Writing Meaningful and Measurable Social/Behavior Goals

Choosing an Appropriate Goal

- How many students in the General and Special Education population exhibit the problem behavior?
  - Does it occur across the class, grade, school?
  - Is homework completion a school-wide issue?
  - Is their hallway misbehavior markedly worse than their peers?

- Is the problem behavior related to the disability?
  - Are they off-task in a classroom where engagement is a classroom-wide issue?

- Do the student's present levels indicate that it is a reachable goal and a priority?
  - If the student cannot do the work assigned, what is the point of behavioral compliance?
  - If the student cannot handle within-classroom transitions, do we want to tackle home-to-school transitions?

Meaningful Goals...

Focus on acquiring skills by addressing what the student WILL DO, not what they won't do. *If a dead man can do it, it's not behavior*

Consider what you will SEE at the end of the IEP year. Focus on the outcome.

Poor Example: Mary will <mark>decrease the number of times she blurts out</mark> during class from a level of 4 times per class to a level of 0 times per class...

Still a Poor Example: Mary will <mark>increase the number of days she refrains from blurting</mark> in class from a level of 1 day per week to a level of 5 days per week...

Better Example: Mary will <mark>increase her use of hand raising</mark> to get the teacher's attention, from a level of 70% of opportunities to a level....

Meaningful Goals…

Are based on target behaviors identified in the student's most recent Functional Behavior Assessment.

Goals are designed to TEACH the replacement behavior(s).

Meaningful Goals...

Measure student behavior, not adult behavior.

Poor Example: By August 2015, Johnny will improve his rate of following adult directions with <mark>4 or less redirections</mark> as measured monthly by special education staff.

Better Example: By August 2015, when given verbal directions by adults across special and general education settings, Johnny will <mark>improve his rate of following adult directions</mark> from 50% to 90% as measured by special education staff using his daily report card.

Measurable Goals...

Monitor the behavior frequently enough to be able to make decisions about the student's progress with specific skills.

Poor Example: Bobby will demonstrate on task behavior 90% of the time during academic classes, as measured 2 times per semester using a 20-minute momentary time sampling observation.

Better Example: By June 2017, during academic instruction, Bobby will demonstrate on-task behaviors from a current rate of 50% to a rate of 90% of the observed time intervals as measured 2 times per month by special education staff using a 20-minute momentary time sampling observation.

Measurable Goals...

Use specific tools to objectively measure the skill area to ensure appropriate data collection.

Method	Effectiveness/Usage	Examples
Permanent Product	● Generally accurate and convenient ● Familiar and efficient ● Use whenever appropriate and possible	● Grades on assignments ● Number of assignments turned in ● Assignments written in planner
Structured Observations	● Most accurate ● Efficient but must be taught or explained ● Used a designated times	● Frequency counts ● Duration measures ● Latency measures ● Intensity measures ● Direct Behavior Ratings (DBRs)
Qualitative Measures	● Generally vague and not measurable ● Typically time consuming ● Can be used supplementally	● Teacher narratives ● Written notes ● Reports based on memory

Measurable Goals...

Define a specific skill and/or behavior that is objective and can be observed.

> **Poor Example:** By August 2016, Bobby will reduce the number of office discipline referrals (ODR's) he earns from 4 ODR's per week to 1 or less per week, as measured by...

This does not focus on a specific skill the student is developing. Look at WHY the student is earning referrals and target the replacement behavior.

> **Better Example:** By August 2016, Bobby will increase his use of coping/calming strategies (i.e. request a break, deep breathing) from a rate of 50% of opportunities to a rate of 90% of opportunities, as measured by...

Measurable Goals...

Define a specific skill and/or behavior that is objective and can be observed.

Poor Example: By August 2016, Joe will demonstrate improved social skills in mainstream classes 4 out of 5 days per week, as measured by daily teacher observations.

Better Example: By August 2016, given 10 minutes of free play time, Joe will engage in 3 positive or neutral 4-word verbal interactions with peers on 14 out of 20 occasions over a 4 week period as measured by weekly frequency reporting from direct observations.

Realistic/Ambitious Goals...

Do not set expectations of special education students higher than those of general education peers.

Poor Example: By August, 2015, during large group instruction, Sally will improve her rate of on-task behavior from 75% to 100% as measured by weekly 20-minute momentary time sampling observations by special education staff.

Better Example: By August, 2015, during large group instruction, Sally will improve her rate of on-task behavior from 75% to 90% as measured by weekly 20-minute momentary time sampling observations by special education staff.

If a student has a "behavior goal"...

Appropriate supports should be identified in the IEP, such as:

- Behavior Support Plan
- Specific accommodations
- Applicable service minutes