

Goals, Activities & Accomplishments: Planning for the Year

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SETTING GOALS FOR YOUR CLUB

THE KEY TO EFFECTIVE PLANNING: GO APE!

GOALS

OBJECTIVES

ACTIVITIES

PREPARATION

EVALUATION

Setting goals and objectives provides groups with a clearer view of what everyone wants to accomplish. Goals also help set standards to be met. If you have a proposed set of goals for the student members to react to, they can set their own goals using your guidelines.

GOing APE is one method of goal setting. It helps provide the necessary structure for setting and realizing goals. It allows students to methodically plan what will be accomplished during the year. This method of goal setting also allows people to take on individual as well as group responsibility for getting things done.

As you set your goals, it may be beneficial to keep in mind the purpose of the club. Generally, the club's goal should be to promote future leaders in the education of exceptional children and youth. Further, it shall promote programs designed to inform students of special education and to encourage them to work with exceptional children and youth. An end result may be that students choose the profession of special education as a career.

Now, here's how to **GO APE!**

➤ **Set Your Goals:** Hazy goals produce hazy results. Define your goals clearly. Write them down, make a plan for achieving them, set a deadline, visualize the results, and go after them. If you know what your goals are, it becomes easier for others to understand what you're trying to achieve. As you prepare to work with club members to set goals for the club, here are a few suggested goals to share with them:

- To foster understanding, respect, and acceptance of individuals with exceptionalities.
- To open new avenues of communication and friendship among school peers.
- To include special education students within existing school programs.
- To provide an opportunity to learn from individuals with exceptionalities.
- To become familiar with a variety of disabilities and the needs of individuals.
- To help students improve their self-esteem.
- To provide a learning environment to enhance leadership and organizational skills.
- To provide a network of support for students with disabilities making the transition from school to the community and the work force.
- To create an opportunity for members to explore potential careers in special education, adapted physical education, occupational therapy, or related fields.

➤ **Plan Your Objectives:** Objectives are short- term goals that can be successfully achieved.

They are directed toward achieving your goals.

- **Establish Your Activities:** Activities are the little steps taken to achieve an objective. Every activity is important and contributes to successfully achieving the objective.
- **Do Your Preparation:** Carefully researching, preparing, and planning all that needs to be done helps to make programs, activities, and events successful.
- **Carry Out Your Evaluation:** How can you be sure that you achieved your goal and objective unless you do an evaluation? Evaluate the event or program as soon as possible while everything is still fresh. Create an evaluation tool if appropriate.

As you get ready to spend some time planning out your year, here are a few things to remember and some forms that will be helpful:

- **Establish a Day to GO APE:** Set aside a day outside of school or plan an afternoon meeting to get together with the executive committee. The president should work with you to set the agenda, and the focus of the meeting should be on goal setting for the year. Electing officers in the spring will help you meet before the year begins so that things get started right away.
- **Welcome to Our CEC Club Meeting:** Use this form to poll club members about what they would like to do during the year. This form can be handed out any time before the executive committee meets to set the goals for the year.
- **Do Some Planning:** Copy this sheet many times so the executive committee can establish the goals, objectives, activities, preparation and evaluation needed for each activity.
- **Create a Calendar:** Copy this form or enlarge it and create a master calendar. Assigning dates to activities, events and programs increases their chance of success. In addition, club members are aware of activities and can plan accordingly.
- **Evaluate Your Work:** Use the evaluation form after each activity, event, or program. Evaluations will help identify your successes and determine areas for improvement.
- **Checking Reality:** Occasionally, you may need to remind students to do a "reality check" and focus on some of the issues listed below. The idealists in your club will want to conquer the world, but it is beneficial to remember these items when planning:
 - What are the resources available in your community?
 - How much time and preparation is involved in each activity?
 - Can you utilize specific skills and talents of your members?
 - Is there a way to involve parents and families in activities?
 - Have you been realistic in your expectations? Do activities coincide with your goals?

WELCOME TO OUR CLUB MEETING!

We are the _____ Club, and we would like to know more about you and your interests. Please respond to the following questions and return this to _____, so that your ideas can be used to help set the goals for the year.

Name _____

Year in School: _____

Homeroom: _____

1. How did you hear about this meeting?
2. Why are you interested in becoming a member of our club?
3. What are your interests and hobbies outside of school?
4. If we have speakers, what topics would you like to know more about?
5. If we hold activities with students with exceptionalities, what would you like to do (dances, track meets, picnics, etc.)?
6. What community service activities would you like to see us do (Special Olympics, peer tutoring, etc.)?
7. Do you belong to any other student clubs?
8. Would you be interested in serving on a committee? If yes, which one(s)?

GO APE -- DO SOME PLANNING

GOAL: _____

OBJECTIVES:

1. _____

2. _____

ACTIVITIES: _____

PREPARATION: _____

EVALUATION: _____

*** MAKE COPIES OF THIS FORM AND USE FOR EACH GOAL YOU SET**

GO APE – CREATE A CALENDAR

Use this calendar as a tool for planning the activities and programs that help you accomplish your goals. Setting dates for accomplishing your goals helps to ensure their success.

CEC CLUB CALENDAR		
<p style="text-align: center;">August</p> <p>*Receive forms from the CEC state/provincial unit for reporting Club officers and members</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">September</p> <p>*Send membership list and officers' list to CEC state/provincial unit</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">October</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">November</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">December</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">January</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">February</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">March</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">April</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">May</p> <p>*Receive annual report form and end of year letter from CEC state/provincial unit</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">June</p> <p>*Submit annual report to CEC state/provincial unit</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">July</p>

15 ACTIVITIES FOR CLUBS

The following list will prompt your goal setting and provide you with ideas that your club can do during the year.

- 1. Tutoring or Cadet Teaching** - This activity requires much planning, inservice preparation, and scheduling, but it is one of the most rewarding and popular activities. Check with special education personnel to find out the need for tutors, the skills that each teacher requires, and the schedule of their classes. Training in special education terminology, multidisciplinary approaches, and behavioral expectations of the tutors are all areas that should be explored before beginning this activity.
- 2. Buddy Systems:** Designing a buddy system can be approached in a number of different ways. You can assign each club member to one or two "buddies" of similar age or assign them with an elementary special education student. Anything students can do in pairs or groups, they should be able to do with their buddies. Whatever age group you decide to work with, here are some fun activities to do together:
 - Go shopping
 - Attend a school sporting event or play
 - Celebrate one another's birthdays
 - Go bowling or to a movie
 - Double date for the prom
 - Practice life-skills together (ride the bus, make business calls, order take-out food)
 - Visit a museum or historical site
 - Do your homework together
 - Exercise together

A buddy system within an inclusive classroom compliments cooperative learning and helps raise the educational outcomes of all involved. Students working together on class assignments are learning skills that they will carry into the workplace in the future.
- 3. Field Trips:** Plan educational visits to group homes, separate school facilities, inclusion sites, state/provincial Special Olympics games, physical education classes, occupational therapy rooms, or universities or colleges with special education programs. Ask your club members to generate a list of sites they would enjoy visiting.
- 4. Respite Care or Sitting Services:** Caring for an exceptional child for even just a few hours is a great service to parents. Conduct training sessions to ensure that your members feel comfortable staying by themselves and being responsible. It's important to survey the parents' needs and expectations before training your student members. Considering checking with your state Department of Social Services or mental health centers to see if they currently provide respite care training.
- 5. Research and Write about Individuals with Exceptionalities:** Spend some time learning about famous individuals with exceptionalities and create a bulletin board sharing this information with the school. Consider learning more about Mozart, Tom Cruise, Stevie Wonder, Jim Abbott, Jim Eisenrich, Ahmed Abdul-Rauf, Curtis Pride and the many other famous individuals with exceptionalities.

6. **Educational Speakers and Presentations:** Ask the student members to screen or view potential speakers for student assemblies. You might consider a “Kids on the Block” puppet show or speakers who have various disabilities. If you have career days, invite past graduates enrolled in college or university special education programs to discuss their feelings about the career they have chosen.
7. **Disability Awareness or Exceptional Children's Week:** Many clubs plan a week of activities that involve sporting events, family fun days, simulation activities, art displays, and public outreach. Other activities can include poster campaigns, newsletters, and viewing of educational films. A handbook with ideas for conducting an exceptional children's week is available from CEC Headquarters, 1110 N. Glebe Road, Suite 300, Arlington, VA 22201-5704, 888/232-7733, service@cec.sped.org.
8. **Participate in Established School and Community Activities:** Do other clubs participate in Homecoming, Pep Rallies, Club Fairs, etc.? Club members will want to be a part of all school activities, so use your creative skills and design a homecoming float, sell items at pep rallies and sporting events, or have a booth highlighting the club's activities. The Niles North Club in Illinois has been successful with their field day "kick-off" event. This Field Day consists of relay events involving families, face painting, a petting zoo, autographing by local celebrities, and of course food, food, and more food! Community activities can include Walk-A-Thons, Special Olympics, Very Special Arts, or making phone calls on behalf of the United Way.
9. **Plan a Dance:** Almost everyone likes to dance! If you can find a location and a DJ who will donate his or her time, what about a dance for a local group home or senior citizens? Many of these residents don't have planned activities and would love to get dressed up. A school gym or church recreation room are great inexpensive sites for holding your dance.
10. **Scholarship or Award Programs:** If your fundraisers are successful or your club can receive funding from another source, scholarships are a great incentive. Scholarships can go to members entering a career in special education, to students with disabilities who wish to attend a summer camp they can't afford, or to someone receiving vocational training for a future job in the community.
11. **Accessibility Advocacy:** Many school buildings may already have accessible restrooms, parking places, and entrances. But have you noticed the accessibility into your gymnasium, football stadium, backstage for theatre productions, or swimming area? If there are students who are visually or hearing impaired, does your library offer braille or is there a written message offered in place of the intercom messages? You can also extend this into the community by looking at the accessibility of restaurants, parks and recreational areas, and other public facilities. Consider looking at local stores and malls as well. In the Additional Information section, there is information on planning accessible conferences and meetings.

- 12. Hold After School Activities for Anyone in the Student Body:** Secure a day on the school calendar once a month and conduct activities in which everyone can participate. Play Bingo or Pictionary. Have a silly games day and play childhood games like Simon Says or Mother May I. Bring in t-shirts from home and paint your club name on them. Go on a scavenger hunt in teams and give out prizes. Plan activities where you can get together, socialize, and have fun.
- 13. Participate in CEC Activities in Your Area:** Secondary school students can benefit from a number of CEC activities and speakers. If there's a local Student CEC chapter, their members can serve as role models for your club members. Special education professionals who are CEC members can also serve as positive mentors and role models. Many secondary school students have served as session hosts at conferences, babysat for children at conferences, developed lessons and activities, and helped with artwork displays.
- 14. Fundraising:** Having available funds is a big part of developing a program. Here are a few ideas:
- Car washes
 - "-Athons" dance, walk, bowl, run, rock, skate, swim, etc.
 - Sales of candy, soft drinks, donuts, ghost balloons, carnations, etc. at school events
 - Baked goods or t-shirt sales
 - Spaghetti dinner; pancake breakfast; chili cookoff (a contest of who makes the best chili and then sell bowls of all different types)
 - Pet contest
 - Gong show
 - Tennis or bowling tournaments
- 15. Create your own program and share it with other CEC Clubs:** Everyone is always looking for a new idea, a new program, or a new activity. Because your club will be unique, it is quite possible you will come up with something no one has done before. Submit your ideas to your sponsoring CEC unit so they can be shared with other clubs in your state/province.

SUGGESTED BOOKS, PLAYS, AND VIDEOS

Books

1. *Bus Girl* by Gretchen Josephson: Through poetry, Gretchen, who has Down Syndrome, describes her emotional development toward independence and adult relationships.
2. *The Crazy Horse Electric Game* by Chris Crutcher: Willie Weaver is the star of the baseball team until he is in a boating accident. Unable to cope with his new disability, he runs away and meets a group of people who teach him how to focus his energies.
3. *My Name is Brain* by Jeanne Bethancourt: Brian has dyslexia and it even affects how he spells his name. Throughout the course of the book, the reader learns how Brian accepts the challenges of his disability and meets them head on.
4. *Reach for the Moon* by Samantha Abeel: Samantha, a 13-year-old girl with a learning disability, writes about her difficulties in middle school, including coping with her disability and the accompanying emotional challenges.
5. *Extraordinary People with Disabilities* by Deborah Kent and Kathryn A. Quinlan: Nearly 50 men and women with mental or physical disabilities are profiled in this collection of well-known figures as: Thomas Edison, Ludwig van Beethoven, Harriet Tubman, Tom Cruise, Chris Burke, and Robert Dole. In addition to those mentioned are: a champion wheelchair marathoner with spina bifida, a partially blind ballet dancer, a photographer with polio, a deaf author and book reviewer, an Indian chief with muscular dystrophy, and an activist and psychotherapist with cerebral palsy.
6. *Views from Our Shoes: Growing Up with a Brother or Sister with Special Needs* by Donald Meyer, Ed.: 45 siblings share their experiences. The children whose essays are featured range in age from 4 to 18 with a variety of special needs, including autism, cerebral palsy, developmental delays, attention deficit disorder, hydrocephalus, visual and hearing impairments, Down syndrome, and Tourette syndrome.
7. *Backyards and Butterflies: Ways to Include Children with Disabilities in Outdoor Activities* by Doreen Greenstein, Naomi Miner, Emile Kudela and Suzanne Bloom: This book provides "low-tech, inexpensive, homemade" accommodations that allow children with disabilities to fully enjoy outdoor activities.
8. *We Can Do It* by Laura Dwight: This children's book describes and illustrates the daily activities of five young children who have either cerebral palsy, blindness, spina bifida, or Down syndrome. Color photographs show the children engaging in their favorite pastimes at home and at school, and the captions describe the scenes from the children's perspective emphasizing their abilities, rather than their disabilities.

9. *A Circle of Children* by Mary MacCracken: A young woman looking for a volunteer job, walks into a school for autistic children and becomes so interested in working with these children, she gets her degree in special education.

Plays

Note: Several of these plays have also been made into movies and can be rented at your local video store.

1. *The Boys Next Door* by Tom Griffen: A touching comedy centering on the daily lives of four men with mental disabilities who live together in the community and the compassionate young man who monitors them.
2. *Butterflies are Free* by Leonard Gershe: A comedy about a young man with a visual impairment who leaves home to live in Greenwich Village in defiance of his interfering mother and falls in love with a girl in the adjoining apartment.
3. *The Elephant Man* by Bernard Pomerance: A drama about John Merrick, deformed from birth and regarded as a freak until Dr. Teeves' interest in his case makes him a favorite of the aristocracy.
4. *The Miracle Worker* by William Gibson: This play documents the earliest efforts of Annie Sullivan to teach a child, Helen Keller, who is rebellious, blind and deaf.

Videos

Here's a few videos you can inexpensively rent from your local video store:

1. **Children of a Lesser God** – Problems arise when a speech teacher at a state school for the deaf falls in love and marries a woman deaf from birth whose only form of communication is sign language.
2. **My Left Foot** – This award-winning film depicts the life of Christy Brown, a young man with cerebral palsy. He lives in a large family in Dublin, Ireland and the story is told from his prospective as he matures.
3. **Mask** – This movie illustrates the life of a young man born with a facial disfigurement. It has a dynamic cast of characters and explores the treatment individuals with exceptionalities receive from their peers.
4. **Flowers for Algernon** – Charlie Gordon, age 32, has mental retardation and enrolls in a class to become smart. He keeps a journal of his progress after an experimental operation increases his IQ. Although brilliant, Charlie is unhappy because he cannot shed his former personality and is tormented by his memories.