



**Developing an
Appropriate
Educational Plan (EP)
for Students Who Are
Gifted**

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State Rule 6A-6.030191, F.A.C., Development of Educational Plans for Exceptional Students who are Gifted

- **Educational Plans (EPs) are developed for students identified solely as gifted.**
- **Procedures for development of the EPs shall be set forth in each district's Policies and Procedures for the Provision of Specially Designed Instruction and Related Services to Exceptional Students document.**
- **Procedures shall be consistent with the requirements in rule.**

Meeting the Needs of the Student

- **Gifted children have specific characteristics that present special learning needs which are best addressed by modification of the curriculum.**
- **Differentiation is a strategy for tailoring the curriculum and instructional strategies which involves adapting content, process, product, and/or learning environment to provide appropriately challenging learning experiences for students.**
- **Varying instructional pace is an important strategy for delivering curricula appropriately to the gifted learner, thus allowing students to learn at their own rate.**

Providing Challenge

- **Challenging gifted students to achieve at a level of excellence and expertise requires curriculum and instruction that will stimulate advanced learners.**
- **To ensure continued progress, it is imperative that the LEVEL, COMPLEXITY, and PACE of curricula be more matched to a student's readiness and motivation.**
- **Gifted students benefit when the modification and adaptation of curriculum and instruction enables them to realize their full potential.**

How Gifted Students Learn

- **Gifted students learn at different rates.**
- **Gifted students vary in their ability to think at advanced levels.**
- **For gifted learners, activities must move at an instructional pace that is comfortable and reflects their mental processing speed.**
- **Additionally, the instructional pace must be flexible so that the learners are challenged, but also given time to think about ideas and to process information.**

What is an Educational Plan (EP)?

- **Once it is determined that a student is eligible to receive service, the Educational Plan (EP) team meets to determine what steps to take to ensure an appropriate education to meet the needs of the student. This team develops the EP.**
- **The EP is written plan for each child who is identified as eligible for gifted education describing the student's educational needs and the services that will be provided to meet those needs.**

What is an Educational Plan (EP)?

(Cont'd)

- The EP provides detailed information about the appropriate education to meet the needs of that student . This information is useful to school personnel and to the parents.
- The EP provides a clear picture of the student, how the student is gifted, and the student's special needs related to the giftedness.
- Those special needs include differentiated curricular experiences to ensure continual student progress and learning.

Who should be at an EP meeting?

(according to Rule 6A-6.030191)

- The parent/guardians of student
- At least one teacher of the gifted program
- The regular education teacher (initial EP meeting)
- School district representative (LEA / ESE contact)
- School psychologist (initial EP meeting)
- Other individuals who may have knowledge of the student at the discretion of the parent / guardian or school district
- The student, as appropriate

Another Point About EP Meetings

- EP meetings, like IEP meetings, are individual meetings. (Technical Assistance Paper #12720: Development of Educational Plans for Students Who Are Gifted)
- The language in the EP rule states that discussion at the meeting should focus on the individual student's current levels of performance and critical information regarding the strengths and interests of the child, his/her progress, and needs resulting from the child's giftedness, based on recent evaluations, class work, and/or state and diagnostic assessments.

Another Point (Cont'd)

- These subjects are not intended to be covered with other parents or students present.
- It should be noted that the corresponding rules regarding the development of IEPs, service plans or individual family support plans also do not address the issue of group as opposed to individual meetings.
- The intent of the EP meeting is to look at how the student is gifted and what this student needs to address his or her strengths and needs appropriately. A discussion of such individual strengths and needs in a group meeting would represent a violation of the student's confidentiality and privacy rights.

Rule

6A-6.030191, (4) F.A.C.

DEFINES THE CONTENT OF THE EDUCATION PLAN (EP)

(4) Contents of Education Plans (EPs). EPs for students who are gifted must include:

★ #1

(a) A statement of the student's present levels of performance which may include, but is not limited to, the student's strengths and interests, the student's needs beyond the general curriculum, results of the student's performance on state and district assessments, and evaluation results;

★ #2

(b) A statement of goals, including benchmarks or short term objectives;

Rule

6A-6.030191, (4) F.A.C.

★ #3

(c) A statement of the specially designed instruction to be provided to the student;

★ #4

(d) A statement of how the student's progress toward the goals will be measured and reported to parents; and

★ #5

(e) The projected date for the beginning of services, and the anticipated frequency, location, and duration of those services

Rule 6A-6.030191, (5) F.A.C

(5) Considerations in EP development, review and revision. The EP team shall consider the following:

(a) The STRENGTHS of the student and needs resulting from the student's giftedness.

(b) The results of recent evaluations, including class work and state or district assessments.

(c) In the case of a student with limited English proficiency, the language needs of the student as they relate to the EP.

Present Level of Performance



#1

(a) A statement of the student's present levels of performance which may include, but is not limited to, the student's strengths and interests, the student's needs beyond the general curriculum, results of the student's performance on state and district assessments, and evaluation results;

Establishes a baseline to identify where the student is currently performing.

- **Student is interested in problem solving in math and likes to design his own problems**
- **Norm referenced tests (SRI, RRR, i.e.), benchmark assessment and/or other formal assessments**
- **Score on the 2008 FCAT for Math (Level 4, i.e.) [CANNOT USE FCAT ONLY]**
- **Pre-assessment at beginning of grade 4 student evidenced mastery of 90 % of the grade 4 math objectives**
- **Is earning an A- in math**

A well-written present level might describe:

- **The strengths of the child (examples: avid reader, currently reading at a beginning sixth grade level based the Woodcock-Johnson, consistently scores 95-100 on weekly spelling tests)**
- **What helps the child to be successful (prefers working independently, enjoys researching topics of interest)**
- **What might be preventing the child from being successful (frequently doesn't complete math homework, does not participate well in small group projects, does not edit his work for grammatical errors)**
- **Objective data from evaluations in class (grades, end of chapter or end of year tests, i.e.)**
- **Teacher or parent observations about work habits (prefers a quiet place to work, asks many questions)**

State Rule 6A-6.0311, F.A.C., Eligible Special Programs for Exceptional Students

“Special programs for exceptional students encompass instruction and related services which provide significant adaptations in one or more of the following: curriculum, methodology, materials, equipment, or environment designed to meet the individual learning needs of exceptional students.”



State Rule 6A-6.0331, F.A.C., General Education Intervention Procedures, Identification, Evaluation, Reevaluation and the Initial Provision of Exceptional Education

- **(3) 3 (c) The school district shall be responsible for conducting all initial evaluations necessary to determine if the student is eligible for ESE and to *determine the educational needs of the student.***
- **(5)(a) 1. The school district must use a variety of assessment tools and strategies to gather relevant functional, developmental, and academic information about the student, including information provided by the parent, that may assist in determining whether the student is eligible for ESE and the content of the ...EP, including information related to *enabling ...a gifted student's needs beyond the general curriculum.***

Individual Needs

- **Curriculum for students who are gifted must be DIFFERENTIATED for their specific learning needs.**
- **Thus, an EP should be an individualized plan for how we intend to assure that this student – who has met eligibility criteria – has his or her special learning needs appropriately addressed to ensure the student continues to make academic progress.**



Next Step: Goals and Objectives

After looking at where the student is currently performing, we then consider:



#2

(b) A statement of goals, including objectives;

As noted earlier ---"To ensure continued progress, it is imperative that the level, complexity, and pace of curricula be more matched to a student's readiness and motivation."

We consider --"What is this student capable of being able to do to continue academic progress?"

A well-written goal will:

- **Be positive**
- **Will clearly describe a skill that can be **MEASURED****
- **Answers the questions:**
 - **WHO**
 - **The student ...**
 - **Will do WHAT will**
 - **...Will achieve at least a reading score of 991...**
 - **HOW**
 - **...measured on the SRI profile...**
 - **WHERE**
 - **...with monthly classroom assessments to increase levels...**
 - **WHEN**
 - **...by the end of grade 5**

Goals

- When developing goals and objectives, the EP team should consider the student's present level of performance.
- The goals should be individualized.
- The goals **CANNOT** be uniform goals covering an entire class or group.

The EP team should ask:

How do you
define
student
achievement?



Domains

- **Cognitive processes**
- **Communications**
- **Problem solving**
- **Scientific method**
- **Study skills**
- **Research skills**
- **Independent learning**
- **Social processes**
- **Leadership skills**
- **Technology**

Remember

We know that what gets measured, gets done.

Each student should be showing at least one year's academic growth each year.



Possible Goals with Objectives

GOAL: Student will complete grade 5 math curriculum with 85 % mastery by the end of grade 4.

- By the end of the first nine weeks the student will evidence mastery of 85% of the grade four math objectives.
- By the end of first semester the student will have completed the first half of the grade 5 math curriculum with 80% mastery.
- The student will complete at least one activity per week from Challenge Math with 100% accuracy.

Three Characteristics of Measurable Goals and Objectives

Performance

*What the student is expected to do

Condition

*When and how the student will perform

Criterion

*What is the acceptable level of performance

Performance: A *Doing* Word, not an *Intangible* Word.

Doing Words

- Writing
- Producing
- Identifying
- Applying
- Using

Intangible Words

- Knowing
- Understanding
- Being
- Comprehending

Condition

When and how the student will perform

- 1. In a given nine weeks.....**
- 2. Using the math textbook.....**
- 3. Using supplementary materials.....**
- 4. Using the internet.....**

Criterion

How well the student is expected to perform

- 1. With 80-89% mastery**
- 2. With 100% mastery**

Expanding the Expectation with Objectives

GOAL: Student will demonstrate inquiry skills by identifying a topic, problem or issue of interest and formulating a minimum of 10 questions for research using appropriate tables and graphs by the end of the first trimester of 4th grade.

- **By the end of the first grading period the student will have completed a teacher approved product for that topic and applied math skills.**

Another example

Establish a baseline:

- **Student (grade 4) is an avid reader and loves to write**
- **FCAT reading score last year was a 4.5**
- **SRI score of 991**
- **Student has a consistent record of A's in reading and language arts**
- **Considerations for a one year Goal might be:**
 - **Student will use analysis to develop an appreciation of and be able to compare and contrast literary characterizations**
 - **Student will receive instruction in 5th grade level Language Arts course**
 - **Student will use writing as a tool for learning by maintaining learning logs, laboratory reports, note taking, journals, or writing portfolios**

Adding Objectives

GOAL: Student will use analysis to develop an appreciation of literary characterizations

- **Student will show evidence of being able to compare and contrast a minimum of three characters in two literary classics in a teacher-approved product of choice by June 2010**

Student will use writing as a tool for learning by maintaining learning logs, laboratory reports, note taking, journals, or writing portfolios

- **Student will maintain a learning log to be assessed by checklist weekly for each grading period**
- **Student will demonstrate appropriate skills in effective note taking as evidenced by a rubric by end of grade 4**

EXAMPLES

- **Student will increase his oral reading fluency by 30% as evidenced by the completion of ten grade appropriate reading assessments in class**
- **Student will improve his vocabulary skills by achieving a minimum test score of 90% on monthly classroom assessments.**
- **Student will successfully compare literature pieces 4 out of 5 times as evidenced by the use of graphic organizers and/or essays in class.**

Examples (Cont'd)

- **Student will develop strategies to solve complex, grade appropriate mathematical problems with 89% mastery.**
- **Student will become a higher order thinker 9 out of 10 times as evidenced by classroom work samples that document the use of synthesis and evaluation skills.**
- **Student will increase his mathematical computation abilities by 20% as measured by teacher made tests completed in the classroom.**

Differentiating Thinking Skills

Some service may specifically target thinking skills. If so, there are key points to keep in mind:

- **What evidence do you have that the student needs to develop creative or critical thinking skills? Establish a baseline.**
- **While we know thinking skills can be taught, it is critical that the thinking be used in connection with other areas of knowledge. *Florida's Frameworks for K-12 Gifted Learners* provides guidance.**
- **What materials will be used to instruct students toward making measurable gains in these areas?**

Differentiation

Writing a Goal Defined by Florida's Frameworks for K-12 Gifted Learners

Goal: The student will be able to conduct thoughtful research/exploration in multiple fields

Objectives:

Student will use a variety of research tools and methodologies – Student is currently performing at the Know level in terms of cooperative research and will progress to the Perform level by June 2011

Student will use and manipulate information sources - Student is currently at the Understand level in recognizing information in multiple contexts – particularly in math – and will move to the Perform level by June 2011



(c) A statement of the specially designed instruction to be provided to the student;



What differentiated instruction will be provided to ensure the student is able to have the necessary skills to complete the goals and objectives?

- Teacher will need to develop rubrics with the student to determine what skills are needed
- Will curriculum compacting move the appropriate instruction forward? If so, how will that be done?
- Will the student and teacher develop a learning contract to better be able to track the progress of the student?
- Will a pre-test appropriately identify the current level of skills and necessary instruction?
- How will the student learn the new skills?

Instructional Strategies / Products to Consider

- **Curriculum compacting**
- **Lecture**
- **Discussion**
- **Guided independent study**
- **Learning or activity center**
- **Simulation**
- **Role play or dramatization**
- **Learning games**
- **Internship**
- **Investigative report**
- **Other strategies /products that assess learning**



#4

d. A statement of how the student's progress toward the goals will be measured and reported to parents;
and



- **Critical step: identify the desired results**
- **Decide what assessment will best document and evidence that the student has accomplished the results desired**
- **TEACHER OBSERVATION** can be included, but it is **NOT** a reliable measure of accomplishment of skills. Pre- and post-test assessments may do this. A completed science project may evidence accomplishment but the project is not the evaluation – a rubric that is used to assess the project would be the evaluation.
- **KEY: The product is not an evaluation.**

Reporting Progress to Parents

- **How will the parent know that the student is making progress toward accomplishment of the EP goals?**
- **Waiting until the end of the year to let a parent know does not allow for addressing the situation in a meaningful way.**
- **If the school district determines all parents should be notified of student progress every quarter, would that be an appropriate time to notify parents of accomplishment toward meeting the gifted goals?**
- **Parents –and students – deserve to know that something meaningful is taking place in the gifted classroom**

Assessment

- **Assessment should be a measuring stick to determine how well the student has mastered skills or learning goals.**
- **The scoring guide should identify what top performance, acceptable performance, and substandard performance would look like.**
- **Assures that students are aware of their own learning.**
- **Pre-assessment is a powerful tool.**
- **A well developed rubric charts student growth of understanding.**

Criteria

Criteria might include:

- Student worked intently on task
- Student was able to effectively portray the information required
- Summary was well-written and grammatically correct

3= excellent

1 = unsatisfactory

2= satisfactory

0= did not complete task



Evidence of mastery

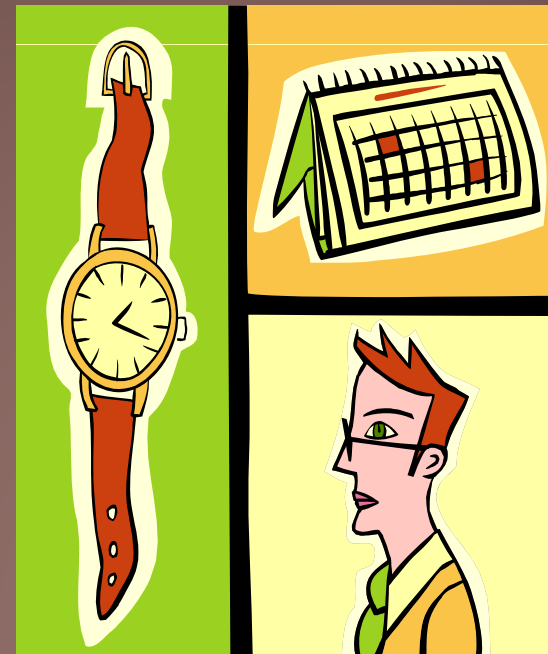
- **What documentation will show that the student was able to accomplish the task?**
- **What criteria will be used to determine that the student minimally addressed the goal vs. evidencing a significant accomplishment?**
- **Raise The Bar! If you allow minimal performance standards, that is what you will get.**
- **Documenting evidence of skill mastery supports more appropriate curriculum needs.**

#5



(e) Projected date for beginning of services, the anticipated frequency, location, and duration of services;

- **When will service begin?**
- **How often will the child receive service? (number of days per week or times per day or week)**
- **How long will each session last?**
- **Where will service be provided?**





“Although the gifted share common characteristics, they also differ from each other in needs, abilities, and interests. Therefore, any curriculum must be modified to accommodate the individual gifted learner...”

Sandra Kaplan

Closing Thoughts

Gifted education is not a privilege – it is a specific need.

The need for service is documented when the student is determined eligible for gifted service.

ASK:

- **How is this student gifted?**
- **What special education does this student need beyond what is available?**



References / Resources

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