Moving Research to Practice:
Lessons Learned Regarding Meaningful Home-School Collaboration

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11:30 am – 12:45 pm PACIFIC TIME

Note: **The PowerPoint is currently available on the CADRE website:**

www.directionservice.org/cadre/muellerwebinar.cfm

Technical Stuff:

➢ All phone lines are muted – press #6 to unmute your phone during Q&A.

➢ Please enter any technical difficulties into the chat box.

➢ Thank you for taking the time to answer the pre & post webinar poll questions!
(Note: The poll questions will appear on your screen until we remove them)

GOALS

- Define meaningful home-school collaboration
- Introduce current status of special education due process trends
- Review research about conflict prevention and dispute resolution beyond formal IDEA procedures
- Bridge research to practice to promote meaningful home-school collaboration

What Does Collaboration Truly Mean?

Cook and Friend (2010) define collaboration as a process requiring, "mutual goals; parity; shared responsibility for key decisions; shared accountability for outcomes; shared resources; and the development of trust, respect, and a sense of community" (Cook & Friend, 2010, p.3).

What is meaningful home-school collaboration?

- Mutual trust
- Awareness of each member's perspective
- Ongoing communication
- Shared decision-making
- Mutual goals
- Realistic expectations
- Keeping the focus on the child
- A level playing field

Two Parties with Two Different Perspectives

The Parent

I worry about my child's academic, behavioral, and social success

The School

I worry about my district, school, staff, and all students' success

One Common Interest

The Student

Definition of Conflict

The interaction of interdependent people who perceive incompatible goals and interference from each other in achieving these goals (Folger, Poole, & Stutman, 2000).

Current IDEA Conflict Resolution Options

- State complaints
- Mediation
- Resolution process
- Due process hearings

Reactive in nature

Due Process Hearing Pitfalls

- Can destroy the parent-school partnership
- End effective communication
- Promote a power struggle
- Lose trust
- Excessive costs
- Stress
- Time spent away from students and staff

Most of all….the one common goal we have often becomes forgotten: the student

The Upcoming IDEA Reauthorization

Parent Experiences with the Special Education System

- Daunting
- Jargon
- Unequal
- Heavy on paperwork
- Confusing
- Formal
- Parent's feel left out (Dad's are the odd man out)

How Informative are Procedural Safeguards for Families?

Fitzgerald and Watkins (2006) analysis revealed:

- 4-8% were written at or below the recommended seventh to eighth reading level.
- Many of the safeguards contained 6 or 8 point written font
- A small number contained a section to address parents' FAQ

OUTNUMBERED?

Conflict develops

Common Sources of Conflict	Examples
Design of services	Placement, eligibility, student's needs
Delivery of services	IEP goals, placement, educational practices, discipline
Relationship issues	Communication, trust, reciprocal power, valuation, discrepant views of a child
Constraints	Resource restrictions
Knowledge	Lack of educational training

(Lake & Billingsley, 2000; Feinberg, Beyer & Moses, 2002; Mueller & Stewart, 2013)

Lake & Billingsley, 2000

FIGURE 2. Factors that escalate and deescalate conflict.

Due Process Research Study

- Analysis of 575 due process hearings (2005-06) from 41 U.S. states.

- Purpose of study: To identify common issues of dispute, disabilities represented, and hearing outcomes

See:
Mueller, T.G., & Carranza, F. D. (2011). An Examination of Special Education Due Process Hearings. The Journal of Disability Policy Studies, *22* (3), 133-141.

What disabilities were most common in the due process hearings?

Disability	Percent of Cases
Severe Learning Disability	26.3
Autism	20.2
Other Health Impairment	15.1
Emotional Disturbance	13.2
Intellectual Disability	7.3
Multiple Disabilities	5.7
Speech or language impairment	4.9
Orthopedic Impairment	2.6
Hearing Impairment,	2.0
Deaf/blindness	0.4
Traumatic Brain Injury	0.8
Visual impairment including blindness	0.8
Deafness	0.6

What dispute issues were most common in the due process hearings?

Dispute Issue	Percentage of Cases
Placement	25.4
IEP	23.9
Assessment/Evaluation	11.9
Eligibility	10.8
Behavior	8.5
Related services	6.9
Procedural	4.6
Compensatory education	2.7
Tuition	2.1
Extended school year	1.8
Transition	1.4

Note. Missing data = 1.9%.

Disability and Dispute

Autism

- Placement (34%),
- IEP and program appropriateness (27%)
- Assessment and evaluation (10%)

Emotional Disturbance

- Placement (36%)
- IEP and program appropriateness (17%)
- Behavior (16%)
- Eligibility (11%)

Disability and Dispute

Multiple Disabilities

- Placement (39%)
- Related Services (25%)
- IEP and Program appropriateness (31%)

Specific Learning Disability

- IEP and program appropriateness (25%)
- Placement (20%)
- Assessment and evaluation (18%
- Behavior(12%)

Where Are We Now?
IDEA dispute resolution data

	Due process complaints	Due process hearings	Cumulative decline
2004-05	21,118	7,349	---
2005-06	19,042	5,385	- 27%
2006-07	18,358	4,537	- 38%
2007-08	18,869	3,218	- 56%
2008-09	18,020	2,904	- 60%
2009-10	17,228	2,329	- 68%
2010-11	17,380	1,997	- 73%

Appropriate Dispute Resolution: A New Agenda

- CADRE continues to publish and present cutting edge research about ADR
- States have made systemic changes (e.g., CADRE exemplar U.S. states (Iowa, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin)
- Family Engagement
- IEP facilitation training

See:

Strategies that promote meaningful home-school collaboration

Moving Research to Practice

Research About Conflict

- Special education directors
- School district systems change
- Parent experiences with the special education system
- Teacher educator preparation
- Teacher/parent conflict dyads
- Experiences with facilitated IEPs

What Can School Districts Do?

- <u>Make data-based decisions:</u> Use due process and other similar data to address areas of need
- <u>Invest in resources:</u> Move predicted litigation costs to systems improvement
- <u>Focus on special education law</u>: Provide special and general educators with current special education legal knowledge
- <u>Secure a parent liaison:</u> Hire a parent representative to educate, support, and connect families with resources.

What Can Administrators Do?

- Communicate
- Provide parent support
- Level the playing field

Prevent Conflict

What Can Administrators Do?

- Intervene at the lowest level
- Keep the focus on the child
- Find a middle ground

Conflict Resolution

What Can Educators Do?

- Communicate, communicate, communicate!
- Build trust
- Listen
- Eliminate jargon
- Structure IEP meetings
- Understand perspectives
- Reduce power imbalance
- Create opportunities for family engagement

Before IEP Meetings

This is a process, not a product. . .

- Ask parents about previous year
- Invite parents to share upcoming goals
- Schedule meeting at a convenient time
- Provide reports early
- Invite parents to review draft IEP goals
- Obtain any necessary supports for families

During IEP Meetings

- Create a comfortable atmosphere
- Arrange seating to prevent power imbalance
- Utilize meeting norms
- Follow an agenda
- Chart (provide visual of) meeting discussions
- Gain consensus before moving on
- Ask open-ended questions
- Always maintain the focus on the student
- Use a parking lot for off-topic issues
- Obtain a facilitator (if needed)

After IEP Meetings

- Acknowledge the team
- Celebrate successes
- Create timeline for implementation
- Establish a procedure for potential disagreement
- Plan for ongoing communication
- Ask for feedback

What Can Parent's Do?

- Join parent networks
- Identify district resources for families
- Obtain information for local parent training and information center
- Communicate with team members
- Ask questions
- Understand perspectives
- Advocate

Promising Practices

- Conflict coaching
- Parent engagement
- Parent-to-parent support
- Parent education opportunities
- Facilitated IEPs
- Mock IEP Teacher preparation activities

Looking Forward

- Need for advocate training/certificate
- State-wide continuum of supports
- Teacher education/training
- Facilitated IEP research & practice
- Exploration of other discipline conflict resolution practices

Thank You for Your Time!

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Thank you for joining us!

Please take a moment to answer the poll questions.

Upcoming Webinar:

Inclusive Listening:
Building Understanding, Supporting Collaboration
with
Lorig Charkoudian, Ph.D., CMM
&
Erricka Bridgeford, CMM
December 18ᵗʰ @ 11:30am-12:45pm PST
Register Online:
www.directionservice.org/cadre/charkoudianwebinar.cfm

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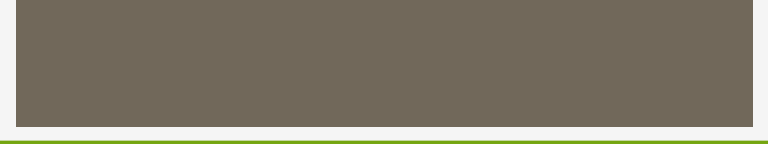
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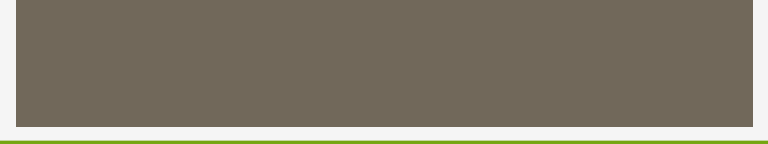
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