

Anatomy of an IEP



We are going to dissect an IEP to explore how the different components function to create a thriving and healthy IEP. While it is important to understand Illuminate and the technical side of developing an IEP, this is about getting to the heart of developing a skeleton or framework for providing specially designed instruction during the year.



The Surgical Team



Our first IEP component for us to dissect and understand is the student's strength. This is an opportunity to describe what the student can do within their area of need. This will be their starting point or baseline for a year long IEP journey.



- Understand current performance.
- Review progress a year later.
- Shape programs, supports, and goals

Strength is incredibly important for movement and this is what gets an IEP off its feet as well. If we can understand, now, where a student is at, what they can do, it is then possible to develop a meaningful goal.

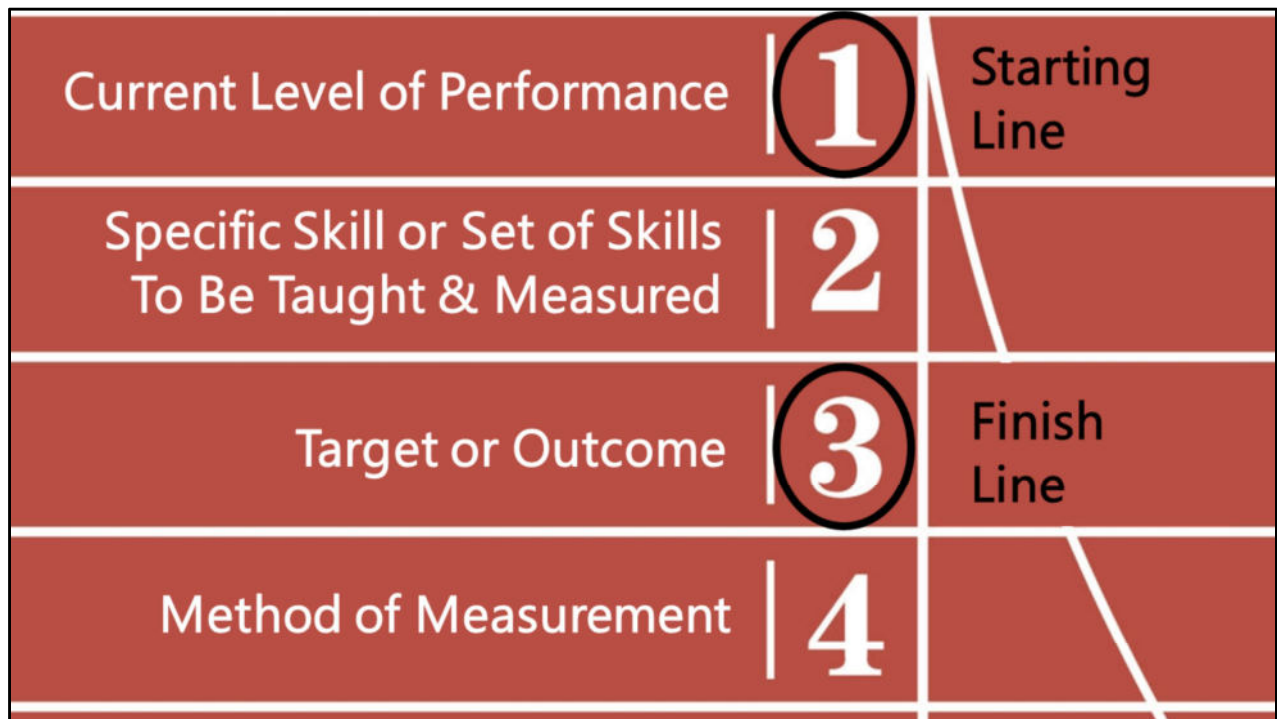
A year later, we can look back and see how far a student has come and what they were able to accomplish. If over the course of this race they are closing the gap between them and their peers or standards or falling further behind, this will help shape what the next IEP could and should look like.



Strength is like the starting line of a year long race and gets us off on the right step. It is also a component of a compliant goal as well.

[click for GIF]

With out strength, our IEPs tend to stumble out of the gate as we introduce broad estimations or even guesswork into our goal development.

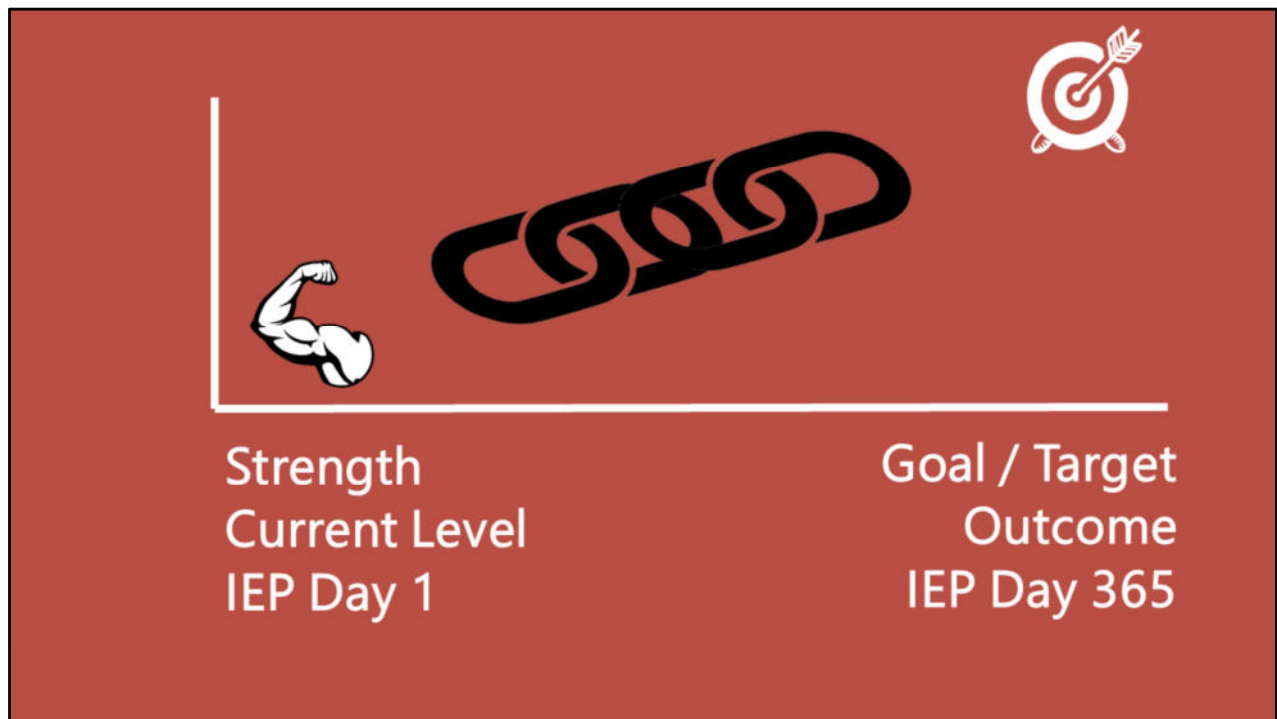


Often when we hear the word compliance, we go into this protective mode where you can hear something like, 'just tell me what I need to say so my IEP passes inspection.

So let's review what is required for a compliant IEP goal. There are 4 pieces to it.

Of these components, which one speaks to strength? [click animation] The current level of performance!

If this is our starting line of a year long race, then what would best represent the finish line? [click animation]. The Target or Outcome, also known as our goal!



The strength and goal are connected. We should be able to see information in a strength and begin inferring what a goal should be about.

Dan can run a
mile in 18
minutes



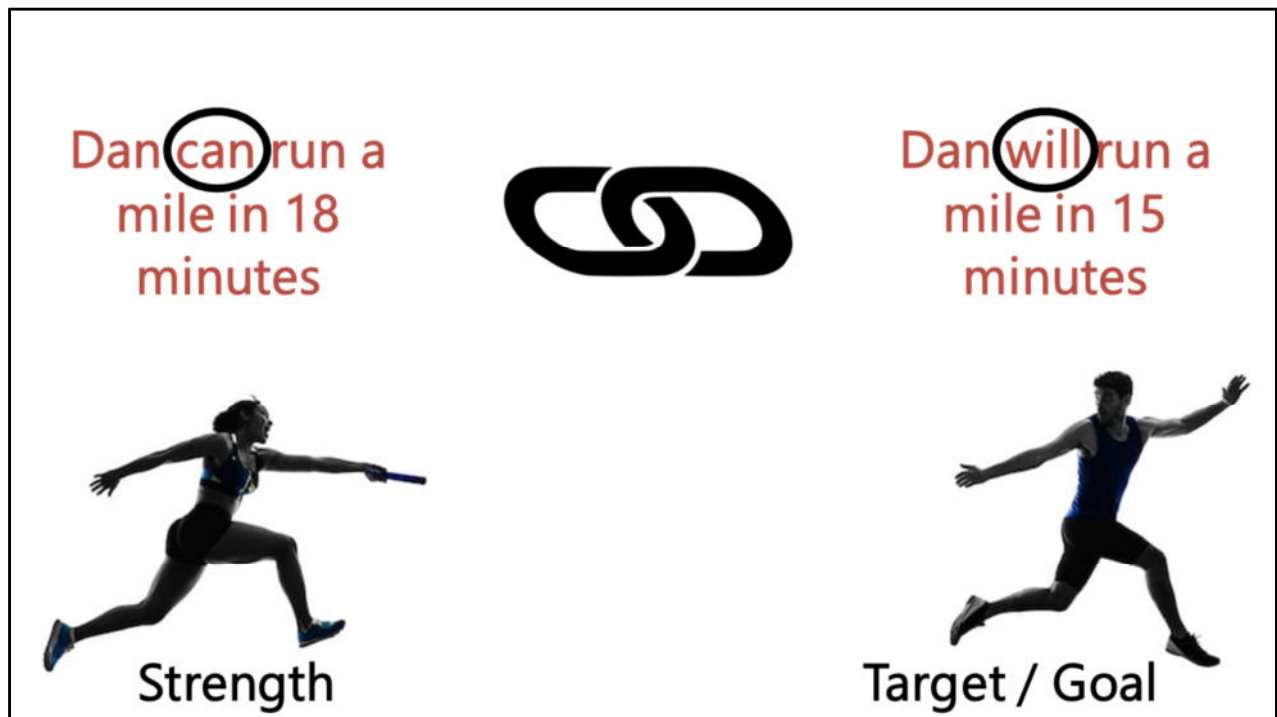
Strength

?



Target / Goal

Let's look at Dan Strength first...what will his goal look like? If it connected, we will know it has to do with him running...running a mile to be exact, the only question is in what time.



Perhaps our goal is for Dan to run a mile in 15 minutes. What do you think, do we have a connection? [click] We sure do as our strength talks about what he 'CAN' do [click] while our goal takes this same skill and describes what we are working towards as a target or goal and will [click] be able to do a year from now.

If we wanted to also describe other things about Dan in our strength besides the skill to monitored that is fine, and even recommended to help a coach know what to work on. This could include Dan's weight, flexibility, resting heart rate, and more.

Ben is currently
earning 68% of his
weekly Check-In /
Check-Out points



Strength

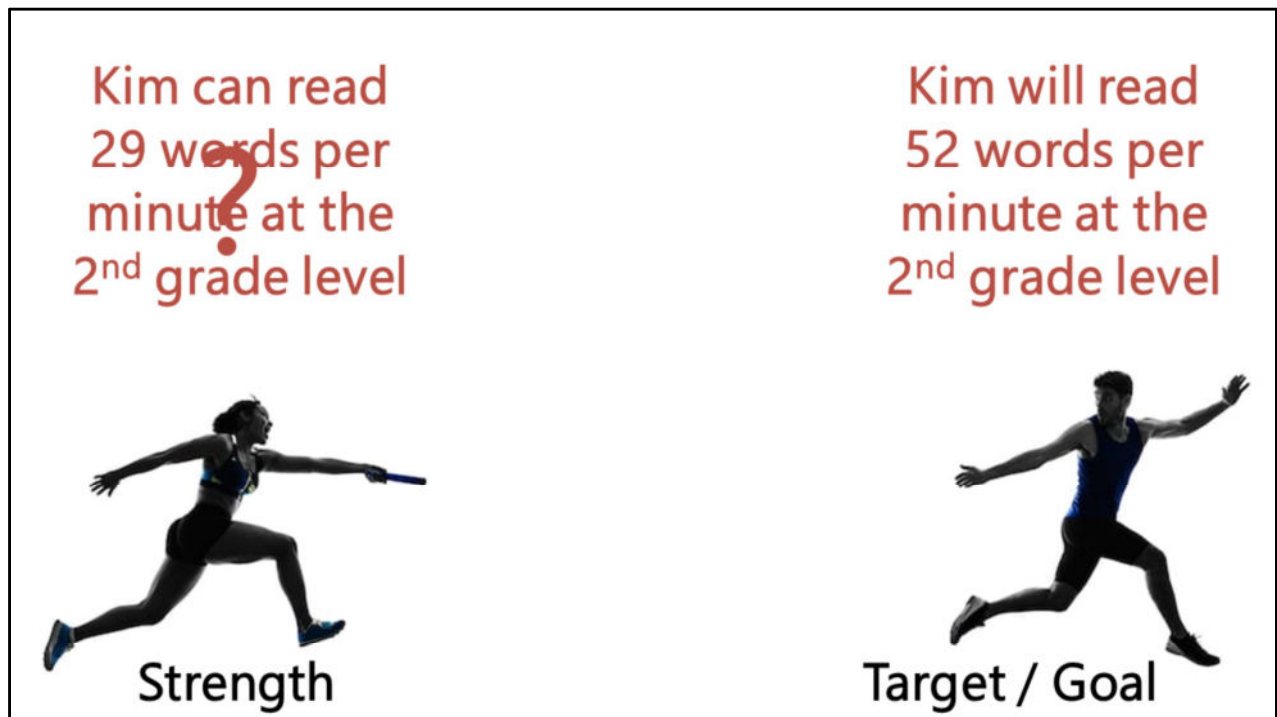
Ben will earn
85% of his
weekly Check In /
Check-Out Points



Target / Goal

Let's get off the track and into the classroom where a teacher is describing Ben's strength. They describe how Ben is able to earn 68% of his weekly Check-In/Check-Out points.

Even if we don't know much about Ben, we can venture a pretty safe guess what his goal is going to be about [click twice to fade out and in]. If there is to be a connection between the strength and goal, then it will describe what percentage of his Check-In/Check-Out points will be earned each week by the end of his IEP year.

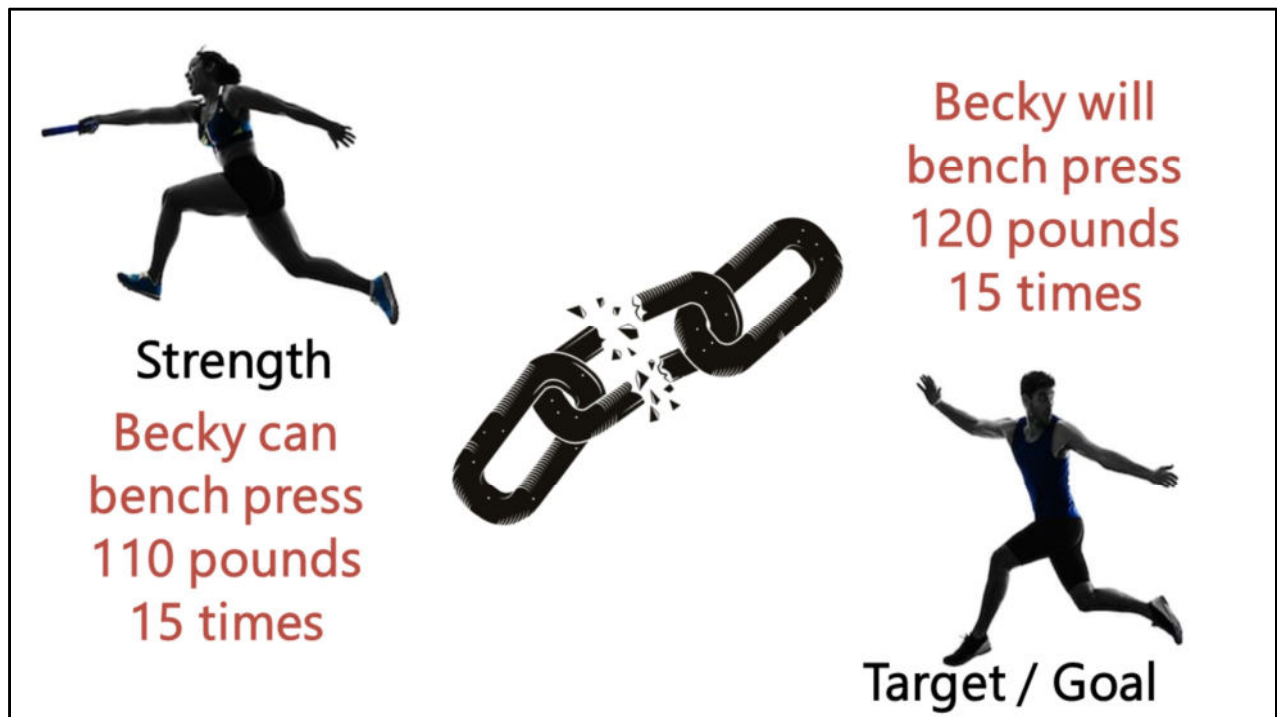


This can work the other way too when we start off by looking at a goal for Kim in which she will be read 52 words per minute at the 2nd grade level.

Within her strength, we can have all sorts of helpful information to guide instruction this year such as her reading rate at grade level, how we she tackles long vowel sounds, digraphs, her performance on the expiring IEP goals, etc. For our new IEP being written for Kim [click twice to fade out & in], we must be sure to include how many words per minute she can read at the 2nd grade level right now to have a meaningful and compliant IEP.



We can see how a misunderstanding of strength is applied within an IEP in few different ways

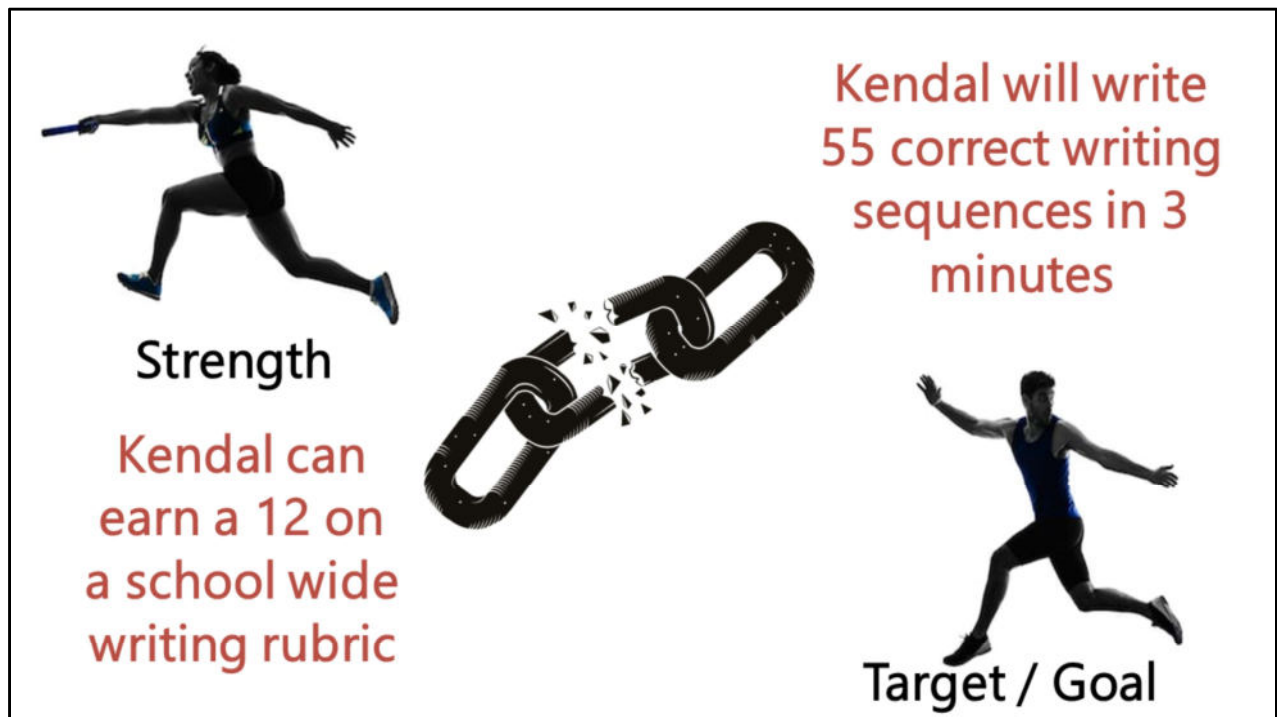


When we don't connect our Strength and Target it can feel like we are reading about two different events.

In this disconnected example, we see that Becky can bench press 110 pounds 15 times. So let's look at a goal for her that is *almost* connected but not quite.

[click animation] Her goal? To bench press 120 pounds 15 times. So where is the disconnection with this goal?

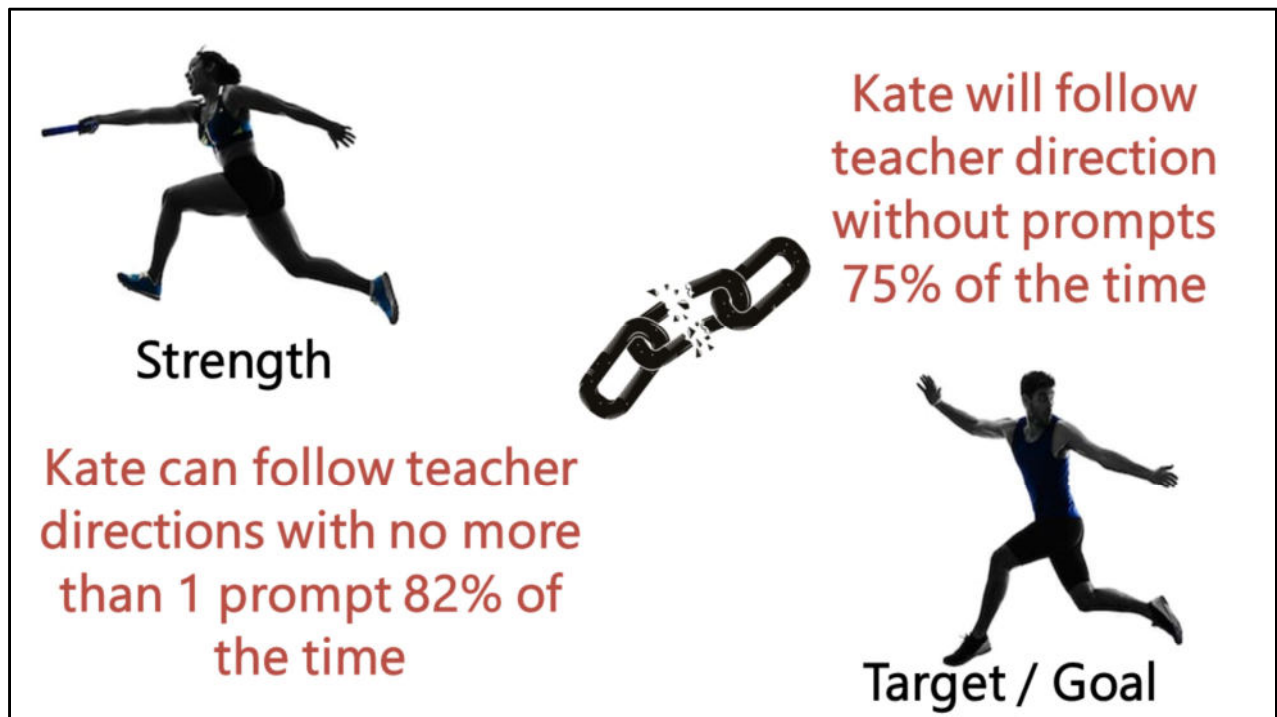
That might be the perfect goal Becky but I would hope it was based on an understanding of how many times she can bench press 120 pounds right now.



For Kendal, we can see how he can see how he can earn a 12 on a school wide writing rubric. It's a good start but let's see if we have a connection or not.

[click animation] It shows that we are now going to be using a completely different tool for Kendal's writing goal and thus creating a disconnection.

This isn't about if a writing rubric is good or bad or using a 3 minute Curriculum Based Measurement is good or bad either...the problem is the we are lacking consistency in our example with Kendal.



In our last example, we see Kate has a goal for following directions. So what are we hoping for? To see somewhere within the strength what percentage of the time Kate is following teacher directions without prompts.

[click animation] We when look at Kate's strength though, this is what we see. It's close, isn't it?!? It is about following directions like the goal does but what is different? It's within the condition where one involves prompts while the other doesn't and it creates a disconnect.

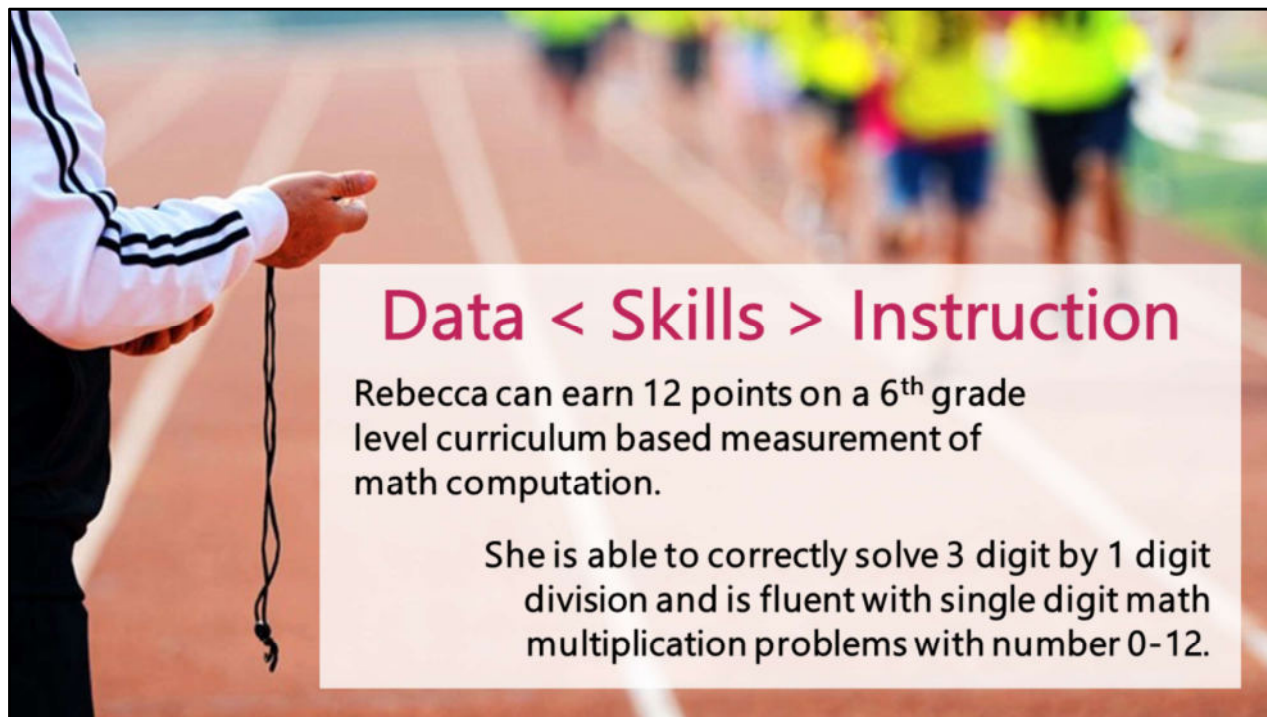


Another way we might drop the baton in by making the strengths not related to the student's area of need. For example, let's say we have a student with a specific learning disability in math...and the IEP details the student's strength as being friendly and outgoing.

Those are wonderful personality traits but it does not provide a starting point for supporting the student in math. I can see the IEP developer's logic in this even though it's faulty. If Illuminate is asking for a strength or what they are good at, how can we talk about something related to a student's disability, area of need, or where they are weakest?

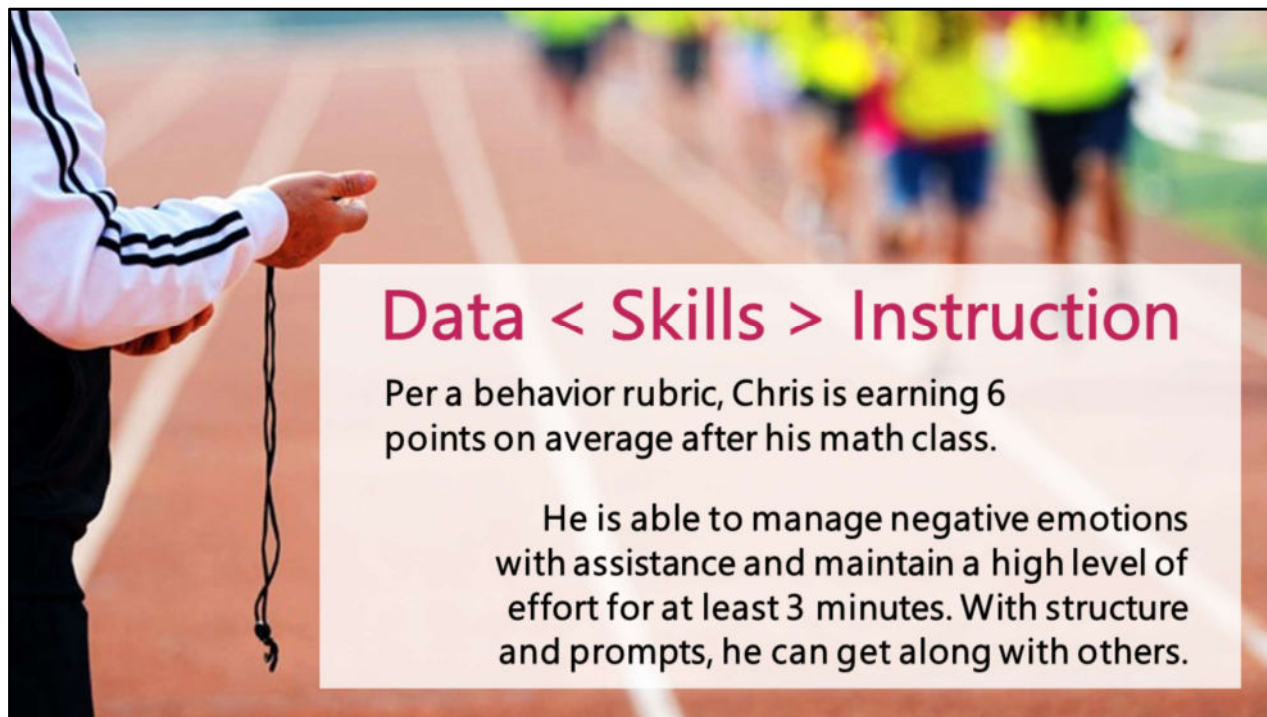
Maybe Illuminate could have used different language such as starting point rather than strength. But let's say I have a running disability and can only run a mile in 28 minutes and it's your job to help me do better. If you have information to go by such as 'Jamie is courteous' or has an 'impeccable taste in bowties' that is not helpful, is it?

While there is certainly room for improvement in running a mile in less than 28 minutes, it is my strength, how I can currently perform right now. With some specialized instruction and practice, I am hoping to increase my strength a year from now to reach a target or goal in mind.



Really robust or 'strong strengths' do a nice job in not only providing a data-centered description of a student's current level of performance but also offers insights to guide instruction for at least the beginning of the new IEP Year.

[click animation] So if we think of strengths in 2 parts, we can see with Rebecca how she can do on a measure of math computation. So far, so good with this data perspective. [click animation] For the 2nd part, we offer a description of mastered or emerging skills the student has in order to provide a more rounded picture of the student.



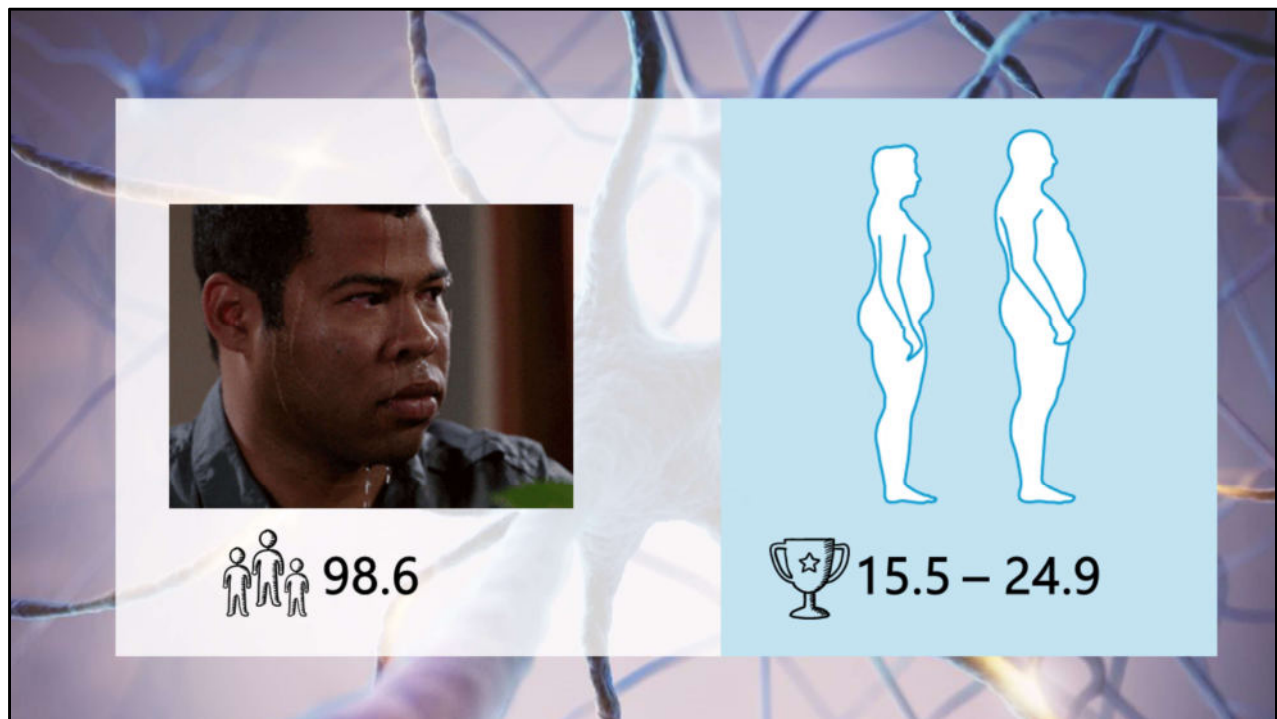
For Chris, his teacher has done a nice job as well. We have a data centered description of how Chris is doing on a behavior rubric. But what skills has the student learned or can demonstrate to provide a clearer understanding of his strengths?

His teacher also included insights on the skills Chris has developed that will help shape what to target and develop during the coming IEP year.



How bad does it need to get before you go to the hospital? For some of us, it doesn't take too much. For others like my dad, he could be dragging major organs behind him and still argue about how a trip to the ER would be unnecessary despite what his nervous system is telling him.

Demonstrated need like the nervous system informs us when something is wrong and needs addressed.

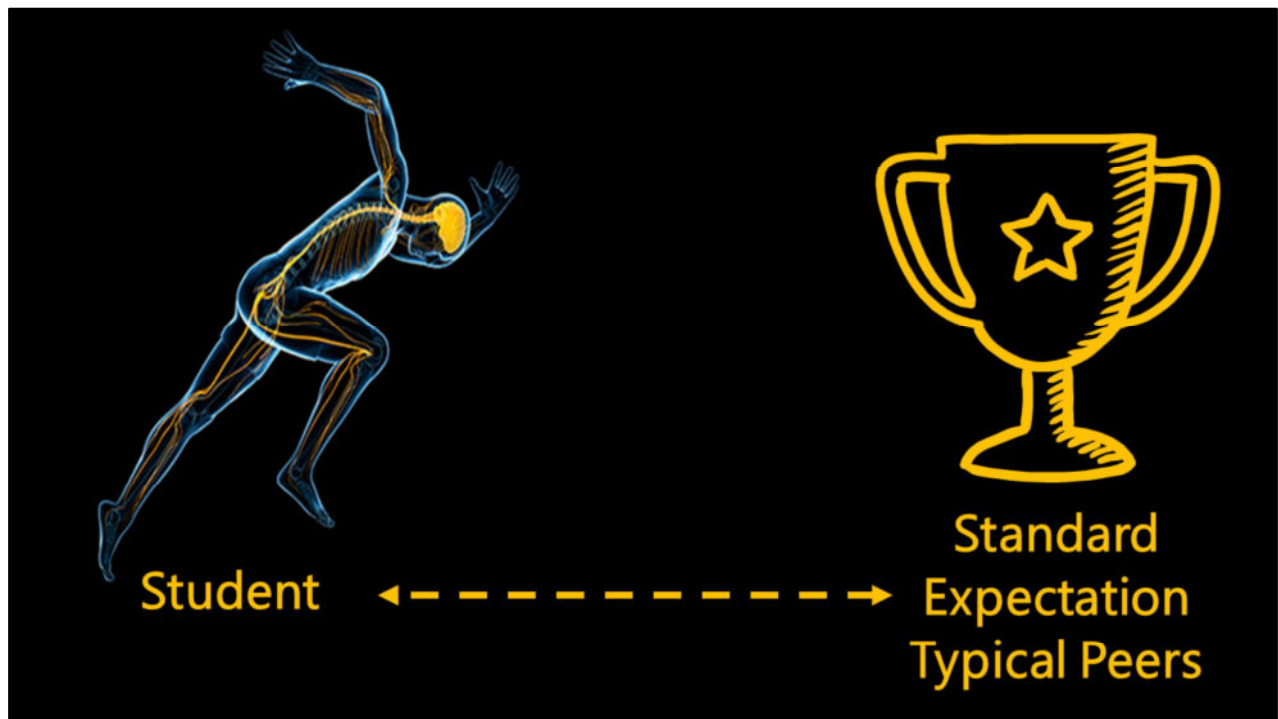


In the world of medicine there are a variety of metrics to determine what is normal and when there becomes a need for treatment. For example, if we took the temperature of everyone in this room who was healthy, what would the results be? We would expect 98.6, but even this may fluctuate a little bit depending on the time of day and what we are doing.

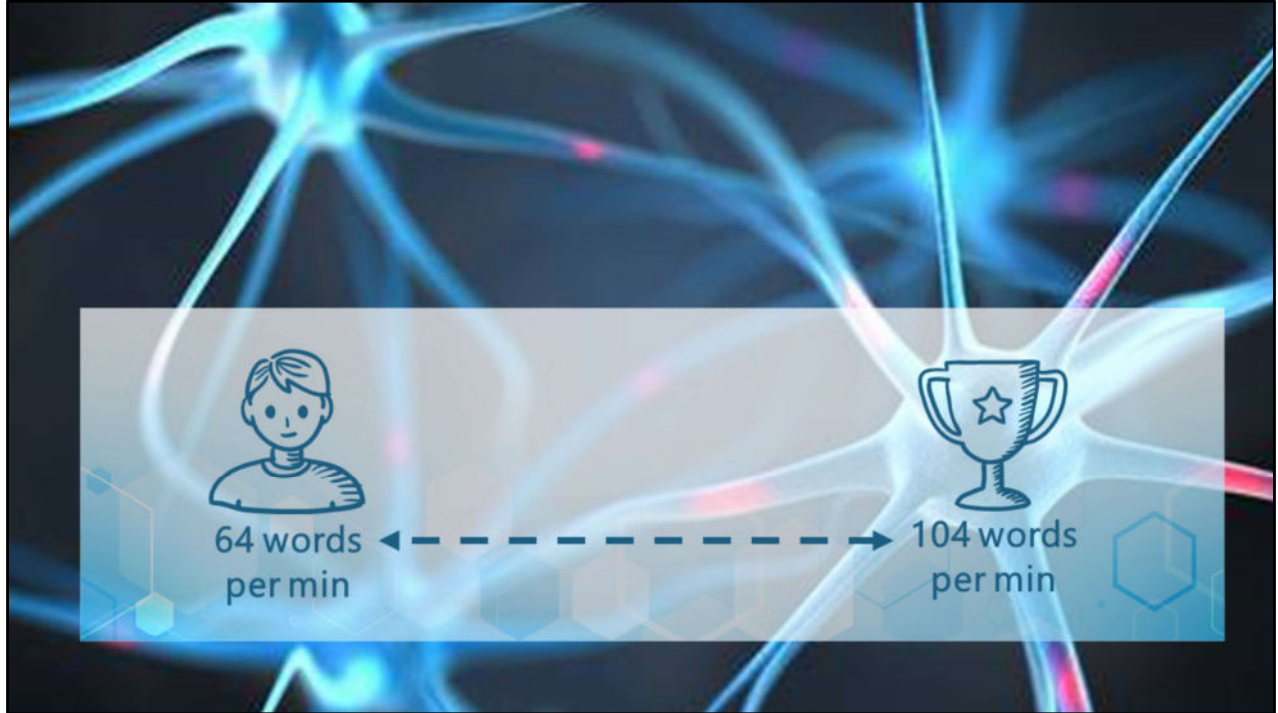
But if someone's temperature is higher for a period of time, we start paying attention to it because there is a gap between their temperature and what it should be.

[click to animate] Another example, is looking at weight. There is a standard for a healthy weight that factors in your height. The standard for a healthy Body Mass Index is between 15.5 – 24.9.

In deciding if you are demonstrating a need to be admitted to the hospital, they will look at your functioning compared to a standard or typical functioning

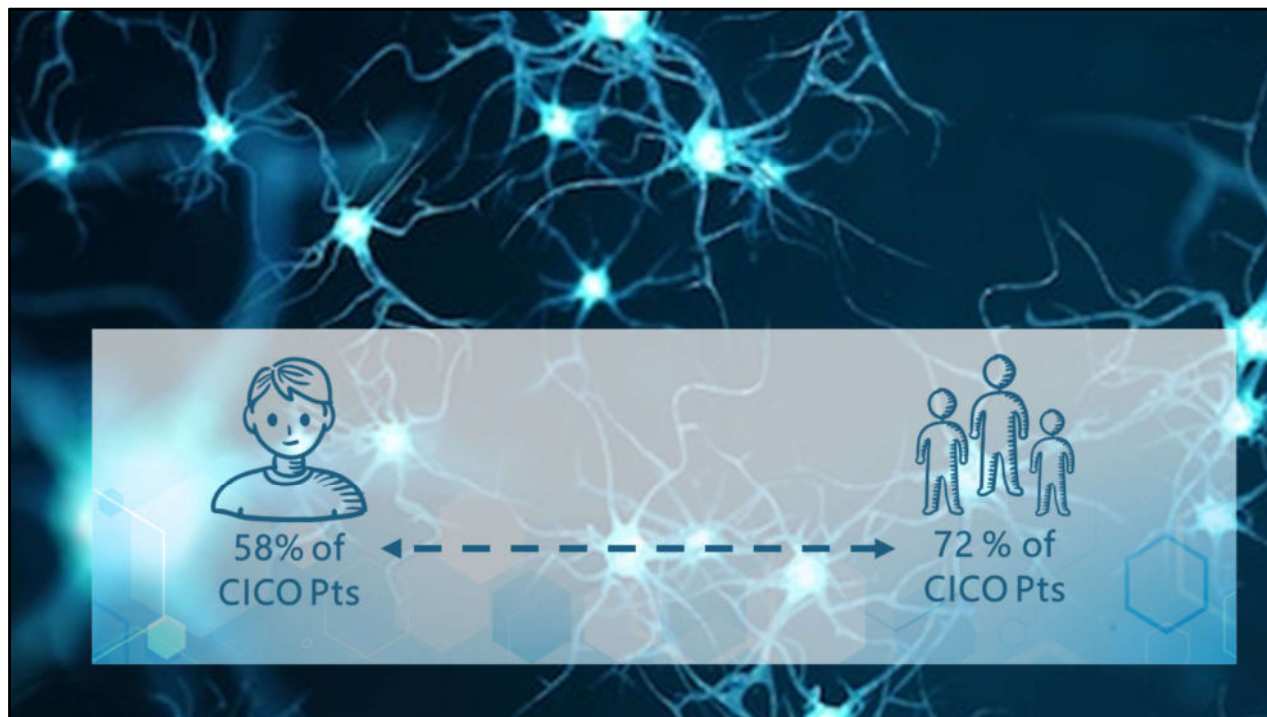


Within an IEP, we can show a demonstrated need by detailing the gap or distance between the student and a standard or typical peer performance.



Let's say that you told a non-educator friend that a 5th grade student you know is reading 64 words per minute on 5th grade AIMSweb Plus probes. What would their response be? It's over a word per second, that seems pretty good, right?

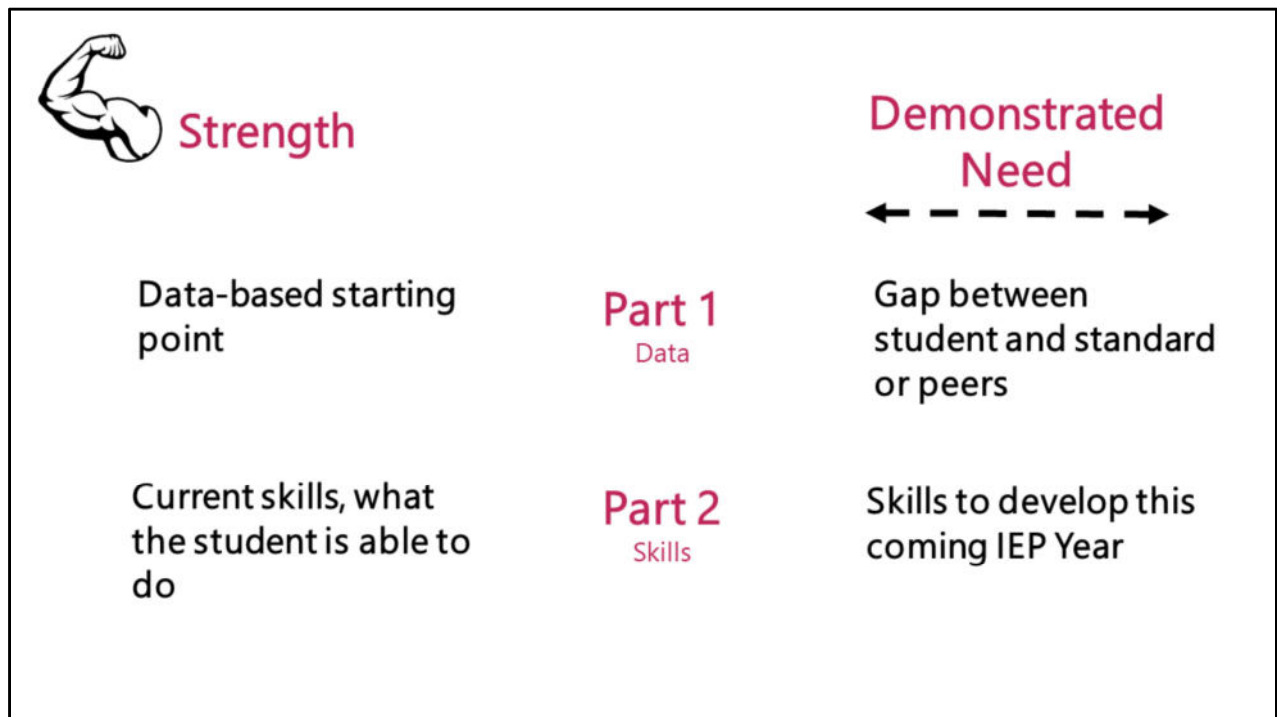
[Click] However, it doesn't take much context to understand why a student may need support if there is a gap between the student and the standard. For 5th graders not to be considered at-risk, they need to be reading 104 words per minute in the Fall. Our 64 word per minute 5th grader is actually performing in the 4th percentile.



But what about a student with needs in which there are not well established norms or standards? Or perhaps your district does not have a tool to help measure and describe performance gaps?

Another way to demonstrate a need is by looking at the gap between the student and peers. For example, students who are receiving support for behavior in a school participate in a check-in/check out program. Each student is working on different skills but the school is keeping track of the percentage of points they are earning each week.

Your student may be earning 58% of his points each week. Is this good, is this bad? It's hard to say without some kind of context. [Click] Because there are not standards or expectations to draw on, we can at least note what percentage of points others are earning. Let's say peers are typically earning 72% of points possible, we can not only show a gap or demonstrated need but also use this data in determining a meaningful goal [vs. 80% for everything].



Earlier, we talked about how a really solid strength can consist of two parts, the first part being data focused while the 2nd part could include the students current skills or abilities.

Demonstrated Need can be looked at through a similar lens in which data is used to described the gap between the student and standard or peers with a 2nd part focused on skill to focus on or target to help the student continue their growth and improvement.



Together the Strength and demonstrated need represent the heart of every IEP. You can build goals from a PLAAFP because we have a clear starting point or strength. You can begin providing specialized instruction because there is a solid understanding of the needs a student is demonstrating. There are many components of an IEP but a healthy PLAAFP is what gives the IEP a heartbeat.

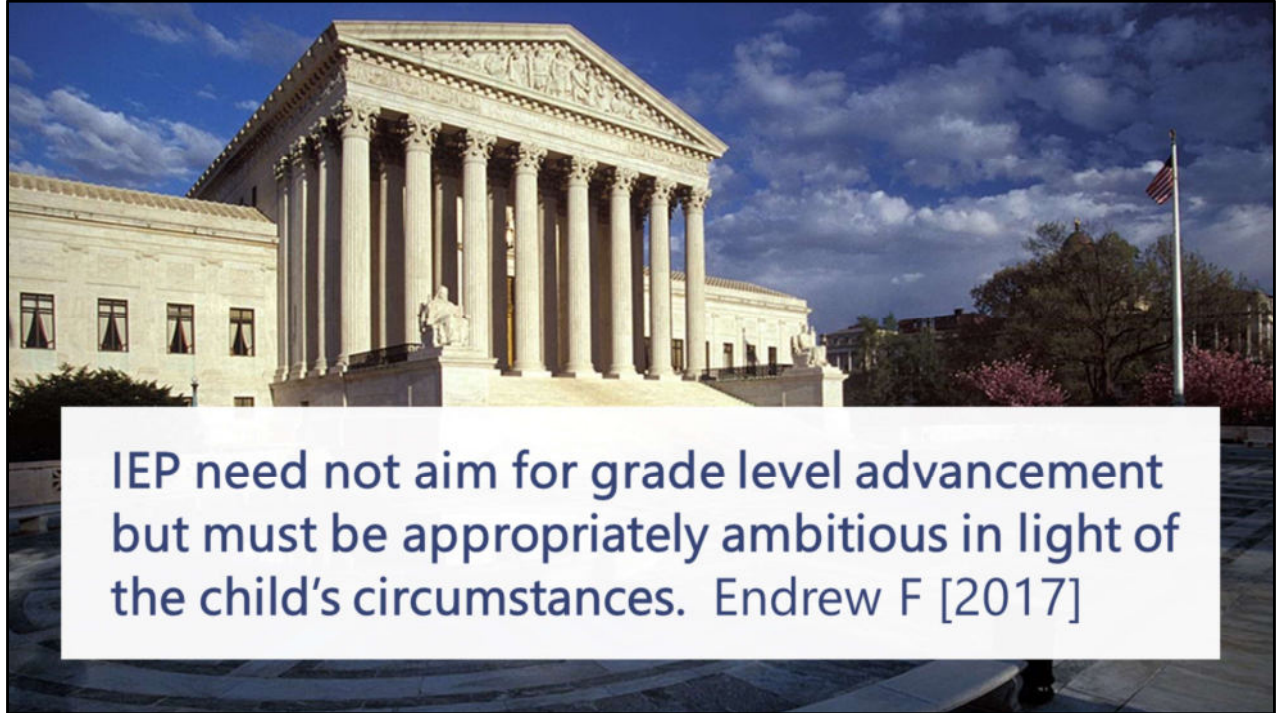


You know where a student is at, you even know what they need to get the IEP off to the right start. What is your vision or goal for where you want them to be a year?

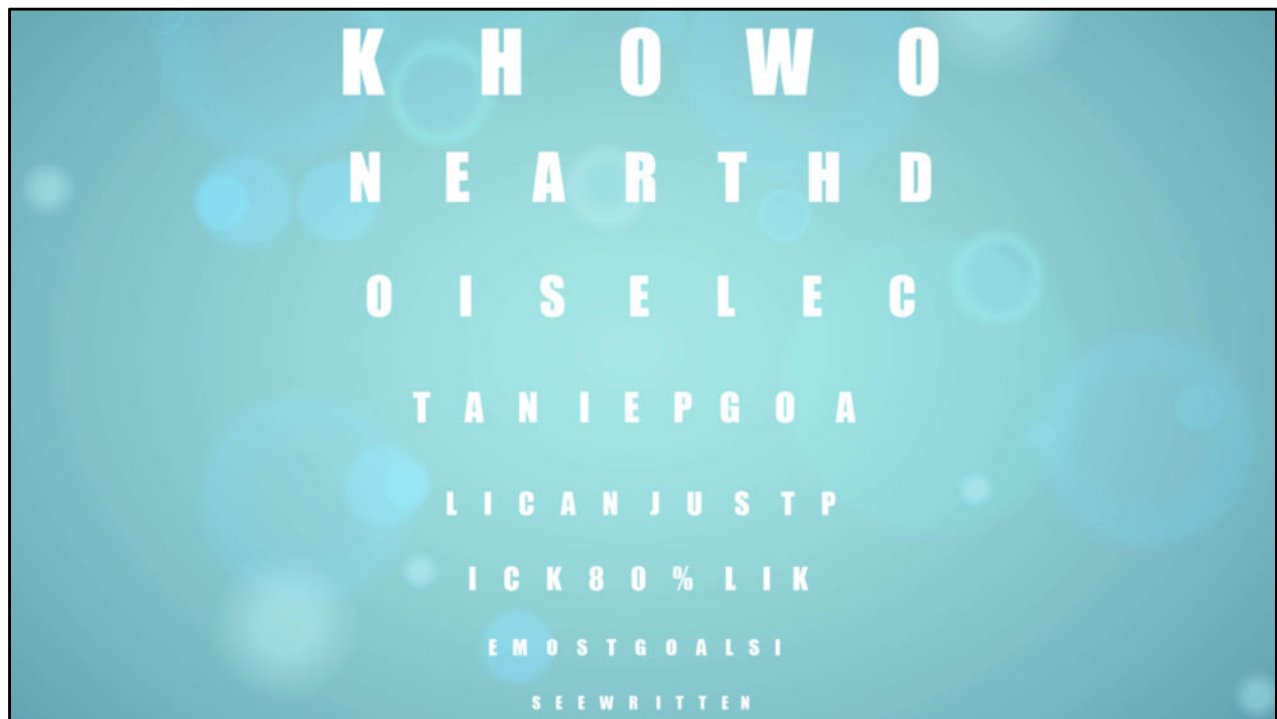


No matter the size of the gap, or demonstrated need, we know the positive impact of specialized instruction and the role we play in special education means we can make a difference. By setting a goal, we are telling the student, parents, and ourselves, that we are ready to make a difference in a student's life this year.

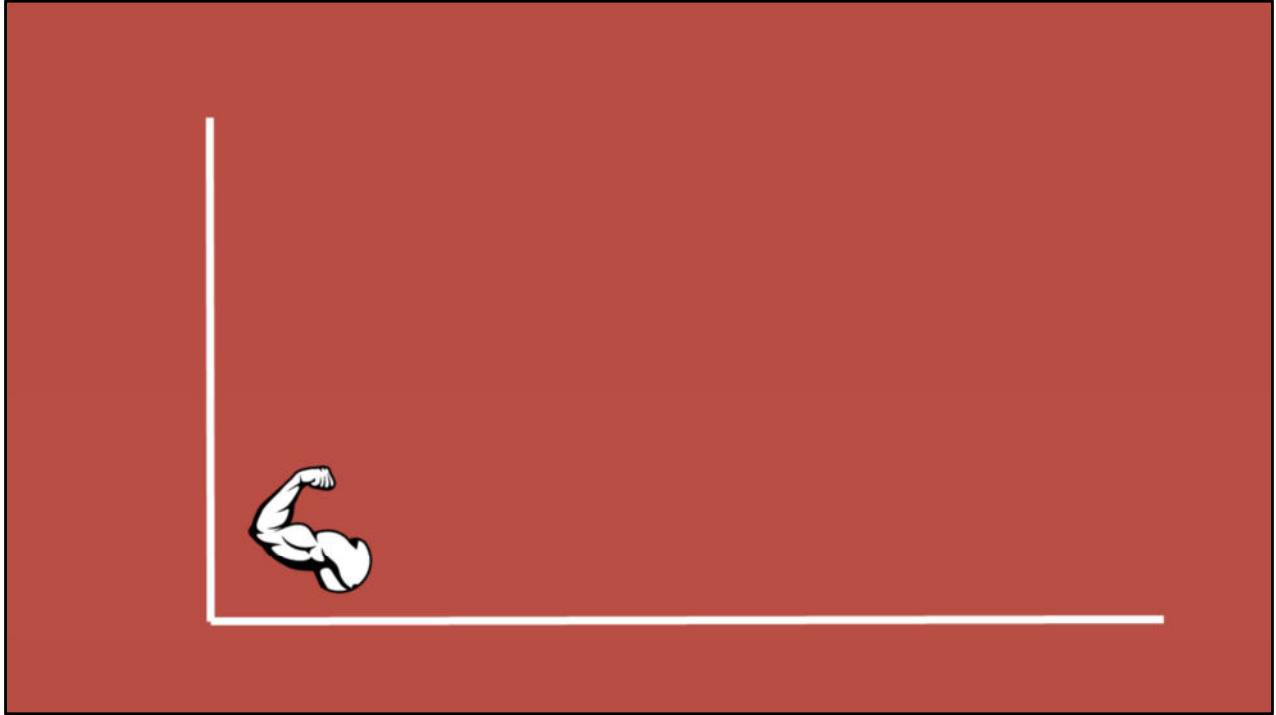
It's not just about any difference at all...this is because for students, regardless of their home environment, quality of the curriculum of school, or effectiveness of teachers, they typically show some growth. The goals we should set for our students [click] strike that balance between being ambitious while remaining realistic.



IEP need not aim for grade level advancement but must be appropriately ambitious in light of the child's circumstances. Endrew F [2017]



So what is your vision for a student as you consider a goal for a student to be performing in a year? How do you determine a goal? How do we know what is represents ambitious but realistic growth? If it seems like it is an unclear picture of how to do this, there can be some reasons why.



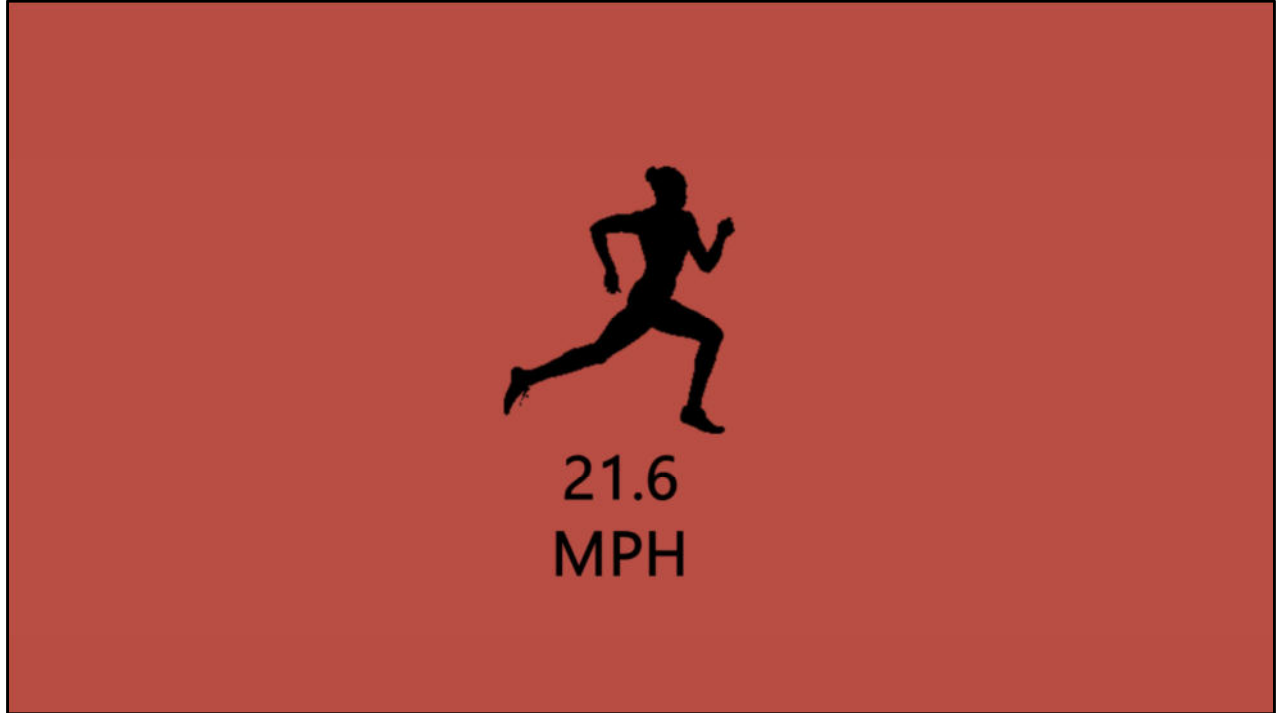
To help determine a goal, let's revisit the student's strengths or where they are at to begin the IEP year. We talked about how important this information was for selecting a goal, so if we have it, why is a goal still such a challenge to figure out?



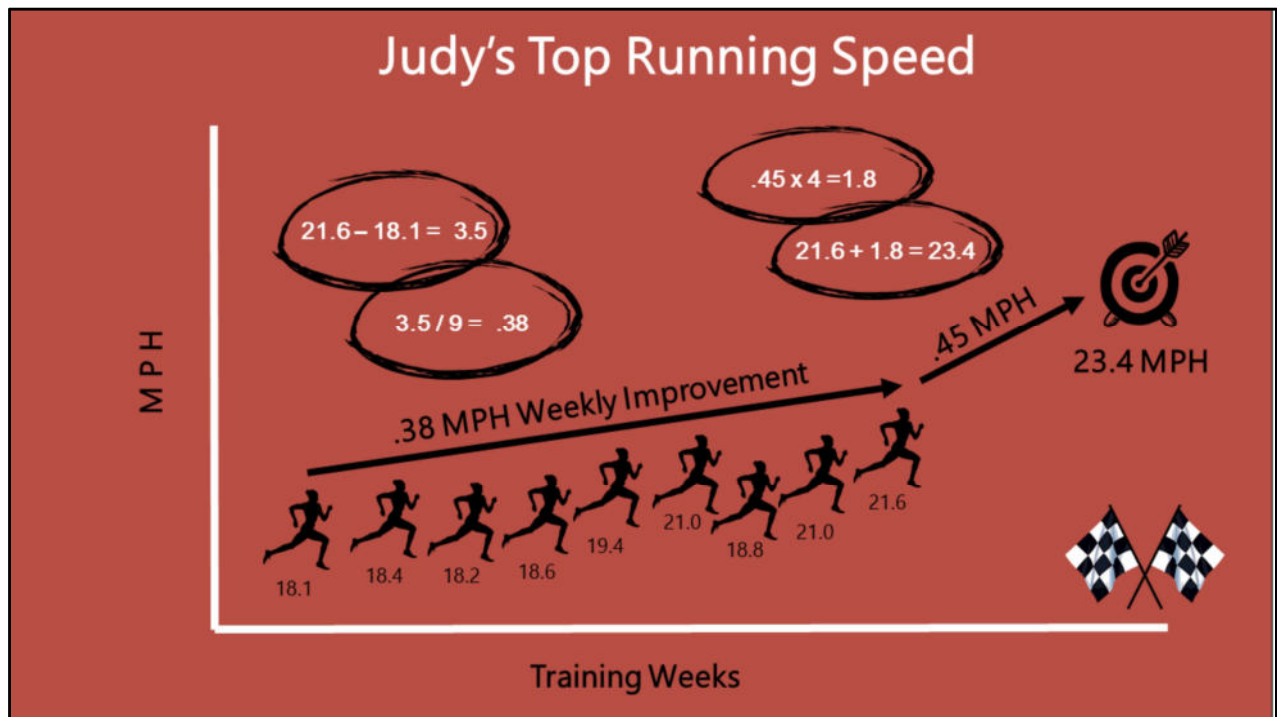
How comfortable would you be if all you knew was what the price of a stock was right now when considering it or not. Is that stock that is at 42 dollars a share a good one to buy into? Probably depends on how it has been trending!



If ALL that we have to work with is this single point of data, then it is a little bit like trying to develop a goal for a sprinter based on a single picture to work with...this is a challenge even if we know how fast they were running.



For example, let's say that you are a track coach where we can explore how useful progress monitoring comes in to play. You are going to help Judy increase her top running speed but if you are responsible for developing a goal for her, it's going to be a challenge if she comes to you saying, my strength or what I can do now is run up to 21.6 miles per hour.



This is where progress monitoring data or growth over time coupled with a clearly understood standard or expectation for proficiency comes in to play. [click] While during her latest run she clocked in at 21.6 MPH, she has also been tracking her progress for the last 9 weeks.

Over these 9 weeks [click], Judy from 18.1 mph to 21.6 mph. So how much growth did she see from week to week? We just need to take the difference between her first data point and her most recent one. [Click] in this case we see Judy has increased her top speed by 3 and half miles. Now let's divide this 3.5 by the 9 weeks she was tracking her progress. The results? [click] Judy has grown by .38 miles per hour each week [click].

Now we have some information to work with...if this is how much she has been improving on her own, your impact as an effective coach should mean she is improving even more so.

Further, the race is a month away [click] so we have 4 weeks to work with Judy, which will be factor for our goal we set for Judy. Let's say we are going to improve Judy's top speed each week then by [click] .45 miles per hour. Over the course of 4 weeks, [click] this will result in an improvement of 1.8 miles per hour. If she is already able to run 21.6 miles per hour, her goal [click] then will be to reach a top speed of 23.4 miles per hour.



We will go through a case study together for a student where you are the case manager. The evaluation team and district representative just notified you a student will be qualifying for services at the end of the week. You will need to develop a goal for a need in basic reading.

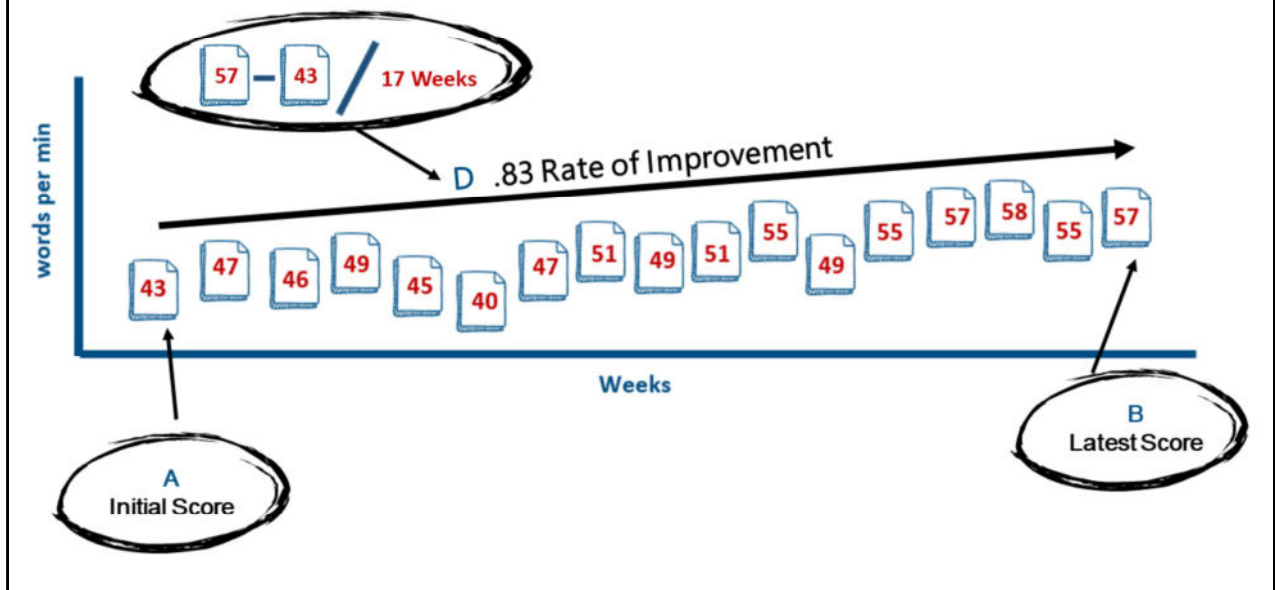
Fortunately, you work in a school that has made progress monitoring part of their intervention support system. In fact, the student's limited progress was a big piece of information the school used to refer the student for an evaluation and how the evaluation team was able to establish a need for special education support.

Or let's say there had not been progress monitoring but this was noted at the REED and collecting weekly data became a part of the evaluation plan...either way we have data to work with! Of course each district is going to have a different way of collecting data with different tools, using different schedules...the idea behind this exercise is understand how we can use progress monitoring data to develop our goals rather than rely on a single point of information.

Click on the link to bring up a google doc as develop Cliff's goal. Make a copy to follow along. [give them time to make their copies]

Word doc on computer in same folder as this PPT – also a google doc in IEP U 20-21 Folder

What Has Cliff's Growth Looked Like?

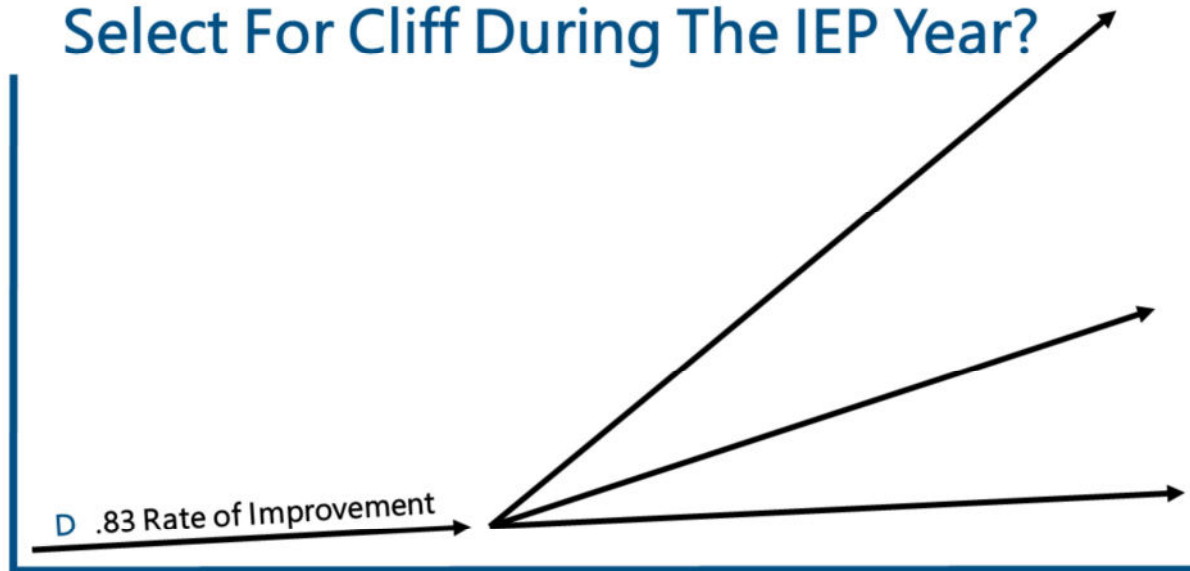


Here is our data we get to play with. Cliff was monitored at the 4th grade level and the first time he was monitored, he read 43 words per minute. [click] On our google sheet, we have a table where item A asks what his initial score was. For Cliff, it was 43 words read per minute.

So while the weeks have progressed, Cliff was consistently monitored. After 17 weeks of intervention support, his latest score [click] reflected a reading performance of 57 words per minute. In our google doc table, for item B, we can indicate 57. We also know the answer to item 'C' as Cliff has been monitored for 17 weeks.

So now it's time to take out a calculator to answer item D that asks what Cliff's rate of improvement has looked like. To do this [click], we will note the difference between his first and last score. $57 - 43$ equals 14....meaning Cliff has improved his score from week 1 to week 17 by 14 and we simply divide this 14 by 17 as this was how many weeks he was monitored. [click] As a result, we can see how Cliff has grown by .83 words each week on average and we have some really solid data to describe his strengths within Illuminate and can develop a meaningful goal too.

E: What Rate of Improvement Will We Select For Cliff During The IEP Year?

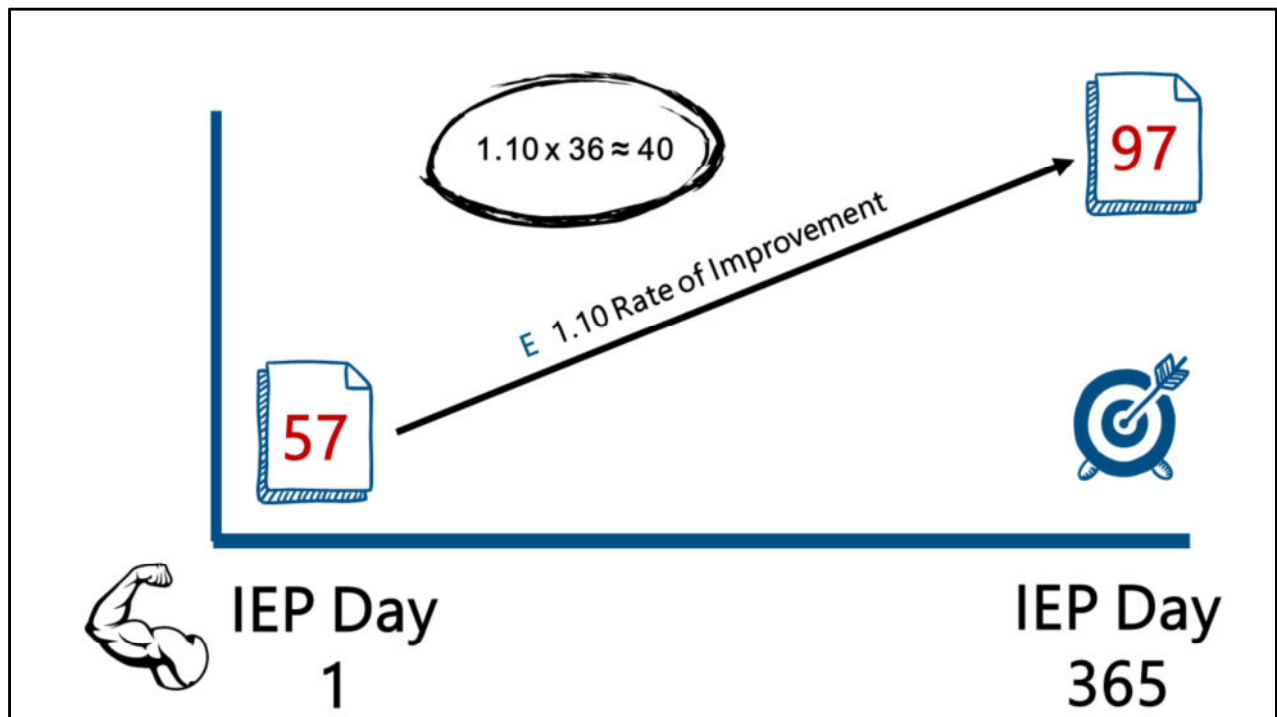


Item 'E' in our table asks what type of improvement we will look for now that Cliff will be receiving specially designed instructional support to address his reading needs.

[click] Perhaps we select a goal for him to simply continue to make the same growth he was making. However, if this is all we are expecting, and he was making this growth already in his current setting, it would be worth questioning why we would place him in special education in the first place.

[click] Or maybe we look at the standard or expectation of where Cliff *should* be to develop our goal. However, the issue with this is that while it certainly meets the criteria of being ambitious, students who are so far behind that they qualify for special education often do not close the gap in a single IEP year.

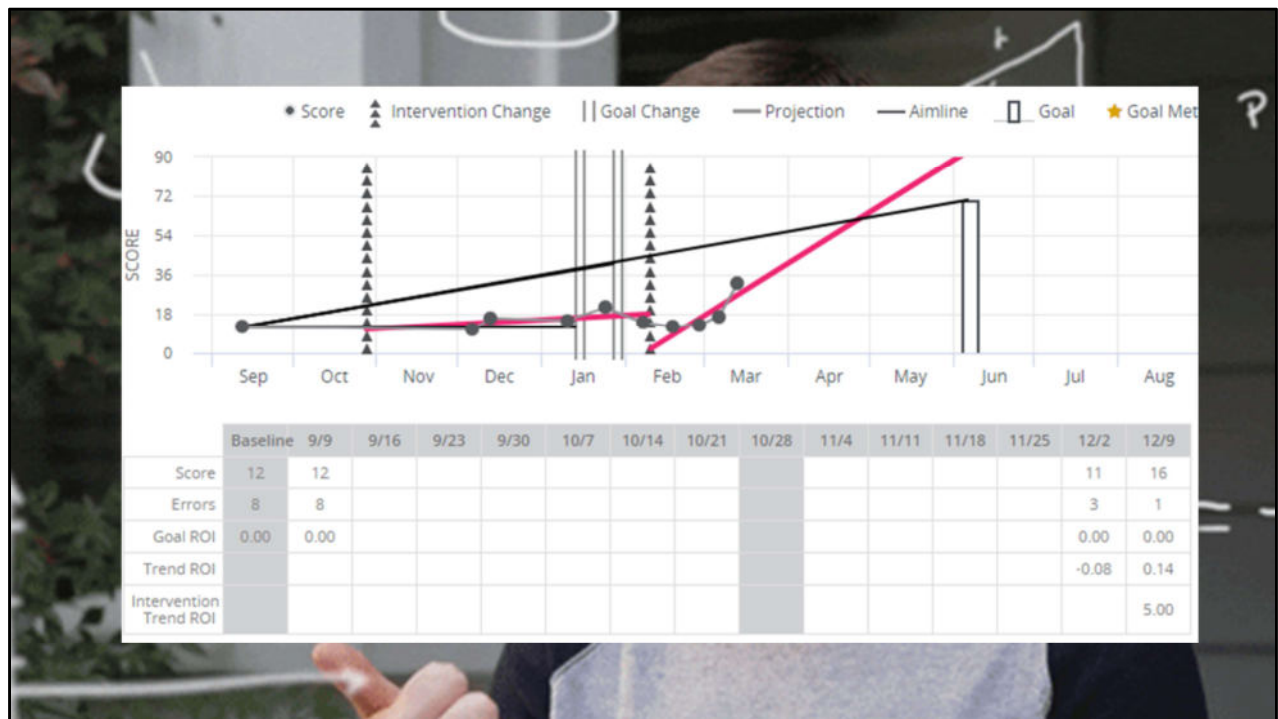
[click] we want to find that sweet spot that reflects a performance that reflects ambitious but realistic growth that takes into consideration the student's demonstrated needs, grade level, and prior growth.



If I am Cliff's case manager, let's see what a goal could look like if I want him to grow [click] at a rate of improvement of 1.10 words a week...a noticeable but realistic uptick from his .83 growth.

With a starting point [click] or strength where Cliff is reading 57 words per minute, let's figure what his goal will look like [click] 1 IEP year later.

In my example, I selected a goal for Cliff to grow by 1.10 words per minute [click]...knowing I have 36 instructional weeks to work with in the IEP year, I am going to multiply 1.10 by 36 and, with a slight round up, get an answer of 40. If Cliff is already reading 57 words per minute, I simply need to add 40 to get [click] a goal of 97 words per minute for Cliff.



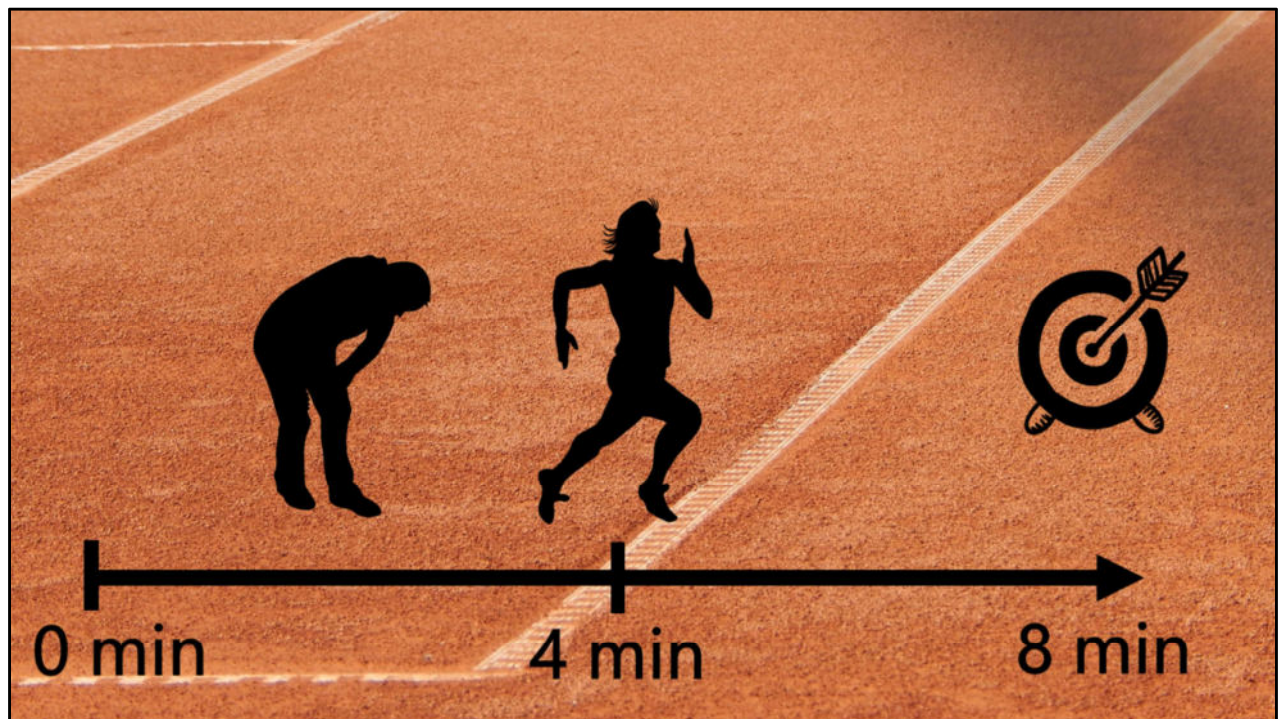
I am not sure I was prepared to do this much math today, but If there was one takeaway that I hope you get in this process, is to see the role progress monitoring can play in developing meaningful goals rather than relying on the ol' 80% standby.

If Progress Monitoring data has not been collected at the REED, make sure it is part of any evaluation plan. If you are gearing up to write a new IEP, make sure to begin collecting this data earlier than the night before it is due!

[click] There are a variety of great tools that can help with collecting, graphing, and analyzing all of this information for you.

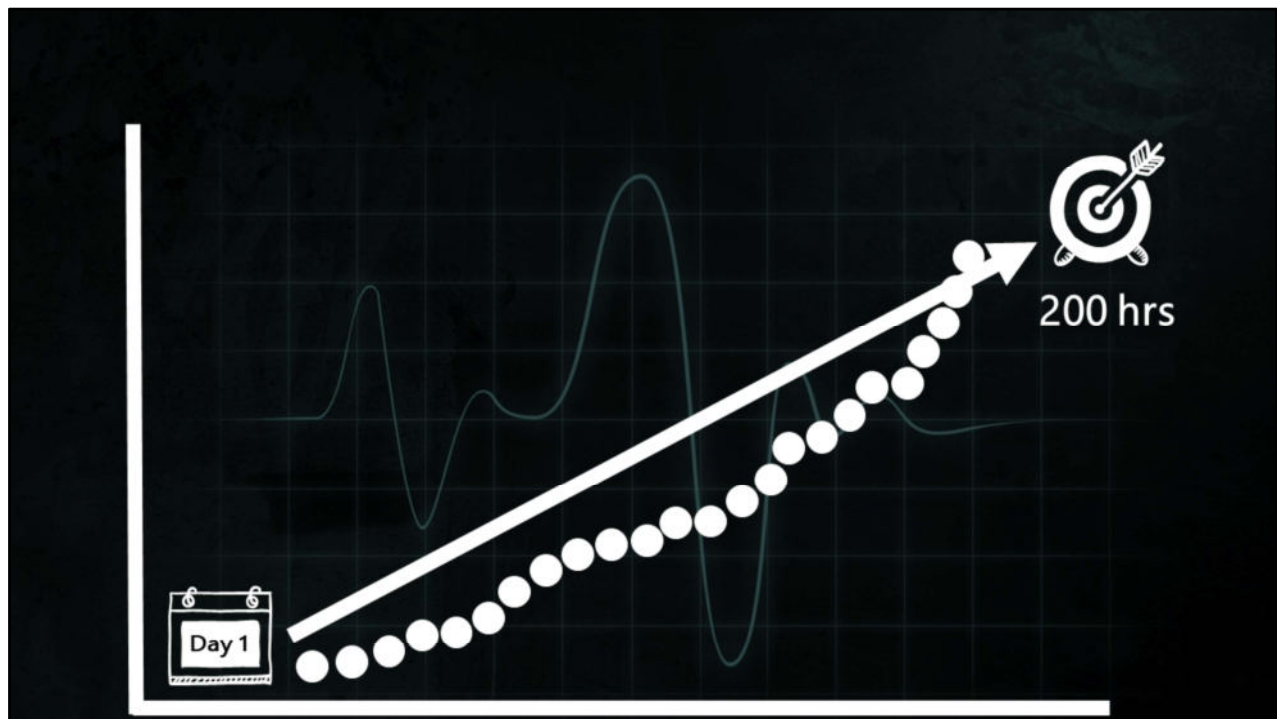


Progress monitoring is about understanding the pace of a student's growth to ensure they will meet their goal by the end of the IEP Year. It's like the heart rate monitor that is able to provide continuous feedback on the health of an individual and the impact of interventions such as surgeries, medications, and therapies.



For example, back in high school, I had a goal to run a mile in 8 minutes.

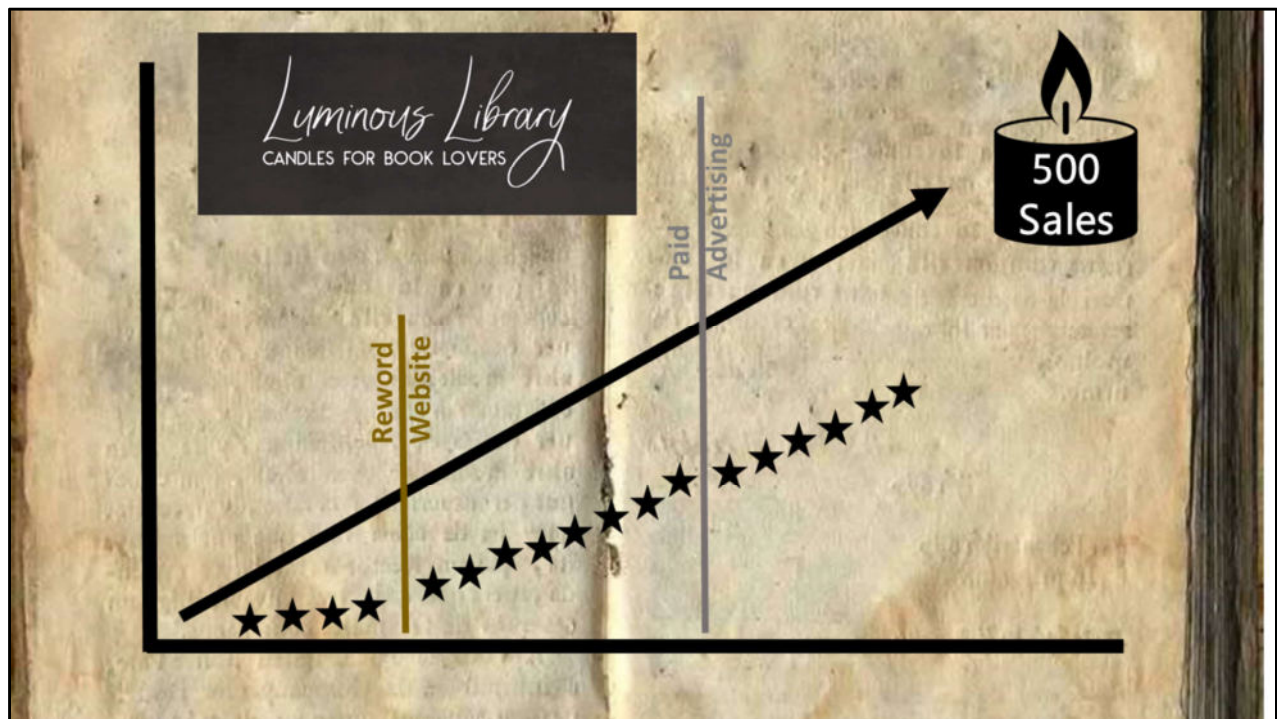
So at the four minute mark, I needed to be where? [click] Halfway through my race? But where was I? Lagging behind [click]. If I kept going at this current rate, I was not going to meet my goal.



After giving up my dream of being a star athlete, I became a school psychologist where one year I supervised a practicum student where she had to get 200 hours of field work in. We talked about the importance on progress monitoring for students and helping inform instruction.

Halfway through her practicum, she decided to graph her hours [click]because despite the fact it felt like she was putting in lots of time and involved in a variety of things, she wasn't confident she was on pace to meet her goal. Once she looked at her data, she took a deep breath knowing that things would have to change within her current schedule if she going to meet her target of 200 hours.

She made adjustments to her schedule and priorities as she continued to chart her progress [click]. Because of these changes, she was able to meet her goal and pass her class and eventually becoming a huge resource as a school psychologist in Berrien County.



Let's look at another example that hits a little closer to home...my home. My wife Janelle wanted to start making a series of candles that are based on books. She dubbed her etsy shop luminous library and put a goal [click]out there to sell 500 candles by the end of the year.

She worked on the lineup, the pictures, the labels, diligently according to the flood of amazon boxes arriving on our front door. When it was time to open her shop, [click] the sales were not what she was hoping for when looking at sales that first month. So Janelle learned about [click] tagging products and using the right words to show up on a potential customer's search. [Click] So what can we see after a couple months went by? While she was not on pace to meet her goal, there was a positive impact once she reworded her site.

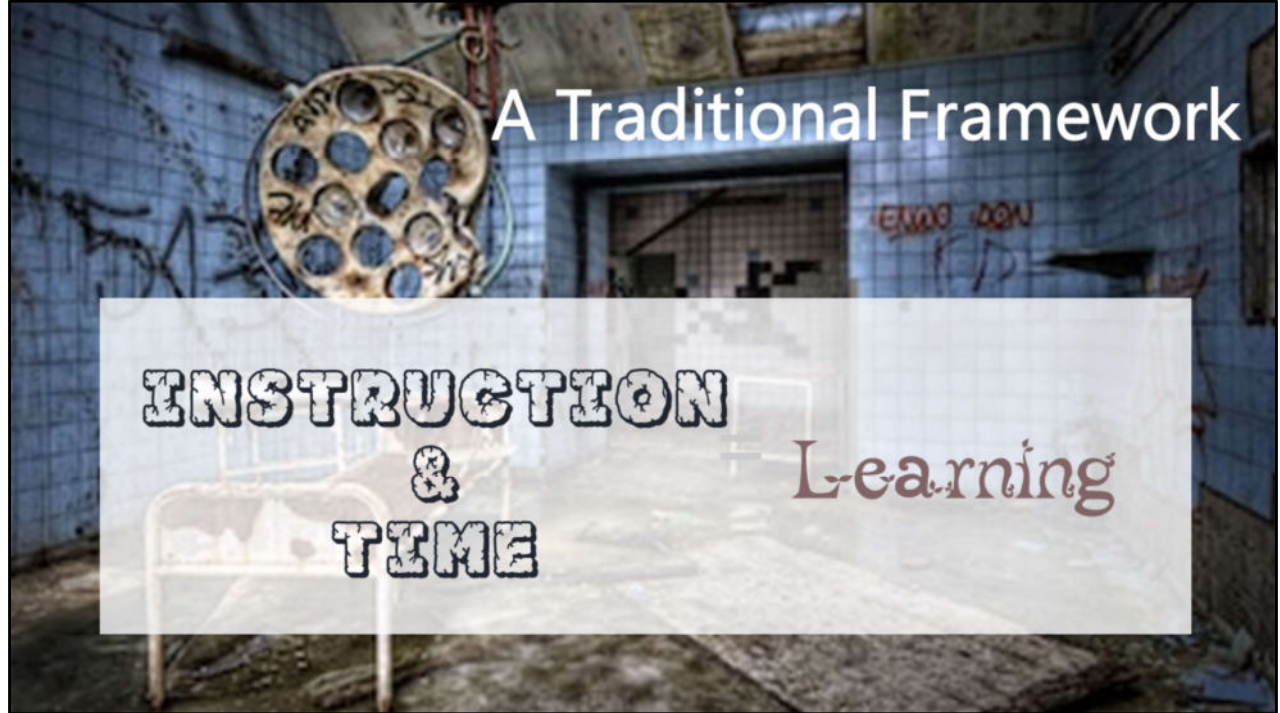
So what is something else she could try to impact her rate of growth? [Click] Janelle decided she would pay for advertising to help get the word out. What kind of impact did that have? As she looked at her sales [click] it seemed like she was selling just as many as she was before and decided to ditch the sales.

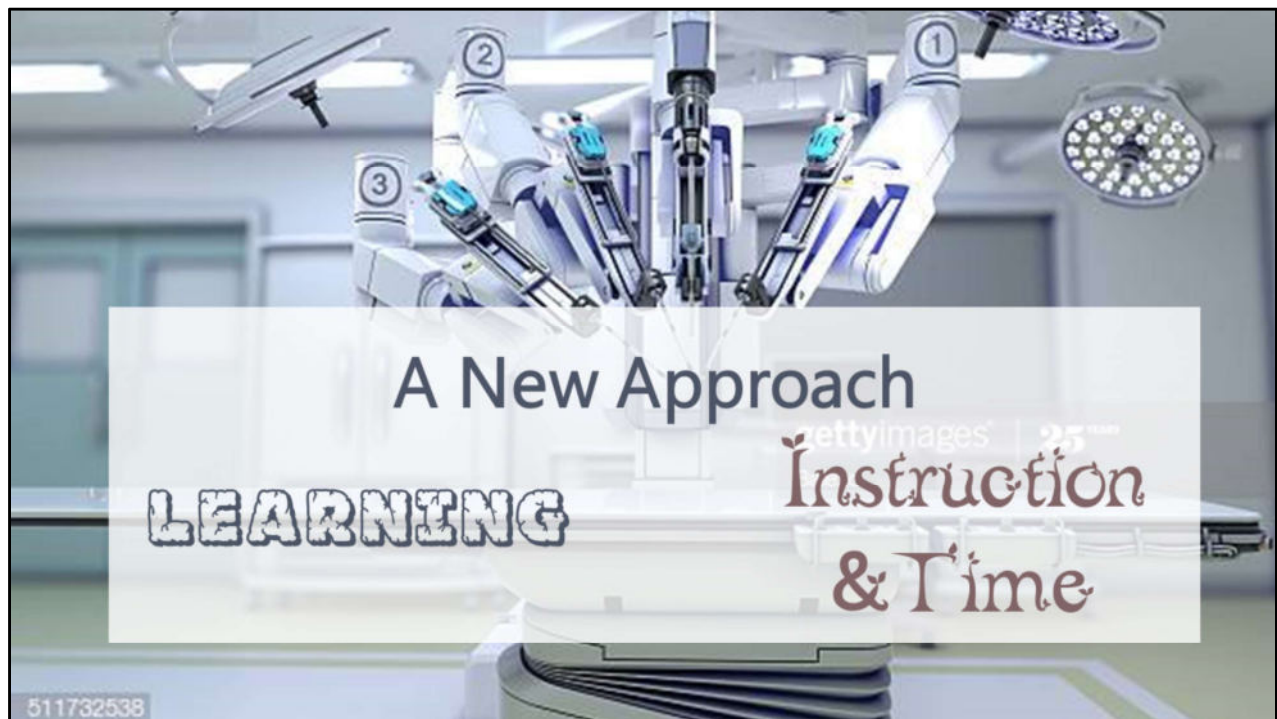
You can see how Janelle used progress monitoring data to understand the impact of her strategies. Whether you are a budding candelmaker or veteran educator, you want to know whether you should stick with the things that help and jettison the things that don't.



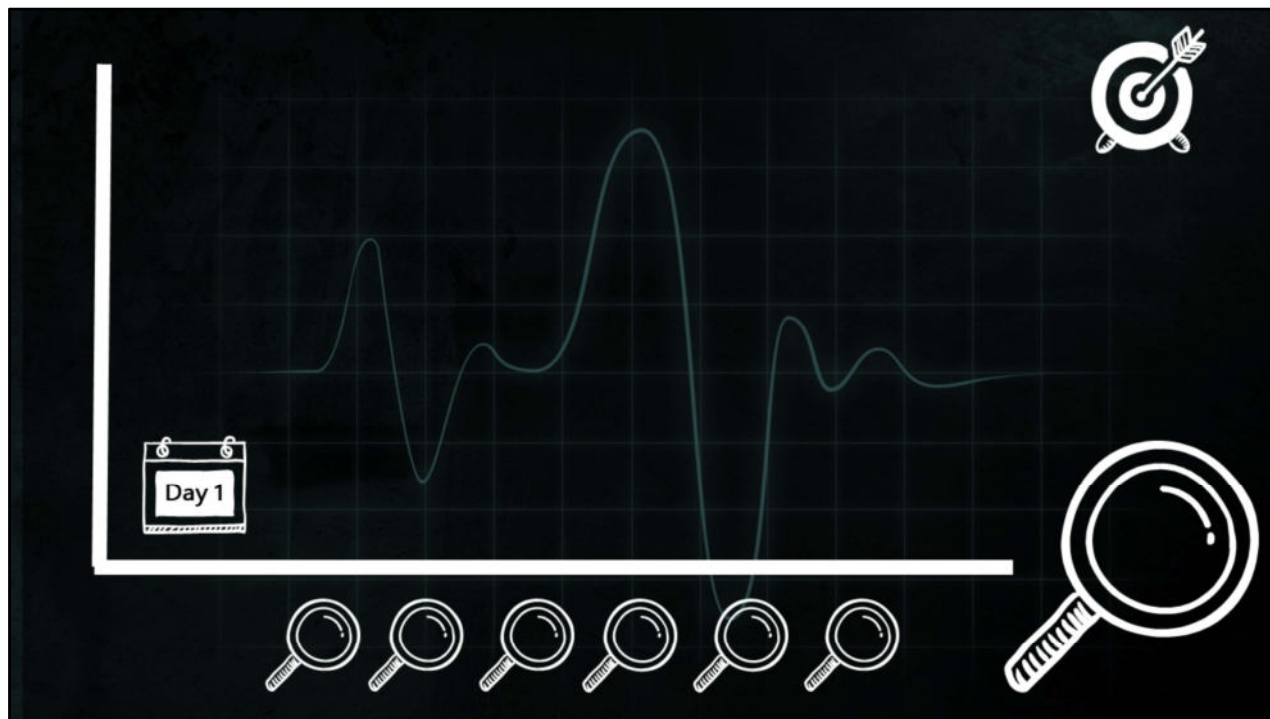
Progress monitoring lets us know when to adapt our supports to ensure students are progressing.

At the heart of progress monitoring, is the idea that we are going to be responding and adapting our strategies and instructions to ensure a student is on pace to reach their goal.





In a responsive approach, we are making learning and growth the constant...we may begin the IEP year with the idea that we will be responsive and adapt our instruction so learning is always occurring.



For our students, we pay close attention to student performance [click] at the end of the IEP year. In fact, we have to detail within a new IEP whether the student met their goal while writing new PLAAFPs and goals. But this practice [click] of looking at your data should be done throughout the year as instruction is fluid so that learning may be the constant.





The diagnostics have been run and we have a clear understanding of a student's present level of performance...now what? Programming provides the setting and time in order for us to get to work. Programming is like the medicine we will be providing to improve the academic health of special education student.



The Benefit

The relief of moderate to severe pain

The Cautions

- Lightheadedness
- Respiratory Arrest
- Apnea
- Fever
- Dysrhythmias
- Seizures
- Confusion
- Metabolic acidosis
- Vomiting
- Kidney Failure
- Jaundice
- Hearing Loss
- Dependence
- Pulmonary edema
- Hallucination

Percocet

Both programming and medication needs to be carefully considered. Think about a medication like Percocet. This was prescribed to me after surgery and it worked [click]...it was like swallowing a warm hug in which the effect was swift and comforting. It didn't completely remove the pain but I was prescribed just enough to manage the pain. The reason why I was on a strict schedule [click] of my dosages was because as pleasant as drifting off into a sleep in which I was flying over mountain tops was, there were side effects and risks of taking Percocet. My doctor needed to weight the benefits of the medication against the side-effects.



In education, there is no question that our special education medication comes with side effects. There is always a cost that comes with removing or limited a students participation in their regularly scheduled or general education setting.

Least Restrictive Environment or LRE is about provided the minimum amount of special education necessary for the student to participate and grow. We have to weight that against our obligation to provide a Free and Appropriate Public Education that addresses the needs that arise due to a disability.

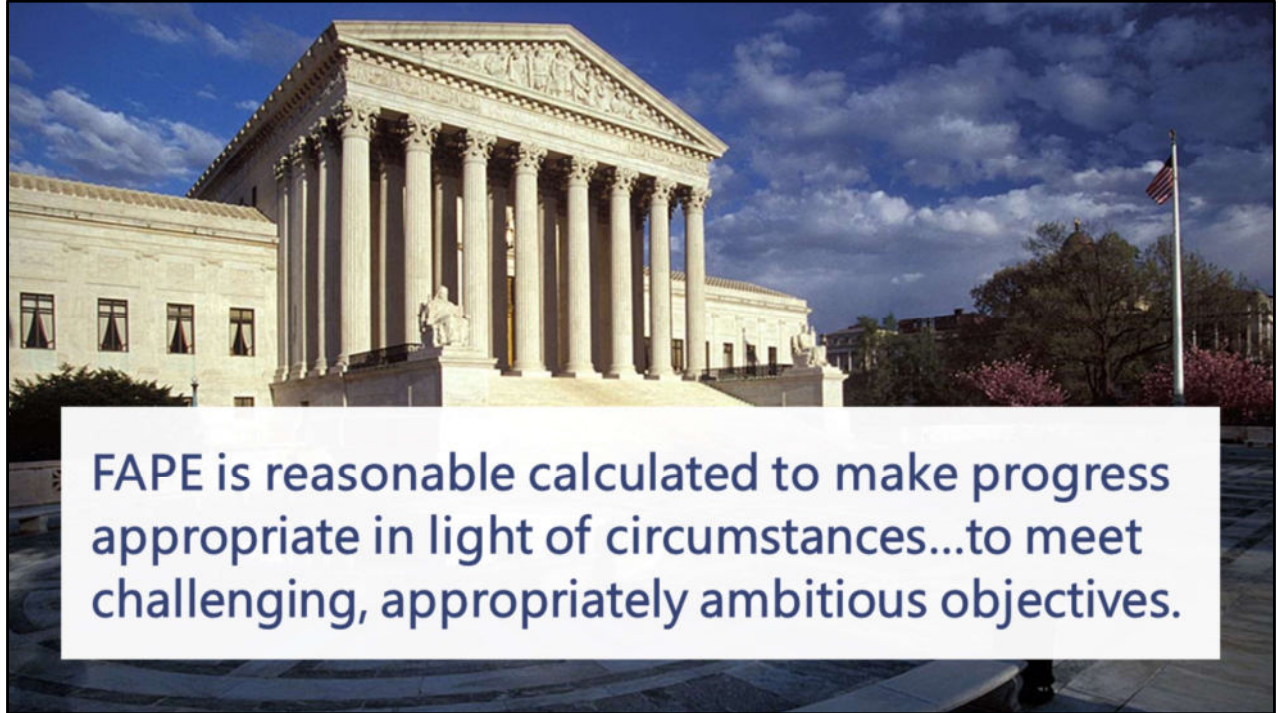
With FAPE & LRE it's about making the greatest impact in the least disruptive way.



Free & Appropriate Public Education

The opportunity to achieve full potential commensurate with the opportunity provided to other children.

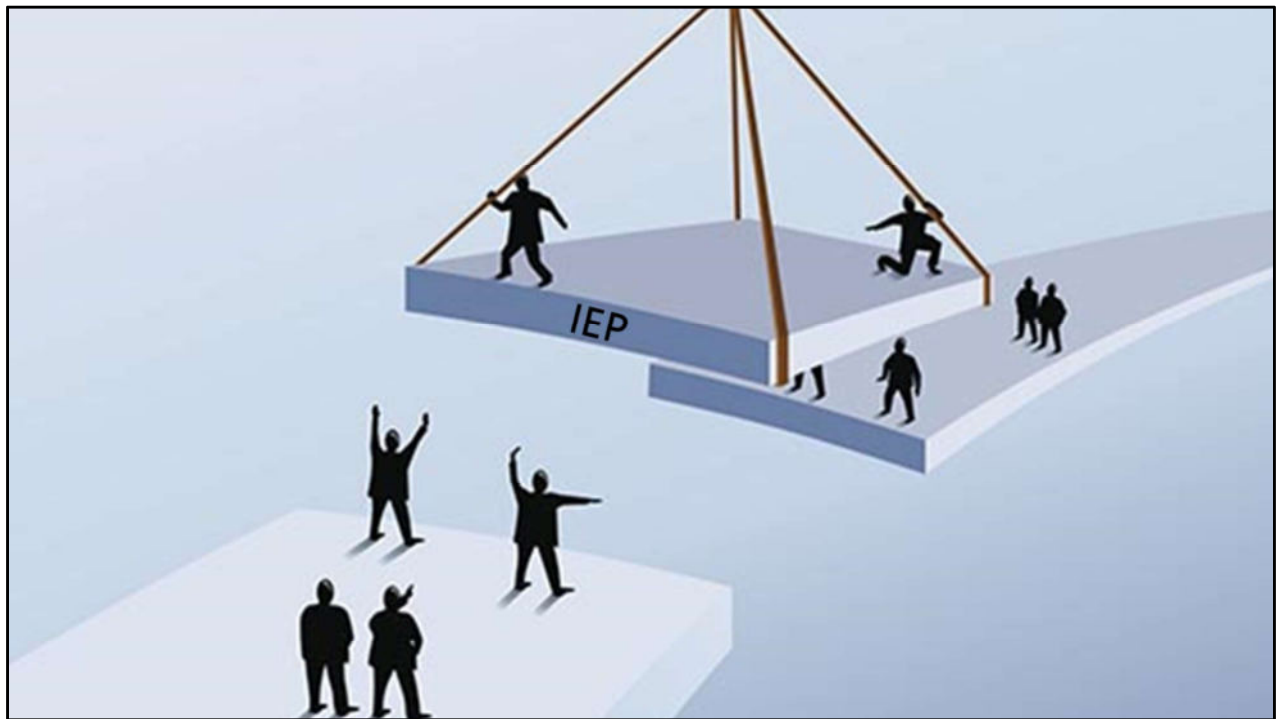
The key word in FAPE is the A. Appropriate means we have calculated or designed a program that will allow a child to grow according to their potential.



FAPE is reasonable calculated to make progress appropriate in light of circumstances...to meet challenging, appropriately ambitious objectives.

The supreme court clarified in 2017 that FAPE is not simply some benefit. In developing an individualized program for a student, we must reasonably calculate the time needed for the student to make challenging, appropriately ambitious progress.

When recovering from surgery, and if I am experiencing a 10 out of 10 on the pain scale, I am not sure how much interest I would have in a medication that would lower my pain to 9.5 even if that represented 'some benefit' as I was very keen on something more reasonably calculated and ambitious.



Recall our discussion of Demonstrated Need and how it is about identifying the gap between a student and standards or peers. An IEP represents how the student will begin to close those gaps by adapting the content, methodology or delivery of instruction to address a child's unique needs resulting from a disability.

When the gaps for a student seem large and the strengths appear limited, it seems like more programming and services, the better. But this is where LRE or Least Restrictive Environment comes into play.

Least Restrictive



Separate
Facility



Gen
<40%

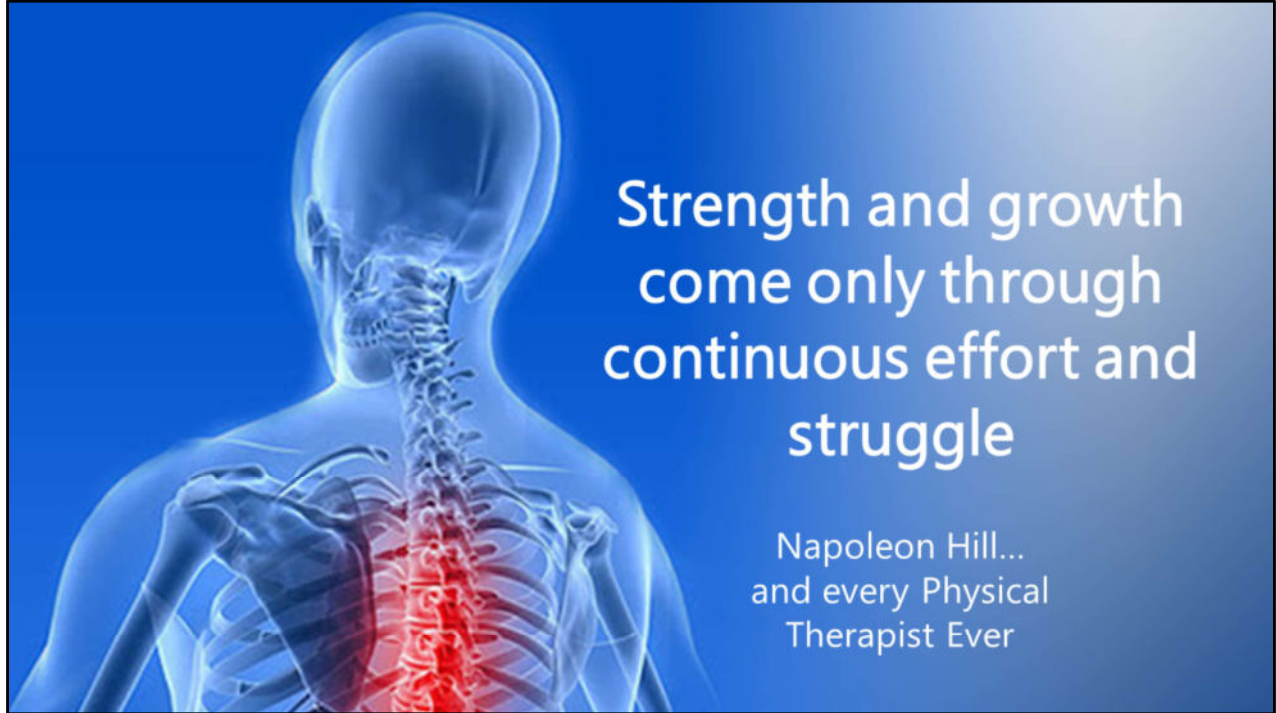


Gen Ed
40-79%



Gen Ed
80% or
More

After surgery, my foot and leg were strapped and wrapped with an estimated 2 miles of bandage. I could not move a thing due to how restrictive things were. Later I graduated to a cast, walking boot, and an assistive foot orthotic. Today, I can move around much better and just use a gel sole insert. For the 4 weeks that I wore my cast, I adjusted to it and was able to zip around with a knee scooter. I eventually needed to have the cast removed, I could see the impact the cast had on my leg as it was half the size of my other leg. I had grown accustomed to my cast and did not feel ready for the walking boot. It did not feel as secure and while I could now put weight on my foot, it was not conformable but this was the only way I was going to improve and eventually walk on my own.



The Least Restrictive Environment is not a place of comfort, nor should it be. Just like with my cast, or with any medication, there are side effects. Even with a student with significant needs, we have the obligation to consider the minimum need for a student to progress.



Least Restrictive Environment

To the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities...are educated in the general education classroom with children who are not disabled...

LRE has been a part of special education since the beginning and for good reason...the more students are exposed the grade level content in an environment surrounded by peers, the more they benefit. Special classes, separate schooling, or other forms of removal only occur if the nature of severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aides and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.

When FAPE & LRE Seem To Collide, Defer To FAPE

To the maximum extent appropriate

- Educate special ed students with their non-disabled peers.
- Separate classes, schooling, or other removals for education programming is prohibited, unless:
 - Education in regular classes, with supplementary aids & services cannot be achieved satisfactorily, taking into account the impact on the student's learning and the impact on the other students in the classroom or LRE.



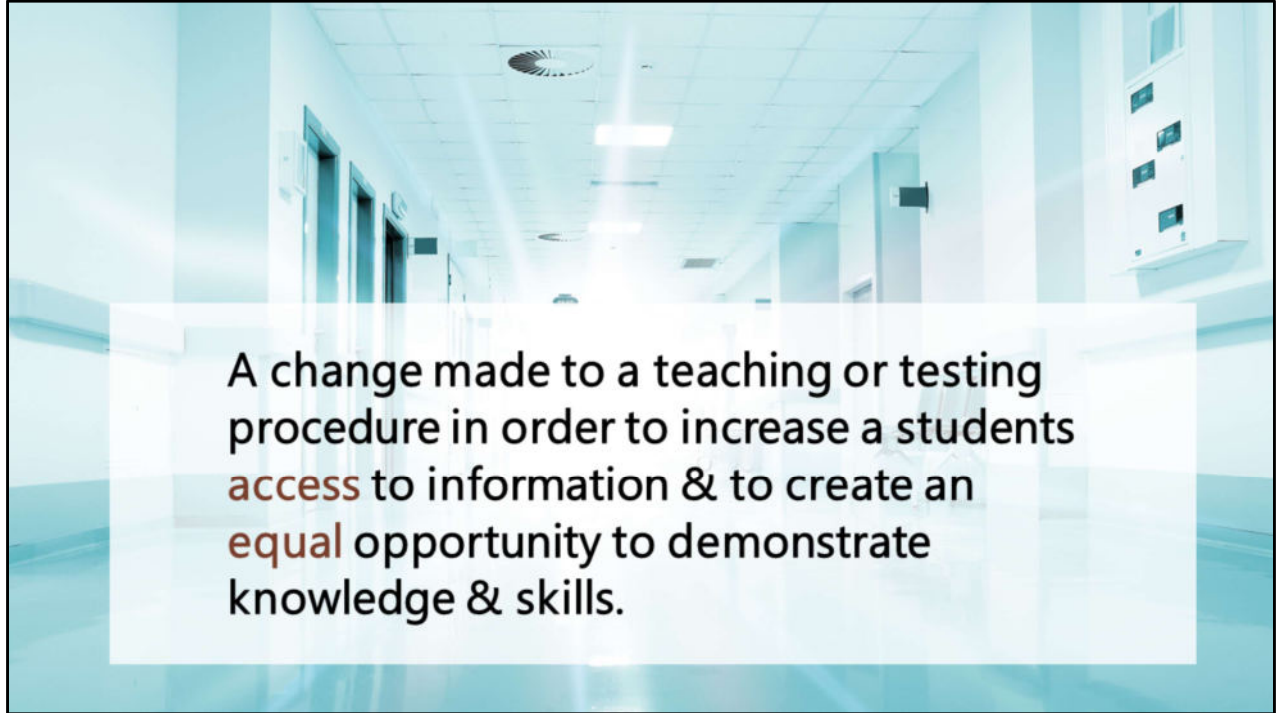


Supplemental Aids and Services



Supplemental Aids & Services are the accommodations that represent our first consideration and line of defense in providing support in the least restrictive environment possible.

Sometime, a problem or need can be worked around without the need for a goal and program time. For example, after surgery, I was able to swap my manual car for my wife's automatic transmission van. This, paired with my knee scooter meant I could get where I needed to go independently.



A Supplemental Aid and Service or SAS involves a change made to a teaching or testing procedure in order to increase a student's access to information and to create an equal opportunity to demonstrate knowledge and skills.

Adaptive Equipment

Assistive Technology

Peer Tutors / Aides

Adapted Materials



We can help level the playing field for student through adaptive equipment, assistive technology, peers tutors or 1-on-1 aids, or adaptive materials.

Berrienresa.org or www.bit.ly/SASbank for list



Important Information for Count Periods

- [Count Day Clean Up Manual](#)
- [Count Day PowerPoint Notes](#)
- [Field Migration from illuminate to PowerSchool](#)
- [Data generation in illuminate](#)

[Accommodation List](#)

[Conversion Table - Minutes to Hours](#)

[Minutes Per Month to Hours per Week Conversion Sheet](#)

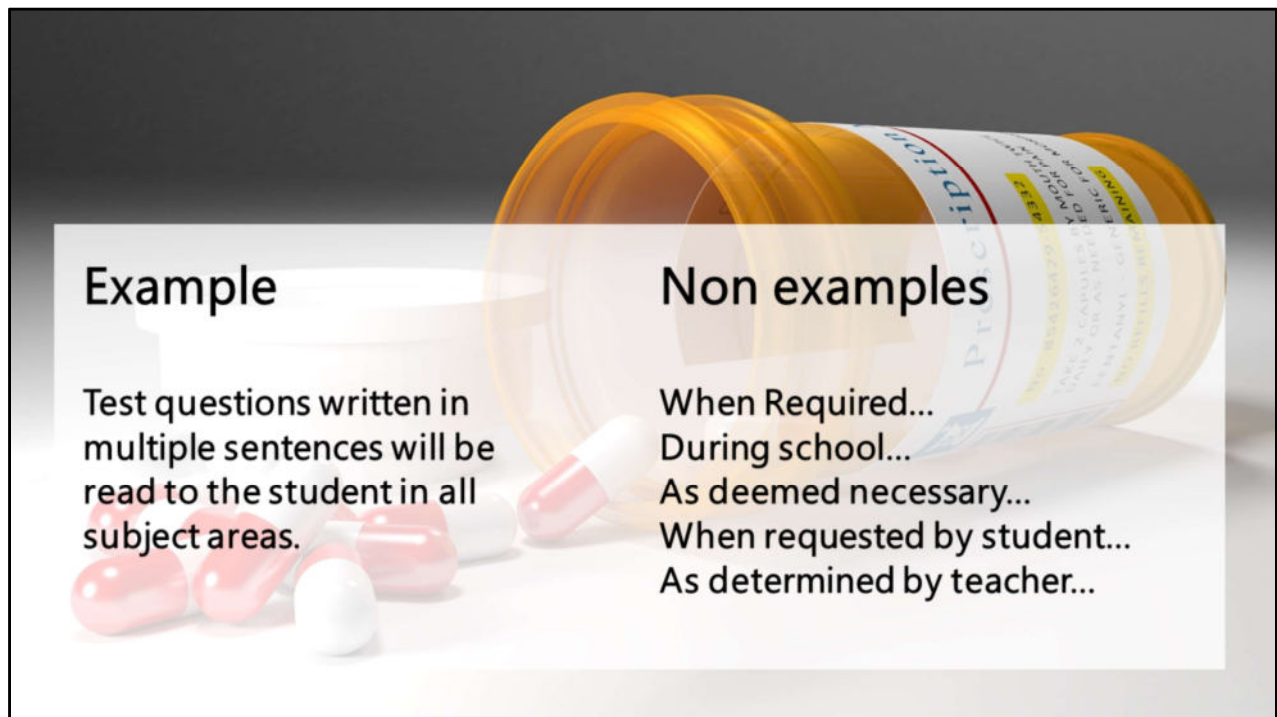
To find the full list of accommodations, you can visit the Berrien Resa website or go to www.bit.ly/SASbank

Consult your local Gen Ed Teacher!

- Know students well
- Regularly provides accommodations for many students
- Good understanding of what is required to access curriculum and materials



Our general education colleagues can be a big resource when determine appropriate supplemental aids and services. For most students, they are the primary contact and the provider of accommodations. When included in the IEP development process, our gen ed colleagues may feel more invested with a clearer understanding of the why behind an accommodation along with how and when to deliver them.



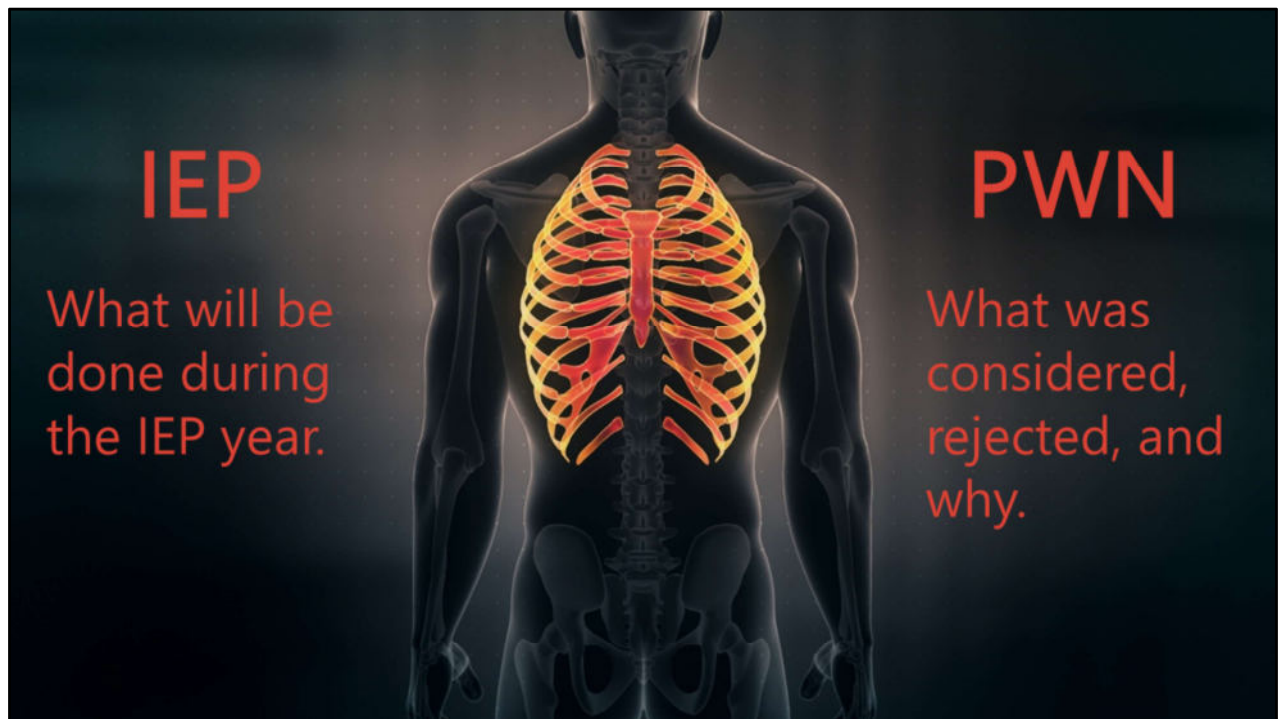
When writing your supplemental aids and services in Illuminate, assume that the **ONLY** thing a person will have to go by in providing the accommodation is your description.

If you write 'as needed' the only person who knows what that means is the writer. Just as a prescription bottle comes with clear directions, your IEP should clearly details the when each accommodation is to be given with no ambiguity.



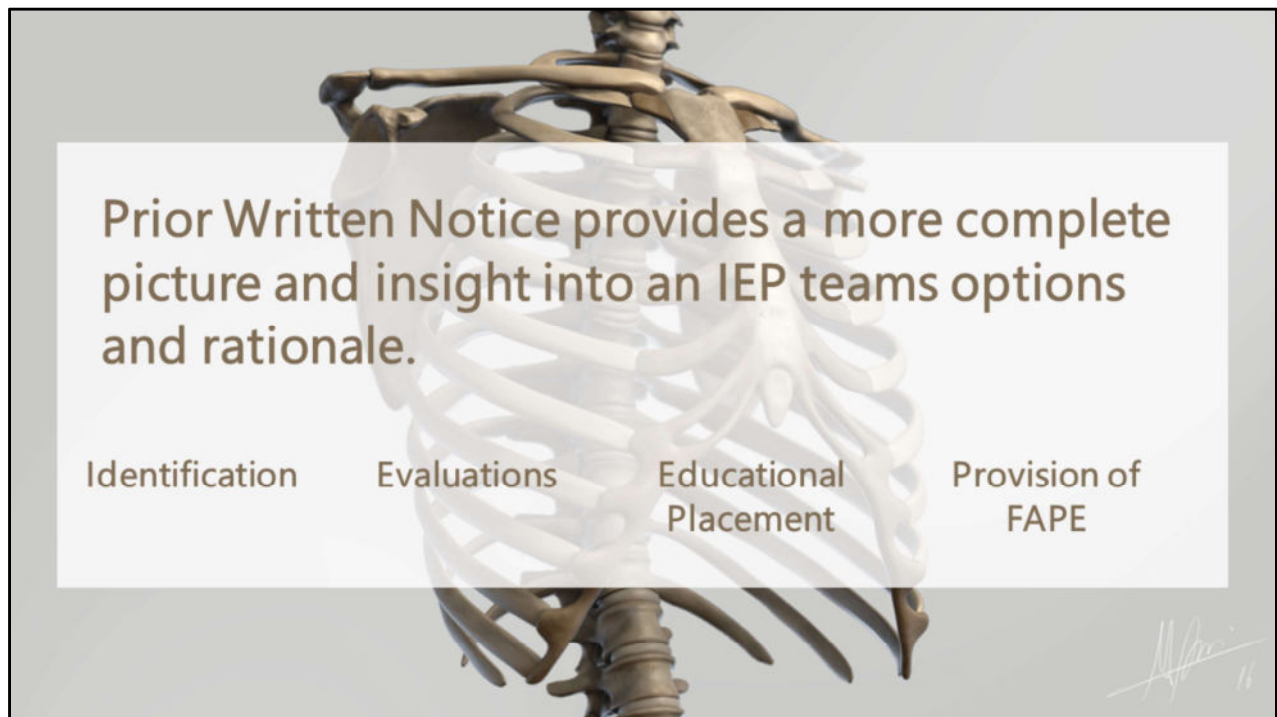
The heart, lungs, and liver, intestines all work together to support life and are protected from injury by our rib cage.

Within an IEP, there are several important components working together – strengths, needs, goals, programming, supplemental aids and services – and prior written notice functions in a similar protective way in the IEP development process.



How many other things in your life do you not do but write up the reason why? Have you ever been to a restaurant where they hand you a menu of items they serve and another menu for what they don't serve and why?

But that is exactly what Prior Written Notice within an IEP is all about, its describing the options that were considered but rejected and thinking or rationale that went behind that decision.

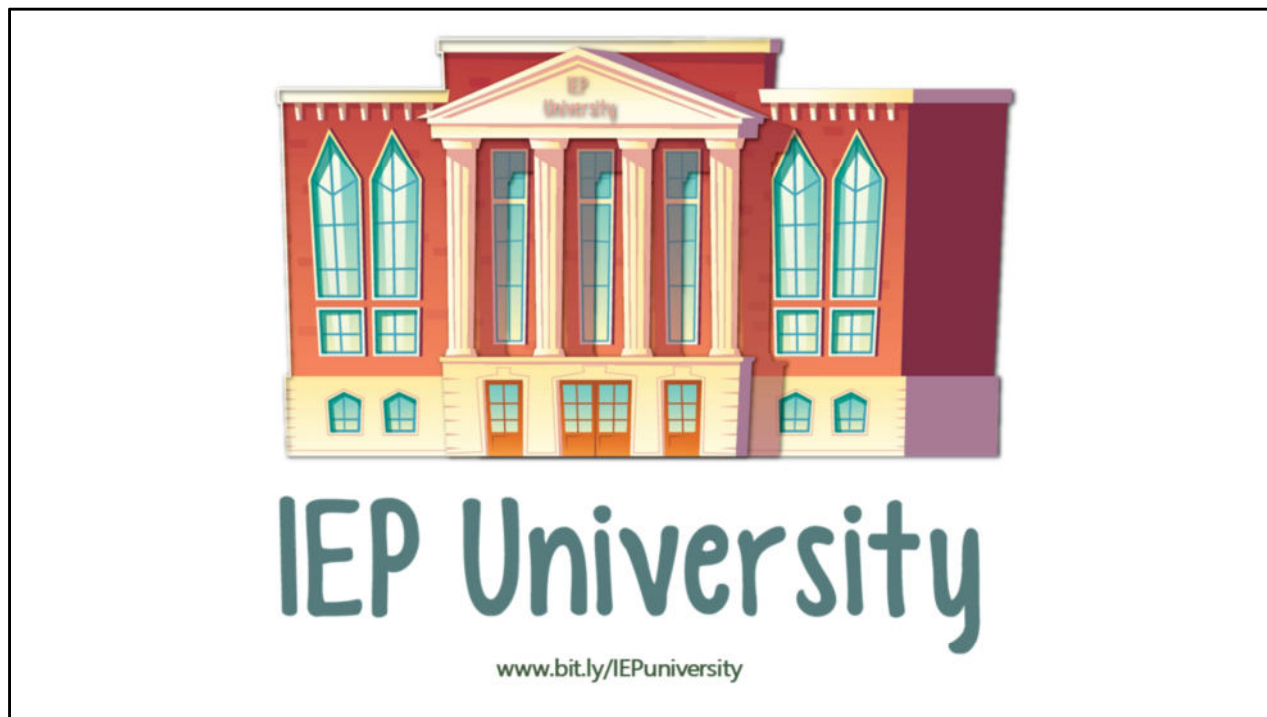


So how does this protect an IEP? By taking the time careful describe these considerations, the IEP team has provided a full glimpse into their thinking. If a parent complains that the district did not even consider an option such as a 1:1 aide, there is not only a very tangible way to show proof the team considered it but also why they dismissed it thus avoiding several 'he said' 'she said' arguments each year.

Every IEP will have PWN notice packaged along with it as it is one of the 4 situations in which Notice is required. It is towards the end of the IEP in Illuminate but take the time to complete Notice to help protect your IEP team.



Each component that we talked about, strengths, goals, there are more too them. We will cover more of these topics at IEP University in depth but let us know what you would like to see covered. For more information on special education topics, you can also visit the Walk About that offers short videos.



This PowerPoint is available on the IEP University Site along with the other session this year and before.

While on this page, you can provide feedback to let me know how I did and what I can do better in the future. Have an idea for next year, let me know! There is also a mail subscription you can sign up for occasional announcement and what's new on campus.