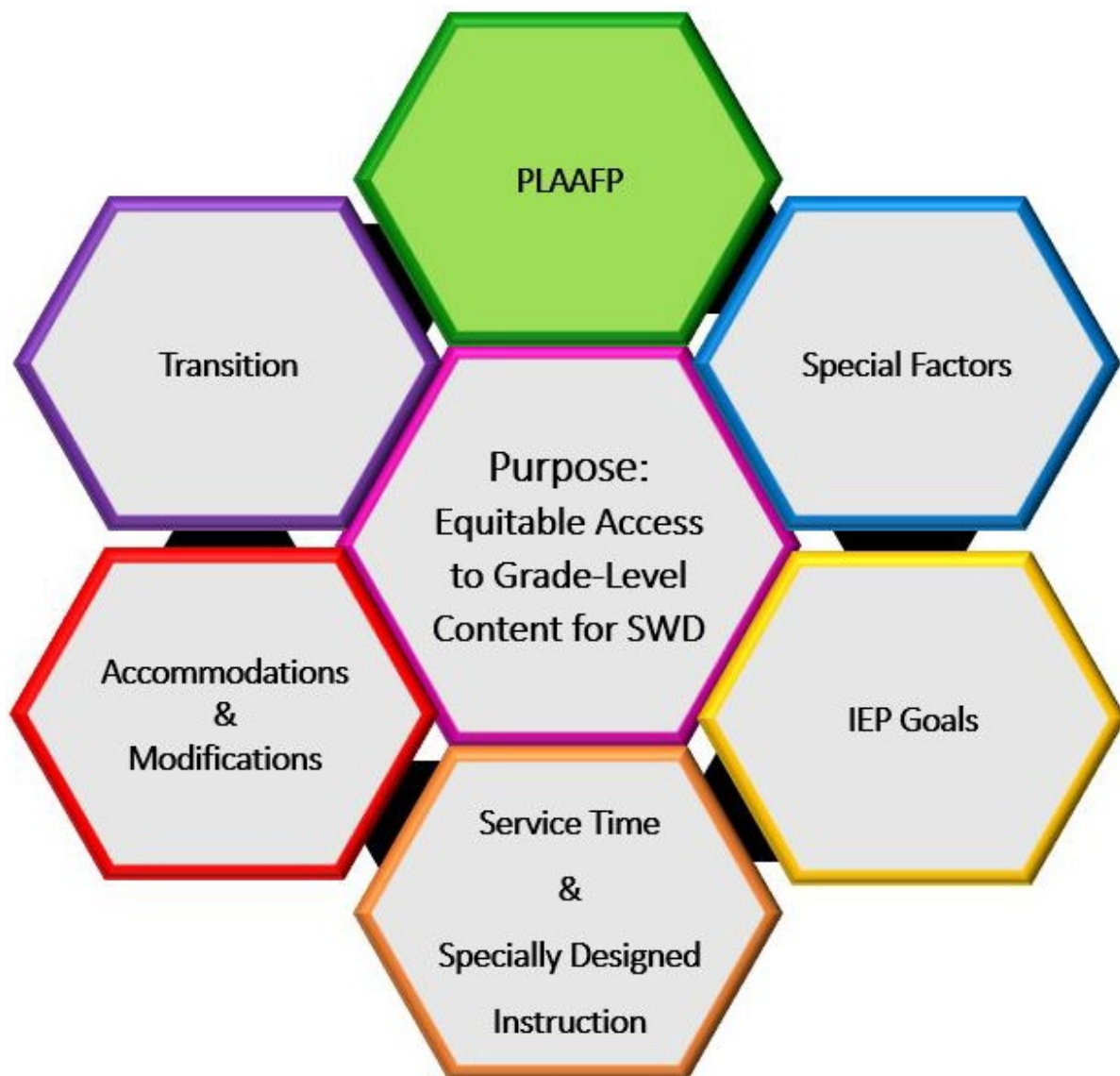


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# PRESENT LEVELS OF ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AND FUNCTIONAL PERFORMANCE (PLAAFP)

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## REQUIREMENTS OF THE PLAAFP

In developing, reviewing, and revising individualized education programs (IEPs), the IEP team must consider:

- (1) The strengths of the student;
- (2) The concerns of the parent(s) or adult student for enhancing the education of the student;
- (3) The results of the initial or most recent evaluation of the student, and
- (4) The academic, developmental, and functional needs of the student ([Utah State Board of Education Special Education Rules](#) [Rules] III.I.1.a.).

Each IEP must contain: "A statement of the student's present levels of academic achievement and functional performance (PLAAFP), including:

- (1) How the student's disability affects the student's involvement and progress in the general education curriculum (i.e., the same curriculum as for nondisabled students); or
- (2) For preschool students, as appropriate, how the disability affects the student's participation in appropriate activities" ([Rules](#) III.J.2.a.).

## IMPORTANCE OF THE PLAAFP

A well-written PLAAFP is the first component of the IEP and is central to ensuring a comprehensive approach in identifying student needs to ensure access to grade-level standards while addressing procedural compliance. A PLAAFP is the first piece of information an IEP team may develop on a student with a disability. This information provides the students' strengths, concerns of the parent, results of evaluations, and the student's academic developmental, and functional needs. Effective practices, accommodations, modifications, and learning strategies are stated in the PLAAFP to help the student be successful. If the PLAAFP is insufficient or incomplete, it is difficult for the student to receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE).

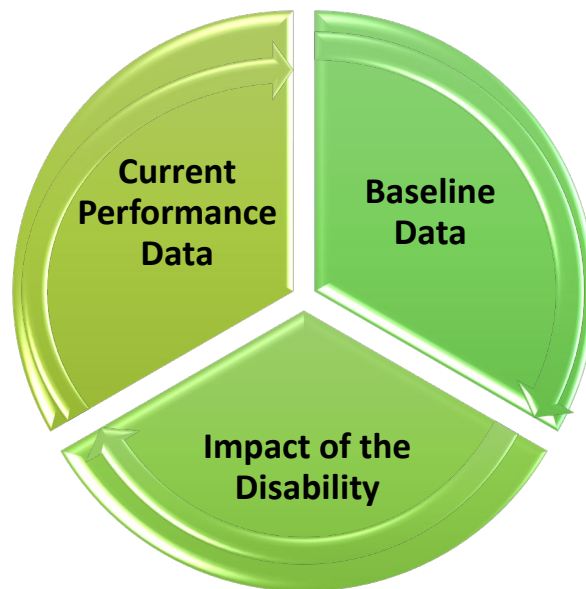
When developing the PLAAFP, the IEP team must consider the unique strengths and needs of the student. If the student were to transfer to another school, does the PLAAFP contain enough detailed information to describe what the student needs?

There should be sufficient data in the PLAAFP to create challenging, measurable goals; and determine which special education, related services, accommodations, and modifications are necessary for a student to progress in the general education curriculum. If an IEP team fails to provide clear identification of the student's present levels, establish a baseline for IEP goals, and ensure parent participation, it could result in a denial of FAPE.

## COMPONENTS OF THE PLAAFP

To effectively demonstrate how the disability impacts the student's involvement and progress in the general education curriculum, the PLAAFP should contain the following:

- The student's current performance,
- Baseline data, and
- The impact of the disability on the student's progress in the general education curriculum.



## Current and Baseline Performance Data

Baseline and current performance data are the starting point for writing measurable goals. **Data should be current, specific, measurable, and correspond directly to the annual goals.** Consider data that will most accurately and specifically reflect the student's current level of functioning in each area. Teams should use data that is already being gathered regularly and align with grade-level standards to reflect where the student performs in relation to grade-level peers.

Types of data teams may consider:

- Parent and teacher input
- Student strengths and weaknesses
- Generalized student observations
- Student interests and learning styles
- Report cards
- Statewide assessments
- Standardized assessments
- Universal screenings
- Social/behavioral/adaptive checklists
- Progress monitoring

- Achievement tests
- Curriculum-based measurements
- Any information that helps the team understand how the student's disability affects involvement and progress in the general education curriculum.

Data includes information not only for academics but also social/behavior, functional/adaptive skills, speech/language, motor, and any other area(s) the student has an educational need. Past data that is no longer applicable should be excluded.

## Impact of the Disability

**The impact of the disability explains *how* the student's disability affects the student's involvement and progress in the general education curriculum (Rules III.J.).** When IEP teams can identify the impact of the student's disability, they can better determine the type and amount of specialized instruction that will enable the student to progress. It is not sufficient to state that the student has a disability. For example, "Barry has a disability in reading" offers no information on how Barry's disability affects his progress in the general curriculum; it only states that he has a disability. Two students with the same disability can look very different in the general education classroom. The impact statement sets them apart. What is unique about each student, and how do these specific characteristics inhibit each student's progression?

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### QUESTIONS TEAMS MAY CONSIDER WHEN DETERMINING THE IMPACT

- *Why* is this student not making sufficient progress in meeting grade-level standards?
  - Is the student unable to read grade-level material such as written instructions or textbooks? Does the student need audiobooks or material read aloud to access the curriculum?
- *What* does the disability look like in the general education classroom?
  - Is the student acting out, looking around for help, sitting alone, off-task, or interrupting the class?
- *How* is this student different from their same-aged peers?
  - Is the student able to keep pace with the rest of the class and understand instructions given by the teacher?
- *How* is the student's disability interfering with their ability to access the general curriculum?
  - Can the student comprehend the material being read or taught? Can they complete assignments independently?

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### EXAMPLES OF IMPACT STATEMENTS

- **Reading:** Devin's disability in reading comprehension causes him to have difficulty reading grade-level material, including instructions and questions on assignments, textbooks, stories, and word problems in math. Devin needs all grade-level material read aloud either through audiobooks, a peer reader, or the teacher. Devin's disability impacts his ability to independently read, comprehend, follow along at the same pace as his peers, and complete grade-level classroom assignments.

- **Behavior:** Jesse has difficulty focusing, staying on task, and following teacher instructions. He often keeps his head down or stares out the window. Jessie's disability impedes his ability to follow along with the class, learn grade-level material, and complete assigned tasks in all classes.
- **Written Expression:** Tina's disability in written expression negatively impacts her ability to complete written tasks independently. Tina often sits quietly, not working, and will not ask for help when given an assignment that requires writing more than one to two short sentences. This impacts her academic success in all instructional settings requiring written work.
- **Math Calculations:** Audrey lacks foundational math skills, limiting her ability to participate in and comprehend grade-level math instruction. She is unable to complete grade-level assignments without significant support and reteaching of skills.
- **Social Skills:** Kylie struggles with respecting personal boundaries with her general education peers, which negatively impacts her ability to create and keep friends, find peers to work on projects with, and complete group assignments. Kylie's social skills deficits impede her progress in both academic and social settings.

## PLAAFP EXAMPLES

### 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Student – Specific Learning Disability

#### CURRENT PERFORMANCE & BASELINE DATA – 4<sup>TH</sup> GRADE STUDENT

Jill is a 4<sup>th</sup> grade student who has a specific learning disability in reading fluency. Jill prefers using text-to-speech accommodations rather than having the teacher read material aloud as it draws less attention to her disability. When given a list of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade level sight words, Jill can read the list with 68% accuracy. She can read the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade list with 77% accuracy and the 1<sup>st</sup> grade list with 89% accuracy. Jill can read 52 wpm with 89% accuracy on a 2<sup>nd</sup> grade level and 65 wpm with 92% accuracy on a 1<sup>st</sup> grade level.

According to oral reading fluency assessments given over four weeks, Jill is currently reading an average of 24 wpm with 75% accuracy on a 4<sup>th</sup> grade level. The spring benchmark for 4<sup>th</sup> grade is 95 wpm with 93% accuracy. Jill completed the LEA-wide reading benchmark assessment and scored in the "needs intervention" range.

A possible relationship has been identified between her sight word accuracy and oral reading fluency in observing Jill's reading patterns. Jill could benefit from additional sight word instruction to increase her oral reading fluency.

#### IMPACT OF THE DISABILITY – 4<sup>TH</sup> GRADE STUDENT

Jill's disability impedes her progress in the general curriculum. At this time, she does not read fluently and accurately and is unable to read and comprehend grade-level material in all academic areas independently. As a result, Jill has difficulty reading directions, worksheets, and completing assignments in a timely manner.

## 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Student– Significant Cognitive Disability

### CURRENT PERFORMANCE AND BASELINE DATA– 7<sup>TH</sup> GRADE STUDENT

Sophie is a 7<sup>th</sup> grade student with a significant cognitive disability and approximately 85% of her math instruction is provided through small groups with three to four other students. Sophie’s parents indicate that Sophie uses eye gaze at home as her primary mode of communication and would love to see Sophie increasing her use of eye gaze during instruction. Sophie has been receiving explicit instruction with number sense vocabulary and demonstrates that she can use eye gaze or gestures to match or identify groups of up to five tangible objects representing “more” and “less” in 8/20 (40%) opportunities. Sophie non-verbally matches or identifies the meaning of “same” or “equal” with 98% accuracy when provided with visual or tactile groups of objects or items. Sophie has also been working on geometry vocabulary and demonstrates the ability to identify basic geometrical shapes (i.e., square, triangle, circle) with 95% accuracy when using picture representations of those shapes. She has also been working on generalizing her ability to recognize shapes to items in her environment. Sophie is currently able to generalize shapes to real objects in 12/25 opportunities when the real item is paired with the visual item.

Although Sophie identifies “more” and “less” with approximately 40% accuracy, she still needs to build that academic language to a point where she can be proficient with that terminology. Sophie really benefits from integrating math concepts with vocabulary. Vocabulary like “more” and “less” is also used to integrate Sophie’s number sense and knowledge of geometric shapes. Sophie currently identifies through pointing and gesturing to numbers up to 10 with 78% accuracy but identifies numbers 1–5 with 100% accuracy. During instruction, we are often using numbers (1–5) or shapes (square, circle, or triangle) that we know she is proficient with to practice or teach the concepts of “more” and “less.” Once Sophie identifies “more” and “less” with more accuracy, she will then need to be able to classify, group, or pair items together based on whether the characteristics are “same/equal” or “more/less.”

### IMPACT OF THE DISABILITY – 7<sup>TH</sup> GRADE STUDENT

Sophie’s disability impacts her ability to demonstrate a functional understanding of how we use math in the real world, and her ability to access the general education curriculum. Numbers, shapes, and visual/tangible manipulatives used in math are simply a representation of something else. For math concepts to be meaningful for Sophie, she needs to be able to develop the language skills with math so she can group, categorize, and compare numbers, shapes, and manipulatives in a functional way.

## 10<sup>th</sup> Grade Student – Other Health Impairment

### CURRENT PERFORMANCE AND BASELINE DATA – 10<sup>TH</sup> GRADE STUDENT

Matthew is a 10<sup>th</sup> grade student who has been diagnosed with anxiety and attention deficit disorder. Matthew does well in math, science, engineering, and art. Matthew likes working with his hands and building things. He can write one to two short paragraphs with simple sentences with no introduction or conclusion.

According to the BASC 3 checklist completed by his mother and English teacher last month, Matthew scores in the clinically significant range for Internalizing Behaviors, such as anxiety. His teacher observes that when Matthew is anxious, he will fidget with something on his desk, look around the room, or scribble on his paper. Matthew's mother notes that he can sit at the kitchen counter for over an hour and not write anything.

Matthew's average test score in English is 67%. His reading scores show he reads at an 11<sup>th</sup> grade level. Over the last four weeks, Matthew was given three curriculum-based writing assessments. He was asked to read a two-page text and then write a five-paragraph opinion essay. According to the writing rubric, his overall score was 65% on the first assessment, 72% on the second, and 55% on the third. Matthew has difficulty generating ideas, writing complex sentences, relating his sentences back to the text, and using correct grammar. When given a complex writing task, Matthew exhibits behaviors that may suggest an increase in anxiety.

In reviewing Matthew's academic patterns, a cyclical connection has been made between anxiety and executive function. Difficulty with executive functioning increases his anxiety, which results in an inability to begin or complete task demands. Matthew currently responds well to breaking large tasks into smaller, more manageable pieces. He could benefit from using a graphic organizer to guide his writing process.

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#### IMPACT OF THE DISABILITY – 10<sup>TH</sup> GRADE STUDENT

Matthew's disability inhibits his progress in the general curriculum. He has difficulty with written expression and completing his English assignments. Matthew often does not turn in his writing assignments because he either has not started them or they are incomplete. When given prompts and encouragement, he can write simple, short sentences, but he does not expand his writing to multiple paragraphs as required for 10<sup>th</sup> grade standards.