About San Joaquin County

- In the heart of the Central Valley
- Diverse population
- 237 public school sites, including charter schools
- 40% of students' families speak a language other than English at home
- 145,000 students
San Joaquin County SELPA

Superintendent

SELPA

- Special Education Local Plan Area
- 1 of 3 SELPA’s in the county (Stockton and Lodi)
- Comprised of 10 school districts

SELPA

- Provides regionalized and special education services
- Supports district personnel
- Employs program specialists, psychologists, vocational specialists
- Staff development and curriculum resources
- Lending library
- Information Resources
Alternative Dispute Resolution Expansion Program Grant

Who we are...
- School psychologist
- Speech therapist
- Behavior specialist
- Over 50 combined years of experience
- Billions of IEPs attended
- Professors at TCSJ
- ADR grant coordinator
- Really tired from getting phone calls from upset families

DISCLAIMER
INFORMATION PRESENTED IN THIS SLIDE MAY BE EXAGGERATED for dramatic purposes... except the picture.
With gratitude, we acknowledge the following who have been extremely influential in our quest for ADR knowledge.

ADR Conference Resources
What we did...

SJC SELPA
Alternative Dispute Resolution Collaborative Continuum

A collaborative network that promotes research based alternative dispute resolution techniques to facilitate communication among stakeholders. The collaborative’s goals and mission will be met by providing resources, services and a continuum of trainings that focus on state of the art techniques for creating agreements.
Predicting rain doesn't count. Building arks does.

Warren Buffett

ADR training continuum

6 Modules
Each module-stand alone training and part of a continuum

1. Connecting the Dots
2. Running an Effective IEP Meeting
3. Art of Note Taking
4. Facilitating Collaboration Beyond IEP Paperwork
5. Navigating Shark Infested Waters
6. Nuts and Bolts of IEP Facilitation
ADR training continuum

- Beginner to advanced information
- Designed for both general education & special education
- Visually interesting
- Videos support the content
- Participatory activities embedded

(Goofy women – humor throughout)

Training #1 - Connecting the Dots

- This beginner training is a basic introduction to the IEP process.
- Outcomes include information & understanding of the following:
  - Intro to special education law & terminology
  - IEP components & meeting agenda
  - Roles & responsibilities of team members
  - Continuum of placement & service options
Training #1-Connecting the Dots

Connecting the Dots

Results:
- 27 participants
- 21 completed evaluations
- Change in knowledge: 2.95 – 4.29 (+1.33)
- Usability: 4.81
- Overall Knowledge: 4.67

Expected Outcomes for Today’s Presentation

- Introduction to special education laws and terminology
- Understand the roles and responsibilities of IEP team members
- Become familiar with IEP components and meeting agenda (legally what HAS to be covered)
- Learn 1 billion new acronyms
Distribution of Information

- Notice of Procedural Safeguards
  - *Parent rights*
  - Given at least once per year
  - Upon filing of due process
- SELPA Community Advisory Committee
- SELPA Alternative Dispute Resolution
- Other (Agenda, Ground Rules)

Sample IEP Agenda-cont

1. Present Levels of Performance
2. Eligibility (Initial and Triennial only)
3. Goals and Objectives
4. Transition Plan (If applicable and may be reviewed at beginning of meeting)
5. Placement and Services
6. Closing
Connecting the Dots - video

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KrapFXnZIDE

**Goals and Objectives**

What is it we want the student to know, understand and be able to do in one year?

- A goal should be written in each determined area of need
- Progress reports should be provided per district reporting periods
- Goals also assist student in progressing towards their stated transition vision
Training #2 – Running an Effective IEP Meeting

This beginner level training covers more facilitative behaviors to implement before, during & after an IEP. Outcomes include information & understanding of the following:

- IEP pre-planning considerations
- Room arrangement considerations
- IEP meeting procedures
- Using an agenda
- Meeting etiquette

Results

- 23 participants
- 15 completed evaluations
  - Change in knowledge: 3.0 – 4.33 (+1.33)
  - Usability: 4.80
The IEP meeting?

It didn't go so well.

Training #3 – The Art of Note Taking

This beginner training covers the top ten elements most important in note taking. Outcomes include information & understanding of the following:

- Legal requirements of notes
- Agenda of an IEP meeting
- What to document
- Facts vs. emotions
- Key terminology
Training #3-The Art of Note Taking

The Art of Note Taking

Results
- 27 participants
- 21 completed evaluations
- Change in knowledge: 2.48 - 4.10 (+1.62)
- Usability: 4.67
- Overall: 4.76

"Um, Can you repeat the part of the stuff where you said all about the things?"
#1-Assign a Note-Taker Before the Meeting

- school district employee
- understands the IEP process, requirements & components of IEP forms
- Ideally, not the meeting facilitator
- This is a Very Important Position!

#4-Capture Pivotal Agenda Items

- It’s not enough to check the boxes
- Notes should fill in the “blanks”—discussions, questions, answers
- Template notes
- Remember Goldilocks . . .
There is no requirement to:
- identify specific staff members
- document personnel decisions
- document staff qualifications
- document a specific methodology or curriculum

But you can if any of the above are required as FAPE for a student!
Training #4 – Facilitating Collaboration – Beyond the IEP Paperwork

Intermediate level training provides knowledge & practice of facilitative behaviors, specifically implementing customer service considerations into the IEP process. Outcomes include information & understanding of:

- Communication strategies
- Collaboration & consensus
- Building trust & empathy
- Positions & interest
- Using visuals to document the IEP process
- IEP role play scenarios of team members &
  a neutral facilitator

Training #4-Facilitating Collaboration- Beyond the IEP Paperwork

Results:
- 12 participants
- 11 completed evaluations
- Change in knowledge: 2.91 – 4.40 (+1.09)
Most customers won't report problems

- 1% - 5% complain to management or HQ
- 45% complain to agent, branch, front-line rep
- 50% encounter a problem, but don't complain
Consider: Room size, furniture, placement, temperature

Training #5 – Navigating Shark Infested Waters

This advanced level training is for seasoned IEP individuals who are interested in increased knowledge & practice of facilitative behaviors, specifically dealing with high emotion IEPs.

Outcomes include information & understanding of:

- Personality types & high stake emotions
- Strategies for dealing with difficult personalities & situations
- Traffic & road block strategies
- IEP role play scenarios of team members & a neutral facilitator
Law: Non-adversarial IEP meeting

Ed Code, Part 30, Section 56341.1 (g)

*It is the intent of the Legislature that the individualized education program team meeting be non-adversarial and convened to solely for the purpose of making educational decisions for the good of the individual with exceptional needs.*
But wait, IEP’s are fun!

* What kind of IEP meetings “stress you out”?
* How do you know when an IEP is going to be challenging?

Only a small % of IEP’s are difficult
Are you a FEABAS?

Communication - keeping things on track

- “Getting back to the agenda...”
- “How about if we put that on the parking lot?”
- “I think we need to write that on an action plan.”
- “Maybe we can take a break?”
- “Let’s relate that to Suzie’s needs, ...”
- “We may have to agree to disagree.”
- “What are you ok with?”
If the meeting becomes adversarial
Training #6 – Nuts & Bolts of IEP Facilitation

This advanced level training is for seasoned IEP individuals who are interested in increased knowledge & practice of facilitative behaviors, specifically how to neutrally facilitate an IEP.

Outcomes include information & understanding of:
  - Rationale & benefit of neutral facilitation
  - Role of neutral facilitator
  - Using visuals to document the IEP process
  - IEP role play scenarios of team members & a neutral facilitator

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**Training #6-Nuts and Bolts of IEP Facilitation**

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<thead>
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<tbody>
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<td>Results:</td>
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<tr>
<td>- 14 participants</td>
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<tr>
<td>- 8 completed evaluations</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Change in knowledge: 2.25 – 4.25 (+2.0)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Usability: 4.63</td>
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<td>- Overall: 4.63</td>
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<thead>
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<th>Starting Knowledge</th>
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<td>2.5</td>
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THE PHONE CALLS!

- Explain your role in the meeting and why you are calling.
- Ask them for their agenda items
  - What are the areas they really want to discuss?
  - Concerns about?
- Be prepared to listen to concerns, grievances, examples of communication problems etc. from **both** parent and district

Your “GO” bag

- Laminated generic agenda
- Laminated generic ground rules
- Post it notes
- Chart paper
- Pencil/pens
- Blue Painter’s Tape

- Chart Markers (Black, Blue & Green)
- Dry Erase/White Board Markers
- Push Pins
- Magnets with Clips
- Large Binder Clips
- Paper Clips
Breaks / Caucuses

- Explain you may call a break,
- Team may schedule a pre-determined break time
- Any team member/s may request a break to caucus.

Lets talk about strategies to address a team member(s)

- Personal attacks
- Emotional outbursts (crying, yelling, abusive language)
- Irrelevant topic areas
- Not taking a breath/pause so you can redirect
What we learned... 

Learn More!!

Role Play Scenarios Are Vital to Maximize Learning

OK EVERYONE...

...LET'S DO A ROLEPLAY!
Role Play Scenarios Are Vital to Maximize Learning

• Participants wanted them!
• Initially, more support is required:
  • Phone a friend,
  • Multiple choice,
  • Fishbowl-tap in/tap out,
  • Selected strategy such as “just ask questions”
• More “on the fly scenarios” vs written, scripted scenarios were more effective
• Set a timer for five minutes and switch out positions (everyone gets a turn and you see different “styles”)

Be Open to Flexible Thinking

• Group may take presentation “off topic”
• Questions were excellent
• Some of the best discussions came from “off topic” questions and became role play scenarios
Redundant Information is Important

- Focus on and reinforce key skills and strategies
- Establish a foundation for all participants
- Repeat information across modules (once is not enough)

District Barriers are Real

- Continue to work out schedule conflicts
  - lack of subs,
  - break time between trainings scheduled on the same day (i.e., AM session and PM session),
- getting information to all team members
- taking trainings on the road
- video trainings
Moving forward
Additional opportunities for our ADR collaborative

- 3 times a year meet to review and practice techniques with targeted short trainings and role plays
- Can phone a friend (us)
- Discussion at Council of Directors on continued need or direction of trainings

THANK YOU!