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Website Version

Intellectual Factors as Determiners of IEP Objectives for Students with Significant Intellectual Disabilities<sup>1</sup>

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In 2000, a coalition of parents of children with disabilities, professionals and other disability rights advocates, including Disability Rights New Jersey, the Education Law Center, the Statewide Parent Advocacy Network and The Arc of New Jersey, recognized that far too many students with a wide array of disabilities were not receiving individually appropriate educations in the least restrictive environments. They filed a complaint in federal district court against the New Jersey Department of Education in 2001. A team of experts, including Lou Brown, to assist in the gathering and analyzing of relevant information was established. Initially, it was intended that Brown and his colleagues would develop instruments that could be used to evaluate information obtained from cumulative student records, interviews of special and general education teachers, school administrators and parents of children with disabilities and from observations in actual instructional and related settings. However, in effect, the court only allowed access to up to 3 years of the IEPs of 147 randomly selected students. After that court ruling, most thought developing the instruments was moot. However, the Plaintiffs' team judged that at least some of the instruments being considered for development might be helpful to parents, lawyers, teachers, therapists, school administrators and others. While the court case was concerned with all students who functioned with IEPs in New Jersey, Brown and his colleagues focused their instruments on students with significant intellectual disabilities. Specifically, these instruments address why students with significant intellectual disabilities must attend home schools, the importance of authentic

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<sup>1</sup> "IEPS" refers to the legally required Individualized Educational Plans that must be provided all students declared eligible for Special Education services.

assessment and instruction and school to post school integrated work transition plans. In addition, they produced educational manual which is designed to be helpful to parents and this paper which is focused on intellectual factors that must be considered when determining IEP objectives. The instruments can be adapted for use with students with different kinds and levels of disabilities.<sup>2</sup> More specifically, the major purposes of this instrument are:

To provide information that can be used to determine if existing IEP objectives are or are not acceptable;

To provide information that can be used to assist, teachers, therapists and others generate individually meaningful IEP objectives;

To assist parents of children with significant intellectual disabilities to gather and carefully consider important information that can be used to prepare their children to live, work and play in integrated society at school exit; and,

To help provide students with significant intellectual disabilities opportunities to benefit from experiencing “best” or “promising” educational policies, procedures and practices.<sup>3</sup>

Intelligence, however defined, is not distributed equally across individuals. Many are quite intelligent. What they can do with their intellectual abilities is wonderfully helpful to society and worthy of many differential opportunities and rewards. We need them to solve important and complex problems. We salute them and support all reasonable efforts to cultivate their talents to the fullest. Individuals with significant intellectual disabilities, the lowest intellectually

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<sup>2</sup> Versions of the instruments can be obtained from the Inclusion Campaign website of Disability Rights New Jersey - [www.inclusioncampaign.org](http://www.inclusioncampaign.org) and the website of Lou Brown - [www.website.education.wisc.edu/lbrown](http://www.website.education.wisc.edu/lbrown). An abbreviated version will be published in TASH Connections.

<sup>3</sup> Professionals who interact with students with significant intellectual disabilities are legally and otherwise responsible to use educational policies, procedures and practices that research, experience and/or common sense support as “best” or “promising.”

functioning 1 - 2% of a naturally distributed population, are substantially deficient on all intellectual dimensions. Almost all of them have been ascribed such labels as severely/profoundly developmentally disabled, autistic, multiply handicapped, mentally retarded, cognitively/intellectually disabled or their synonyms. Space does not permit addressing all relevant intellectual factors important in the process of establishing their IEP objectives, but we will address 6. Further, it is extremely important that at least the six be honored concurrently. Those involved in the life of a person with significant intellectual disabilities must add those that are individually and situationally meaningful. Most will agree with our definitions and examples as they are based upon credible empirical evidence and extensive personal and professional experiences. As ways to enhance innate intellectual capacity have yet to be discovered or created, none can be denied or otherwise dishonored.

The Number of Skills That Can Be Learned. Individuals with significant intellectual disabilities can learn many skills, but less than 98 - 99% of all others. Thus, only important skills should be selected for instruction. Teaching unimportant skills: those that a person really does not need to know; those that waste time; those that are chronological age inappropriate; or, those that will be obsolete soon after they are learned is professionally untenable and otherwise unacceptable. The tasks here are to consider skills a student actually needs in order to live, work and play in integrated society, either now and at school exit and then to consider if there are good reasons for making them IEP objectives. Two cautionary points are in order. First, many IEP teams include extensive lists of ostensibly important objectives. Parents are quite often positively impressed with such lists. However, in many instances the professionals involved are aware these objectives are essentially unrealizable. Second, parents generally believe that if an objective is presented in the IEPs of their children, the instruction designed to reach them is being provided. However, when they observe their children in actual educational or therapeutic settings, too often there are few, if any, relationships between the objectives contained in IEPs and what they observe. An IEP is considered here as a legally binding contract between a student with significant intellectual disabilities and her/his family and school officials regarding what will actually

happen in instructional settings and activities. If a student is not receiving the instruction needed to realize an objective, it should not be reported on her/his IEP. If a student is receiving instruction needed to realize an objective, it should be reported on her/his IEP.

Subject - Math

The teacher created a booklet of 9 picture cards. Three contained pictures of from 1 to 3 of the half pint cartons of milk available in the school cafeteria. Three others contained from 1 to 3 pictures of art smocks and 3 others contained from 1 to 3 pictures of place mats used during snack time in the classroom. The Potential Math instructional objective was to teach the student to gather and distribute 1, 2 or 3 of the objects correctly when told to do so by the teacher. For example, the teacher would open the booklet to a card with a picture of 3 art smocks and tell the student to gather and give 1 to each of 2 other students in her/his art group. When the student could consistently gather and distribute from 1 to 3 of the smocks, place mats and milk cartons in response to the verbal cues of the teacher and the picture cards selected, the objective would be considered reached.

Potential Math Skill/Instructional Objective # 1 - Gathering and distributing from 1 to 3 objects correctly in response to verbal and picture cues. Of all the Math skills that could possibly be selected, is Potential Math Skill # 1 among the most important the student should try to learn at this time?

Yes                       No

If yes, report why you consider Potential Math Skill # 1 sufficiently important to try to teach at this time.

It could easily become a functional skill. That is, if he/she does not gather and distribute objects appropriately in real life/authentic settings, someone else will have to.

It will enhance his/her status in the eyes of peers without disabilities because like them, he/she can engage in these activities effectively.

It is chronological age appropriate.

It can be used in many nonschool settings and activities such as shopping, playing games and completing tasks around the house both now and at school exit.

He/she is capable of learning it and it is sufficiently challenging.

It will enhance her/his feelings of self worth.

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If Yes, put Potential Math Skill # 1 on the list of those that will be given further consideration as an IEP objective. If No, report why you consider Potential Math Skill # 1 not sufficiently important to be considered an IEP objective at this time.

This skill has been on her IEP for many years. She/he has not learned it. We need to select an important objective she/he can actually realize.

There are many other Math skills he/she can and should learn that are more important.

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If No, do not put Potential Math Skill # 1 on the list of those that might be selected as an IEP objective and generate another Potential Math skill that may be sufficiently important.

Subject - Science

Potential Science Skill # 1 - Make iced tea

Of all the Science skills that could possibly be selected, is Potential Science Skill # 1 among the most important the student should try to learn at this time?

Yes       No

If Yes, report the reasons why Potential Science Skill # 1 is considered sufficiently important to be an IEP objective at this time.

\_\_\_ She/he was taught to make orange juice from concentrate last year. He/she can and should learn to make iced tea also.

\_\_\_ He/she really likes iced tea. If he/she does not learn to make it, someone else will to do it for him/her. Thus, it will be a functional skill.

\_\_\_ It will reduce demands he/she places on others.

\_\_\_ It will allow her/him to make more personal choices.

\_\_\_ It will enhance his/her status in the eyes of peers without disabilities and others.

\_\_\_ It can be used in many settings and activities now and in post school years.

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If Yes, put Potential Science Skill # 1 on the list of those that will be given further consideration as an IEP objective. If No, report why you consider Potential Science Skill # 1 not sufficiently important to be considered an IEP objective at this time.

\_\_\_ She/he already knows how to do it. He/she does it at home.

\_\_\_ He/she is capable of learning it, but it is not sufficiently challenging. Other Science skills are equally important and more challenging.

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If No, do not put Potential Science Skill # 1 on the list of those that might be selected as an IEP objective at this time and consider other Potential Science skills until one is determined sufficiently important. However, just because a skill

satisfies the criterion of importance, it may or may not meet the requirements of the other factors addressed below.

Difficulty Range. If we are asked to try to learn many or only skills that are too simple; i. e., at the lower ends of our difficulty ranges, we are not challenge and we underachieve. If we are asked to try to learn skills that are too complex or otherwise out of our difficulty ranges, we cannot learn them and we underachieve. It is best when skills selected for instruction are important and near the upper ends of difficulty ranges. It is counterproductive, wasteful and otherwise unacceptable to attempt to teach a skill a student is not intellectually capable of learning, no matter how important it is.

Potential Math Skill # 1 - Gathering and distributing from 1 to 3 objects correctly in response to verbal and picture cues - has been established as sufficiently important to be considered an IEP objective. It must now be determined if the student is intellectually or otherwise capable of learning it, given reasonable kinds and amounts of instruction.

Is Potential Math Skill # 1 considered within the upper end of the difficulty range of the student? That is, is it challenging and is he/she intellectually capable of learning it?

Yes                       No

If Yes, report why Potential Math Skill # 1 is considered near the upper end of the difficulty range of the student.

He/she has learned skills that are almost as difficult. She/he is now ready to try to learn something slightly more complex.

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If Yes, keep Potential Math Skill # 1 on the list of those that will be given further consideration as an IEP objective. If No, report why you judge that the student is not intellectually capable of learning Potential Math Skill # 1.

It has been on his/her IEP for several years. He/she has not learned it. It is time to select something else.

She/he has not learned other skills of similar difficulty.

This skill is much more complex than those she/he has learned recently.

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If No, remove Potential Math Skill # 1 from the list of those that will be given further consideration as an IEP objective and generate another until one that is both important and near the upper end of his/her difficulty range is delineated.

Potential Science Skill # 1 - Make iced tea - has been established as sufficiently important. Now it must be determined if the student is intellectually or otherwise capable of learning it, given reasonable kinds and amounts of instruction.

Yes                       No

If Yes, report why Potential Science Skill # 1 is considered near the upper end of the difficulty range of the student.

She/he has learned skills of similar difficulty. For example, she/he has learned to make orange juice from concentrate.

He/she has learned skills that are almost as difficult. She/he is now ready to try to learn some that are slightly more complex.

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If Yes, keep Potential Science Skill # 1 on the list of those that will be given further consideration as an IEP objective. If No, report why Potential Science Skill # 1 is not considered near the upper end of the difficulty range of the student.

She/he has not learned other skills of similar difficulty.

This skill is much more complex than those she has learned recently.



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If No, remove Potential Science Skill # 1 from the list of those that will be given further consideration as an IEP objective and generate another until one that is both important and near the upper end of her/his difficulty range is delineated.

Thus far in the IEP objective development process important instructional objectives have been selected for further consideration and the student is considered intellectually capable of realizing them.

The Number of Instructional Trials. Very few students with significant intellectual disabilities can learn some skills simply by observing the actions of others or after receiving only a few instructional trials. Most typically need many more instructional trials to learn important skills than all others. Thus, the individually appropriate numbers of instructional trials needed to learn important skills at the upper ends of difficulty ranges must be provided. If they are not, acquisition and accumulation will be extremely limited, if realized at all, and valuable resources will have been wasted.

Potential Math Skill # 1 - Gathering and distributing from 1 to 3 objects correctly in response to verbal and picture cues - has been determined important and near the upper end of the difficulty range of the student. Given his/her demonstrated intellectual abilities and learning history, can the instructional trials needed to learn Potential Math Skill # 1 be provided?

Yes                       No

If Yes, report who has agreed to be responsible for ensuring that the necessary instructional trials are provided.

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If more than the typical number of instructional trials is needed, report how they will be provided.

- A peer tutor will provide the additional instructional trials during lunch times and before and after school.
- A parent and/or sibling will provide additional instructional trials at home in natural activities and contexts.
- The skills are imbedded in functional skills she/he is performing or learning to perform at home and in her/his community. This will afford additional instructional trials.
- The skill is imbedded in a game he/she is learning. This will afford additional instructional trials.
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If the number of instructional trials needed to learn Potential Math Skill # 1 can be provided, keep it on the list of those that will be given further consideration as an IEP objective. If the needed instructional trials cannot be provided, remove it from that list and generate an acceptable alternative.

Potential Science Skill # 1 - Make iced tea - has been determined important and within the difficulty range of the student. Given his/her demonstrated intellectual capabilities and learning history, can the instructional trials needed to learn Potential Science Skill # 1 be provided?

- Yes                       No

If Yes, report who has agreed to be responsible for ensuring that the necessary instructional trials are provided.

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If more than the typical number of instructional trials is needed, report how they will be provided.

- \_\_\_ A peer tutor will provide the additional instructional trials during lunch times and after school.
- \_\_\_ The skill is imbedded in an array of functional skills the student is learning and performing at home. This will afford additional instructional trials.
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If the number of instructional trials the student needs to learn Potential Science Skill # 1 can be provided, keep it on the list of those that will be given further consideration as an IEP objective. If the needed instructional trials cannot be provided, remove it from that list and generate a reasonable alternative.

Thus far, important instructional objectives have been selected for further consideration; the student has been judged intellectually and otherwise capable of realizing them; and the necessary numbers instructional trials can and will be provided.

Practice. Without practice students with significant intellectual disabilities forget more and take longer to relearn what was forgotten than all others. This requires that they not be taught skills that cannot be maintained with reasonable practice. Knowing forgetting will occur and then allowing it to happen is wasteful and otherwise professionally irresponsible. Two important kinds of practice are vertical and horizontal. Assume I teach a student to count 5 things. Then I teach her to count 10 things. This operationalizes vertical practice because in the process of learning to count 10 things she is practicing counting 5. The problem with relying upon vertical practice strategies when trying to teach students with significant intellectual disabilities is that the upper limits of their difficulty ranges are reached rather quickly. This is extremely frustrating to both the students and to those who expect or demand progression through vertically arranged academic, therapeutic or other hierarchies, but do not get it. Horizontal practice strategies offer important options. Assume I teach a student to count 5 things

and I assume the responsibility for not allowing him to forget to do so. I then engineer horizontal practice by arranging for him to count 5 sit ups in his physical education class, to set his dining table at home for 5 family members, to put 5 bananas in his cart at the grocery store, etc. If we teach skills that are useful in a variety of settings and activities, practice can be operationalized, retention can be maximized and thus forgetting can be minimized. In addition, when practice is imbedded in several skill clusters or made the responsibility of others, teachers and therapists are released to focus on the development of new skills. Thus, it is the responsibility of instructional personnel to arrange for and empirically verify that the practice necessary for the maintenance of a skill is actualized. Finally, practicing a skill in artificial conditions may to some degree be beneficial, but practicing it in authentic settings and contexts is much better.

When he/she learns Math Skill #1 - Gathering and distributing from 1 to 3 objects correctly in response to verbal and picture cues - have arrangements for practice been made so she/he does not forget it?

Yes                       No

If Yes, report those who have agreed to be responsible for ensuring that Potential Math Skill # 1 is practiced acceptably.

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If Yes, describe the practice arrangements that have been made.

Other pictures will be substituted in the booklet and used at school, at home, at her/his faith facility and in community stores.

The skill is imbedded in games she/he is learning and playing at home.

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If the number of practice opportunities needed to maintain Potential Math Skill # 1 will be provided, keep it on the list of those that will be given further consideration for selection as an IEP objective. If the number of practice

opportunities needed to maintain Potential Math Skill # 1 will not be provided, remove it from that list and generate a reasonable alternative.

Have arrangements for the student to practice Potential Science Skill # 1 - Make iced tea - when he/she learns it been made?

Yes                       No

If Yes, report who has agreed to be responsible for ensuring that Potential Science Skill # 1 is practiced acceptably.

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If Yes, describe the Potential Science Skill # 1 practice arrangements that have been made.

- A peer tutor will supervise the necessary practice at school.
- A parent and sibling have agreed to arrange for the necessary practice at home, at her/his faith facility and at the home of a relative in naturally occurring contexts.

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If the practice needed to maintain Potential Science Skill # 1 will be provided, keep it on the list of those that will be given further consideration as an IEP objective. If the practice needed to maintain Potential Science Skill # 1 will not be provided, remove it from that list and generate a reasonable alternative.

Thus far, important instructional objectives have been selected for further consideration; the student has been judged intellectually and otherwise capable of learning them; the necessary numbers and kinds of instructional trials have been arranged; and the commitments for the needed practice that will allow

retention to be maximized and thus forgetting to be minimized have been secured.

Generalization. Unfortunately, students with significant intellectual disabilities have major difficulties generalizing what is learned across similar but different settings, activities and other conditions appropriately. Assume I have taught your daughter to stop her electric wheelchair in front of a tape line on the floor of the school gym. Now I would like your written permission to take her to busy streets and see if she stops at curbs. What would you do? If she was my daughter, I would ask for authentic assessment and instruction. That is, I would require that you provide well planned, systematic, direct assessment and instruction in real traffic conditions.

If instructional/artificial settings, activities, materials and other conditions are used, they should be as close as possible to authentic/real settings, activities, materials and other conditions. Generally, the more differences there are in the two sets of conditions, the less generalization is expressed. However, even if differences between instructional/artificial and authentic/real settings, activities, materials and other conditions are minimal, acceptable performance under authentic conditions must be validated empirically or developed. We cannot rely upon generalization skills we know a student does not possess. A skill can be considered academic, functional, motor, cognitive, social, vocational, communication, etc. Regardless, if IEP team members determined that it is important, it is their responsibility to arrange and empirically verify that it is performed in meaningful settings, activities and contexts (Brown, 2012; Brown, Kessler & Toson, 2015). In some instances, the conditions operative in instructional settings and activities are quite similar to those operative in generalization settings and activities. In most instances they are not and reasonable modifications that foster generalization must be generated.

Do you have confidence that after the student learns Potential Math Skill # 1 - Gathering and distributing from 1 to 3 objects correctly in response to verbal and picture cues - he/she can and will learn to perform it, or a reasonable version of it,

in other than the instructional settings and other conditions in which it was learned?

Yes                       No

If Yes, report the noninstructional settings and other conditions to which the student can and will generalize Potential Math Skill # 1.

Pictures of apples were substituted for pictures of art smocks; pictures of 3 piece settings of knives, forks and spoons were added to the place mats and pictures of glasses of water were substituted for pictures of milk cartons.

She/he will or can learn to use the modified booklet at home as part of daily meal routines.

She/he will or can learn to use another modified booklet when grocery shopping with family members.

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Have arrangements been made to determine the extent to which Math Skill #1 - is generalized acceptably to appropriate noninstructional settings and other conditions when it is learned?

Yes                       No

If Yes, report who is responsible for determining that Potential Math Skill # 1 is generalized/transferred acceptably to appropriate noninstructional settings and other conditions.

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If No, determine someone who will be responsible to do so before proceeding.

If the student does not generalize Potential Math Skill # 1 acceptably to appropriate noninstructional settings and other conditions with or without modifications, report who has agreed to be responsible teaching her/him to do so.

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If the student does not generalize Potential Math Skill # 1 to noninstructional settings and other conditions appropriately and if instruction in those settings and conditions that will compensate for the lack of generalization/transfer cannot be provided, it should be removed from the list of skills being considered as IEP objectives and replaced with one that is more appropriate.

Do you have confidence that after the student has learned Potential Science Skill # 1 - Make iced tea - he/she can and will perform it with or without modifications in other than the instructional settings and other conditions in which he/she learned it?

Yes                       No

If Yes, report the noninstructional settings and other conditions to which Science Skill #1 can and will be generalized.

In her/his home when preparing meals.

In the cafeteria of her/his training worksite.

At her/his religious facility when preparing for a meeting.

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Report who is responsible for determining if Potential Science Skill # 1 is generalized/transferred acceptably to noninstructional settings and conditions.

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Have arrangements been made to actually determine the extent to which Science Skill #1 with or without modifications is generalized acceptably to noninstructional settings and other conditions when it is learned?

\_\_\_ Yes                      \_\_\_ No

If No, determine someone who will be responsible to do so before proceeding.

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If the student does not generalize Potential Science Skill # 1 with or without modifications acceptably to appropriate noninstructional settings and other conditions, report who is responsible for arranging for her/him to do so.

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If the student does not or cannot generalize Potential Science Skill # 1 with or without modifications to noninstructional settings and other conditions appropriately and if instruction in the noninstructional settings that will compensate for the lack of generalization cannot be provided, it should be removed from the list of skills being considered as IEP objectives and replaced with one that is more appropriate.

Thus far, important potential IEP objectives have been delineated; the student has been judged intellectually and otherwise capable of realizing them; the necessary numbers of instructional trials have been arranged; the needed practice opportunities that will minimize forgetting and thus maximize retention have been agreed upon; the measures that will be used to determine generalization to appropriate noninstructional settings and other conditions have been decided upon; and, if acceptable generalization to noninstructional settings and other conditions is not demonstrated, the instruction needed to generate it has been arranged.

Synthesis and Context.

At school Charlie was taught to fasten and unfasten the Velcro straps on his new shoes. At home he fastens and unfastens the straps 15 to 20 times per

hour. At school Sara was taught to pick up 3 crayons from a desk and put them in a basket. At the grocery store her family uses she puts 3 of every kind of produce she can fit in a cart. At school Bill was taught to cut out pictures of the foods he would like to eat from magazines. At home he cuts out all pictures from all magazines and newspapers.

The more intellectually able you are, the better you are at fusing, clustering, combining, synthesizing disparate bits of information and producing unique and often interesting outcomes. Scientists, artists, business leaders, inventors, authors and many others are remarkably good at synthesizing isolated bits of information and producing interesting, valuable, etc. outcomes. Students with significant intellectual disabilities are not. We know how to teach them many isolated or “splinter” skills, but we also know they will rarely synthesize them effectively. Thus, school officials are responsible for engineering synthesis by arranging for skills taught to be performed in meaningful clusters in appropriate contexts. Dan was taught a math skill at school and how to ride the correct public bus to his work training site. Then he was taught to buy a snack using pictures at a grocery store and to eat it at his worksite. Then he was taught to perform these disparate skills in a cluster in authentic settings and contexts. Specifically, on the way to the bus stop he used some of the math and communication skills he learned at school to purchase a snack. Then he used his math, travel and communication skills to ride a public bus to work. During his break he ate the snack he bought on the way to work. He will probably perform these synthesized skill clusters, or those quite similar, in authentic settings for many years.

Have arrangements been made to verify that, with or without reasonable modifications, Potential Math Skill # 1 - Gathering and distributing from 1 to 3 objects correctly in response to verbal and picture cues - will be performed acceptably as a component of meaningful synthesized clusters of skills in authentic settings and contexts?

\_\_\_ Yes                      \_\_\_ No

If No, Potential Math Skill # 1 should not be considered as an acceptable IEP objective. If Yes, report the meaningful synthesized skill clusters in which

Potential Math Skill # 1 will be performed in appropriate authentic settings and contexts.

She/he will use it to complete an array of useful tasks at her/his home.

He/she will use it when shopping for groceries with family members.

She/he will use it at her/his nonschool integrated work training site.

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If Yes, report who will be responsible for ensuring that Math Skill #1, with or without reasonable modifications, is performed as a component of synthesized skill clusters in appropriate noninstructional settings and contexts.

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Have arrangements been made to verify that Potential Science Skill # 1 - Make iced tea - with or without reasonable modifications will be performed acceptably as a component of meaningful synthesized clusters of skills in appropriate authentic settings and contexts.

Yes

No

If No, Science Skill #1 should not be considered an acceptable IEP objective and a more appropriate alternative should be generated. If yes, describe the meaningful synthesized skill clusters in which Potential Science Skill # 1 will be performed in appropriate authentic settings and contexts.

She/he will make iced tea for use in meals and when preparing to play with her/his siblings at home.

She/he will make iced tea as part of her/his responsibilities at her religious facility.

\_\_\_ She/he will make iced tea it at her/his nonschool integrated work training site.

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Report who will be responsible for ensuring that Potential Science Skill # 1 is performed as a component of important synthesized skill clusters in authentic settings and contexts.

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### Summary and Conclusions

Important instructional objectives have been selected. The student has been judged intellectually and otherwise capable of reaching them. The necessary numbers instructional trials will be provided. The practice opportunities that will minimize forgetting and thus maximize retention have been arranged. Reasonable modifications in instructional conditions have been made. Measures of the extent of generalization to appropriate noninstructional settings and contexts will be obtained. If acceptable generalization is not demonstrated in authentic settings and contexts, instruction of the skills needed to do so will be provided therein. If a potential academic, functional, motor, cognitive, social, vocational, communication, etc. skill honors at least these 6 factors, it can be considered an acceptable IEP objective.

Some offer that more than these 6 factors must be carefully considered and honored. If so, they should be added and addressed. Others, when they realize the cognitive and other requirements of this process, wonder if it is acceptable to address only some. No, it is not. What if we taught a skill that was unimportant and we wasted valuable time, money and other resources? What if we tried to teach a skill that was out of his/her difficulty range and he/she never learned it. What if we started to teach a skill, but did not or could not provide the instructional trials needed to learn it? What if we spent valuable time and other

resources teaching a skill that she/he had no opportunities to practice, so he/she forgot it? What if we taught a skill that was only performed under instructional conditions when the purpose was to enhance functioning in a wide array of authentic environments, activities and contexts? What if we taught a skill as an isolated event, but it was never combined with others and performed in meaningful settings, activities and contexts?

Do these factors require cooperative relationships between schools and homes? Yes, so do state and federal laws and “best” and/or “promising” policies, procedures and practices. Do they require providing authentic assessment and instruction in individually relevant nonschool settings? Yes, students with significant intellectual disabilities simply cannot be prepared to live, work and play in integrated society if the educational and related services they receive are confined to the physical property of schools (Lane v Brown; 2015; Perez, 2012; Perez, 2013; Musgrove, 2012; Brown, Nisbet, et al. 1984; Brown, 2012). Do they require that new and better ways of thinking and operating are developed? Yes, all respected professionals constantly improve the services they provide. We should also. Currently, at school exit the vast majority of the students with significant intellectual disabilities spends their days in segregated workshops or sitting at home on waiting lists for services and interacting only with family members, others with disabilities and persons paid to be with them. Honoring at least these 6 factors in individually meaningful ways will result in better school outcomes for many more of these most deserving individuals and their families. Perhaps someday soon we can report that the vast majority is spending their days living, working and playing in integrated society.

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A version of this paper is presented on the Inclusion Campaign website of Disability Rights New Jersey - [www.inclusioncampaign.org](http://www.inclusioncampaign.org) and on the website of Lou Brown - [www.website.education.wisc.edu/lbrown](http://www.website.education.wisc.edu/lbrown).

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