

Specialized Learning

MONTHLY

Issue 003

November 9, 2023

Gaining Meaning from IEP Progress Updates - Benchmarks and Goals

Monitoring student progress is a crucial part of planning and implementing appropriate programming for all students. Students with IEPs are working toward specific goals to help them close gaps and access grade-level standards. In this issue, we will dive in and explain IEP progress updates so families can gain more meaning from the data and understand how the team uses progress updates to help guide the IEP.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions!

April Lomas - april.lomas@mot.k12.de.us



Progress is not inevitable. It's up to us to create it.

~ Michael Bloomberg



Progress Updates vs. Report Card Grades

It is important to remember that IEP progress updates provide data and information related to a child's specific annual goals, while the report card provides data and information as to how the child is progressing according to all grade-level standards.

What Are Benchmarks on the IEP?

According to federal and state regulations, all IEPs should include targeted individualized learning goals and benchmarks. An annual goal is broken down into smaller learning steps, or benchmarks, which are monitored throughout the year to determine if a student is on track to reaching his/her annual goal.

At MOT Charter, benchmark progress updates are provided to families at the same time as each trimester report card. You should expect to see data values with brief narratives related to progress, along with an indicator of whether or not the child is making satisfactory progress toward his/her annual goal.

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What if my child is not making satisfactory progress towards the annual goal?

It may be disheartening to see an indicator that your child is not currently making satisfactory progress toward the annual goal. However, our teachers and specialists will use this data to help adjust instruction and/or supports and accommodations to foster increased success over the next trimester. These adjustments will be noted in the progress update.

If a child struggles to make satisfactory progress toward an annual goal **across two benchmarks**, the IEP team will meet to make adjustments to the IEP to help the student achieve higher levels of success in meeting annual IEP goals.



What if I have questions about my child's progress report?

- If you have questions about progress on academic goals, please reach out to your child's special education teacher, first. The special education teacher is the expert on the data collected and provided to monitor the progress of your child's academic goals.
- If you have questions about progress on a related service goal (speech, OT, PT), you can reach out to that specialist, directly. If you need help contacting the specialist, please reach out to me at april.lomas@mot.k12.de.us.
- If you have general questions or would like to schedule an informal conference or IEP meeting, please reach out to me at april.lomas@mot.k12.de.us.

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Staff Spotlight

Mrs. Huffman is our 5th-grade language arts inclusion teacher. While she is in her sixth year at MOT Charter School, Mrs. Huffman has been a teacher for 16 years with 10 of those years in special education. Prior to her time at MOT, Mrs. Huffman taught in Cecil County, Maryland. She holds degrees in elementary and special education, as well as a master's degree in autism spectrum disorders. In addition to her role in the classroom, Mrs. Huffman leads a professional learning community (PLC) to help educate and provide resources to teachers at MOT to support the needs of autistic students. Mrs. Huffman loves to read, bake, and spend time with her family. Her favorite place to relax is at the beach.

Leslie Huffman



Christine Low



Ms. Low currently works in second grade and has been at MOT Charter School for 18 years. Overall, Ms. Low has spent 25 years in education in grades ranging from kindergarten through eighth grade. She holds a dual certification in regular and special education. Ms. Low has a master's degree in school counseling. When not engaged in teaching at MOT, Ms. Low enjoys spending time in the great outdoors biking, hiking, and kayaking. She also loves to do puzzles and read. Ms. Low has two grown children, both of whom went through the MOT K-8 School. Last, but certainly not least, Ms. Low has a box turtle named Digger.