

# Quick Reference Guide

## Section 4: Goals and Objective/Benchmarks

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### Tips for Developing a Quality and Compliant Individualized Education Program (IEP)



Michigan Department of Education  
Office of Special Education and Early Intervention

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The purpose of this section is to develop annual goals and objectives/benchmarks that ensure the student has access to and makes progress in the [general education](#) curriculum.

Goals are descriptions of what the student can be expected to accomplish within a 12-month period; they are to be reasonable, yet challenging. Objectives/benchmarks are intermediate steps between the present level and the annual goal.

Alignment of goals to other sections in the Individualized Education Program (IEP) is important. Goals and objectives/benchmarks align with:

- Needs from the Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance Section 2).
- Baseline data (Section 2).
- Michigan content expectations (e.g., EGLCEs, GLCEs, HSCEs)/early childhood standards of quality pre-kindergarten.
- Secondary Transition Considerations (Section 3).

This section has implications for the student's participation in state assessments. In order to take an alternate assessment (e.g., MEAP-[Access](#), MI-Access), the student must have goals and objectives/ benchmarks based on Michigan content expectations. Goals and objectives/benchmarks must be aligned to the content area of the alternate assessment.

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#### Options I and II

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There are two options for documenting goals and objectives/benchmarks. A district is required to [complete](#) only one of the two options. Both options contain the same requirements; however, the information for short-term objectives/benchmarks is documented differently.

- Option I--uses a narrative approach
  - Option II--uses a Progress Monitoring approach.
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#### Checklist

- The instructional area is identified (i.e., content area).
- The Michigan content expectation is identified.
- The selected content expectation is for the grade in which the student is enrolled.
- For a nonacademic goal in which a Michigan content expectation at grade level does not exist, "No expectation related to this area," is written in the field requesting the Michigan content expectations upon which the goal will be based.
- Baseline data is provided to describe the student's current performance in measurable terms (i.e., how the student is currently performing on the assessment).
- The annual goal is a reasonable but challenging expectation for the student that allows him or her to access and progress in the general education curriculum.
- The annual goal describes what the student can be expected to accomplish within a 12-month period.
- The annual goal is measurable.
- If there is a need for a transition-related goal, the goal is appropriately identified.
- There is more than one short-term instructional objective.
- The objectives include:
  - Performance.
  - Evaluation.
  - Schedule.

*Checklist continues on next page*

Based on the information documented throughout the IEP, determine the area(s) of need requiring a goal and short-term instructional objectives.

Goals and Objectives/Benchmarks
<b>Instructional Area</b> --List the appropriate content area (e.g., strand, domain):
<b>Michigan Content Expectations Upon Which Goal Will Be Based</b> --List the appropriate GLCE, EGLCE, HSCE, EHSCE or Early Childhood Standards of Quality for Pre-Kindergarten:

**Instructional Area and Content Expectation:** Identify the content area related to the student's need. Then identify the content expectation that aligns with this area.

Baseline Data
The student is currently _____ on the _____. <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; width: 100%;"> <span>(data)</span> <span>(assessment)</span> </div>

**Baseline Data:** This information is taken from the data documented in the present level section (Section 2) and establishes a baseline for monitoring progress.

Annual Goal:
By _____, the student will _____ when/at _____ on _____. <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; width: 100%;"> <span>(demonstrate skill)</span> <span>(conditions criteria)</span> <span>(assessment/ evaluation)</span> </div>

**Annual Goal:** A goal must be meaningful (aligned to the area of need) and measurable (have identifiable criteria). [**§ 300.320(a)(2)(i)**]

A well-written goal has four critical elements:

- Target date for achieving the goal.
- Identification of what the student will demonstrate.
- Under what conditions or to what level/degree the student will perform.
- How progress will be assessed/evaluated.

### **Checklist continued**

- The position(s) responsible for implementing goal activities is identified.
- The schedule for reporting progress on goals is identified and includes how often progress reports will be sent home to the parent.

### **Resources**

- *Michigan Administrative Rules for Special Education (MARSE)*  
[www.michigan.gov/ documents/ mde/MARSE- April09\\_274156\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/MARSE-April09_274156_7.pdf)
- *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, Federal Regulations)*  
<http://idea.ed.gov>
- *A Seven-Step Process to Creating Standards-Based IEPs*  
[www.cenmi.org/documents/ sevensteps.pdf](http://www.cenmi.org/documents/sevensteps.pdf)
- *Measurable Verbs for Goals*  
[www.cenmi.org/documents/ measurableverbs.pdf](http://www.cenmi.org/documents/measurableverbs.pdf)
- *MEAP-Access Eligibility Criteria and Guidelines for Participation*  
[www.michigan.gov/ documents/ mde/MEAP-Access\\_Eligibility\\_Criteria\\_and\\_Guidelines\\_ 030209\\_273134\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/MEAP-Access_Eligibility_Criteria_and_Guidelines_030209_273134_7.pdf)
- *Grade Level Content Expectations (GLCEs)*  
[www.michigan.gov/ mde/ 0,1607,7-140-28753\\_33232---](http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,1607,7-140-28753_33232---)

To ensure the goal is aligned with the general education curriculum, write the goal based on a content expectation [e.g., Extended Grade Level Content Expectation (EGLCE), Grade Level Content Expectation (GLCE), Extended High School Content Expectation (EHSCE), High School Content Expectation (HSCE)].

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[.00.html](#)

- High School Content Expectations (HSCEs) *listed under curriculum*  
[www.michigan.gov/mde/0,1607,7-140-38924---,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,1607,7-140-38924---,00.html)

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### Short-Term Objectives/Benchmarks

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Options I and II provide different ways for documenting short-term objectives/benchmarks. Each goal page allows for the development of more than one short-term objective/ benchmark. **[R 340.1721e(2)(b)]**

Describe each short-term objective/benchmark. The objectives/benchmarks are to be written in such a manner that meeting all objectives/benchmarks will result in the student achieving the annual goal.

For each short-term objective/benchmark, describe:

- The performance criteria--determines at what level and under what conditions the skill will be achieved.
- The evaluation procedure--a description of what method will be used to document student performance.
- The evaluation schedule--the frequency of the evaluation procedure.

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**Status Areas:** Both options provide the template for reporting progress. These status areas are shaded and are designed to represent quarterly marking periods. If the district has more or fewer marking periods, adjust the number of status areas to align with the district's periodic reports (i.e., report cards). [**§ 300.320(a)(3)**]

The status areas are to be completed at the time of the district's periodic reports. They must include the date of the periodic report and the progress toward the annual goal as it relates to the short-term objective/benchmark.

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<b>SCHEDULE FOR REPORTING PROGRESS</b>
When: _____

**Schedule for Reporting Progress:** Identify when periodic reports of progress will be provided to the parent (align the schedule with the district marking periods).

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Position(s) responsible for implementing goal activities (check all that apply):		
<input type="checkbox"/> Special Education Teacher	<input type="checkbox"/> Teacher Consultant	<input type="checkbox"/> Speech and Language Provider
<input type="checkbox"/> School Social Worker	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupational Therapist	<input type="checkbox"/> Physical Therapist
<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____		
Position(s) responsible for reporting progress on goal: _____		

**Position(s) Responsible for Implementing Goal Activities and for Reporting Progress on Goal:** This information is designed to create transparency for both the district and the parent.

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