

Examples-Nonexamples: Students with Severe Disabilities

Case Study:

Kevin is an 18 year old young man with significant intellectual disabilities who is attending his neighborhood high school. Kevin is following his state's Extended Content Standards which are aligned with the general curriculum's Standard Course of Study. He receives daily instruction in Literacy (reading, writing, and communication), Math, and Science. Kevin also is involved in vocational and daily living skill training. His coursework is delivered in individual and small group settings in the special education classroom except for Digital Communications (a general education Career Technical Course) which he has taken (using a modified curriculum) with the assistance of a one-on-one instructional assistant. Kevin also participates in a school-based enterprise through the Occupational Course of Study (a state endorsed curriculum for students with special needs leading to a high school diploma) and an on-campus work placement in the school library.

Kevin has spastic quadriplegic cerebral palsy and uses a manual wheelchair for mobility which has been adapted with trunk support and subbasis bar. He is able to use his right hand to manipulate larger items and can use his left hand for stabilization. Kevin receives physical therapy one time a week for 30 minutes and has ongoing therapy services in the classroom including positioning on adaptive equipment. He wears AFOs for stability when using a stander and a left hand-elbow mobilizer. Kevin's physical therapist would like for him to have a motorized wheelchair but funds have not been available. Kevin also receives occupational therapy on a consultative basis. His teacher and the occupational therapist have been working on developing vocationally related jigs.

Kevin has little intelligible speech other than single words and yes/no responses but within the classroom has used an iTalk2 to communicate simple needs and choices and is learning to use a GoTalk20+. He does not use an augmentative communication device at home but does have a picture board which transitions with him between school, the community, and home. Kevin receives speech therapy 2 times a week for 30 minutes each session.

Kevin has generalized tonic-clonic seizures which are 85% controlled with two different anti-convulsant medications (Tegretol and Mysoline). He is fed through a gastrostomy tube although he is able to take some pureed foods by mouth in limited amounts. Kevin can feed himself by mouth using a CP Feeder but has to be closely monitored and reminded to eat slowly to avoid asphyxiation. Usually Kevin is only allowed to feed himself during special occasions such as a class party or special meal. The gastrostomy tube placement was primarily due to asphyxiation of food during meal times that resulted in recurrent upper respiratory infections. These URIs have greatly decreased since his surgery. A functional vision assessment has indicated that Kevin's visual acuity with corrective lenses at near distances is 20/80 and at far distances is 20/100. His most effective visual field is slightly below eye level and he is able to localize to visual stimulus and fixate his gaze on objects and people as well as shift his gaze. Kevin does not like wearing his glasses but is cooperative in this area most of the time. Kevin has good hearing.

Kevin and his family plan for him to stay in the public schools until he ages out at age 21 which will provide him with three more years of services. He lives at home with mother, step-father, 11 year old sister, and a great aunt that helps with his care. Kevin also has one older brother who is in college. After receiving state level mental health funding for personal care and 10 hours of one-on-one community-based services for the last 4 years, Kevin was recently approved for Medicaid waiver funded services. This funding source will provide Kevin with an array of services based on

his individual needs including: augmentative communication devices, case management, one-on-one community and home support, personal care services, respite, specialized equipment and services and medical transportation. Funds will also be available for supported employment and day support after high school graduation.

Kevin has had a comprehensive transition component in place since his 14th birthday. The development of a complete transition component was determined appropriate for Kevin at an earlier age due to his complex needs and the length of time needed to obtain appropriate adult services. His school level transition planning team has consisted of: Kevin and his parents, a special education teacher, a CTE Special Populations Coordinator, Kevin's case manager, a regular education teacher, Kevin's one-on-one worker, and a LEA representative (e.g., school administrator or diagnostician). Kevin's has not been referred for any services other than those he is receiving from Mental Health through the Developmental Disabilities division.

In preparation for transition planning, Kevin has been administered speech, physical therapy, and occupational therapy assessments focusing on the skills and equipment needed for functioning in the home and community. Kevin's parents have completed Parent Transition Surveys and Kevin provided input by responding to picture choices in post-school domains.

Kevin's teacher also administered the Supports Intensity Scale to his parents to determine the frequency, amount, and type of support needs in the home living, community living, learning, employment, health and safety, and social activities Kevin will need after graduation from high school. The assessment indicated that Kevin will need regular and extensive support in all areas of adult life to achieve his post-school goals. In addition he will need protection and advocacy services for managing money, legal issues, self-advocacy, and protection from exploitation.

It is anticipated that in the area of future employment Kevin will need ongoing supported employment to work in a competitive employment placement. Using observational data, situational assessment, and modified picture interest inventories Kevin enjoys interacting with other people, music, horticulture, computers, and clerical type activities in which he has the opportunity to complete a project. Kevin responds well to verbal praise and is able to stay focused on a task for 20+ minutes with occasional verbal redirection. Kevin has developed the skills to operate a variety of switch activated devices (e.g. button maker, blender, etc.), use a paper shredder, and collate papers with a jig. Kevin has worked successfully on an assembly line in the school-based enterprise and has held an on-campus job in the school library checking books in and out using a scanning system and shelving books with the assistance of a teacher assistant. He tried a job in the school cafeteria bagging cookies for sale but due to hygiene issues (e.g. drooling) it was determined that this was not a good placement for Kevin.

Kevin loves school and is always eager to learn new skills. He demonstrates a high level of motivation to please his teachers and his parents report that even when he is sick he begs to go to school. Everyone who knows Kevin feels that it would be beneficial for him to be involved in post-secondary education. His recently approved Medicaid waiver services will provide one-on-one ongoing daily and adult living skill training but participation in continuing or compensatory education classes at the local community college might be a good option for Kevin. This type of setting would allow Kevin to develop skills in some of his areas of interest as well as provide a social framework.

Kevin's residential plans for after graduation are uncertain. Kevin is very happy at home and indicated that he loves his family. Two of his classmates have moved into group homes and

through classroom discussion and lessons on post-graduate residential options, Kevin appears to have some understanding of becoming an adult and living more independently, possibly away from his family. Kevin's mother has very mixed feelings about Kevin's future living arrangements. As Kevin's primary caregiver since birth she feels she would be lost without him but realizes that as time goes on it might be necessary to seek an out-of-home placement. Kevin's father would very much like to see Kevin move into a group home or other supervised post-school living arrangement as soon after high school as possible. Kevin's father would like to spend more time with his younger daughter and wife and believes that his elderly aunt is not going to be able to assist them much longer with Kevin's personal care. Both Kevin's mother and father are very happy about his recent approval for Medicaid waiver services and have stated that this additional support might result in Kevin remaining in their home for several more years.

While at home, Kevin's mother and great-aunt provide total physical care. Although Kevin could assist with some personal hygiene tasks this is not an expectation for him while in the home. Other than insignificant type choices, all decisions are made for Kevin by his parents. He goes into the community on occasion with his one-on-one worker when she is allowed to use the family wheelchair lift van. Kevin is able to sit in a car using a seatbelt and then be transferred into a Pogo Buggy for community outings but his parents prefer him not to be transported in that manner. This limits Kevin's community-based learning activities. A great deal of Kevin's one-on-one worker's time is spent in the home with him. While at home Kevin enjoys watching DVDs, looking at books, listening to his I-Pod, watching his younger sister play video games, family meals, and making music on his electronic keyboard.

Kevin's has no understanding of money and does not provide input into his health/medical care. He has been covered under his father's work insurance policy but his recent approval for a Medicaid waiver program will assist with medical care, equipment, and supplies. Kevin's parents plan to work with his Mental Health case manager to obtain guardianship since Kevin has now turned 18 years of age. Kevin has never received SSI benefits.

Postsecondary Goals:

Education/training:

Example:

- Immediately after graduation, Kevin will participate in habilitative and functional skill training through CAP services and will attend courses designed to provide specialized academic, functional, and occupational preparation for individuals with disabilities 2 times per week at the community college.
 - This goal meets I-13 standards for Item #1 for the following reasons:
 - a) Participation in training is the focus of the goal.
 - b) Participating is an observable behavior.

Nonexample:

- After leaving high school, Kevin plans to attend courses the local community college.
 - This goal does not meet I-13 standards for Item #1 for the following reason:
 - a) "Plans" does not indicate an explicit behavior by the student that will occur after high school that can be observed as occurring or not occurring.
 - b) This goal does not state the purpose of attending a community college. Stated in observable terms, this may be a reasonable goal for Kevin if specialized academic, functional, and occupational curricula (e.g., compensatory education) are available at the community college.

Employment:

Example:

- Within three months of graduation, Kevin will obtain a supported employment position that allows him to work to his maximum stamina and incorporates the use of assistive technology.
 - This goal meets I-13 standards for Item #1 for the following reasons:
 - a) It is stated that the goal will occur after graduation from high school.
 - b) The goal is stated measurably: “obtain” and “work” can be observed as occurring or not, within three months of graduation.

Nonexample:

- Upon completion of high school, Kevin will express his preferences related to his postsecondary employment options, given picture symbols and the iTalk2, an augmentative communication device.
 - This goal does not meet I-13 standards for Item #1 for the following reasons:
 - a) Expressing preference about employment preferences is an activity. Expressing preference about employment is not an outcome.
 - b) This goal is an activity that should be engaged in with Kevin prior to and throughout secondary transition. It does not reflect a postsecondary goal for his employment.

Independent Living:

Examples:

- After graduation, Kevin will continue to live with his parents and will participate in his daily care routines to the maximum extent possible.
- Immediately following graduation, Kevin will participate in 1- 2 age-appropriate community and individual community-based activities per week related to horticulture, socialization with young adults, animals, and music.
- After graduation Kevin will effectively utilize an augmentative communication device at home and in the community that allows familiar and non-familiar individuals to communicate with his regarding needs, wants, and desires.
 - The above goals meet I-13 standards for Item #1 for the following reasons:
 - a) Each goal is focused on Kevin’s independent living (residential, self-care, community participation, communication skills).
 - b) Each goal is stated in a manner that can be observed (i.e., “will live”, “participate”, “effectively utilize”).
 - c) There are criteria for performing the postsecondary goals that make them explicit and observable.
 - d) The goals are stated as outcomes for Kevin after high school, not activities or processes toward outcomes.

Nonexample:

- Kevin enjoys watching DVD’s, looking at books, listening to his iPod, watching his younger sister play video games, sitting with family for meals, and making music on his electronic keyboard.
 - This goal does not meet I-13 standards for Item #1 on for the following reasons:
 - a) While this information includes a consideration for Kevin’s preferences and interests, he has already developed this skill.
 - b) No timeframe or date is stated for this goal. It is stated as an activity that is currently happening rather than a goal for the future.
 - c) “Enjoys” is neither observable nor measurable.

- d) This is a statement of Kevin's preferences, not what he will do after exiting secondary education.

Annual Goals:

Example:

- Given the GoTalk20+ augmentative communication device and weekly community practice, Kevin will independently and accurately use the device to communicate single words to communicate a desire for an item in community settings, including restaurants and ticket counters.
 - This example meets I-13 standards for Item #2 for the following reasons:
 - a) Kevin is not able to use a GoTalk20+ effectively and learning to do so is a skill that will prepare him to **participate in a habilitative and vocational training program**, recreational opportunities, and educational opportunities after high school.
 - b) Learning to use a GoTalk20+ effectively will prepare Kevin to incorporate assistive technology use in **future employment**
 - c) Similarly, communicating choices will prepare Kevin for the goal of **participating in leisure activities** that interest him.
 - d) Finally, learning to use the GoTalk20+ is a step toward preparing Kevin to **communicate more effectively** with familiar and non-familiar individuals in various settings.

Nonexample:

- Kevin will participate in occupational therapy two times each week for 30 minutes each session for the duration of the IEP.
 - This goal statement does not meet I-13 standards for Item #2 for the following reason:
 - a) Participation in occupational therapy does not indicate what knowledge or skill Kevin is expected to gain during the upcoming year.
 - b) While it is likely that participation in speech therapy logically supports his postsecondary **education/training** goal, because there is no skill noted, it is unclear that there is a link.

Example:

- Kevin will participate in yearlong on-campus vocational preparation, including the following experiences, each for a period of three months, with a frequency of a minimum of two sessions each week, and session duration of one hour per session in the following positions
 - a) Clerical job experience in school office
 - b) School Based Laundry Enterprise
 - c) Janitorial work experience throughout school building
 - This annual goal meets standards for I-13 for Item #2 for the following reasons:
 - a) Kevin will gain skills as well needed of employment in these on-campus job experiences.
 - b) Data from completion of the annual goal may provide Kevin's IEP team with information regarding future employment strengths and interests for him.
 - c) The goal statement includes specific criteria to attain this goal, including minimum level related to (a) duration of the work experience, (b) frequency of participation, and (c) as well as the duration of each work session.

Nonexample:

- Given a GoTalk20+, Kevin will use the device to speak in sentences in the community to speak to familiar listeners including his teachers and family members as well as unfamiliar listeners by October, 2008.
 - This annual goal does not meet standards for I-13 for item #2 for the following reason:
 - a) Kevin is just learning to use of the GoTalk20+ augmentative communication device in the classroom setting, so this behavior cannot logically be demonstrated during the coming year given Kevin's current level of performance.

Example:

- Given picture symbols with Velcro adhesive and a wall mountable daily planner, Kevin will utilize a schedule to plan self-care (e.g., showering and eating), employment, educational, and recreational activities, five days each week for the duration of the IEP with a maximum of one physical prompt per activity to place the picture symbol on the schedule.
 - This annual goal statement meets I-13 standards for Item #2 for the following reasons:
 - a) Developing the skills to plan necessary to meet this goal will prepare Kevin for his postsecondary goal of maximum participation in his daily routine.
 - b) The goal statement provides conditions, criteria, and a timeframe, so that it is measurable.

Nonexample:

- Kevin will receive occupational therapy services 3x/ week.
 - This goal statement does not meet I-13 standards for Item #2 for the following reasons:
 - a) The goal statement does not indicate any skills that Kevin will be gaining.
 - b) This is a related service, not a statement of an annual goal.

Transition Services:

Community Experiences

Examples:

- Visits to recreational agencies/facilities in the community
- Leisure and recreational interest survey through student response to different leisure opportunities in the community
- Referral to Teens on the Town, a recreation program for young adults with developmental disabilities

Nonexamples:

- Employment preference survey
- Watching a movie in the classroom
- Calling the movie theater from the classroom to determine movie times

Daily Living Skills

Examples:

- Maintain a bank account
- Express preferences related to saving money for personal
- Safety skills in the community
- Selecting clothing for the day

Non-examples:

- Preparing simple meals for himself
- Travel training in the community

Employment and Other Post-School Objectives

Example:

- Meeting with job coach in classroom and community settings
- Meeting with SSI representative to determine possible financial benefits
- Vocational rehabilitation referral

Nonexamples:

- Apply for college disability support services
- Complete application for job at local mall

Functional Vocational Evaluation

Example:

- Refer to Vocational Rehabilitation for non-verbal, modified assessments of adaptive behavior, career interest, and career skills

Nonexample:

- Administration of assessments intended for verbal students
- Administration of assessments for preschoolers, not related to employment or adult living skills

Instruction:

Examples:

- Participation in academic and functional curriculum
- Participation in self-advocacy training

Nonexamples:

- Class field trip to the movies
- Situational assessment at local hotels

Related Services

Examples:

- Speech therapy services for training in use of augmentative communication device
- Speech therapy, occupational therapy for augmentative communication evaluation and selection of appropriate augmentative communication device for school and postschool environments
- Occupational therapy consultation for use of assistive technology
- Occupational therapy consultation for assistive technology evaluation for determination of devices to increase independence in home and community environments
- Physical therapy to maintain and improve strength and flexibility
- Transfer of therapy services to adult service arena

Nonexamples:

- Counseling services related to anger management
- Instruction related to self-determination

Evidence of Coordination:

Examples:

- A consent form signed by Kevin's mother, indicating that the local education agency (LEA) may contact vocational rehabilitative (VR) services to make a referral for services
- A consent form signed by Kevin's mother, indicating that the LEA may contact Social Security Administration (SSA) to schedule a meeting with the family regarding Kevin's benefits
- A consent form signed by Kevin's mother, indicating that the LEA may contact Medicaid to coordinate referrals to outside agencies therapy referrals
- An invitation to conference the VR agency representative
- Notes on file from conversation between LEA physical therapy (PT) and private practice PT provider

Nonexamples:

- An invitation to conference to the VR agency representative
- Notes from a phone call with outside PT provider by the LEA PT (without consent on file)

Age-Appropriate Transition Assessment:

Example:

Summarized on front page of IEP.

"Strengths: Kevin enjoys interacting with other people, music, horticulture, computers, and clerical type activities in which he has the opportunity to complete a project. He responds well to verbal praise and is able to stay focused on a task for 20+ minutes with occasional verbal redirection. Kevin has developed the skills to operate a variety of switch activated devices (e.g. button maker, blender, etc.), use a paper shredder, and collate papers with a jig. Kevin has worked successfully on an assembly line in the school-based enterprise and has held an on-campus job in the school library checking books in and out using a scanning system and shelving books with the assistance of a teacher assistant. Kevin loves school and is always eager to learn new skills. He demonstrates a high level of motivation to please his teachers and his parents report that even when he is sick he begs to go to school.

Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Abilities: Kevin is following his state's Extended Content Standards which are aligned with the general curriculum's Standard Course of Study. He receives daily instruction in Literacy (reading, writing, and communication), Math, and Science. Kevin also is involved in vocational and daily living skill training.

His coursework is delivered in individual and small group settings in the special education classroom except for Digital Communications (a general education Career Technical Course) which he has taken (using a modified curriculum) with the assistance of a one-on-one instructional assistant. Kevin also participates in a school-based enterprise through the Occupational Course of Study (a state endorsed curriculum for students with special needs leading to a high school diploma) and an on-campus work placement in the school library.

Signed examination summary from Kevin's physician, dated during the current year that he is:
18 years old

Is typically fed via G-tube to avoid asphyxiation

Uses a manual wheelchair to ambulate

- This example meets the I-13 standards for Item #5 for the following reasons:
 - Information regarding the student's strengths and needs is provided.

- Information considers current and future environments.
- Information is from multiple sources, relevant to Kevin's strengths, preferences, and interests.

Example reflecting best practice:

The information in the above example, as well as:

Summary evaluations from various dates during the previous 3 years by

LEA's physical therapist

LEA's occupational therapist

Private occupational therapist

Summary of notes from Person Centered Planning (using the Making Action Plans [MAPS]) forms meeting conducted at family's home, recorded by Kevin's great aunt.

- This example reflects additional best practices suggested for **age appropriate transition assessment** because
 - The information was obtained from multiple sources.
 - The information reflects the input of the student/family regarding strengths, needs, preferences, and interests.

Nonexample:

Kevin is a student with significant cognitive disabilities. He has severe limitations in cognition, communication, fine motor and gross motor skills.

- The information provided does not meet I-13 standards for Item #5 for the following reasons:
 - Stating the type of disability is not sufficient information to conduct comprehensive transition planning, since individuals with the same disability classification likely have varying abilities
 - There is no information regarding the student's strengths and skills that are currently present.

Courses of Study:

Example:

Receives specially designed instruction with an alternate curriculum, including instruction focused career development, functional academics, and community referenced skills that are linked to the state standard course of study in Language Arts, Math, and Science.

- These **courses of study** meet I-13 standards for Item #6 for the following reasons:
 - Kevin is a student with significant cognitive and physical disabilities whose curriculum must be modified
 - The curriculum described is relevant to his postsecondary goals
 - The curriculum described includes opportunities to access the standard course of study through alternative methods

Nonexample:

The box is checked on the IEP indicating that the student is completing the coursework for a standard diploma.

- These courses of study do not meet I-13 standards for Item #6 for the following reasons:
 - While it would be adequate to check a box to describe the courses of study, the standard diploma option without any explanation of accommodations, modifications, or alternative paths would be inappropriate based on our knowledge of Kevin's strengths and needs and his postsecondary goals.