

## Technical Assistance Paper Related to Parent District Provider Agreements (PDPA)

### Purpose of the Parent District Provider Agreement

The purpose of the Parent District Provider Agreement (PDPA) is to assist low-performing students in meeting state and school district expectations in academic proficiency in reading, language arts, and mathematics. The PDPA should reflect each student's program with instruction that is focused, intensive, and tailored to meet the individual needs of the student. The PDPA is the primary vehicle for communicating the parent, district, and provider commitment to addressing the unique educational needs of a student.

### Critical Elements of the PDPA

The PDPA must:

- be based on **academic performance data and a diagnostic assessment conducted by the state-approved SES provider to identify student's academic deficiencies and skill gaps**. Academic performance data might include FCAT scores, scores from other standardized tests, and report card grades. In addition, diagnostic assessments should be used to pinpoint specific academic deficiencies and identify priority educational needs.
- identify **specific and measurable achievement goals** for the student in reading, language arts and/or mathematics. Academic goals and FCAT tested benchmarks should be stated specifically for each deficiency and prioritize educational need in the content area based on appropriate diagnostic assessments. The measurable goal should focus on the knowledge or skills that will enhance the student's performance and assist in achieving the desired outcome.
- include **individualized instructional program and academic intervention strategies** designed to meet students' individual needs. Intervention strategies and tutoring should be proven effective by scientific research and focused on specifically diagnosed deficiencies. If the student has been identified as having a deficiency in reading, the PDPA must address the student's specific deficiencies in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary. If the student has been identified as having a deficiency in mathematics, the PDPA must address the student's specific deficiencies in the identified standards of the Sunshine State Standards (number sense, measurement, geometry and spatial sense, algebraic thinking, and data analysis and probability). For information regarding Florida's Sunshine State Standards, see [www.firn.edu/doe/curric/prek12/index.html](http://www.firn.edu/doe/curric/prek12/index.html).

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- provide the process and schedule for **frequent monitoring of student's progress**. Continuous progress monitoring of academic performance is necessary for many reasons. Continuous progress monitoring enables teachers to detect a student's academic difficulties early and modify or accommodate the curriculum and instruction. Students should be aware of their progress and can use the information for goal-setting and motivation. Information from progress monitoring will reinforce the efforts of teachers and parents who are supplying the supplemental instruction and increase the probability that such services will be effective. Frequent progress monitoring will help inform tutors, teachers, and parents of the student's progress toward meeting the annual goals. It is recommended that a student's progress be monitored at a minimum of once each month. This will enable the tutor, parent, and teacher to determine if the academic intervention and support is effective, and if not, to revise or make accommodations to the instruction to reflect a more effective intervention.
- provide a **timetable for improving the student's achievement** that ensures that services are provided to students as soon as possible in the school year, but no later than October 15 of each school year. The timetable should include the length of each tutoring session, the frequency of the sessions, and the duration (i.e. end of the school year).
- describe **how the provider will regularly inform the student's parents and teachers regarding the student's progress**. Progress reports to parents and teachers must be regularly scheduled, and the format should provide information in a way that is easy to understand.

### **Current Level of Academic Performance**

Gathering information related to a student's current level of academic performance is the first step in developing a PDPA. The PDPA team members must use the information to establish a baseline of the student's current functioning level in order to develop measurable annual goals and determine what services are needed to meet the needs of the student. It is important that the current level of performance statement is written in a way that is clear to all participants and measurable so that student progress during the tutoring sessions can be easily monitored and reported.

The current level of academic performance should contain information on the following:

- specific information about the student's achievement and performance on a variety of assessments and observations
- strengths and/or weaknesses of the student based on the diagnostic assessments
- informal data and observations

### **Measurable Goals**

A measurable goal is an individualized, specific statement of what the student needs to learn and how well it must be accomplished. The measurable goals must clearly communicate what the student is expected to accomplish and specify the criterion or measure that will be used to determine whether or not the student has achieved the goal. Measurable goals should reflect the student's most critical academic needs that are to be addressed during the tutoring sessions. The measurable annual goals set up the process for how progress can be measured and reported to meet the requirements of the PDPA.

To be measurable, each goal must include a clear description of what the student is expected to learn and the criterion or measure that will be used to show if the goal has been achieved. Project SMART (2000) suggests the acronym SMART for writing measurable goals. The acronym SMART has a number of slightly different variations, which can be used to provide a more comprehensive definition for goal setting:

**S** - specific, significant, stretching

**M** - measurable, meaningful

**A** - agreed upon, attainable, achievable, acceptable, action-oriented

**R** - relevant, realistic, reasonable, rewarding, results-oriented

**T** - time-based, timely, tangible, trackable

**Specific goals** should be straightforward and emphasize what the team wants to happen for the student. A specific goal outlines the what, why, and how of the SMART model.

- **WHAT** are you going to do? Use action words such as direct, organize, coordinate, lead, develop, plan, build etc.
- **WHY** is this important to do at this time? What do you want to ultimately accomplish?
- **HOW** are you going to do it? (By...)

**Measurable goals** should show a change in student performance. A measurable goal addresses how the team will know when the student has reached his or her goal. For example, the student will show a 25 percent increase in the correct number of words read in one minute on grade level probes. A measurable goal shows the specific target to measure and the instrument used to measure it. "The student will improve his or her reading skills" is not a measurable goal. A measurable goal has the following benefits:

- keeps students and teachers on track
- helps students and tutors reach the target dates
- allows parents and students to monitor the progress toward reaching the goal

**Agreed upon goals** support the collaborative effort involving a student's parents, a representative from the student's school or the school district, and the provider selected by the parent. These individuals should function as a team to develop the PDPA and agree upon the goals. Each team member is responsible for bringing information to the process, including but not limited to the most recent results of each student's performance on state and/or district-wide assessments, the student's classroom performance, provider assessments, observations by the teacher or parent, and other existing and relevant student plans such as an academic improvement plan (AIP), individual educational plan (IEP), or English language learner (ELL) plan. It is the responsibility of the school district to develop procedures consistent with the requirements of NCLB related to the development, implementation, and evaluation of students' PDPAs.

**Relevant goals** are goals which are tied to the Sunshine State Standards and help students reach and/or exceed grade level achievement. The benchmarks for the Sunshine State Standards refer to a description of the content or skill that must be learned to achieve the standard. The Sunshine State Standards, benchmarks, and grade level expectations provide the framework for the curriculum used in Florida schools. It is not necessary to duplicate this information on the PDPA.

**Realistic goals** are written to bring the student closer to achievement at or above grade level. Realistic goals are not written to be easy to ensure student success.

The goal must be based on the current academic performance of the student. For example, a goal of learning to use every Latin prefix and suffix with 100 percent proficiency in two days is not realistic for an elementary student. It is more realistic to set a goal of learning the Latin prefixes of pre-, post-, and non- in context. The student can then work toward mastery of these prefixes gradually and build upon these successes.

**Timely goals** should specify a clear timeframe such as “by the end of the tutoring sessions”, “in twelve weeks”, “by the end of the year”, etc. Putting an end point on the goal provides a clear target to work toward. If a timeframe is not established, there is no urgency to take action.

To be measurable, a goal must include a clear description of what the student is expected to learn and the criterion or measure that will be used to show if the goal has been achieved. Bateman and Herr (2003) suggest four indicators to test whether or not a goal is measurable. A measurable goal must:

- reveal what to do to measure whether the goal has been accomplished
- yield the same conclusion if measured by several people
- allow a calculation of how much progress it represents
- be understood without additional information (p. 14)

### **Writing Measurable Goals for the PDPA**

Measurable goals are derived directly from the data regarding the student in the current levels of academic performance statement. All members of the PDPA team are involved in developing the goals, which will be used by tutors to focus instruction and measure progress.

The measurable goals may be written as either an overall goal based on end of the year assessments or short-term goals based on the specific diagnostic and/or progress monitoring data. There may be several short-term goals which are all tied to the one overall goal.

The PDPA team may elect to use short-term objectives, benchmarks, or a combination of the two. The difference between the overall goal and short term goals is subtle. Short-term goals describe sub-skills or intermediate steps toward reaching the overall goal and are generally written using the same format as a measurable goal. Regardless of whether overall goals or short-term goals are used, the PDPA team must be able to monitor the progress the student is making toward the goal and to report that progress to parents.

Type of Goal	Measurable Goals	Assessment Tool
Overall Goal	By the end of 2007, Johnny Jones will make one year’s growth as measured by a change in the Developmental Scale Score (DSS) on the FCAT.	FCAT
Short-term Goal	By the end of the tutoring sessions, Johnny Jones’ oral reading fluency will increase from 60 correct words per minute to 90 correct words per minute as measured by DIBELS progress monitoring assessments.	DIBELS progress monitoring assessments
Short-term Goal	By the end of the first month of tutoring, Johnny Jones will show an increase of 20 percent in sight words recognized using teacher-created flash cards of the 200 Dolch sight words.	Dolch sight word lists

Specific examples of measurable and non-measurable goals:

<b>Samples from PDPAs</b>	
<b>Non-Examples (from PDPAs submitted)</b>	<b>Make them Measurable</b>
Identifies words and constructs meaning from text, illustrations, graphics, and charts using the strategies of phonics, word structure, and context clues.	Sally will be able to verbally identify the meaning of words in context when reading grade level texts with 80 percent accuracy.
The students will increase their knowledge of grade appropriate vocabulary.	By the end of the tutoring sessions, Bobby's Dolch sight word recognition will improve by 50 percent when assessed orally using flashcards.
Increases comprehension by rereading, retelling, and discussion.	By the end of the tutoring sessions, Desiree will be able to answer in writing specific questions recalling details from grade level passages with 80 percent accuracy.
Student will use basic elements of phonetic analysis including hearing, segmenting, substituting, and blending sounds in words.	By the end of the tutoring sessions, Jamal will be able to orally segment words of five phonemes with 80 percent accuracy.
Student will be able to communicate ideas and information, be able to write stories, informative pieces, and contribute ideas during group writing activities.	By the end of the tutoring sessions, Ramon will be able to write an expository passage of at least three paragraphs on a given topic. The passage will include at least three support details and have a clear beginning, middle, and end.
The student will improve grade level math skills.	By the end of the school year, Johnny will make at least one year's growth as measured by a developmental scale score increase of at least 231 points.
The student will read better by the end of the tutoring sessions.	By the end of the tutoring sessions, Sylvia's oral reading rate will improve by at least 25 percent as measured by correct words read per minute on grade level DIBELS passages.

## References and Resources

Bateman, Barbara D. & Herr, Cynthia M. (2003). *Writing Measurable IEP Goals and Objectives*. IEP Resources, Attainment Company, Inc., Verona, WI.

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