Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP/PLEP) Development

The Purpose of the PLAAFP/PLEP is to identify and prioritize the specific needs of a child and establish baseline performance in the general education curriculum so that an individualized and meaningful plan can be developed. Statements of PLAAFP/PLEP include current information about the student's academic achievement and functional performance. The PLAAFP/PLEPs provide a description of the degree of match between the student's current skill levels and the expectations of the student's learning environment.
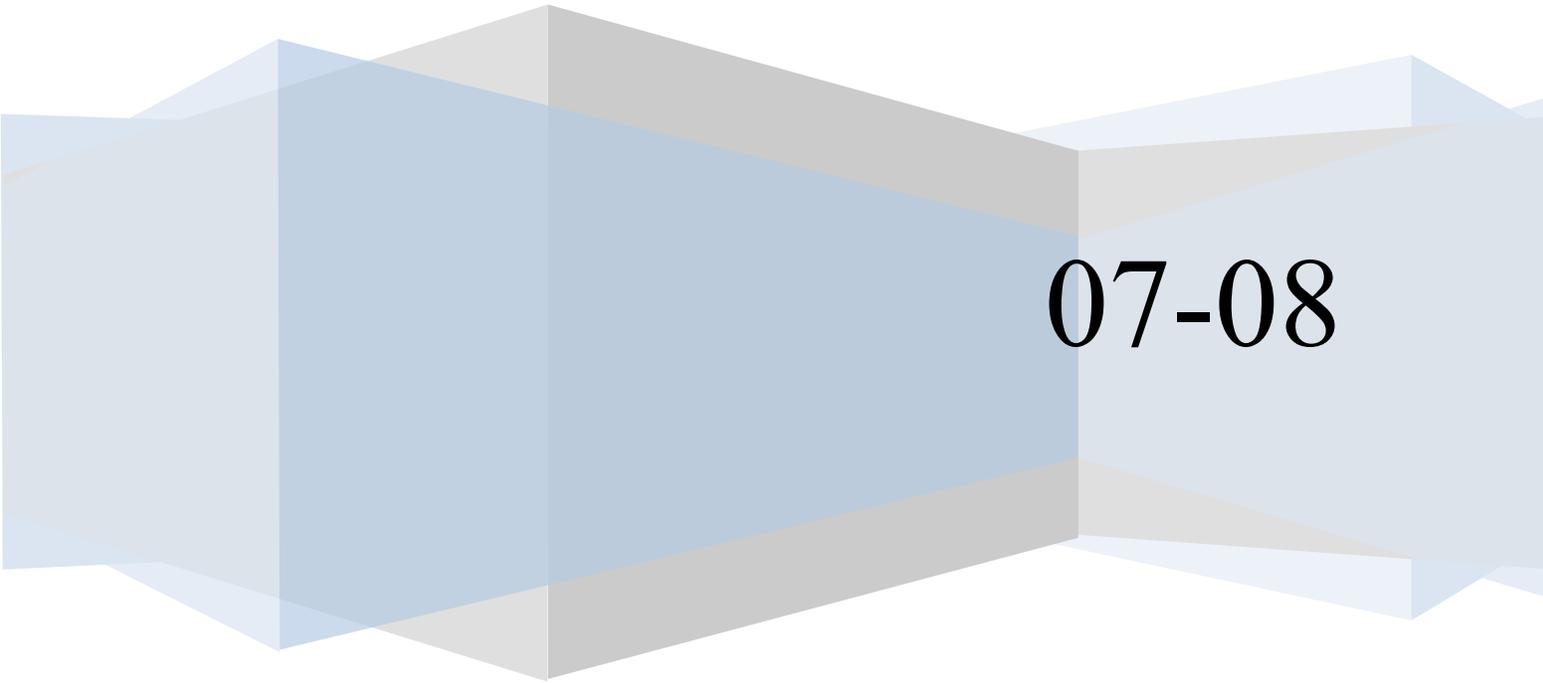
Component	Characteristics
Describe Current Performance: The description of current performance should be in relationship to where the student currently is and where the student is headed (next setting, next transition, post-school outcomes, etc.).	• This describes the unique needs of the child, relevant performance and other non-curricular issues that help clarify student needs. • Includes information such as learning strengths, absenteeism, standardized assessments, etc. • Includes information from a variety of sources such as parent(s), general and special education teachers of the child.
Describe Performance in General Education Curriculum: This includes an explanation of how the disability or giftedness affects the child's participation and progress in the general curriculum.	• Statement of how the exceptionality affects involvement and progress in the general education curriculum. • Includes information from a variety of sources such as classroom quizzes, tests, state and district assessments, the most recent evaluation of the child and other assessments that are linked directly to the curriculum. • Describes the degree of match between the student's performance and the expectations of the general curriculum standards.
Provide Baseline Data: The PLEP needs to contain baseline data that is in specific, measurable and objective terms for each identified need addressed by a measurable annual goal.	• Provides the starting point for each goal written in the IEP & is how progress is shown. • Sets the measurement method that will be used in each goal. • Specific • Objective • Measurable • Able to be collected frequently – must be able to be collected as frequently as progress reports are sent.

PLAAFP

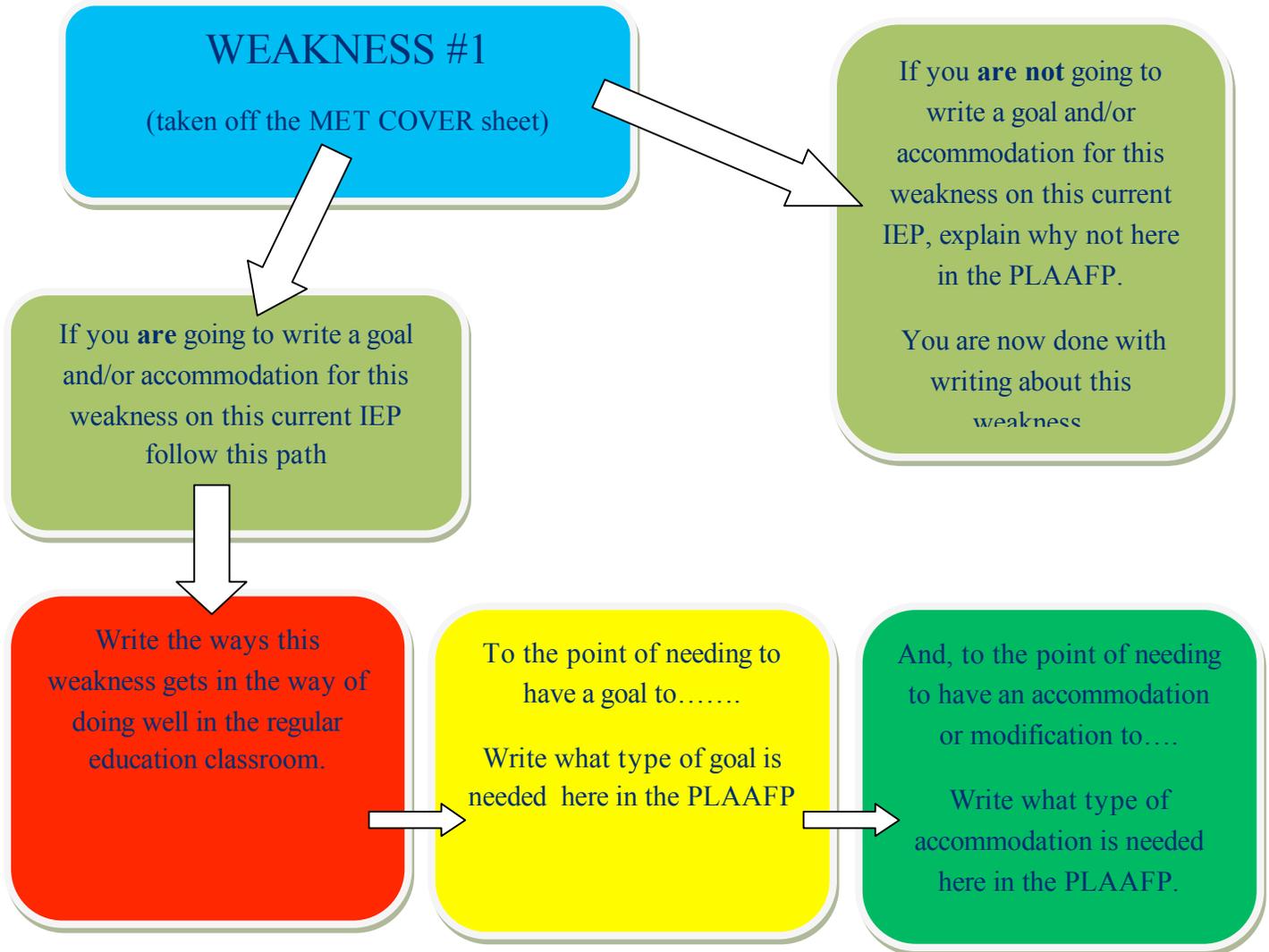## Guide to writing Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance

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ISD Monitor

07-08

PLAAFP

WEAKNESS #1

(taken off the MET COVER sheet)

If you **are not** going to write a goal and/or accommodation for this weakness on this current IEP, explain why not here in the PLAAFP.

You are now done with writing about this weakness.

If you **are** going to write a goal and/or accommodation for this weakness on this current IEP follow this path

Write the ways this weakness gets in the way of doing well in the regular education classroom.

To the point of needing to have a goal to…….

Write what type of goal is needed here in the PLAAFP

And, to the point of needing to have an accommodation or modification to….

Write what type of accommodation is needed here in the PLAAFP.

Don't just say that it does impact or gets in the way. Explain HOW each weakness gets in the way.

For example: Struggling with knowing his sounds and letters gets in the way of

- Learning and mastering grade level reading skills: so he will need a goal to improve basic reading skills.
- Keeping up with grade level reading assignments : so he will extra time for assignments, and to have someone read directions to him, and to explain things to him orally.
- Taking tests independently: so he will need to have tests read to him orally and answer orally.

NOTE: As the IEP Team discusses how each weakness gets in the way, the IEP Team may list several ways. Jot these down on a piece of scrap paper first. Don't start writing the actual ways into the PLAAFP until the IEP Team discusses which ones are top priorities for this student. Link each need to each goal and/or accommodation.

COLOR CODING CHART for PLAAFP

When you address each of the student's weaknesses, taken from the MET COVER SHEET, you must include the following COLOR ZONE when writing about each weakness.

BLUE = a weakness taken from the MET COVER SHEET.

Examples:

Reading decoding (from LD cover sheet)

Inability to build and maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships (from EI cover sheet)

DO NOT PUT A LABEL HERE: such an LD, EI, POHI,

REQUIRED FOR EACH WEAKNESS LISTED IN THE FIRST SECTION OF THE PLAAFP

HOW does this weakness get in the way of doing well in the general curriculum.

REQUIRED FOR EACH WEAKNESS LISTED IN THE FIRST SECTION OF THE PLAAFP.

To the point of needing a goal to……………………..(explain what kind of goal is needed and why)

REQUIRED FOR EACH GOAL

To the point of needing an accommodation or modification to……………..(explain what type of accommodation is needed, and why)

REQUIRED FOR EACH ACCOMMODATION OR MODIFICATION.

PLAAFP example (using color codes)

Three areas of weakness: reading comprehension, written expression and basic reading decoding skills.

READING COMPREHENSION

Because John struggles with comprehending what he reads,	he cannot understand grade level reading materials.
He will need a goal to improve reading comprehension.	He also needs to have tests given orally, and all directions repeated orally.

WRITTEN EXPRESSION

Because John struggles with written expression	he is unable to write complete sentences and paragraphs at grade level.
He will need a goal to improve to improve sentence and paragraph development skills.	And be given additional time to complete writing tasks.

BASIC READING DECODING

John's weaknesses in basic reading decoding	Makes it difficult for him to keep up with grade level reading requirements, including reading math directions and problems.
He needs a goal to improve basic reading decoding skills	and a goal to improve reading math word problems.
He will also need to have a modified language arts curriculum, working on grade level expectations	And have all math problems read to him before asked to solve the problem..

STARTING AND ENDING POINTS FOR Short-Term Objectives:

➢ Starting points are an extension of the PLAAFP statement. In many districts, people write data about where a student performs right into the PLAAFP statement on page 2.

➢ However, we have taken the approach to place the actual "starting point" data for each Short Term Objective on the same page where you list the Short Term Instructional Objective.

➢ Placing this data alongside the actual short term objectives, makes it easier to ensure that each goal presents data to demonstrate where the student functions in that skill area at the beginning of this new IEP year.

➢ Placing the "starting point" on the same page as the STIO, and on the same page and area as the "ending point" (goal point), makes it easier to determine how much progress the student makes during the IEP year.

➢ Placing the "starting point" data on the same page as the STIO, makes it easier to use the same "statistic" or units of measurement, to calculate progress: by comparing "starting and ending points" utilizing the same type or similar type of statistic.

➢ However, keep in mind, that the PLAAFP statement is a combination of what is listed on page 2 of the IEP, and what is listed as starting points on the STIO page of the IEP.

➢ Finally: when describing how a student's weakness impacts progress in the general curriculum, then, writing about what kind of goal and/or accommodation is needed, and why these are needed on page 2, you ensure a solid link from the student's needs to the actual goals and accommodation, so that there is a one to one match. Otherwise, you might end up with too many needs listed on page 2, not linked to a goal or accommodation; or, the opposite, where you find a goal or accommodation that is not linked back to the PLAAFP statement on page 2.

<p style="text-align:center; color:blue; font-weight:bold;">STEP BY STEP GUIDE TO WRITING</p>

<p style="text-align:center; color:blue; font-weight:bold;">PRESENT LEVELS OF ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AND FUNCTIONAL PERFORMANCE</p>

SECTION I: What is/are the student's weaknesses associated with the suspected or known impairment?

What gets written into this space? Look for the last MET COVER SHEET that was done before this current IEP. In some cases you may have a recent MET. In other situations, you may have to look back several years to find the last MET COVER SHEET. Use the verbiage off the MET COVER SHEETS in this part of the PLAAFP. Do **not** write the label here: LD, EI, ASD, etc.

On the **MET COVER SHEET**, list what areas were found to be significant.

SPECIAL LEARNING DISABILITY = There are eight areas of eligibility under the LD Guidelines.

      i.   Oral Expression
      ii.   Listening Comprehension
     iii.   Written Expression
     iv.   Basic Reading Skills
      v.   Reading Fluency
     vi.   Reading Comprehension
    vii.   Math Problem Solving
   viii.   Math Calculations

EMOTIONALLY IMPAIRED = There are four areas of eligibility under the EI Guidelines.

      i.   Inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships
      ii.   Inappropriate types of behavior under normal circumstances
     iii.   General pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression
     iv.   The tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears

SPEECH AND LANGUAGE IMPAIRED = There are 4 areas of eligibility under the SLI Guidelines.

      i.   Language Impairment
      ii.   Articulation Impairment
     iii.   Fluency Impairment
     iv.   Voice impairment

AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER = There are several areas of eligibility under the ASD Guidelines.

1) Evidence that this developmental disability adversely affects this student's performance in 1 or more of the following performance areas:
   i. Academic
   i. Behavioral
   ii. Social
2) Evidence of qualitative impairments in reciprocal social interactions including at least 2 of the following areas:
   i. Marked impairment in the use of multiple nonverbal behaviors such as eye-to-eye gaze, facial expression, body postures, and gestures to regulate social interaction.
   ii. Failure to develop peer relationships appropriate to developmental level.
   iii. Marked impairment in spontaneous seeking to share enjoyment, interests, or achievements with other people, for example, by a lack of showing, bringing, or pointing out objects of interest.
   iv. Marked impairment in the areas of social or emotional reciprocity.
3) Evidence of qualitative impairments in communication including at least 1 of the following:
   i. Delay in, or total lack of, the development of spoken language not accompanied by an attempt to compensate through alternative modes of communication such as gesture or mime.
   ii. Marked impairment in pragmatics or in the ability to initiate, sustain, or engage in reciprocal conversation with others.
   iii. Stereotyped and repetitive use of language or idiosyncratic language.
   iv. Lack of varied, spontaneous make-believe play or social imitative play appropriate to developmental level.
4) Evidence of restricted, repetitive, and stereotyped behaviors including at least 1 of the following:
   i. Encompassing preoccupation with 1 or more stereotyped and restricted patterns of interest that is abnormal either in intensity or focus.
   ii. Apparently inflexible adherence to specific, nonfunctional routines or rituals.
   iii. Stereopyted and repetitive motor mannerisms, for example, hand or finger flapping or twisting, or complex whole- body movements.
   iv. Persistent preoccupation with parts of objects.

VISUAL IMPAIRMENT = There are 3 areas of eligibility under the VI Guidelines.

   i. Evidence to verify vision acuity of 20/70 or less
   ii. A peripheral field of vision restricted to 20 degrees or less
   iii. A progressively deteriorating eye condition

HEARING IMPAIRMENT = Hearing Loss

COGNITIVE IMPAIRMENT = There are two areas of eligibility under the CI Guidelines.

   i. Lack of development primarily in the cognitive domain.
   ii. A delay in adaptive behavior

PHYSICAL IMPAIRMENT = Severe orthopedic impairment

TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY -= There are 9 areas of eligibility under the TBI Guidelines.

"The student has an open or closed head injury resulting in impairment of………………."

    i. Cognition
    ii. Language
    iii. Memory
    iv. Attention
    v. Reasoning
    vi. Behavior
    vii. Physical Functions
    viii. Information Processing
    ix. Speech

OTHER HEALTH IMPAIRMENT: There are several areas of eligibility under the OHI Guidelines.

1) The student has one or more of the following resulting in limited alertness
  i. Limited Strength
  ii. Limited vitality
  iii. Limited alertness, including heightened alertness to environmental stimuli
2) The limited alertness is due to chronic or acute health problems:
  i. Asthma
  ii. ADD
  iii. ADHD
  iv. Diabetes
  v. Epilepsy
  vi. Heart Condition
  vii. Hemophilia
  viii. Lead Poisoning
  ix. Leukemia
  x. Nephritis
  xi. Rheumatic Fever
  xii. Sickle Cell Anemia
  xiii. Etc.

EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENTAL DELAY = A delay in one or more areas of development: list the areas here.

SEVERELY MULTIPLY IMPAIRED: There are several areas listed under the SXI Guidelines. List the weaknesses checked off on the MET COVER SHEET.

SECTION II: Describe HOW each weakness listed in SECTION I, affects his/her involvement and progress in the general curriculum.

What gets written into this space? Follow the items on the green card agenda.

Discussion of Rules and Regulations:

IDEA STATUTE: 2004 300:347

An IEP must contain "a statement of the child's present levels of academic achievement and functional performance, including—H. R. 1350—62 ''(aa) how the child's disability affects the child's involvement and progress in the general education curriculum" and ''(bb) for preschool children, as appropriate, how the disability affects the child's participation in appropriate activities.

As you can see in IDEA 2004, the rule itself does not provide much guidance as to what should be included in the PLAAFP statement.

However, there are additional requirements in Michigan Rules and Regulations, including "monitoring" standards set forth by the MDE.

- "annual goals shall relate back to the deficit areas as indicated in the present level of educational performance". (rule 340.1721 e (2) (b))

Here are additional requirements from IDEA 2004 regulations:

- **Rule 300.347:** "The IEP for each child must include a statement of the special education and related services and supplementary aides and services to be provided to the child, on behalf of the child, and a statement of the program modifications or supports for school personnel that will be provided for the child (i) to advance appropriately towards attaining the annual goals; (ii) to be involved and progress in the general curriculum in accordance with paragraph (a) (1) of this section." Rule 300.347 (a) (1) is the rule that addressed above, regarding the child's present levels of academic achievement and functional performance.

When taken together, these rules and regulations and supporting Federal Register discussions, make it clear that goals, accommodations and modifications, must link back to a student's impairment needs, as addressed in the PLAAFP statement.

The Educational Benefit Review process, the component of the MDE Continuous Improvement Monitoring System that evaluates whether or not IEPs are reasonably calculated for student success, also emphasizes the importance of including additional information in a PLAAFP statement, beyond the basic requirements of rules and regulations.

The Educational Benefit Review process has been instrumental in revealing how important the PLAAFP statement is when developing IEPs. Most major IEP decisions are the result of the discussion and documentation that occurs when an IEP Team addresses PLAAFP.

Taking all the rules, regulations and best practice components of a PLAAFP statement into consideration, the following areas should be considered and addressed for each PLAAFP statement.

1) The first part of the PLAAFP, as noted above, is to list the areas of impairment as indicated on the MET COVER SHEETS.

2) The next portion of the PLAAFP is where the student's needs that derive from his/her impairment/s, are addressed systematically.

STEP (A) First: refer to the list of the student's weaknesses that the IEP Team list in section 1 of the PLAAFP. If all the weaknesses will be addressed on the IEP through goals and objectives, continue to step B. If the IEP Team decides one or more of the weaknesses will not be addressed on the current IEP, they must list the reason why it is not appropriate to focus on that weakness during the current IEP year.

EXAMPLE: in section 1 of the PLAAFP, a particular student being considered for services as an LD student, may have the following weaknesses from the LD MET COVER SHEET listed:

<u>Basic reading decoding; reading comprehension; and written expression.</u>

When the IEP Team starts to discuss the PLAAFP, the team may decide to NOT work on a particular weakness during the current IEP being developed that moment. Hence, the IEP Team could write a statement in the PLAAFP (section 2) saying: <u>*"John does not know his letter sounds at this point in time. Although reading comprehension and written expression are important areas and are a weakness for John, the IEP Team has decided to not work on reading comprehension and written expression this current IEP year, and instead, focus on basic reading decoding skills."*</u>

The importance of documenting "why" a weakness will not be addressed is to show that the IEP Team did consider that area, but decided that it was not a priority at present. When the IEP Team gets together in subsequent years, they may make a different decision, based on how well the student did during the current IEP year, learning his letters and sounding out words. If the IEP Team does not mention why it is not working on a weakness, someone could interpret, that the IEP Team forgot to address that weakness. Instead, by documenting the reason for not working on a particular weakness, the IEP Team has demonstrated that it did indeed address the weakness and made an informed decision.

STEP (B)   Next, take one weakness at a time, and do the following.

1)   Explain "HOW" that weakness gets in the way of doing well in the general education setting.

   EXAMPLE: **"because of John's difficulties in decoding basic words, he cannot read independently or quickly enough to keep up with classroom reading requirements."**

STEP (C)   You just explained in the PLAAFP "how" the weakness gets in the way of doing well in the gen ed setting. Now, tell us what kind of goal is needed for that weakness area. Hence, this statement of what kind of goal is needed, follows the explanation of the "how" the weakness impacts progress.

   EXAMPLE: "because of John's difficulties in decoding basic words, he cannot read independently or quickly enough to keep up with classroom reading requirements**." "He will need a goal in improving his basic reading decoding skills."**

STEP (D)   Next, the IEP Team should explain what type of "accommodation" and/or "modification is needed for that weaknesses, if any.

   EXAMPLE: "because of John's difficulties in decoding basic words, he cannot read independently or quickly enough to keep up with classroom reading requirements**." "He will need a goal in improving his basic reading decoding

skills." ***He will also need to have all tests administered to him orally. And, he will need extra time to complete every assignments."***

STEP (E)   As you discuss EACH weakness, follow your PLAAFP statement up with proceeding to the GOAL PAGE and SUPPLEMENTAL AIDES AND SERVICES sections of the IEP, and fill those in while your thoughts are fresh.

REPEAT STEPS A through E for "each" of the weaknesses that the IEP Team elects to address on the IEP.

Here are some additional suggestions for a complete PLAAFP discussion and documentation. During the PLAAFP discussion, the IEP Team should ask the following questions, and if appropriate, address them within the PLAAFP.

- Will the student need to have an IEP this year? In order to have an IEP, there must be at least ONE ANNUAL GOAL that is deemed appropriate for the student. In cases where the IEP Team agrees that "accommodations" will be sufficient, with no need for a GOAL, then the IEP Team may decide to find the student "ineligible" for special education during the current school year. The IEP can then be completed by filling out the eligibility section, and checking "not eligible", and having the district representative and parents sign the signature page.

  NOTE: eligibility for special education is a TWO PRONG decision.

  1)   Does the student have an impairment?
  2) Does this impairment impact performance in the general curriculum setting to the point that a goal and full IEP is needed? If the IEP Team feels that the student's needs can be met with accommodations only, this can be done by writing an "regular education plan" or in other instances, a 504 plan. If a student is getting passing grades without special education, special education may not be warranted.

- Another issue that should be discussed by the IEP Team during their PLAAFP discussion, is whether or not a student needs to be "pulled out " of regular education to receive special education programs and services, or can those programs and services be delivered within the regular education classroom. When this decision is made, the IEP Team can jump to the section of the IEP that documents LRE, and indicate that the programs and services will be delivered by pulling the student out of regular education, or by going into the regular education classroom, or by a combination of both.

- The IEP Team should also consider how much time the student needs for whatever Special Education programming or services is deemed necessary. The IEP Team can turn to the "program and service" page of the IEP and fill out what types of services and programs are needed, along with how much time is appropriate for each.
- One other important consideration for the IEP Team during the PLAAFP discussion, is to discuss what the most appropriate time of the day or period would suit the student's needs best: as to not interfere with the flow and continuity of what is happening in the regular education classroom. Sometimes, it may not be worth pulling a student out of regular education to assist him/her, if the student is going to miss out on important information or experiences. In some cases, the special education support may not be worth interfering with the good that could be happening within the regular education classroom setting. Perhaps the IEP Team can consider if another part of a different period, or another time of the day, would be the most helpful and the least disruptive to the student, or peers.

SUMMARY OF THE PLAAFP DISCUSSION AND DOCUMENTATION:

The PLAAFP is the "heart" of the IEP.

- This is the place where every member of the IEP Team can have input in determining the best decisions for each student.
- This is the place that an IEP Team should debate pros and cons of certain decisions, and make their decisions based on the best information available to them.
- This is the place to ensure as much as possible that the student gets an IEP that is focused on his/her individualized needs.
- This is the place for sorting through possibilities and choosing weaknesses and issues to work on that are top priority and make sense for that student at that particular time.
- Finally, the PLAAFP is also the place where discussion and documentation happens to make sure that the major components of the IEP (goals, accommodations, programming and services), and all linked to the student's unique impairment/s.