

State Schools Curriculum Introduction

The curriculum is an organized framework, based upon established graduate goals, MAP-A grade level expectations and strands, and the Show-Me Standards. This curriculum delineates the knowledge of authentic skills that are frequently demanded in the student's home, community or workplace. The underlying premise of the curriculum targets knowledge standards for students with significant disabilities to participate, as much as possible, in basic authentic daily life activities. Students learn to use these authentic skills in all environments through embedded curriculum-based instruction, and skill generalization occurs with instruction through authentic learning activities in multiple teaching environments.

The curriculum is divided into four sections. Each section reflects one of the four grade span levels of grades K-2, 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12. Within each section, the curriculum provides a comprehensive guide for IEP goal and API development and implementation for the six content areas of Communication Arts, Mathematics, Science, Health/PE, Fine Arts, and Social Studies. Embedded within each content area are: Authentic Life Skills (IEP goals and benchmarks); the IEP code for each life skill (code to be used when completing the IEP worksheets); the API code, if applicable for MAP-A development and implementation; and examples of Authentic Learning Activities specific to the skill. The criteria information and codes are provided in the section titled IEP Criteria, provided in the back of the Curriculum.

The following steps are to be used as a guide when developing and implementing goals and benchmarks for a student's IEP:

1. Refer to the section appropriate to the student's grade level. **Use only the section that applies to the student's current grade level. Goals and benchmarks can be combined from different content areas within a student's grade level.**
2. Through the staffing process, select appropriate authentic skills (goals/benchmarks) from the curriculum that the student should learn during the IEP implementation period. If the student is to participate in MAP-A, selection of skills connected to APIs should be made in the content areas in which assessment will occur. If the team determines the APIs listed in the curriculum are not appropriate for the student, then selection from additional APIs listed in the MAP-A manual should occur.
3. Through the staffing process, determine appropriate criteria for each skill listed.
4. Use the IEP code for each skill determined appropriate when completing the IEP worksheets.
5. Upon completion of the IEP conference and final determination of skills to be learned by the student, use the appropriate authentic learning activities, with adaptations as needed for each student, in addition to other authentic learning activities developed by staff, to teach the student the authentic life skills (goals/benchmarks), and to complete the student's MAP-A portfolio.

The MSSD curriculum manual was developed as a tool to be used by staff in constructing IEPs. It was constructed carefully to insure that it contained a wide variety of goals/benchmarks which would be appropriate for a wide range of student needs. However carefully the MSSD curriculum was developed all situations could not be foreseen. As a result periodically an IEP goal/benchmark may be needed which is not contained in this manual. The following are procedures to be followed by staff under two scenarios when the MSSD curriculum manual may not contain goals/benchmarks needed for a student.

1. **Need for Goals/Benchmarks Not Contained in Curriculum Manual Identified Prior to IEP Meeting**

If prior to an IEP meeting it is determined that a goal or benchmark may be needed for a student that is not contained in the curriculum manual, the teacher or building administrator should call or email the Director of Program Services to alert them of this need. The teacher or building administrator should provide the following information:

- The specific wording of the goal/benchmark that is felt should be included in the student's IEP
- Confirmation that there is nothing similar in the MSSD curriculum
- An explanation on why existing goals/benchmarks will not meet the needs of this student.

The Director for Program Services will review this information and as needed discuss this situation with the teacher or building administrator. If through this discussion it is determined that the requested goals are not contained in the curriculum manual then the new goal/benchmark will be approved. The teacher should then include the new goal/benchmark in the student's IEP. A computer code of 999-999 would be entered into the IEP computer program.

2. **Need for Goals/Benchmarks Not Contained in Curriculum Manual Identified At IEP Meeting** It may occur that during an IEP meeting a decision may be made to include an IEP goal or benchmark which has not previously been considered and is not contained in the curriculum manual. If this would occur the IEP team should

include this goal or benchmark in the IEP. After the IEP meeting the teacher or building administrator should inform the Director of Program Services of the goal/benchmark that has been included in the IEP.

Contacting and involving the Director of Program Services in the manner described above is to allow the Director of Program Services to assist IEP teams in the selection of goals and benchmarks and insure the Director is aware of goals and benchmarks being used. The purpose of this contact is not to limit the actions of IEP teams, as all IEPs must be designed to meet the needs of each individual student, but to keep the Director informed on areas that may need additional development.

Curriculum-based assessments occur by weekly appraisal of student performance and recording that data into learning pictures. Teachers evaluate instructional interventions to improve or maintain student proficiency. The five essential elements suggested by Graham, Harris, and Reid (1990) for curriculum assessments are followed when implementing the curriculum:

1. Targeting skills within the curriculum, through a staffing process, and projecting the expected student mastery level by the next annual IEP. The IEP team, along with the performance criteria, identifies specific IEP goals and benchmarks necessary to achieve the curriculum goal.
2. Evaluating how the student performs prior to teaching (baseline) to determine where in the teaching progression to begin instruction.
3. Identifying the most effective teaching methods to achieve the expected learning outcome.
4. Collecting weekly student performance data and converting the raw data into learning pictures to evaluate the effectiveness of instruction. The degree of student learning is then measured against the baseline data.
5. Modifying the Individualized Education Program (IEP). Teachers continually monitor the student's learning rate to strive to achieve all IEP goals by the next Annual IEP

The curriculum, along with appropriate teaching strategies and authentic learning activities, will be implemented to ensure learning of authentic life skills and attainment of the curricular standards. All curricular goals for a student with developmental disabilities must define the knowledge and authentic skills necessary for increased independence and quality of life.