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Strategies for Setting High-Quality Academic Individualized Education Program Goals

[Slide 1 – Strategies for Setting High-Quality Academic Individualized Education Program Goals]: Tessie Bailey: Good afternoon everyone and welcome to our Webinar, Strategies for setting high-quality academic individualized education program goals. We would like to thank you for joining us today. My name is Tessie Bailey and I will be the moderator for today. Before we begin, I want to orient you to a few logistic details about this webinar on the next slide.

[Slide 2 – Webinar Format & Questions]: For technical issues, a webinar team member will try to assist you as soon as possible. To contact us, you'll see a box on the righthand side where you can submit questions or comments at any time. For content question, please feel free to submit your questions at any time as well. We will either respond to the question in the chat box to you individually or in a group. Or, we'll share them with the presenters as a Q & A at the end of the presentation.

Throughout the webinar, we will be sharing links to be discussed by today's presenters in the chat box. So, right now if you look in the chat box, you can see the link to our handout including today's Power Point presentation. We'd like to start today's webinar with a brief poll about your familiarity with available goal setting resources. Please take a moment to answer the following question on your screen. Which National Center on Intensive Intervention goal setting resource have you used? And feel free to check all that apply.

The Guide: Strategies for Setting High-Quality Academic IEP Goals. The NCII Progress Monitoring Tools Chart. Our training modules. Our Student Progress Monitoring Tool for Data Collection Graphing. Or maybe you've not heard of any of these so, just select the last box which says "None, I just learned about them."

We've got great participation in our survey. Okay, we'll close up our survey. We've got about seventy-five percent of the folks who participated. And I want to share that most of your; fifty-one percent of you indicated that none; you had never heard of these resources. Which is great, which is the purpose of today's webinar. Most of our focus will actually be on the first one. The Strategies for Setting High-Quality Academic IEP Goals.

So, you've come to the right place today. A lot of you have heard of our Tools Chart; about thirty-three percent. And thirty-three percent of you have accessed some of our training modules around how to set goals. One of the resources that was new to folks is our Student Progress Monitoring Tool for Data Collection and Graphing. We recommend checking that out.

You can include up to eight students in the Excel resource to set your baseline and your goals. As well as input progress monitoring data and print graphs for free. So, thanks for participating in our first webinar. I do want to let folks know that today's Webinar is sponsored by the National Center on Intensive Intervention.

[Slide 3 – Introducing the PROGRESS Center]: And the Office Special Education Programs newly funded PROGRESS Center. The PROGRESS Center, which stands for Promoting Rigorous Outcomes and Growth by Redesigning Educational Services for Students with Disabilities. It provides information, resources, tools and technical assistance services to support location educators in developing and implementing high-quality educational programs that enable children with disabilities to make progress and meet challenging goals. The Center's full website, promotingprogress.org, will launch in early May. So, we'll keep you posted.

[Slide 4 – Session Outcomes]: Today's session is the first of a two-part goal setting webinar series sponsored by NCII and the PROGRESS Center. Today's webinar focuses on setting Academic IEP goals and we'll demonstrate how educators can use the first resource that was on that list, Strategies for Setting High-Quality Academic IEP Goals, as well as other related NCII resources to improve your goal development.

You can access a copy of the guide on the NCII website or check out the handouts section of today's webinar. We will also model three academic goal setting strategies. And then share local and state application of goal setting resources and their lessons learned in using those resources. The second webinar in this series, which is actually scheduled for March 13th, will focus on setting behavior IEP goals. And I'll share more about that webinar towards the end of this session.

[Slide 5 – Introductions]: Again, my name is Tessie Rose Baily and I am the Director of the PROGRESS Center and I serve as a Principle Consultant for the National Center on Intensive Intervention at the American Institutes for Research. As today's moderator, I am pleased to introduce the other presenters for today. Zach Weingarten is a Researcher for the National Center on Intensive Intervention as well as the PROGRESS Center. He supports evaluation activities and product development for both centers.

Thom Jones is the Wyoming State Personnel Development Grant Director and the State Systemic Improvement Plan or SSIP Coordinator at the Wyoming Department of Education. In his role, Thom also provides direct coaching and support for IEP and Intervention goal setting for target districts. And Justine is an amazing Special Education teacher at Freedom Elementary School in Cheyenne Wyoming. She not only has experience in developing high-quality academic IEP goals; she coaches and supports teachers in her district in writing realistic yet ambitious goals using the resources that will be shared today.

[Slide 6 – A Call to Action: Endrew F. v. Douglas Country School District (2017)]: Before we begin, I would like to provide some context for today's content. On March 22nd 2017, the U.S. Supreme Court issued a unanimous opinion in Endrew F. versus Douglas County School District. In that case, the Court interpreted the scope of free appropriate public education or FAPE requirement in the IDEA. The Court overturned the Tenth Circuit Courts decision that Endrew, a child with Autism, was only entitled to an educational program that was calculated to provide nearly more than de minimis educational benefit.

In rejecting the Tenth Circuits reasoning, the Supreme Court determined that to meet its substantive obligation under IDEA that the school must offer an IEP reasonably calculated to enable a child to make progress appropriate in the light of the child's circumstances. The Court

additionally emphasized that the requirement is that every child should have the chance to meet challenging objectives. Now, we get a lot of questions through our Center about how this looks in practice. And what we know is that ensuring that students with disabilities have an opportunity to make progress towards challenging objectives requires setting realistic and ambitious annual IEP goals.

[Slide 7 – Developing IEP Goals]: Now, the IEP is a valuable tool for educators. It's not just an annual requirement. It outlines the goals for what students need to know or be able to do. And it clarifies how progress towards those goals will be measured. These goals, which are written by a statement of present levels of academic and functional performance or PLAAFP, help teams to design and implement high quality educational programs that enable children to make, with disabilities, to make progress towards and meet challenging goals.

Despite the power of common IEP goals, we continue to see common pitfalls, such as lack of alignment with PLAAFP or goals that focus too narrowly on specific skills. In addition, IEP goals continue to be measured by observational trials or anecdotal notes and data, which are not easily interpreted for responsiveness.

To support educators in preventing some of these pitfalls, NCII created the Guide for Studying High-Quality IEP Goals. My colleague Zach is going to walk you through this useful resource.

[Slide 8 – Strategies for Setting High-Quality Academic IEP Goals]: And he'll model three validated goal setting strategies that are presented in the Guide. Zach.

Zach Weingarten: Great, thank you Tessie. So, I'm going to discuss some strategies for setting high-quality academic IEP goals. As Tessie mentioned, these are the strategies that we share in the Guide.

[Slide 9 – Steps for Goal Setting]: So, I'm going to summarize the guide sectionally. And if you want more information, I really encourage you to check out the guide. The resource is available on the NCII website at intensiveintervention.org and the link is also in the chat box. I just wanted to say also that while the strategies that are described in the guide are geared towards setting an IEP goal. They are also applicable to setting intervention goals for students receiving Tier 2 or Tier 3 interventions who don't have an IEP.

So, in the guide we present these four steps for setting an IEP goal that you see up here on the screen. The first one is selecting a target measure. The second one is establishing baseline performance. The third is choosing a strategy for setting the goal. And then finally, writing a measurable goal.

So, in the guide we explain how the educator can use these steps to set goals that are measurable, ambitious and appropriate for the students. And while this guide is geared towards educators, it's important to remember that all members of the IEP team, including families, should be involved in the discussions about setting the goals.

[Slide 10 – Step 1: Select the Target and Measure]: So, the first step that we have in the guide is to select the target and the measure. So, when we're talking about determining the targeted behavior in academics, we're often talking about a targeted behavior, such as: math

computations or passage reading fluency, or it could be math concepts and applications. Those are just some examples or target behaviors that we might want to measure.

Once we've identified that targeted behavior based on the student's individual needs, we want to identify a measure to assess the student's progress. And so, in the guide, we present these two broad categories of measures. The first one would be a single skill measure, which is also known as a mastery measure. You see that on the left side of the screen. And this would be used to assess the student's mastery of a discrete skill.

So, in the example here, we see that the educator wanted to assess the student's mastery of the short vowel A for a few weeks. And then assess the student's mastery of the short vowel I. These are useful for measuring progress on a short-term instructional objective, but they are less useful for monitoring student's maintenance of skills over time or for monitoring progress on a broad set of skills. In addition, these mastery measures have some limitations related to their psychometric properties and their capacity to model a student's growth.

So, on the right side of the screen we see general outcome measures. And general outcome measures are indicators of general skill success that reflects overall confidence on an outcome. So, these might include all of the skills that might be taught in the annual grade level curriculum or the focus on a skill that reflects overall confidence in a domain, such as reading connected text. So, these are what are more commonly recommended for setting annual IEP goals. They're useful for describing student's growth and development over time and for providing information on student's current performance and their rate of development.

Another benefit of general outcome measures are that they are frequently simple and efficient to use and sensitive to student's improvement. In addition, publishers of these assessments typically provide information about national norms that allows students performance to be compared with peers.

[Slide 11 – Identify a Measure: Key Characteristics]: So, whichever type of measure that you choose, it's important that these key characteristics are considered. So, you want to make sure that we're choosing a valid and reliable tool most importantly. And the Academic Progress Monitoring Tools Chart on the NCII website will help you to determine whether the tool that you have selected meets some of these criteria.

[Slide 12 – Step 2: Establish a Baseline]: So, the second step that we discuss in the guide is to establish a student's baseline. So, it's important that the student's baseline be set using the same tool that will be used for progress monitoring. And there are three approaches that we used in the guide. The first one is to use the student's score from universal screening. For this to be a valid baseline, you want to make sure that progress monitoring begins with in two weeks of when this data point was collected.

The second option would be to administer three progress monitoring probes in one testing session and select the median score. So, in this example here, you can see that the educator gave reading passage probes to the student in one session and then selected median words read correctly and the median number of errors to establish the student's baseline. The third option would be to calculate the average of three consecutive progress monitoring scores collected

during separate testing sessions. So, in this example, they took the first three data points from progress monitoring, found the mean of those and used that as the student's baseline.

[Slide 13 – Using the Baseline to Information the PLAAFP]: So, it's important that we use the student's baseline information when we're writing the PLAAFP statement. So, the student's baseline score should be included in the PLAAFP. So, for example, you may write a statement such as. When given a standardized passage at the second-grade level, Chris currently reads fifty-five words correct per minute with ninety-three percent accuracy.

So, while that information should be included, it's important to recognize that that would not be a complete PLAAFP statement in and of itself. It's also important to include additional information in the PLAAFP, but we do want to include that baseline score.

[Slide 14 – Step 3: Choose a Strategy for Setting the Goal]: So, the third step that we have, that we lay out in the guide is to choose a strategy for setting the goal. And this is where we present the bulk of the content in the guide and we review these three strategies. And so, on the right side of the screen you can see that there is a one-page handout which provides an overview of each of these goal setting strategies. So, that's at the back of the guide and is a useful reference.

And so, there are three validated approaches to setting goals that we cover. The first one is using benchmarks. The second one is using national norms for weekly rate of improvement. And then the third one is using an intra-individual framework.

[Slide 15 – Option 1: Benchmarks for Middle- or End-of-Year Performance]: So, for option number one, this is using benchmarks for middle or end-of-year performance. This is a really straight forward approach which makes it a great choice for setting goals. It can be especially useful for students who are performing at or close to grade level. So, to use this approach, the educator would simply locate the benchmark. These are often included in progress monitoring data tools/systems.

The tools will include the middle and end-of-year benchmark and you would just take that and use that as the student's goal, which would then be plotted on their progress monitoring graph. Again, some advantages of this are that it's easy to use when the progress monitoring tool provides benchmarks. It tracks progress towards grade level expectations, which is where we want out students to be, and it's efficient for setting goals for a large number of students.

However, this may not be an appropriate approach for students who are significantly below benchmark. So, in the guide we recommend that to determine whether it's an appropriate approach that you could calculate the weekly growth rate required to meet the goal and compare it to the typical rate of grown to the national norms. So, if the student is going to be expected to make more progress per week than a typical student is making then you may not want to use this as an approach.

[Slide 16 – Where do you find benchmarks?]: So, in terms of where to find these benchmarks, many of the published progress monitoring tools include middle and end-of-year benchmarks. You can use the NCII Academic Progress Monitoring Tools Chart to find out whether many of these tools have those benchmarks available. For any of those that don't have these published

benchmarks, you can look elsewhere. We also include on the NCII website some compiled Oral Reading Fluency norms that you could consult, or you can find other published research that includes national norms for weekly; sorry, for benchmarks.

[Slide 17 – Option 2: National Norms for Rate of Improvement]: So, the second option that we present is to use national norms for rate of improvement. And this is an approach that uses a standard formula for calculating the goal using the rate of improvement. So, national norms on the rate of improvement are based on the typical growth of students from a national sample. So, many progress monitoring tools provide these national norms for each grade level and they oftentimes help educators calculate goals based on this information.

So, this type of goal setting is used when the benchmark is unrealistic during the intervention time frame, but the student is still expected to make growth comparable to peers. So, to use this approach, you would find the rate of improvement based on the information that the tool provides. You would then multiply it by the number of weeks left in the intervention. Then add the students baseline score to get your goal.

So, this is an approach that includes an individual; is a somewhat individualized approach because you're incorporating the student's baseline score when you're setting the goal. So, you're taking into account where the student is starting. So, it provides a mechanism for writing an ambitious but realistic goal based on the student's initial performance. This is useful when the benchmark is unrealistic as I mentioned but the student is still expected to make growth comparable to peers.

One consideration to keep in mind is that if a student is performing below grade level peers, matching the normative rate of improvement could maintain achievement gap in some cases. It's also worth noting that some progress monitoring tools provide some recommendations for ambitious or typical rates of improvement.

[Slide 18 – How do I set goals using ROI?]: So, here's an example of how you can set a goal using this approach. So, in this example the rate of improvement was one and five tenths. So, the educator would find that information and then multiply it by the number of weeks left in the instructional period, which in this case is ten. Then they would add the student's baseline score, which in this case is fifty-two to arrive at the goal of sixty-seven. So, that would be an example of how to use rates of improvement for setting a goal.

[Slide 19 – Practice Opportunity: Goal Setting -- June]: In the guide, we provide a practice opportunity. So, appendix A is an opportunity for you to practice setting the goals using the benchmark and norms for rate of improvement methods. So I encourage you to check that out in the guide as well. The answers are found in the back of the resource.

[Slide 20 – Option 3: Intra-Individual Framework]: So, the third option would be to use an intra-individual framework. This is often used for students who are performing far below grade level or with very low skills where typical growth rates are not appropriate. So, to use this method you're going to take the three most recent data points to calculate the student's baseline score. And one important distinction with this method is that rather than basing the growth rate on national norms or calculating the student's previous– the student's individual growth rate

based on their previous performance. So, that would be what SROI stand for; it's the student's rate on improvement.

You're going to base that rate of improvement on at least eight data points. So, to use this option we take the student's rate of improvement in the intervention so far, and we can calculate that in a variety of ways, and the Guide will provide more details on how to calculate their rate of improvement, it's also called slope. And we're going to multiply that by one point five or one and five tenths. The reason that we're going to multiply it by one point five is because we want to make sure that we're increasing their rate of performance.

So, we generally want to increase their– we want to make sure that we are holding them to high expectations and that we're also holding ourselves to high expectations. So, we want to improve the growth rate by about fifty percent. So, we're going to multiply their previous growth rate by one point five and then multiply it by the number of weeks left in the intervention and then add the student's baseline score to arrive at the goal.

So, again this is useful for when a student is performing far below grade level and standard growth rates are not appropriate. Some considerations here are that this option is the most complicated in terms of calculation. So, it could be difficult to understand and calculate and therefore may require more training and support. It also requires the collection of at least eight data points before setting the goal, so that requires a little bit more time. It's important to note that this is likely not necessary for students performing at or near grade level.

[Slide 21 – Setting a Goal Using an Intra-Individual Framework]: On this slide, we see an example of setting a goal using this intra-individual framework. So, first the student's rate of improvement or the SROI is calculated. In this case it's one word read correctly. And so, in the first eight weeks of the intervention, that was the rate of improvement that they were making weekly. We would then take that slope and multiply it by one point five because we want to boost their rate of growth by about fifty percent.

We're going to then multiply it by the number of weeks left in the intervention, which in this case is ten weeks. So, we have one point five times ten. And then we're going to add the student's baseline score, which is nineteen, to arrive at their goal of thirty-four words read correctly. It's important to mention for all of these strategies that once you arrive at the goals, you want to add that to the progress monitoring chart along with the student's baseline. And you really need the goal line which connects the baseline to the goal in order to see if the student is on track.

[Slide 22 – Practice Opportunity: Goal Setting – Jack (Reading) and Lincoln (Math)]: So, in the Guide there are a couple of other practice opportunities. So, Appendix B is the practice activity for setting a goal using the intra-individual frameworks. And then Appendix C is an activity where you get to practice all three types of goal setting. And again, the answers are included in the back of the resource.

[Slide 23 – Step 4: Write a Measurable Goal]: The last step that we present in the guide is writing a measurable goal. And so, we want to make sure that the goal that we write includes or addresses the condition or the context in which the skill will be performed, the target behavior, as

well as the level or proficiency and time frame that would be needed. So, for example we also include this sample IEP template structure. So, we could write a goal, such as: when given a standardized third grade level reading probe, Michael will read ninety-nine words correctly in one minute with ninety-five percent accuracy by spring benchmarking.

[Slide 24 – When writing goals remember…]: On the next slide you can see that we provide a table of some examples of statements that fit each of these components. So, in terms of the first component, which is condition, here we may be talking about things like materials or tools use, the grade level or the setting or timing involved. So, it could be statements like, when given thirty first grade site words or it could be when given a third-grade reading passage.

The next component would be the target behavior. So, here we have the observable behavior and the target goal. So, this could be a statement like, the student will read thirty of thirty sight words or that the student will read sixty words correctly.

And then finally, we have the level of proficiency/timeline. And here we have things like the accuracy, the timeline or the number of trials. So, it could include information like ninety-five percent accuracy or three consecutive probes or by the spring benchmark.

So, also before I turn it back over, I just want to mention that in the guide we have sort of this checklist that we include. You just want to make sure that the goal is measurable. So, some of the items on the checklist include: Is the goal quantifiable? Can it be observed? Can data be collected systematically? And can the data be graphed? So, with that, I'm going to move things back over to Tessie who will move things onto the panel

[Slide 25 – Goal Setting in Action: Reflections from Practitioners]: **Tessie Bailey:** So, before we move to the panel, I do have two questions that I want to share before we move forward. Zach, can you briefly just share the pros and cons of each method in terms of closing the gap with their same grade level peers?

Zach Weingarten: So, I would say in terms of closing the gap with the same grade peers, I think that, you know, I know that using benchmarks would of course probably is the one that comes to mind for me first. Because you know that essentially is exactly what that would do if the student could reach that benchmark. Then that would mean that you have closed the gap with same-grade peers. Of course, it's really up to the IEP team to decide whether that's an appropriate strategy because, as I mentioned, hitting that benchmark in some cases requires a rate of growth that just may not be realistic. So, it's really important to consider, as I mentioned, what the typical growth rate might be and how the student, you know, whether the student would be able to match that or exceed that growth rate.

Tessie Bailey: Right, and I think something to recognize is that the rate of improvement is often used as Zach mentioned when the student is unable to reach the benchmark during that same year. But it is feasible that the student may close the gap over a multi-year period time when we're using ambitious growth rates. I think the biggest concerns that we have with these strategies is with the intra-individual is that you are setting an expectation that's based on individual previous growth and it's not likely to help the student close the gap because it's based

on a growth rate that is not typical; it's not like typically developing grade level peers. Hopefully that helps.

There was another question that I just want to reference. You talked about the Progress Monitoring Tools Chart and we received a question around are all of the available progress monitoring and universal screening tools available on the Tools Chart? And the answer is no. Right now, the Tools Chart is– it includes tools that have been submitted for review by publishers. So, if you do not see your tool on the Tools Chart, we highly recommend that you contact your publisher and ask them to submit for review so that they can make it on the Tools Chart.

Alright, well thank you Zach.

Zach Weingarten: Thank you.

Tessie Bailey: Well, at this time, I'm going to introduce my colleagues Thom Jones and Justine Essex from Wyoming and they're going to share their reflections on IEP goal setting in action.

[Slide 26 – Panel Questions]: Our panelists will be responding to several questions that were submitted prior to the webinar. If you do have additional questions, please submit them in the questions box at any time. And there is some time after they're done addressing these questions that I will present those. I'm going to pass this over to Thom Jones first.

Thom Jones: Hi, thank you very much Tessie. And I appreciate the opportunity to kind of share our experiences and lessons learned with this process. Before I begin addressing the questions that you see on your screen, we had received two other questions kind of beforehand that I think we need to address. The first question deals with how do teachers manage progress monitoring so many goals? And they talk about when you have large caseloads with twenty plus students, each with numerous IEP goals.

And one of the things that– one of the processes that we work with our teachers is that we were really focused on those students what have the most intensive learning needs. So, we asked the teachers that we coached to really focus on very select goals and the data collections that are brief but very reliable. And what we see is those students that were progress monitoring weekly that it was a very small number. The larger portion of their caseload, as long as they're making progress towards their IEP goals, may be monitored a lot less frequently. I'll get it out in a minute, whether that be monthly or even bi-weekly.

The other questions that we received is, when not using a norm measured based tool, how do we set appropriate ambitious goals? So, this is something that we've dealt with in some of the schools that we've coached teachers with before they got really progress monitoring tools that they used. Or, we've also done it with our early childhood, child development centers or pre-schools as a part of our state improvement project.

At any rate, what we do in those cases is that we establish a baseline through a very similar method as the intra-individual framework. And then utilizing that baseline and continuing to track student progress. We then utilize the student rate of improvement to calculate the goal. At this point, there's a little bit of flexibility because once we have an established goal, we usually

will come in and tweak it. Really depending on kind of the teacher's experience, their familiarity with maybe adapting interventions to make them more challenging for the students.

And where we may see that rate of improvement with the student that we may be able to push the student a little bit harder to make it a little bit more ambitious. And in some cases, we'll increase that number. And I hope; I am just checking to make sure that I answered all of those questions.

Oh, and one other thing too, I did want to add this last question. It's that there is a progress monitoring tool and I know that a lot of the tools that are available out there have a graphing function in it, but a lot of the teachers that we worked with prior to getting those tools with graphing functions, we utilized the progress monitoring tool: the Excel sheet offered by NCII in order to track and monitor the progress of students in our project.

So, onto the panel questions that you see on your screen. Our context that prompted the use of this and related resources, so, with the state of Wyoming, we're involved with what is known as data-based individualization. And this is really looking at these students and focusing on these student's sub-set skilled deficiencies and developing or intensifying an existing intervention to move that student along; to really kind of assist them in their progress.

I'm sitting here double checking my notes real quick. So, we drove this as part of our state improvement plan. And once we began working with teachers on the implementation of data-based individualization we realized two things. One is: a number of the teachers that we were actually working with needed the set skill of setting goals, and those that didn't were explicitly asking for this set skill.

So, bringing this really became a natural extension of the work that we'd been doing within the state, both under the SSIP and had become an integral part in the coaching process that we utilized with the teachers in our project. And I think as far as that question is concerned, Justine may have additional information that she would like to include if possible.

Justine Essex: Sure, thanks Thom. As far as the context that prompted us to use this and you know the related resources that we're using now, the resource teachers within my district were just really frustrated with the lack of tools and resources to use with our students. We really wanted more professional development opportunities in the area of goal setting and interventions and progress monitoring. And collectively, we kind of voiced our concerns to one of Special Services Consultants from our district.

And so, with the wave of her magic wand, she bought in Thom and Tessie to help us with that development. You know, using the tools that NCII has developed, that's kind of how we got started in all of this. The next question is how are you using this and other goal setting resources? Right now, I'm just tailoring it to my students and their individual needs.

Obviously, our students are not cookie-cutter kids. We have to do what we need to do to meet their individual needs. So, I'm using to guide the focus for my instruction; those goals that I've created within their IEPs are really driving the instruction that I'm doing daily in my classroom with my students. And really, truly, my students and the parents and the IEP team is a part of

that goal setting process too. Thom, did you have anything that you wanted to add onto that question?

Thom Jones: No ma'am. I believe that pretty much covers the same thing. As far as us using those resources, I talked about it a little bit on the last question in that it is just a natural extension of the project of data-based individualization that we're doing here in the state.

Justine Essex: Exactly. So, the next question is: what impact has this had on your work and student performance? For me really, truly, not only goal setting but just DBI in general has changed my teaching role in such a positive way. My students are motivated to want to do better than the week before. We love having the celebrations and sharing the data with anyone throughout our school, whether it be, you know, their classroom teachers or the principle or a secretary. Everybody loves being involved in those celebrations when the students are meeting their goals and they're just so excited to share in their progress.

Overall though, the goals are specific and attainable. And I feel really confident attending IEP meetings and leading those IEP meetings in saying, you know, here's the data that your child has from this past year. And look at their growth and, you know, look at goals being met. That's the biggest thing for me. It's just a big celebration in our kids and their abilities and whatever those may be. So, that's the biggest impact that DBI and goal setting has had on me and.

Tessie Bailey: And Justine, can I interject? I know that you actually had some students that actually exited out of Special Education. And I think that was based on setting grade level benchmarks that students were– once they were able to meet the grade level benchmarks it was easier to have the conversation about moving a student to a less intensive level of support. Where some kids were in resource and are now in more inclusive supports. Can you talk a little bit more about that?

Justine Essex: Yeah Tessie, you are spot on. I did use those benchmarks for those students that eventually were exited from Special Education; I used those benchmark norms in creating those goals. So, once those students were you know close to meeting those goals, I'm not only talking to their classroom teachers and talking to their parents but I'm also using the tools that Gen Ed is using to make sure that my data that I'm gathering is corelating well with what's going on in Tier 1.

So, those Tier 1 screeners. So yeah, I'm not having to guess whether a student is making progress or not. I know where they are, and I know where they need to be. Like I said, I'm using a whole bunch of different tools and, you know, communicating with parents and teachers to be able to make those data informed decisions.

Alright, the next question was: what are your future plans related to goal setting? Obviously creating more goals. As Resource Teachers, we're constantly creating new goals and I'm no different. So, just making sure that I'm setting those attainable but ambitious goals. It's super important for each of my individual students.

Right now, I am currently a DBI Coach in the district that I'm working in. So, I'm helping other Resource Teachers in making appropriate goals for their students and I'm also finding

interventions and tools to meet the needs of their students as well and progress monitoring their process; just basically coaching them along that whole DBI process.

I'm hoping soon that I can be a part of the conversation at the building level. When putting students through our building Intervention Team, I know that as Zach had mentioned earlier, this doesn't necessarily have to be utilized within that Tier 3 Special Ed. instruction. It could also be really beneficial when setting goals for our students who are in Tier 2 interventions. So, I'm really excited about the future and you know the work that my building and our district, yeah our district are doing. Thom, did you have anything with that?

Thom Jones: No, the only thing that I would add as far as future plans related to that is again, we continue to get requests from districts and teachers throughout the state specifically for that resource. And so, we're incorporating that into our yearly educational conference that we have here in the state as well as other trainings that we roll out for professional development.

Justine Essex: Alright, and the last question is: what are lessons learned from improving the quality of goal setting practices? For me I would say you really don't have to guess. There are PDFs, webinars such as this, and videos that NCII has supplied on their website to assist you in your goal setting practices. Really, truly, there's so much out there that they've created for us that– it's so helpful and just being able to utilize those resources and read those resources and implement them in your classroom. That's my biggest lesson learned; it's that they've done a lot of the grunt work for us.

Thom Jones: And I would add that from my perspective, as far as lessons learned, it's how far you really can push students when you have an accurate, attainable goal that you're really focused on. That intentionality of driving instruction toward that goal, it's amazing. I've seen a lot of the teachers that we've worked with where they're working with students and they're like, "Eh, I don't know if we're going to see a lot. We hadn't seen a whole lot in the previous year."

And we sat down and we really looked at creating a solid goal and then a plan on how to reach that goal. And then probably nine times out of ten, we've pushed those students not just to the goal but beyond it. And so, in having that clear vision, it's just been so huge for the buy-in for our project, including my own buy-in to the work that we do.

Justine Essex: Right, I think on the next one.

Tessie Bailey: Can I?

Justine Essex: Oh, I'm sorry. Go Ahead.

Tessie Bailey: I just want to interrupt for a second. We did get an audience question that seems really timely based on your lessons learned. The question is around the collaboration between General Education and Special Education. They indicated that it sounds like in order to have that you really have to have strong collaboration between the two. Was that culture already in existence in your site? And if not, how did you or how are you getting there?

Justine Essex: Yeah, so that was kind of already established at my building. Most of– all of the teachers that I work with, I'm very blessed. We communicate often, if not daily on you know

some of our kids' progress. And they're a part of, like I said, obviously of the IEP Team, but I'm constantly sharing the data that I have collected through my tools with them.

And like I said, including the parents are included in that as well. But just letting classroom teachers know that they may not be on grade level necessarily, but they're growing in their own right. They're making progress as it relates to them and the skills that they have. It's just that it's exciting for all involved and most of the time, if not all of the time, the teachers want to be a part of that. So, I don't know if I answered that question very well but, yeah.

Tessie Bailey: No, I think that's great.

Thom Jones: Tessie, I was going to add too. I mean we have such an amazing group of educators in this state and I'm privileged to work with so many of them, but you don't always see that type of collaborative work taking place. And one of the interesting things that we have found, and I guess this would be added to the lessons learned, is that in some cases where we don't have that harmonious you know inter-mixing of Gen Ed and SPED that a lot of this work— goal setting and progress monitoring tracking— it really has empowered a lot of our Special Education teachers to kind of open the doors to that conversation. And I think that when you have that type of data, it becomes very powerful. And through that, you can gain a lot of the buy in from your General Education folks as well. So, even where it wasn't pre-existing, it exists now because of this process.

Justine Essex: Yeah, I just want to piggyback off of that too. I bring the data, I bring the graphs to the IEP meetings. And so, the Gen Ed teachers are seeing that. And they're like, how do I get my hands on this? They want it too, which is why I am excited about being a part of those goal setting practices on a building level at Tier 2.

Tessie Bailey: So, let's see your data.

[Slide 27 – Early Reading – Letter Names PM Report]: **Justine Essex:** Yeah, go ahead. So, this is a student of mine that came in. Really, his baseline was that he didn't know any letter names at the beginning of the year. This is a first grader. So, I screened him and like I said, no letter names at the beginning of the year. And sorry, this charts really fuzzy.

But we got up to I think forty-two on our last progress monitor. So, he was making great goals; making great gains, excuse me. And again, it's a part of that celebration for this particular student because he loves to be pumped up by the people around him and being so excited for him. So, we're right on track to making, you know, meeting those goals in this area. So, like I said this was the letter names.

[Slide 28 – Early Reading – Letter Sounds PM Report]: I think on the next slide, it's the same student with letter sounds. So, we're still trying to work up there to our goal line, but it's still a great trend line for our little guy. I think it says on that last one that it was twenty-five letter sounds within one minute. And so, he's shooting up there which is great to see.

[Slide 29 – CBM English Reading PM Report]: On that last graph that I have, it's just a regular fluency, Oral Reading Fluency progress monitoring report. For this particular student, he is close to being back on grade level. So, I have selected a benchmark goal for this student, but

again, making pretty good gains. Somewhat inconsistent but overall that trend line is moving in a positive direction. So, these are the things, these graphs that I have here are the things that I'm sharing with everyone. I'm sharing with the parents. We're having those intentional conversations with the students, you know when we're first progress monitoring. Like, where do you want to be by the end of year? What do you think is a good goal? And again, sharing this data too with the Gen Ed teachers is super important to see that the student is making gains.

Tessie Bailey: Great, so I do have a question about your first slide.

[Slide 27 – Early Reading – Letter Names PM Report]: And maybe you can just talk briefly about which tool you're using and how you determined what was the benchmark that you might use with this student?

Justine Essex: Yeah, so.

Tessie Bailey: Was it an embedded tool or yeah?

Justine Essex: Yeah, okay. So, on this first slide, the tool that I used is Fast Bridge. Many teachers use different tools for what they want to use, but like I said, I've chosen Fast Bridge. Within that tool, they give like a given ROI for that individual student. So, for this particular student I used an ROI base on their baseline, but like I said for that third slide; like for the fluency passage, I used the benchmark norm.

Tessie Bailey: Great

[Slide 29 – CBM English Reading PM Report]: And another question that we received was around a student who is first being monitored on letter names and letter sounds. And the question is, do you write your goals with more than one measure? And I'll take the first stab at that from a recommendation standpoint. It is that we often recommend writing your IEP goals at the highest level. What is the most general outcome measure that's appropriate for that grade level as Zach had mentioned in his section?

In some cases, you may be monitoring on both of those because you're trying to provide– to gather more information about how the student is responding. They might be responding to one area of reading but not another. But for an IEP goal, we often recommend at the broadest indicator or proficiency that you expect.

And we do have one more question and I just want to put it out there. It's related to attendance. And I can't remember if it was at your school or another, but you did have some students who struggled to attend the intervention or weren't attending school. How has that impacted perhaps any of your IEP goal writing?

Justine Essex: Tessie, I haven't had any kiddos necessarily like that. But obviously that plays an impact on fidelity with an intervention and consistency. So, I don't– I'm not sure how to answer that question because I haven't been in that situation. So, sorry.

Tessie Bailey: Okay, and I did respond. And I think one of the things that we, as we talk about in some of the DBI training. It is that the intervention or specially designed program is one piece

of what we do but it's also around the fidelity of implementation and exposure to the intervention, whether it's attendance, you know are they actually in the instruction that your providing is critical.

And so, if attendance is interfering with the student being able to access the curriculum or the specially designed instruction then what we need to be looking at is to design an intervention that is focused on increasing the student's attendance. And that may be requiring wraparound services or partnering with the parents or other community service providers depending on the student's reason that they're not attending. There are some great resources on the NCII website to consider around intensification strategy checklists and some problem-solving teaming resources that might help a team problem solve around how do you address persistent attendance issues whether it's for an individual or a group of students.

[Slide 30 – Learn More: Building capacity and improving student outcomes with DBI – Wyoming's implementation story]: Well, I would like to thank our presenters today for sharing goal setting resources, their strategies, and their stories. As with most webinars, you probably have lots of questions and we've only had time for just a couple of those.

[Slide 31 – Questions & Answers]: For those we don't get to today, we will be posting a follow up resources and responses as needed. I think that we've addressed most of them. But I will; we did have one that I want to pose. But you will be able to find all of these responses where you'll find the recorded webinar from today, as well as the Power Point presentation. We did receive a question around why don't we include the baseline in the goal statement template that we present in the Guide?

And that is because that's included in our PLAAFP. Some states do ask that the practitioners include that in their goal statement. But IDEA is currently; when they think about that baseline it often occurs within the PLAAFP statement depending on how your IEP is structured.

[Slide 32 – Closing and Additional Resources]: Well, our time has come to an end and I'd like to reflect on what we heard today. And share several other resources to help you on your journey to set appropriately challenging goals for students with disabilities. It's important to remember that IEP goals; we want to go to the next slide.

[Slide 33 – Goals Should …]: Focus on student behavior and not educator behavior. We want to make sure that they're monitored with enough frequency to determine progress and make timely instructional interventions. I mean, some kids might need to be monitored twice a week. For others, it might be okay being monitored every other week or in some cases even monthly.

We want to make sure that the goals are measured using objective, valid, and reliable measures rather than more subjective measures. And most importantly I think is ensuring that the goals are realistic yet ambitious.

[Slide 34 – Similarities and Differences: Academic and Behavioral Progress Monitoring]: We know that while there are some similarities in academic and behavior goal setting, there are many differences and that many of the strategies shared today do not apply. As a result, we have also developed a Guide for Strategies for Setting Data-Driven Behavior IEP Goals.

[Slide 35 – Save the Date: Upcoming Webinar for Behavior Goal Setting]: And we do have an upcoming resource that's coming out. Well, the resource is out, you can find the link in the chat box. But we have a webinar coming up that's going to share strategies for setting behavior IEP goals. It's scheduled for March 13th 2020 from 12 to 1pm Eastern Standard Time. And during that Webinar, Teri Marx from the National Center on Intensive Intervention and the PROGRESS Center as well as Doctor Faith Miller from the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities. They will model how to set ambitious behavior goals for student using valid and reliable progress monitoring measures. And then they will share how to write measurable and realistic goals focused on the replacement behavior.

[Slide 36 – Want to Learn More?]: In addition to the Guide that was shared today, there are additional resources available to support you in monitoring annual IEP goals and setting those goals in the Endrew era. Consider checking out our previous webinar: Recommendations and Resources for Preparing Educators in the Endrew F. Era. And there, you can learn a little bit more about Endrew as well as its impact on students with disabilities.

[Slide 37 – Want to Learn More?]: You can also check out the National Center on Intensive Intervention's Progress Monitoring Tools Chart. And there, you'll find tools as Zach mentioned to support goal setting using both single skill as well as general outcome measures. You might also appreciate the two former IRIS modules that are available. They are featuring two of our PROGRESS Center Senior Advisors; Mitch Yell and David Bateman.

[Slide 38 – Want to Learn More? Visit us at …]: And finally, to stay up to date, we recommend that you sign up for our quarterly newsletter. We have one for NCII and the PROGRESS Center and you can access the sign up on our website. NCII is continuously adding new resources to help educators in designing and implementing intensive interventions.

And the PROGRESS Center, based on its name, will provide you with resources to support you in ensuring ambitious growth for students with disabilities. Our website is expected to go live in early May. And so, sign up so that you don't miss it.

[Slide 39 – National Center on Intensive Intervention]: And finally, I'd like to thank you for joining us today to learn more about setting high quality academic IEP goals. If you would like to stay connected, please follow us on Twitter, Facebook and You Tube. And please have a wonderful day.

[Slide 40 – References]: Thanks!

[Slide 41 – NCII Disclaimer]: Bye.