

Appendix 8: Education Best Practice Guideline Checklist

The following guidelines can be used by both parents and educators to address the unique needs of students with autism. This list is not intended to be included in every plan for every child. It is intended to be a starting point for discussion by the planning team when designing an individualized plan.

Student Planning Goal/Objective	Now	Not Now
1: Extended Educational Programming		
<p>Extended Day and Extended School Year. (NOTE – these are distinct and need to be clearly defined.)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Duration and programming to be based on individual needs. 2. Extended day should to be different from In-Home Training. 3. Determine eligibility criteria based not solely on likely regression, but also on a needs assessment of the following areas: behavior, social skills, communication, academics, and self help skills. 4. Should be available to all eligible students; not to be determined by district availability funds/staff. 5. To include variety of structural programs/settings. 6. Services should be linked to IEP objectives and goals. 		

Student Planning Goal/Objective	Now	Not Now
2: Daily Schedules Reflecting Minimal Unstructured Time		
<p>Individualized daily schedule reflecting minimal unstructured time and active engagement in learning activities to the maximum extent possible.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Flexibility within routines to adapt to individual skill level. 2. Learning activities should be based on IEP goals and objectives and related educational activities. 3. Engagement time may include lunch, snack, and recess. 4. Consideration should be given to aiding students with changes in routine schedules such as, field trips, substitute teachers, and pep rallies. 		

Student Planning Goal/Objective	Now	Not Now
3: In-Home and Community-Based Training		
<p>Include training and IEP goals and objectives to assist in acquisition and generalization to the home and community setting (appropriate social interaction skills including social and behavioral skills) based on needs assessment. (NOTE: Define In-Home and Community-Based training.)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strategies to facilitate maintenance and generalization (home to school, home to community, school to home, school to community). 2. Consideration should be given to guidelines for the qualifications of the In-Home trainer. 		

Student Planning Goal/Objective	Now	Not Now
4: Positive Behavior Support Strategies		
<p>Positive Behavior Supports include Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA), antecedent manipulation, teaching replacement behaviors, reinforcement strategies, data based decisions.</p> <p>Behavior Intervention Plan developed and maintained based on a Functional Behavioral Assessment using current data collection of target behaviors.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Considerations and guidelines should be written for the person who is performing the FBA. 2. Behavioral programming is structured across school, home and community-based settings. 		

Student Planning Goal/Objective	Now	Not Now
5: Futures Planning for Integrated Living, Work, Community and Educational Environments		
<p>Considered for all students with ASD, at any age</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consider skills necessary to function in all environments post graduation. 2. Consider skills necessary to function in all environments 3 years hence. 3. Consider skills necessary to function in all environments for current year. 		

Student Planning Goal/Objective	Now	Not Now
6: Parent/Family Education, Training, and Support		
<p>Parent/family education, training, and support are designed to provide the parent/family with skills/techniques needed in order to help their child become successful in the home/community setting.</p> <p>Parent training is provided by qualified personnel with experience in autism and may include but is not limited to: information regarding parent support groups, workshops, videos, conferences, direct consultation, materials, separate and distinct from in-home training to increase the parent's knowledge of specific teaching and management techniques, curriculum information, provide information related to the child's disability and available resources, and facilitate parental carryover of in-home training.</p> <p>Strategies can include behavior management, setting a structured home environment, or communication training. Parents are active participants in promoting the continuity of intervention across all settings based on IEP.</p>		

Student Planning Goal/Objective	Now	Not Now
7: Staff-to-Student Ratio		
<p>Staff-to-student ratio appropriate to identified activities and as needed to achieve progress on social, behavioral, and/or academic IEP goals and objectives. The team may determine ratios based on the following considerations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Level of learning (acquisition, fluency, maintenance, generalization). 2. Priority given to work towards individual independence by fading dependence on 1:1 ratios. 3. Developmental level of the student. In the case of young children (developmental level 0-8 years) no more than two children with autism spectrum disorder per adult as determined by results of adaptive behavior evaluations. 4. Behavior needs. 5. Accommodations across all settings. 6. Transitions within the school day. 7. Teaching activities. 		

Student Planning Goal/Objective	Now	Not Now
8: Teaching Strategies		
<p>Teaching strategies shall be based on peer reviewed and empirically validated evidence-based practices/methodologies for students with autism.</p> <p>At this time the science heavily favors, but is not limited to those based on the science of applied behavior analysis, defined as the application of behavioral principles for the benefit of the learner and includes simultaneous evaluation of the effect of these applications.</p> <p>The following instructional strategies should be considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Discrete-trial training ◆ Visual supports ◆ Structured learning ◆ Augmentative and Alternative Communication ◆ Social skills training <p>Implementation of the instructional strategies should be reflected in the IEP. The following will be considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ How will this strategy be implemented? ◆ When and by whom? 		

Student Planning Goal/Objective	Now	Not Now
9: Communication		
<p>Communication intervention, which considers language forms and functions that enhance effective performance across settings. Strategies may include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Augmentative and Alternative Communication ◆ Milieu, incidental, or naturalistic teaching ◆ Verbal Behavior ◆ Pragmatics ◆ Conversation skills 		

Student Planning Goal/Objective	Now	Not Now
10: Social Skills Support		
<p>Consideration will be given to the following areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Appropriate social skills assessment and curriculum. 2. Instruction provided by highly qualified service providers. 3. Use of trained peer facilitators such as, but not limited to, circle of friends. 4. Strategies may include but are not limited to video modeling, Scripts training, social stories, and role playing. 5. Support to be provided across all settings. 		

Student Planning Goal/Objective	Now	Not Now
11: Professional Educator/Staff Support		
<p>Professional development will be provided for all personnel who work with the student to assure the correct implementation of the techniques and strategies as determined by the IEP.</p>		

This checklist was developed through the work of the Texas Autism Rule Study Committee, a committee comprised of parents, Autism providers (Board Certified Behavior Analysts), school principals, and Texas education agency representatives. It was shared through the efforts and courtesy of the committee and Arzu Forough (2007).