STATEWIDE WEBINAR

Enhancing Communication to Support OUR Learners

Wednesday, December 2 @ 12:15 p.m. CT
Today's Goals

GOALS

- Identify WHY we are here
- Review definitions
- Discuss communication
- Ideas/Strategies for enhancing communication

To Do:
1 Be Open
2 Participate
3 Be Mindful
Who's Here

- Parent
- Teacher/Educator
- Educational Advocate
- Student (Learner)
- Support Personnel
- Administrator
- Related Service Provider
- Other
Let's Get on the Same Page

- Individualized Education Program (IEP)
- Admissions, Review, Dismissal (ARD)
- Multi Disciplinary Team (MDT)
- Access to the General Curriculum (AGC)
- Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)
Getting on the Same Page

**Communication**: a process by which information is exchanged between individuals through a common system of symbols, signs, or behaviors (Merriam-Webster)

**Communication Fidelity**: Communication between two or more individuals that demonstrates congruence between the intended message and the message received (Powers & Witt, 2008)

**Team**: Group of people who each play an important role in planning, supporting, and educating learners.

Who is required (POLL).

**Collaborate**: To work together with specific intent, an agreement to a common purpose or goal, and to a common way of achieving that. Collaboration is built on a foundation of mutual trust and respect.” Working smarter together rather than harder alone.
Getting on the Same Page

**Dispute:** Disagreement. Issues should be resolved by the parties at IEP Team meetings if at all possible (opinion).

**Resolution Meeting:** provide parents and the school district with an opportunity to resolve the issues prior to the initiation of due process.

**Crucial Conversations:** A discussion between two or more people where the stakes are high, opinions vary, and emotions run strong.” (p.3)
Common Disputes

**IN YOUR EXPERIENCE,**
What is the most crucial conversation you've had when supporting a learner?

To Do:
1. Use white board
2. Look for Annotate
3. Add Your Text
What is the GOAL?
Defusing Statements

1. “I may be misunderstanding…”
2. “I can show you…”
3. “How can we work together to make this happen?”
4. “My I see a copy of the written policy?”
5. “Let’s ask home to join us.”
6. “I understand.”
7. “I’ve noticed…”
8. “How does that look in the classroom?”
9. “What alternatives do you suggest?”
10. Let’s talk about what’s working.”
Good vs “not so good” Communicators

Good Communicators
✓ Engage you
✓ Make what they say relevant to you
✓ Share themselves
✓ Build rapport
✓ Value you as the listener
✓ Encourage feedback

“Not So Good” Communicators
✓ Talk at you, not with you
✓ Do not take turns
✓ Use unfamiliar acronyms, words, jargon
✓ Do not provide context
✓ Use unnaturally long pause

(DeBoer, 1995)
Effective Communication

1. Listen to understand (do not reply)
2. Be mindful of cultural differences, expectations and perspectives
3. Ask deeper questions (do not provide solution)
4. Avoid Interruptions (speak less, listen more)
5. Be personable and patient
6. Limit jargon, unnecessary details or paperwork (find time to explain & simplify) - Make videos
7. Watch Nonverbals (actions speak louder than words)
8. Be clear, concise, and confident
Increasing Communication Fidelity

1. Adapt to the context of the situation (Spitzberg & Cupach, 1984).
   Example: Adapting language to fit needs of parents

2. Establishing relationships (Karen Mapp - “The Joining Process”)
   Example: Welcoming - Welcome signs, parent parking, customer service mentality; Honor - give parent voices, recognized family contribution; Connecting - link parents to what students are doing, invite observations

3. Understanding primary goals of meeting (Dillard et.al, 1989)
   Example: Admins shared goals is creating educational program, but secondary goal is to protect valuable school resources

4. Parent knowledge of self, child and rights.
   Example: Going above and beyond to help parents understand rights and how to ask questions
Additional Resources

The Power of team in IEP Meetings
Caroline Elser (2017) Dissertation

Partnering with Parents to Ask the Right Questions
Luz Santana, Dan Rothstein, Agnes Bain
Additional Points & Takeaways

Communicate
Dedicate
Be Proactive
Be Open/Mindful
Collaborate
Crucial Conversations
Finding resolutions
OUR Learners
Others?
Resources

Virtual IEP Participation: https://www.michiganallianceforfamilies.org/covid-iep-meeting/

The Power of teams in IEP Meetings: https://scholarworks.uni.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1411&context=etd

Six Tips for Successful IEP Meetings: https://tea.texas.gov/academics/special-student-populations/special-education/dispute-resolution/special-education-dispute-resolution-processes

Parent and Family Resources: https://tea.texas.gov/academics/special-student-populations/special-education/parent-and-family-resources

The Importance of Communication for IEP Students and Parents: https://theeducatorsroom.com/the-importance-of-communication-for-iep-students-and-parents-2/

Special Education Dispute Resolution Processes: https://tea.texas.gov/academics/special-student-populations/special-education/dispute-resolution/special-education-dispute-resolution-processes

Family Engagement Professional Development: https://slideplayer.com/slide/12543523/
References


Elser, C (2017)The power of team in IEP meetings. Retrieved from https://scholarworks.uni.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1411&context=etd


Questions?
Please type your questions in the Q & A box