering all that is known about the child. It is sometimes difficult for members of the group to make judgments of this sort. The coordinator should emphasize that the annual goals can only be the group's "best estimate" of what the child will be able to do within one year. All must realize that the goals stated will not limit the student's program; if they are accomplished sooner than anticipated, additional goals will be set.

It is important for the coordinator, in the interest of time, to elicit goal statements and write them down, quickly moving through each critical need area. If the group is having difficulty deciding on one area, they should move on to something else and return to the unfinished area at the end. It is often easier to make decisions once the process has gotten under way and each person can see the total program taking form.

The following two examples of annual goals derived from present level statements both represent low functioning skills.

Present level: Makes random marks on paper.
Annual goals: (a) Will print entire name, (b) Will copy letters, numbers, and shapes.

Present level: Counts to 5 by rote.
Annual goals: (a) Will count to 100. (b) Will match objects and numerals to 10. (c) Will recognize numerals to 10.

In both examples, annual goals set correspond directly to what the child can presently do. There must be a relationship between the annual goals set and the student's present level of performance. Goals must be built upon present levels as a house is built upon a foundation; otherwise, the program will not be appropriately sound. Always ask, "What else?"

Next, the support needed to achieve the annual goals must be documented. Success may depend on many factors such as home reinforcement, medical services, speech or other therapy, consultation with a behavioral specialist, counseling, or modifying or adding instructional materials and resources. This should also be documented. The person(s) responsible for achieving the annual goals and short term objectives should be listed. In the case of mildly handicapped children this is often the regular classroom teacher with support from the itinerant or resource room instructor. In the case of moderately or severely handicapped children, the teacher of the self contained class will be the main implementer. In any case, the home may be involved to further insure success.

HOME INTERVENTION

Parents may participate in a supportive program in carrying out the individualized education program, or they may work with a counselor to set up a behavioral program to be implemented at home. It may be necessary to improve attendance in school, or the student may need help with homework or with physical exercises in the evening. It should be documented whenever parents are to work toward the attainment of goals.

The services of a school social worker may be another support cited at this time if the student and family need help coordinating with community agencies for medical, dental, clothing, day care, counseling, or other services.

It is essential to document the nature of services needed as well as the person responsible for service delivery. As time passes and the program implementers monitor the intervention, some breakdown in support may become apparent. Too often the delivery of related services, which have a large impact on school performance, is neglected simply because no one knows who to ask or no one was designated to follow up. Documenting the person responsible for monitoring services will often result in more timely and efficient delivery of services.

The kind of support needed to achieve annual goals and short term objectives should be recorded, regardless of whether the support currently exists in the school system. The alternative that *could* be implemented and the alternative that *will* be implemented may differ, but recording other possibilities for program service delivery models, resources, and strategies may bring their realization that much quicker. What is necessary is to avoid fitting the student to existing programs. Accurate documentation of the kind of support necessary to achieve appropriate goals is vital. The most appropriate alternative must be the one that is offered to parents for their approval. However, the needs of children must be recorded in order for improvement of services in the district to be effected.

Monitoring the effectiveness of each program is an ongoing process. When support breaks down, procedures for reporting and correcting deficiencies must be understood by all. Procedures may include contacting the individual designated as the one responsible in a particular area or contacting the special education administrator in the district. Whatever procedures are established, all who share the responsibility for the child must understand them and take responsibility for reporting any deficiencies as soon as noticed and as often as necessary until the problem is ameliorated. There is no excuse for realizing at the end of the year that a particular service was never delivered. Those closest to the child, his teachers and parents, must monitor the intervention strategies and report irregularities immediately.

SHORT TERM OBJECTIVES

Once the annual goals have been recorded and the support needed to accomplish them has been documented, the next step is to identify

several short term objectives for each annual goal. These short term objectives may be viewed as milestone steps between where the child currently is (present level) and where the group hopes the child will be by the end of the year (annual goals). The number of short term objectives established is currently left up to the district to determine, but three or four steps in each area seems to be a reasonable number. The group developing the individualized education program examines each annual goal and determines the sequence of steps leading up to the goal. These are short term objectives.

An Example

Suppose a year end goal was that the student would recognize vowel sounds. Since this objective was selected, it must be assumed that the student is able to auditorially discriminate between such words as pin, pen, pan, and pun, otherwise phonics instruction would be unprofitable. Another assumption may be that the child has already learned a number of "sight" words, which can then serve as "phonic models." A third assumption is that the student has already learned the consonant sounds. This is a rather easy example because the short term objectives may be simply that the child will correctly pronounce the short sound of A in the middle of a one syllable word, the short sound of E in the middle of the word, and so on for the five common vowels. It matters not whether the short sound is taught for initial or medial vowels in one generalization or separately. The approach to reaching and teaching short term objectives is really the teacher's domain. In teaching phonic analysis, deciding which vowel or which sound of that vowel to teach first is probably not a crucial issue and should be left to the teacher's discretion.

If the annual goal is to be accomplished, the teacher must have some sequence in mind when planning instruction. However, for the purposes of Public Law 94-142, it is not necessary to list each and every step the child will take along the way. Short term objectives are not intended to be lesson plans. In this example it may suffice to list only three milestone steps:

1. Common short vowel sounds
2. Common long vowel sounds
3. Irregular vowel sounds (schwa, oo, diphthongs, etc.)

Listing only a few short term objectives may make it easier for those developing the individualized education program to complete this section at one sitting. The teacher may wish to break the sequence into smaller steps, which may be done during the year without rewriting the program.

Some teachers have found it helpful to list short term objectives for each reporting period. If record cards are issued four times a year, the objectives could be written prior to each nine week period. In this way, children can be evaluated on specific objectives set for them each reporting period and progress reports can be sent home along with the regular report cards. This type of reporting keeps parents well informed and lets students know what is expected of them.

GOALS IN THE AFFECTIVE DOMAIN

It is tempting to overlook social and behavioral goals when writing annual goals and short term objectives for the individualized program. The subjective nature of the decisions that must be made makes this section difficult. Stating exactly how the child should act in a year's time is hard enough; sequencing the steps that will take him there is a real challenge. Suppose, for example, a timid child never volunteers in class, avoids eye contact when talking to adults, and usually plays alone during recess. What will be desired as year end behavior? How often should he raise his hand in class? How long must eye contact last? With how many children should he play and for how long?

As another example, consider a child who almost never completes an assignment, steals several times a month, is belligerent to teachers, and bullies other children. In addition, he yells out across the room whenever he feels like it and is out of his chair as soon as the teacher's back is turned. To specify goals for this child's behavior it will be necessary for the teachers and parents to decide what change they would most like to see in the child as a first step. An objective should be written for that goal and then for other behaviors in more or less rank order of importance.

Since published sequences are difficult to locate for behavior goals, the most practical way to determine short term objectives in the affective domain is to list successive approximations toward the goal as milestone steps. For exam-

ple, a child verbally "shares" with one other person, then before a small group, and finally before the entire class; or the unwanted behavior is reduced by 10 percent, then 20 percent, and finally 50 percent of its original frequency. The judgments involved in planning and assessing progress of behavioral goals will be easier to make if they are viewed as the planning group's "best estimate" rather than as "the" answer.

SOURCES OF GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

While the annual goals for each student are established by the planners themselves, the short term objectives can be obtained from a variety of published sources. A curriculum guide is the best tool to use when pinpointing behaviors and sequencing short term objectives. It is not necessary to "reinvent the wheel" at each planning meeting. Special education curriculum guides, whether locally developed or not, generally contain skill sequences in many areas. To use such a reference in writing short term objectives for an individualized education program, it is only necessary to turn to the particular skill area (e.g., self help skills) and then locate the child's present level and the predicted annual goal. The steps between these points are short term objectives. It may not always be possible to locate each behavior in this way, but one can save time whenever it works.

The grade level objectives used in the regular educational program are another source that can be a helpful reference. Even textbook teacher's guides in the content areas can be used. In fact, almost any published sequence of objectives will do as a starting point. The key is to adjust or modify the objectives to meet the needs of the individual student. To facilitate planning, several guides or sequences should be on hand during the meeting. No two sequences will be identical; however, almost all sequences contain enough content to choose milestone steps for short term objectives. If the available curricula do not contain appropriate skill sequences, the planners can add their own steps as necessary. It is most essential to choose a design in which the objectives are clearly stated and arranged in positive skill sequences.

In writing objectives on the individualized education program form, several criteria may be applied. The criteria to follow for both annual goals and short term objectives:

- Must be in pupil terms.
- Must be measurable or observable in some way.
- Must be stated in specific terms.
- Must be realistic for the student.

These criteria should be followed in order to monitor pupil progress effectively as well as to assess the impact of individualized education programs.

Once the annual goals and short term objec-

tives are completed, the next step is to begin arranging the necessary special education and related services required to implement the education program and support the process of moving from the present level(s) of performance toward successful attainment of the annual goals. With a clear understanding of where the child is now and where it is hoped the child will be next year, assigning the necessary resources appropriate to implement the individualized education program is a critical task.

4

ARRANGING SPECIFIC EDUCATIONAL SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED

Jeptha Greer

Scottie Torres

DURING the meeting(s) to develop the child's written individualized education program, two main issues emerge. First, a clear understanding of what the child presently can do, with a projection based on the child's performance to indicate annual goals and short term objectives, is developed. Second, a list of the type(s) of services the child will need is established. This chapter will present some items for schools and parents to consider when determining the educational services to be provided to the student. Public Law 94-142 makes a distinction between educational services that a child needs and the actual type of placement the child will have.

DEVELOPING EDUCATION SERVICES

The language set forth in the law and amplified in the proposed rules (December 1976) requires that each individualized education program contain a statement of specific educational services needed by the child. The language states:

(d) A statement of specific educational services needed by the child (determined without regard to the availability of those services) including a description of:

(1) All special education and related services which are needed to meet the unique needs of the child, including the type of physical education program in which the child will participate, and

(2) Any special instructional media and materials which are needed. (Section 121a.225)

It is important to note that the proposed rules require documentation of the specific services a child needs, as determined without regard to the availability of those services. Developing this statement will be difficult for both the parents and the school personnel. What services does the child minimally need and what ser-



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vices will provide for all the educational needs of the child? Frequently, professionals are hesitant to recommend services that currently do not exist within the local education agency. Sometimes, services required for a child are available from other human service agencies such as the departments of mental or public health. How does one begin to document those service needs?

The proposed rules do provide a skeletal framework on how to proceed. Subsection 1 under section d requires specification of all special education and related services needed to meet the unique needs of the child. The reader is encouraged to review the legal definitions presented in chapter 1 and remember key phrases such as "specially designed instruction to meet unique needs" in the definition of special education and "as required to assist a handicapped child to benefit from special education" in the definition of related services.

It seems logical then that the law is requiring a documentation of that specially designed instruction and an indication of how any related services will support the child's special education. No longer will it be sufficient to say that a child "needs to be placed in a junior high program for educable mentally retarded students and see the psychologist weekly." Rather, it will be necessary to describe any specially designed instruction and describe the related services. This process will be a natural "next step" once the annual goals and short term objectives have been developed. Based on the annual goals and short term objectives, a statement of educational services in the example above might read:

A work-study program will be established to work on the prevocational skill sequence. The student will need to spend at least two weekly half hour sessions with the work-study coordinator to continue the link between on the job training and the classroom skill sequences for this training.

It is critical that the related services correspond directly to the child's needs. Specifying the relationship that the supportive services are to have to the rest of the child's program minimally accomplishes two tasks. First, it makes it possible to go beyond the general level of the services—speech pathology, for example—and begin to describe the necessary services within the area of speech

pathology that will be delivered. Perhaps this will be a step toward unveiling the "mystery" behind the "therapy." Second, everyone, including parents, school personnel, and the related service people, will have a clearer understanding of what services everyone expects will be provided to the child.

Included in the statement of educational services is the proposed requirement that a list be included of "any special instructional media and materials which are needed." A word of caution must be offered: The key to the specificity with which media and materials should be listed in the child's education program has to come from the term "special." In other words, what *special* material or media is required to implement the individualized education program? Otherwise, professionals would be required to list all instructional materials and media that they will use with the child. Common sense and the intent of Public Law 94-142 should prevail. The intent clearly seems to require documentation only of those highly "specialized" pieces of material or media that are necessary.

The issue of time becomes important when determining the educational services to be provided. The law requires that the statement include "(e) The date when those services will begin and length of time the services will be given" (section 121a.225).

There are several points to consider. First, when does the child need the services and how soon are they available? For instance, if the child needs the services from a source other than a local agency, some time delay may occur. It is the responsibility of the school to document the estimated time the service will begin (e.g., in two weeks, pending acceptance to a private school or availability of the physical therapist from the department of human resources). If it is apparent that there will be more than a two week delay, however, documentation must include the services the child will receive while waiting for the appropriate designated service(s).

The length of the service is an area that few professionals have experience in predicting. It is relatively easy to estimate that a child needs the service for at least one month, one semester, or even one year. But when the time sequences are more discrete, some difficulties arise. Why does the child need to see the speech clinician two times a week for 30 minutes? Why not once a

week for 60 minutes? Or, what is so "special" about 60 minutes? This time analysis becomes important whenever time is scheduled away from the regular program. For instance, if the child needs some "resource" help, it is necessary to ask: How much, when, and for how long? There are no clear-cut answers to these questions. Rather, those persons responsible for determining the educational services must begin with each child's needs and then work toward estimating the degree of time necessary to implement the individualized education program.

DETERMINING APPROPRIATE PLACEMENT

Historically, schools have based placement recommendations either on the type of handicapping condition or the currently existing available programs. Either a child was handicapped enough to go to a special class or the child was not handicapped enough and so might not get the appropriate support services. Through the years and particularly over the past 10 years, schools have realized the inadequacies of this placement procedure. Today, many more program options are available in the schools. Local and intermediate education agencies have an option to contract with other public or private agencies or personnel to provide services that they may not offer—but these services as well must be provided in the least restrictive environment.

Translating needed educational services into the most appropriate placement for the child requires one basic change in thought. The concept of least restrictive environment, as set forth in Public Law 94-142, provides the framework to build the bridge between needed services and where those services will be delivered. Anytime the child's individual needs require that the child be removed from the regular program for special education or the provision of related services, that removal must be documented. As indicated in the law, documentation of the educational services must include:

- (f) A description of the extent to which the child will participate in regular education programs;
- (g) A justification for the type of educational placement which the child will have. (Section 121a.225)

Following the intent of the law, the justification for the type of placement must correspond to

the specific educational needs of the child. The appropriate placement is the placement option that will meet those needs.

When an individualized education program is being developed, it is important that the justification specify the type of placement rather than name the placement. For example, if a child needs a residential type of program, the individualized education program must delineate the types of services required rather than state a recommendation for a specific residential school. Too often, recommendations have been in the nature of, "The child shall be placed in the Oscar Private Schools." Trouble and delay result when it is determined that the school does not have room for the child, that the same services could better be provided at a different school, or that a more appropriate residential program can be established through collaboration with other local or intermediate agencies. Caution must be exercised most frequently when a placement recommendation is out of district to insure that promises and commitments made on behalf of the child can be fulfilled and monitored.

In some education agencies, based on either state or local policy, it is the responsibility of the team members developing the individualized education program to delineate the type of placement appropriate for the child. The administrator of special education then has the responsibility to locate the exact program and notify the parents of the actual recommended placement. This distinction might help schools and parents to make better educational decisions for the child. Once the actual placement has been agreed to by the parents, "(h) a list of the individuals who are responsible for implementation of the individualized education program" will be included in the child's program (section 121a.225).

It is important to remember what is happening to the child throughout all phases of the development of the individualized education program. The child shall remain in the regular school program where he or she was when deliberation began. If the child is not in a public school program, he or she has the right to be enrolled in one until placement procedures are completed. Agreement by the parent or guardian and the appropriate administrator is necessary. It may also be necessary to obtain a written agreement from the administrator and the teacher(s) at the receiving school where the pu-

Figure 1
A Sample Resource Inventory

Program type	Staff	Material resources	Instructional interventions	Interagency services
Regular classroom	Teachers	Regular curriculum guides	Diagnosis	Human resources
Regular classroom with direct or indirect assistance (provide definition)	Consulting teachers Itinerant teachers	Special curriculum guides	Intervention Treatment	Physical health Mental health Vocational rehabilitation Family and child services
Itinerant	Methods and materials and curriculum specialists	Special equipment	Therapy	
Crisis intervention		Special instructional materials	Training	Natural resources Recreation Lifetime sports
Resource room	Resource room teachers	Diagnostic material	Programing	
Self contained	Special therapists		Regular education	Intermediate school district
Multisystem unit	Audiologists Speech therapists Physical therapists		Special education	Direct services Indirect services
Special center	Occupational therapists Recreation therapists		Reevaluation	
Private center, school	Music therapists Medical consultants		Followup	State department of education
Homebound/hospital	Other		Staff development	Instruction Special education Vocational rehabilitation Federal programs Other
Residential	Support teachers Reading Math Other	Other resources		Other
	Paraprofessionals	Curriculum modification		Special hospitals Special clinics Community service organizations
	Counselors			
	Visiting teachers	Intraschool differentiated staffing		
	School social workers			
	School psychologists			

child will receive his or her education pending completion of the individualized education program.

IDENTIFYING DISTRICT RESOURCES

The administrator of special education should be responsible for uniform procedures regarding the development and implementation of each individualized education program. Factors to consider minimally include establishing procedures for communication with parent(s) or guardian; observation at home, school, center, or other environment when appropriate; a staffing process that includes interpretation of services available, alternatives, and interventions; parent consent; and the hearing process when required. Due to the importance of each of these aspects in the development and implementation of the individualized education program, it is important that districtwide procedures be established.

Existing resources within the school district that are traditionally outside the realm of special education can add to the district's capacity to meet the child's individual education needs. Often the school library or media center supplies special instructional materials, equipment, media, and other resources. Recommendations for the use of support services such as remedial reading or math instruction should be incorporated in the district's procedures. The district may already have in effect such concepts as differentiated staffing, individually prescribed

instruction, informal learning, instructional television, micro-teaching, modular scheduling, continuous progress, open classroom, performance contracting, programmed instruction, and open education. These concepts should be used when applicable.

It will become increasingly difficult for administrators to keep track of all special education and related services that are required and specified in each individualized education program unless some mechanism is established to identify and follow the available resources within the local or intermediate education agency. Administrators of special education will want to make good use of this information in order to better plan for the resources that are or will be required as part of the child's individualized education program.

As existing district resources are identified, it is possible to compile a resource inventory for planning purposes. The essential areas to identify include the types of programs, existing personnel, materials available, present instructional interventions, and current interagency services. Figure 1 is a partial listing of the components of a sample resource inventory. Each district will be able to identify its own existing resources. Once the district's resources have been identified, this information should be widely circulated so that professional staff and parents can view what is and what needs to be included to provide the necessary resources to implement the educational services component of the individualized education program.

5

EVALUATING INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAMS

M. Stephen Lilly

OF ALL the requirements introduced by Public Law 94-142, perhaps the most challenging is the provision regarding evaluation of whether the instructional objectives set forth in a child's individualized education program are being achieved. The rationale for federally mandated evaluation is clear: Special educators must be concerned about quality as well as quantity of services, and provision of federal money for special education services must be accompanied by evidence that those services are making a significant difference in the lives of children. In effect, the individualized education program has been established as a means of managing special education services. Without a strong evaluation component, the individualized education program could become an empty exercise in planning.

The process of program evaluation has gained greater respectability and understanding among educators during the last decade, primarily due to the growing emphasis on educational accountability and the accompanying evaluation requirements in state and federal grant programs. While it is possible to conceive of many audiences for educational evaluation, realistically it must be recognized that evaluation is usually mandated just before it occurs, and the primary audience in any evaluation is usually the agency, organization, or individual that mandates it.

If the above analysis is accurate, then the first step in designing a program for evaluation of

individualized education programs must be to examine Public Law 94-142 to determine what the law says must be done, thus establishing the "minimum requirements" for such evaluation. If the examination stops with what the law says, however, the resulting evaluation system may satisfy the mandates of the federal law, but might be of minimum benefit to the local and state education agencies that collect and report the data. If this happens, it must be classified as a waste of valuable human resources, since evaluation that has no potential for improving the actual delivery of education is the equivalent of no evaluation at all.

The present chapter will cite federal evaluation requirements as defined in Public Law 94-142 and suggest procedures for assuring the efficient flow of appropriate evaluation data. In addition, the chapter will at times go beyond minimum federal mandates to suggest data systems that might help to establish feedback



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mechanisms to assist teachers, local school systems, and state education agencies in improving special education services for school age children.

With specific reference to individualized education programs, the law calls for "appropriate objective criteria and evaluation procedures and schedules for determining, at least on an annual basis, whether instructional objectives are being achieved." This is extremely important, since it requires that evaluative data specify attainment of specific instructional objectives for individual children, as established in individualized programs.

Under two separate sections of Public Law 94-142, requirements are set forth for the state and local education agencies to report evaluation data regarding the effectiveness of individualized education programs. At the federal level, the US Commissioner of Education is also required to submit data to the Congress. It seems logical, then, that a necessary flow of information between agencies will occur so that aggregate data will be reported (see Figure 1). While it is unreasonable to assume that specific

data on student progress would be submitted for all children receiving special education in the United States and associated territories, it must be anticipated that summary data on achievement of instructional objectives will need to be submitted, and that more specific data on individual children must be available and auditable, at least at the local district level.

In presenting information on program monitoring procedures within this chapter, the specific content required for development of an individualized education program is not included. This information appears in other chapters, and the specific format for presenting the information is contained in appendix 2. Rather, this chapter will recommend methods for collecting data on student progress toward short term instructional objectives and long range goals, as well as for monitoring provision of services as agreed upon in the individualized education program. Suggestions will be made concerning which data might reasonably be kept at the teacher level, local district level, and state level as support for summary data that are submitted to the next administrative level.

	Requested by local education agencies	Requested by state education agencies
Service delivery monitoring	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Screening and assessment information 2. Individualized education programs 3. Service delivery monitor forms 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Summary of referrals 2. Summary of disposition of referrals
Short term objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Actual objectives in individualized education programs 2. Teacher/school reports on objectives achieved 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Summary report: number of objectives set by content category and age level 2. Summary report: number of objectives achieved by content category and age level
Long range goals	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Actual goals in individualized education programs 2. Reports of review meetings 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Summary report: number of goals set by content category and age level 2. Summary report: number of goals achieved by content category and age level

Figure 7

Possible Data Collection Components

STUDENT PROGRESS TOWARD INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES

Perhaps the most far reaching implication of Public Law 94-142 is that teachers must become data collectors, in that they must have data available on student progress toward instructional objectives. The vast majority of student progress measures used in regular and special education are norm referenced and do not provide information on progress toward specific objectives. If this problem is solved by writing objectives with reference to available measuring instruments, the very essence of the individualized education program is violated, since the objectives would be test based, not child based. The only alternative is to collect criterion referenced evaluation data on student performance as specified in the individualized education program, and the teacher is the only person with sufficiently consistent contact with students to collect and store these data.

While it is not possible here to make a complete presentation concerning data collection in the classroom, a basic model for such a system can be presented. Data collection is an area in which the requirements of Public Law 94-142 can be used to improve classroom instruction, since a teacher who keys instruction to specific objectives and makes decisions based on student performance data will be more effective in meeting the needs of individual children.

Elements in a Data Based System

A data based instructional model has five essential elements.

Specification of the instructional problems in performance terms. No performance can be measured unless it can be reliably observed, and reliable observation depends on behavioral descriptions of problems. If a teacher's objective is to decrease a child's hyperactivity, for example, it is impossible to present unambiguous data in support of progress toward this objective, since hyperactivity in the classroom would not lend itself to direct and unambiguous measurement. However, if the objective is to decrease the frequency of inappropriate talk outs or leaving the seat without permission, then direct, reliable assessment is possible. Likewise, improvement of a child's performance in reading is too general to measure, while decreasing the error rate in oral reading or increasing the percentage of comprehension

questions answered correctly represent objectives amenable to reliable measurement.

Collection of preintervention (baseline) data. Prior to setting out to solve an instructional problem stated in performance terms, it is essential to determine the student's preintervention performance. Only on the basis of such baseline data can it be determined whether the instructional objective is appropriate and whether the student is making progress as a result of instruction. In the examples listed above, the teacher might want to know the number of times the student talks out or leaves the seat during a specified time period, the rate of oral reading errors, or the percent of comprehension questions answered correctly. At least three to five instances of baseline data are needed to assure that the data represent typical student performance.

Initiation of instruction. Once baseline data are collected, an instructional intervention designed to solve the problem, that is, move the child toward the instructional objective, is begun. The federal requirements stress only the monitoring of outcomes of instruction; it is not necessary to list specific teaching methods as a part of the individualized education program.

Collection of progress data. Once an instructional program is initiated, it is necessary to continue collecting the same type of data collected during the baseline phase to determine if progress is being made toward the instructional objective. The data collected during this phase must be comparable to that collected during the baseline phase or comparative judgments concerning student progress cannot be made. Public Law 94-142 requires that such data be collected and reported annually, but it is clear that one-shot data collection has little hope of benefiting either the student or the teacher. For reasonable decision making, it is suggested that progress data be collected and noted at least weekly, preferably twice a week.

Instructional decision making. The level of instructional decision making required by Public Law 94-142 is relatively simple and straightforward: Did a given child reach a specified instructional objective? In the life of the classroom teacher, however, that level of decision making is only the tip of the iceberg. More complex instructional decisions involve such questions as:

- Is progress sufficient to justify continuation of the present instructional procedures?

- Do progress data indicate that the instructional objective is appropriate or inappropriate for the student?
- Is the criterion level appropriate for the instructional objective?
- If the objective is reached, what is the appropriate next step?

In short, the progress data provide an ongoing feedback mechanism that forces the teacher to continually assess the appropriateness of instructional objectives and interventions.

Data Keeping Procedures

If a teacher has data on student performance with reference to specific instructional objectives, the data must be maintained in such a way that it can be used both for instructional decision making and as evidence that an objective has or has not been reached. Perhaps the most efficient and effective means of keeping student performance data is through charting procedures that provide a visual display of data over time. While various charting protocols are available, the most important aim is to choose a procedure that will allow quick, easily readable

data displays that can be readily understood by other teachers and parents.

Figure 2 is a sample chart showing data on percent correct for long division problems. The chart clearly displays data for three days of baseline and three days of instruction. The vertical dotted line represents a "phase change" from baseline data collection to the beginning of instruction; the horizontal dotted line represents the criterion level for successful performance as stated in the instructional objective.

Two points must be made about the data based instructional model that has been presented. First, it has been possible to provide only the briefest of introductions to a data based system of instruction, and a good deal of teacher and administrator preparation is needed to make such a system work. Second, the system for data collection on student performance outlined here yields more data than is absolutely necessary to meet the reporting requirements of Public Law 94-142. However, teachers must become more systematic in specifying instructional objectives and maintaining records of student progress if special education

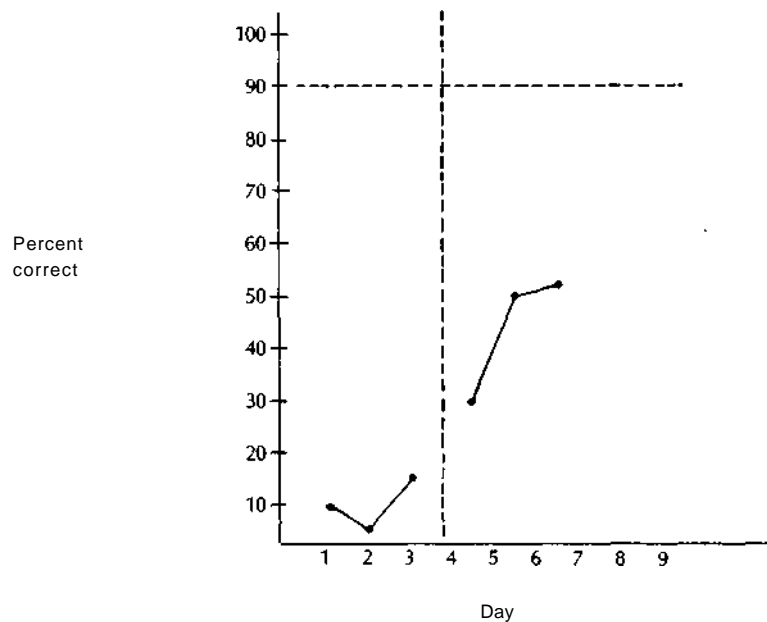


Figure 2

is to demonstrate its true capabilities in meeting the individual needs of students.

In short, the challenge of becoming "data-based" in decision making must be accepted, and the necessary time must be invested to help teachers become effective ongoing evaluators of student performance. This is a challenge of Public Law 94-142. It is hoped that educators accept this challenge and go beyond the minimum requirements of the law to bring about fundamental changes in the extent to which performance data determine instructional decisions.

EVALUATION OF LONG RANGE GOALS

In addition to evaluating progress toward specified instructional objectives, it is also necessary to determine whether the long range (annual) goals included in the individualized education program are being achieved. This is, by its very nature, a more ambiguous process than evaluation of instructional objectives, since the goals are more general in nature and not typically amenable to direct assessment. In effect, a long range goal can be seen as a culmination of a series of short term objectives, and the process for evaluating progress toward goals must be less data based and less objective and must involve more professional judgment than is the case with instructional objectives.

The meeting that must be held at least annually for review of the individualized education program provides a reasonable setting for assessing progress toward long range goals. At this meeting, progress data can be presented and the meeting participants, including the parents, can reach a group decision concerning the extent to which goals have been achieved. The outcome of this group review process is reflected in either a cessation of special education services, which represents the optimum level of goal attainment, or development of a new individualized education program. The new program either contains new goals, retains unmet goals, or contains a combination of new and previously stated, but as yet unattained, goals. Written records of each meeting should indicate the meeting participants' decision concerning student progress toward each goal as stated in the individualized program.

MONITORING PROVISION OF SERVICES

In addition to specifying the projected outcomes of instruction, the individualized educa-

tion program also represents an agreement for services between the school district and the student's parents. A few principles noted in earlier chapters should be reviewed. While it is not a binding contract, it is an agreement for services, and failure to provide services outlined in the program would undoubtedly establish a strong case for a parent appeal. The individualized education program is a program, not a plan, and procedures must be established for monitoring provision of services as well as changes in student performance as a result of service delivery.

Two types of service might be specified in an individualized education program, those of a one time only or short term nature, such as the acquisition of a specially designed piece of equipment needed to implement the program, and those of an ongoing nature, such as assignment to a resource teacher or other instructional setting. Completion of one time only services should be noted through a simple checkoff system, with a notation of the date of completion and followup actions. Ongoing services should be tracked through specification in the individualized education program of types of services to be provided, in what settings, and for what time periods. Persons responsible for service delivery could then submit reports indicating whether the agreed upon services were provided during the time period in question, in the type and quantity specified. In cases in which agreed upon services were not provided, reasons would be specified. This reporting system avoids complicated time monitoring procedures through use of a simple, straightforward checkoff procedure that requires a more detailed response only when agreed upon services are not provided.

An important point to be made with respect to this monitoring system is that a single person should be responsible for gathering data on a regular basis from teachers in a given school district. For example, if a district has area or program supervisors of special education, these supervisors might be responsible for collecting service provision data from the teachers with whom they work. In other districts, principals or the director of special education might be responsible for gathering this information. Data should be collected in the same format throughout a given school district to facilitate reporting of summary data to the state education agency.

6

MEETING TO DEVELOP THE INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM

Richard Sherr

PUBLIC Law 94-142 is very clear in stating that there shall be a meeting to develop the individualized education program, which persons shall attend, and what the outcome shall be. This chapter will specify the necessary components and functions of the meeting and present some aspects which, although implied or routinely a part of good parent relations, are not required by law. The matter of prior staffings, the parties to be involved, scheduling and procedural arrangements, the functions of the various participants, procedures for conduct, and the meeting outcomes and actions will be explored.

PRIOR STAFFINGS

It is clear in the law that decisions regarding a child's placement and program require involvement by the parent or parent surrogate. This refers to the decision making function, however, not to the staff interaction that is usually necessary prior to decision making. The confidence of parents will not be enhanced if they become involved in a meeting in which there is wide discrepancy of results on a child or serious disagreements as to diagnosis or levels of functioning as a result of assessments conducted. For this reason, it would seem necessary that there be prior communication between professionals involved with the child to come to some rough consensus as to the child's functioning levels and disabilities, in addition to the interaction

and sharing of information that is essential in developing an adequate program for a child.

An assessment staffing does not require the full array of professionals that may be required at the meeting which the parents attend, but it should involve those critical staff persons who have evaluated the child and have some clinical or educational data which are needed to form the composite picture of the child. It may be necessary to call upon other professionals to provide data, to further evaluate a certain function, or to gain additional information from the child. Parents are not to be disregarded in this assessment staffing and may be invited.

Parents should understand that the purpose of this meeting is professional sharing to piece together the various bits of information; it is not a meeting from which any action shall flow. The purpose of the prior staffing is not to plan the program of the child, but rather to exchange information and determine if all the necessary



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data are available for the next step, which is the formal meeting with the parents involved. It should be noted that this staffing determines who will be present at the meeting in which the program will be developed with parent involvement.

PARTIES INVOLVED IN THE MEETING

The federal law specifies the minimum persons to be involved in the meeting. It states that there shall be a "representative of the local educational agency or an intermediate educational unit who shall be qualified to provide, or supervise the provision of, specially designed instruction." It further states that there shall be "the teacher" and the parents or guardian of the child and, whenever appropriate, the child. The law does not note any other individuals required to be present.

Good educational practice suggests that there are many other persons who would potentially be involved in developing a program for an exceptional child. The precise list of professionals to be involved would be defined by the unique needs of the child. The list of persons that potentially could be involved include the psychologist, educational diagnostician, school social worker or case manager, counselor, master teacher, and various other specialists such as the physical or occupational therapist and vision consultant. This is not an all inclusive list, but it suggests the type of professional that may be involved in the meeting. The reader is cautioned that professional resources should not be misallocated by involving superfluous people in individualized program meetings. Common sense and judicious use of personnel suggest that only professional persons who have a direct part to play in the meeting should be involved.

It is clear that the parent shall be involved in the meeting; however, "the parent" can be someone other than the natural parent of the child. If the child has met the legal qualifications requiring a parent surrogate, this person may be present. A parent advocate may be present, either accompanying the parents or sent in place of the parents with the right to speak for them. In any case, it should be clearly determined that the person speaking on behalf of the child for the parent has the right to do so. Written documentation might be requested in some instances.

The law states that the person (child) for whom the program is being developed may also be present "whenever appropriate." Unfortunately, a judgment must be made regarding the appropriateness of such attendance by the child. Options are available and must be determined by written policy as to when it is appropriate, but the following suggestions are offered.

The age of the child must be determined to ascertain if the individual is of majority. If so, the individual may make his or her own decision about attendance, as well as all other decisions regarding the development of the individualized education program. This implies the decision making ability of the individual. In many instances, the person is unable to make such a decision and the parent will have to make it. If the child has not reached majority, obviously the parents have the decision making right as to the attendance of the child. In any case, if the parent deems the child essential to the meeting, it is incumbent upon school personnel to permit that attendance even though there may be question as to the wisdom. If the child is in attendance, it is essential that the meeting continue to be productive and that care be taken to avoid cruelty or harm to the person.

SCHEDULING AND PROCEDURAL ARRANGEMENTS

The scheduling of the meeting would appear to be a simple matter. However, there may be a number of professional persons involved and the meeting should be scheduled at the convenience of the parents. The question of developing a mutually agreeable time can often become complex. The focus of the meeting is to develop a program for the child, and the parents are to be considered the primary persons responsible for the child. Therefore, the parents should have the benefit of the doubt in terms of establishing the mutually agreeable time. As many parents are employed, it might become necessary to schedule late afternoon or early morning meetings. The parents clearly are to be equal partners in establishing the time of the meeting; however, they have a responsibility to suggest a reasonable time in view of school schedules. The school system is often hampered by professional employee contracts regarding the time available for professionals to meet during the day. This will need to be reviewed when

the time of the meeting is discussed with parents.

The meeting should be held at the school facility nearest the family. Often, parents are required to travel across a large district in order to attend a meeting regarding the welfare of their child, and this can present a burden. This concept requires that professionals move to meet with the parents rather than requiring all parents to come to them. In a reasonably compact district, it may be as easy for a parent to come to a central location. The district needs to be flexible in meeting with the family.

Another consideration in selecting the meeting site is the school that the child will be attending. It is conceivable that the child will be receiving special education services in a school other than the neighborhood school. The meeting may be held in that location in an effort to acquaint the parents with the facilities. Regardless of the circumstances, fairness to the parents and requirements for professional staff attendance must be balanced.

If the parents are not able to meet or are unwilling to meet, the local school system has a clear responsibility to attempt seriously to bring school and parents together. The law indeed requires that the school be able to demonstrate a true effort at establishing a meeting by documenting telephone calls, correspondence to the parents, or even visits to the home. It would appear that the school district should take steps beyond that to demonstrate their efforts in getting the parents to a meeting. This might take the form of a certified letter to the parents or a sign-off in which they agree that they will not be in attendance. The waiver or sign-off by the parent would be the least desirable action. It should be suggested only after every attempt to have them meet with the school has been unanswered or unacceptable to the parents.

After the parents have agreed to a date, courtesy demands that a written confirmation be forwarded to them to ascertain that both parties understand the time, date, and place, and to eliminate the possibility for error. This same notice should be sent to the staff to be involved so there is a clear understanding of each professional person's responsibility to attend the meeting. It is embarrassing to a school system when a parent is brought into a meeting only to learn that a staff conflict exists and selected professional staff will not be present. In fact, the school can be in jeopardy of the parent

not agreeing to the placement and demanding another meeting if not all the persons agreed upon are present.

There is a possibility that the family may request other professional staff to be present. The school system should honor this request if reasonable. The school must make a determination between the wise use of resources on the one hand and providing the parents with adequate information on the other.

In some instances, the parents and the school are not able to agree upon a mutually acceptable program for the child. It is possible that both the school and the parents wish to gather more information, undertake further assessments, or be permitted additional time to review the proposals presented by either party. In such a case, the necessity for another meeting is clear, and the same procedures will need to be followed.

FUNCTIONS OF PARTICIPANTS

The Chairperson

The meeting should be chaired by the person referred to in the law as "representative of the local educational agency . . . who shall be qualified to provide, or supervise the provision of, specially designed instruction." Assuming that individual is an administrator or in a supervisory capacity, he or she should have the requisite leadership skills to chair a meeting as well as sufficient knowledge of the total system to properly coordinate the various program components of the individualized education program once it is developed. As chairperson of the meeting, the administrator should not only preside over the meeting, but should also assume responsibility for determining that all necessary persons are present. The chairperson should either present the necessary assessment information and data or call upon other individuals for their presentations. It is the chairperson's responsibility to present the various recommendations for programming to the parents and to act as spokesperson for the local or intermediate area school system.

As a means of providing continuity, the meeting chairperson might present the levels at which the child is functioning, what the school proposes to be the annual goals and short term objectives, and the specific services to be provided. The chairperson should be responsible for determining and noting when the ser-

vices are to begin and what procedures are to be carried out for purposes of evaluation. The chairperson may not be able to respond in depth to all questions asked by the parents and should rely on the other professionals in attendance.

The chairperson should also advise parents of their rights. The method for conveying these rights will no doubt vary from district to district. However, the chairperson should have available all the necessary paperwork and forms to present to the parents so that they can be integrated into the discussion.

The chairperson is responsible for the various housekeeping duties associated with the meeting, such as arranging for a room and seating. If the necessary arrangements are properly made, the school is viewed by the participants in a more positive way. These items may seem trivial, but it is awkward to attend a meeting in a public place and then have to search through the building for a location in which to meet. Other duties include reproducing any data to be shared with the parents, having information available regarding the community service agencies to which the school might be referring the family for other than educational or special educational services, and generally acting as a resource person to the family.

A key role of the chairperson is setting the tone for the meeting. The meeting, and subsequent dealings between the school and family, will be more beneficial to the child if a friendly and positive atmosphere is evident. If the chairperson indicates in any manner that the meeting is a time waster or an imposition on other activities, or establishes a negative tone, the parents will likely react in a similar fashion. If the school and the parents function together in a positive manner, the best interests of the child will be served. If an antagonistic mood develops between the parties, it could ultimately be a disservice to the child.

Finally, the chairperson is responsible for determining that the basic ingredients of the individualized education program are present as required by law, that it is completed within local and state guidelines, and that all components of the program as stated in writing are reasonable and feasible.

The Teacher

The child's teacher performs the function of explaining to the parents the various classroom

techniques that will be used to meet the annual goals. Many of the specific objectives of the education program will be explained to the parent by the teacher. Ideally, the teacher would elaborate at the meeting on the materials, why one strategy was chosen over another, and so forth. The teacher should be responsible for responding to any questions the parent might have on events that occur within the classroom.

As the person most responsible for implementing the child's program, the teacher becomes the main emissary from the school system to the family. It is important that a good working relationship be developed between the teacher and the family. As the teachers play a key role with the parents, they must be prepared to fulfill their duties and responsibilities regarding the development and implementation of the individualized education program. School districts must develop training programs to orient the teaching staff to individualized education programs, to solid principles of interaction with parents, and to other necessary activities judged by the system to be essential to the meeting.

Other Professionals

Other professionals may be involved in the meeting. They should be prepared for their particular role by the person chairing the meeting and advised on how to perform their role. All professionals should be encouraged to speak in language that parents understand rather than using professional jargon. All specialized personnel should remember that they are a part of a team contributing to the development of a program for a child, and no one discipline or activity shall supercede another. Professionals need to realize the equal status that is to be shared by parents and professionals. They may need to practice communicating their professional skills to parents so that parents are not commanded, told exactly what to do and how, or talked down to. Professionals should be reminded prior to the meeting that they should not become defensive and that parents have a right to speak and a legal right to be heard and dissent.

PARENTAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The federal law clearly indicates that the child and parents have rights, and the law is structured in such a way as to guarantee those rights.

The child and parents do have full status at the meeting, and they should be communicated with and related to in a manner that denotes this full status. Parents have clear rights and responsibilities as set forth in the law. Parents have the responsibility to deal openly and honestly with the school system, accurately describing their child's behavior and reasonably and realistically requesting services.

In addition, there are other specific functions that parents should perform for their child. The parent is the individual who asks the searching questions of the system as to why a procedure is necessary, how it is to be done, and why that particular procedure was selected over any other possible choice. It is also the role of the parent to act as the advocate for the child and, through the proper and defined channels, challenge the system if there are aspects presented within the individualized education program that are not desirable to them. When a challenge is made, parents must remember that to do so does not necessarily make them an adversary to the system. They are simply exercising their right to require the system to explain the procedures and defend them.

If the child is present, it is important to remember that the child does not have any more rights and privileges than the parent. If there are serious disagreements between the parents, the child, and/or the school, there is a route to be followed that provides an impartial review.

At times, parents may complain, argue, or display other behaviors that make it difficult for the school not to "put them in their place"; however, doing so does not give the parents the status they deserve. This does not imply that school personnel and other professionals are to be abused by parents; it does mean that every attempt should be made to afford the parents their true status and keep the discussion at an amicable level.

The matter of time may be an issue as well, since some parents will need more time than may have been scheduled for them. In order to effect the communication and develop the spirit of cooperation that is so desirable, it is important that parents be afforded the necessary time to develop an understanding of their child's status and placement and also to develop the beginnings of a future relationship. Common sense indicates that time spent in the initial meeting is time well spent, as it can pre-

clude the necessity for a future hearing or save a great amount of time in future debate and disagreement. It may be desirable for the meeting to be terminated and reconvened at a later time when adequate time is available for the discussion required.

RESULTS OF THE MEETING

The ultimate result of the meeting is that parents and professionals agree upon the individualized education program developed for the child. This includes the points required by law and any other necessary components that school districts or intermediate education systems have added for purposes of local policy. As required, this is a written document according to the format developed by the school system, and it describes all components agreed upon. A copy of this should be available to the parents and a copy should be on file for the child. Further, this document should be available to all other professional personnel involved in delivering the program to the child. It is important that school systems review their records policy and procedures regarding how the individualized education program shall be filed, which persons shall have access to it, and how the necessary copies shall be made available within the district records policy.

If local procedure indicates that the individualized education program is drafted by a member of the professional staff prior to the meeting, it is important to realize that any changes negotiated in the actual meeting are to be made on all other documents. When the individualized education program is completed, it should be signed by the parents and all persons who participated in its development. It is important that the document the parents sign is the document that indicates the program. This may seem like a simple matter; however, in a meeting wherein a great deal of information is discussed and ideas exchanged, it is possible that important matters may not be on the written document that the parents and school sign. It is important to remember that parents will want a copy of their child's individualized education program. If this is not available at the end of the meeting, then arrangements should be made to provide them with a copy as soon as possible following the meeting, but within 10 days.

This procedure is a relatively simple matter, assuming that the parties agree by the end of the

meeting. If there is disagreement, it is essential that efforts be made to work out the differences and come up with an acceptable program that will benefit the child. Conceivably, there may be critical differences of opinion between the school system or intermediate educational system and the parents despite every effort to develop a solution. In such cases, the school system is compelled to turn to the legally prescribed procedure to come to an agreement. According to state policy or federal law, the disagreement proceeds to a hearing by an impartial person and the ultimate decision made by that impartial hearing officer.

RESPONSIBILITY

These procedures detail how one should establish and conduct the individualized education program meeting with families. These procedures assume that all necessary persons are involved, that school and family are in agree-

ment, and that the required paperwork is satisfactorily completed at the conclusion of the meeting. There is one final step that remains for both the school personnel and the family. The most important step in the life of the exceptional child is the delivery of the program of services agreed upon and stated in the individualized education program. Although schools are aware that the program is not a binding contract, the school has a professional and moral obligation to implement the program for the child so that a free, appropriate public education is provided to each handicapped child.

Once the individualized education program has been developed, the teachers and support staff necessary for implementation must see that the program begins and that the child works toward successful completion of the annual goals and short term objectives.

7

THE TEACHER'S ROLE IN DEVELOPMENT

Veronica C. Garcia

Mary Pinkelton

IN THE past, teachers have usually had a minor role in selecting resources necessary to plan the educational program of handicapped children. It has not been uncommon for administrators, psychologists, physicians, social workers, and other professionals to totally exclude teachers in the decision making process regarding placement and program. More often than not, however, teachers are able to offer valuable insight about the group learning situation of the class and the supportive services needed to carry out the student's instructional program.

Teachers must have an active role in the development of the individualized education program. (For the purposes of this primer, the term *teacher* can also refer to other personnel, such as speech therapists, when they are the persons primarily responsible for achieving the instructional objectives.) Teachers must be treated as equal partners by administrators and other professionals in the process. Equal teacher involvement establishes a common basis for understanding among the parent, the teacher, and all involved parties. Too frequently the parent has been promised a program by the administration that the teacher could not feasibly deliver. It is important that teachers demand and achieve full and equal participation in the development of each child's individualized education program.

It is equally important for all professionals and parents to realize that the teacher does not carry

the entire responsibility for the preparation, production, and implementation of the individualized education program. The responsibility for decisions must be shared by all persons developing the program. It is not always the teacher's responsibility to coordinate and write up the outcomes of the meeting. In fact, as mentioned in the previous chapter, it is suggested that this be the responsibility of the chairperson.



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WHO MUST ATTEND?

Public Law 94-142 requires that "the teacher" be involved in the meeting to develop the child's individualized education program. However, the proposed rules (December 1976) broadly interpret the term *teacher* to include:

- (b) The child's teacher or teachers, special or regular, or both, who have a direct responsibility for implementing the child's individualized education program.

For clarity, a distinction is made between the roles of a *sending teacher* and a *receiving teacher*. The sending teacher is the person in whose class or program the student currently is enrolled. This person may be either a regular or special education teacher. Based on the eligibility criteria determined and the age level of the student, it is often relatively easy for a school district to identify a receiving teacher.

While it may not be possible to have all the teachers responsible for implementing the program present at the meeting, the teacher who has the major responsibility must be designated to attend. Because of the organization of most school districts, this is usually feasible at the elementary school building level. It becomes more difficult to include the teacher(s) when the student is in a middle or high school program.

Of immediate importance to teachers, then, is to be actively involved as school districts restructure their plans to organize professionals required to develop individualized education programs. Teachers everywhere must ask the question, "How will I be involved?" Of course, no one procedure is right. What is appropriate is that the teaching personnel involved be those that can adequately plan for and implement the student's program. For those students whose primary education will be in regular programs, it becomes necessary to identify and strengthen the link between the regular and special education programs. For those students who appear to need a self-contained classroom program, it is obvious that the teacher(s) responsible for all or nearly all of the implementation of the child's program must be present at the meeting.

Once it is clearly designated how teachers will be involved, it is important to determine who will be involved. In many instances, both the sending and potential receiving teachers are asked to collect information.

In determining what information teachers have to collect, report, and be responsible for monitoring, it is possible to divide the individualized education program process into three phases. In some instances the phases overlap, but for purposes of this discussion they may be conceptualized as:

- Preparation.
- Production.
- Implementation.

While other personnel are involved concurrently, the focus here is on the role of the teacher during each phase.

PREPARATION

It is the major responsibility of the administrator or designee to collect all information required during the assessment phase. In many cases at the elementary level, the building principal coordinates the necessary information regarding what educational services, programs, and/or assessments the child is involved in at the time of referral. If the child is currently in a public school program, whether regular or special, then it becomes the responsibility of the current teacher to provide the bulk of the educational information that will be used to develop the child's individualized education program.

Often, the current teacher has conferred with the parents, reviewed all existing educational records, and performed informal diagnostic assessments in the various curriculum areas. In some instances, and particularly at the secondary level, the teacher will have talked with the student about past and current learning problems.

There are some guidelines the present teacher might use as a reference in reviewing what information is available about the student. After making sure that the student's folder contains current test data, case history, hearing and vision screening reports, and medical history when applicable, the teacher should draft, at least mentally, a sketch of the student's performance at school and, if appropriate, on the job.

The teacher will also want to consider the student's social adjustment. Questions to ask might include: Are drugs or alcohol a problem? Is the student's maturity commensurate with his age? Is there any history of delinquency? Is the

student on probation? Is the student currently involved in psychological therapy? Are there problems at home with parents or siblings? For those students who have been or will be involved in prevocational programs, a review of skills achieved or necessary will be important.

When considering school performance, the teacher will want to document the student's learning style, attendance patterns, suspensions or expulsions, and any disciplinary problems in the classroom. If appropriate, the teacher should document how the student relates to peers and any reaction to authority figures. After reviewing this information, the teacher will want to note any discrepancies between test performance on aptitude, achievement, or intelligence tests and actual performance in both the classroom and home.

If the student is currently enrolled in a non-public school, the administrator must notify the school that all necessary assessment data must be collected and readily available to the local or intermediate education agency for review when the individualized education program is developed. In these cases, it is most helpful to invite the teacher from the private school to work with the parents and the teachers when the program is developed.

If a tentative receiving teacher has been identified, there are some information collection activities that teacher can conduct prior to the meeting. Minimally, this might include a description of the age range of the students, the objectives of the program, the general functioning ability of other students in the class, and a description of general subject areas taught. The teacher should include any special equipment or materials available in the program.

PRODUCTION

When the meeting is convened to develop the student's individualized education program, there will be at least three persons in attendance. The administrator or designee should be capable of speaking for the school system and making the necessary decisions to commit whatever human, fiscal, or material resources are required to implement an appropriate program for the child. The teacher(s) who will be responsible for program implementation will be present and so will the parents. The law allows the student (child) to be present "whenever appropriate." Because educators realize the importance of involving students as

soon as possible, more students, particularly at the secondary level, should and will be involved in the development of their education program.

The administrator must set the positive tone for the meeting. A summary of all assessment data and the determination of present level(s) of performance will be reviewed. In some instances, other professionals may be present, and this information will be reported and determination of present level(s) of performance will be identified across all domain areas during the meeting. This is the essential first step in developing an individualized education program.

As the information regarding present levels of performance is described, it is imperative that the parents, the teacher(s), and the administrator have a clear understanding of what the child can do. During the discussion, methods and procedures that have worked successfully in the past will be identified. At this point, it is always important to check with the parents to verify the present performance levels with what the child does at home. Occasionally there are conflicts of opinion regarding what the child can do.

The process of working with present performance level information and building to identify annual goals is not often an easy task. It begins, simplistically, with the knowledge that the child is here now—where can the child be educationally within the year?

Throughout this phase, the receiving teacher will play the most critical role. Once the annual goals and short term objectives are identified, it will be the teacher's responsibility to apply professional knowledge and techniques toward the successful implementation of the program.

As the individualized education program is developed, the services required will be documented. It is critical at this time that the teacher be alert to the available and recommended resources. If the teacher is requested to provide services that are not available, this is the time to specify inservice training that will be required to implement the service. If auxiliary personnel are needed to work with the teacher, this must be specified. If there is a particular piece of equipment or special materials that are critical to the implementation of the program, then this must be discussed.

Throughout all discussions during development of the individualized education program, it is important that the parents, teacher(s), student, and administrator work to develop the most appropriate program that can be imple-

mented in the least restrictive environment. When working with well meaning professionals and parents, it is often difficult to avoid designing the best program possible. The intent of Public Law 94-142 is to provide each handicapped child with the most appropriate program, realizing that this might not necessarily be the best program in the world.

In some instances, a child's education program will be implemented in a private school or an institution. As soon as that alternative is identified, it is imperative that at least an administrator, but preferably a teacher, from the private school or institution work with the parents and the local or intermediate education agency to develop the child's program. A child whose special education will be provided in a private school or institution is entitled to all the rights guaranteed to handicapped students in a public school. It follows, then, that *all* teachers responsible for implementing the individualized education program must be involved in its development.

It is critical that teacher(s) and parents understand the reporting schedules and have a clear knowledge of the criteria that will be used to evaluate the education program. When some services will be provided by other agencies such as vocational rehabilitation or mental health, it is important to document who is responsible for

coordination and followup so that everyone is notified of the successful implementation of the program.

IMPLEMENTATION

At this phase, the individualized education program has been approved and the task of working with the student toward mastery of the short term objectives striving for attainment of the annual goals is initiated. Within the classroom, the teacher maps out the teaching strategies necessary to formulate the daily lesson plans that will enable the child to successfully master the skills "mapped out" in the education program.

It is the teacher's responsibility to immediately notify the supervisor or administrator of any promised services that are not being provided. Student progress should be continuously noted and reported periodically, often coinciding with the regular school reporting time. Clear documentation of the student's attainment of short term objectives leading to mastery of the annual goals will produce the baseline information necessary to formulate the annual review and, if appropriate, the design of an individualized education program for the next school year.

8

BEYOND THE INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM: THE INSTRUCTIONAL PLAN

Josephine Hayes

ONCE the individualized education program is developed and the annual goals and short term objectives are specified, the classroom intervention to successfully meet those requirements is initiated. The individualized program can be an effective tool for teachers to monitor pupil progress.

MONITORING PUPIL PROGRESS

One alternative is to conduct a review before, during, and after sequenced instructional objectives are organized by the teacher during any evaluation period. The initial review is given at the beginning of the evaluation period and covers an entire sequence of short term objectives. The results are recorded and used when planning for the student's instruction.

Students who have the same sequence of objectives can be reviewed individually or as a group. This step helps eliminate unnecessary teaching because, although identical sequences may be written for several children, gaps in learning often result when some students know some of the sequential steps necessary to reach the short term objectives. Scanning the recorded review results permits grouping children working toward the same annual goal for discrete instruction on short term objectives. The date of the pretest and an indication of mastery or nonmastery should be noted.

Interim review of progress documents the child's readiness for instruction on the next

objective. It is necessary to review at the end of the evaluation period, or sooner if the student has mastered the entire sequence, because some students will pass an objective on an interim test but fail it later. Information on retention is useful to the teacher when planning, so adequate time is allotted for review. Comparing the length of time the child has taken to master objectives will also aid in future planning. The documented information teachers have as a result of keeping these records will aid them in making decisions on the appropriateness of placement and in updating the individualized education program.

Middle and high school students who have had input into the instruction they are receiving may record their own progress. Due to the individualized nature of the prescribed objectives, criterion referenced or objective based assessment is recommended for monitoring pupil progress.



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When nonmastery is noted during any of the assessment situations, analysis of possible causes must follow. The teacher examines the strategies through which instruction was delivered. If a change in strategy, method, or technique may produce desired results, such changes are introduced and reinstruction of the failed objective proceeds. If the strategy was appropriate, the teacher may examine the resources used in delivering the instruction. If additional resources are needed, or resource modifications are called for, reinstruction of failed objectives proceeds as soon as the appropriate changes in resources are made. It may happen that examination of all possible sources yields the conclusion that the objective itself was unrealistic for a particular child. If this is the case, the objective must be changed. Changing objectives originally prescribed during an individualized program meeting necessitates involving the original planners to search for more appropriate goals for the student under consideration.

If a student masters all the prescribed objectives prior to the end of the year, instruction should follow the planned sequence farther at the pace the student is achieving. The teacher should also communicate this progress to the original planners, indicate the new objectives, and adjust new annual goals that will be attempted.

FEEDBACK

Progress on prescribed goals should be reported to parents, to other teachers working with the students, to administrators, and to the students themselves. Public Law 94-142 mandates at least an annual case review of each student. Information documented at the year end conference includes whether the student has achieved the annual goals (either the original or modified ones) and what program modifications, if any, are called for as a result. Support may be increased or decreased, contact hours with special instructors may be changed, or a diagnostic update may be indicated. The student's year end goals become the present level statement for the following school year, so it is most important to indicate the student's exact progress at the year's end.

To best accomplish the desired results, however, pupil progress should be reported at regular intervals throughout the year, not only

at year's end. The regular reporting periods in each school district are a logical time for reporting progress in exceptional child programs to parents of handicapped children. The form used to record short term objectives can be duplicated and sent home with the regular report card every six or nine weeks. The teacher will have documented which objectives were mastered and the dates of mastery. Objectives prescribed for the next evaluation period will provide the next step in the skill sequence leading to the annual goal. Reporting at intervals during the year enables the teacher to gauge how realistic the annual goals set for each student were. By midyear, for example, approximately half of the objectives should have been mastered. If this is not the case, the pace of instruction will need to be quickened or perhaps the goals were set too high. Teacher planning is greatly assisted by periodic evaluation of pupil progress.

SUGGESTIONS FOR CLASSROOM ORGANIZATION

Since the individualized education program is a document setting forth an agreed upon program, it must be accessible to teachers, parents, and administrators, and when appropriate to the students themselves. One convenient way to keep the teacher's copies of the forms for an entire class is to use a three ring binder with a tab for each student in alphabetical order. When planning daily lessons, the notebook can be easily carried and all the vital data is readily accessible. Parents and administrators will appreciate such organization, and accountability will be made easier.

Keeping the documents in a folder in a file cabinet is another alternative. However, psychological and diagnostic information and many other forms and reports are stored in this manner, and the amount of paper to be waded through is potentially voluminous. Since the individualized education program is used constantly throughout the year, keeping these forms all together and separate from other reports may be desirable. If the teacher wishes, however, a copy of the current short term objectives may be kept in a folder that is accessible to each student. These objectives will be updated each reporting period. This folder may also contain assignments and/or completed work related to the objectives. The entire con-

tents of the folder may then be sent home at the end of the reporting period. Those students who are able to keep track of their own progress can be taught to record dates of mastery on the short term objectives form. The teacher may hold individual conferences to discuss pupil progress, to increase motivation, to encourage independence or self direction, and to set the stage for future instruction.

Students working toward the same annual goal may be grouped together for instructional purposes by charting sequences whenever appropriate. The students' names may appear across the top of the chart, with the steps in the skill sequence down the left hand column. Such

a classroom chart can also become a motivational device and help students focus on the purpose of instruction.

Each district will have requirements as to long range storage of forms for auditing purposes. It is vital, however, for the student's next teacher to have the previous year's program forms available when planning instruction for a new year. Logistics, such as copying costs or conferences between current and future teachers, will be important considerations to include in district procedures in order to ensure continuation of an appropriate education for all handicapped students.

9

PARENT PARTICIPATION

Lynn Winslow

PREVIOUS chapters have dealt with the functions of the many professional educators who are responsible for the planning and implementation of a child's individualized education program. While reference has been made to the roles and responsibilities of the parents, this chapter is designed to highlight some specifics for the parents of a handicapped child.

ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT PARENTS

In attempting to determine what the role of parents is or ought to be in the development of an individualized education program, it is necessary to start with the parent's responsibility. Parents monitor, guide, and act as a resource for a whole set of personal values that they want and hope their children will incorporate into their own life styles. While parents realize that they do not have total control over their children's lives, they share a partnership with the school in developing their child's individualized program.

Mistakes will be made, but there are two important points to remember to avoid that pitfall as much as possible. First, the individualized education program is not a contract. It is not binding; it can be changed. Latitude exists for flexibility and to make needed educational changes when necessary. Second, parents of an exceptional child have a wealth of valuable information about their own child that others may not have. They are a resource to the profes-

sionals, and it is their responsibility to share this information as they continue to monitor their child's education needs.

IDENTIFICATION OF A PROBLEM

Sooner or later, parents realize that their child has some unique learning needs. The person who confirms or identifies that there is a problem (whether labeled specifically at this point or not) can often vary. Depending on the type of handicap and the severity, a doctor may be the first to mention something. Or the parent or a teacher may express concern. It is also possible that a child may ask for help. It is not important who initiates concern, but it is important to try to understand why. What was observed that led to this concern? It is advisable for parents to start a notebook at this point. It is easy to forget conversations that may be important later. A notebook can help organize



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thoughts, keep everything in one place, and serve as a reminder of what has been done for the child.

When talking with professionals, parents should not be afraid to question a word or phrase they do not understand. Educational and medical jargon can be confusing and they are full of everyday words that are used differently. Asking what is meant will not slow down any meeting or conversation. Parents should be certain they understand what others are saying about their own child.

TYPES OF INFORMATION

There are many kinds of information parents will discuss with professionals. The following four types of information might help parents organize a working notebook.

Informal Behavioral Observations

These will include parental observations as well as those of any professionals the parents may be in contact with. Frequently, children are observed as behaving and/or reacting very differently at home than they do at school. A parent's observations are important and should be recorded. They could be meaningful and well worth sharing at a later date.

Formal Observations

These observations are available to parents from the child's school as well as from doctors. Any medical, educational, or psychological test results should be entered into the notebook. Any questions about these reports should be listed, including terms used and the person who conducted the assessments. The answers should be noted so that they may be referred to at a later time.

Significant Differences

If at any point while collecting information parents note any significant difference, they should be sure to record it. Sometimes there is a difference between what a test says a child can do or what a parent knows a child can do and what the child is actually achieving.

Intervention Attempts to Date

Any attempts that have been made to change or intervene in a child's handicap should be noted, along with any approach that seemed to work.

COMMUNICATION

The importance of communication cannot be stressed enough. Much of the success of an individualized education program will depend on good communication. A parent notebook may help. During a phone conversation or any meeting about the child, the parent should take notes including the date, time, place, and name of the person spoken to. Taking notes often assures that the information will be more accurate.

The parents' communication with their child is very important. Obviously, the depth of this communication will depend on the age of the child and the severity of the handicap. Parents should be sure that their child understands their love and that they are trying to help.

One rule worth mentioning: At no time should parents make negative comments to their child about a professional who is involved with the child. Parents should receive and record information, but they must not put the child in the difficult position of having to "take sides." Comments made about the child's handicap can be misinterpreted by the child *and* by his or her brothers and sisters.

REFERRAL FOR ASSESSMENT

Requesting assessment information does not mean that a child necessarily requires special education. Perhaps remedial help or tutoring will suffice. Parents should not prejudice the placement or service recommended for their child. Their first step should be to set up a contact person they can relate to, trust, and depend on to follow the case through. This person might be the child's current teacher, a special education teacher, a guidance counselor, a social worker, or the principal. Perhaps the family doctor is willing to help in this way.

Once a formal (written) referral for assessment has been made, the parent should be provided with both written and oral notice of intent to conduct the assessment(s) on their child. The following information should be provided to parents by the school (Abeson, Bolick, & Hass, 1975):

- The reasons the evaluation has been requested and the name of the person(s) who initiated the process.
- The evaluation procedures and instruments that will be used.

- A description of the scope of the procedures and the instruments that will be used.
- A statement of the right to review the procedures and instruments that will be used.
- A statement of the right to review and obtain copies of all records related to the request for the evaluation and to give this authority to a designee of the parent as indicated in writing.
- A description of how the findings of the evaluation are to be used, by whom, and under what circumstances.
- A statement of the right to refuse permission for the evaluation with the understanding that the local education agency can then request a hearing to present its reasons and try to obtain approval to conduct the evaluation.
- A statement of the right of the parent to obtain an independent educational evaluation, either from another public agency with the fee determined on a sliding scale, or privately at full cost to the parent.
- A declaration that the child's educational status will not be changed without the parent's knowledge and written approval or completion of the due process procedures described in the right to hearing section of these procedures.
- Identification of the education agency employee (chairperson of the evaluation team) to whom the parent response should be sent and the deadline for response given in terms of the day, date, and time. In no case should the deadline be less than 10 school days nor more than 15 school days after receipt of the notice.
- Do I have any records from my child's doctor that will give additional information?
- Have I listed any home observations that either reinforce or disprove the possibility of a handicap?
- Have I recorded observations, past and present, from the school?
- Are test scores, past and present, recorded?
- What questions have I forgotten to ask at previous meetings or discussions?
- Is there any material, upon review, that I still don't understand?

Parents will be informed by the school as to a proposed date and time for the meeting. Although the law states that the meeting must be at a mutually convenient time, parents should be as flexible as possible. There are just two of them and there may be many school personnel involved. Regardless of when the meeting is held, once the parents agree to a meeting, they must be sure to be there on time. They should know ahead of time exactly who will be attending by name and what they do.

The professionals who attend will have had at least one staffing on the child, if not more. The school staff who has worked with, tested, or will work with the child often meet and exchange assessment information prior to meeting with parents. According to local district policy, parents may be invited to attend this meeting. If parents have the opportunity to attend a staffing, it is advisable that they go. At the meeting, parents will review relevant information regarding their child to develop the following components of the individualized education program:

- The child's unique educational needs.
- The child's present level(s) of educational functioning.
- The written annual goals and short term objectives the child is expected to achieve.
- The program services the child should receive.

When working with professionals to establish annual goals and short term objectives for their child, parents should keep in mind activities that can be done at home and ask what they can do to help. Perhaps they can listen to their child read or review arithmetic tables. If the child's annual goals include self help skills, teachers or therapists can demonstrate useful techniques for the home that will build on the skills the child is learning at school.

PREPARING FOR THE MEETING

Following the assessment, a meeting, which can be informal, should be scheduled to inform the parents of the outcomes. Parents should request copies of any test results that have been obtained on their child, making sure that they understand these results and adding them to their notebook.

In order to prepare for the meeting that will serve to develop their child's individualized education program, it is essential that parents review most of the information they have collected in their notebook and spend some time thinking about what they want to learn at the meeting. Questions such as the following may help parents organize their thoughts:

At the meeting, parents will be provided more information about their child's disability and any needed special education and related services. Parents should know the present level of educational functioning and be aware of annual goals and short term objectives. Where will the child be placed? Are there alternatives to this placement? Have provisions been made for the child to be with nonhandicapped children? Parents will also want to know when the effectiveness of this unique program will be evaluated and determine when the school will report the child's progress.

Whether or not parents have attended the meeting, they should receive a copy of the results of the meeting. They should not hesitate to call on the teacher for any necessary clarification.

INVOLVING THE CHILD

There can be no hard and fast rule for parents as to when and how to involve their child in the meeting to develop an individualized education program. This would depend on the age of the child, the severity of the handicap, and how well they feel the child can handle the situation. If a child is under the age of majority, the decision belongs to the parents. Should it be determined that, for one reason or another, the child is not ready to take part in a meeting such as this, an alternate arrangement should be considered. Perhaps the parent and child could sit down with the teacher and go over the results of the meeting. It is important that the child be aware of the annual goals whenever possible, and also realize that this is an effort that does not end at the close of a school day.

PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS

The system does not always work the way the law says it should. If along the way things do not work the way parents know they should—for instance, if they are not allowed to assess their child's files, are not included at some stage of program development, or reject the proposed education program—there are steps they can follow. If at any phase of the planning and programming for their child, parents feel that they are not getting cooperation, they should inform the administrator of special education they they are aware of their rights and are trying to accept the accompanying responsibility. Usually the key person to contact is the person in the school

system designated as responsible for coordinating special education.

Once disputes or disagreements are spelled out between the parents and the school, the law sets forth procedures that parents can use to appeal the school's decision regarding the individualized education program for their child. The administrator of special education will be able to tell them how to request a hearing once they have rejected the program.

Specific procedures for an impartial hearing are set forth in Public Law 94-142. Naturally, it is preferable for parents not to have to go through a hearing. If they do, however, it is important that they be as organized as possible. This is another time when a notebook will help. Parents should remain as calm as possible. Although this can be an emotional experience, it is important they they try to control their frustrations and possible anger. Adversarial positions only cause bitter feelings between the parent and the school. It should be remembered that parents and the school are working together to provide the most appropriate program for the handicapped child.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

There are some resources that parents will want to have available. The following suggestions are offered to parents as the beginning of a resource list. Parents may want to add to the list and include it in their notebook.

- Obtain a copy of Public Law 94-142 from your member of Congress.
- Obtain a copy of your current state special education law and regulations from the special education division of your state department of education.
- Review your district's local education agency's special education application. It will tell you district procedures and how they work for you. This application is usually obtained from the director of special education.
- Identify active parent groups. Not only is it comforting to know you are not alone, but they can also provide "people resources" who can often identify other resources for you.
- Be informed: Obtain the most current literature.

All of these resources will assist parents to be informed of the rights that their handicapped

child is extended so that he or she might receive a free, appropriate public education.

Parents have had great impact on the passage of legislation that affords basic rights and protection to the education of their handicapped child. Now it is up to parents to accept the responsibility of monitoring and involving themselves in their child's education.

REFERENCE

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DEVELOPING AN ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESS: SOME DECISIONS

Scottie Torres

SIGNIFICANT decisions must be made before a process can be implemented at the local or intermediate education agency level to insure that each handicapped child is provided with an individualized education program. This chapter will explore three major areas relative to establishing an administrative process to develop individualized education programs. Decisions regarding administrative procedures, personnel issues, and alternative organizational patterns will be presented for consideration.

Throughout this primer, each author has presented various aspects of the development of an individualized education program. Each chapter has raised some significant questions that require decisions on the part of administrators, parents, and the professional staff responsible for developing the child's education program. The real impact on the child occurs when administrators identify the necessary decisions to be translated into an effective administrative process for developing an individualized education program for each handicapped child.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

Development of the child's individualized education program must begin at the local or intermediate education agency that has the legal responsibility for providing a free, appropriate public education for that child. In order for that education agency to respond to the requirements of Public Law 94-142, some deci-

sions must be made regarding administrative procedures to be used within the school system. Several assumptions must be made about the education agency's capability to develop individualized education programs in accordance with the requirements of Public Law 94-142:

- One person has been designated as the administrator of special education on a full time or part time basis to develop or refine the administrative process within the school system to oversee the development of each individualized program.
- There is a clear recognition that each education agency must develop a clear, written policy that describes the special education administrative procedures to be used to guarantee each handicapped child his or her rights as set forth by state law and Public Law 94-142.



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- Districtwide procedures will be used so that each handicapped child has an individualized education program.

For some school districts, each of these assumptions is real and presently in place. Research conducted over the past two years by the Special Education Administrative Policy (SEAP) Project at The Council for Exceptional Children indicates, however, that many school districts have a great deal of work to do in order to make these assumptions reality. As soon as one person has been made responsible for coordinating the school's administrative process and written policies are available to explain that process, then using the same procedures across the entire district will help guarantee handicapped children equal access to the right to have an individualized education program detailed for their needs.

There are some decisions that will have to be made by each district in order to comply with Public Law 94-142 in developing individualized programs. The first regards the use of forms. What information will be collected and reported and who will have to sign off on the forms will dictate, in part, what they look like (see appendix 2 for a sample individualized education program form).

Each school district will have to decide how to involve teachers and other support personnel in the meeting(s) to develop individualized education programs. In some instances, the amount of time spent and when meetings take place will depend on teachers' schedules and on contract negotiations. And, as previously mentioned, the administrative process developed to include teachers at the secondary level will be quite different than the process at the elementary level.

Based on current mandates of state law and Public Law 94-142, each school district will have to analyze its current capabilities in developing individualized programs. Any discrepancies between what is currently being provided and what is mandated in law will serve as an indicator of any necessary changes in the administrative process. Once the needed changes are determined, it is necessary to review the requirements of individualized education programs in terms of personnel issues.

PERSONNEL ISSUES

The most important personnel decisions will focus on determining who will be involved in

developing the individualized program. Some state laws mandate a minimum number and type of personnel. In those instances, the only decisions involve assigning names to the types of personnel required. However, some districts separate the assessment and eligibility responsibilities from the placement functions. Different staff usually respond to the first tasks of assessment for eligibility and other staff are responsible for placement decisions. When these functions are separated, fewer professional staff are required at the meetings.

Regardless of how a district outlines its procedures, all staff will be required to receive some amount of inservice training. In some instances, this will be an awareness session on the philosophy and intent of individualized program development in the district. It will be important for all personnel to understand what, if any, their role will be in the actual development of an individualized program. For some, in-depth training will be required to provide experience in collecting and reporting information required in the individualized education program.

Schools also have a responsibility to educate the parents in the administrative procedures used. All parents need some information on how an individualized program works for their child. Some parents will want and require more extensive information. This will result in some professionals providing more extensive parent training.

In each case, in order to effectively develop an individualized education program and maximize the amount of time set aside for those tasks, all persons must recognize the importance of group dynamics. For some parents and professional staff, group process techniques will have to be reviewed so that the meeting(s) to develop the program results in a document that reflects the child's strengths and indicates what special education and related services the child will receive for the rest of the school year.

ORGANIZATIONAL PATTERNS

Each local and intermediate education unit will most likely develop multiple organizational patterns to meet the individualized program requirements. Districts have several options. For those handicapped children currently receiving some special education services, it often makes sense to use a process that focuses

on the building level. In other words, different "core" teams are established at each school building. Some districts use a more centralized system in which professionals from across the district are called on to develop the child's program. SEAP research indicates that, while building teams are more prevalent, they do not necessarily produce individualized education programs that are any more effective for the child than those developed at a system wide level. What does seem to make a difference is the amount of time required to develop the program. Usually the process is more expedient when the individualized program is developed at the local building level.

Although school districts do establish either building or systemwide capabilities for program development, two distinct populations of children seem to have some impact on the procedures. For students who are currently receiving an education or currently residing in either a public institution or private school, the procedures used to develop the individualized education program are different. While all requirements as set forth in Public Law 94-142 remain the same, different personnel are required when a child's education program is or most likely will be in a private school or institution. In either case, it is important that the local or intermediate education agency take every necessary step to include as soon as possible the personnel who either are or will be responsible for the implementation of the child's program. In some cases, this might necessitate holding the individualized program meeting on the grounds of the institution or private school.

Local or intermediate education agency personnel and parents of handicapped children must realize that if the child's appropriate edu-

cation program is at an institution or private school, the responsibility for initiating, developing, and monitoring the individualized education program still rests with the public school. For some administrators, responsibilities will have to be shared with the institution or private school. In any case, it is important that each education agency decide how it will work with other personnel in private schools or institutions so that the child's individualized education program is implemented.

Each of the decision points identified in this chapter requires some response from local and intermediate education agencies in order to establish an effective administrative process for the development of an individualized education program. Each of the authors contributing to this primer has presented selected perspectives on the development of an individualized program. It is important to remember that parents and professionals have had little experience in working together to develop written individualized education programs for handicapped children. Over the next few years, parents and professionals will become more sophisticated in their approach and, based on the important decisions they make, more comprehensive in the delivery of special education and related services to handicapped children.

This primer is a beginning. It must never be forgotten, in the preoccupation with regulations, policy, or guidelines, that the most effective individualized education program is the one that provides a handicapped child with the free, appropriate public education that is his or her right. The best decisions that can be made will be those that provide an administrative process that guarantees that right.

APPENDIX 1

POLICIES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAMS

PUBLIC Law 94-142 requires that each handicapped child have a written individualized education program. In order to fulfill the mandates of the law, the following policy statements are recommended.

AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

The state education agency and each local education agency shall insure that an individualized education program is provided for each handicapped child who is receiving or will receive special education, regardless of what institution or agency provides or will provide special education to the child.

Each local education agency shall develop, or revise, whichever is appropriate, an individualized education program for every handicapped child at the beginning of the school year, and review and if appropriate revise its provisions periodically, but not less than annually.

PARTICIPANTS REQUIRED

Each local education agency shall insure that each meeting includes the following participants:

- A representative of the local education agency, other than the child's teachers, who is qualified to provide, or supervise the provision of, special education.
- The child's teacher or teachers, special or regular, or both, who have a direct responsibility

for implementing the child's individualized education program.

- One or both of the child's parents.
- Where appropriate, the child.
- Other individuals, at the discretion of the parent or agency.

COMPONENTS OF AN INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM

In order to develop the individualized education program in conformance with the requirements of Public Law 94-142, the following components must be included in each individualized education program developed for every handicapped child requiring special education and related services.

- A statement of the child's present levels of educational performance, including academic achievement, social adaptation, pre-vocational and vocational skills, psychomotor skills, and self help skills.
- A specific statement describing the child's learning style.
- A statement of annual goals that describes the educational performance to be achieved by the end of the school year under the child's individualized education program.
- A statement of short term instructional objectives, which must be measurable intermediate steps between the present level of educational performance and the annual goals.

- A statement of specific educational services needed by the child (determined without regard to the availability of those services), including a description of:
 - a. All special education and related services that are needed to meet the unique needs of the child, including the type of physical education program in which the child will participate.
 - b. Any special instructional media and materials that are needed to implement the individualized education program.
- The date when those services will begin and length of time the services will be given.
- A description of the extent to which the child will participate in regular education programs.
- A justification for the type of educational placement that the child will have.
- A list of the individuals who are responsible for implementation of the individualized education program.
- Objective criteria, evaluation procedures, and schedules for determining, on at least an annual basis, whether the short term instructional objectives are being achieved.

APPENDIX 2

SAMPLE INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM FORM

School District
Responsible _

Date(s) of meeting:

Student _____
(name or number)

Current placement	Persons present	Relationship to child
Eligibility		
(date)		
Period of individualized education program		
to		

Curriculum areas* requiring special education and related services	Present level(s) of performance	Annual goals	Short term objectives	Time required	Objectives attained			
					(dates)			
Area 1								
Area 2								

*If more space is required, use an additional sheet.

A. List any special instructional material or media necessary to implement this individualized education program.

Special education and related services recommended	Personnel responsible (name and title)	Date services begin	Duration
Curriculum area 1			
Curriculum area 2			

Student name or number _____

B. Describe the extent to which the child will participate in regular education programs.

C. Recommended type of placement: _____
(include physical education)

D. Provide justification for the type of educational placement.

E. Actual placement:

F. List the criteria, evaluating procedures, and schedule for determining whether the short term objectives are met.

Short term objectives	Objective criteria	Education procedures	Schedule

Date of parental acceptance/rejection

Signature _____

Signature _____

APPENDIX 3

INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM LEGISLATIVE ANALYSIS: Public Law 94-142

THIS document contains every reference relative to an individualized education program (IEP) that is contained in the statute and proposed rules (December 1976) for Public Law 94-142. Statutory language is italicized to facilitate the reader's distinction between the law and the proposed regulations.

SUBPART A

Section 121a.4

The reader must review the definitions of *handicapped children*, *special education*, and *related services* to determine who is eligible to have an IEP and when.

SUBPART B, STATE ANNUAL PROGRAM PLANS AND LOCAL APPLICATIONS

Section 121a.20, Public Participation

(a) Each annual program plan must include procedures which insure that the requirements of sections 121a.130-121a.132 are met.

Section 121a.30, Individualized Education Programs

(a) Each annual program plan must include information which shows that each local educational agency in the State maintains records of the individualized education program for each handicapped child, and each local educational agency establishes, reviews, and revises each program as provided in Subpart C.

(b) Each annual program plan must include:

(1) A copy of each State statute, policy, and standard that regulates the manner in which individualized education programs are developed, implemented, reviewed, and revised, and

(2) The procedures which the State educational agency follows in monitoring and evaluating those programs.

Section 121a.47, Annual Evaluation

Each annual program plan must include *procedures for evaluation at least annually of the effectiveness of programs in meeting the educational needs of handicapped children, including evaluation of individualized education programs.*

SUBPART B, LEA APPLICATIONS

Section 121a.111, Information—Reports

Each application must provide that the local educational agency furnishes information (which, in the case of reports relating to performance, is in accordance with specific performance criteria developed by the local educational agency and related to program objectives) as may be necessary to enable the State educational agency to perform its duties under this part, including information relating to the educational achievement of handicapped children participating in the local educational agency's programs for handicapped children.

Section 121a.114, Individualized Education Programs

Each application must include procedures to assure that the local educational agency complies with sections 121a.220-121a.226 of Subpart C.

SUBPART C, SERVICES**Section 121a.203, Physical Education**

(b)(2) The child needs specially designed physical education, as prescribed in the child's individualized education program.

(d) If specially designed physical education is prescribed in a child's individualized education program, the public agency responsible for the education of that child shall provide the services directly, or make arrangements for it to be provided through other public or private programs.

SUBPART C, INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAMS**Section 121a.220, Scope**

Each State and local educational agency shall insure that an individualized education program is provided for each handicapped child who is receiving or will receive special education, regardless of what institution or agency provides or will provide special education to the child.

Section 121a.221, State Educational Agency Responsibility

(a) The State educational agency shall insure that each local educational agency establishes and implements an individualized education program for each handicapped child.

(b) The State educational agency shall require each public agency which provides special education or related services to a handicapped child to establish policies and procedures for developing, implementing, reviewing, maintaining, and evaluating an individualized education program for that child.

Section 121a.222, Local Educational Agency Responsibility

(a) Each local educational agency shall develop, or revise, whichever is appropriate, an individualized education program for every handicapped child at the beginning of the school year, and review and if appropriate revise its

provisions periodically, but not less than annually.

(b) Each local educational agency is responsible for initiating and conducting meetings for developing, reviewing, and revising a child's individualized education program.

(c) For a handicapped child who is receiving special education, a meeting must be held early enough so that the individualized education program is developed (or revised, as appropriate) by the beginning of the next school year.

(d) For a handicapped child who is not receiving special education, a meeting must be held within thirty days of a determination that the child is handicapped, or that the child will receive special education.

Comment

The Conference report for Public Law 94-142 states:

The conference substitute also requires each local educational agency to provide assurances that it will establish, or revise, whichever is appropriate, an individualized education program for each handicapped child at the beginning of each school year and will then review and, if appropriate revise, the provisions of such program periodically, but not less than annually. In the initial year of a handicapped child's participation in a program of free appropriate public education, the individualized education program shall be established at the beginning of the school year and reviewed at least once during that year. Thereafter, the Conferees intend that this provision requires at least one annual review of the child's individualized education program. (H. Rept. No. 94-664, P 39 (1975))

Section 121a.223, Participants in Meetings

The local educational agency shall insure that each meeting includes the following participants:

(a) A representative of the local educational agency, other than the child's teachers, who is qualified to provide, or supervise the provision of, special education.

(b) The child's teacher or teachers, special or regular, or both, who have a direct responsibility for implementing the child's individualized education program.

(c) One or both of the child's parents, subject to section 121a.224.

(d) Where appropriate, the child.

(e) Other individuals, at the discretion of the parent or agency.

Section 121a.224, Parent Participation

(a) Each local educational agency shall take steps to insure that one or both of the parents of the handicapped child are present at each meeting or are afforded the opportunity to participate, including scheduling the meeting at a mutually agreed on time and place.

(b) If neither parent can attend, the local educational agency shall use other methods to insure parent participation, including individual or conference telephone calls.

(c) A meeting may be conducted without a parent in attendance if the local educational agency is unable to convince the parents that they should attend. In this case the local educational agency must have a record of its attempts to arrange a mutually agreed on time and place such as:

(1) Detailed records of telephone calls made or attempted and the results of those calls,

(2) Copies of correspondence sent to the parents and any responses received, and

(3) Detailed records of visits made to the parent's home or place of employment and the results of those visits.

(d) The local educational agency shall take whatever action is necessary to insure that the parent understands the proceedings at a meeting, including arranging for an interpreter for parents who are deaf or whose native language is other than English.

Section 121a.225, Content of Individualized Education Programs

The individualized education program for each child must include:

(a) *A statement of the child's present levels of educational performance*, including academic achievement, social adaptation, prevocational and vocational skills, psychomotor skills, and self-help skills;

(b) *A statement of annual goals* which describes the educational performance to be achieved by the end of the school year under the child's individualized education program;

(c) *A statement of short term instructional objectives*, which must be measurable intermediate steps between the present level of educational performance and the annual goals;

(d) *A statement of specific educational services needed by the child* (determined without regard to the availability of those services), including a description of:

(1) All special education and related services which are needed to meet the unique needs of the child, including the type of physical education program in which the child will participate, and

(2) Any special instructional media and materials which are needed;

(e) *The date when those services will begin and length of time the services will be given;*

(f) *A description of the extent to which the child will participate in regular education programs;*

(g) A justification for the type of educational placement which the child will have;

(h) A list of the individuals who are responsible for implementation of the individualized education program; and

(i) *Objective criteria, evaluation procedures, and schedules for determining, on at least an annual basis, whether the short term instructional objectives are being achieved.*

Section 121a.226, Private School Placements

(a) *The State educational agency shall insure that an individualized education program is developed, maintained, and evaluated for each child placed in a private school by the State educational agency or a local educational agency.*

(b) The agency which places or refers a child shall insure that provision is made for a representative from the private school (which may be the child's teacher) to participate in each meeting. If the private school representative cannot attend a meeting, the agency shall use other methods to insure participation by the private school, including individual or conference telephone calls.

SUBPART D, PRIVATE SCHOOLS

Section 121a.230, Responsibility of State Educational Agency

Each State educational agency shall insure that a handicapped child who is placed in or referred to a private school or facility by the State educational agency or a local educational agency:

(a) *Is provided special education and related services:*

(1) *In conformance with an individualized education program which meets the require-*

ments under sections 121a.220-121a.227 of Subpart C.

SUBPART E, PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS

Section 121a.431, Protection in Evaluation Procedures Evaluation; Change in Placement

(a) An evaluation must be conducted before any action is taken with respect to:

(1) The initial placement or denial of placement of a handicapped child in a special education program, or

(2) The transfer or denial of transfer of a child from a special education program to full-time regular class placement.

(b) Subject to paragraph (a) of this section, and the requirement for reevaluation in section 121a.433, any change in a child's special education placement (such as changing from a self contained special class to a resource room) must be based on:

(1) The child's current individualized education program, and

(2) Any other information relating to the child's current educational performance.

Section 121a.433, Reevaluation

Each State and local educational agency shall insure:

(a) *That in accordance with Subpart C, each handicapped child's individualized education program is revised periodically, but not less than annually.*

SUBPART E, LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT

Section 121a.442, Placements

Each State and local educational agency shall insure that:

(a) Each handicapped child's educational placement:

(1) Is determined at least annually, and

(2) Is based on his or her individualized education program;

(b) To the extent necessary to implement an individualized education program for each handicapped child, the applicable agency must provide, or arrange for the provision of, all of the various alternative placements included under section 121a.441 of this subpart;

(c) Unless a handicapped child's individualized education program requires some other arrangement, the child is educated in the school which he or she would attend if not handicapped.

SUBPART F, STATE ADMINISTRATION

No specific IEP provisions.

SUBPART G, ALLOCATION OF FUNDS: REPORTS

No specific IEP provisions.

PART 121m, INCENTIVE GRANTS

No specific IEP provisions.