# **New IEP Form: Trainer Facilitation Guide**

IEP Leadership Team members can use this facilitation guide and accompanying materials to help inform and design future training opportunities among educators, families, business managers, and administrators to support high-quality implementation of the new Massachusetts Individualized Education Program (IEP) form. This guide, and accompanying training materials, were introduced during the October 2023 Training of Trainers (TOT) Events. The information below is intended to supplement training materials (PowerPoint slides/notes and handouts) and can be adapted to meet your training needs. Please note that this information reflects current guidance and resources available in October 2023.

Further questions and needs can be directed to specialeducation@doe.mass.edu.

### **IEP Form Training Overview**

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| **Who** | * The “New IEP Form” training is intended to be delivered by IEP trainers who attended the October 2023 Training of Trainers events. |
| **What** | * Training objectives can be customized by district/organization implementation teams. The primary training objective is to help educators and families understand the new IEP form in relation to existing form(s), systems, policies, and guidance. |
| **When** | * The training materials were prepared for delivery in a 2-3-hour timeframe, or over multiple shorter sessions. However, materials can be modified or expanded to meet a variety of scheduling needs. |
| **Where** | * The training can be delivered in a virtual or in-person professional development setting. |
| **How** | * Prior to delivering the training, we recommend reviewing the training materials (below) and further familiarizing yourself with the new IEP form. Speaker notes are included in the PowerPoint slides. * Following your training, consider job-embedded professional learning, including coaching and feedback. |

### **Training Materials**

All training materials used for the TOT events have been posted to the [DESE IEP Improvement Project Website](https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/ImproveIEP/). These materials include:

* Training of Trainers (TOT) PowerPoint slides
* Action Planning Template
* Trainer Facilitation Guide

Additional resources from DESE regarding the implementation of the new IEP form are available and will continue to be updated on the same website.

### **Turnkey Activity Guides**

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|  | 1. Getting to Know your MA IEP Form |
| Suggested Time | 20 minutes |
| Participant  Materials | * Blank copy of MA IEP Form * TOT PowerPoint Slides |
| Set the Stage  (5 min) | The purpose of this activity is to help participants **locate** information in the new IEP form. Please have your blank copy of the new MA IEP form in front of you as we go through this activity. |
| Round 1  (7 min) | To start, we’ll locate some of the **key sections** of the MA IEP form. |
| Round 2  (8 min) | * For round two, we’ll go into some more **nuanced sections** of the MA IEP form, and in some cases, highlight some of the changes to the new form, which we will discuss in more depth soon. |
| Discussion  (10 min) | With others at your table, please discuss the following:   * Did this activity help you feel more familiar with the layout of the new IEP Form? * Which sections of the IEP form are most (and least) familiar? * If you were a student or family member, which sections of the IEP form might feel most (and least) familiar? |

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|  | 1. Vision Activity |
| Suggested Time | 10 minutes |
| Participant  Materials | None |
| Set the Stage  (2 min) | The purpose of this activity is to brainstorm changes to process that may help IEP Teams write high-quality student vision statements that incorporate student and family perspectives. |
| Tabletop Discussions  (5 min) | As a group, select a specific age range to focus on (e.g., preschool, elementary, middle, high). Discuss approaches for gathering information about the student’s vision. Are there specific questions and/or processes that could lead to increased student engagement and participation in IEP development and implementation? |
| Discussion  (3 min) | * For the age range your group focused on, what challenges exist for capturing a student’s vision in the IEP? * For the age range your group focused on, how might increased student engagement and participation in IEP development support improved and equitable student outcomes? |

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|  | 1. Know Your Student |
| Suggested Time | 35 minutes |
| Participant  Materials | * Notepaper * Blank copy of MA IEP Form * TOT PowerPoint Slides |
| Set the Stage  (5 min) | The purpose of this activity is to practice describing (step 1) and documenting (step 2) students’ strengths, interests, and areas of need. |
| Step 1  (7 min) | With a partner, engage in a **seven-minute conversation** to describe a student that one of you knows well. Both partners will take notes and ask clarifying questions to summarize the student and team vision , and the student’s strengths, interests, and preferences. |
| Review Slides  (10 min) | Review the Present Level pages and slides in more depth. Highlight key technical features of the Present Level pages in the new form, and opportunities for adaptive changes to systems, processes, and practices. |
| Step 2  (5 min) | Based on the conversation from Step 1, work with your partner to transfer key information into one Present Levels page from the new IEP form. |
| Discussion  (7 min) | * What additional information would need to be included to support your statements (ex. Data, parent and student input)? * What adjustments will teams need to make to document this information? |

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|  | 1. Tabletop Sorting |
| Suggested Time | 20 minutes |
| Participant  Materials | * Sample Accommodations/Modifications (see below) * Blank Copy of the IEP * Answer key (see below) |
| Set the Stage  (3 min) | The purpose of this activity is to help participants understand the difference between accommodations and modifications, and how to document both in the new IEP form. |
| Review Examples  (2 min) | With the whole group, review some example accommodations and modifications (from the Pre-K Sample IEP) and where they fit in the Accommodations/Modifications Table in the MA IEP form. |
| Tabletop Sorting  (10 min) | Using the accommodations and modifications provided on your table, work with your group to sort each into the MA IEP form. |
| Discussion  (5 min) | * Which accommodations and/or modifications were challenging for your group? * In what ways do IEP accommodations and modifications contribute to more meaningful access and equitable outcomes for students with disabilities? |

**Tabletop Sorting - Sample Accommodations/Modifications**

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| Simplify and repeat directions, as needed. | Use personal timers or alarms to help with time management. | Allow extra time to process spoken information. |
| Provide visual supports and cues (such as written directions and checklists). | Provide academic content that is substantially modified for Student. | Use verbal cues or visual supports to help student express their emotions. |
| Provide immediate, positive, and descriptive feedback. | Allow for pre-teaching and re-teaching of key terms, concepts, and skills. | Extended time for completion of assignments or tests. |
| Provide additional wait time to process information and respond. | Dictation of answers on all written response assignments longer than two sentences. |  |
| Complete an assessment in several timed sessions or over several days. | Use noise-reducing headphones and preferential seating that is away from distractions and close to an adult or peer mentor. |  |
| Allow for frequent breaks, such as after completing an activity, or every half hour. | Scaffold complex tasks by breaking them down into manageable steps. |  |

**Tabletop Sorting Answer Key**

* Simplify and repeat directions, as needed. (ACC – Presentation of Instruction)
* Provide visual supports and cues (such as written directions and checklists). (ACC – Presentation of Instruction)
* Provide immediate, positive, and descriptive feedback. (ACC – Presentation of Instruction)
* Provide additional wait time to process information and respond. ACC – Response)
* Complete an assessment in several timed sessions or over several days. (ACC – Timing/Scheduling)
* Allow for frequent breaks, such as after completing an activity, or every half hour. (ACC – Timing/Scheduling)
* Allow extra time to process spoken information. (ACC – Timing/Scheduling)
* Use personal timers or alarms to help with time management. (ACC – Setting/Environment)
* Provide academic content that is substantially modified for Student. (MOD – Content)
* Allow for pre-teaching and re-teaching of key terms, concepts, and skills. (MOD – Instruction)
* Dictation of answers on all written response assignments longer than two sentences. (MOD – student output)
* Use noise-reducing headphones and preferential seating that is away from distractions and close to an adult or peer mentor. (ACC – classroom and nonacademic – setting/environment)
* Scaffold complex tasks by breaking them down into manageable steps. (MOD – instruction)
* Extended time for completion of assignments or tests. (ACC – Timing/Scheduling)
* Use verbal cues or visual supports to help student express their emotions. (ACC – Response)

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|  | 1. Connections! (Content adapted from PROGRESS Center) |
| Suggested Time | 30 minutes |
| Participant  Materials | * Sample IEP |
| Set the Stage  (5 min) | The purpose of this activity is to understand the extent to which the IEP is reasonably calculated to **improve student outcomes** by addressing the student vison, identified needs and corresponding goals and services. |
| Identify needs, aids, services, and goals  (15 min) | Using the Sample IEP:  For **each** specific student need described within the vision statement, and present level, locate the corresponding aids, services, and/or goals. |
| Discussion  (10 min) | As a whole group or in small groups, have participants reflect and discuss. The following are potential questions to consider:   * To what extent is the student’s current reality and needs clearly identified in the vision, parent concerns, and present level statements? * Is it clear that the needs are a result of the child’s disability? * To what extent did every need have a clearly aligned service, aid, or program modification and goals? Do you see internal consistency? |

### **Additional Resources**

The following resources may be useful as you design training on the new IEP forms.

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| **Title** | **Source** | **Description (From Website)** | **Link** |
| **IEPs Module** | IRIS Center | This module details the process of developing high-quality IEPs for students with disabilities. The module discusses the requirements for IEPs as outlined in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) with implications of the Supreme Court's ruling in *Endrew F. v. Douglas County School District* (est. completion time: 3 hours). | <https://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/module/iep01/> |
| **Accommodations Module** | IRIS Center | This module overviews instructional and testing accommodations for students with disabilities, explains how accommodations differ from other kinds of instructional adaptations, defines the four categories of accommodations, and describes how to implement accommodations and evaluate their effectiveness for individual students (est. completion time: 2 hours). | <https://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/module/acc/> |
| **IDEA and the IEP: From Compliance to PROGRESS** | PROGRESS Center | This course provides an overview of the seven required components of the IEP as outlined in IDEA. The course explains how the required components of an IEP are interconnected and critically important for developing high-quality educational programming for students with disabilities, provides tips for developing IEPs that promote progress, and shares resources to learn more. | <https://promotingprogress.org/training/IDEA-IEP> |
| **IEP Tip Sheet Series** | PROGRESS Center | This series of tip sheets introduces key components of the IEP. They include brief summaries of federal regulations, tips for implementation, and resources. | <https://promotingprogress.org/resources/iep-tip-sheet-series> |
| **Instructional Practice Briefs** | PROGRESS Center | This series of practice briefs highlight six evidence-based, high-leverage practices that research has shown support implementation of high-quality instructional programming for students with and at risk for disabilities regardless of their identified disability category or grade span. | <https://promotingprogress.org/resources/instructional-briefs> |
| **Getting to Know Your IEP** | PROGRESS Center | This activity is intended to help educators and administrators review and analyze their local IEP document to ensure they understand where each required component appears. It is important to remind participants that their state may require components beyond those required by IDEA or may use language that differs from the language in IDEA. | <https://promotingprogress.org/resources/getting-know-your-iep> |
| **Looking for Connections: Ensuring the Parts of the IEP Work Together.** | PROGRESS Center | This activity is intended to help educators and administrators analyze whether the parts of the IEP work together and ensure that they are driven by student needs as described in the present levels of academic achievement and functional performance (PLAAFP) statement. | <https://promotingprogress.org/resources/ensuring-parts-iep-work-together> |