

10 IEP Myths

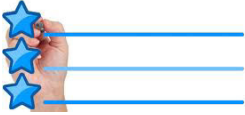
by Charmaine Thaner

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Myths can create negative realities.

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IEP GOALS



Myth #1: Progress on last year's goals don't have to be mentioned in the new IEP.

If you don't know where you have been, how do you know where to go? In the Present Level of Performance section of the IEP it should summarize the progress (or lack of) on each goal. This will help the team know what could be appropriate goals for the new IEP.

IEP GOALS

- S - Specific
- M - Measurable
- A - Attainable
- R - Realistic
- T - Timely

Myth #3: Measurable goals are always written.

Believe it or not, most IEP goals are NOT specific or measurable. Make sure each goal tells who is going to do what, given what materials, under what conditions, and with what accuracy.

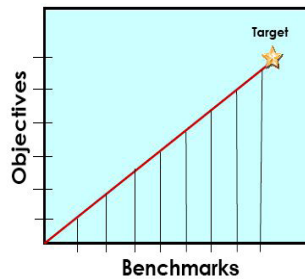
Myth #2: Each need has to have an IEP goal.

Some students' needs can be met with an IEP goal, an accommodation, or modification. Just make sure there are no dangling needs - a need with no means to address it.



Myth #4: Short term objectives are no longer required.

Check with your own state's regulations about short term objectives. On the federal level, short term objectives/benchmarks are required if the student will be taking an alternative assessment.



Myth #5: Progress Reports can only be given when regular report cards are.

This is what happens most often, but this is only one example of the frequency of progress reports. Some schools only send report cards home twice per year. It is not helpful to wait until half the year is over to see how well a student is performing on his IEP goals. It is permissible to ask for more frequent progress reports. Monthly reports are not unreasonable.



10 IEP Myths continued

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Myth #6: Extended School Year (ESY) services don't have to be individualized.

You should NOT hear, "This is what we students get for ESY." ALL the services a child receives must be based on their unique needs.



Myth #7: The IEP meeting has to be completed in one meeting.

Many IEP meetings are scheduled for one hour, which is rarely enough time for a team to write a quality IEP. If there are disagreements, an additional meeting (s) will be necessary.



Myth #8: IEP team members don't have to stay for all of the meeting.

Unless a parent gives approval to excuse a required IEP team member everyone needs to participate in the entire meeting.



Myth #9: IEPs can't be implemented until parents sign it.

Check with your own state's regulations. Many states only require a parent's signature on the initial IEP.



Myth #10: If it is written in the IEP it will happen.

If only this was true! A well written IEP is only the first step. If the IEP is not implemented with fidelity it is not worth much. Ongoing conversations between families and educators is critical to ensure the plan developed actually gets put into action.

Check out additional IEP resources on my website.
<http://www.visionsandvoicestogether.com/resources/ieps>