

Positive Partnerships for Individualized Education Programs (IEP)

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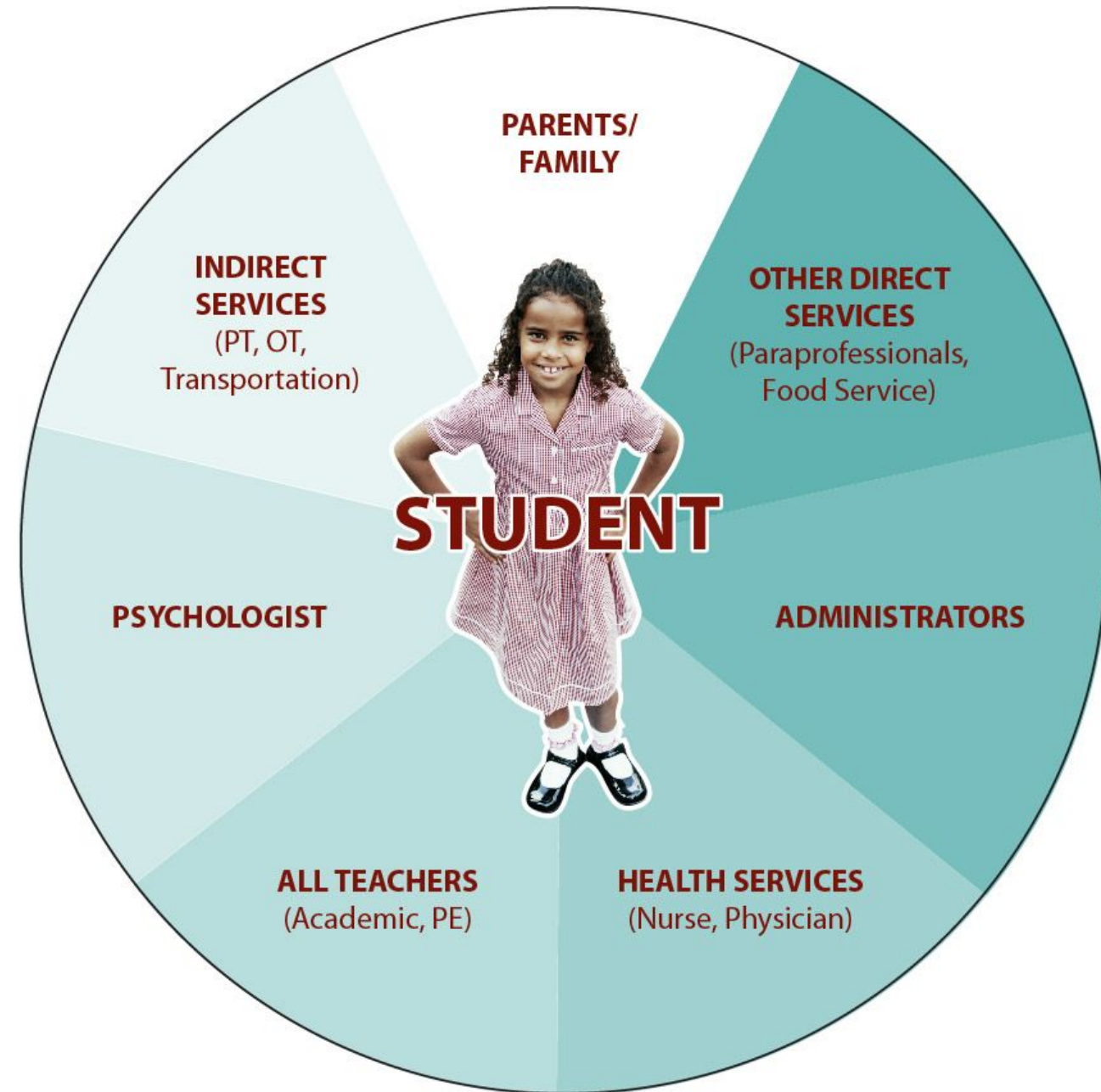
What is an IEP?

- Individualized Education Plan
 - The Individualized **E**ducation Plan, also called the **IEP**, is a document that is developed for each public school child who needs special **e**ducation. A student must meet the state requirements in order to qualify for an IEP. The **IEP** is created through a team effort, reviewed periodically.



Project Objectives:

- The district recognized the need to improve the IEP process.
- A Group Level Assessment process was used to get input from parents and staff.
 - This project piloted using the GLA process.
- Information gathered from the focus groups will be used to create an action plan to be implemented in the Fall 2018-2019.



Group Level Assessment Methodology

GLA methodology is a large group method for identifying primary issues and needs within a community.



Group Level Assessment (GLA)

Step One: Climate Setting

- Overview of session, warm-up

Step Two: Generating

- Group works at responding to prompts written on flip charts placed on walls around the room. Participants are given markers and asked to simultaneously walk around the room responding to each heading in any order with pictures, words, or phrases.

Step Three: Appreciating

- Mill around and look at data written on the wall charts.

Step Four: Reflecting

- Spend time alone thinking about what the data means.

Step Five: Understanding

- Subgroups discuss specific data items and report out.

Step Six: Selecting

- Group discusses and prioritizes data.

Step Seven: Action

- Group considers possible next steps based on priorities.

Group Level Assessment (GLA) Step 1:

- Held four 2-hour sessions during February and March.
- Approximately 100 participants attended, including parents, teachers, and administrators.
- Attendees were asked for responses to prompts, broke into smaller groups to identify themes, then individually power-dotted their 3 most important themes.



GLA Prompt Examples

Feelings

When I walk into an IEP meeting I want to

The best part of an IEP meeting is when

The worst part of an IEP is when

I would feel like a more valued team member if

Something that causes me to become upset at an IEP meeting is

I would feel positive walking out of an IEP meeting if

My best IEP meeting was a time when

During the IEP process I fear

It would help me during the meeting to feel less overwhelmed if

Input

I don't always advocate for my child/student because

Parent advocates are

I would feel more prepared to participate in my child's/student's IEP meeting if

During the meeting I can be more included by

I feel that my voice is heard during the IEP process when

Team transparency could be improved by

The best way to build trust between staff and parents is

Process

The IEP process could be made more positive if

I would better understand the paperwork/process if

My biggest struggle as a parent/staff member in the IEP process is

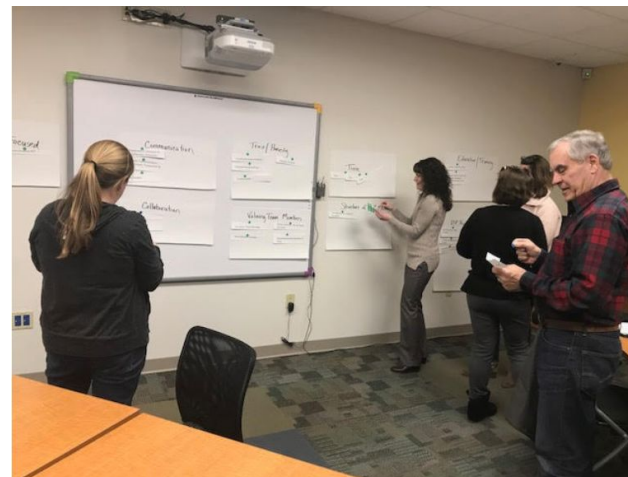
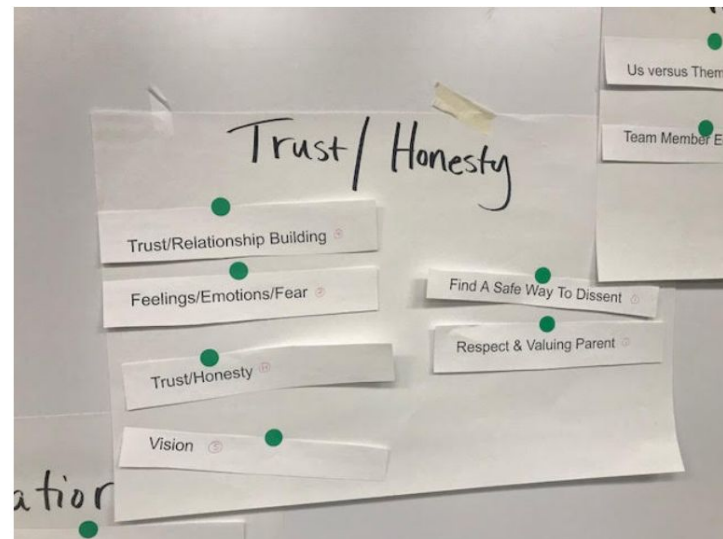
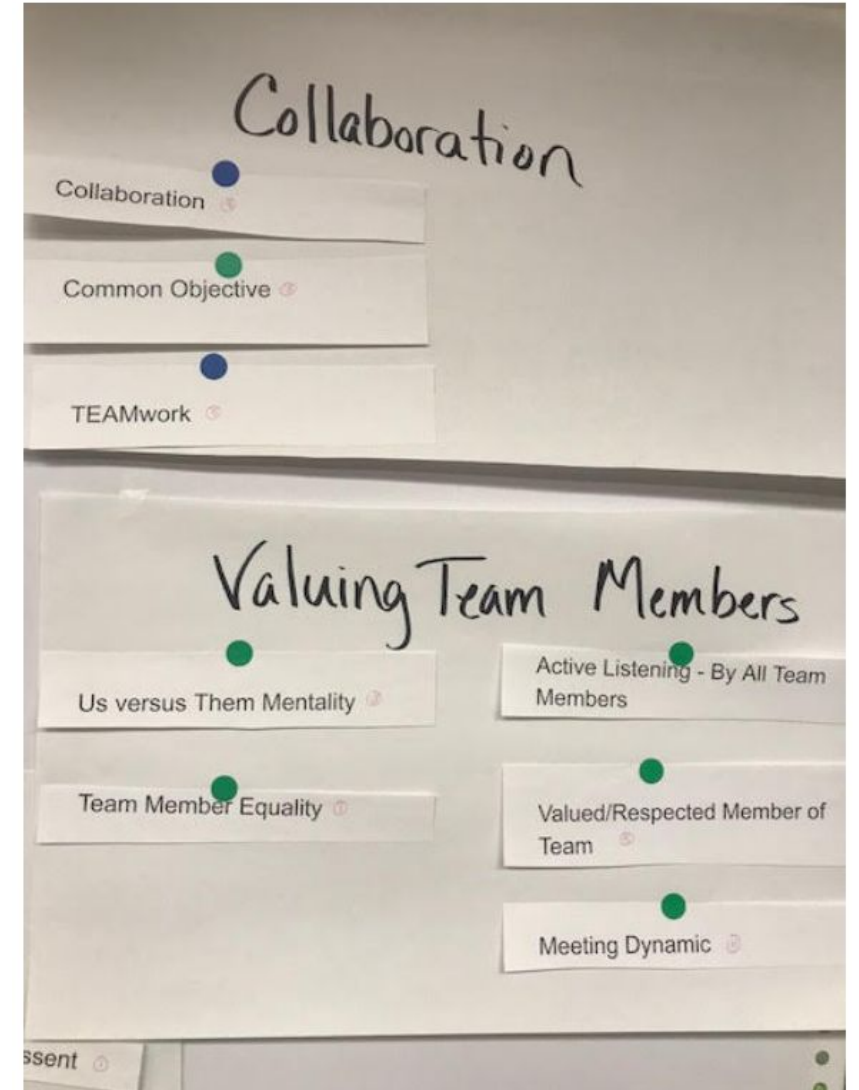
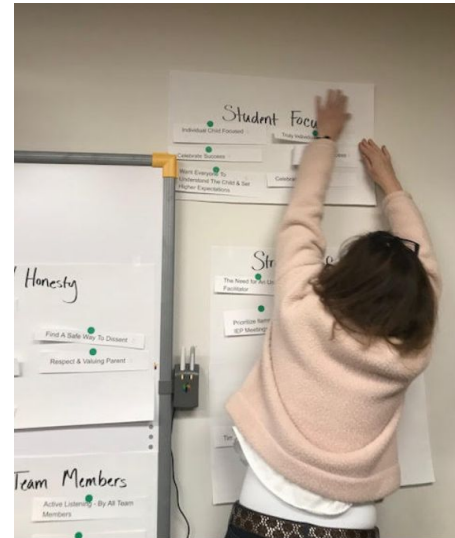
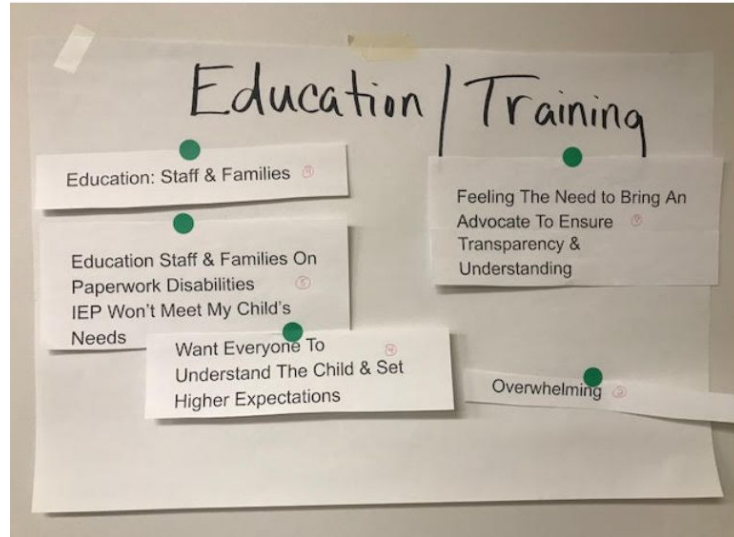
One thing I wish could happen during every IEP meeting is

Light-Hearted

What superhero do you think you should be at your child's/student's IEP meeting?

My IEP theme song would be...

Analyzing the Data After 4 Sessions



Themes Identified from Input Sessions

Shared Team Decision Making

Student Focused

Collaboration

Valuing Team Members

Trust and Honesty

Communication

Structure of IEP Meetings

Education and Training

IEP Process and Documents

Group Level Assessment (GLA) 2nd Step:

- In April, all participants were invited back to an Action meeting
 - Discussed priority themes generated from the first sessions.
 - Brainstormed and prioritized potential action steps and possible barriers to address the priority themes.





Collaboration

- Value child as team member
 - present in meeting
 - photo

- Create Standardized format for meetings (district wide)
 - * Script with prompts
 - * Time allocated for parent to voice concerns
 - * ~~Include pre-planning meeting~~

- Conduct pre-planning meeting \Rightarrow may result in decreased time in actual IEP meeting. Efficiency.
 - * What are concerns?
 - * What are goals?
 - * Develop pre-meeting agenda.
 - * What is the parent/child's vision

- Utilizing Parent Resource Coordinator more effectively.

- * Early notification of families
- * Attend initial IEP meeting

- Establish conference time with ^{student, parent, teacher}
 - * informal-
 - * By week 3-4 of school year.

- Provide donuts & coffee

Barriers

- Time
- Personalities
- \$ for donuts & coffee



Action Plan Coming Soon:

- Stacey Spencer, Director of Student Services, will oversee a committee a group this summer that will develop an action plan.
- The group will consist of a representation of team members involved in an IEP meeting: administrator, special education teacher, general education teacher, parents, other related service staff members.



Reflections on the SAC Project:

- Researching directly with staff and parents was rewarding.
- Process was time consuming.
 - Facilitating and preparation was almost double the commitment vs. traditional SAC project.
 - Time was spent on training to learn about the GLA process and understanding the components of IEPs.
- Meaningful to interact with parents and school personnel to meet the same goal...how to help children learn. It is an inherently emotional topic.



Collaboration

ACTION STEPS

Continuity in Key Relationships (Int. sp. follows std.) → Certified Staffing Model Competency legal liab.

"Administrative Gate-Keeping" needs to change to Solution building + Relationship management.

(ID ROOT CAUSES) → (PA)

Training for teachers and parents on how to have difficult conversations.

- Optional 30 min. conversations/meeting after progress meet notes.
- Co lead meetings between parents + staff.
- Communication logs for younger students + language emerging students
- Hire staff person who supports paperwork specific to IEP teams.

Monthly newsletter from related services with qualitative information

- include what parents can work on at home

Options for informal quarterly meetings/conference with specialist, EA's + related services.

Increase training for Educational Assistants/Aids

- specific to disabilities (ex- behavior modifications, sensory needs)
- utilize EA's creatively

Parent Observations in classroom.

Barrier- confidentiality

Increase training for general education teachers for students w/ disabilities

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Communication plan established at beg. of year

- time
- reasonable expectations (shared expectations)
- Blackboard cost to update
- scheduling
- restructure system
- staffing

- online system that streamlines communication (assignments, grades, comm. etc.)
- Keep IEP team consistent to build trust + honesty (ie. looping grade levels)
 - parent education nights about special ed.
 - Special ed. orientation at beginning of year to network with parents + teachers

Actions	Barriers
More communication throughout the year	Template/Rubric
PTO for parents of students on IEPs	
Facebook Page/ Blog	Confidentiality
Parents Helping Parents	Need a mediator
Communication from current team/building to next team/building	Case Load/ Work Load
Member from current team at new building come to IEP meeting at current building or vice versa	Contract Concern
Opportunity to visit school before it starts or staggered start	Contract/Resource concern Funding
part of transition plan	Laws, Policy

Actions	Barriers
Parent education (maybe online) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - breaks down documents - vocabulary - references 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Who will complete/keep up - risky for district how specific - parents w/o access to tech - parents not accessing in for
Parent Talk Nights on special ed topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - how many parents would come - staff to do it - nights that are free in the district - body sitting
Send out documents early to family: work on IEP goals together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - time - multiple meetings
Volunteer Parent Member/Facilitator for meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - qualifications - having an objective person
Communication for transitions schools, grade levels <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - sharing plan, what has happened to prepare 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Time - Structure of building - Parents unaware what is happening
Have EAs at meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Time - Coverage
Parent input for more data/text to get more feedback for vision goals (electronic)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - getting these back in time to use technology





Thank you!