



# Training IEP Meeting Participants for Family-Friendly and Culturally Competent IEPs Using Simulations

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# Welcome

- Introductions
- Barriers to Meaningful Family Participation in IEPs
- Frameworks for Culturally Competent Practice
- Simulated IEPs as a Training Tool
  - An overview
  - Applying the practice across sites
  - Modifying the practice for broader application

# Introductions

- Who are we?
  - Natalie Holdren, UCSB & Independent Consultant
  - Dezi Maier, UCSB & Alpha Resource Center
  - Emily Evanstein, Linfield College
- Who are you?
  - What role do you play in IEP meetings?
  - What brings you to this session?

# The Research Literature on Family Participation

- A literature review of IEP-related studies conducted between 1997 and 2014
- Special educators and administrators exert considerable control over the direction of IEP meetings and content, while families are frequently passive participants (Fish, 2008; Gaffney & Ruppert, 2011; Garriott, Wandry, & Snyder, 2000; Lo, 2008; Martin, Huber, & Sale, 2004; Salas, 2004; Wagner, Newman, Cameto, Javitz, & Valdez, 2012; Zeitlin & Curcic, 2013).

Blackwell and Rossetti (2014)

# The Research Literature on Family Participation

- Nationally representative samples of students with disabilities using two prospective longitudinal studies
- Different rates of parent participation and satisfaction in IEP meetings based on differences in a family's socioeconomic status, racial/ethnic background, and the child's disability

Wagner, Newman, Cameto, Javitz, & Valdes (2012)

# The Research Literature on Family Participation

- The often bureaucratic procedures of IEP meetings might be presenting obstacles to lower income members of their schools, to those who are less educated, or those who are non-White facing White-majority school staff.

Wagner, Newman, Cameto, Javitz, & Valdes (2012)

# The Research Literature on Family Participation

- Upon synthesizing the results of their literature review of IEP development studies published between 1997 and 2014, Blackwell and Rossetti concluded that special educators need to be provided with training to improve their IEP meeting facilitation skills.

Blackwell and Rossetti (2014)

# Reflect & Connect

In your experience, either personal or professional, how do these findings from the research literature compare with meetings you have participated in? Examples?

What role might IEP team members play in facilitating family-friendly and culturally competent IEP meetings?

# Culturally Competent Practice: Frameworks

- Intersectionality
  - Reflecting on your own multiple, intersecting identities and their influence on your practice
- Positionality
  - Reflecting on how those identities impact social power and access

How do we as professionals become aware of our own group and cultural identities and their potential impact on our work with families?

Group/Cultural Identity	Impact on my BELIEFS	Impact on my BEHAVIOR

How can we become more aware of how our own beliefs and behaviors might impact the families we serve?

### Potential Impact on the Families I Serve

# Conceptualizing Culture

- Considering the culture of institutions
  - How does the culture of your school district, special education, etc. impact your practice?
  - How does the culture of your school district, special education, etc. impact the experience for others?
- Examples

How do we as professionals become aware of the culture of our institutions and their potential impact on our work with families?

Institutional Practice/Culture	Impact on my Behavior	Impact on Families I Serve

# Interactive/Reflection

- Using the handouts provided, consider:
  - Your identities and positionality and how they might impact your experience in an IEP meeting
  - The culture of your institution(s) and how they might impact:
    - your participation
    - others' experiences in the IEP

# Overview of Simulated IEP Training Process

## Background

- Project started as a quantitative research project designed to determine if an intervention that involved a training session and simulated IEP meetings would improve pre-service teachers' ability to facilitate family-friendly meetings.
- Modified the approach and embedded it into our Teacher Education Program. Teacher Candidates often cite it as one of the most valuable experiences in their credential program.
- Partnered with another institution to implement the practice across contexts (different campus, state, credential structure).

# Overview of Simulated IEP Training

## Key Instructional Components of the Training

- Discussion on barriers to participation for families
- Conceptualizing identity
  - Self-reflection
- Conceptualizing the culture of institutions
  - Reflection
- Considerations for meetings with interpreters
- Training on facilitating family-friendly meetings
  - Creation of an annotated agenda
- Participation in simulated meetings

# Applying the Practice Across Sites

## UC Santa Barbara

- Santa Barbara, California
- Year long credential program with optional M.Ed.
- All candidates are pursuing Extensive Support Needs credential
- Candidates are at field work placements and taking courses simultaneously

## Linfield University

- McMinnville, Oregon
- Bachelor's degree with endorsement and in-service endorsement options in special education
- Candidates in various stages of their program
- Some candidates are in classrooms as aides, others are working as a special or general education classroom teacher, some students have not yet begun student teaching.

# Simulated IEP Experiences

## UC Santa Barbara

- Participated in lecture reviewing literature on family participation in IEPs
- Completed class activity to create an annotated IEP agenda
- Reviewed IEP scenario information including current IEP and Triennial multi-disciplinary report using real world information from the community

## Linfield University

- Participated in lecture reviewing literature on family participation in IEPs
- Completed class activity to create an annotated IEP agenda
- Reviewed IEP scenario information including a brief description of a student, student interview, and assessment information

# Simulated IEP Experiences

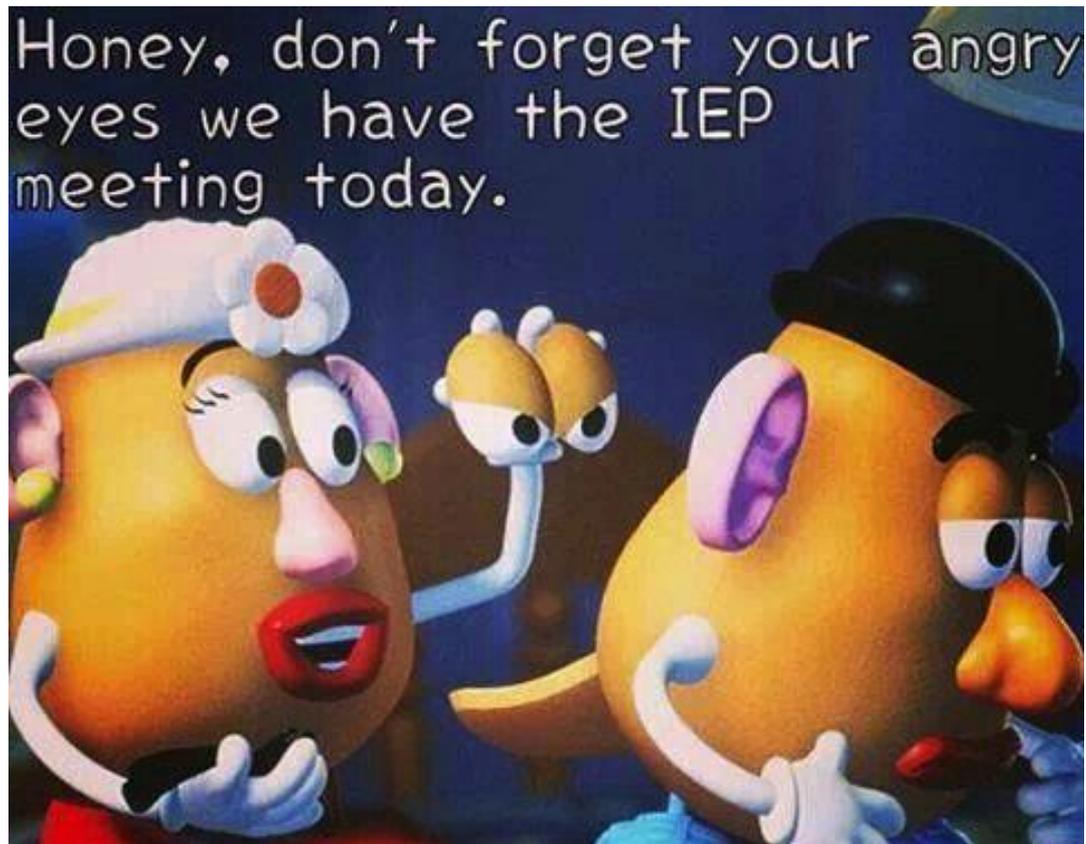
## UC Santa Barbara

- Candidates presented IEP information and scenarios from local community during simulations
- Candidates completed simulations in two small groups
- Students took turns role playing different IEP stakeholders during the IEP simulations

## Linfield University

- Candidates drafted a proposed goal with a partner in class and presented during IEP simulation
- Simulations conducted in a “fish bowl” format with option to pause for questions and support
- Students took turns role playing different IEP stakeholders during the IEP simulations

# Sample Screenshots from the Training



# Disclaimer

**Today's presentation is about facilitating the actual IEP meeting. Many of the most important ways you can encourage family participation in the IEP process happen before the meeting and are sustained on an ongoing basis through good communication and trusting relationships.**

# Our Goals for Today

1. Learn the components of an IEP meeting using an **IEP agenda**
2. Use the agenda to help you increase **family member participation** in an IEP team
3. Create a meeting environment that is **positive and productive** where **all team members provide meaningful input**

# How will you support family participation?

1. Checking for/facilitating parent understanding
2. Checking for/facilitating parent agreement
3. Checking for/facilitating parent input

# IEP Meeting Agenda

At this time, access the IEP agenda document provided.

Take a minute to look at the components of an IEP meeting.

During this session you will modify this agenda to include reminders to yourself to help you facilitate a meeting that meets our previously stated goals for today.

**You are encouraged to use this tool at all future IEP meetings (simulated and real).**

# Meetings with Interpreters

If there is an interpreter, they should:

- introduce themselves to the family and team
- explain what their role is in the meeting
  - relay a message without adding, deleting or changing the content
- remind participants about watching their pacing and for cues to pause if necessary
- sit next to the family member so others are looking at them as they speak
- interpret ALL communication that is spoken/heard

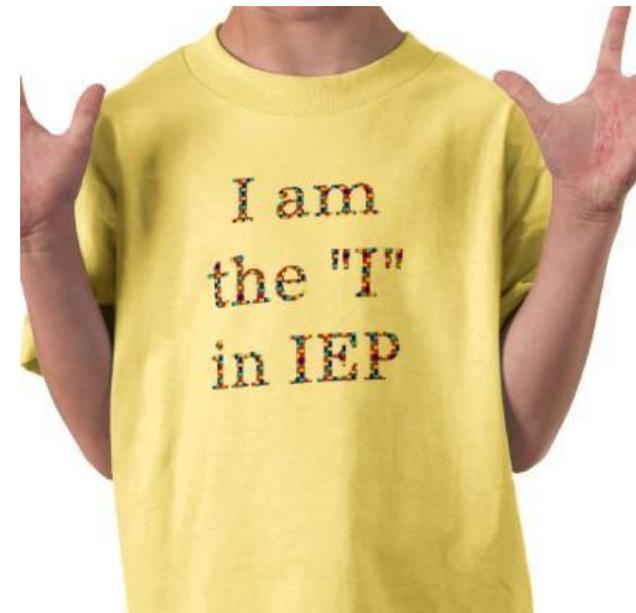
# Meetings with Interpreters

Team members should:

- speak loudly and clearly, one person at a time
- speak at a moderate pace
- avoid any side conversations
- speak to one another, not to the interpreter
- observe interpreter signals
- avoid jokes, idioms, or inside jokes which are often hard to interpret

# Share an Anecdote or Student Work

After introductions have been made, share a fun or positive anecdote or a sample of student work. This can help set the tone for a student-centered meeting and reminds team members why they are there.



# IEP Simulations

In the coming weeks you will be using your annotated agenda to facilitate simulated IEPs with your cohort. Please practice some of the language you might use to move through the different parts of your agenda and stay tuned for resources that will help you prepare for the simulations.

# Reflect & Connect

## Next steps...

How could this training approach be refined or modified to:

- Be useful to other institutions or agencies?
- Include families in the design and implementation?
- Other ideas, questions, or directions for exploration?

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