

2. Daily schedules

Developing a schedule that reflects **minimal unstructured time** and **active engagement in learning activities** is essential. Schedules are dependent on the student's individual needs. They may include short blocks of time and/or the use of more organized arrangements during unstructured times.

- Does the student need assistance to adapt to daily schedule changes such as transitioning from one environment to another?
- Does the student need adult supervision for routine events such as school drills?
- Does the student need support for independent functioning?

3. In-home & community based training

Teaching in natural environments where social/behavioral skills are needed.

- Does the family have access to resources to implement strategies for appropriate social/behavioral skills?
- Does the family need assistance with transitions from home to school/school to home?
- Does the child need specific schedules and cues to adjust at home with family members?

Implications for schools

- Does not mean that teachers/school staff are expected to work in the home/community.
- Does not mean that the school district must pay if resources are suggested.
- Does mean that the IEP team needs to know community based resources (any referrals will be documented in the IEP under inter-agency links).
- Does mean that the teacher/school staff can suggest/explain helpful strategies (social stories, video modeling, etc).



4. Positive behavior support strategies

What supports are needed to help students learn new, appropriate behaviors and prevent problem behaviors?

- *Is the student unable to follow classroom rules, and the school-wide rules and discipline plan?*
- *Does the student show a pattern of socially inappropriate behaviors?*
- *Does the student need reinforcement strategies to achieve appropriate social behaviors?*
- *Is a Functional Behavior Assessment/Behavior Intervention Plan needed to address problem behaviors?*

5. Futures (transition) planning

What are the end of school goals and, in **each grade level**, what skills must be built to reach those long-term goals?

- *What supports are needed to transition to new school settings?*
- *Does the student need assistance to transition to post secondary environments and/or daily living skills within the community?*
- *Does the family have access to resources regarding transition from daily home life to daily life within the community (specific resources and links to be documented in the IEP).*

6. Parent/Family training and support

Families may need/request help with home life and a variety of resources/strategies to improve social and behavioral skills and transitions between environments.

- *Does the family have access to qualified assistance for the acquisition of needed social/behavior skills*
- *Are there training and resources to provide consistency between environments (social stories, mini-schedules, communication notebook, etc.)*

7. Staff-to-student ratio

What is the ratio of students to staff members needed to enable the student to function in, and benefit from, school activities/environments.

- *Is there a research based program with intensive interventions (e.g. discrete trial training)?*
- *Does the student need help in transitioning?*
- *Does the student need adult supervision in drills, different environments, etc.?*
- *Does the student need visual or physical cues initiated by adults to adjust to changes?*

8. Communication interventions

Which language forms and functions, will enhance effective communication across settings? The most important question is “Does the student have a functional (used for communicating wants and needs) communication system?”

- *Does the student require assistive technology?*
- *Has the student tried a picture-based system?*
- *What speech/language services does the student require as a core characteristic of autism is social-communication difficulties?*

9. Social skills supports

Providing strategies based on social skills assessment/curriculum and provided across settings is essential as a core characteristic of ASD is social-communication.

- *Does the student have difficulty interacting with peers or joining a play group or game?*
- *Does the student have trouble working with peers in a group?*
- *Does the student have difficulty using appropriate social skills in a variety of contexts?*
- *What social skills training, intervention or curriculum would be most effective?*

10. Professional educator/staff support



Staff must have adequate training about autism and strategies to implement an IEP for students with ASD.

- *Does the staff have training and access to evidence based practices to implement the student's IEP?*
- *What additional training does the staff need to adequately/appropriately work with the student?*

11. Teaching strategies based on peer-reviewed and/or research based practices

Considering **evidence based** teaching strategies including Applied Behavior Analysis, visual supports, functional communication, adaptive skill building, etc.

- *Does the staff have access to assistive technologies to implement the student's IEP?*
- *Does the school site have access to teaching strategies to support positive behavioral systems/social skills training?*

In Summary:

The 11 Considerations were developed to help IEP teams create and implement an effective plan for addressing the needs of students with ASD. In general, the considerations may be viewed as minimum standards for support. The most powerful tool is

1. *Knowledge about the characteristics of indi-*



- viduals with ASD*
2. *Knowledge about necessary supports for individuals with ASD*
 - communication supports
 - visual supports
 - social supports
 - family supports
 - transition supports
3. *Knowledge about Evidence Based Practices (EBPs) in the education and treatment of ASD*
 - what are Evidence Based Practices
 - resources for the implementation of EBPs
 - fidelity in the implementation of EBPs
4. *Knowledge about staff/family training*
 - Recognition that the field is so new that no one knows it all

Tips for Success

1. **Become familiar with the IEP Considerations:** Familiarize yourself with the 11 Considerations before the IEP team meeting and be sure to ask questions if there is anything you don't understand. Remember that each consideration needs to be addressed in the IEP, but every strategy will not necessarily need to be implemented. Discussion regarding each consideration must be documented.
2. **Remember the checklist is a guideline:** The checklist serves as a guideline to insure that the IEP is truly customized to fit the specific needs of the student. Many of the practices on the checklist may already be included in the IEP; check with the IEP team if you are unsure.
3. **Advocate for the student:** Be prepared to advocate for what you think is important for the student while listening carefully to the viewpoints of the rest of the team. **You** are an important member of the student's IEP team!

Resources:

- Autism Speaks Individualized Education Program (IEP) Guide and Other Resources
<https://www.autismspeaks.org/family-services/tool-kits/iep-guide>
- New Mexico Public Education Department
<http://ped.state.nm.us>
- Autism Spectrum Disorders IEP Considerations Definitions
<http://ped.state.nm.us/SEB/dl11/ASD%20considerations%20definitions.pdf>
- IEP Checklist Considerations—Autism Spectrum Disorder
<http://ped.state.nm.us/SEB/dl11/IEP%20checklist%20considerations-Autism%20Spectrum%20Disorder.pdf>
- Memo: Best Practices to Consider When Developing Individualized Education Programs For Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder
<http://ped.state.nm.us/SEB/dl11/Memo%20ASD%20Strategies.pdf>
- School Consultation Team, Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities Program
Center for Development and Disability, University of New Mexico
<http://cdd.unm.edu/autism/>
- Texas Project FIRST: Strategies for Consideration for Students with Autism
<http://www.texasprojectfirst.org/AutismStrategies.html>

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