

## Writing an Inclusive IEP

The development of the IEP is a critical step that a student's ARD team takes to communicate goals and share strategies that will support the student to reach those goals. Careful planning of the ARD meeting is essential when designing the services needed to support the child successfully. The team should take time when planning for the IEP to listen and learn from each other. When the team is focused on planning for an inclusive placement, they should focus on including as much information as possible in the IEP about the necessary supports needed so the child can participate successfully in the general education classroom.

**Consider related services.** It is common to see a student who is included for the majority of the day, but receives her/ his related services in a pull out model. Pulling students from the classroom can be quite detrimental to learning and social relationships. Instead of removing the student from general education classroom to work on speech and language goals, consider having the particular goal met during reading language arts time with the support of the speech teacher. Or, instead of having a student work on a goal like learning to tell time in a resource room, have the student be responsible for the class agenda or alerting the class when it is time to go to music class.

**Write inclusive goals.** A student's individual goals should be driven by the student's strengths, assessment data, and what the student and her/his family would like to accomplish over the course of the year. Goals should be individual and directed by the student's needs and should also assist in connecting the student to the general education curriculum and to their peers. When drafting IEP goals as a team, be sure to consider how the goals can guide the team in working on academic and social skills in natural inclusive environments. Make sure the goals:

1. Use supports and curriculum that are age-appropriate
2. Lead to meaningful outcomes for your child
3. Support learning the general education curriculum with peers and
4. Occur in natural settings and times throughout the day.

For example, zipping practice can be done by taking a coat on and off before and after recess, organizational skills can be practiced when gathering class materials, and social skills can be practiced in cooperative groups while learning science. The following sample IEP goals may assist the team in thinking about writing inclusive IEP goals.

- While participating in 12th grade biology, Sophie will be able to name and describe four big ideas from each unit of study, with 80% accuracy for each unit.
- While working in cooperative groups with 2-4 peers without disabilities, Noah will successfully take turns 4 out of 5 times.
- When signing up for centers, signing out to use the restroom, and writing her name on her paper, Jamie will legibly write her name 4 out of every 5 opportunities.

IEP goals should allow for participation in and access to the general education curriculum while focusing on the student's individual needs. All students can be educated within the context of the general education setting with appropriate supports. As educators and families recognize the benefits of inclusive schooling, they can begin to work together to make inclusive placements a reality. Where a child is educated is one of the most important educational decisions a team can make. It is essential that teams work together to purposefully create successful IEPs so that students with disabilities have full access to general education curriculum alongside their peers without disabilities.



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