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**The April Dunn Act**  
Malik and  
the Jump Start Pathway

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# Objectives

Provide an overview of the April Dunn Act, via a student scenario, including the following:

- Introduction to the April Dunn Act
- Graduation Pathways and Requirements and April Dunn Act
- Determining Eligibility
- Selecting Courses for Applying April Dunn Act
- Developing and Applying Individual Performance Criteria
- Documenting Achievement of Individual Performance Criteria

# Meet the Student

## Meet Malik:

- a student with an exceptionality of Autism and a Mild Cognitive Intellectual Disability,
- entering the 10<sup>th</sup> grade, and
- was not eligible for April Dunn Act upon entering high school.



# Meet the Student

We will follow his IEP team as they:

- examine eligibility for the April Dunn Act,
- select the courses to apply April Dunn Act,
- develop and apply individual performance criteria for those courses within the first 30 days of Malik entering the course, and
- monitor and document his progress in achieving these performance criteria.



# Introduction to the April Dunn Act



# Act 833 Becomes the April Dunn Act



- In 2014, the Louisiana Legislature passed [Act 833](#).
- In June 2020, Act 833 was renamed as the [April Dunn Act](#) after April Dunn, a longtime advocate for people with disabilities instrumental in the passing of Act 833.



# The April Dunn Act

- The April Dunn Act allows a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) team to determine an alternate means to a diploma.
- Students with disabilities entering high school, grades 9 through 12, must first meet the graduation eligibility criteria.

# The April Dunn Act

- Once eligible, students pursuing a high school diploma through the April Dunn Act must meet
  - all graduation requirements necessary to earn a diploma on one of the two graduation pathways, and
  - certain requirements related to employment.

# Graduation Pathways and Requirements and April Dunn Act



# Graduation Pathways and Requirements

- IEP teams must be familiar with available graduation pathways to earn a high school diploma so they can
  - make appropriate eligibility and application determinations, and
  - facilitate a timely application of the April Dunn Act to selected high school course(s) as determined necessary.



# Graduation Pathways and Requirements

<b>TOPS University Graduation Pathway</b>	<b>Jump Start TOPS Tech Graduation Pathway</b>
<p>Students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Earn a minimum of 24 Carnegie Units</li><li>• Score approaching basic or above on LEAP 2025 state assessments</li><li>• Pathway prepares student to attend a 4-year college</li><li>• Complete a FAFSA</li></ul>	<p>Students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Earn a minimum of 23 Carnegie Units</li><li>• Score approaching basic or above on the LEAP 2025 state assessments</li><li>• Earn an IBC</li><li>• Pathway prepares student for employment and/or a 2-year college</li><li>• Complete a FAFSA</li></ul>

# Pathway Requirements and April Dunn Act

## TOPS University Graduation Pathway and April Dunn Requirements

Students:

- Earn a minimum of 24 Carnegie Units
- **Participate in the LEAP 2025 state assessments for any assessment-eligible course for which they earn credit**
- Prepare to attend a 4-year college
- Complete a FAFSA
- **Meet the requirements of the April Dunn Act**

# Pathway Requirements and April Dunn Act

## Jump Start TOPS Tech Graduation Pathway and April Dunn Requirements

Students:

- Earn a minimum of 23 Carnegie Units
- **Participate in the LEAP 2025 state assessments and/or IBC for any assessment-eligible course for which they earn credit**
- Prepare for employment and/or a 2-year college
- Complete a FAFSA
- **Meet the requirements of the April Dunn Act**

# Pathway Requirements and April Dunn Act

## Requirement 1

Students pursuing a high school diploma through the April Dunn Act **must meet all graduation requirements** necessary to earn a diploma on one of the two graduation pathways: TOPS University or Jump Start TOPS Tech.

Graduation requirements include the following key academic components:

- earn all Carnegie Credits required by the graduation pathway and statewide credential (for Jump Start),

# Pathway Requirements and April Dunn Act

- complete a [Free Application for Federal Student Aid \(FAFSA\)](#),
- demonstrate proficiency in the courses assessed by the [LEAP 2025 assessments](#)
  - *If a student is unable to meet the LEAP 2025 assessment requirements by achieving the state established standard scores of Advanced, Mastery, Basic, or Approaching Basic, they are able to meet this requirement through an alternate means as determined by their IEP team.*

# Pathway Requirements and April Dunn Act

## Requirement 2

In addition to Requirement 1, students pursuing a high school diploma through the April Dunn Act must meet at least one of the following criteria prior to graduation:

- gain employment in an inclusive integrated environment.
- demonstrate mastery of specific employability skills.
- gain access to services that are not provided by the school, employment, or education options.

# Graduation Pathways and Requirements

- Malik is entering 10<sup>th</sup> grade.
- He has decided to pursue a diploma via the Jump Start Tops Tech Pathway.
- Although Malik entered high school ineligible for the April Dunn Act, his school system has established policies and procedures that continually check for eligibility.
- Malik will be examined for eligibility for April Dunn after taking the 9<sup>th</sup> grade LEAP 2025 Assessments.



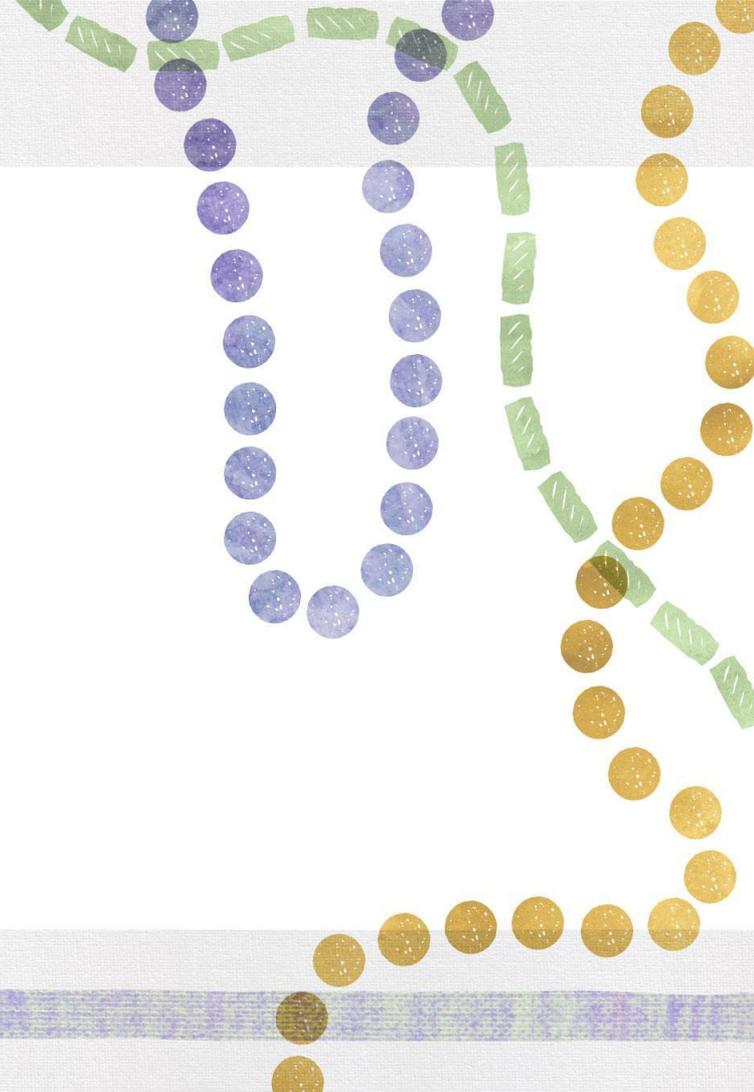
# Graduation Pathways and Requirements

If eligible, the IEP team must

- determine which courses to apply the April Dunn Act, and
- create and apply the individual performance criteria for those courses within the first 30 days of Malik entering the course.



# Determining Eligibility



# Determining Eligibility

Who should be examined for eligibility for the April Dunn Act?

- **Any student with a disability**, as defined in R.S. 17:1942(B), except a student identified as gifted and talented and who has no other exceptionality, **must be examined by IEP teams for eligibility** for the April Dunn Act.
- Students no longer eligible for special education services can no longer be eligible for the April Dunn Act.

# Determining Eligibility

Once eligible, how often is a student's eligibility reexamined?

- In the high school setting, eligibility for the April Dunn Act only needs to be established once for a student. Once determined eligible, the student remains eligible for the remainder of their high school experiences.
- If a student, found eligible for the April Dunn Act, achieves the state established benchmark on a required state assessment, the student remains eligible.

## Determining Eligibility

The IEP team will determine April Dunn Act eligibility for students with disabilities when a student:

- enters high school without achieving the state-established benchmarks on the LEAP 2025 state assessment for two of the three most recent school years, or
- does not achieve the state-established benchmarks after two attempts of the same LEAP 2025 high school assessment.
  - IEP teams should use this criteria for determining eligibility once the student has taken at least one high school state assessment.

## Determining Eligibility

To ensure effective implementation of the April Dunn Act, Malik's school system mandates multiple checkpoints for high school eligibility.

- 1<sup>st</sup> checkpoint: Upon entering high school
- 2<sup>nd</sup> checkpoint: After each high school state assessment cycle.



# Determining Eligibility

1<sup>st</sup> checkpoint: Upon entering high school

- Malik's IEP team reviewed LEAP 2025 state assessment data from the 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grades.
- Because Malik met state required benchmarks on all assessments, he was ineligible for April Dunn Act upon entering high school.



# Graduation Pathways and Requirements

2<sup>nd</sup> checkpoint: After taking each high school state assessment.

- Malik's IEP team reviews LEAP 2025 assessment data after each testing season in hopes of identifying students that could be eligible for the April Dunn Act.
- While in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade, Malik took and passed Algebra I.



# Graduation Pathways and Requirements

2<sup>nd</sup> checkpoint: After taking each high school state assessment.

- At the end of the 9<sup>th</sup> grade, Malik took the LEAP 2025 Algebra assessment. He scored Unsatisfactory.
- After summer remediation, he again took the LEAP 2025 Algebra assessment. He again scored Unsatisfactory.



## Determining Eligibility

During their post LEAP 2025 Assessment data review, the IEP team determined, because Malik did not achieve the state-established benchmarks after two attempts of the same LEAP 2025 high school assessment, **he is now eligible for the April Dunn Act.**

Now, the IEP team will determine which, if any, courses to apply April Dunn Act to in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade.



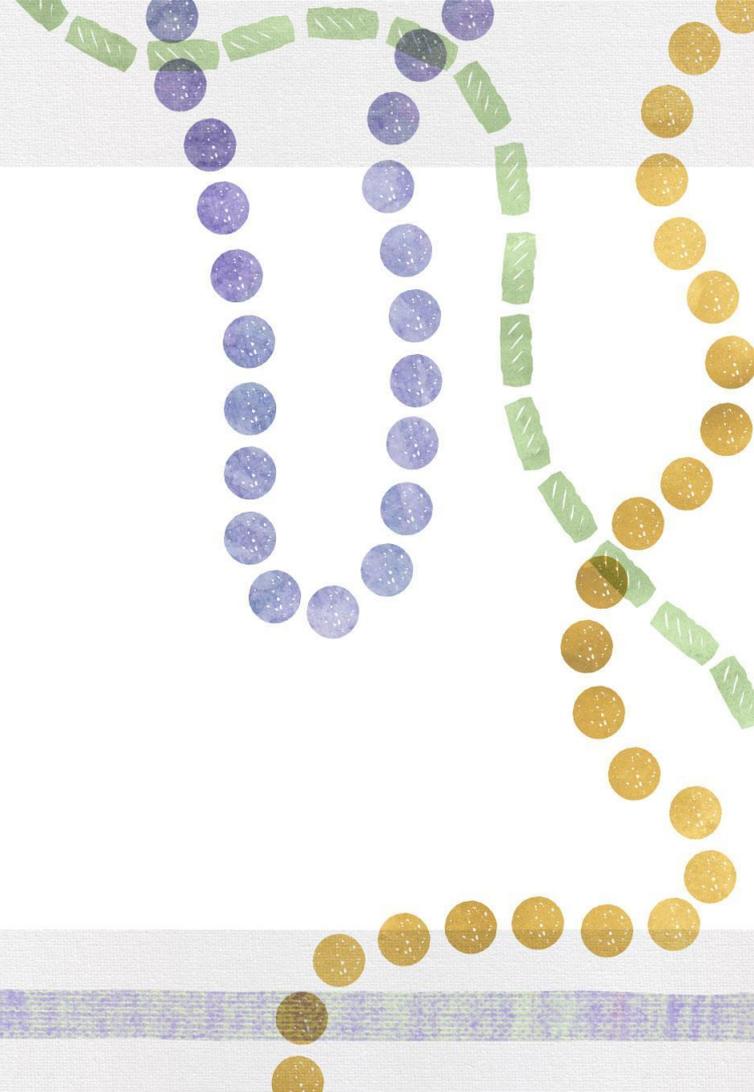
# Determining Eligibility

Three important points to remember:

- Because administrators established policy and procedure requiring personnel to check eligibility at different times throughout a student's high school experience, Malik did not fall through the cracks.
- Malik became eligible because he did not achieve the state-established benchmarks after two attempts of the same LEAP 2025 high school assessment.
- IEP teams should use this criteria for determining eligibility once the student has taken at least one high school state assessment.



# Selecting Courses for Applying April Dunn Act



## Selecting Courses for Applying April Dunn Act

After determining Malik is eligible for the April Dunn Act, the IEP team must decide which courses, if any, to create and apply individual performance criteria.

Note: The IEP may choose not to apply April Dunn Act to any courses.



# Selecting Courses for Applying April Dunn Act

To determine which courses, if any, to apply April Dunn Act, the IEP team should complete the following actions:

- Identify the student's strengths and weaknesses relative to the student's disability.
- Review the data
  - state assessment scores
  - performance on student learning targets
  - course grades, and
  - any other data relevant to student performance.

# Selecting Courses for Applying April Dunn Act

- Identify accommodations and supports needed for the student to be successful in the course.
- Review the student's schedule/Individual Graduation Plan (IGP) to determine
  - the graduation pathway of the student,
  - the courses the student is currently registered for, and
  - any LEAP 2025 subject assessment requirements and/or IBC.
- With the teacher of record, determine, on a course-by-course basis, if individual performance criteria should be established/applied.

# Selecting Courses for Applying April Dunn Act

After taking the actions above, Malik's IEP team decided they would apply the April Dunn Act in the following manner:

Course	Participate in LEAP 2025 Assessment or IBC	Must Meet State Benchmarks on LEAP 2025 Assessments	Individual Performance Criteria (Goals and Objectives)
Geometry	X		X
Welding	X		X

# Selecting Courses for Applying April Dunn Act

Why did the IEP team make these application decisions?

- Data indicates a weakness in Math skills including the two Unsatisfactory assessment results in LEAP 2025 Algebra I
- Because of these scores, and other data, the IEP team decided to apply the April Dunn Act to Geometry.

Course	Participate in LEAP 2025 Assessment	Must Meet State Benchmarks on LEAP 2025 Assessments	Individual Performance Criteria (Goals and Objectives)
Geometry	X		X

# Selecting Courses for Applying April Dunn Act

- Finally, the IEP team determined that, because Welding has several Math components, Malik would address the Welding IBC via the provisions of the April Dunn Act.

Course	Participate in LEAP 2025 Assessment or IBC	Must Meet State Benchmarks on LEAP 2025 Assessments	Individual Performance Criteria (Goals and Objectives)
Welding	X		X

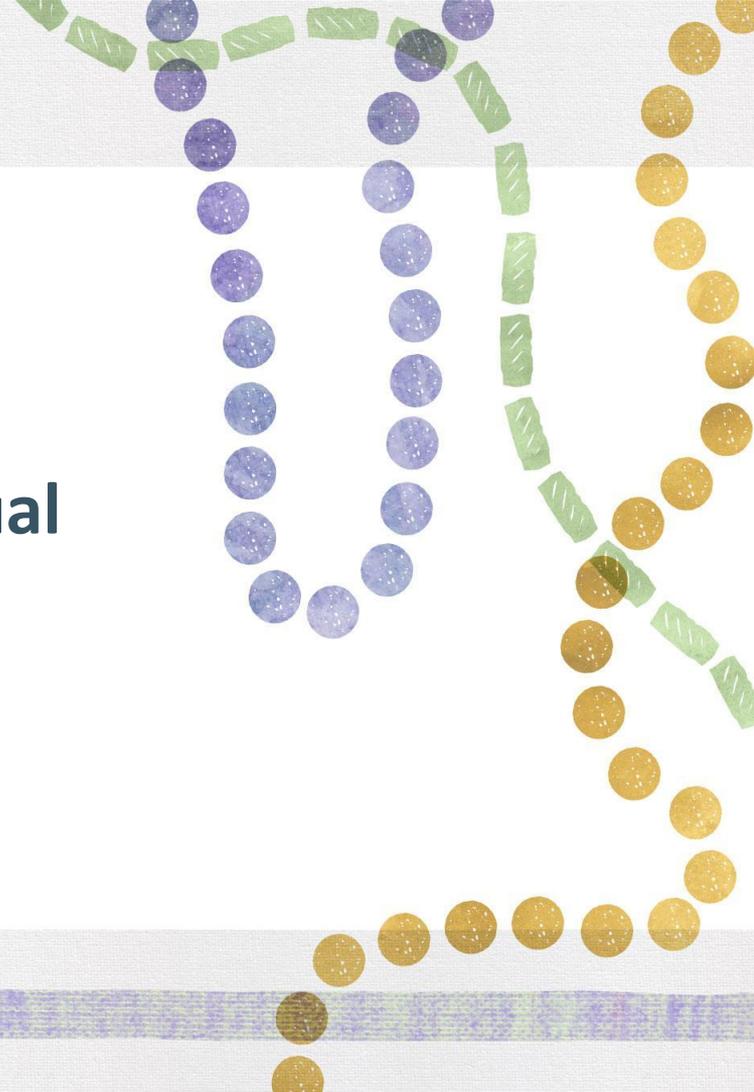
# Selecting Courses for Applying April Dunn Act

Now that courses are chosen, individual performance criteria must be created and applied.

Individual performance criteria offers students the flexibility needed to successfully access and demonstrate mastery of grade-level course content.



# Developing and Applying Individual Performance Criteria



# Developing and Applying Individual Performance Criteria

IEP teams, along with the teacher of record, are responsible for

- creating individual performance criteria, and
- ensuring the criteria addresses the scope and sequence of the course standards.

When creating performance criteria, the IEP team **must**:

- maintain a rigorous standard of learning,



# Developing and Applying Individual Performance Criteria

- maintain the expectations of the course, and, if applicable, the accompanying assessment or IBC,
- create and apply the individual performance criteria **within the first 30 days of Malik entering the course**, and
- express the individual performance criteria as goals and objectives on the IEP.



# Developing and Applying Individual Performance Criteria

To develop individual performance criteria for selected courses, the IEP team must

- determine the student's current level of performance, including strengths and weaknesses, in the academic area and/or skill levels in the case of an IBC by reviewing
  - information in the student's IEP (present level of performance, goals and objectives, etc.)
  - past state assessment results,
  - grades, and
  - any other data related to the student's academic or skill performance.

# Developing and Applying Individual Performance Criteria

- compare the data to the state-established benchmarks including
  - [grade-level course content standards](#),
  - applicable [LEAP 2025 subject assessment criteria](#),
  - or IBC information found on Louisiana Believes [Jump Start website](#),
- determine if there is a gap between the student's current performance and the benchmarks
- collaborate with the teacher of record to determine the strategies and supports needed to
  - address the gaps, and

# Developing and Applying Individual Performance Criteria

- enable the student to successfully participate and progress in grade-level course content
- write a measurable goal that
  - reflects the strategies and supports discussed with the teacher of record,
  - includes specifically designed instruction,
  - targets knowledge and/or skills,
  - outlines the conditions under which the skills will occur,
  - defines the acceptable level of performance, and
  - includes postsecondary goals for training, education, employment, and, where appropriate, independent living skills,

# Developing and Applying Individual Performance Criteria

- create objectives aligned with the goal that
  - describe the intermediate knowledge and skills the student will acquire, within a specified time period,
  - that collectively lead to the accomplishment of the goal,
  - align with the scope and sequence of the [grade-level course content standards](#) (**not an alternate or below grade level curriculum**), and
  - align with [achievement level descriptors](#) for applicable LEAP 2025 assessments to prioritize skills, and

# Developing and Applying Individual Performance Criteria

- ensure the goals and objectives, or individual performance criteria, are developed within the first 30 days of the student entering the course.

Did I mention IEP teams MUST...

**ensure the goals and objectives, or individual performance criteria, are developed within the first 30 days of the student entering the course.**

# Developing and Applying Individual Performance Criteria

Sample IEP goals can be found in “Appendix A” of the guidance document *“The April Dunn Act: An Alternate Means to Graduation for Students with Disabilities.”*

Appendix A

Sample Individualized Performance Criteria Aligned with the breadth and depth, or the scope and sequence, of the Grade-Level, Course Content Standards (Please note: These examples are provided for instruction and guidance to IEP teams responsible for creating and writing individual performance criteria for students eligible for the Dunn Act. They are not meant to be copied or duplicated in any IEP for any student. IEP team members must always strive to ensure goals and objectives are individualized for each student across each IEP year.)

Sample 1: English I

IEP Goal	Given teacher instruction, modeling, and guided practices, the student will demonstrate mastery of the grade-level expectations by achieving 3 of 4 objectives by the end of the English I course, which will serve as evidence of proficiency in the course for the purpose of graduation and Act 833.
Objective 1	After listening to a grade-level text read aloud and then reading the text independently, the student will orally summarize the content of the text with 70% accuracy in 3 of 4 trials for each unit of study as measured by rubrics or checklists appropriate to the text.
Objective 2	After listening to a grade-level text read aloud and then reading the text independently, the student will make inferences and draw conclusions about the main details of the text with 70% accuracy in 3 out of 4 trials using at least two of the following: the grade-level passages from the DNF's diagnostic or interim tests, the IFAP 2025 practice tests, or other

# Developing and Applying Individual Performance Criteria

Individual performance criteria for the course is documented in the IEP in the form of goals and objectives.

Malik's IEP team ensured the individual performance criteria were created and applied to Geometry and the IBC within the first 30 days of Malik entering the course.



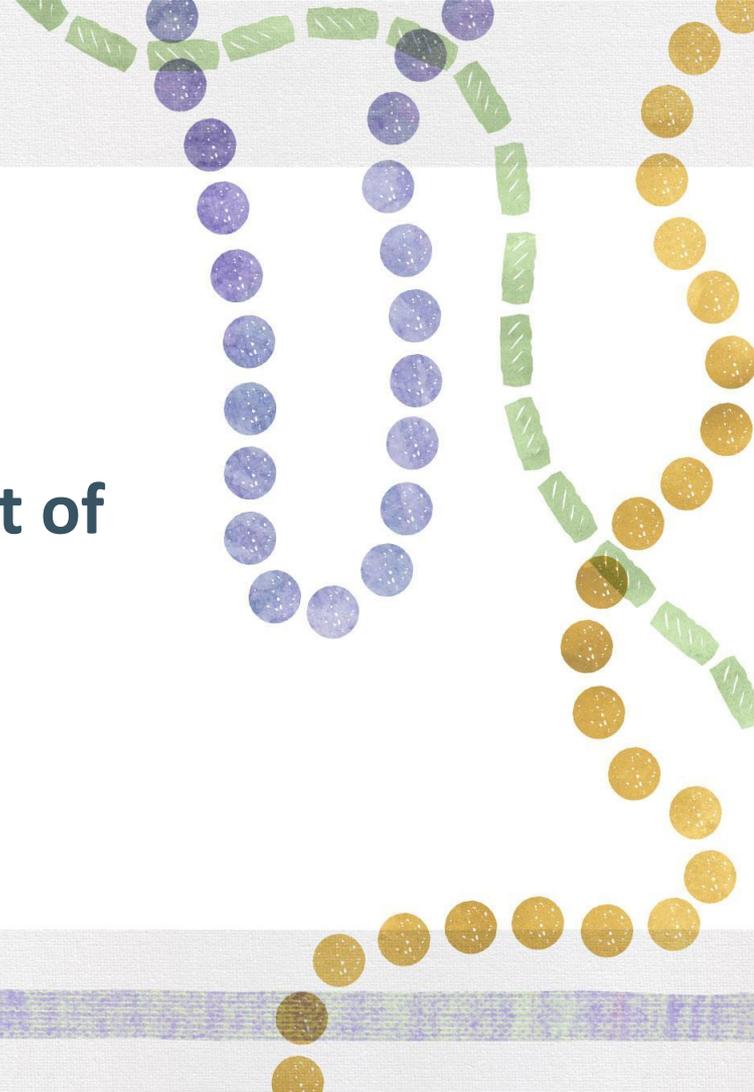
# Developing and Applying Individual Performance Criteria

With individual performance criteria developed and applied, the next step is documenting progress and achievement as Malik begins successfully addressing course content.

Let's take a look at documenting progress and achievement of performance criteria.



# Documenting Student Achievement of Individual Performance Criteria



# Documenting Student Achievement

After developing individual performance criteria, the IEP team, including the teacher of record, will track Malik's progress by recording data relative to goals and objectives across the duration of the course.



# Documenting Student Achievement

The teacher of record will:

- monitor and assess student progress,
- determine whether the student has met individual performance criteria,
- determine the \*final grade in the course, and
- award course credit

\*Note: If the course is a LEAP 2025 assessment course, the score on the assessment will be used to determine the final grade in the course. According to Bulletin 741, the LEAP 2025 assessment score accounts for 5% of the final grade for students with disabilities.

# Documenting Student Achievement

To determine progress, the teacher of record can use items such as:

- class assignments
- special projects
- observations
- benchmarks
- state assessments

# Documenting Student Achievement

Additionally, the IEP team, along with the teacher of record, will

- review data to determine student progress,
- record the student's progress on the IEP progress report, and
- complete Goal Summary Form **prior** to
  - submitting a new IEP to SER, and
  - certifying a graduating student's transcript in STS.

# Developing and Applying Individual Performance Criteria

Note: Once Malik achieves the individual performance criteria, he will, for the purposes of graduation, achieve the graduation requirement of an IBC.

He will not receive the actual IBC. He will only fulfill the graduation requirement for an IBC for the purposes of graduation.



## Questions or Comments?



Contact Information:

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