



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

This is Session Two of the training. If you have not viewed the Introduction to Creating Collaborative IEPs or Session One of this training which addresses the process and skills that support successful collaborative efforts, it is suggested that you return and begin with the Introduction and Session One.

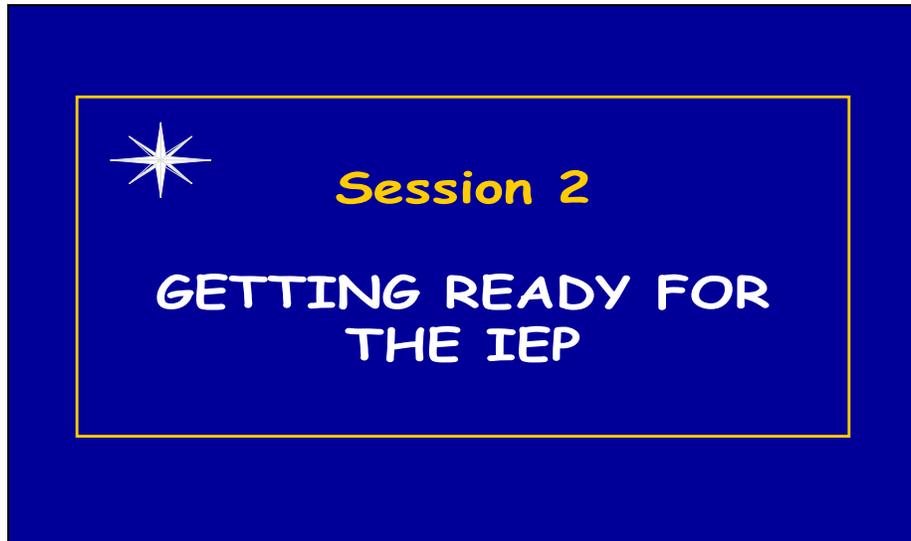
It is our belief in providing this online training that the use of a process for developing IEPs that is both

- ◆ 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.



For our first session, we began with the concept of collaboration or teamwork. As Andre Carnegie said, "Teamwork is the ability to work together toward a common vision;...It is the fuel that allows common people to attain uncommon results." We believe that successful collaboration is the foundation of the development and implementation of IEPs that support students in achieving uncommon results.

Today, we are going to introduce a planning process that can be used by all IEP team members to gather information, data, and input about the student that will be used in developing the IEP. Using a shared planning process along with the collaborative skills we reviewed last time, allows all IEP team members, especially the student and his or her parents, to be working from the same page. This in turn supports IEP team members in making contributions to the development of the IEP and in being invested in its successful implementation.



## Session Two Training Objectives

### Participants will:

- Consider other IEP team members points of view
- Understand the importance of the student's and family's dream
- Recognize the importance of preparing for the IEP
- Recognize that the IEP process is at least as important as the IEP 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*.

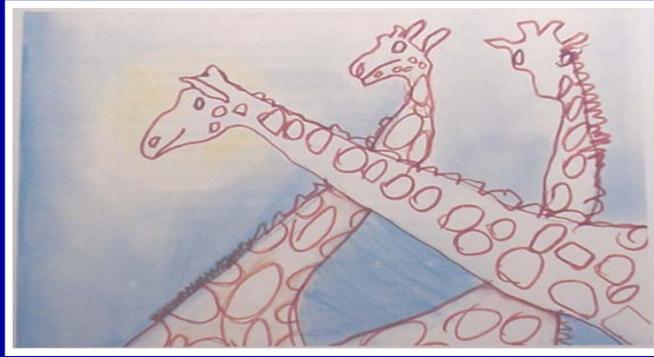
📁 This is followed by *Points to Ponder*, an activity about your current IEP process in which you are asked to consider the strengths and areas of need in your present practices. This handout can be found on the website where you accessed the online training in a folder entitled "Session # Handouts".

*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 # Handout file to emphasize the important ideas in each section.

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

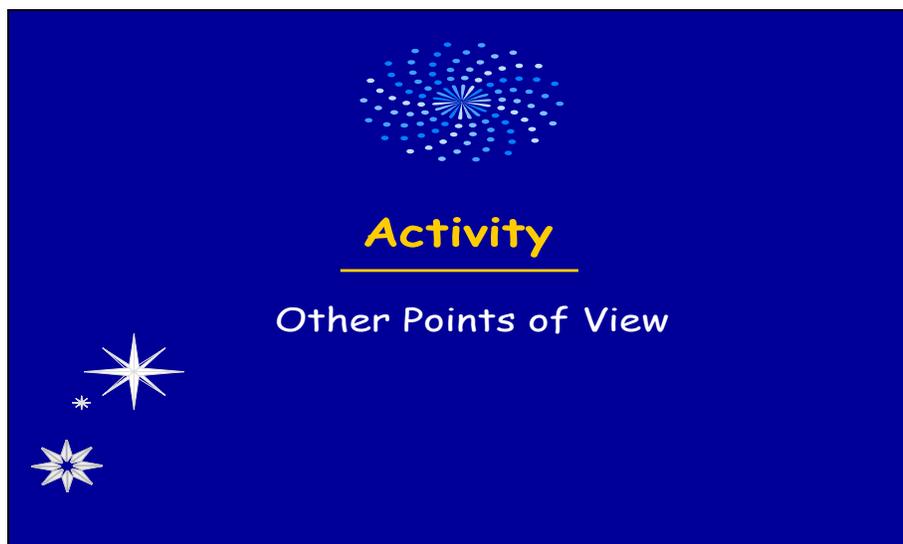
Session Two: 4



*“TEAM – Together Everyone Achieves More”*

*Marsha Forest and Jack Pearpoint*

“Giraffes in the Sun”, a work of art by a student with disabilities, Robert P. Doval



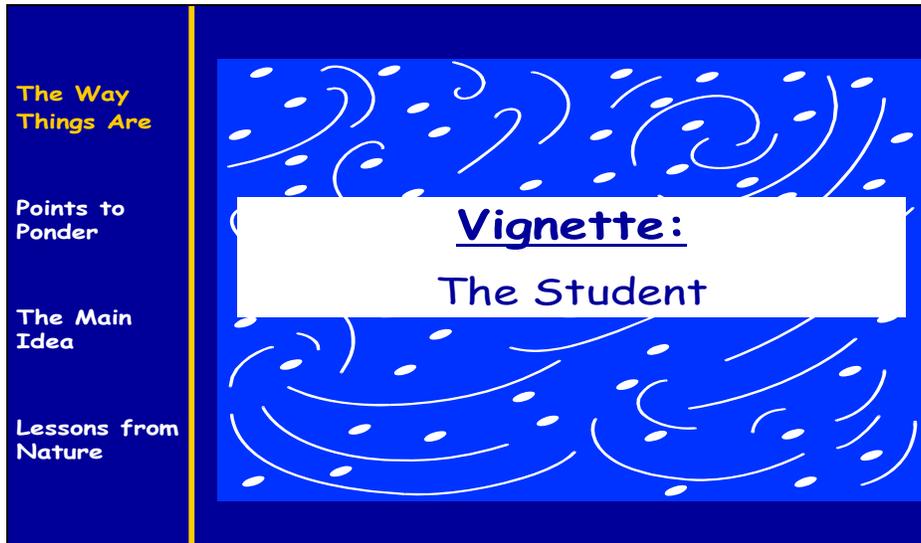
To make the transition from learning about and using a collaborative process and the skills that support that process to preparing for the IEP, it is helpful to think about those things that are your greatest concerns or fears as you go into an IEP meeting.

Take a moment to jot down on a piece of paper those things that come to mind. Once you have listed two or three of your fears or concerns, try looking at the IEP process from the perspective of another team member.

If you are a parent, spend a little time imagining what concerns and fears educators deal with as they approach the IEP team meeting. If you are an educator, put yourself in the place of the parent and try to identify some of his or her concerns and fears. List the things that you have identified from the other's perspective on the back of the sheet of paper where you just listed your own concerns.

Now think about those things that could be done to lessens the fears and concerns of IEP team members as they approach the development of a new IEP.

📁 Now go to the handouts entitled **What Some Parents and Professionals Thought, From a Parent's Perspective** and **From an Educator's Perspective**. As you read this summary and these short stories remember that being able to see things from another's point of view greatly improves each of our ability to be a collaborative team member.



## THE WAY THINGS ARE

### The Student

Oh boy, I must be in trouble. They actually want me to attend this IEP meeting this afternoon. I'm not sure why, since I don't like talking in front of adults and nobody ever listens to what I have to say anyway.

My mom is baking the chocolate chip cookies with the double chips and her killer brownies. She said I could bring a friend or two. I wouldn't except for the food. The guidance counselor, Miss Jones, is going to be there too. She said she just wants me and my friends to talk about what is and isn't working in the 6th grade, like we do every other week in our Lunch Bunch meetings. She's cool and really sweet looking too. And the guys all like her. Maybe this won't be too awful.

Miss Jones said me and my friends could come to her office during last period and sort of practice for the meeting. But it is still hard talking to friends with an adult around. Nobody ever really asked me or my friends anything like this before. Usually my mom handles the IEP meetings. Boy is she ever cranky when she gets home from them. Seems like she and my Dad talk for hours on those nights. This time I'm just going for the brownies and I'll see how it goes.

The Way Things Are

Points to Ponder

The Main Idea

Lessons from Nature

Do IEP team members work together to learn what is important to and for the student and plan accordingly?

Perhaps the preceding was a point of view that rings true with 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: Getting Ready for the IEP**. Remember we said that Points to Ponder is the second area around which this training is organized. We will be using these “points to ponder” tools throughout the training as a way to determine what our IEP processes look like now. Take several minutes to review these questions. After you have done this, force rank the top two points that are working well with your team process and two points that you identify as needing the most improvement.

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.



We are now at The Main Idea, the third area in this training format, where we will answer the question “How should team members prepare for developing an IEP?”

Imagine that you are being asked to plan a vacation for someone. How successful would you be at this if you were not given the time to get to know the person or to ask the important questions? It may (or may not) be easy to quickly establish how much time and money the person has to spend or how many people will be going on this vacation with him or her. Does the person like the mountains, the shore or the city? Does he or she want to sight see and be a full time tourist or would he or she rather spend time relaxing in the sun somewhere? Is this an amusement park person? Does the person like to fly? Has he or she always wanted to take a car trip across country? What vacations in the past have been taken that have been really enjoyed? What vacations have been disasters, and why?

As you breathe a sigh of relief that you are not a travel agent, think about how many times we develop an annual IEP, a part of an individual with disabilities’ life plan, without really knowing the answers to the important questions about the individual. What are his or her dreams for the future. What are the parents’ hopes? What are this student’s strengths? How will the student’s needs impact progress in the general education curriculum? What are the grade level standards and what skills are needed to be successful in the general education curriculum and environment.

How do we begin to get that information?



**Remember to use collaborative skills to create an environment conducive to teamwork**

- support student input
- seek input from all team members
- use general educator's expertise
- provide all IEP team members with information needed to participate meaningfully

We want to make sure that we are facilitating the participation of all team members, especially the student and family.

Our focus needs to be broad enough to encompass supporting the student's needs in the area of academic achievement and in the areas of functional needs, friendships and a sense of belonging. All of these contribute to success in future plans and goals.

Remember to use the collaborative skills discussed in Session two in order to work together as a team.



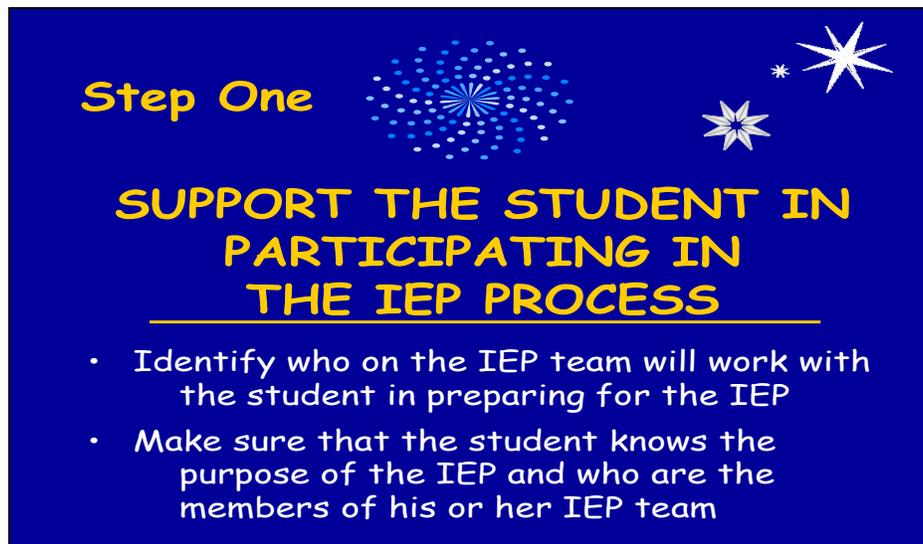
Today we are reviewing with you a *It's About Me!*, a guide that we developed to be used by IEP teams in gathering information and preparing to develop the IEP document.

**[Note:** Remember that we said in the Introduction to this training that you may obtain this booklet from your school division's Director of Special Education, from the Virginia Department of Education or at [www.vcu.edu/partnership](http://www.vcu.edu/partnership) under "Resources" → "Products" → "Family" ]

As we go through the training today we will be referring you to different sections of *It's About Me!* and the steps that we have developed, in the form of worksheets, to help IEP members gather and share information, support student and family input, and prepare for the annual IEP.

This is not the only format that can be used to guide a team through the process of gathering information and seeing that all IEP team members are well informed about the student and knowledgeable about the process. It is one that we developed with some input from IEP teams in school divisions in Virginia.

Let's begin with a basic overview of *It's About Me!* Whenever you see this symbol  it will be followed by a page number that will direct you to the place in *It's About Me!* where you can find more information.



**Step One**

**SUPPORT THE STUDENT IN PARTICIPATING IN THE IEP PROCESS**

- Identify who on the IEP team will work with the student in preparing for the IEP
- Make sure that the student knows the purpose of the IEP and who are the members of his or her IEP team

The first step is to support the student in participating in the IEP process.

Does your IEP team currently support student involvement/participation in the IEP development process? If not, this is a great opportunity for your team to work collaboratively to involve the student.

Identifying an adult team member who has a good relationship with the student and who can support the student in understanding the IEP process and then in participating to whatever extent the student is willing and able is an important place to begin.

Making sure that the student understands what an IEP is, who the members of the student's IEP team are, and what areas of input are important to and for the student, are all essential building blocks for developing students who can make choices, problem solve, and set and achieve goals. (📖 4,5,8,9)



Are you familiar with the *I'm Determined* project in Virginia? This is an excellent set of resources developed by the Virginia Department of Education that focuses on student involvement in all aspects of his or her education from preparation for, development and implementation of the student's IEP.

This is a quote from the I'm Determined website,

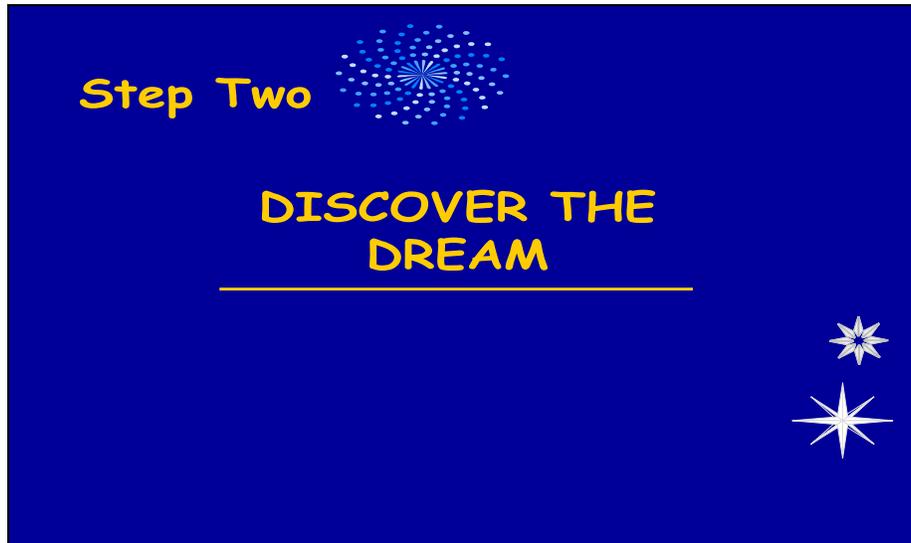
"The Individualized Education Program (IEP) is a legal document developed by the student, teachers, administrators, parents and other team members. The IEP helps students with disabilities in reaching their goals. According to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act 2004, the IEP must focus on the student's preferences, interests, needs and strengths. All students, regardless of age or disability, can be involved in the development of their own IEP".

Identifying adult support, building involvement over time, setting a student led IEP as a goal of the IEP team are ways of using the IEP process to develop a self-determined student who

Knows and believes in himself or herself

Knows what he or she wants his or her future to look like and how to be part of the planning to make it happen

Knows the supports he or she will need in order to have control over his or her life



The next step is to work with the student and his or her family to discover the dream, a vision for a positive and possible future.



📁 Use the handout for this session entitled **Drawing Your Dreams** for this activity.

Take the next five minutes individually to draw your dreams. What do you hope to see in your future? List the different areas.

Do you plan to marry?

Hope to have children

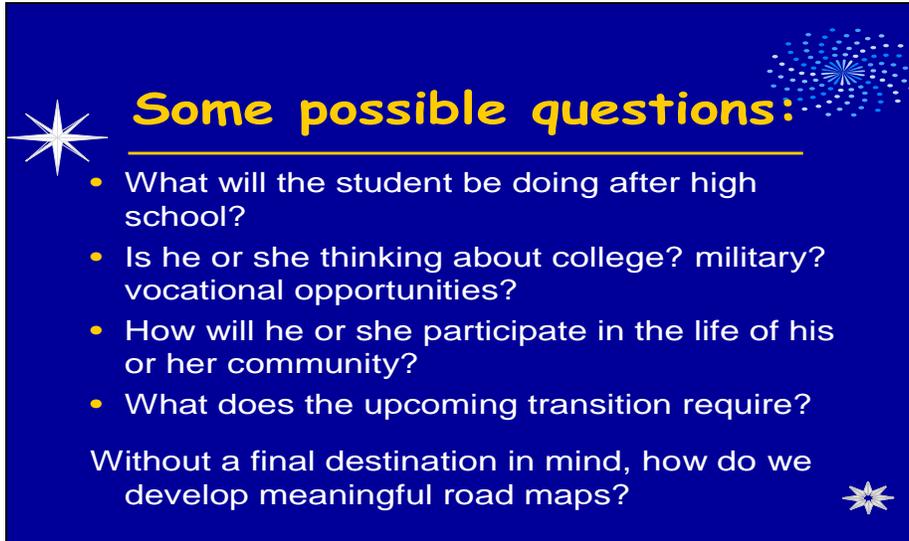
Want to retire in the next xx number of years

Are you hoping to write the great American novel?

Are you longing to travel and see the world?

What are your dreams?

What are the skills you need to have in place in order to move toward your dreams? What steps are you taking to realize your dreams for the future?



**Some possible questions:**

- What will the student be doing after high school?
- Is he or she thinking about college? military? vocational opportunities?
- How will he or she participate in the life of his or her community?
- What does the upcoming transition require?

Without a final destination in mind, how do we develop meaningful road maps?

It is important for our planning today that we know what the student's and his/her family's vision for the future is.

What will she or he be doing after high school?

Is the student planning on pursuing higher education (a 4 year college program, 2 year community college, technical school)?

Is the student interested in the military or will he or she be seeking full time employment?

Are the student's post secondary interests in line with the statewide assessment and diploma option he or she is pursuing?

How will he or she participate in the life of his or her community?

If the student is still in elementary or middle school discuss the expectations for the next significant transition e.g. third grade or middle school. Ask and answer the question for the next school transition, what will be required?



**Tools for Discovering the Dream**

- Circle of Friends
- MAPS
- PATH
- Informal discussions about future dreams

How do we assist in developing the dream?

If needed, Circles, COACH, MAPS (Magil Action Planning System) and PATH (Planning Alternative Tomorrow's with Hope") are excellent tools for discovering the dream. However, they are trainings unto themselves.

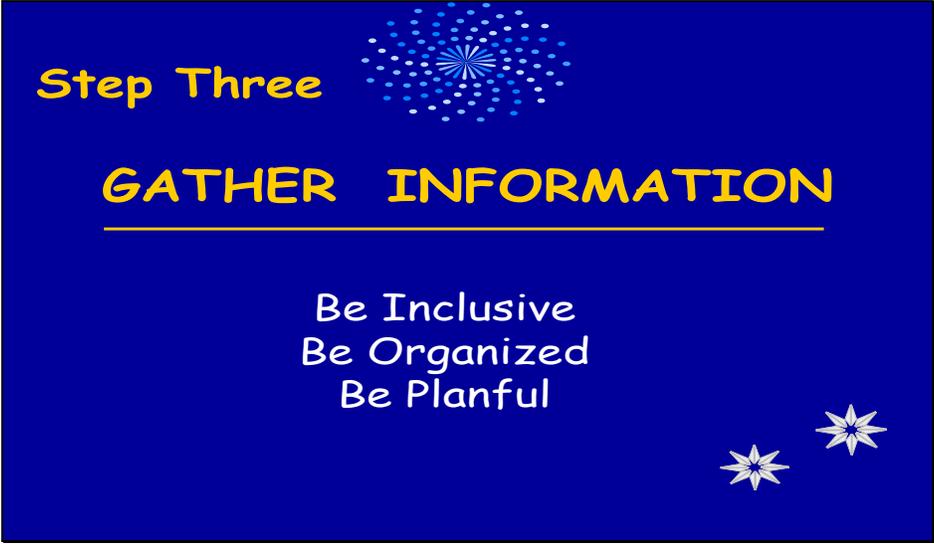
Additional training is needed in order to use the MAPS and PATH processes.

TTACs may have info about trainings on these tools.

When looking at the dream section, decide if one of these tools is needed to develop the dream. It is unlikely that you will be developing a MAP or PATH each year or with all of your students. There are many ways to collect information on your students.

### 10 & 11 *It's About Me!*

This is where you would record the dream or the vision for a positive future. This should be based primarily on student and family input. Will it change over time? Of course. Is it sometimes difficult to remain true to "real" dreams, as opposed to those we think are doable or available to the student? Yes, sometimes it is. But it is important to have a true destination in mind, if we are to develop meaningful road maps. What skills does the student need to develop over the next five or six years in order to live his dream/achieve his goals?



**Step Three**



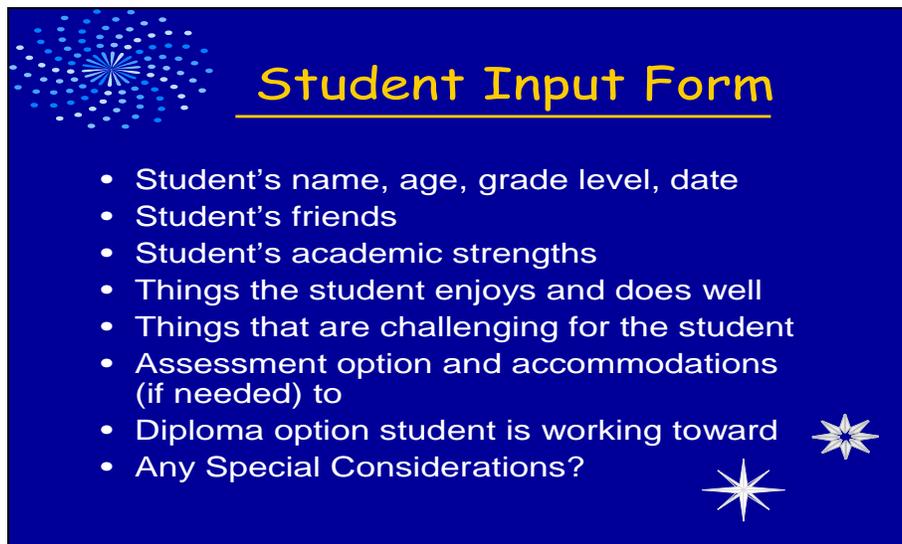
**GATHER INFORMATION**

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Be Inclusive  
Be Organized  
Be Planful



Gathering and in some cases sharing information are activities that occur before the actual IEP meeting to facilitate the participation of all required team members, including the student and family. It also helps to ensure that all participants are working from and with the same information.



## Student Input Form

- Student's name, age, grade level, date
- Student's friends
- Student's academic strengths
- Things the student enjoys and does well
- Things that are challenging for the student
- Assessment option and accommodations (if needed) to
- Diploma option student is working toward
- Any Special Considerations?

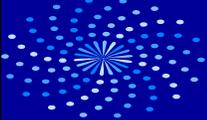
 12, 13 & 14

Here are worksheets that a student can use to record his or her input.

A teacher, a teaching assistant, a parent, an older brother or sister, a guidance counselor or some adult who has developed a rapport with the student can assist the student in providing this information IF THE STUDENT NEEDS ASSISTANCE.

If a student is not familiar with the IEP process or has not had an opportunity before to participate, the adult providing support might begin working with the student well in advance of the actual IEP meeting time. There may be things that need to be explained to the student before the student is ready to begin providing his or her input. It may also take time for the student to feel comfortable with the process if they have not been asked to participate in this way before.

Once these worksheets are completed the student can make copies of his worksheets to share with other members of the IEP team.



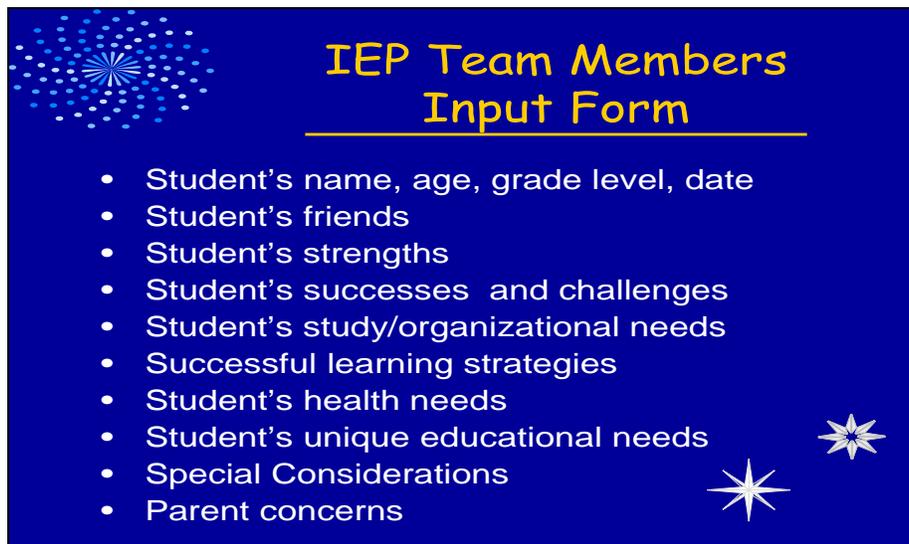
## Educator's Worksheet

- Student's name, age, grade level, date
- Student's performance/results on standardized tests
- Student's performance/results on statewide standards test
- Student's performance on informal classroom assessments and grades
- State standards or aligned standards for the student's grade level



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This worksheet provides a place for the special educator or case manager to provide information about the student's performance on standardized test and SOLs, results of classroom assessments and grades, and progress on IEP goals. Here is also the place where the educator can direct IEP team members (including the student and parents), to the appropriate grade level standards or aligned standards.

A blue rectangular slide with a dark blue background. In the top left corner, there is a decorative graphic of a starburst made of small white dots. The title "IEP Team Members Input Form" is written in yellow, bold, sans-serif font, underlined with a thin yellow line. Below the title is a bulleted list of ten items in white text. In the bottom right corner, there are two white starburst graphics of different sizes.

## IEP Team Members Input Form

- Student's name, age, grade level, date
- Student's friends
- Student's strengths
- Student's successes and challenges
- Student's study/organizational needs
- Successful learning strategies
- Student's health needs
- Student's unique educational needs
- Special Considerations
- Parent concerns

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Just as the student is providing information about himself or herself, adult IEP team members are gathering information to be shared with other team members. The bulleted points on this slide are all things that we will need to develop the IEP *[review the bullets on the slide]*.

We have already noted, facilitating the participation of all team members is critical. Parents in particular have insights into their child's strengths, challenges, and needs that a supportive team can draw out and use to the student's advantage.

Once all team members have filled out their worksheets, copies of all sheets can be shared with team members. This gives all of the members a fuller impression of the student, including the student's input, and may cause team members to think in more creative and holistic ways about meeting the students needs.

NOTE: Another way to involve the student is to ask the student to be responsible for some part of disseminating information gathering forms and or collecting them from the other team members.



**Consider how the student will  
participate in State assessment  
and diploma options**

In light of the student's dream for the future,  
think about assessment and diploma  
requirements.

Share information with student and parents  
about Virginia's diploma and assessment options

In light of the student's dream for the future, think about assessment and diploma requirements. Information about the different types of diplomas and Virginia's assessment options should be shared with students and parents so that they are knowledgeable about options available to them.

 32 – 34; Information about assessment and diploma options are provided.

## Consider Special Factors

(Paraphrased from *IDEA 2004*)

- ◆ For students whose **behavior** impedes learning, consider positive behavioral interventions and strategies
- ◆ For students with **Limited English Proficiency** (LEP), consider language needs
- ◆ For a student who is blind, visually impaired, or deaf-blind, consider use of Braille and consider the **communication needs**

In preparing for the IEP meeting, the IEP team should consider these special factors, especially as they relate to accessing instruction the general education curriculum. [Paraphrased from *IDEA*]

 35; Information about these special considerations are provided.

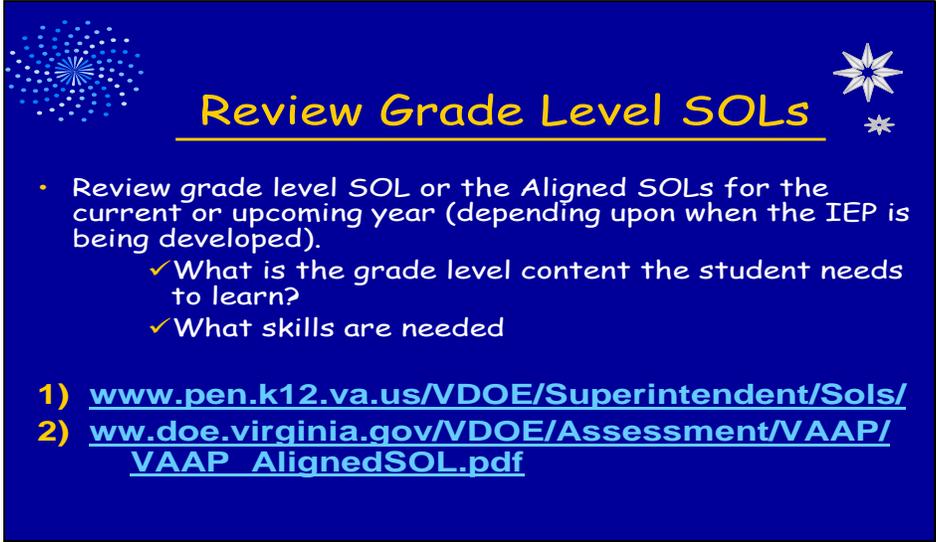


## Consider Special Factors cont'd

(Paraphrased from *IDEA 2004*)

- ◆ For a student who is deaf, hard of hearing, or deaf-blind, consider **language and communication needs**, including opportunities for direct **communication with peers**
- ◆ Consider whether the student needs **assistive technology** devices and services





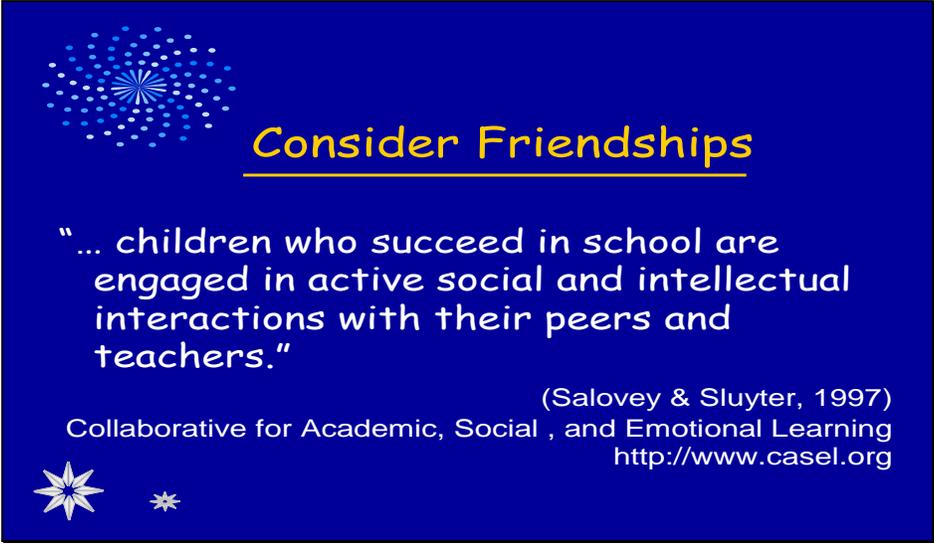
**Review Grade Level SOLs**

- Review grade level SOL or the Aligned SOLs for the current or upcoming year (depending upon when the IEP is being developed).
  - ✓ What is the grade level content the student needs to learn?
  - ✓ What skills are needed

- 1) [www.pen.k12.va.us/VDOE/Superintendent/Sols/](http://www.pen.k12.va.us/VDOE/Superintendent/Sols/)
- 2) [www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/Assessment/VAAP/VAAP\\_AlignedSOL.pdf](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/Assessment/VAAP/VAAP_AlignedSOL.pdf)

NCLB makes this area of preparation a critical one for IEP teams. It provides the general education teacher(s) with an invaluable role to play as content expert on the grade level SOLs for the year for which the team is planning, as well as knowing what grade level skills are important to the student's success (the lack of these skills can be remediated by special education services). An intimate familiarity with the demands of the general education setting allows the team to plan for accommodations that will support the student in achieving academically.

At the websites listed on this slide you can review the SOLs or Aligned Sols for your student .



**Consider Friendships**

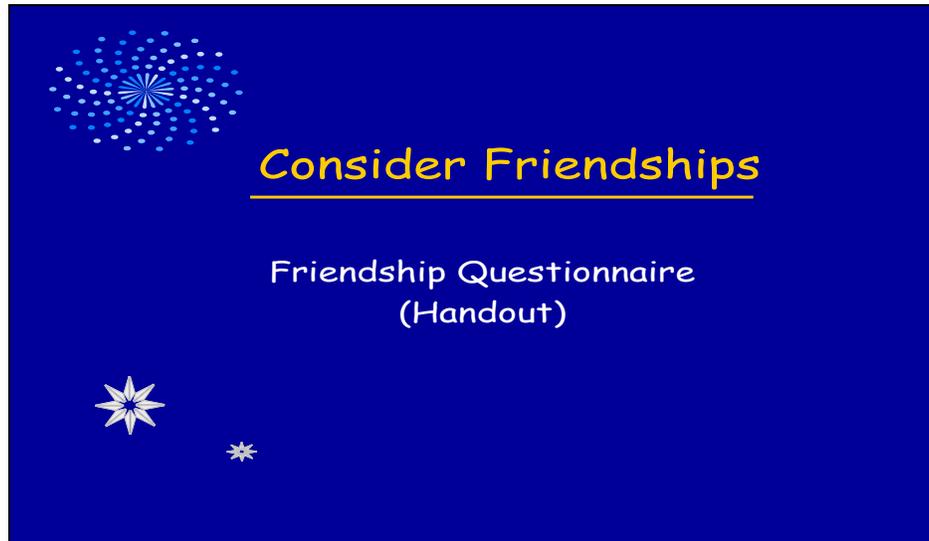
"... children who succeed in school are engaged in active social and intellectual interactions with their peers and teachers."

(Salovey & Sluyter, 1997)  
Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning  
<http://www.casel.org>

Why do IEP teams even look at friendships? With all there is to be done around SOLs how is there time for this? Is it really important?

"Accumulating research makes the compelling case that social and emotional factors are integral to academic learning and positive educational outcomes for children...Based on evidence from 61 educational researchers, 91 meta-analyses, and 179 handbook chapters, Wang, Haertel and Walberg in 1997 found that social and emotional factors were among the most influential factors of student learning...These experts concluded that directly influencing the psychological component of learning is an effective way of changing how much and how well students learn.

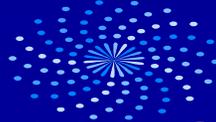
*"Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning  
[Http://www.casel.org/sel/academics.php](http://www.casel.org/sel/academics.php), retrieved 7/30/07*



📁 Use the handout for this session entitled **Friendship Questionnaire** for this activity. Take five minutes to fill out the questionnaire.

What do we remember from our school days? Do we remember specific books that we read and in what grades we read them? Do we remember the subject matter in different grades? Is there anybody, who doesn't teach 6th grade science, who remembers what 6th grade science was all about? It is certainly true that throughout the course of our education we learned many important skills, and we learned and retained some specific content, but what stands out most in our memories?

**Step Four**



**DEVELOP A DRAFT OF THE  
PRESENT LEVEL OF  
PERFORMANCE**

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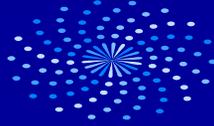
Using the information gathered  
and shared, begin to add your  
ideas to "What is My Present  
Level of Performance?"



In Session 3 we are going to spend time considering how we take the information that we have gathered and shared and put it to use writing the student's Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance.

 18, 19, 20; Information about the Present Level of Performance is provided.

**Step Five**



**CONSIDER AND DRAFT  
GOALS**

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Consider goals that meet needs that are identified in the student's PLOP. Begin to add your ideas to "Developing My Goals..."



In Session4, we are going to spend time considering how we take the information that we have gathered, shared and used to write the student's Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance, as the basis for developing goals.

 22, 23; Information about annual goals is provided.

**Step Six**

**DETERMINE SERVICES,  
PLACEMENT,  
ACCOMMODATIONS...**

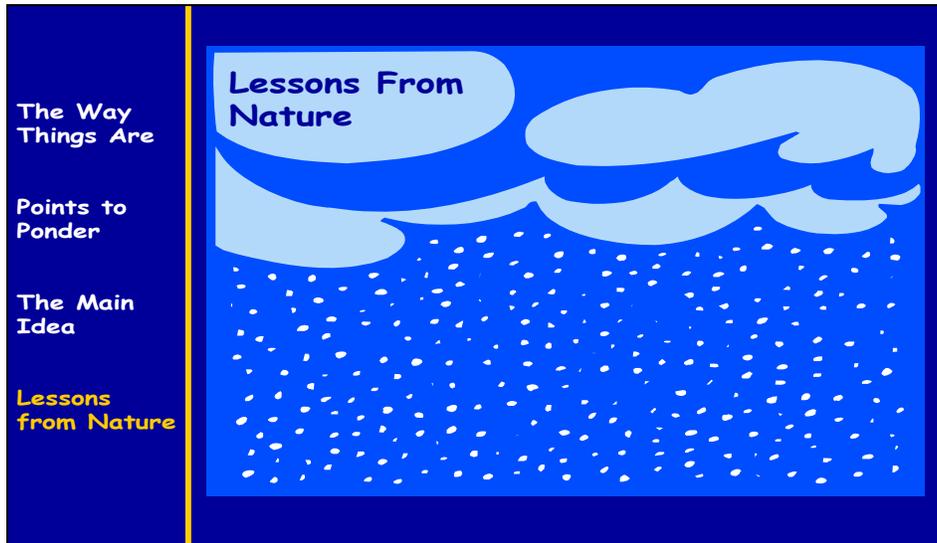
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Put your ideas on the worksheet  
"Determining My Services..."



In Session 5, we are going to put the IEP together by addressing the final sections.

 24, 25; Information about identifying services, accommodations and placement is provided.



📁 Please review the story for this session, entitled “ The Parts of the House Argue”.