

Innovation

Triangulated IEP Transition Goals

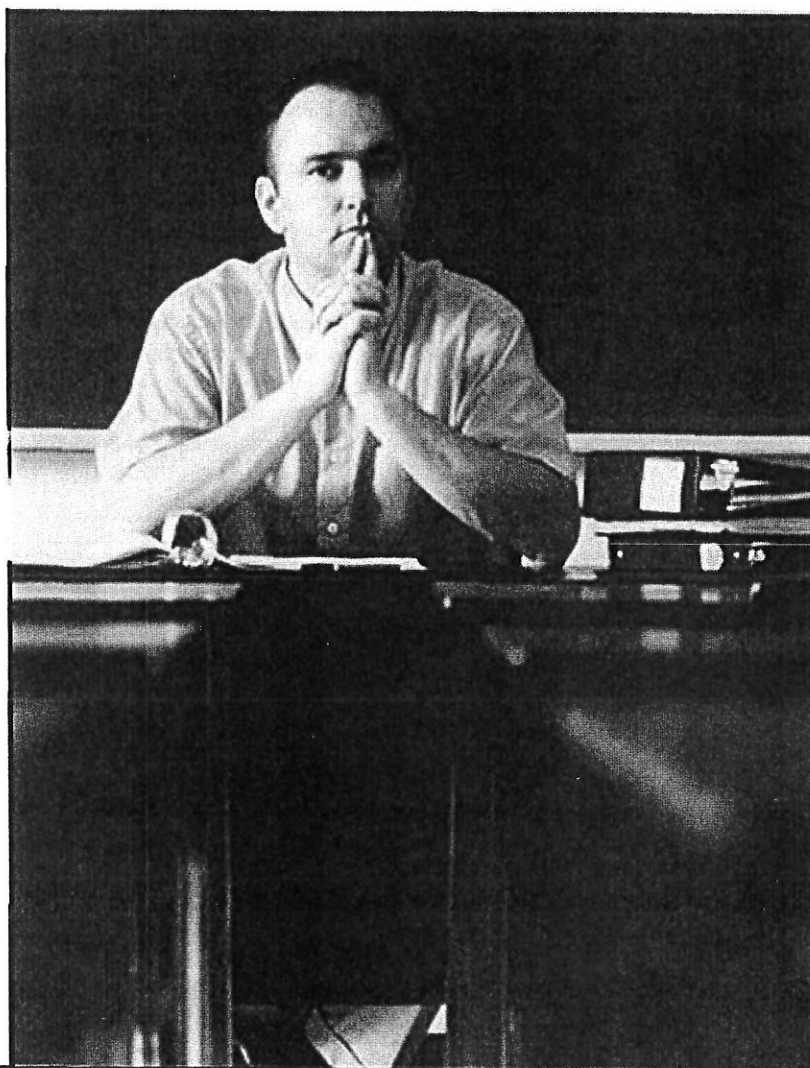
Developing Relevant and Genuine Annual Goals

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Mr. Krump is a high school special education teacher with high expectations for his students. He encourages his students to dream big and then helps them create a plan to achieve their goals. In response to his question "What do you want to do when you graduate from high school?," Austin—an energetic sophomore with two lip piercings and an oversized hooded sweatshirt—shouts, "I'm going to be a police officer." Austin has a GPA of 2.5, writes at the sixth-grade level, and frequently receives in-school suspension for insubordination. "I want to have my own apartment without roommates," chimes in Marisala, a personable sophomore with multiple disabilities who excels at interpersonal relationships, receives instruction in an alternative curriculum, and requires assistance with daily living skills.

Mr. Krump thinks about this conversation as he prepares for his students' individualized education program (IEP) meetings. "Austin wants to be a police officer. Marisala wants to live on her own. How do I know if they can reach their goals? What knowledge and skills will they need? How are we going to develop annual goals that clearly support these postsecondary goals—and how do I align them with the new state standards?"



Like Mr. Krump, many educators feel overwhelmed writing transition plans, particularly when students' dreams do not align with their current abilities; IEP teams are also challenged to align students' individualized plans with changing curricular expectations. Special education professionals are required by law to develop relevant and legally defensible IEPs for students with disabilities, while teaching to an array of required standards. As students move into their teen years and closer to adult life, schools must address both their academic and their transition needs. This charge is intensified as educators strive to develop plans that will truly prepare students for postsecondary education, employment, and independent living and still meet standard or modified curricular expectations.

"Triangulating" annual goals links them with transition and academic assessments, embeds industry and content standards related to postsecondary goals, and responds to any skill and knowledge gaps (see Figure 1). This process, which includes input from the student and key players in a student's life, ensures that annual goals are genuine and relevant to postsecondary goals, legally defensible, and meet state content standards (for many states, the Common Core State Standards, CCSS; National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010).

Developing Relevant and Genuine Transition-Focused IEPs

Successful transition of students with disabilities to postsecondary life is dependent upon them having a strong foundation of skills, knowledge, behaviors, and strategies. The Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 2006) mandates transition planning to prepare students for the demands of adulthood, and requires transition planning to be a results-oriented process. For students with disabilities, results matter—and are measured by the improvement of both academic and functional skills that facilitate transition from school to postschool activities (Li, Bassett, & Hutchinson, 2008). In developing a transition plan, the IEP team must consider the student's needs in the areas of postsecondary education, employment, and independent living, simultaneously or sequentially (34 C.F.R. § 300.320[b]).

IDEA defines *transition services* as a "coordinated set of activities" that promote "movement from school to post-school activities" (34 C.F.R. § 300.43[a][1]). Schools, as part of transition services and activities, must develop measurable postsecondary goals that (a) are based on the results of age-appropriate transition assessments, (b) incorporate annual goals that are related to the student's needs, and (c) ensure access to the general education curriculum and standards. At least one annual goal is needed to

support each of the student's postsecondary goals, and the IEP team must specify how student progress will be measured and reported (Katsiyannis, Zhang, & Moore Mackjewicz, 2012). This federal mandate for IEP transition content actually helps simplify IEP development, by aligning the various components (present level of academic achievement and functional performance, annual goals, course of study, special education and related services, duration of services, and accommodations) with the student's postsecondary goals (Finn & Kohler, 2009). In addition, to align the annual goal to the general education curriculum (for many states the CCSS), most states require a "standards-based" IEP.

IDEA allows states to use "performance indicators" to monitor their provision of special education services. Of the 20 performance indicators, only one, Indicator 13, is federally monitored; it requires states to ensure that transition IEPs include "appropriate measurable postsecondary goals that are annually updated and . . . annual IEP goals related to the student's transition services needs" (20 U.S.C. §1416[a][3][B]; see Table 1). This mandate, along with the shift to new standards, highlights the need to triangulate students' future postsecondary goals with state standards as well as with the skills and knowledge requirements for the student's desired postsecondary career and living situation.

If IEP teams identify realistic postsecondary goals, then every component

Figure 1. Triangulated Annual Goals

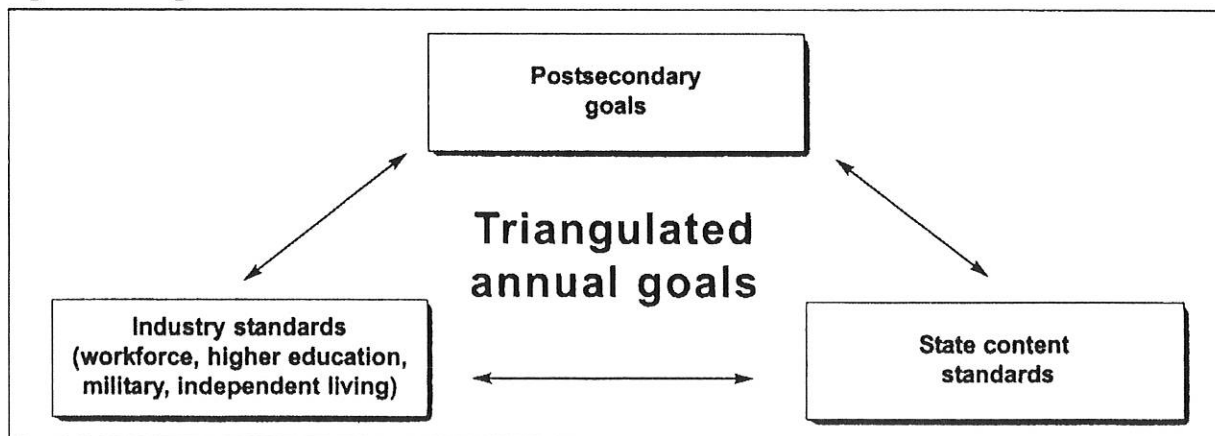


Table 1. Aligning Postsecondary Goals With Annual Goals

IEP Postsecondary and Annual Goals	How Do These Align? How Do the Goals Meet Indicator 13 Requirements?
<p>Postsecondary goal: To work as a truck driver.</p> <p>Annual goal: Will be able to determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings at a 9th grade reading level.</p>	<p>The reading goal provides a basis for the student to pass the commercial driver licensing test; it also fulfills a job-skill need to be able to read and comprehend industry documents.</p> <p>Including information in the IEP that delineates the skill set required by the postsecondary goal (see O*NET Online Summary Report at http://www.onetonline.org/link/summary/53-3032.00) establishes a clear connection between the annual goals and the postsecondary goal.</p>
<p>Postsecondary goal: To attend a cosmetology school.</p> <p>Annual goal: Will be able to select and apply computational techniques to solve a variety of algebraic problems at a 10th-grade level and determine the reasonableness of the solution with 85% accuracy.</p>	<p>The goal in algebra will support the student's development of complex problem-solving skills.</p> <p>Including information in the IEP that delineates the skill set required by the postsecondary goal (see O*NET Online Summary Report at http://www.onetonline.org/link/summary/39-5012.00) establishes a clear connection between the annual goals and the postsecondary goal.</p>

of the plan (including annual academic, life skill, social-emotional, and behavior goals) should assist the student in reaching those goals. Developing annual goals that realistically and clearly link to the student's postsecondary goals requires more than checking a box to meet compliance regulations. The questions for IEP teams in developing transition plans are:

- 7 What skills and knowledge do students need to meet their postsecondary goals?
- 7 What skills and knowledge are required or identified by our state standards?
- 7 What annual goals will help students progress toward achieving their postsecondary goals?

There are "industry standards" for the skills and knowledge individuals need in order to function in the workforce, postsecondary education, and independent living environments. Identifying skill and knowledge gaps between the standards associated with the postsecondary environment and students' current skills can guide the development of *genuine* (realistic to the context) and *relevant* (valuable to students) annual goals. Developing triangulated annual goals that link the student's postsecondary goals to state content and industry standards is a

seven-step process (see Figure 2). Once educators master the steps to triangulate annual goals, they can enhance the process by conducting a task analysis to expand the scope and sequence of identified goals as well as monitor progress.

Step 1: Conduct and Review Transition-Related Assessments

Data from transition assessments contribute significantly to the foundation of postsecondary and annual goals (Morningstar & Liss, 2008). Ideally, the IEP team will use a variety of assessments and inventories to comprehensively evaluate the student's transition-related skills and identify interests and preferences in the areas of education, employment, living, and personal and social environments. This process should assess all relevant data that relates to the attainment of the student's postsecondary goals including current academic performance, behavioral and disciplinary data, attendance records, and classroom and on-the-job observations. Developing a transition-focused plan requires examining all data through the transition lens with a focus on specific postsecondary goals. For example, if a student's postsecondary goal is a career in nursing, transition assessment data that simply reflect an interest in the medical field

is not sufficient; data are needed regarding the student's performance in the skill areas needed for a particular field of nursing.

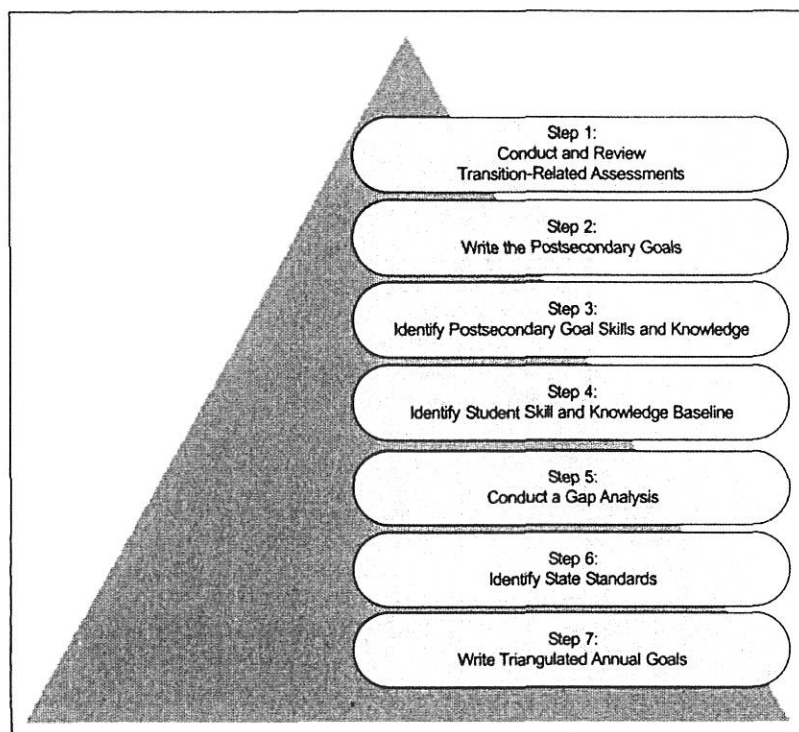
Developing annual goals that realistically and clearly link to the student's postsecondary goals requires more than checking a box to meet compliance regulations.

Using assessments, skilled questioning, school records, and other data can support students in identifying postsecondary goals that match their personal interests and preferences, and which will form the foundation for relevant annual goals. There are many resources to assist educators in developing a comprehensive assessment plan to drive postsecondary goal development (see box, "Transition Assessment Resources").

Step 2: Write the Postsecondary Goals

Postsecondary goals are the coordinating component of a transition-focused IEP, the litmus test for evaluating the relevance of every other component of

Figure 2. Steps in Triangulating Annual Goals



the plan. The annual goals, course of study, services, and other components should all support students in ultimately attaining their postsecondary goals. Postsecondary goals (a) must be based on age-appropriate transition assessments, (b) must indicate what is to be accomplished after high school, (c) should state what the student will do, and (d) must describe an outcome that will occur versus the process of getting there (National Secondary Transition and Technical Assistance

Center, NSTTAC, 2006). Although postsecondary goals must meet all of these technical requirements for compliance purposes, they also must reflect the true interests and desires of the student.

Educators do not have legal responsibility for students' experiences after high school, and there are currently no requirements about the timeframe in which students should attain their postsecondary goals; schools are responsible for the transition plan

developed prior to graduation, not what the student actually does after high school (Etscheidt, 2006; NSTTAC, 2006). However, IEP teams can establish steps for 1 to 2 years out. Writing goals for 1 to 2 years after a student leaves high school increases accuracy of the steps, relevance of the intervening annual goals, and the likelihood of goal attainment.

Step 3: Identify Postsecondary Goal Skills and Knowledge

Because postsecondary goals are written in the areas of education, employment, and independent living, IEP teams should collect industry standards for all three areas (see Table 2). Assembling the resources and information may take some time and seem overwhelming at first, but once identified, maintaining an industry standards database will streamline the process.

Postsecondary Education

Obtaining information about postsecondary education skills and knowledge requires accessing resources specific to the type of postsecondary institution the student plans to attend. IEP teams and school special education staff should gather and update information from vocational, technical and trade schools, community colleges, and 4-year institutions. Some states (e.g., Colorado; see Colorado Department of Higher Education, 2011) have higher education policies requiring individuals registering for courses to take remedial

Transition Assessment Resources

The Transition Coalition "The Big Picture" training modules provide an introduction to transition assessment, along with information to assist users in fine-tuning a current transition assessment process. http://transitioncoalition.org/transition/module_home.php

Web sites affiliated with the National Center on Secondary Education and Transition include resources on how to promote successful postsecondary options. NCSET; see <http://www.ncset.org/websites/default.asp>

The HEATH Resource Center at George Washington University has compiled information about and links to a variety of assessment tools. <http://www.heath.gwu.edu/resources/directory-of-transition-websites/transition-assessment>

The National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center (NSTTAC)'s Age Appropriate Transition Assessment Toolkit provides an overview of the transition assessment process as well as sample instruments and links to additional resources. <http://nstattac.org/content/age-appropriate-transition-assessment-toolkit-3rd-edition>



coursework if they do not meet or exceed cut-off scores on college placement assessments.

Postsecondary Employment

To support students' identification of postsecondary career goals, IEP teams should collect and use assessments that both identify student skills, knowledge, interests, and abilities, and also link these to potential careers and industries. In addition to resources available through school counseling offices and transition resource personnel, there are several Internet web sites that provide knowledge and employment skills assessments, profiles of careers, and planning tools.

Military service can encompass both education and employment goals; students interested in careers in the armed forces need to take the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB; see <http://official-asvab.com/>). As with postsecondary education requirements, there are minimum ASVAB scores required for each branch of the military (currently 31 for the Army and Marines, 35 for the Navy, 36 for the Air Force, and 45 for the Coast Guard).

Independent Living

Although there may not be a standardized source of skills and knowledge related to independent living skills, there are certain functional expectations for living on one's own versus living within a supported environment. IEP transition teams should consider the general minimum requisite functional skills necessary for independent living. For example, orientation and mobility skills for students with visual impairments should be established at or near competencies measured near 100%. Similarly, skills such as cooking, driving, cleaning one's home, and using public transportation all require high thresholds for success as the instances of nonsuccess without support or supervision could be dangerous to the student's health and well-being.

Step 4: Identify Student Skill and Knowledge Baseline

After identifying the industry standards that relate to potential postsecondary

Table 2. Industry Standard Resources

Higher education	School counselors, transition resource personnel, and admissions offices at local community colleges or 4-year institutions can provide a general overview of the skills necessary to be successful in the postsecondary education setting. Education institution disability services offices can provide information on the types of support services available and steps for accessing these.
Workforce	Web sites such as the Occupational Information Network (O*NET; http://www.onetonline.org), a project sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor For students interested in a career in the armed forces, the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery web site (ASVAB; http://official-asvab.com/index.htm) provides information regarding the skills necessary to be in the military (e.g., paragraph comprehension, mechanical comprehension, assembling objects).
Independent living	Contact adult developmental disability service providers or centers for independent living for information related to independent living skill thresholds. The National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities (NICHY) has a "resource page" on independent living and additional resources at http://nichcy.org/schoolage/transitionadult/independent .

goals, the IEP team should review the student's transition, academic, and behavioral data to establish a baseline and identify specific barriers to attainment of postsecondary goals. For example, if a student wants to become a police officer or go into the military but has been convicted of a felony, he may not be eligible to attain this postsecondary goal. Similarly, a student who is a registered sex offender or has been convicted of a felony is unlikely to find employment in schools or working with children.

Step 5: Conduct a Gap Analysis

Industry standards and data from completed transition assessments inform the gap between students' current skills and their postsecondary goals. To define the gap a direct comparison is made between current levels of academic and functional performance and those required by the preferred postsecondary setting. This information identifies target points for instructional goals and establishes the necessary rates of improvement (ROI) required

for the student to attain the postsecondary goal. An ROI can easily be calculated by the amount of progress needed divided by the amount of time it will take to attain the postsecondary goal. Once the gap and ROI are established, the IEP team should determine if the gap is bridgeable in the time the student has left to receive services under IDEA (or until graduation, whichever comes first). Gaps that appear to be too great may require the team to review the postsecondary goal to determine if it is still an achievable "next real step" for the student, and the necessary interventions and supports for assisting the student in progressing towards the goal.

Step 6: Identify State Standards

Many states require that IEP annual goals be linked to state content standards or the CCSS, in order to identify the skills and knowledge necessary for students to make progress in the general curriculum. Determining the appropriate standard to assist students in

Table 3. Writing SMART Individualized Education Program Goals

S	Each goal should identify a specific skill, behavior, strategy or piece of knowledge that is related to the target area.
M	The goal must be measurable , meaning that it is observable and countable.
A	Goals must use words that indicate the specific action the student must take in order to show performance, words that show the direction in which the behavior will progress, related to the area of need, and specify the level and conditions of attainment.
R	Goals should be developed that are realistic and relevant ; they must specifically address the student's area of need, and in the postsecondary planning realm they must be relevant to assisting the student in meeting a postsecondary goal.
T	Goals must indicate a specific time limit in which they will be accomplished.

attaining the postsecondary goal requires transition teams to identify the standards reflecting the current or next grade level for students. The use of off-grade-level or below-grade-level standards will ultimately result in a failure to achieve the desired outcome of closing the achievement gap between current performance, industry standards, and the postsecondary goal. Teams should remain focused on grade-level standards aligned to the general education curriculum. Aligning goals to lesser standards greatly decreases the likelihood of postsecondary readiness and success.

Step 7: Write Triangulated Annual Goals

As with all goals, the triangulated annual goal should consist, at a minimum, of an observable behavior (action), a condition, and criteria (measurement). Triangulating these three components helps the team write a goal that provides a maximized outcome for students with disabilities. Jung (2007) recommended using the SMART acronym: including specific, measurable, actions, realistic and relevant, and time-limited information in the goal (Wright & Wright, 2006; see Table 3).

When determining measurable criteria for transition-related goals, consider

the minimum criteria for success. For example, if a student currently responds to teacher requests 6% of the time, it may be tempting to expect the student to improve to a 50% within 1 year. However, consider the postsecondary minimum threshold for success, such as an employer making a request of an employee. Is responding 50% of the time acceptable for success? Would a minimum threshold be better set at a higher level, say 90%? Although setting such a high criteria may seem challenging for the student to attain, if educators are not aiming for the minimum criteria for success, it may never be accomplished. In addition, lower standards fail to communicate authentic adult expectations to students and their families.

Triangulated, transition-focused annual goals must show a specific alignment between the skills and knowledge needed to make progress in the general education curriculum, the skills and knowledge required by the industry, and the postsecondary goal. They also must be rooted in the needs of the student and the impact of the disability. All of these pieces come together to form a cohesive and concrete annual goal that helps promote movement towards postsecondary goal attainment.

The postsecondary goal also should be self-evident within the annual goal. One way to ensure this outcome is to read the annual goal and ask if each element is clearly identifiable. When read in isolation from the rest of the IEP, the reader of an annual goal should be able to (a) state the postsecondary goal, (b) identify the content or CCSS standard, and (c) identify the industry standard. In addition, all of these elements should be documented within the annual goal section of the IEP.

If the purpose of an annual goal is to help close the gap between current performance and desired performance, then the established ROI in the annual goal must be sufficiently written to do just that. For example, if a beginning junior needs to read at 170 words per minute by the end of 12th grade to succeed in college and her current baseline is 80 words per minute, she would need an ROI of 2.5 words per week (determined by her gap of 90 words per minute divided by 36 weeks instruction). If the annual goal is written to reflect a growth of 2 words per week, the gap is not likely to close within the identified timeframe—and her pursuit of the postsecondary goal may be compromised. In addition, the annual goal as written diminishes the legitimacy of the IEP as a transition plan that supports the student in attaining her postsecondary goals.

Triangulating IEP Goals: Two Examples

Our opening scenario introduced two of Mr. Krump's students, Austin and Marisala. Austin is a 16-year-old student in 10th grade and has his driver's license. He was identified for special education services under the category of specific learning disability in the area of written language. He has expressed an interest in becoming a police officer; an interest inventory he took highlighted interest in the areas of regulation and protection, and communication and records.

Marisala is a 17-year-old student, also in 10th grade. She was identified for special education services under the category of multiple disabilities

with intellectual and speech language impairments. She is passing all of her classes with significant accommodations and modifications to the curriculum including modified responses and one-on-one support. Marisala enjoys her Theater Arts and Spanish classes, and socializing with peers; she is interested in working in the child-care field after high school.

Mr. Krump understands that each of these students' transition IEPs should be tailored to identify their specific needs as these relate to their postsecondary goals. He and the other members of the students' IEP teams followed the seven-step process we have outlined to develop triangulated IEP goals.

Step 1: Conduct and Review Transition-Related Assessments

Table 4 summarizes the results of various transition-related assessments that helped the IEP team understand Austin and Marisala's current level of performance in the areas of education, employment, living, and personal and social environments as these related to the students' interests and preferences. The types of assessment data collected by the IEP teams necessarily differed; the information they needed to collect had to be individualized for each of the students.

Step 2: Write the Postsecondary Goals

Austin. The IEP team (which included Austin) reviewed his transition assessments to determine the reasonable next steps for 1 to 2 years following high school. Although a career as a police officer is his stated employment goal, the team acknowledged that it may take him longer than 2 years to accomplish this. The next real steps for Austin, they decided, would be for him to gain education, training, and work experience related to a career in law enforcement. Therefore, his IEP reflected the following postsecondary goals:

- ☛ Education: After graduation, Austin will enroll in and attend Crabtree Community College to obtain an associate's degree in Criminal

Justice as preparation for applying to the police academy.

- ☛ Employment: After graduation, Austin will work part time with local law enforcement (sheriff's office, police department, or building security) while attending Crabtree Community College.

Because Austin's Transition Planning Inventory (TPI; Clark & Patton, 2006) indicated that his independent living skills were typical of his age group, the IEP team did not need to write an independent living postsecondary goal.

Marisala. Marisala, Mr. Krump, and the other members of her IEP team reviewed her transition assessments to determine the next reasonable steps for her. Although acknowledging that she is interested in working in a preschool, they noted that her Adaptive Behavior Assessment System-Second Edition (ABAS-II; Harrison & Oakland, 2003) indicated need for support in adaptive functioning, home living, and community use. They decided that the next real steps for Marisala would be to gain job training related to child care and instruction in home living skills. Her postsecondary goals reflected this decision:

- ☉ Education: After completing her high school career, Marisala will participate in on-the-job training with the assistance of the job coach in the area of child care.
- ☉ Employment: After completing her high school career, Marisala will obtain part-time employment in the area of child care.
- ☉ Independent living: After completing her high school career, Marisala will have the skills to live in an assisted living situation by cooking for herself, grocery shopping, and participating in household cleaning.

Step 3: Identify Postsecondary Goal Skills and Knowledge

Austin. Prior to the IEP team meeting, Mr. Krump and Austin reviewed his assessment data and drafted some postsecondary goals. They reviewed

the O*NET skill and ability standards for the occupation of police officer (see <http://www.onetonline.org/link/summary/33-3051.01>) and contacted the community college admissions office and disability support services office for information on academic skills that support success in the community college setting. They also discussed and focused on Austin's current need for special education services in the area of writing skills.

To be able to be admitted to and succeed in the community college setting, they determined that Austin would need a minimum writing proficiency reflecting at least 10th-grade level writing vocabulary, structure, and readability. He would also need to be able to take accurate electronic or handwritten notes during instruction, and to compose a well formulated and substantiated five-paragraph essay. These skills would also prove essential to achieving his career goal; the industry standards for police officers include strong English language skills (spelling of words, rules of composition, and grammar) and ability to document and record information (O*NET Online, n.d.).

Marisala. Prior to her IEP team meeting, Mr. Krump and Marisala reviewed the transition assessment data and identified some preliminary postsecondary goals. Based on her interest in working in child care and in living in a supported environment, they reviewed both the postsecondary industry standards for child-care occupations and the adaptive behavior skills necessary for independent living. Throughout this process, Mr. Krump and Marisala considered her need to receive special education services in following multistep directions and developing daily living skills.

The O*NET standards for child-care workers (see <http://www.onetonline.org/link/summary/39-9011.00>) included oral comprehension skills (i.e., the ability to listen to and understand information and ideas presented orally), so this became a goal she would need to meet prior to leaving high school. Based on a review of her ABAS-II (Harrison & Oakland, 2003)

Table 4. Transition-Related Assessment Data

Austin		Marisala	
Assessment	Information for IEP team	Assessment	Information for IEP team
TPI	Interpersonal Relationships: Austin has difficulty responding to directives given by authority figures.	TPI	Strengths in Leisure Activities, Self-Determination, and Interpersonal Relationships; identified needs in Employment, Further Education and Training, Daily Living, Community Participation, and Health and Communication
Mock job interview	Austin scored below average on appearance (clothing) and above average on presentation (answering questions thoughtfully). The interviewer stated he would possibly hire Austin because he was motivated and had goals.	TOLD	Significant impairments in the areas of spoken language (standard score 50), grammar (standard score 50) and organizing (standard score 54); relative strengths in listening and vocabulary
BESI	Austin's scores indicate he has more barriers than most adults in the areas of Personal and Financial, Career Decision-Making and Planning, Emotional and Physical, Job Seeking Knowledge, and Training and Education.	ABAS-II	Overall adaptive functioning, conceptual, social, social and practical skills within the Extremely Low range at school and Borderline range at home. Areas of relative strength included health and safety skills. At home Marisala also showed strength in social ability. Areas of concern include functional academics, communication, self-care, home living, and community use.
ACT Plan	Overall composite of 18 with subscores of Reading 19, English 12, Math 19, and Science 20	Reading (teacher report)	Marisala reads at 1st-grade level with comprehension falling in the late kindergarten range; she can write all letters in the alphabet.
State assessment (Grade 9)	Proficiency in Reading and Math; unsatisfactory score in Writing	Following directions (teacher report)	Marisala can follow two-step oral directions with 90% accuracy.
WJ III	Average score in Reading and Math; Limited to Average score in Written Language, Written Expression, Spelling, Writing Fluency, and writing samples	Math skills (teacher report)	Marisala can count pennies with 90% accuracy, nickels with 80% accuracy, dimes with 40% accuracy, and quarters with 60% accuracy with assistance.
Flesch-Kincaid readability analysis (Microsoft Word tool)	Scored 6.0 grade level (range, 5.3–6.7)	Daily living skills (informal observation and parent information)	Marisala is able to take care of her personal hygiene at school. She requires assistance when going out in the community; she is unsure when navigating from one place to another and is hesitant to walk across roads without the assistance of an adult. She is not able to locate items in a store, use a store directory, or ask for help. She can cook on her own with picture directions.

Note. IEP = individualized education program. TPI = Transition Planning Inventory (Clark & Patton, 2006); BESI = Barriers to Employment Success Inventory (Liptak, 2011); WJ III = Woodcock-Johnson III Tests of Achievement (Woodcock, McGrew, & Mather, 2001); TOLD = Test of Language Development Intermediate-Fourth Edition (Hammill & Newcomer, 2008); ABAS-II = Adaptive Behavior Assessment System-Second Edition (Harrison & Oakland, 2003); ACT Plan (ACT, n.d.).

scores and a conversation with an adult developmental disability service provider, they also realized that she needed the ability to find items in a store and shop for home goods and groceries.

Step 4: Identify Student Skill and Knowledge Baseline

Austin. Mr. Krump reviewed Austin's present levels of academic and functional performance to identify Austin's current writing skills. Austin's writing scores and other measures of performance related to writing indicate impairments related to written expression and readability levels. He currently performs around the 13th percentile with readability levels measured around the sixth-grade level.

Marisala. Mr. Krump reviewed Marisala's present levels of performance to identify her daily living skills and her ability to follow directions. Currently, Marisala is able to follow two-step oral directions with 90% accuracy. She does not currently have the skills required to shop independently for groceries.

Step 5: Conduct a Gap Analysis

Austin. A sophomore in high school, Austin currently writes at the sixth-grade level; to be successful in community college, he needs to be able to function at the 10th-grade level. Therefore, Austin will need to close a written expression gap of two grade levels by the time he finishes high school. The IEP team will need to decide if this gap is bridgeable for Austin or if an adjustment should be made to his postsecondary goal so it reflects the true next real step for Austin to attain his goal of becoming a police officer.

Marisala. Marisala needs to be proficient at following multistep oral and written directions to work in the field of child care; she has not yet mastered following two-step oral directions. In order to live semi-independently she will also need to be able to locate items in a grocery store without support, and to be able to ask others for

assistance. Again, her IEP team will need to decide if these gaps are bridgeable for Marisala or if adjustments should be made to the postsecondary goals to more accurately reflect her attainable skills.

Step 6: Identify State Standards

The state in which Austin and Marisala live uses the CCSS as their state standards. Mr. Krump's next step was to identify the CCSS that relate to Austin's and Marisala's needs and postsecondary goals.

For both Austin and Marisala, Mr. Krump identified CCSS literacy standards (see <http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/W/11-12>; National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010) that aligned with their needs and goals. For Austin, these focused on

- Developing topics and identifying information, details, and other information appropriate to a particular audience (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.2b);
- Being able to link major sections of the text and clarify relationships between claims, reasons, and evidence (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.1c);
- Being able to produce "clear and coherent writing" (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.4); and
- Planning, revising, editing, and rewriting skills (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.5).

Marisala's identified needs aligned with CCSS that involved:

- Being able to integrate multiple sources of information from different formats and media (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.2);
- Evaluating advantages and disadvantages of different media (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.8.7); and
- Synthesizing information from a range of sources (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RST.11-12.9).

Although Mr. Krump was able to link CCSS to Marisala's goals, Marisala

receives instruction in an alternative curriculum for the majority of the school day. Some states have expanded on the CCSS by identifying extended evidence outcomes and access skills to identify outcomes for students working in an alternative curriculum.

Step 7: Write Triangulated Annual Goals

Austin. Using information that assessed Austin's current level of skills and knowledge, the education and industry standards related to his postsecondary goal, and the CCSS, Mr. Krump and Austin's IEP team were able to develop triangulated annual goals. These goals addressed both his need to improve his level of writing skills and his need to be able to record and distill information, and included:

- ▲ Austin will compose all written work at a minimum 10th-grade writing level to include compound, complex, and compound-complex sentence structures as measured by Flesch-Kincaid readability analysis on a minimum of five formal writing assignments.
- ▲ Austin will record (in written format) information as heard from three different sources with 90% accuracy as measured three times per quarter.

Marisala. Mr. Krump and Marisala's IEP team developed triangulated annual goals that addressed Marisala's current level of skills and knowledge, the child-care industry standards, and adaptive behavior expectations. These goals included:

- ▲ Marisala will listen to oral directions of four steps and follow them with 100% accuracy for 10 tasks per week for 15 consecutive weeks.
- ▲ When given a grocery list with six items Marisala will locate and purchase these items with 100% accuracy during four consecutive shopping trips.

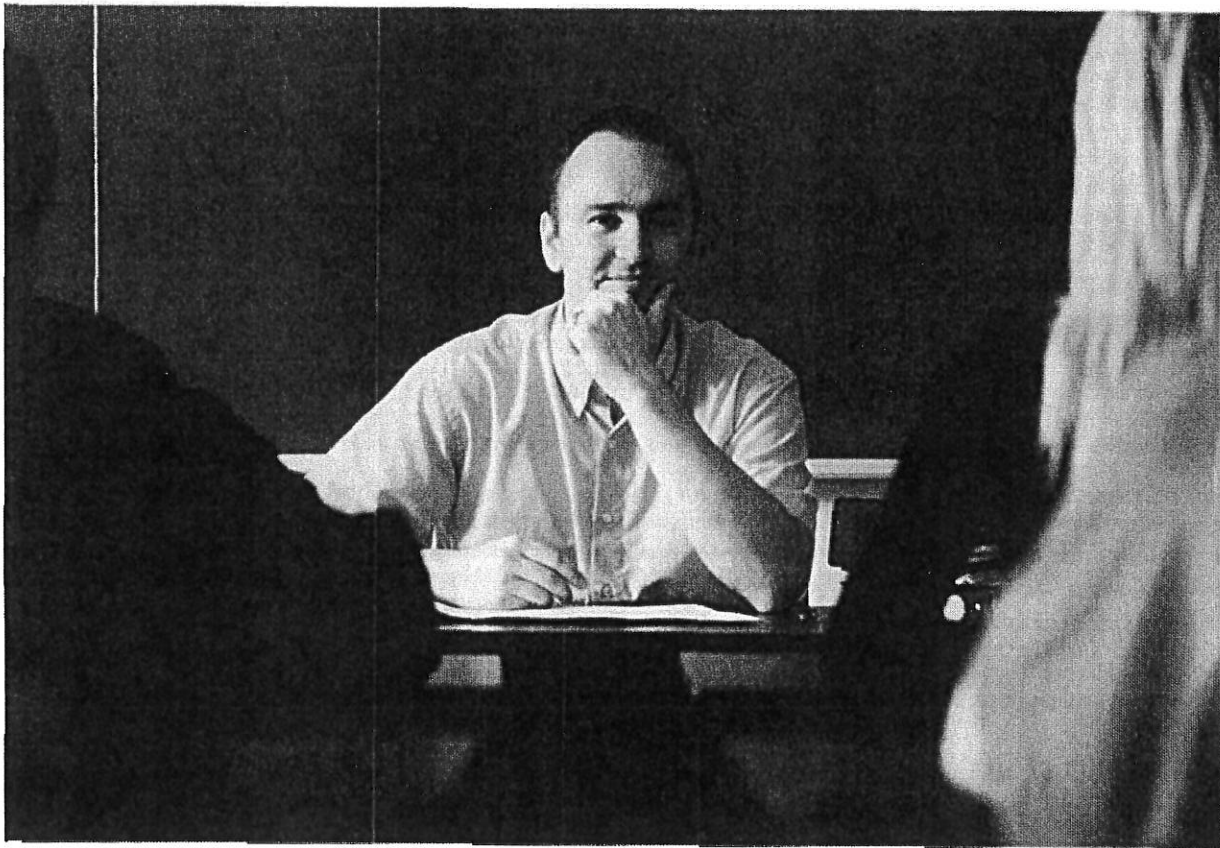
Bringing It All Together

Triangulating annual goals to the postsecondary goal creates a student-focused, compliant, legally defensible

Figure 3. Examples of Triangulated Annual Goals

Kayla's IEP		Lemont's IEP	
Postsecondary goal	To work in the food service industry.	Postsecondary goal	To join the U.S. Marine Corps and become a machinist.
Annual goal	Speech-language goal: Kayla will improve her receptive and expressive speech-language skills through answering various "wh" questions in the provided order with 100% accuracy on 6 consecutive trials.	Annual goal	Behavior goal: Lemont will respond to direction/redirection by using the following learned skills: have eye contact, use a calm tone of voice, and acknowledge the person(s) speaking to him 95% of the time.
State standard met by the goal	CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.3 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.4	State standard met by the goal	CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.9-10.3 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.9-10.4 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.9-10.6
Industry standard met by the goal	O*NET Skills and Abilities Summary: 35-3021.00 (Food Preparation and Serving Workers) See speaking, active listening, and oral expression standards	Industry standard met by the goal	O*NET Skills and Abilities Summary: 51-4041.00 (Machinists) See monitoring and active listening standards. U.S. Armed Forces Standards: A local recruiter identified that individuals in the Marine Corps needed to be able to respectfully receive and respond to directives and corrective feedback from authority figures.
Annette's IEP		Jeremy's IEP	
Postsecondary goal	To ride the city bus to work and home independently.	Postsecondary goal	To attend community college and earn an associate's degree in criminal investigation.
Annual goal	Orientation and mobility goal: Annette will learn to identify her bus stop (in the community and on the bus map), ask the driver for confirmation of destination prior to boarding the bus, and confirm the destination with the driver prior to departing the bus. Annette will demonstrate this skill 100% of the time over 10 consecutive independent trials in a 1-month period.	Annual goal	Jeremy will advocate for himself when he doesn't understand content or instructions: asking questions for clarification, and accessing learning center tutors and other support systems available to him in five out of five situations.
State standard met by the goal	CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RST.11-12.9	State standard met by the goal	CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.9-10.1
Industry standard met by the goal	O*NET Skills and Abilities (multiple career paths) See critical thinking, deductive reasoning, and inductive reasoning skills Adaptive behavior skill: The ABAS-II identifies the need for individuals to be able to travel within the community either by walking, using public transportation, or using a bicycle or a car.	Industry standard met by the goal	O*NET Skills and Abilities Summary: 33-3021.03 (Criminal Investigators and Special Agents) See problem sensitivity, inductive reasoning, and oral comprehension standards.

Note. IEP = individualized education program; CCSS = Common Core State Standards; ABAS-II = Adaptive Behavior Assessment System-Second Edition (Harrison & Oakland, 2003).
Information on CCSS is available at <http://www.corestandards.org/>; information on industry standards accessed from O*NET web site occupation searches, <http://www.onetonline.org/>.



and relevant IEP (see Figure 3). This does not mean, however, that the IEP, postsecondary goal, and annual goals are static. Educators must continue to

goal, then why is it even in the IEP? At the secondary level, every goal should be related to transition. If annual goals do not clearly support postsecondary

Some states have expanded on the CCSS by identifying extended evidence outcomes and access skills to identify outcomes for students working in an alternative curriculum.

develop plans specific to the needs of the student and maintain flexibility when revising plans; students' postsecondary goals often change. Triangulating annual goals supports identifying the next real steps necessary for students to attain their postsecondary goals.

Sometimes, IEP teams approach special education and transition goals as two distinctly different functions, writing annual goals focused on academic skills and separate goals to address transition skills. But why separate these goals? If an annual goal doesn't directly or genuinely support movement toward the postsecondary

success, their value to the IEP must be questioned. Creating triangulated transition and academic focused annual goals ensures that all goals are applicable to postsecondary plans.

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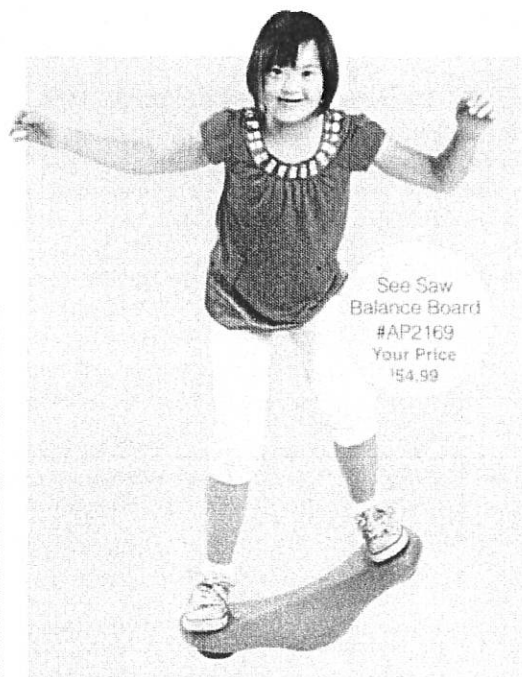
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