

Overview of a Facilitated IEP Meeting

Presented by:



In collaboration with the
Illinois State Board of Education
(ISBE)



Outcomes

By the end of the presentation,
you will have an understanding of:

- ◆ The definition and benefits of Individualized Education Program (IEP) facilitation
- ◆ Tools and prevention strategies you will see in IEP facilitation
- ◆ The roles and responsibilities of meeting participants
- ◆ The ISBE Pilot Project
- ◆ The IEP facilitation request process



What is IEP Facilitation?

Individualized Education Plan (IEP) Facilitation

- ◆ A collaborative team; and
- ◆ Decision making managed through the use of facilitation skills.

This process of Facilitation for IEP meetings enables the team to:

- ◆ Build and improve strong relationships;
- ◆ Reach consensus;
- ◆ Focus the IEP content and process on the needs of the student; and
- ◆ Exercise effective communication and reflective listening.



The Purpose of IEP Facilitation

To guide IEP groups toward their objectives;
To assist people in building understanding and agreement; and
To bring out the best in all group members.



When these concepts come together, the team finds shared responsibility and shared understanding.



Visual Tools used in IEP Facilitation

- ◆ Outcomes
- ◆ Agendas
- ◆ Group Norms
- ◆ Group Memory
- ◆ Parking Lot
- ◆ Action Plan



Prevention Strategies used in IEP Facilitation

- ◆ Process Agreements
- ◆ Process Suggestions
- ◆ Educate the Group
- ◆ Reserve Judgment
- ◆ Communication Skills



Roles and Responsibilities of IEP Meeting Participants

Parent	To be the child's voice and to bring information related to the child's strengths and challenges
Special Education Teacher	To provide data in relation to the student's educational plan
General Education Teacher	To provide information related to the general education curriculum and state standards
LEA Representative	To answer district wide questions and allocate resources
Neutral Facilitator	To assist the team in moving the group through the IEP process.



The Role of the Neutral State-Sponsored Facilitator

An IEP facilitator focuses on guiding the meeting process and supporting all parties' full participation. The neutral facilitator is not a member of the IEP team or an advocate for any person on the team. The neutral facilitator does not make a decision for the group. The neutral facilitator keeps team members on task, clarifies points of agreement and disagreement, provides team members opportunities to consider alternative solutions, and keeps the meeting focused on the needs of the student.



The Benefits of IEP Facilitation are:

- ◆ The process focuses on the needs of the child, not desires of the participants;
- ◆ Teachers feel more prepared for their meetings;
- ◆ Team members feel capable of preventing or managing conflict;
- ◆ All team members feel they have a voice;
- ◆ Contentious meetings result in positive outcomes;
- ◆ It utilizes a process that follows federal law; and
- ◆ It ensures that the decisions that are made in the meeting are implemented.



Legal Counsel Feedback

*“Facilitated IEP’s incorporate the **best practices** that we (lawyers) have been asking teams to use for years!”*

“FIEP’s ensure that everyone on the team shares in the responsibility of developing the IEP.”

“The facilitated strategies bolster the case that our procedures follow the IEP process.”

“The FIEP process lends itself naturally to the collaborative process.”



ISBE Pilot Project

ISBE has decided to first implement the IEP Facilitation System as a 12 to 18 month pilot project prior to state-wide implementation.

The role of the state-sponsored IEP Facilitators will be to:

- ◆ focus on the “process” of the IEP meeting;
- ◆ support all parties’ full participation;
- ◆ keep team members on task;
- ◆ clarify points of agreement and disagreement; and
- ◆ provide team members opportunities to consider alternative solutions.

ISBE invited districts of varying sizes and demographics across the state to participate in this pilot project.



The IEP Facilitation Request Process

State-sponsored IEP Facilitation is a voluntary service offered at ***no cost to districts and parents of students*** with disabilities. A parent or a district representative may make the request for a state-sponsored facilitator. However, these services will initially only be available to those districts who have volunteered to participate in the pilot project and parents from those identified districts. The pilot project will begin during Spring 2016.

Updates on the IEP Facilitation System, including when it will be available to all districts and parents will be provided on the Illinois State Board of Education website. www.isbe.net

For more information or to request an IEP Facilitation, please contact:

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