Preparing for a Facilitated Team Meeting

Family

Special Education Facilitation is an option for using an impartial third party to promote effective communication and assist a student's Special Education team in coming to consensus on issues related to the student's education needs. State-sponsored facilitation is a voluntary process; both the parent and the district need to agree to facilitation. Facilitation can be used for any special education process.

Facilitators are specially trained to promote effective listening and discussion between all meeting participants. They are a neutral third party who is not an employee of the district, does not advocate on behalf of any involved parties, and does not participate in decision-making. They are not an IEP team member. Facilitators are neutral and typically do not have individual conversations with meeting participants.

For The Family To Do:

- ☐ If the meeting has not been scheduled when making the request, please include the facilitator in scheduling to ensure their availability.
- ☐ Reply to emails sent by the facilitator within 1-2 business days.
- ☐ Return the agenda development form as outlined in the facilitator's email, including the type of meeting and any additional information relevant to the meeting.
- ☐ Provide emails of those you are inviting to the meeting, including but not limited to outside providers, advocates, and others.
- ☐ Prepare for a facilitated meeting as you would prepare for any IEP meeting.
  - Review any information provided by the school in advance of the meeting.

For The Family To Consider:

- ☐ Think about what is most important to you for your child's IEP and make a note of those items.
- ☐ Make a list of what has been going well/what is working and what has not. Include issues you want to discuss and questions you want to ask.
- ☐ Where do you want your child to be a year from now in their educational experience? 3 years? 5 years?
- ☐ Assume positive intent and be prepared to provide input and listen to all perspectives.

For Questions About The Facilitation Process:

Please feel free to contact Nancy Jones, Alternative Dispute Resolution Coordinator, jones_n@cde.state.co.us or 720-955-2784.

Preparing for a Facilitated Team Meeting

School

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For School Team To Do:

- ☐ If the meeting has not been scheduled when making the request, please include the facilitator in scheduling to ensure their availability.
- ☐ Reply to emails sent by the facilitator within 1-2 business days.
- ☐ Return the agenda development form as outlined in the facilitator's email, including the type of meeting and any additional information relevant to the meeting.
- ☐ Provide emails of all team members. Ensure that all seats of the IEP team are filled and will be in attendance for the duration of the meeting.
- ☐ Provide indication or knowing of outside providers, advocates, lawyers, guardian ad-litem, council for youth, etc.

For School Teams To Consider:

- ☐ Please schedule ample time for the meeting. It is recommended that a facilitated meeting be scheduled for 90 minutes to 2 hours, but that is flexible depending on the scope of the agenda.
- ☐ Read the attached documents in the facilitator's introductory email. Seek clarification when necessary.
- ☐ Come in with an open mindset for collaboration and problem solving.

If The Meeting Will Be Virtual:

- ☐ Check with parents about their access to technology, platform used, and barriers to participating virtually.
- ☐ For effective facilitation and team member engagement, it is helpful to have each member of the team on their own device and visible to everyone during virtual meetings, to the greatest extent possible.

On The Day Of The Meeting:

- ☐ Allow facilitator access to the meeting space 5-10 minutes prior to the meeting.
- ☐ Ensure the meeting space is adequate for the number of participants.
- ☐ Provide facilitator access to a whiteboard and markers or large chart paper and markers.
- ☐ Have a realistic view of the range of probable outcomes. Be willing to listen carefully to each other and feel free to explore new options.

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