

PLAN



What can be done
to solve it?

TARGETED IMPROVEMENT PLAN

DISTRICT GUIDE

SPED

SPECIAL EDUCATION

FOR USE IN DEVELOPING THE 2025-26 TIP

This document is designed to serve as a guiding resource for teams as they develop their Targeted Improvement Plan (TIP) within the NDE Office of Special Education platform, QuestionPro. It provides section-by-section guidance, including prompting questions to support team discussion, examples and non-examples, and relevant context to inform decision-making. More comprehensive versions of this guidance are available on our website: <https://www.education.ne.gov/sped/ilcd/>

Plan Section:

The **Plan** section asks teams to select an evidence-based practice (EBP) to focus on during the 2026–2027 school year and to develop corresponding goals: one for the implementation of the EBP by adults and one for the resulting student outcomes. The selected practice and the goals established should directly align with, and address, the root cause identified in the **Analyze** section.

Future Implementation Plans

What practice will you focus on next school year to support student growth in literacy?

1. What evidence-based practice (EBP) will you focus on in the upcoming school year?

Teams should select one EBP from the following options:

- Systematic and explicit instruction
- Quality student practice and response
- Corrective and constructive feedback
- Instruction adjusted using data

Description	Nothing Selected	One Selected
Score	0	3

After selecting the EBP, teams will develop an **Implementation Goal**. This goal should have a narrow focus on improving the frequency and/or quality of adult use of the selected EBP. TIP goals are designed for a five-year horizon to allow teams to examine trend data and continuously evaluate the effectiveness of the plan.

To support teams in developing clear, measurable goals, the Office of Special Education (OSE) has broken the SMART goal process into distinct components with guiding questions embedded in each section. At this stage, the system does not automatically generate a complete goal statement. Teams may create a more concise, overall goal statement by adding to the **Timely** section, but only after entering all required information in the other sections.

2. Goal Statement (Adult Implementation)

The goal is written with a focus on adult actionable behaviors and the selected EBP.

The goal contains all 5 elements described below.

- **Specific:** What will be accomplished? Which EBP will be used? Who is the target population?
- **Measurable:** Which tool(s) will measure progress toward the goal? How often will the data be collected? What benchmarks and baseline data will be used?
- **Attainable:** What is the target outcome? Is the goal realistically achievable? Are necessary resources available? What fidelity measures will be used?
- **Relevant:** Why is this outcome important? How does it align with other district initiatives, priorities, or goals?
- **Timely:** What is the timeframe for achieving this goal?

Example:

Specific	Teachers will implement systematic and explicit instruction with fidelity across all targeted intervention groups to improve decoding and fluency outcomes for 2nd - 4th-grade special education students.
Measurable	Exampleville Public Schools will utilize the Foundational skills and ELA IPG's specifically focusing on standards alignment. Progress will be measured through 3 yearly observations.
Attainable	The baseline for this goal is currently 75% of teacher(s) earning a 3 or 4 for standards alignment. The baseline should be interpreted with caution as it represents only 4 practice observations done by the regional literacy coach. Targets may need to be adjusted next year when more data is available. Our target is 95% of our teachers earning a 3 or 4 for standards alignment by 2031.
Relevant	Educators will consistently apply systematic and explicit instructional practices that align to the targeted literacy standard to support decoding and fluency development. Instruction aligned with the standard and therefore, the district's early literacy priorities, structured

	literacy initiatives, and goals for improving outcomes for students with disabilities.
Timely	The goal will be met by school year 2030-2031.

Scoring Rubric

Description	Not likely to improve student outcomes	Low likelihood to improve student outcomes	Medium likelihood to improve student outcomes	High likelihood to improve student outcomes
Score	0 The district is missing all parts of the goal and/or doesn't have a clear understanding of their focus and/or the goal does not connect to their root cause/problem statement.	1 The district is missing parts of the goal or has a weak understanding of their focus and/or the goal has little connection to their root cause/problem statement.	2 The district has all parts of their goal and has an understanding of their focus and/or the goal has a connection to their root cause/problem statement.	3 The district has all parts of the goal and shows a strong understanding of their focus and/or the goal does not connect to their root cause/problem statement and has a strong connection to their root cause/problem statement.

3. Targets and Performance for Implementation

Teams should establish targets for implementation over the next five years using the table provided. When setting targets, teams may disregard the rows for the previous year (2024–2025) and current year (2025–2026), as implementation goals were not required in those years.

Implementation targets should resemble objectives in student IEPs—incremental steps that progress from baseline to the long-term target. Growth steps do not need to be equal across years (e.g., 5% annual growth). Teams should consider the unique factors of their district when determining annual growth targets for implementation.

Scoring Rubric

Description	Not likely to improve student outcomes	Low likelihood to improve student outcomes	Medium likelihood to improve student outcomes	High likelihood to improve student outcomes
Score	0 Targets do not reflect growth that will close the gap/no understanding of the targets.	1 Targets reflect growth to partially close the gap/ targets not appropriately measured.	2 Targets reflect growth that mostly closes the gap/appropriate progress being measured.	3 Targets reflect growth to close the gap/rigorous targets set.

Future Student Outcomes Plan

In this portion of the **Plan** section, teams will establish a goal for student outcomes, set corresponding performance targets, and report progress toward those targets.

1. Do you need to change your goal?

Teams should first select **Yes** or **No**. Teams selecting **No** may proceed directly to Question 2. Teams selecting **Yes** must also respond to the following question:

Why are you changing the goal?

While teams should avoid frequent goal changes, the Nebraska Department of Education recognizes that circumstances may evolve. Factors such as changes in assessment availability, emerging student needs, or newly identified needs in additional or different grade levels may warrant a goal revision. If only target adjustments are needed, these can be made in the subsequent section. Teams should provide a brief explanation for why the goal is being changed. Examples and guiding questions are provided below.

Guiding Questions

- Did your district's continuous improvement plan goal change?
- Was the goal met and you need to adjust your goal?
- Which components of the current goal (specific group, evidence-based practice, benchmarks, or fidelity measures) may need adjustment to better support student progress?
- What recent data or implementation challenges indicate that changes are needed to make the goal more attainable or realistic?
- How will adjusting these elements improve alignment with district priorities and ensure students move toward the 5-year target?

Example narrative for goal change:

Exampleville Public Schools will adjust our literacy goal to focus on 3rd-grade students who are below grade level, rather than all intervention groups. We will refine the benchmarks and progress-monitoring schedule to match current DIBELS data and ensure fidelity of systematic and explicit instruction. These changes will make the goal more attainable while keeping the overall 5-year target unchanged.

2. Goal Statement

The goal is written with a focus on Literacy Growth.

The goal contains all 5 elements described below.

Enter each part of the goal in the specified box below.

Similar to the **Implementation Goal**, teams will develop their **Student Outcome Goal** by responding to the guiding questions within each section of the SMART goal framework. Student outcome goals should focus specifically on improving results in the area of literacy. As with the Implementation Goal, there is currently no functionality to automatically combine the sections into a single goal statement. Teams may create a more concise, overarching goal statement by adding to the **Timely** section, but only after completing all required information in the other sections.

Specific	What will be accomplished? What evidence-based practice will be used? Who will be targeted?
Measurable	What tool will measure progress for the goal? Frequency of administration? What are the benchmarks? What's the baseline data?
Attainable	What's your target? Is the goal able to be achieved? Are necessary resources attainable? What fidelity measure will be used?
Relevant	Relevant: Why is the result important? How does this align with other initiatives, priorities, and/or goals of the district?
Timely	What is the timeframe for accomplishing the goal?

Example:

Specific	Third grade special education students will improve their decoding and fluency skills through participation in systematic and explicit instruction delivered with fidelity in targeted intervention groups.
Measurable	In the 2025-2026 school year 45% of 3rd grade special education students were meeting grade level fluency targets. By April 2031, 80% of Exampleville 3rd graders will be meeting grade level fluency targets according to the district fluency screener (currently DIBELS).
Attainable	With a recent change to tier 1 curriculum and instruction, along with standards aligned teaching as a focus area we've seen a 15% growth in

	on level students in kindergarten this year making 80% a reasonably attainable 5-year target.
Relevant	This goal aligns to both our CIP and Strategic Plan outcome goals. It also aligns with the work our district is doing with the CLSD grant and an early literacy initiative within the district.
Timely	<p>The goal will be met by school year 2030-2031</p> <p>Given improved explicit and systematic instruction in decoding and fluency skills, fluency skills for 3rd grade special education students will improve from a baseline of 45% of students meeting grade level targets in 2026 to 80% of 3rd grade special education students meeting grade level targets in 2031, as measured by three yearly screenings on DIBELS or similar fluency measure.</p>

Scoring Rubric

Description	Not likely to improve student outcomes	Low likelihood to improve student outcomes	Medium likelihood to improve student outcomes	High likelihood to improve student outcomes
Score	<p>0 The district is missing all parts of the goal and/or doesn't have a clear understanding of their focus and/or the goal does not connect to their root cause/problem statement.</p>	<p>1 The district is missing parts of the goal or has a weak understanding of their focus and/or the goal has little connection to their root cause/problem statement.</p>	<p>2 The district has all parts of their goal and has an understanding of their focus and/or the goal has a connection to their root cause/problem statement.</p>	<p>3 The district has all parts of the goal and shows a strong understanding of their focus and/or the goal does not connect to their root cause/problem statement and has a strong connection to their root cause/problem statement.</p>

After entering the student outcome goal teams will answer the following question:

3. Do you need to adjust your targets?

Teams will select yes or no. If selecting yes teams will need to enter a description that explains why the team needed to adjust targets.

Guiding Questions

- Did you change your goal?
- Did you meet your target for the past couple of years?
- Did your target increase/decrease each year?
- Was the target too attainable?

3a. 5 Year targets and current school year performance

Teams may re-enter target information from their previous TIP, as this data remains accessible in ILCD. Teams should enter targets and performance for each row, beginning with **Previous Year (2024–2025)**. Some teams may choose not to enter information for certain future years, such as the **+5 year (2030–2031)**, if their TIP cycle concludes earlier. This is acceptable, provided the timeline is clearly noted in the **Timely** section of the SMART goal. Targets should resemble objectives in student IEPs—incremental steps that progress from baseline to the long-term target. Growth steps do not need to be equal across years (e.g., 5% annual growth). Teams should consider the unique factors of their district when determining annual growth targets for implementation.

Scoring Rubric

Description	Not likely to improve student outcomes	Low likelihood to improve student outcomes	Medium likelihood to improve student outcomes	High likelihood to improve student outcomes
Score	0 The targets do not reflect growth that will close the gap/no understanding of the targets.	1 The targets reflect growth to partially close the gap/ targets not appropriately measured.	2 The targets reflect growth that mostly closes the gap/appropriate progress being measured.	3 The targets reflect growth to close the gap/rigorous targets set.