Warm-up Activity
Characteristics of Good Meetings

- Start and end on time
- People know each other
- People feel safe and respected
- All participants contribute
- Everyone actively listens
- The meeting has a clear purpose
- The team makes good use of its time
- The seating is comfortable
- People do not have hidden agendas
- Participants share the time
- Roles are clear
- People are prepared
- The group works towards agreed upon goals
- The room temperature is comfortable
- Snacks or drinks are available
- A sense of team spirit is present
- People are focused and fully present

A Guide to Collaboration for IEP Teams, Nicholas R.M. Martin
When to Facilitate an IEP Meeting
## Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)

### CADRE Continuum of Dispute Resolution Processes & Practices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stages of Conflict</th>
<th>Stage I</th>
<th>Stage II</th>
<th>Stage III</th>
<th>Stage IV</th>
<th>Stage V</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Levels of Intervention</td>
<td>Prevention</td>
<td>Disagreement</td>
<td>Conflict</td>
<td>Procedural Safeguards</td>
<td>Legal Review</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)
When to Facilitate an IEP Meeting

The relationship between the parent(s) and the local education agency is strained

Lack of a perceived “level playing field”

When the IEP team has not been able to reach consensus

Other ideas...
When to Facilitate an IEP Meeting

- High Content
  - Facilitated IEP a Consideration

- Low Content

- High Emotion
  - Facilitated IEP appropriate

- Low Emotion
  - Facilitated IEP a Consideration
Benefits of Facilitating an IEP Meeting

- Builds and improves relationships
- Models effective communication and listening
- Clarifies points of agreement and disagreement
- Provides opportunities for conflict resolution
- Encourages new options to address unresolved problems
- Is typically less stressful than formal proceedings
- Supports follow through and follow-up

*Is* the IEP meeting
Consequences of NOT Facilitating...

• Conflict widens, others get involved
• Legal battles
• Unilateral action
• Sabotage
• People give up
• People get stressed
• People become irrational/make bad decisions
• Conflict reaches the point of no return
Role of the Meeting Facilitator
Facilitate - Definition

verb
verb: facilitate; 3rd person present: facilitates; past tense: facilitated; past participle: facilitated; gerund or present participle: facilitating

To make (an action or process) easy or easier.
Role of the Meeting Facilitator

- Ensure a welcoming and positive environment (host)
- Establish/enforce process
- Keep the team focused
- Commit to neutrality
- Be an example
- Encourage collaboration and participation

- Promote positive communication
- Explore interests
- Clarify concerns
- Clarify agreements
- Address unproductive communication
- Bring meaningful closure
Role of the Meeting Facilitator

“Put your energies into guiding rather than ruling. The more unobtrusive you lead, the more people will grow and learn to use their powers wisely. Make your aim as a leader to be unnoticed and eventually unneeded!”

- Quoted in *My Tao* by R.W. Russell
Technical Components of the Facilitated IEP
Components of a Facilitated IEP

- Agenda
- Preparation
- Room Environment
- Ground Rules
- Visual Aids
An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.
Preparation - Timing

- Make sure all attendees understand the meeting start/end time and can attend the entire meeting.
- If a member cannot attend the entire meeting ensure that parents give permission.
- Make sure the meeting notice was sent to all attendees specifying the correct date, time, location, and participants.
- Ensure you have the room for the amount of time needed.
- Send reminders
Preparation - Materials

- Name tags
- Food/water
- Agenda
- Posters/visuals and pens
- Kleenex
- Documents
Preparation - Responsibilities

Assign preparation responsibilities. Who will:

- Draft meeting agenda
- Provide documents prior to meeting for review
- Draft proposed academic and behavioral goals
- Request student work samples for each goal
- Take notes
- Write the IEP
Preparation - Documents

- Old IEP
- Draft IEP
- Evaluation reports
- Work samples
- Attendance records
- Report cards/progress reports
- Behavior data
Preparation - Contacts

Make contact with IEP team members

• Explain your role as the facilitator
• Consult with all team members on potential or known issues
• Identify individual goals for the meeting

Ensure that all participants understand their role in the meeting.
Preparation - Contacts

- Student Ability
- Current Grades
- Missing Assignments/Tests
- Academic Assessments
- Attendance
- Behavior
- Level of Independence
- Accommodations/Modifications
- Learning Strengths/Weaknesses
- Collaboration with General and Special Education Teachers
- Data Driven!
Preparation – Explore Expectations

Whenever possible, take the time prior to the meeting to explore the expectations of team members.

• Avoid making assumptions
• For example, ask the following:
  ◦ What are your desired outcomes for this meeting?
  ◦ What are you hoping will be accomplished at this meeting?
• Awareness of expectations allow the facilitator to:
  ◦ Prepare to highlight areas of agreement
  ◦ Prepare for potential areas of conflict
  ◦ Brainstorm opportunities for resolution or compromise
Having an agenda:

• Encourages pre-planning
• Demonstrates intentionality in planning the meeting
• Provides a roadmap for the meeting
• Let’s participants know what’s coming next
• Assists in keeping the team focused and on-track
• Allows the early opportunity for the facilitator to build agreement
• Provides a third point
Sample Agenda

- Welcome/start-up
- Introductions
- Purpose/expected outcomes
- Time parameters
- Agenda overview
- Ground rules
- Child/parent rights
- Present levels of performance
- New goals/objectives based on current needs
- Supports, services, accommodations, state testing
- Placement and consideration of LRE
- Consent
Room Environment

- Inclusive room arrangement
- Provide name tags and adult-sized chairs
- Keep the room temperature comfortable
- Make sure food, water, tissues, notepads, and pens are available
- Ensure that visuals/posters are easily viewed from all seats in the room and good quality poster pens are available
- Provide documents to all participants
Establish Group Norms

Group Norms protect groups from unproductive behavior. In order for Group Norms to be effective, the group needs to agree upon:

- Each Group Norm.
- Who will enforce the group norms.
- The consequences for failing to follow a norm.
- Whether the facilitator is empowered to enforce the group norms. The facilitator may also decide to empower the group to state when they believe the group norms are not being followed.

NOTE: Very skilled facilitators may decide not to use group norms.
Establish Group Norms

Sample Group Norms:

• One person may talk at a time
• Be courteous and respectful
• Silence cell phones
• Commit full attention to the process
• Follow the agenda
• Remain child-focused
• Be an active listener and participant
• Work together to reach consensus
Visual Aids

- Confirm that individual members’ agreements, concerns, and comments are documented accurately.
- Provide a third point to shift the cognitive and emotional energy from team members to the data.
- Assist the group with remembering discussions and agreements.

Always post visual aids in a place where they can be clearly viewed throughout the duration of the meeting.
Parking Lot:
• For issues that arise that require follow up
• For issues that are not IEP related
• To acknowledge issues that are keeping a team member from moving forward

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What?</th>
<th>Who?</th>
<th>By When?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Visual Aids

- Agenda
- Work samples
- Ground rules
- The projected IEP
- Competing pathways charts
- Student strengths/needs
- Placement options (+ and -)
Activity
Additional Questions?