

# Where's the Meat? Writing SMART IEPs:

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Advocate Well

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## A Little About Cynthia Singleton



- Mother to a 23-year-old son with autism
- Helped write the autism supplement
- Awarded for my work in advocacy
- Special Ed Advocate for 18 years
- Have a Consulting Practice
  - Special Ed Advocacy
  - Autism Parent Coaching
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# Purpose of IDEA

The primary purpose:

“to ensure that all children with disabilities have available to them a free appropriate public education

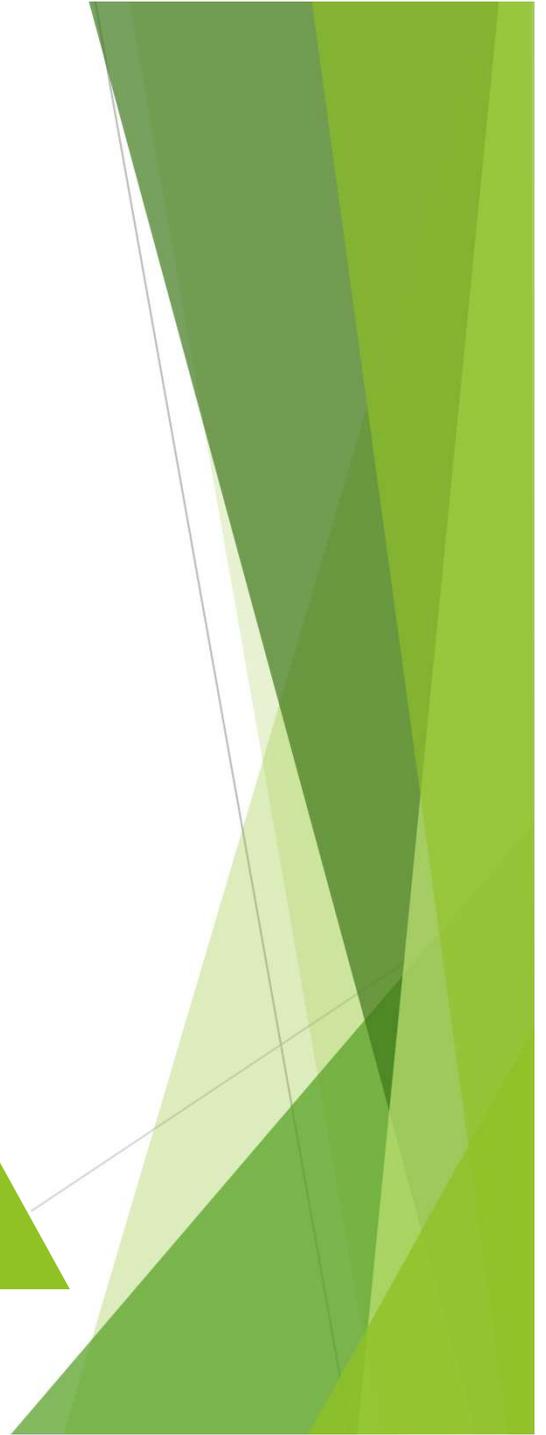
**that emphasizes special education and related services** designed to **meet their unique needs** and prepare them for further education, employment, and independent living.”



**Place-  
ment**

**IEP**

**Evaluation  
(FIE)**





## 2 Parts of IEP Goal

- ▶ **PLAAFP**

- ▶ **Present**
- ▶ **Level**
- ▶ **Academic**
- ▶ **Achievement &**
- ▶ **Functional**
- ▶ **Performance**

- ▶ **IEP Goal**

- ▶ A statement of the academic or functional skill that the student is to acquire in order to make progress towards or in the general ed curriculum.

“If you don't know where you're going,  
you'll end up someplace else.”

Yogi Berra



## SMART IEP Goals

- ▶ **S**pecific
- ▶ **M**easurable
- ▶ **A**ction word based
- ▶ **R**ealistic and relevant
- ▶ **T**ime limited

# Parts of the Goal

- ▶ **WHERE:** Setting: where will the goal happen
- ▶ **BY WHEN;** Time Frame: by when will this goal happen (not all goals have to be for an entire year)
- ▶ **HOW:** Supports/Conditions:
  - ▶ Prompts, visual supports, etc.
  - ▶ Independently
- ▶ **WHAT** Specific Positive Action
- ▶ **WHO:** Implementor
  - ▶ Teacher, SLP, OT,
  - ▶ If more than 1 implementor, who will be in charge of data collection

## A Too Vague IEP

### Usual IEP

- ▶ Student will read at 2<sup>nd</sup> grade level.

### SMART IEP

- ▶ By date (of the next annual ARD) Student will orally read a passage with 70% fluency when tested with the Woodcock Johnson iii.

# Too Many Skills in One Goal

## Usual IEP

- ▶ By 36 instructional weeks, student will participate in turn-taking and sharing activities with at least (1-2 peers by maintaining personal space such as being the line leader (by waiting his turn and refraining from crying). Student will learn to take turns with manipulatives (by refraining from not wanting to share) preferred items during small group activities. Student will learn to wait his turn and share by using visual cues and verbal reinforcement. Student will learn how to take turns and share in 4/5 turn taking and sharing opportunities

## SMART IEP

- ▶ By Aug 12, 2022, when given visual and verbal cues, student will participate in a preferred turn taking or sharing activity (such as being a line leader with at least (1-2 peers) by maintaining personal space and quietly waiting for his turn in 4 out of 5 opportunities.

# Looks Measurable, but Does Not Address Key Deficit Noted in the PLAAFP

## Usual IEP

- ▶ By the next annual ARD of the 201-22 school year, when given a grade-level reading passage with reduced complexity, clarification of key vocabulary, attention to specific information and reminders to stay on task, Student will answer questions about the text with 75% accuracy.

## SMART IEP

- ▶ Given inference graphic organizers and late 5<sup>th</sup> grade instructional texts, student will support inferences with at least 3 text-based evidence with 80% accuracy.

# So, How Do I Craft a SMARTer IEP?

- ▶ Start with the need from the PLAAFP that you want to address
- ▶ Write a statement describing WHAT you want the child to do.
- ▶ Add the supports.
- ▶ Add the setting.
- ▶ Who needs to teach it.
- ▶ What level is reasonable for them to be able to do this skill?
- ▶ timeframe



## A Few IEP Goal Tips

- ▶ Quality before quantity
- ▶ Clear language
- ▶ Preparation, preparation, preparation!!!
- ▶ There is no writing, there is only re-writing
- ▶ Teamwork



## Impact of Endrew F

. . . If that is not a reasonable prospect for a child, his IEP need not aim for grade-level advancement. But his educational program must be **appropriately ambitious** in light of his circumstances, just as advancement from grade to grade is appropriately ambitious for most children in the regular classroom. The goals may differ, but **every child should have the chance to meet challenging objectives.**”



Questions?



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