

IEPs for Consult Students

A Helpful Note from Chrissy Cowan

We were unclear on whether or not we are supposed to write VI specific IEPs for students we designate as "consult", so we contacted TEA for clarification. Because the term "consult" is not clearly defined across the state (or between any 2 teachers, for that matter!) it is best to clearly state on the ARD paperwork summary section what is meant whenever you use the term. Examples of consultative services wording might be "VI consult services will consist of":

- Developing a tactual symbols system using input from the student's educational team
- Meeting with team members once every 6 weeks to update progress on objectives (use when you've written an integrated IEP)
- Participating with education team in setting up routines and collecting student progress data once every month
- Observing once a month to determine the extent to which the student uses adaptive skills already learned
- Meeting with classroom teachers once every 6 weeks to discuss ways to increase the student's use of adaptive techniques
- Obtaining feedback from classroom teachers once a month to check on the student's study skills, social skills, etc.
- Working once every 4 weeks with the student on cooking skills, and communicating with the family on daily living skill needs, acquisition or progress

These are just some ideas. The range of what you can do within the consulting model is limitless. Just remember to specify what it is you plan to do, and try to assign a time frame to it. Note: ESC-XIII advocates the concept of writing an "integrated" IEP in concert with the parents and other professionals who work with your student, rather than a "stand alone" IEP for students with multiple impairments and multiple service delivery professionals. An integrated IEP is one in which the team has assessed and selected objectives which develop skills across disciplines.

If you have a "consult only" student who receives NO OTHER SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICE but VI, you MUST write an IEP goal. Notice I said "an". One is sufficient. Since these tend to be those high academic low vision kids, the goal might look like one of these examples:

Example 1

Goal 1: The student will master 5th grade course work as measured by classroom criterion referenced tests, while addressing these specific identified educational needs, using modified techniques to access print and classroom learning materials.

- Objective 1.1: The student will use a monocular to read information on the overhead and chalkboard well enough to complete daily assignments in 3 classes by the third report card period.

- Objective 1.2: The student will use a laptop computer to complete one daily assignment in 4 classes by the second 6-weeks report card period.

Example 2

Goal 1: The student will participate in a Circle of Friends meeting monthly.

- Objective 1.1: The student will organize a minimum of three meeting dates for up to a semester on a calendar.
- Objective 1.2: The student will plan an activity or topic for discussion for 2 meetings during the first semester.

Example 3

Goal 1: The student will prepare a variety of up to 5 after-school snacks by the end of the first semester.

- Objective 1.1.: The student will prepare 2 snacks weekly using a microwave oven by the end of the second 6 weeks grading period. (e.g., popcorn, nachos)

Again, these are just some ideas of goals for the consult student who has no other IEP. By the way, I hope you detect my effort to make both my goals and objectives measurable. This is a new requirement of IDEA-B, and we should probably get ready to have our IEP paperwork scrutinized on this regard.

For those of you whose directors require an IEP even if you don't work directly with the student, you should still give a description of your consultative services in the summary section of the ARD (see above). An example of an IEP in these situations might be:

Goal 1: The student will respond to visual cues within two routines during the first semester.

- Objective 1.1: The student will show recognition of a spoon approaching his mouth (e.g. open his mouth, turn his head) during a lunch or snack routine once a day for 10 consecutive days by the end of the first semester.
- Objective 1.2: The student will indicate a choice in a play routine by reaching for a desired toy presented in his left visual field once a day for 14 consecutive days by the end of the third grading period.

If you have an IEP like this, remember that you will be responsible for updating it. To do this, you will need to design some sort of checklist to be used by the school personnel to keep track of how the student is doing. You would describe your consultation on the ARD paperwork in terms of modeling appropriate practices to enhance vision utilization and organizing and reviewing data collection with other personnel.