DEVELOPING MEANINGFUL GOALS FOR STUDENTS WITH AUTISM

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Tri-State Autism Spectrum Disorder Webinar Series

This material was developed under a grant from the Colorado Department of Education. The content does not necessarily represent the policy of the U.S. Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.

The content of this material was developed under an agreement from the Federal Department of Education to the Kansas Department of Education. However, those contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Kansas Department of Education or the Federal Government.

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Without looking, can you define FAPE?

a. Yes
b. No

Without looking, can you list the three goals of Special Education in the U.S.?

a. Yes
b. No
THE PURPOSE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

- To ensure that all children with disabilities have available to them a free appropriate public education that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique need and prepare them for further education, employment, and independent living.

(IDEA) §300.1 (emphasis added)

IDEA: GOALS OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

- Further Education
- Employment
- Independent Living
The Rose Capacities outline what Kansas students should know and be able to do.
- There is also an emphasis on preparing for life after high school.
- Cited in the Kansas Supreme Court’s March 2014 Gannon v State of Kansas school finance decision.

- Sufficient oral and written communication skills to enable students to function in a complex and rapidly changing civilization
- Sufficient knowledge of economic, social, and political systems to enable the students to make informed choices
- Sufficient understanding of governmental processes to enable the students to understand the issues that affect his or her community, state, and nation
- Sufficient self-knowledge and knowledge of his or her mental and physical wellness
ROSE CAPACITIES

- Sufficient grounding in the arts to enable each student to appreciate his or her cultural and historical heritage
- Sufficient training or preparation for advanced training in either academic or vocational fields so as to enable each child to choose and pursue life work intelligently
- Sufficient levels of academic or vocational skills to enable public school students to compete favorably with their counterparts in surrounding states, in academics or in the job market

GOALS OF IDEA AND ROSE CAPACITIES RELATIONSHIP
Rose Capacities

Goal of IDEA: Further Education

- Oral and written communication skills
- Preparation for advanced training
- Self-knowledge

Goal of IDEA: Employment

- Oral and written communication skills
- Academic or vocational skills
- Self-knowledge
Rose Capacities

oral and written communication skills

knowledge of economic, social, and political systems

self-knowledge

Goal of IDEA Independent Living

STATE STANDARDS, ROSE CAPACITIES, IDEA RELATIONSHIPS
Kansas Standards for English Language Arts (Grade 5 – Speaking and Listening)

**Rose Capacities**

IDEA Goals

Further Education, Employment, Independent Living

**Oral Communication Skills**

- SL.5.1c Pose & respond to questions by making comments that contribute to the discussion and elaborate on the remarks of others.
- SL.5.1b Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions and carry out assigned roles.
- SL.5.6 Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, using formal English when appropriate to task and situation.

**IDEA Goals**

Further Education, Employment, Independent Living

Kansas Standards for History Government and Social Studies

**Rose Capacities**

IDEA Goals

Knowledge of economic, social, and political systems

**IDEA Goals**

Further Education, Employment, Independent Living

- Analyze multiple accounts of the same event or topic, noting similarities & differences in the point of view they represent. KCCRS RI.5.6
- Adhere to the fundamental principles of common good and justice for all. Civics skill 5th grade
- Exhibit decision making based on an understanding of consequences and cost/benefit. Economic Skills 5th Grade

Ruth Aspy, Ph.D.
OBJECTIVES, STATE STANDARDS, ROSE CAPACITIES, IDEA

RELATIONSHIPS

IEP objective

Kansas Standards for English Language Arts (Grade 5 – Speaking and Listening)

Rose Capacities

IDEA Goals

Further Education, Employment, Independent Living

SL.5.1b Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions and carry out assigned roles

Oral Communication Skills

Student will ask three follow-up questions on one topic within 0-2 seconds with one verbal prompt (Assign criteria for mastery).

Within 2 seconds, student will correctly identify the topic in fast-paced audio recordings within a structured setting (assign criteria for mastery).
CURRENT OUTCOMES
ARE WE REACHING THE GOALS?
DO SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS HAVE THE CAPACITIES WHEN THEY GRADUATE?

INDEPENDENT LIVING: 20%

Newman et al. (NLTS2), 2011
FULL-TIME EMPLOYMENT - ASD

14%  

15%  

https://www.forbes.com/sites/karenhigginbottom/2018/05/31/

UNEMPLOYMENT

Unemployment Rate of College Grads with Autism  

85%  

National Unemployment Rate  

4.5%  

SOCIAL EXCLUSION

- 54% not invited to activities with friends
- 69% never saw friends
- 65% never talked with friends on the phone

NLTS2, 2016

CRITICAL SKILLS - QUESTION

- Write down 3 skills that are critical to further education, employment, and independent living.
POLL

Did you include conversation in your list?

a. Yes
b. No

National Autism Indicators Report
Transition into Young Adulthood
2015

CONVERSATION ABILITY & OUTCOMES
As conversation ability increased, so did the percentage of young adults who ever had a job during their early 20s.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conversation ability</th>
<th>Percent ever employed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unable to converse</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A lot of trouble</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A little trouble</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No trouble conversing</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: National Longitudinal Transition Study-2

As conversation ability increased, so did the percentage of young adults who ever attended postsecondary education during their early 20s.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conversation ability</th>
<th>Percent attended postsecondary education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unable to converse</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A lot of trouble</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A little trouble</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No trouble conversing</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: National Longitudinal Transition Study-2
As conversation ability increased, the percentage of young adults who were disconnected decreased.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conversation ability</th>
<th>Percent ever disconnected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not able to converse</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A lot of trouble</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A little trouble</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No trouble conversing</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: National Longitudinal Transition Study-2

OUTCOMES

- What is the significance of these outcomes?
- How might these outcomes impact the goals and objectives for students with ASD in your setting?
GREAT RESOURCES FOR CONVERSATION GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

TALK WITH ME
A Step-by-Step Conversation Framework for Teaching Conversational Balance and Fluency for High-Functioning Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder
Kerry Maloof, MS.Ed. + Ruth Aspy, PhD. + Noah Shafter

CONVERSATION CLUB
Teaching Children With Autism Spectrum Disorder and Other Challenges Skills to Engage in Successful Conversations with Peers
Sixty Lessons, Janet Clark, Dorothy Minor, Eve Miller, and Michael Powers
Illustrated by Becky Whalen

Regulation
SELF-REGULATION DEFINED:

- The ability to control one’s own behavior
- The ability for the mind to organize itself
- The ability to modulate emotions – to soothe oneself when distressed or to express or suppress feelings
- The ability to adapt to new people and new situations
- The ability to match arousal level to the task or situation
- The ability to set a goal and adjust behavior to reach that goal
- The ability to deal with frustration

WRITING GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

GOALS SHOULD:
IDEA: IEP MUST INCLUDE

(2)(i) A statement of measurable annual goals, including academic and functional goals designed to—

- (A) 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

- (B) Meet each of the child's other educational needs that result from the child's disability;

IDEA

GOALS SHOULD

FOCUS ON LEARNING AND BEHAVIORAL PROBLEMS RESULTING FROM ASD
NEEDS THAT RESULT FROM THE CHILD’S DISABILITY

Programming for students served under the category of autism should be designed to address the underlying autism – social, communication, repetitive behaviors and interests/difficulty with change. Goals and objectives must reflect this focus.

FOCUS OF GOALS

related to needs that result from the child’s disability - ASD

- Social
- Behavior, Interests, and Activities
- Communication
- Sensory Differences
- Cognitive Differences
- Motor Differences
- Self-Regulation/Emotional Vulnerability
ADDRESS THE DISABILITY

**IEP**
- **Name:** John
- **Eligibility:** LD
- **Goals:**

**IEP**
- **Name:** Luis
- **Eligibility:** AU
- **Goals:**

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“YOU CAN’T DO SOMETHING FOREVER.”

BOB DYLAN

Ruth Aspy, Ph.D.
GOALS SHOULD
ADDRESS THE NEEDS SUMMARIZED IN THE PRESENT LEVELS
OF ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AND FUNCTIONAL
PERFORMANCE

PRESENT LEVELS
related to needs that result from the child’s disability
▶ Social
▶ Behavior, Interests, and Activities
▶ Communication
▶ Sensory Differences
▶ Cognitive Differences
▶ Motor Differences
▶ Self-Regulation/Emotional Vulnerability
There must be a direct relationship between the needs identified in the PLEP and the goals.

What does this student need to learn next?
Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions and carry out assigned roles when working in a small group (2 peers) to create an art project.

Underlying Characteristics:
- Difficulty with rules of conversation
- Difficulty following instructions
- Poor eye contact
- Mindblindness
- Difficulty joining
- Difficulty understanding nonverbal communication
- Difficulty asking for help
- Lacks tact or appears rude
- Less involved in group activities
- Difficulty maintaining personal space

GOALS

During a slow-paced conversation in a structured setting, student asks at least one follow-up question within 0-2 seconds with one verbal or gesture prompt.

In a natural conversation with peers, student will ask at least one follow-up question within 0-2 seconds with one verbal or gesture prompt (assign criteria for mastery).
GOALS SHOULD

Be meaningful, measurable, able to be monitored, and useful in decision-making

DESCRIBE ONLY WHAT THE STUDENT CAN REASONABLY BE EXPECTED TO ACCOMPLISH WITHIN ONE SCHOOL YEAR IEP

**Present Level**
Maintain a conversation with a peer for a minimum of two conversational turns in structured setting with visual supports.

**Objective**
During a natural conversation, student will spontaneously use a sad voice intonation to make a conversation believable (assign criteria for mastery).
To increase the effectiveness of all types of training, we need to contextualize the skills. Situational trainings are preferable to skill trainings.

Vermeulen
CONTEXT VS. SKILLS

Instead of formulating goals in terms of skills (e.g., learn to greet people, learn to have a conversation), we would do better to set goals in terms of contexts.

Vermeulen

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>Context</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Engage in a conversation</td>
<td>Appropriately take turns in conversation about the communication partner’s interest with 85% accuracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wait for his turn</td>
<td>• With adult during individual instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• With peer during small group activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• With peers in the cafeteria at breakfast</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Skill Context

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>Context</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Will recognize emotions</td>
<td>Identify basic emotions using the following sequence 7 out of 10 opportunities:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• In drawings and photos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• In stories and video</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• In role play using “freeze”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• In <strong>morning meeting</strong> with assistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• In <strong>morning meeting</strong> without assistance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Description of Current Functioning

- Difficulty Making or keeping Friends
- If things do not go his way he may growl or hit others on the playground
- Becomes nervous when he is required to interact with others during circle time

### Contextualized Objective

- Using a social behavior map Paul will identify behaviors in a specific context as expected or unexpected
  - In the cafeteria before school
  - During Reading Circle
  - On the playground during structured play activities
Bryan - Background

- Elementary School Student - ASD
- Over 25 In School Suspensions
- Hides under desk
- “Work refusal”
- Body slams adults and peers
- Leaves class
- Teased by peers
Bryan - IEP

- Has 42 objectives in IEP – 40 of those are academic (writing/grammar, number operations, penmanship, geometry and spatial reasoning, geography)

Bryan – “Psychological” IEP objectives

- Bryan will identify three alternative behaviors to replace negative behaviors. 90%

- Brian will identify 3 support services in the school setting. 100%
Underlying Characteristics:

Specific Behaviors:

- Has Problems handling transition and change
- Has eccentric or intense preoccupations
- Interprets words/conversations literally
- Has difficulty following instructions

Consequence(s):

- Redirection
- Reassured that can complete task later

ABC-Iceberg Bryan

Antecedent(s):

- Teacher gives direction
- Instructions not literal
- Asked to transition from an incomplete task

Difficulty understanding nonverbal communication

Difficulty asking for help

Attention Problems

Unmotivated by customary rewards

Tends to be less involved in group activities

UCC Item IEP Objective

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UCC Item</th>
<th>IEP Objective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interprets words and conversations literally</td>
<td>Correctly identify common idioms when used/presented in oral or written formats with 80% accuracy and minimal cues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASD</td>
<td>IEP Objective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tends to be less involved in group activities</td>
<td>Given carefully selected group of peers, including trained buddy, and a clearly defined task that Bryan has been trained to do, and a reinforcement plan, Bryan will participate in a classroom or other small group activity along with his peers without the need for additional prompting twice per week for 6 weeks.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ASD</th>
<th>IEP Objective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>▶ Has difficulty asking for help</td>
<td>▶ When watching a video of a class activity, Bryan will identify why students asked for help in 3 out of 4 opportunities.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Underlying Characteristics

- Naive, easily taken advantage of
- Has Problems handling transition and change
- Difficulty expressing thoughts and feelings
- Withdraws into complex inner worlds
- Difficulty asking for help
- Difficulty tolerating mistakes
- Responds in unusual manner to sounds

Consequence(s)

- Redirection
- Wait time
- ISS
- Office referral

Specific Behaviors

- Melting down
  - Stomps
  - Screams
  - Body slams
  - Leaves class
  - Hides/goes into fetal position

Antecedent(s)

- Change in expectations
- Loud sounds
- Peer teasing
- Mistakes

Mindblindness

With prompts, identify positive interpersonal expressions seen on video 8 out of 10 trials.

Identify basic emotions using the following sequence:

- Drawings
- Video
- Role play using “freeze”
- Actual settings with assistance
- Actual settings without assistance 8 out of 10 times
## References

- **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act** [https://sites.ed.gov/idea](https://sites.ed.gov/idea)

## Resources