



Welcome to Creating Collaborative Standards-Based IEPs, an online training for IEP team members.

This is Session Three of the training. If you have not viewed the Introduction to Creating Collaborative IEPs or Sessions One and Two of this training, it is suggested that you return and begin with the Introduction and then Sessions One and Two.

It is our belief in providing this online training that the use of a process for developing IEPs that is both collaborative (including students and their parents), and tied to Virginia's Standards of Learning, will produce IEPs that lead to better student outcomes, improved IEP team functioning and a reduction in conflicts over IEP development and implementation.

During this session, you will be referred to activities that require handouts. You will be cued to look for an accompanying handout when you see the following symbol: . The handouts can be found in the file for the session on the website where you accessed the online training in an accompanying folder entitled **Session # Handouts**. For ease of working with this online training, it is

suggested that you download the handouts for the session on which you are working and either save them to your desktop or print all of them before you actually begin the session.



In this session we are looking at the Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (referred to here as the Present Level of Performance or PLoP). It is a section of the IEP document and an important part of the IEP development process.



Session Three Training Objectives

Participants will:

- Understand the components of the PLoP and the importance of the PLoP as central to the IEP.
- Understand the importance of using a process that ensures the participation of all IEP team members in the development of the PLoP.
- Recognize that the process for developing the PLoP is at least as important as the PLoP document.

As a reminder, the training format is standard throughout these training sessions.

Each session is introduced by a vignette which is a description of the IEP process from the point of view of one of the team members (student, parent, special education teacher, general education teacher, administrator). We have called this section *The Way Things Are*.

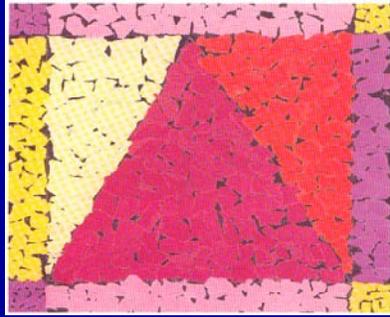
📁 This is followed by *Points to Ponder*, an activity about your current IEP process in which you are asked to consider the strengths and areas of need in your present practices. This handout can be found on the website where you accessed the online training in a folder entitled **Session # Handouts**.

The Main Idea helps you to focus on what we consider the most important points to be taken away from each of the sessions.

📁 Finally, each Session ends with a *Lesson from Nature*, a tale or fable that we have included in the **Session # Handouts** file to emphasize the important ideas in each section.

Our training objectives for this session are listed on this slide.

Session Three: 4



“To accomplish great things we must not only act, but also dream; not only plan, but also believe.”

Dan Wilkins



THE WAY THINGS ARE

THE RELATED SERVICE PROVIDER

This is crazy. This is my third IEP meeting this morning. I really liked the last one, where the mother brought in the picture of her child. I think it helped me to get focused and on the right student too. I have a speech case load of 50 kids. I travel among three schools. Is it any wonder everything begins to run together in my head? This is insanity.

Everyone wants something different. Some parents want their kids pulled out and given one-on-one therapy for 45 minutes a day. Needless to say this just doesn't happen. Others want therapy integrated into the classroom lessons and daily routines. Still others want to use speech therapy as a way of teaching kids social skills. I am not the guidance counselor!

This is not what I trained for in college and graduate school. Sometimes these IEP meetings seem so non-productive; other times when I think speech is a critical issue for a student I am not even included in the meeting. I heard at a conference about a team approach to IEPs where everyone works together to develop a plan for a kid and then shares the responsibility of implementing it. So

many of my kids would benefit from having all of the school staff reading off of the same page and working consistently throughout the day on their speech objectives as part of their regular activities. Maybe I'll bring this up at next month's staff meeting. Just two more meetings until I can put this day to bed. Amen.

The Way Things Are

Points to Ponder

The Main Idea

Lessons from Nature

What is the process your IEP team currently uses to develop the PLoP?

Perhaps the preceding was a point of view that rings true for you, perhaps not. The purpose of these vignettes is to remind us that we each come to the IEP process with a different set of experiences, training, and expectations. If we are not aware that we have unique differences, it can be more difficult for us to understand another's point of view.

Now we want to take a few minutes to reflect on the current way your school uses teams to develop IEPs.

📁 Please review the handout for this session entitled **Points to Ponder: Developing the Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance**. Remember we said that Points to Ponder is the second area around which this training is organized. We are using the “points to ponder” tool throughout the training as a way to determine what our IEP processes look like now. Take several minutes to describe on a step by step basis what process was used to develop the student's Present Level of Performance for the most recent IEP. Indicate whether you think each step is a strength in your IEP process (+) or something that needs to be improved upon (-) by placing a check in one of the columns to the right. After you have done this, force rank the top two points that are working well with your current process and two points that you identify as needing the most improvement. If you are doing this as part of a team

or group training, spend a little time discussing and try to come to consensus on 2 areas of strength and 2 areas of need

Keep these areas of strengths and needs in mind throughout the training and think about strategies that could be used by schools and IEP teams to build on the strengths in the team process and address the needs that you have identified.

The Way
Things
Are

Points to
Ponder

The Main
Idea

Lessons
from
Nature

Why is the Present Level of
Performance so important
to the IEP?

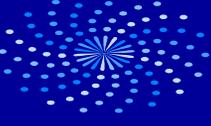


It's About Me!

A Step-by-Step Guide for Creating My IEP

Much of the information we are going to discuss here can be found in the workbook entitled, *It's About Me!*

 18, 19, 20 Please be sure to review the information on the PLoP in *It's About Me!* and take the time to practice filling in the forms.

Step Four 

DEVELOP THE PRESENT LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE

- Gather Information**
- Write/Draft the PLoP**
- Review the Draft and Incorporate Feedback**
- Reach Consensus**



Step four in the workbook, *It's About Me!* addresses the development of the Present Level of Performance. A process needs to be in place that encompasses the four main activities around developing the Present level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance. We will be discussing this process later.

Let's first look at some characteristics of the PLoP and also some components required by law.

Develop the PLoP

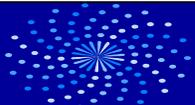


Characteristics

- ❑ Standards based
 - addresses the general education curriculum (content standards)
- ❑ Data driven
 - includes formal and informal data
 - evidenced based information that is observable and specific
- ❑ Understandable - uses clear, easily understood language that provides a snapshot of the student's needs and strengths

When developing the PLoP the following characteristics should be present.

- ◆ The PLoP should be Standards based. The appropriate grade level Standards should be reviewed by team members. The skill deficits that are keeping the student from achieving the grade level standards need to be identified.
- ◆ The PLoP should be data driven and measurable, whether formal or informal, the information should be specific, observable and based on evidence.
- ◆ Language used in the PLoP should be understandable to everyone on the IEP team.



Develop the PLoP

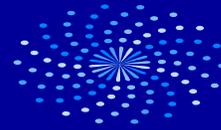
Standards-based

- **Know the grade-level standards**
 - Understand the intent of the standard
 - Understand what the student must know and be able to do
- **Know the student – be familiar with**
 - Current assessment data
 - ✓ State assessments
 - ✓ Classroom assessments (curriculum-based)
 - ✓ Eligibility data (if current and related to learning the standards)
 - Student work samples
 - Other info (e.g. progress on IEP goals, grades, etc.)

Aligning with grade level standards is the part of IEP planning that allows the IEP team to focus on providing the student with access to the general education curriculum. IEP team members need to understand the intent of the Standards and what it is the student is expected to know and be able to do. This is a role often played by the general education teacher, as it is the general education teacher's responsibility to be the "expert" on the grade level standards. If the student is working on the Aligned Standards of Learning, the special education teacher provides the expertise in explaining what is expected of the student.

Data and other information about the student's performance allows the IEP team to identify the gap between actual performance and grade level standards. If there is no gap then this is not an area of need for a student. If there is a gap then this is an area where the IEP team must identify the skills needed to close the gap and support the student's access to the general education curriculum.

Develop the PLoP



Data driven

PLoP information sources

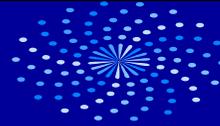
- Standardized and state tests
- School records & instruction based assessments
- Checklists: skills, behavior, interests
- Career, transition, vocational assessments
- Student work samples, portfolios
- Teacher observations and records
- School nurse
- Parent/student input

In compiling data, there are sources of information for the PLoP that meet the different requirements for information to be included in the Present Level of Performance.

Some provide us with formal data (e.g. standardized and state tests and various assessments).

Others provide informal data that is specific and observable (e.g. checklists, observations, and teacher/parent/student input).

Develop the PLoP

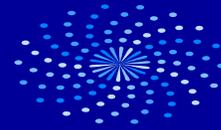


Documenting data sources

- Performance on the 4th grade SOL (5/18/09) indicated...
- Classroom observation (10/15/09) reported the following strengths and weaknesses...
- Interviews with parents, teachers, and student from 9/27-9/29 2009 indicated...
- A review of completed class work assignments (10/13-10/30 2009) revealed...
- The Woodcock-Johnson III, Tests of Achievement, administered 3/10/09 suggest ...
- Reading Free Interest Inventory (*age appropriate transition assessment*) administered 4/15/09 shows an interest...

Clear documentation of the information and its source helps to provide a full picture of the student's strengths and needs.

Develop the PLoP

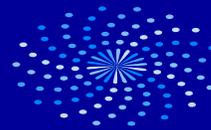


Understandable Language

1. Does this description tell me clearly what I need to know about this student if he or she was going to be in my class next year?
2. Is this written in a way that is descriptive, jargon free and meaningful to parents and general education teachers?
3. Would I use these terms to describe my child, my friend, myself?

Have you ever been at a meeting, any kind of meeting, where a few people in the know spoke in initials or used jargon that was not known to all of the meeting's participants. Did this make the meeting better? Did it help to make all of the participants feel valued and a part of the meeting process? Did it help to achieve the desired outcomes of the meeting? We all are guilty of speaking in jargon or using acronyms (initials) from time to time. Being conscious of using language that is understandable to everyone helps to set a tone of collaboration.

Develop the PLoP



Required Components

- Student strengths
- Parents' concerns
- How the student's disability affects involvement /progress in general education curriculum
- Assessment data (including progress on IEP goals)
- Transition needs (as appropriate)
- Student needs (including Special Needs Considerations)

These components are required by law to be part of the PLoP.

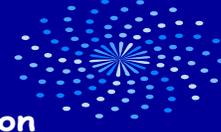
Establishing the student's **strengths** at the outset provides a firm foundation upon which to develop goals and specialized instruction. It also reminds team members that the Present Level of Performance should be a well rounded picture of the student.

Parents' concerns are also an important component of the PLoP. Parents see their children from a different view point than educators, have longer term and broader based concerns about their children's well being, and have dreams and goals for their children's futures.

We have already discussed the importance of objective **assessment data**.

Student needs are identified as a result of assessment and other performance measurements. There are also **special needs considerations** in the areas of behavior, English proficiency, visual impairments and deaf-blindness, communication, and assistive technology that must be addressed if they are present.

Develop the PLoP



Describe the impact of the disability on performance in the general education curriculum

Example of what **NOT** to write:

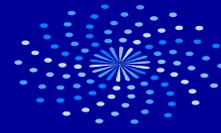
Marcus' learning disability affects his progress in the general curriculum.

Example of what to write:

Marcus' weakness in applying strategies, such as making inferences and making complex predictions, affect his progress in comprehending sixth-grade literary materials.

In describing the impact of the student's disability on his or her performance in the general education curriculum, a specific description of skill deficits rather than a global statement of disability helps the IEP team to go on to develop the goals and specialized instruction needed.

Develop the PLoP



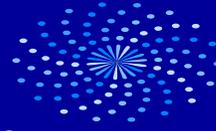
Consider transition needs

- Many transitions:
 - ❖ Early intervention to preschool
 - ❖ Preschool to elementary
 - ❖ Grade to grade
 - ❖ Elementary to middle
 - ❖ Middle to high
- Planning for school to adult life transition is mandated to begin no later than the first IEP to be in effect when the student turns 14, or earlier as determined by IEP team
- IEP Team needs to evaluate whether non-mandated transitions are areas of need

Transition is an important topic in the IEP. Once a student reaches transition age (i.e. school to adult life transition which is to begin no later than the first IEP to be in effect when the student is 14, or earlier as determined by IEP team), transition actually drives the entire IEP process.

However students experience transition needs all through their school years. IEP teams need to identify these needs and make sure that they are addressed in the Present Level of Performance.

Develop the PLoP



Why is the Present Level of Performance so important to the IEP?

It is central to the IEP development process.
It is the part of the IEP where information and data are gathered.
It is the basis for the development of goals and specialized instruction.

Why is the Present Level of Performance so important:

- ◆ It is the part of the IEP where information and data are gathered.
- ◆ It is the basis for the development of goals and specialized instruction.

Develop the PLoP

Team Activity

Part I



Design a process that can be used by IEP teams to develop the PLoP.

You have 30 minutes to complete this activity.

Assign a time keeper, a recorder and a spokesperson for your team.

Record your responses on the flip chart provided.

This activity was part of an in person training for parents and educators. The results of this activity will be posted on the website when the face-to-face training is completed and the process developed by the participants has been reviewed by them and refined.

📁 Use the handout for this session entitled **Design a Process for Developing the PLoP** for this activity.

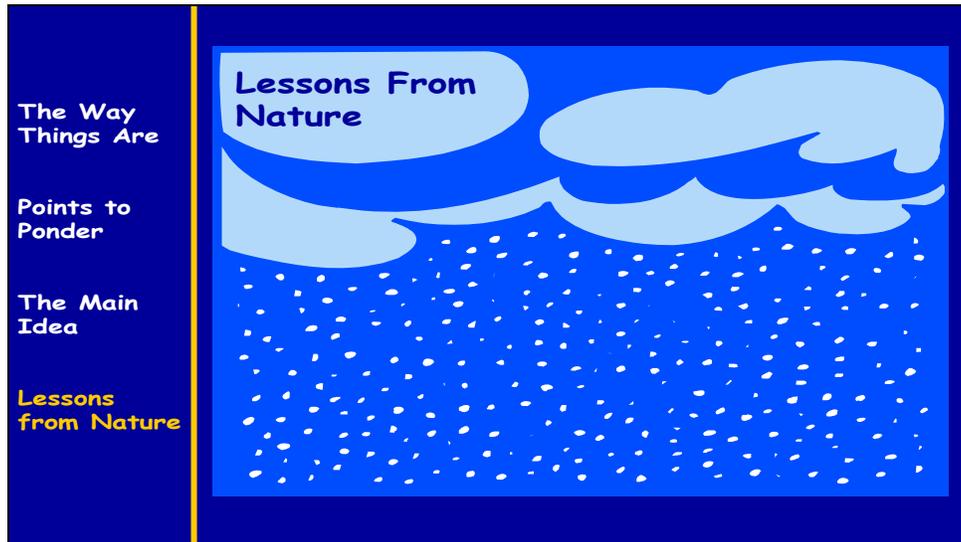
Develop the PLoP



Team Activity Part II

Working with the table next to you, take turns presenting the processes you have developed. Use the Checklists on the green sheets in your packets to review and evaluate the other table's process, giving + or – for each item.

📁 Use the handout for this session entitled **Considerations Checklist for a Process for Developing a PLoP** for this activity.



📁 Please review the story for this session, entitled, “A Wild Strawberry”.