

Virtual Progress Monitoring

During COVID-19, FAPE and specialized academic instruction/specially designed instruction (SAI/SDI) and related services are still required under IDEA (as of 4/8). This means that progress monitoring of IEP goals is critical, as IEP meetings are still convening and the data that can be collected will inform progress and instruction once schools convene again in-person. However, due to distance learning, providing high-quality, evidence-based progress monitoring and reports can be difficult. Some goals won't be able to be progress monitored in a virtual space, such as task-specific goals for behavior (e.g. sitting in assigned seats). Others may not be an area of need in a virtual learning space, including peer conflict resolution or behavior goals for school transitions. In those cases, IEP teams should discuss if the goal needs to be revised, and/or if an alternative form of data collection can be utilized.

The following topics will be covered, with examples from different student disabilities:

- Guiding Questions to Consider
- How Students Can Access Support for IEP goals Virtually
- Using Existing Resources for Progress Monitoring
- Progress Monitoring Tracking in Virtual Environments
- Progress Monitoring on Virtual Assessment Platforms
- Home to School Communication

Audience: Special Education and General Education Teachers, Para-Educators and Administrators

Related Resources:

- [Check for Understanding in Virtual Learning](#)
- [Creating Accessible Learning Environments](#)
- [Supporting Teachers with Accommodations and Modifications](#)

Guiding Questions to Consider

Why progress monitor? The primary benefit of conducting ongoing progress monitoring is that you will have continuous data towards relevant goals for students who are still able to participate in interventions virtually. Such monitoring can (and should be) be used broadly to provide feedback to students, but is necessary for students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) to meaningfully update goals, accommodations, and services. Progress monitoring data may also help inform fall placements, provide continuity of progress communication with families and students, and assist in measuring the potential impact of school closures on student progress or regression.

Take time to reflect where and how progress monitoring has changed, and what questions are priorities for progress monitoring over the next few months. You might ask:

- Are the priorities for intensive intervention the same?
- Are there students who need more engagement with their learning?
- Is learning improving or is it stagnant? Why?

What are the limitations of the distance learning environment? There are two limitations worth noting:

- It is possible that not all students will be able to participate in the progress monitoring due to limited access to computer equipment, internet, or family assistance. If so, reference
 - [Best Practices for Distributing Technology](#)
 - [Connecting with Students with Limited Access to Technology](#)
- Assessing student progress in virtual settings may not provide accurate data, depending on the format being used. Thoughtful consideration of when, how, and under what conditions progress monitoring is carried out is necessary to achieve the outcomes desired.

What are patterns in your data? After collecting progress monitoring data, analyze patterns for individual students and groups of students. Evaluate data to determine whether students are making progress, maintaining skills or demonstrating a loss of skill. Using this information, take immediate action to adjust student learning plans and supports.

- If seeing a loss of skill in student data points, consider:
 - Increasing engagement in learning
 - Increasing motivation systems
 - Increase frequency of skill instruction
 - Review the level of instructional material for independent practice to ensure it isn't too easy or too difficult and causing frustration

How Students Can Access Supports for IEP Goals Virtually

Students now need to access their IEP goals and instruction through the systems and structures of the virtual learning environment. Students can continue to make progress on their IEP goals by reviewing core content, participating in whole group and small group instruction, and through check-ins with teachers and service providers.

When implementing [Small-Group Instruction](#), consider:

- Integrating IEP related work
 - To reduce complexity, consider designating specific days for types of IEP goals (e.g. small group instruction on Mondays and Tuesdays is dedicated to ELA and Math)
- Identifying core content that aligns to IEP goals
 - For example, if a student has an IEP goal related to increasing ability to self-identify mechanical errors in their writing, provide them with or have them pull up a pre-existing or current document from a course.
- The role of the co-teachers and/or para-educators
 - Pull individual students to conduct 1:1 progress monitoring in a breakout session
 - Offer pre-teaching or re-teaching based on progress monitoring data
 - Facilitate small group check-ins with students to celebrate progress and set short term (daily, weekly) goals for learning related to IEP goals

Related IEP goals this structure can support: **Reading** (basic & comprehension) | **Math** (reasoning, problem-solving) | **Writing** (expression, spelling) | **Executive Functioning** (organization of an assignment, breaking work into

manageable chunks, planning for the week) | **Social-Emotional Learning/Behavior** (reteaching a strategy, positive reinforcement, an opportunity for a group activity)

When conducting Virtual Observations of students with disabilities, look for and track:

- On-task behavior
 - See if a student is working on an assignment or have them show you their completed task
- On-time attendance
 - Did the student attend the class period on time
- Number of times a student asks questions
 - Student can ask questions verbally or virtually through g-chat for example

Related IEP goals this structure can supports: **Behavior** (participation in a group activity, response to a verbal or non-verbal redirection) | **Social-Emotional** (requesting for a break, managing negative social interaction/comment) | **Oral Expression** (showing images and having students restate x number of details)

Use One-on-One Check-ins to support progress on:

- Targeting foundational IEP goals that are difficult to meet in general education or small group setting.
- Social-Emotional IEP goals
 - Check-in on how students are doing
 - Reinforce strategies and tools that were previously taught and help students generalize them into the current setting.
 - For example, if a student has an IEP goal related to increasing usage of self-soothing strategies and decreasing elopement behaviors, review student daily schedule, identify times to take a break, and brainstorm a location and at-home tools.
 - Tracking work completion - through submitted assignment, goals completed

Related IEP goals this structure can support: **Reading** (basic reading, decoding, fluency) | **Writing** (spelling, sentence composition) | **Life Skills** (practice writing personal info - phone number, birthday, address, etc) **Social-Emotional** (navigating the new structure, coping skills) | **Executive Functioning** (review progress with parent/guardian, review upcoming assignments) | **Behavior** (reflect on a previous class - what went well and what didn't, address barriers student is facing and come up with a plan to communicate out to team)

Using Existing Resources for Progress Monitoring

Knowing that teachers are not in the physical classroom conducting progress monitoring, it is helpful to identify pre-existing online resources that can make it easier to progress monitor specific student goals. Whenever possible, students should continue to work with the same tools and measures previously used for IEP goal progress, yet current circumstances may require a change in assessment tools or strategies.

- [Khan Academy](#)
 - Create a class and have students 'enroll'
 - Assign students with work that is aligned to their IEP goals
 - K-12 comprehensive curriculum: Math, Grammar, Science, SAT, AP and more

- See this [“Quickstart Guide”](#) for how to get started with Khan Academy Digital Learning
- [ReadWorks](#)
 - Free online reading comprehension resource that targets a variety of reading strategies
 - Teachers can align with students IEP goals and instructional reading levels
 - Auditory recordings of stories
- [IXL](#)
 - Provides educators with free online classroom set-up
 - K-12 comprehensive curriculum: Math, Language Arts, Social Studies, & Spanish
 - Assign students with content related to their IEP goals
- [Checks for Understanding](#)
 - Helps teachers evaluate student progress which can inform IEP goals
- [DIBELS](#)
 - Provides free downloadable resources for K-8 reading skills, including decoding, fluency and comprehension
 - Must agree to use before accessing. Some materials are only available for grades K-6

Progress Monitoring Tracking in Virtual Environments

Creating progress monitoring trackers makes progress monitoring a little easier. During this time, it's important to think of different ways to monitor student progress and continue the partnership with students and their families.

- Create or iterate on an existing [Excel sheet](#)
 - Designated to a goal type (E.g. reading, writing, etc) or student grade-level
 - Insert student name and copy and paste their goals
 - Across the top row, indicate dates and track progress
- [Google Forms](#) are helpful ways to capture important information quickly
 - Create a google form and title it something you will remember
 - Ensuring the form indicates: student name, grade, goal area, and observations or work completed
 - Ensure this google form is either connected to a pre-existing excel sheet or one a new one titled something similar
- Increase parent partnership through progress monitoring
 - [Sample - Parent Progress Monitoring](#)
 - Identify goals that can be met at home
 - Ensure they are written in parent ‘friendly’ language
 - Work with the parent on when and how to support with progress monitoring
 - [Independent Study Checklist](#)
 - Identify what students need to do to be prepared
 - Provide examples, descriptions, visual if needed
 - Work with parents to sign off if the student met expectations
 - Have parents send a picture at the end of each day or week
- Other ways to Track Progress towards IEP goals include but are not limited to
 - [Student Goal Setting sheet](#)
 - [Reading Goal Form](#)

- [Images](#) for setting up tracking protocols
- [Virtual Service Provision Calendar](#)

Progress Monitoring on Virtual Assessment Platforms

Practice virtual progress monitoring assessments in advance. These can include but are not limited to the Measure of Academic Progress test (MAP), FastBridge, DIBELS. It is important to plan for progress monitoring tools, set-up and scheduling before working “face-to-face” with students.

- **Confirm access to all materials for use.** If students need to log-in to platforms or tools at home, confirm all settings enable home access. You can do this by logging in as a student to check for any security measures, such as specified IP addresses, that might block access at home. Confirm preset testing windows or access dates are not in place that would prevent you from administering the test(s) on the intended dates. If so, you may need to have an administrator revise test windows or settings for test administration.
- **Ensure security of test materials.** Do not send them out in advance, otherwise they could be viewed before intended use, or shared with others. For data to be valid, assessments should be administered under specific conditions.
- **Collect all necessary materials for implementation.** If students need specific materials, such as a pencil, calculator, reading tracker, headphones or microphone, create a list and share it in advance. Make sure to have all grade books, student rosters or materials you might need or wish to reference while working with students on progress monitoring tasks.
- **Coordinate and schedule with students and their families.** Communicate in advance about time parameters, purpose of the progress monitoring tasks, and expectations for students and their families for engagement. Whenever possible, schedule progress monitoring to occur during regularly established small group or 1:1 instruction times. Even if another adult will administer one or more of the progress monitoring tasks, such as a district SWOT or assessment team, centralize communication and scheduling with the primary teacher or case manager.
- **Plan sufficient time for the task.** When creating a schedule for yourself, provide time for both progress monitoring of students and transitions between students. Assessments could take as few as 5 minutes per student, but might be scheduled

To see a model of how one progress monitoring tool was set up for use by the FastBridge Team at Illuminate, skip to minute 32 on this [webinar](#) from Illuminate Education.

Home to School Communication

The need for strong partnership and communication between home and school is critical. During this time, providing families with consistent and easily accessible information regarding how their student is progressing on their IEP goals stability for families and makes the transition back a little smoother.

- [Communication tracker \(sample\)](#) templates can be a useful tool and iterated on based on the goals of students to help inform the focus of the week and progress.

Final Word

Ensuring schools are continuing to progress monitor increases student outcomes and better informs instruction now and for when schools open. However, because of virtual learning, progress monitoring can be difficult. We recommend: (1) evaluating how students access their IEP goals through virtual school, (2) utilize pre-existing progress monitoring resources, (3) utilize a progress monitoring tracker that is easily accessible, and (4) partner with student families.



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Timing		Independent Study Checklist		
Environment		My environment is free of distractions <input type="checkbox"/> Away from TV <input type="checkbox"/> Away from my phone I have all the supplies I need <input type="checkbox"/> Computer and charger <input type="checkbox"/> Pencil <input type="checkbox"/> Paper <input type="checkbox"/> Headphones <input type="checkbox"/> Water		
x-x minutes	Beginning	<input type="checkbox"/> Have I set a goal myself <input type="checkbox"/> I am logged in or have all the necessary materials <input type="checkbox"/> I have read the directions carefully		
x-x minutes	Middle	<input type="checkbox"/> I am logging questions <input type="checkbox"/> I am taking a break when I am feeling stressed or overwhelmed		
x-x minutes	End	<input type="checkbox"/> I am sending questions to my teacher and/or attending office hours <input type="checkbox"/> I have read through my work, identified and fixed any mistakes <input type="checkbox"/> I have cleaned up my workspace		
Break Options: Up to x minutes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen to music • Put head down • Play a game • Read 				
Monday Parent Initials:		Tuesday Parent Initials:		Wednesday Parent Initials:
Thursday Parent Initials:		Friday Parent Initials:		

Study Goal Setting and Reflection Sheet
My Goal During Independent Study:
What I can do to achieve my Goal:
How did I do?