CCR-IEP Family Engagement Facilitator's Guide & Agenda

This guide is aligned with the CCR IEP 5 beliefs and 5-step process. It is meant to be used as a tool to facilitate positive IEP meeting conversations and offer schools strategies to engage with families during the IEP process.

General Tips when working with families:

- Be sensitive to families, relative to where families may be in the acceptance of the diagnosis/disability and/or the grieving process
- Think about ways the family could feel welcomed and included in the school community
- Strive to understand the whole child and family.
- Focus on descriptions, not labels.
- Use active listening.
- Remember to report out in family-friendly language, speak in layman's terms, and avoid jargon
- Ensure all communications are in a language that families understand, and communication is two-way.
- Connect the school with learning at home.

Before meeting:

- Ensure that families have input into the time and place that the meeting will be held.
- Ask the family if a pre-meeting between the family and a trusted staff member is needed so that information can be shared in a comfortable environment.
- Co-construct an IEP meeting agenda with the family. Once the agenda is developed, send it out in advance of the meeting.
- Invite the student when appropriate.
- Share a form, such as the Family Student Snapshot, the My Snapshot, or the Family Profile, with families asking for thoughts/ideas/concerns that would benefit the upcoming meeting and allow for a better understanding of the student.
    - Share the forms in a way that is meaningful and relevant to the family.
    - Offer assistance to families and students in filling out
    - When you give this form to the family, acknowledge the family as the expert on their child and that you value their input.
- Make sure that the family has a copy of the most current IEP. Encourage the family to review before the meeting. If possible, share any reports prior to the meeting so families are able to review them. Offer to address any questions they have.
- Check in with the family to address any of their questions regarding reports and logistics
- Share resources with families that will help them prepare for the IEP meeting, such as the WI FACETS IEP Checklist.
- Build the family's capacity to engage in the IEP process by sharing additional special

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education resources, such as An Introduction to Special Education and Special Education in Plain Language.

Day of the meeting:

- Alert the office staff so they know where to direct the family and agency representatives
- Find a way to make the family feel welcomed, such as greetings, offerings of water
- Prepare name tags for all members. Greet everyone and call them by their preferred name.
- Be aware of the unique needs of the family to conduct the IEP in alignment with culturally responsive practices
- **Welcome the family**
  Begin with introductions and celebrations:
    - Ask IEP members to introduce themselves, have them share a strength, positive experience, or an accomplishment of the student to build positive relationships among the team.
    - Provide an overview - purpose of meeting, establish norms/time parameters.
    - Convey to families how important their presence and input will be to developing a comprehensive IEP.
    - Share that
        - Families are equal partners in the process.
        - The student's IEP is co-created with the family
    - Engage in a conversation about the family's hopes and dreams for their child
        - Ask the family how they feel the current IEP/services are meeting your child's needs, and any concerns.
        - Take some time to explain the Communication Options for Families form.

IEP Development: Using the Five-Step Tables

Educator:

CCR-IEP Family Engagement 5 Step Table

Family :

CCR-IEP Family Guide to Engaging

The Family's Role in the CCR-IEP Process Worksheet

IEP Development: Five Steps

NOTE: If you are new to the CCR-IEP Process, click on the CCR-IEP Family Engagement 5-Step Table for Educators to learn more about the specific steps. The following suggestions under each step below are more focused on questions to better engage families in the discussion.

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Family Engagement Prompt

Throughout the IEP 5-Step process, think about how you will engage the family in the student's education. The IEP Family Engagement Prompt states the following:

How do school staff engage families in the education of the student?

Here are some ways to consider:

- Sharing resources
- Communicating with families
- Building upon family strengths
- Connecting families to learning activities
- Additional Guidance & Resources
    - WI DPI Family Engagement Prompt Guidance (being updated)
    - CESA 6 Screen Cast
    - WSPEI Suggestions for the Family Engagement Prompt

1. Understand Achievement

Help families understand assessments. Remember to report out in family-friendly language, speak in layman's terms, and avoid jargon.

- Encourage the family to share
    - Student strengths, interests, etc. related to school functioning (academic/functional)
    - How they function at home and in the community
    - New information related to achievement and functional skills
    - Family/cultural information to help understand the student
    - Concerns, fears, and questions
- Example Discussion Prompts
    - When is your child at their best?
    - What types of books, literature, and movies does your child enjoy that could support literacy?
    - How are things going at home?
    - Is there anything you would like us to know about your family's culture?

2. Identify the Effects of Disability and Disability-Related Needs .

Revisit parental and student questions and concerns. Include the family in the root cause discussion. Be mindful of the family's culture when discussing disability-related needs.

- Encourage the family to share
    - How the student's disability affects learning, peer and adult relations, independence in the home, and the community
    - Observations that support or are different than those shared by school staff
- Example Discussion Prompts
    - What are you seeing at home that helps us understand your child's needs?
    - What concerns do you have about your child's academics, relationships with friends, emotional needs, and independence at home and in the community?
    - Do you agree with the needs as discussed?

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3. Develop IEP Goals

Consider how you will plan with the family rather than for the family, and co-create annual goals with the family.

- Encourage the family to share
    - 2-3 skills they believe will make the most difference in the child's access, engagement, and progress
    - The strengths and interests of the student as seen in the home and the community
    - Thoughts on whether a self-determination goal would assist the student in becoming more independent
    - Questions they have about the goals and/or the development of the goals
- Example Discussion Prompts
    - Do these goals support your hopes and dreams for your child's future?
    - How do you believe you can help support your child's education at home?
    - How can we do a better job supporting you so you can support your child?
    - What do you think would help your child become more independent?

4. Align Services

Make sure families understand the difference between accommodations and modifications. Explain what specially designed instruction is and what it looks like for the student.

- Encourage the family to share
    - What accommodations are used at home and in the community to support the child
    - What services, supports, and accommodations have, or have not, been effective and why?
    - Their thoughts on how the student will be included in field trips, extracurricular activities
    - Whether or not the family feels welcomed and included in the school community
- Example Discussion Prompts
    - How can we develop services and supports for your child in a way that respects your family's time and traditions?
    - What strategies do you use at home or in the community that you find effective?
    - What questions or concerns do you have about the proposed services and supports?
    - Do you have a clear picture of what your child's day will look like and how they will be supported at school?
    - Would you like a tour of the school to see where your child's services will be delivered?
    - Do you feel like your child is included in all aspects of the school?

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5. Analyze Progress

- Ensure that families understand that progress is reported on IEP annual goals and what tools will be used to measure progress.
- Encourage the family to share
    - Ways that they view progress toward goals at home and in the community ○ Questions about progress reports and progress data
    - Which school staff are they most comfortable communicating with to review progress, ask questions, and receive encouragement and support
    - If they can access and receive progress reports, if they are sent electronically
    - What the family believes their role is in monitoring progress
- Example Discussion Prompts
    - How often do you want to be updated?
    - How would you like to be involved in helping us to monitor your child's progress?
    - Are you able to access the school's management system (insert name here)?

If it is part of your district process, provide a draft copy of the IEP to the family before ending, and thank everyone for their participation.

Follow-up to meeting

- Review the completed IEP with the family to ensure full understanding. Ask the family if they are satisfied? Overwhelmed?
- Provide parents with a copy of the student's schedule with times and places.
- Share a list of community agencies that offer support to families of children with disabilities.
- Make positive phone calls and send positive emails to family.
- Check in with the family on their perspective of progress, and how things are going.
- Follow up with ways that the family can support goals at home throughout the year.

Additional resources to have available for families:

English (PDF): Communication Options for Families / English COF Fill-in Version
Espanol (PDF): Opciones de comunicación para familias / Spanish COF - Fill-in Version
Hmong (PDF): Tej Kev Sib Txuas Lus Rau Cov Tsev Neeg / Hmong COF Fill-in Version
PTA Parents' Guide to Student Success
Acronym List
Annual Goals
Accommodations / Modifications
How Will I Know if My Child is Making Progress?
CADRE Engaging Parents in Productive Partnerships
Endrew F. Advocacy Talking Points

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IEP Agenda

As a part of the IEP process, family and student input is valued and needed. This agenda provides a framework for IEP team discussions as collaboration takes place to develop the IEP.

Welcome

- Introductions
- Overview - the purpose of the meeting, establish norms/time parameters
- Celebrations
- Student input
- Family input

IEP Development

- Discuss and review current achievement
- Discuss the student's current needs
- Discuss IEP Family Engagement Prompt
- Discuss and develop goals
- Plan supports and services needed to meet goals
- Discuss where instruction will be delivered
- Discuss how and when progress will be measured and communicated

Wrap up: Questions/Suggestions/Discussion

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