Section 2: Establish IEP Goals

Description, Rationale and Guidelines

In British Columbia the Individual Education Plan is the guiding document for students with special needs where adaptations and modifications have been made to the curriculum. The rationale and guidelines for IEPs are clearly stated by ministerial order. These guidelines can be obtained from the BC Ministry of Education website (http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/iepssn/)

The key components of Individual Education Plans are:
- identification and assessment
- planning;
- program support and implementation
- evaluation, and
- reporting.

The IEP is needed to document:
- what modifications or adaptations have been made to the provincial curriculum
- what the student is expected to learn, and
- what strategies and resources are used.

The IEP process is as follows:
- Identify priorities for the student
- Determine long-term goals from these priorities
- Break the goals down into short-term objectives
- Determine what strategies will be used and what resources will be required to assist the student to reach the objectives
- Establish ways of assessing student progress and dates for review

In addition to guidelines for the process there are guidelines for implementation of the plan once it has been agreed upon by team members. It is recommended that these include 1 or more of the following:
- modifications to the curriculum
- adaptations to instruction and/or assessment methods
- use of adaptive/assistive technologies
- changes to make the learning environment more accessible
- provision of support services
- provision of specialized training (mobility and orientation; sign language instruction, etc.).

If a student has a need for a particular assistive technology as identified in the IEP, this should be clearly documented as a strategy in the goals and objectives including the mechanism for evaluating student progress. It should be made very clear that assistive technology is not a goal. The purpose of integrating AT into a student’s program is to increase some measurable educational outcome – it is that measurable educational outcome that is the goal.
In addition to locally published guidelines for assistive technology in the IEP, the field of assistive technology has produced a series of best practice indicators. The most often cited guidelines are from QIAT (Quality Indicators of Assistive Technology) from the University of Kentucky (http://sweb.uky.edu/~jszaba0/qiatqualityind.html). The following are some of the relevant best practice indicators as they apply to the IEP.

- The IEP illustrates that assistive technology is a tool to support achievement of goals and progress in the general curriculum by establishing a clear relationship between student needs, assistive technology devices and services, and the student's goals and objectives.

- IEP content regarding assistive technology use is written in language that describes how assistive technology contributes to achievement of measurable and observable outcomes.

- Assistive technology is included in the IEP in a manner that provides a clear and complete description of the devices and services to be provided and used to address student needs and achieve expected results.

The identification of IEP goals that would be supported by assistive technology is an absolutely critical step in the implementation process. Many AT systems have been abandoned because the team was not able to identify the educational goals that would be achieved through the use of AT or the methods for determining if the technology was successful in assisting the student in meeting these goals.

Tools for Including AT in the IEP

Since Assistive technology is a tool or strategy to support IEP goals and objectives it is necessary to be familiar with the process for creating goals and objectives first and foremost. Without this foundation there is no rationale for the use of technology and there is no way to demonstrate that the assistive technology is successful. Within the guidelines for IEPs provided by the BC ministry of education and BC school districts there are many resources available to assist teachers in writing measurable goals and objectives for student achievement.

General IEP Resources

- **Special Education Services: A Manual of Policies and Procedures**
  This BC Ministry of Education manual outlines the policies and legal responsibilities with regard to IEPs
  http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/ppandg/iep_1.htm

An entire booklet is devoted to Individual Education Planning for students with special needs. http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/iepssn/
The section titled *Establishing and implementing IEP goals and objectives* in particular provides many examples of goals and objectives as well as sample vocabulary for goal setting and sample forms.
http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/iepssn/establishing.htm
• **A Guide for Developing IEPs for Reading** by Dawn Reithaug (2005)

This Canadian resource includes lists of phrases for developing goals and objectives, over 300 objectives, lists of practices and adaptations to attach to the IEP and ways to measure progress. While it specifically applies to goals and objectives for reading, it easily generalizes to all areas of the curriculum. (Information on this document can be obtained by contacting the author dreithaug@shaw.ca).

There are also a number of resources available which, while focused on IEP legislation in the US still provide valuable information on setting measurable goals and objectives. Examples include:

• **Nebraska’s IEP Technical Assistance Guide**  
  [http://www.nde.state.ne.us/SPED/iepproj/](http://www.nde.state.ne.us/SPED/iepproj/)

• **Wisconsin’s A Guide for Writing IEPs**  

• **North Dakota’s IEP Planning Process**  
  [http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/speced/guide/iep/index.shtm](http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/speced/guide/iep/index.shtm)

• **New York’s Sample IEP & Guidance Document**  

**IEP Adaptations and Modifications Resources**

The Ministry of Education has also provided an online resource guide for teachers whose students require adaptations or modifications to their program. Adaptations and modifications in presentation /learning environment or materials are described. These follow the continuum of low tech to high tech and begin with the least intrusive adaptation.  

The BC Teachers’ Federation has a resource guide for teachers which supports their platform of “Teaching to Diversity”. A resource inventory is provided which encompasses strategies and adaptations to the curriculum for students with a variety of learning needs.  
[http://www.bctf.bc.ca/TeachingToDiversity/ResourceInventory,strategies/adaptations.html](http://www.bctf.bc.ca/TeachingToDiversity/ResourceInventory,strategies/adaptations.html)
Resources for Including AT in the IEP

- **Assistive Technology Solutions for IEP Teams** by Sherry L Purcell Ph.D, Debbie Grant, M.A. IEP Resources.  
  This resource consists of a series of sample worksheets taken from the K-3 language arts curriculum. It identifies the Grade /Domain/Strand/ Sub-strand and Standard for each aspect and sets out on table format with sample IEP goals which incorporate AT solutions.

- **Assistive Technology in the Individual Education Plan Outline** by Kursten Dubbels  
  [http://www.nls.org/atiep.htm](http://www.nls.org/atiep.htm)  
  This article is a comprehensive overview of the IEP process and includes how to set measurable goals and objectives and incorporates the Assistive technology in the process.

- **Writing Assistive Technology in the IEP (Section 7)** Ohio Center for Autism and Low incidence (OCALI) AT resource manual  
  This chapter of OCALI’s comprehensive AT resource manual provides examples of goals and objectives which incorporate AT, as well as outcome measurement strategies.  
  [http://www.ocali.org/at_manual/at_7_writing_at_in_iep.pdf](http://www.ocali.org/at_manual/at_7_writing_at_in_iep.pdf)

- **Infusing Assistive Technology for Learning in the IPP (IEP)**  
  The Alberta Ministry of Education has produced a comprehensive guide to developing the IEP. Chapter 9 deals with ensuring that necessary Assistive technology is incorporated in goals, objectives and measurement criteria.  

  Adapted from work by the Region IV Education Service Center Assistive Technology advisory committee, this is a 1 page 10 point reminder of the important elements to remember when integrating assistive technology in IEP goals.  
  [http://www.texasat.net/docs/AT%20in%20the%20IEP%20Top%2010.pdf](http://www.texasat.net/docs/AT%20in%20the%20IEP%20Top%2010.pdf)

Examples of General IEP Goal Statements

- **Goal statements are reasonable levels of performance which can be expected within a specific time period.**  
  e.g. Johnny will increase his written output in language arts assignments at the grade 3 curriculum level.

- **Objectives are the measurable intermediate steps between what the student can do now (baseline) and the established goal. These should be observable, measurable behaviours and should indicate student progress.**  
  e.g. Johnny will complete 3 paragraphs of writing over 10 consecutive English periods by (specify date)
Examples of IEP Goal Statements with AT Included

For the student using assistive technology the same process for goal setting is followed. However in situations where AT is necessary for student’s access to the curriculum, the relationship between the use of the technology and the curriculum goals and objectives must be clearly apparent.

- **General IEP Goal**  
Johnny will increase his written output in language arts assignments at the grade 3 curriculum level.

- **IEP Objective with AT Strategy Integrated**  
Using the computer and pre-programmed word banks in a picture based word processor, Johnny will complete 3 paragraphs of writing over 10 consecutive English periods by (specify date)

- **General IEP Goal**  
Mary will develop independence in communicating requests.

**IEP Objective with AT Strategy Integrated**  
Using pre-programmed choices on her VOCA, Mary will request an activity in 4 out of 5 observed opportunities at Centre Time.
INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLAN  
(Sample Form 1)

STUDENT NAME

BIRTH DATE

SCHOOL

STUDENT ID:

GRADE LEVEL

PARENT/GUARDIAN

ADDRESS

HOME PHONE

WORK PHONE

Assessment/Planning Information

CURRENT LEVELS OF PERFORMANCE/ACHIEVEMENT AND ACADEMIC/EXPERIENTIAL NEEDS:

Strengths:

Needs:

GOAL:

DATE INITIATED

TEAM MEMBERS RESPONSIBLE

School administrator

Classroom teacher

/parent


Review date(s):

Comments:

Recommendations:
Based on the student profile, check the planning options below that will be part of the students individual education plan.

Appropriate Learning Levels
- Acceleration (reading material)
- Telescoping
- Compacting

Enrichment Opportunities
- Exploration activities
- Thinking, research and planning skills
- Individual study option

What are the intended student outcomes?
- Explore a topic in depth
- Develop skills of elaboration
- Define his project
- Gather data
- Synthesize information

How will the outcomes be assessed?
- Student self assessment
- Quality of work, rigour, challenge, new knowledge
- Daily learning log - to include what he has done, insights, questions concerns presentation and final product

Criteria for evaluation of outcomes (set with student),
1. Planning
2. Data gathering, research skills
3. Organization
4. Presentation
5. Final product

Members of Planning Team: classroom teacher, gifted resource teacher, student

Review Date February 1996
Case Study of Effectively Establishing AT in the IEP

Jeremy is a grade 2 student with cerebral palsy and significant physical challenges. His parents and school team have for him, as the ultimate goal, full inclusion in the classroom. Jeremy communicates through a variety of gestures / sign language and choice making using PCS symbols and an alphabet board. His communication system is not always understood by all communication partners. He is unable to write and his teachers have been unable to accurately assess his reading level. He has been working on matching high frequency words but reliable measurement criteria have not been established. A variety of computer access methods have been tried and scanning with a switch has been established as the most reliable. The IEP team has established goals and objectives in the areas of Reading / Writing and Communication.

In his IEP, the following IEP goals and objectives were established.

**Reading**
**Goal:** Jeremy will increase recognition of high frequency words.
**Objective:** Jeremy will demonstrate recognition of the first 50 high frequency words from the Dolch word list with 80% accuracy over 10 trials by the first reporting period.
**AT Strategy for Reading Objective:** Computer with pre-programmed Clicker 5 grids containing the first 50 Dolch words which Jeremy will access by scanning through the words and making choices with a switch.
**IEP Objective with AT Strategy Integrated:** Using a computer with pre-programmed Clicker 5 grids, Jeremy will scan through the words and select words with his switch to demonstrate recognition of these words with 80% accuracy over 10 trials by the first reporting period.

**Writing:**
**Goal:** Jeremy will increase written output in daily journal activity.
**Objective:** Jeremy will point to flash cards containing single words to construct 5 sentences composed of 3 words each during daily journal activity.
**AT strategy for Writing Objective:** Computer with pre-programmed Clicker 5 word bank grids which Jeremy will access by scanning through the words and making choices with a switch.
**IEP Objective with AT Strategy Integrated:** Using a computer with pre-programmed Clicker 5 word bank grids, Jeremy will scan through the words and select words with his switch to compose 5 sentences containing a minimum of 3 words each during daily journal activity.

**Communication:**
**Goal:** Jeremy will participate in class discussions with his Grade 2 peers during daily Circle Time.
**Objective:** During daily Circle Time, Jeremy will voluntarily respond to 3 questions per day 80% of the time as measured over a 2 week period.
Jeremy is unable to meet the above goals and objectives without the assistance of technology.
**AT strategy for Communication Objective:** MT4 dynamic screen voice output device with pre-programmed pages containing content related to Circle Time topics which
Jeremy will access by scanning through the choices and making selections with his switch.

**IEP Objective with AT Strategy Integrated:** Using pre-programmed pages relating to Circle Time discussion topics, Jeremy will participate in class discussions with his Grade 2 peers during daily Circle Time by scanning through choices and using his switch to respond to 3 questions per day 80% of the time as measured over a 2 week period.

In addition to establishing appropriate IEP goals and outlining how the assistive technology would support those goals, Jeremy’s team formulated a plan to assess whether those IEP goals were being met at various points in the year. Formal meetings to discuss the IEP goals with Jeremy’s parents as well as follow-up meetings to review the progress of the IEP were also scheduled during the school year. His team discovered that the IEP goals initially established required some minor revisions as they became more familiar with this assistive technology and how he used it.