



Special Education Advisory Panel

Rules and Regulations Subcommittee

APPROVED MINUTES

Meeting Place: Virtual Meeting

Address: Microsoft Teams Meeting

Date: Thursday, September 30, 2021 – 4:30pm to 6:30pm

Present: Sandra Chittenden; Crista Yagjian; Jamie Crenshaw; Sarah Fabrizio

Agenda:

4:30-4:35 Welcome

4:35-4:40 Assign Roles: Notetaker, Timekeeper, Track Keeper (Rudder)

The Notetaker: The Note Taker writes down group decisions and answers. The note taker should be as detailed as possible when writing down any discussions that occur in the meeting so that those who are absent can read the meeting minutes and have a clear picture of what was discussed at the meeting.

Timekeeper: The timekeeper essentially helps the facilitator move the group through the agenda, reducing the amount of stress on the facilitator or leader who is managing the discussion. They monitor the time allotted for each agenda item to make sure that the meeting moves along. If time is running out on an agenda item and the discussion is still going strong, the timekeeper should inform the team that there are ___ minute(s) on the clock. At this time the team will decide to either negotiate more time or end the agenda item until the next meeting.

Track Keeper (Rudder): The Track Keeper or the Rudder keeps the group on track, focused, and sticking to the agenda topic that the team is currently tackling.

4:40-4:50 Discussion and Approval of Draft Meeting Minute(s): 9.2.21

4:50-5:15 Parent Input Template

5:15-6:20 Goal Writing Documents

6:20-6:25 Next Steps

6:25-6:30 Public Comment

6:30 Adjourn

Welcome:

The meeting began at 4:30 p.m.

Assign Roles: Notetaker, Timekeeper, Track Keeper (Rudder):

Jamie Crenshaw volunteered to take notes. It was decided that we did not need a timekeeper or track keeper since member attendance was small.

Discussion and Approval of Draft Meeting Minute(s): 9.2.21:

Motion made by Sarah, seconded by Sandra, to approve the 9.2.21 meeting minutes.

All in Favor.

Parent Input Template:

Parent Input is a new rule change that Vermont will be implementing in July 2022. The discussion began with members sharing their concerns about the parent input template. The following discussions occurred;

- Although we felt it contained a lot of good information, we did feel that the amount of information could feel overwhelming to educators and parents. Especially since there are a lot of initiatives currently being implemented in all schools, adding to this are the impacts of covid. It was suggested that the information might possibly be condensed - removing parts of the document that may be repetitive or less important to the overall implementation.
- The attached templates were not provided in the document. Not sure if those are being added at a later date.
- The sentiment of focusing more on parents as valuable members of the team was also discussed.
- We also questioned how the information is going to get disseminated to the special educators and to parents. We are afraid that if the information, if not prescribed, will be open to interpretation which is in contrast to education equality.
- In addition, we wondered whether the document was meant for educators alone or if it was also meant for parents. If the document is meant for parents, then we felt that the language should be written in language that is easier for parents to understand. Parents may have learning disabilities, low literacy levels, or use English as a second language. We feel that the information should be accessible to everyone and in a format that is clear and easy to read and understand. The subcommittee recommends having two separate documents. One for parents where the information is easier to read and understand and one for school personnel where the information is more in-depth - both would contain the same content though.
- Lastly, we feel that clarification on the 10 days' timeline for parents might be needed. Is it 10 days from the IEP meeting, 10 days from when the school mails it, 10 days from when the parent receives the documents?

At this point in the meeting, we lost a member, so we no longer had a quorum, but we decided to continue the meeting since a vote was no longer needed for any items on the agenda.

Goal Writing Documents:

The rule changes that will take place in July 2022 include changes to the content of the Individualized Education programming for students, including changes to goal writing. The subcommittee was given several documents to review; Goal Writing: Grade Level Standards, IEP Goal Writing: Introduction, IEP Goal Writing: Using Data, and Goal Writing: Smart Goals. We all agreed that Goal Writing: Grade Level Standards, IEP Goal Writing: Introduction, IEP Goal Writing: Using Data were incredibly informative documents. We appreciated all of the work the AOE has done on these documents. We definitely feel that this in-depth information is desperately needed in our schools. There was one document that we had questions about though. The Goal Writing: Smart Goals. The following discussions occurred;

- We liked how, on page 2, the document shared the 2004 IDEA statement; “A statement of measurable annual goals, including academic and functional goals, designed to meet the child’s needs that result from the child’s disability to enable the child to be involved in and make progress in the general education curriculum; and . . . meet each of the child’s other educational needs that result from the child’s disability.” We believe it might be beneficial in helping to emphasize the importance of appropriate goal writing by including additional information on what constitutes a procedural violation as opposed to a substantive violation of the IDEA. This would provide a new lens into the legality of the IEP document and the importance of compliance and the role the educators play in ensuring procedural and/or substantive violations do not occur.
- The subcommittee discussed the AOE’s use of the SMART acronyms (found on page 3). None of us had heard of ‘A’ being only Actionable. To our knowledge, the ‘A’ in the SMART goals acronym usually means Action and Achievable. Having the word “achievable” is important to this part of the process. The word “achievable” focuses on “what can educators and parents do to make the goal attainable and more importantly, it ensures that the educators answer the question of whether or not they have the skills and resources available to accomplish the goal. If they do not, then they would consider what it would take to attain the goal (professional development and/or additional resources). Several parents in the panel have experiences where one or both of these scenarios were not addressed at the time the goal was written.
- On page 4 - we feel the definition could include;
 - Where it says “clear descriptions” add “so anyone reading the goals can understand them (no acronyms). This ensures easy readability for parents”.
 - Specific measurement for progress - What metric are you using to determine goal achievement
 - We like the examples you provided. Specifically, your removal of the word “increase”. It may be worthwhile to discuss this even further under the A acronym - removing all words that imply a direction you want the result to move in. (increase, decrease, reduce, etc.). Direction words do not explain the “action” you want the student to take to accomplish the goal.

We discussed this further later in the meeting.

- On page 5 - possibly phrasing the sentences as questions. Instead of “know when the child reaches the goal” to “how will you know the child reaches the goal”. The subcommittee feels that posing every acronym as a question urges educators to always try to answer the questions of who, what, where, when, and how.
- On page 7 - we suggest adding the word Attainable and discussing the difference between “action” words and “direction” words. Actionable words clearly define what the student must do. Adding the word attainable answers additional questions that might often be left out. The educator is answering;
 - What does the student need to do to accomplish the goal? (read, write, organize, communicate, etc.)
 - Who needs to be involved in accomplishing the goal? (Will the student need prompting from the educator, will it be independently completed, will

- there be manipulatives, etc.).
- Do you have the resources and skills needed for the student to accomplish the goal? (Are manipulatives needed? Are they already created and/or available? Are there special skills or knowledge the educator needs in order to help the student accomplish the goal? If not, consider what it will take to attain them.)
 - It might be beneficial to also provide an example word bank of “action” words for both academic and functional performance specific to certain tasks; write, read, process, produce, remove themselves, communicate, collaborate, etc. The example below is from the Quincy Conference which is linked on page 4 of this document. This is a great resource one parent utilized to help write her child’s IEP goals.

Bloom’s Taxonomy & Related Verbs Reference Chart

Keep in mind that not all verbs listed are observable and measurable. Be sure to pick those that are both when writing goals, or to be clear about what behavior the student will demonstrate that will allow an observer to assess the action (ex: John will prioritize his assignments by placing a star next to those that must be completed that day.)

Knowledge	Comprehension	Application	Analysis	Synthesis	Evaluation
count	classify	act	analyze	adapt	appraise
define	cite	administer	break down	categorize	argue
describe	compare	assess	characterize	collaborate	assess
draw	conclude	calculate	choose	combine	choose
enumerate	demonstrate	change	classify	communicate	compare
find	describe	chart	compare	compare	contrast
identify	discuss	choose	contrast	compile	conclude
label	differentiate	collect	correlate	compose	criticize
list	estimate	compute	debate	construct	critique
match	explain	construct	deduce	contrast	decide
name	generalize	contribute	diagram	create	defend
quote	give examples	demonstrate	differentiate	design	estimate
read	illustrate	determine	discriminate	develop	evaluate
recall	interpret	develop	distinguish	devise	interpret
recite	locate	discover	examine	discuss	judge
recognize	paraphrase	dramatize	illustrate	express	justify
record	predict	draw	outline	facilitate	predict
reproduce	put into your own words	extend	point out	formulate	prioritize
select	report	imitate	prioritize	generate	prove
sequence	restate	implement	research	hypothesize	rank
show	review	interpret	relate	incorporate	rate
state	summarize	interview	separate	individualize	reframe
tell	trace	inform	subdivide	initiate	select
view		instruct	organize		support
write		manipulate			
		modify			
		participate			
		predict			
		prepare			
		produce			
		provide			
		relate			
		report			
		select			
		show			
		solve			
		transfer			
		use			
		utilize			

- On page 8 - We believe it might be beneficial to define this acronym further so that it is understood that the educators are answering the questions - does it make sense? Does it address the need? Does it address more than one need? If so, then the goal should be split into 2 goals so as to clearly measure whether the student accomplished both needs.

- We also suggest removing the direction word “improve” in the example on page 8. Again, this is a “direction” word and does not clearly define what the student needs to do.
 - [Student] will independently write a clear and cohesive paragraph consisting of at least 3 sentences, including compound and complex sentences, that are clearly related.
 - We believe that the last part of the goal (with no more than 5 spelling mistakes) should be removed. To our understanding, this should be a new goal that addresses the student’s spelling needs. The goal as written is measuring 2 different criteria which could ultimately set the student up for failure. What happens if the student accomplishes the sentence criteria set forth in the goal but they have more than 5 spelling mistakes?
- On page 9, we believe the annual goal should be the “After 27 weeks” goal. This states specifically what the child must accomplish in order to reach master. “Random” is not specific enough - whether or not the student reached the goal would be open to an educator’s opinion (subjective measure).

[Quincy Conference 2.0](#)

We want to add that our suggestions are in no way criticizing the work of the AOE on this topic. We recognize and appreciate the work all of the AOE personnel have done and are doing to improve this area of need within all Vermont schools. The members of this subcommittee are certainly not experts in this topic so the above information is only our suggestions on how we feel the presentation may be improved.

Next Steps:

The subcommittee looks forward to reviewing the other rule change implementation documents.

Public Comment:

No public comments were given.

Adjourn:

Meeting adjourned at 6:27 p.m.

Meeting Schedule (Hold the Dates):

October 28, 2021 Canceled

November 18, 2021

December 14, 2021

January 27, 2022