Understanding Measurable Postsecondary Goals

Why do we develop measurable postsecondary goals?
- It is required under the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act 2004. The law went into effect on July 1, 2005.

Who needs to have measurable postsecondary goals and when are they developed?
- Any student who will turn 14 during the timeframe of the IEP, or younger, if determined appropriate by the IEP team.

What is a measurable postsecondary goal?
- A statement that articulates what the student would like to achieve after high school.
- It is based on the student’s strengths, preferences, and interests.
- It is based on age-appropriate transition assessment.
- It is written for the following areas:
  1. Education/Training and
  2. Employment
  3. Independent Living (if appropriate)

**Education** - 4 year college or university, technical college, 2 year college, etc.

**Training** – specific vocational or career field, independent living skills training, vocational training program, apprenticeship, on-the-job training, job corps, etc.

**Employment** – paid employment (competitive, supported, sheltered); non-paid employment (volunteer, in a training capacity): military, etc.

**Independent Living** – adult living, daily living, independent living, financial, transportation, etc.

How is a measurable postsecondary goal written?
- Use results-oriented terms such as “enrolled in”, “work”, and descriptors such as “full-time” or part-time”.

**Training** – Bob will enroll part-time in an emergency medical technician training program.
Education – Donna will be enrolled full-time at Cape Fear Community College and obtain an associates degree in computer networking.

Employment – Dave will work full-time for the fire department, hospital, or ambulance service.

Independent Living – Kim will live independently in her own apartment or home.

A postsecondary goal is not the process of pursuing or moving toward a desired outcome.

Note: There would be less specificity in the postsecondary goals articulated by younger students, than those in their last years of high school. Ex. – “After high school, John will enroll in the general Associates Degree program at…..” (John is in 11th grade.)

Language that is not effective for writing a measurable postsecondary goal(s) as identified by the National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center:

• “Plans” does not indicate something will occur or explicit behavior by the student will occur after high school.
• “Learning about something” is not measurable.
• “Wants” not measurable, does not indicate an explicit behavior by the student that will occur after high school”
• “Student thinks they will do something” – goal written as process, not outcome
• “Student will need to continue to work on skills” - not written as goal, but stated as a need
• “Student hopes to work” – “hopes” not observable/measurable
• “Student will apply for services” is an activity not an outcome
• “Student will work with” not measurable
• “Student will get a job” – getting a job measurable, but not clear if it will happen after high school
• “Student will learn to use the bus” – expectation for learning, or behavior not explicit and not clear if will happen after high school
• “Student will pass class so they can apply for college” – apply is an activity or process, not an outcome and it occurs before student leaves school.

KEY PHRASE: “after high school”