Creating Change:
Student-Led IEPs & Youth Engagement as a Dispute Resolution Option

Sarah Grime, David Friedemann, Moneé Wright

March 15, 2016
2:30 pm – 3:45 pm ET (11:30-12:45 PT)
Note: The PowerPoint is currently available on the CADRE website
http://www.directionservice.org/cadre/studentlediep.cfm

Technical Stuff:
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Youth Engagement as a
Dispute Resolution Option

David Friedemann, Self-Advocate
Sarah Grime, SchoolTalk Inc.
Moneé Wright, Self-Advocate

Washington, DC to Eugene, OR

* Schools & student engagement in DC

* Schools & student engagement in Eugene
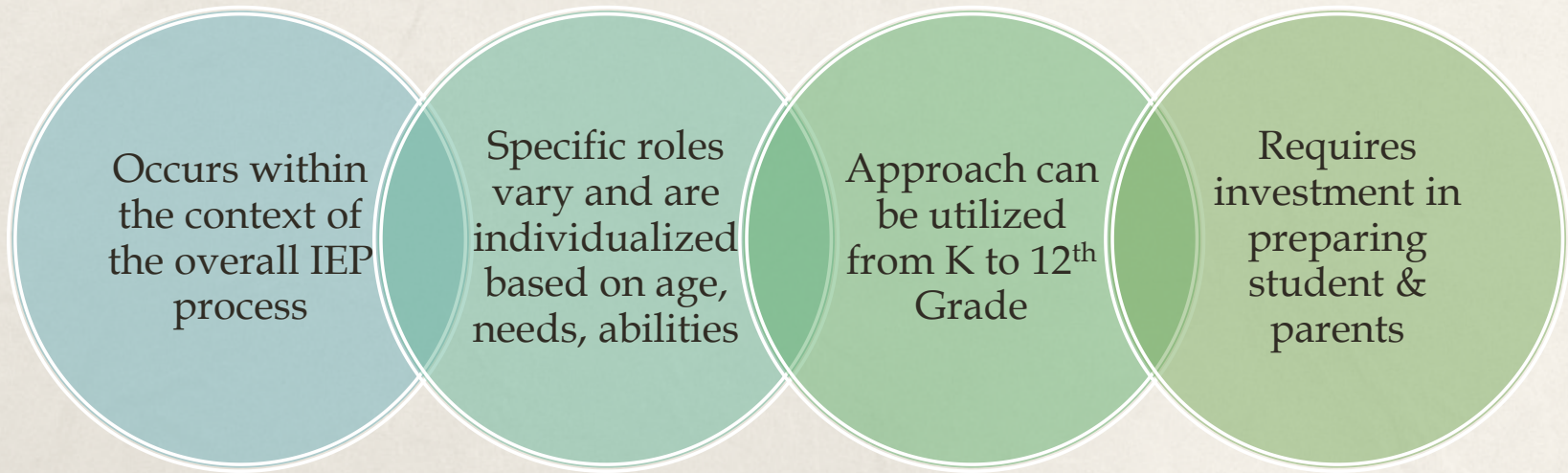
SchoolTalk

www.schooltalkdc.org

SLIEP &
Youth Engagement as a Dispute Resolution Option

* Stage 1: Prevention (CADRE Continuum)
  - Increasing the capacity of students to meaningfully participate, collaborate and problem solve

Photos in this presentation are from "The Best Me I Can Be" – film produced in collaboration and with funding from the DC Office of the State Superintendent of Education
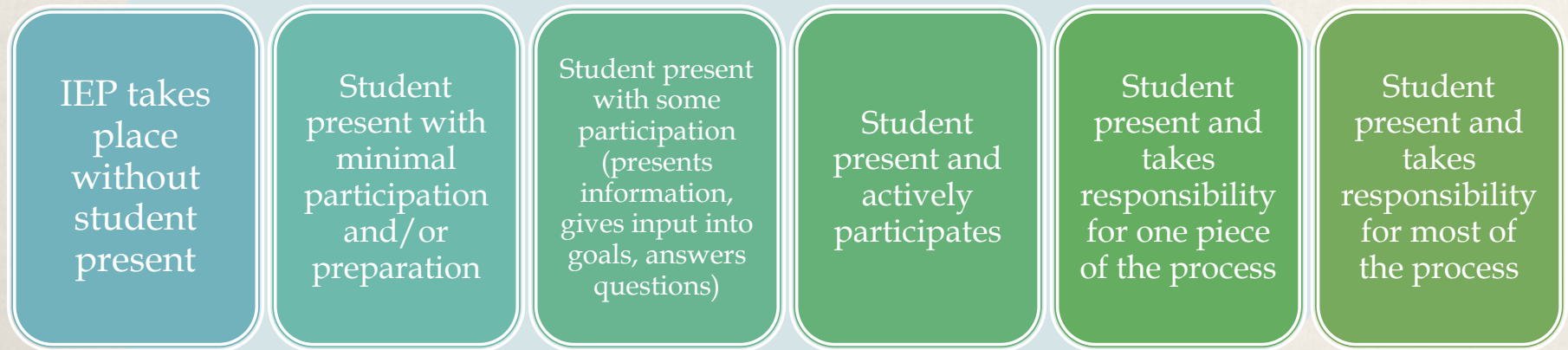
Defining the Student-led IEP

Occurs within the context of the overall IEP process

Specific roles vary and are individualized based on age, needs, abilities

Approach can be utilized from K to 12th Grade

Requires investment in preparing student & parents

* Substance: meaningful student participation in IEP development

* Process: the student takes a leadership and decision-making role

IEP Participation Spectrum

Student engagement levels based on individual needs and abilities

IEP takes place without student present	Student present with minimal participation and/or preparation	Student present with some participation (presents information, gives input into goals, answers questions)	Student present and actively participates	Student present and takes responsibility for one piece of the process	Student present and takes responsibility for most of the process

Research

* Student develops stronger self-advocacy and self-determination skills, leads to increased self-confidence

* Students gains greater knowledge of disability and accommodations

* Increased parent and general education teacher participation

* Less tension—meeting environment becomes a forum for inclusive positive communication between all participants

* Reduced stigma associated with having a disability

* Allowing students to play a decision-making role leads to increased student engagement and accountability

* Improved transition outcomes

"It's really helped me to gain a better understanding of how vulnerable it is not to have that information. Now that he has that information me and my husband can sit back and say 'OK.' So thumbs up to him. I'm really excited about it, really excited." - parent

Tips for Getting Started

* Buy in & training for schools
  * Prepare schools & parents

* Assess students self-advocacy skills
  * Variety of assessments and self-determination checklists available on www.imdetermined.org

* Develop a goal and plan for each student

* Prepare the student

* Watch the magic happen…

In DC, OSSE and the Secondary Transition CoP provided materials and coaching to support the work at each school.

Steps for Preparing Students

* Build self-awareness
    * Disability
    * Abilities & Limitations
    * Needs & Supports
    * Goals

* Understand the IEP
    * Rights
    * Process
    * Review own IEP

* Plan for Participation
    * Introductions & Facilitation
    * Ground rules
    * Use technology
    * Create "out" for student
    * Provide opportunities for practice
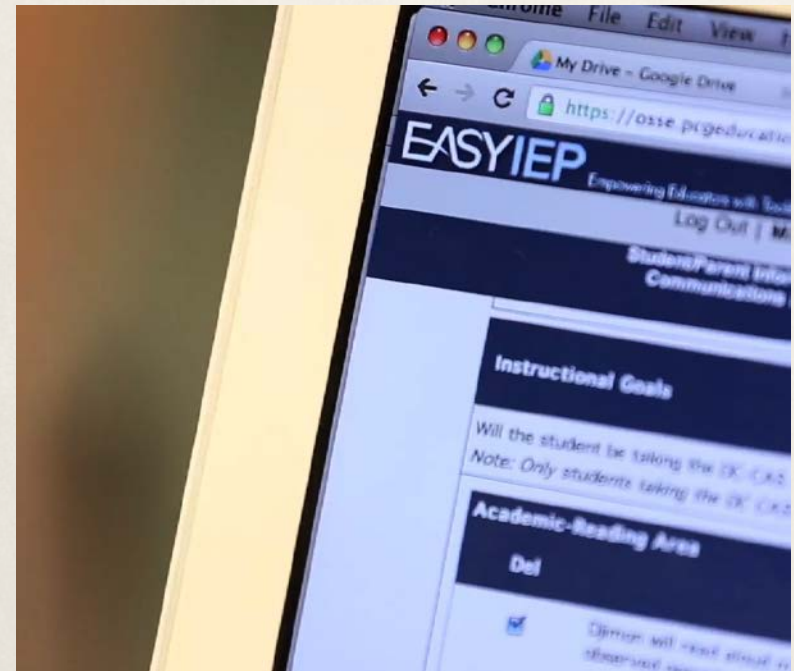
Utilize Assistive Technology

* Develop PowerPoints

* Student demos their assistive technology during the meeting

* Video tape the presentation ahead of time if student is nervous

* Record the IEP meeting and use it to debrief with student after the meeting

* Ask student to take pictures to tell their story

I'm Determined Video – The Importance of Assistance Technology OC

http://www.imdetermined.org/youth/videos/

Student Participation

* Prepare & send invitations

* Conduct introductions

* Make a presentation

* Communicate strengths, weaknesses, needs, & interests

* Request accommodations

* Define future goals, dreams, and aspirations

* Write sections of the IEP

* Facilitate all/part of the meeting

Tips

* Be flexible about the way each school builds in time to work with students.

* Apply self-advocacy skills beyond the IEP meeting.

* Involve students in many ways that work for them.

* Provide teachers and parents with tools for talking to students about their disability.

Impact of Increased Participation

Students who lead and participate in IEP meetings gain:

* Greater awareness about their disability

* Understanding of how their disability impacts their academic performance

* Increased self-determination skills

* Knowledge about available and appropriate accommodations

* Familiarity with the IEP process

"When you are out of school - an adult - you have to take care of everything. You need practice. If only the parents talk, the kids won't be prepared for life."
                                                    - Adult Self-Advocate, DC Advocacy Partners

Implementing SLIEPs in DC

Collaborative initiative with OSSE, DCPS, charter schools, the DC Secondary Transition Community of Practice, and SchoolTalk

DC Student-led IEP Demonstration Project: Best Me I Can Be Video Student-led IEP Toolkit

www.ossesecondarytransition.org

Video & Toolkit Modules

* Module 1: Getting Started

* Module 2: Building Self-Awareness

* Module 3: Understanding Your IEP

* Module 4: Preparing for Participation

* Module 5: Student-led IEPs

In their words…

> *"Now I can tell people like my teachers what I need, my goals, and what I don't need"* – **student**

> *"When I get to middle school I want to achieve all my goals. Especially, my math goals. When I grow up I want to be an archeologist, a scientist, a biologist, and a basketball player. My career goals are all involve math which makes it important for me to strengthen my skills"* – **student**
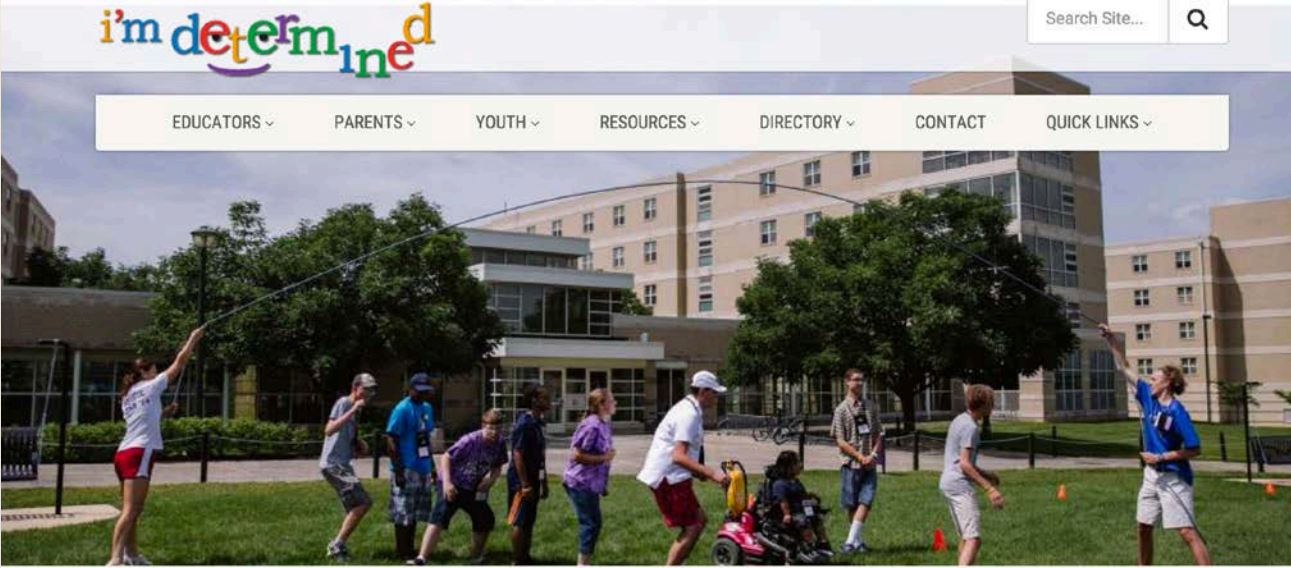
> *"I've seen that what really determines a student's success is not the severity of their disability. Its how engaged they are and using strategies to overcome it. The kids who really say 'yes, I know that strategy works for me and I am going to try it,' they are the ones who do well."* - **Director** of Student Support Services

Expansion in DC

* DCPS self-advocacy curriculum

* CoP resources & videos for how to talk to students about their disabilities + public awareness campaign

* OSSE professional learning community for SLIEPs with more significant disabilities

    * Arts-based initiatives

* Beyond IEPs

    - CIRCLES – Year 3

    - Restorative Justice Pilot

    - DC Youth Leaders Peer Network

I'm Determined VA

De·ter·mined - /di 'tərmind/

Adjective
1. Having made a firm decision and being resolved not to change it.
2. Processing or displaying resolve.

"The I'm Determined project, a state directed project funded by the Virginia Department of Education, focuses on providing direct instruction, models, and opportunities to practice skills associated with self-determined behavior. This project facilitates youth, especially those with disabilities to undertake a measure of control in their lives, helping to set and steer the course rather than remaining the silent passenger."

www.imdetermined.org

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[Webinar Survey](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/studentledieps)

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/studentledieps

Upcoming Webinar

Constructive Individual and Systemic Approaches to Helping Frequent Filers

Presenters:

Suzanne McDougall & Marshall Peter

June 8, 2016

2:30 pm – 3:45 pm ET (11:30-12:45 PT)

Registration Open Soon – Check the CADRE Website!