

Value-Added Educational Evaluations: Improving IEP's and Services for Students

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Presenters

Angie McKinney, Ph.D.

Consultant, IEP Resource Center
angela.mckinney@indstate.edu

Leah Nellis, Ph.D.

Associate Professor, School Psychology
Consultant, IEP Resource Center
leah.Nellis@indstate.edu



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Session Objectives

- Consider the multiple purposes of educational evaluations
- Learn about conducting focused evaluations (and reevaluations) that connect findings to IEP development
- Implications for the evaluation process and report writing



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What's the Purpose of Educational Evaluations?



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511 IAC 7-32-30

Two Prongs of Purpose

Determine whether a student is eligible

There is a Disability

That adversely affects educational performance

And necessitates SE and Related Services

If eligible, the nature and extent of SE and Related Services

Focus and Type of Services, Aids, Accommodations

Intensity of Services, Delivery of Services

How do we operationalize these purposes?

What does this look like in practice?

What could it look like in practice?



511 IAC 7-32-34

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Questions to Guide the Evaluation: First Prong

Determine whether a student is eligible

There is a Disability

- *Is there evidence of eligibility criteria?*
- *Have exclusionary factors been ruled out as the primary cause?*

That adversely affects educational performance

- *In what ways does the disability impact the student's involvement and progress in the GE curriculum?*
- *To what extent does the disability affect academic and/or functional performance?*

And necessitates SE and Related Services

- *What services are needed to minimize the impact of the disability?*



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Questions to Guide the Evaluation: Second Prong

If eligible, the nature and extent of SE and Related Services

Focus and Type of Services, Aids, Accommodations

- *What skills are needed to access the GE curriculum?*
- *In what ways can engagement in learning be increased/improved?*
- *What services and supports will reduce the impact of the disability?*

Intensity of Services, Delivery of Services

- *What growth has been made previously and is needed to make progress?*
- *What rate of growth is needed to reduce or close the gap?*



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Why Is This Important?

Maximizes the value of the evaluation process

Aligns with the FAPE Dear Colleague Letter (November 2015)

Supports reevaluation for the purpose of informing services and supports

Places focus on what the student needs, not deficits



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OSEP Dear Colleague Letter

(November 2015)

High Expectations for All Students

Shared Responsibility

Access to Grade Level Content

Ability to Learn with Appropriate Supports and Services



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Implications for the Evaluation Process

Referral

Planning

Assessing

Sharing Results



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Referral Information

- What information is collected at referral?
 - Knowledge and skills that are being focused on in the classroom
 - Specific skills the student lacks or does not use efficiently or consistently
 - Ways in which the student's engagement and motivation are boosted
 - Information regarding barriers to accessing grade level standards?

✓ Examine your current process
 ✓ Check your referral forms
 Are changes needed?



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Planning

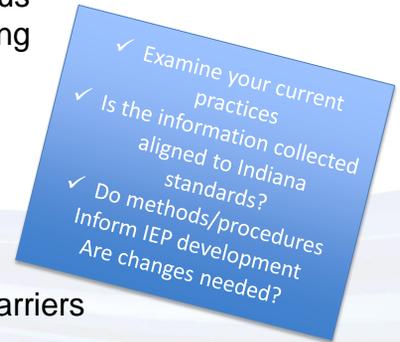
- What information is needed and what are the best methods/procedures to collect it?
 - Information that aligns with grade-level curriculum and standards
 - Assets/strengths and areas of need
 - Settings and instructional areas for observations
 - Coordinated multidisciplinary team planning



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Assessing

- Summarizing existing data
 - What rate of progress is demonstrated by previous formative assessments and/or progress monitoring data
- Collecting new data
 - What progress is made during brief intervention periods
 - What is the current instructional level
 - What supports or accommodations reduce the barriers to learning and performance



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Utility of Educational Evaluation Reports

Information should inform:

- Eligibility
- Present levels of performance
- Areas of current need
- Possible accommodations
- Possible services



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Utility of Educational Evaluation Reports

Reports should be:

Written in easy to understand language

Brief and concise

Meaningful to the reader



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Utility of Educational Evaluation Reports

Estimate previous rate of progress.

Applies to initials and reevals

Applies to RTI and non-RTI cases

Align results with grade level standards.

Address access skills.



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Case Example – Initial Evaluation

- Brian is a sixth grader who moved in last year and is struggling with reading. He has difficulty in all his core sixth grade classes because he can't keep up with reading the text. He fails assessments in language arts, science, history, and does not do well on math assessments that involve story problems or long directions. NWEA testing in reading showed performance similar to students in second grade. He is often overly quiet in class and doesn't offer to answer questions.
- Brian has been participating in RTI since he moved in, where he has received regular intervention in reading fluency. The intensity of the intervention was increased at the beginning of this year both in the amount of time given and reduced group size. Regular assessment in fluency has shown very little growth, despite intervention. He was referred for an SLD evaluation.



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Case Example – Initial Evaluation: Questions to Guide the First Prong

Determine whether a student is eligible

There is a Disability

That adversely affects educational performance

And necessitates SE and Related Services

- *Is there evidence of eligibility criteria?*

There is evidence to support SLD in reading. Brian shows weak fluency, reading 51 words per minute on 2nd grade level text. His comprehension is about 35% of what he reads independently. When grade level (6th) material is read to him, he shows comprehension at 87%. Math assessments were within the average range. His written expression was low average, but with weak spelling.

- *In what ways does the disability impact the student's involvement and progress in the GE curriculum?*

Brian's reading skills have been keeping him from meaningfully accessing grade level content because of the increased expectation for independent reading of text in 6th grade. He struggles to read quick enough to make sense of information.

- *What services are needed to minimize the impact of the disability?*



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Case Example – Initial Evaluation: Questions to Guide the Second Prong

If eligible, the nature and extent of SE and Related Services

Focus and Type of Services, Aids, Accommodations

Intensity of Services, Delivery of Services

- *What skills are needed to access the GE curriculum?*

Reading fluency, reading comprehension, academic engagement, listening comprehension.

- *In what ways can engagement in learning be increased/improved?*

Brian has a desire to do well, but often sits quietly to avoid being called on. By providing him access to the material he can participate more in class discussions.

- *What services and supports will reduce the impact of the disability?*

AT (digital text, text to speech) would allow Brian access to grade-level content. He may also benefit from using spell check or speech to text to work around his difficulty in spelling when answering questions through writing.

- *What growth has been made previously and is needed to make progress?*

Since 5th grade when Brian moved in, his reading fluency has not shown much improvement. His current rate of improvement shows Brian is falling further behind peers each year.



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Growth Rates

Rough Estimate

In our case study Brian is a 6th grader who reads independently at about the 2nd grade level.

This means he is making about 1/3 of a year's progress for every school year so far.

If his growth rate remains unchanged, where will he be in 6 years?

What rate of growth does he need to attain to close/reduce the gap?

RTI Data

Current fluency 51 wpm.

Past 10 data points show a rate of improvement (ROI) of per .3 words per week.

Expectation for 6th grade is 150 words per minute.

In order to "catch up" by 8th grade, Brian would need to show ROI of 1.375 words per week (99 WPM/72 weeks).



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Case Example – Reevaluation

- Samantha is an 8th grader who has had an IEP since 3rd grade due to SLD in reading fluency and comprehension. Services were initially delivered through push-in but have increasingly become more pull-out over the middle school years
- Reevaluation requested
 - due to poor grades in all areas and increasing behavioral difficulties and poor attendance and
 - to consider different eligibility categories of ED and CD



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Case Example – Reevaluation: Questions to Guide the First Prong

Determine whether a student is eligible

There is a Disability

That adversely affects educational performance

And necessitates SE and Related Services

- *Is there evidence of eligibility criteria?*

Not sufficient evidence to support ED. CD not supported due to average adaptive skills at home and in community and average in social, communication, and adaptive areas at school. Math skills and performance in the low average range, oral expression and listening comprehension below to low average.

- *In what ways does the disability impact the student's involvement and progress in the GE curriculum?*

Samantha's reading fluency and reading comprehension skills are at the 3rd grade level. This prevents her from being able to independently read and understand text and assignments in content areas. This also impacts her ability to express knowledge and ideas in writing.

- *What services are needed to minimize the impact of the disability?*



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Case Example – Reevaluation: Questions to Guide the Second Prong

If eligible, the nature and extent of SE and Related Services

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- *What skills are needed to access the GE curriculum?*

Reading comprehension, academic engagement, listening comprehension.

- *In what ways can engagement in learning be increased/improved?*

Samantha shared that she is frustrated because of her poor reading skills and that she is unable to do assignments and group work in class. She acknowledges being argumentative and disrespectful in an attempt to get out of class and work.

- *What services and supports will reduce the impact of the disability?*

AT would allow Samantha access to grade-level content and opportunities to express her knowledge and skills without writing demands. Self-assessment and reflection and coping strategies would reduce behavioral issues.

- *What growth has been made previously and is needed to make progress?*

Since 3rd grade, reading fluency and comprehension skills have increased from early 1st grade to early 3rd grade (approx. 2 years growth in 5 years time). Listening comprehension and oral expression skills have decreased slightly,

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Key Take-Aways

- Remember that evaluations serve two purposes
- Be intentional about collecting and summarizing information for both purposes
- Identify the impact of the student's disability and ways to minimize the barriers the disability poses
- Use prior growth rates to inform the development of annual goals that reflect high expectations and alignment to grade-level standards
- Plan services and supports that focus on access skills, strengths, and needed growth



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