

The SEA's Responsibility for IEP Meeting Quality: Minnesota's Approach

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Around the room you will see
seven terms posted
on easel paper.

What do you think of when you
see each term?

*Please write a word or phrase that
comes to your mind.*


What have been your experiences in difficult IEPs?

2005: the Dilemma...

In 2005 anecdotal data gathered from our

- Hearing Coordinator
- Complaint investigators
- Alternative Dispute Resolution Coordinator
and
- Due Process Specialist (triage)

all indicated difficulties in communication,
collaboration, trust and basic meeting skills.



We decided to
intervene by
offering training to
IEP managers.

We designed a training which stressed four main components of a well-run IEP meeting:

- Due Process Requirements;
- Communication Skills;
- Meeting Essentials; and
- Facilitation Skills.





District and state collaboration

District will:

- Find location
- Schedule time
- Publicize training
- Reproduce all handouts
- Supply needed materials
- Register participants provide 'coffee &'
- Pay for overnight for trainers, if necessary
- Train all IEP managers

State will:

- Bring in high quality, research-based training to district leaders/trainers
- Pay mileage



The *IEP Managers' Training* is a trainer-of-trainers design.

Between 9/15/06 - 5/09/08:

Nearly 1400 district leaders, in over 250 districts, were trained as trainers.

Additionally, more than 4100 IEP managers were trained by these trainers.

Over 5540 IEP managers were trained, state-wide.

2009: then we started again,
with new data

Facilitators' Views:

- Disagreements on student's needs
- Neutral third party needed to manage communication among team members
 - Lack of trust among team members
- History of intense emotions among team members
- Neutral third party needed to keep meeting focused
 - Adequacy of services
 - Personality conflicts
 - Current placement
- Team members not listening to each other

Nine Factors Leading to Disputes in FY'08

The background of the slide is a photograph of a forest during autumn. The trees are in various stages of color change, with many showing vibrant yellows, oranges, and reds. In the foreground, there is a field of tall, brown grasses and a small, shallow stream or pond that reflects the colorful foliage.

In 2009 the MDE provided a three day training for the ARC
Greater Twin Cities advocates.

The ARC feedback stressed specific aspects of the training which
would be beneficial for their clientele.

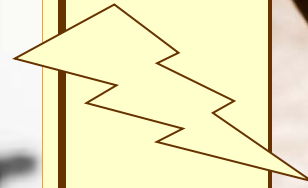
Feedback from ARC:

- Training should start late enough for parents to get their children to school.
- Training should end early enough so parents can be home when children return.
- Training should not be on consecutive days.
- Training should have a lot of role plays.
- The most important training topics for parents are **communication**, **collaboration** and conflict management.

We wanted to reflect their ideas and incorporate the data we had from the state facilitation system.

This led to a five hour parent training held in October of 2010 on communication and collaboration.





Strong IEP
meetings

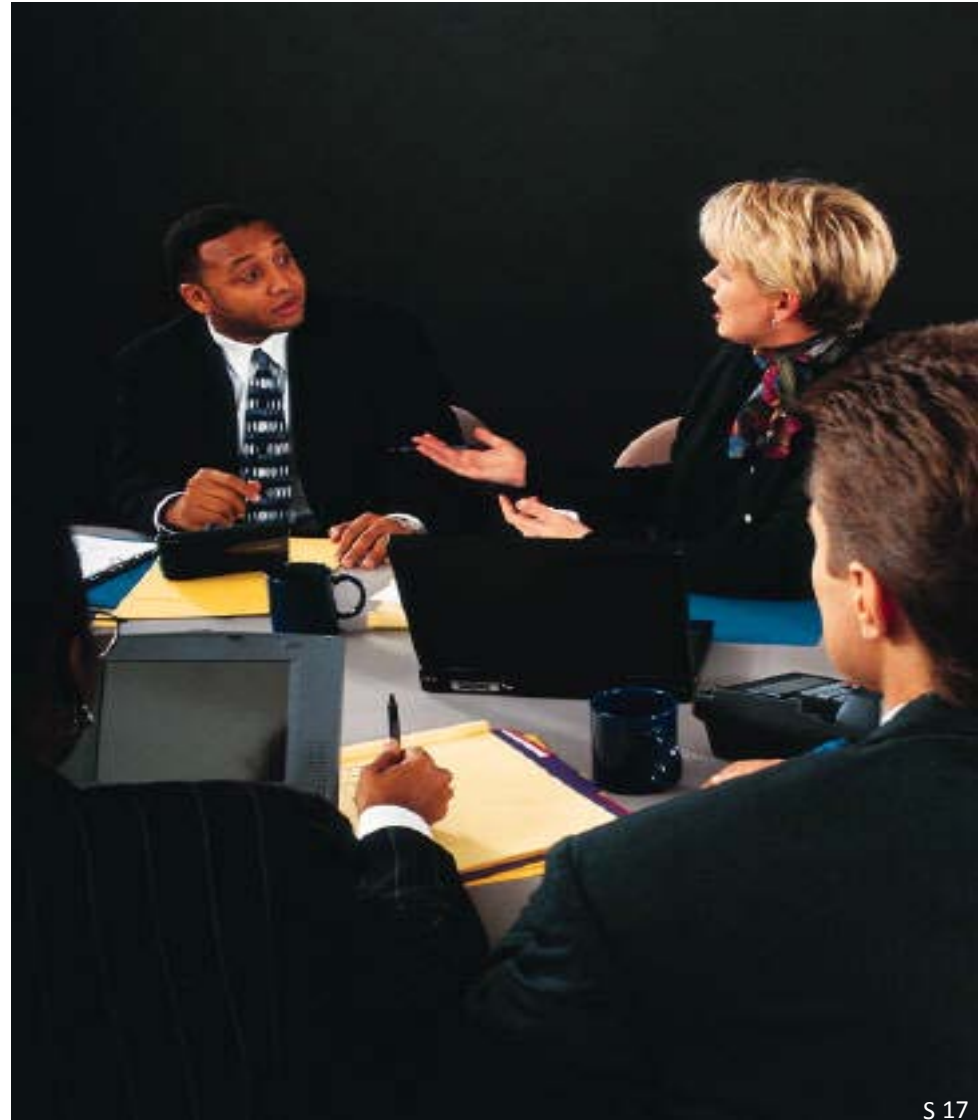
using
communication
& collaboration
skills.

*So we're going to an
IEP meeting...*



What should
we expect?

A respectful,
collaborative
meeting of the
people key to
your child's
education.



The people key to your child's education are:

You (parent or guardian)

General Education Teacher

Special education teacher

Administrator (or designee)

*All the right people
to find all the right pieces
needed to develop an
appropriate IEP!*



How do I make
sure I'm
a significant
part of
this process?

Team Activity



This is a team
activity and teams
run on
relationships.

Personality traits influence the meeting:

- Need for power
- Need for affiliation
- Approach to conceptual problem-solving
- Creativity
- Effect of strong emotions
- Dominating or nurturing tendencies

Facilitator traits...

Gilkey & Greenhalgh, Negotiation Journal, July 1986

personality traits (cont.):

- Cognitive empathy
- Emotional empathy
- Interpersonal orientation
 - Assertiveness
- Internal or external locus of control
- Content or process orientation

Facilitator traits...

Gilkey & Greenhalgh, Negotiation Journal, July 1986

Boundaries can be
an issue.

Be Authentic

Know your
own values.



Authentic communication and good relationships can avoid a storm.



Authentic Interaction

- Listen deeply
- Be engaged
- Be true to your values
- Ask the hard questions
- Listen and speak from the heart
- Be sensitive to each other's perspectives

Share Understandings

listen



observe



ask
questions





Listen carefully.

Observe non-verbal and para-verbal communication:

- » Body language
- » Intonation patterns
- » Verbal speed
- » Eye contact
- » Physical proximity
- » Gestures/lack of gestures
- » Imbedded cultural meanings



Speak clearly
and kindly



Use dialogue



Build trust



Speak Clearly:



1. When I see, hear, feel, observe...
2. I feel...
3. Because I... (interpretation)
4. And now I want...(what you are asking the other for)
5. So that...(for what purpose)

AND ...

Dialogue





How do we
foster trust?

Collaboration

**Encourage all team members
to collaborate as you solve
problems together.**



A collaborative atmosphere for the IEP meeting is:

- Cooperative
- Future orientation
- Solution orientation
- Positive focus
- Relationship-based

Getting close to consensus?



Try using “fist to five.”

Role Play



Evaluate Collaborative Efforts of Participants

Round Robin Activity



2010: the second part

Feedback from ARC:

- Training should start late enough for parents to get their children to school.
- Training should end early enough so parents can be home when children return.
- Training should not be on consecutive days.
- Training should have a lot of role plays.
- The most important training topics for parents are communication, collaboration and **conflict management.**



Weathering a Storm in IEP Meetings:

Conflict Management Training



**At some point,
conflict may
produce a stormy
IEP meeting.**

Team members can
get caught up in it.



Tracking the storm can be frustrating and unsettling.



**Team members
can maintain
a calm
atmosphere
when resolving
conflicts.**

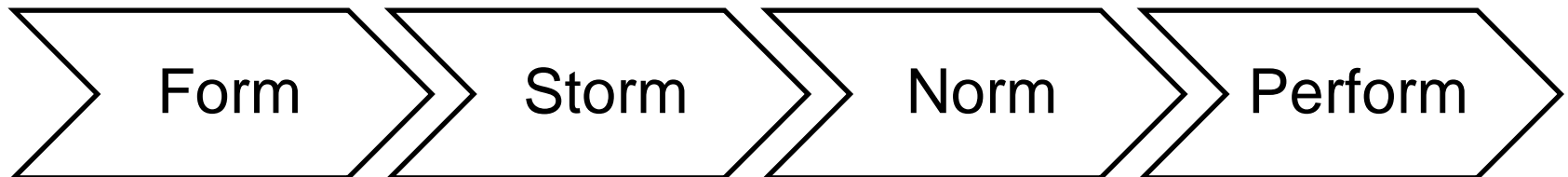


**Weather the storm with effective
conflict management skills.**



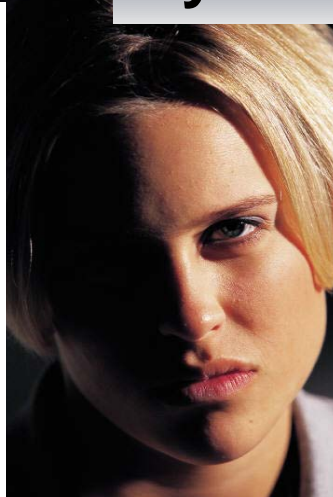
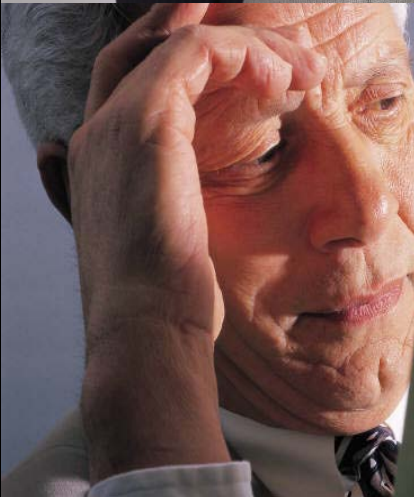


Define
conflict as
the intersection
of differences.





Different personalities and conflict styles can cloud your vision.



When making decisions, some use...

logic
analysis
facts

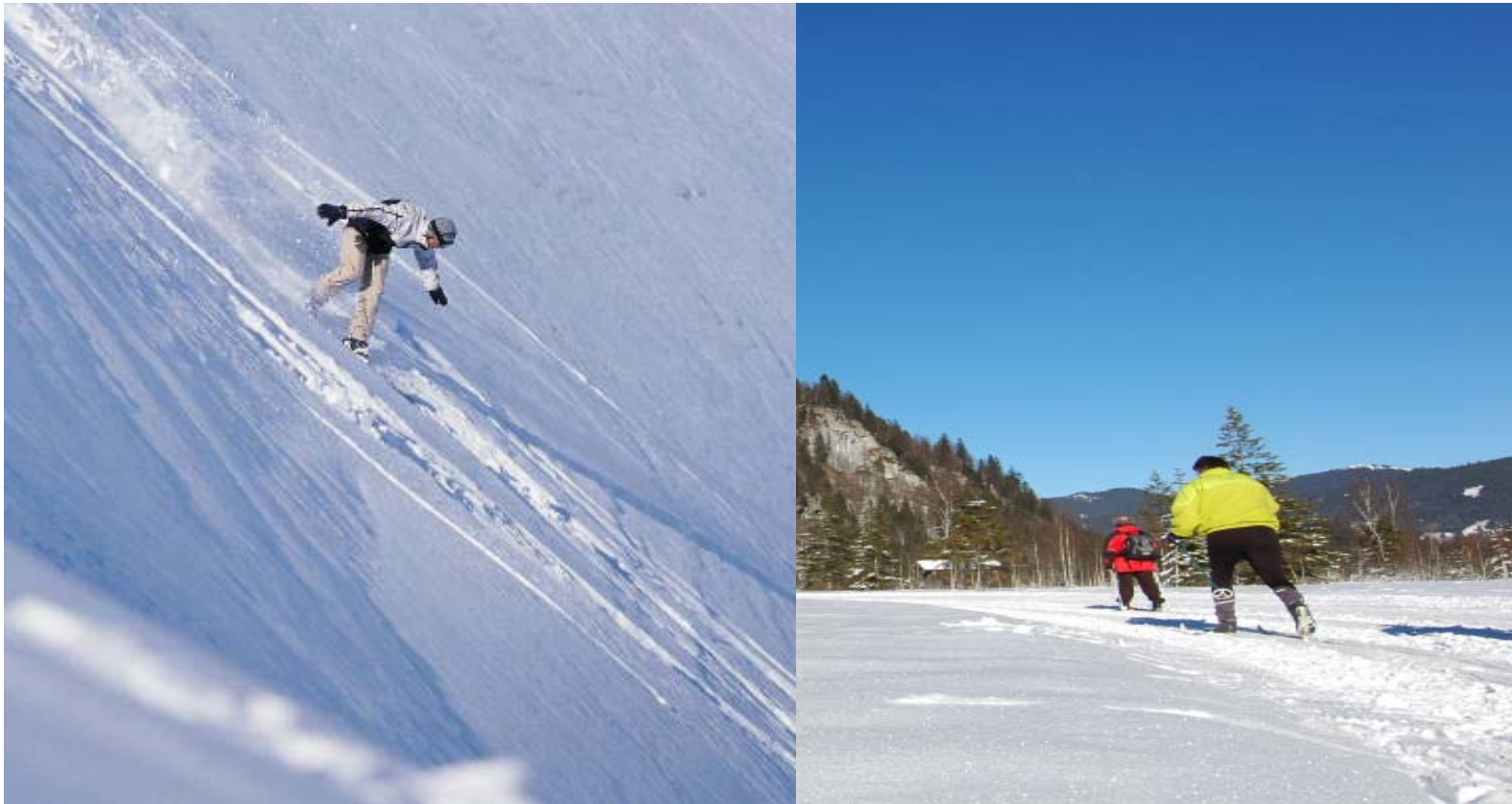


Others are concerned with...

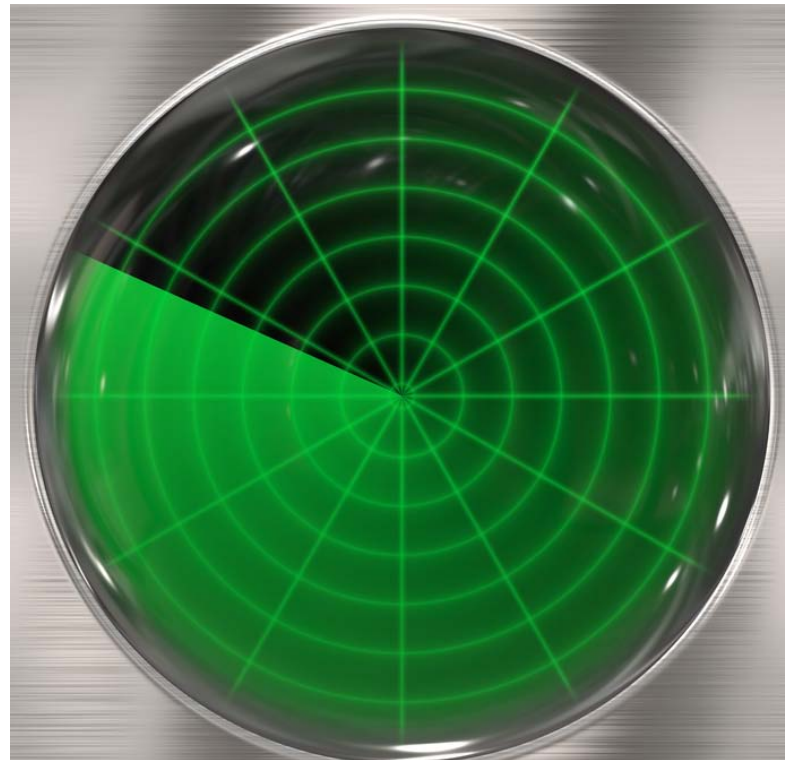
harmony
values
impact on others



Decision makers operate
at different speeds.



Accurate radar improves your choice
for the appropriate conflict
resolution method.



ACCOMMODATE

Your Way

COMPROMISE

Half Way

COMPETE

My Way

AVOID

No Way

COLLABORATE

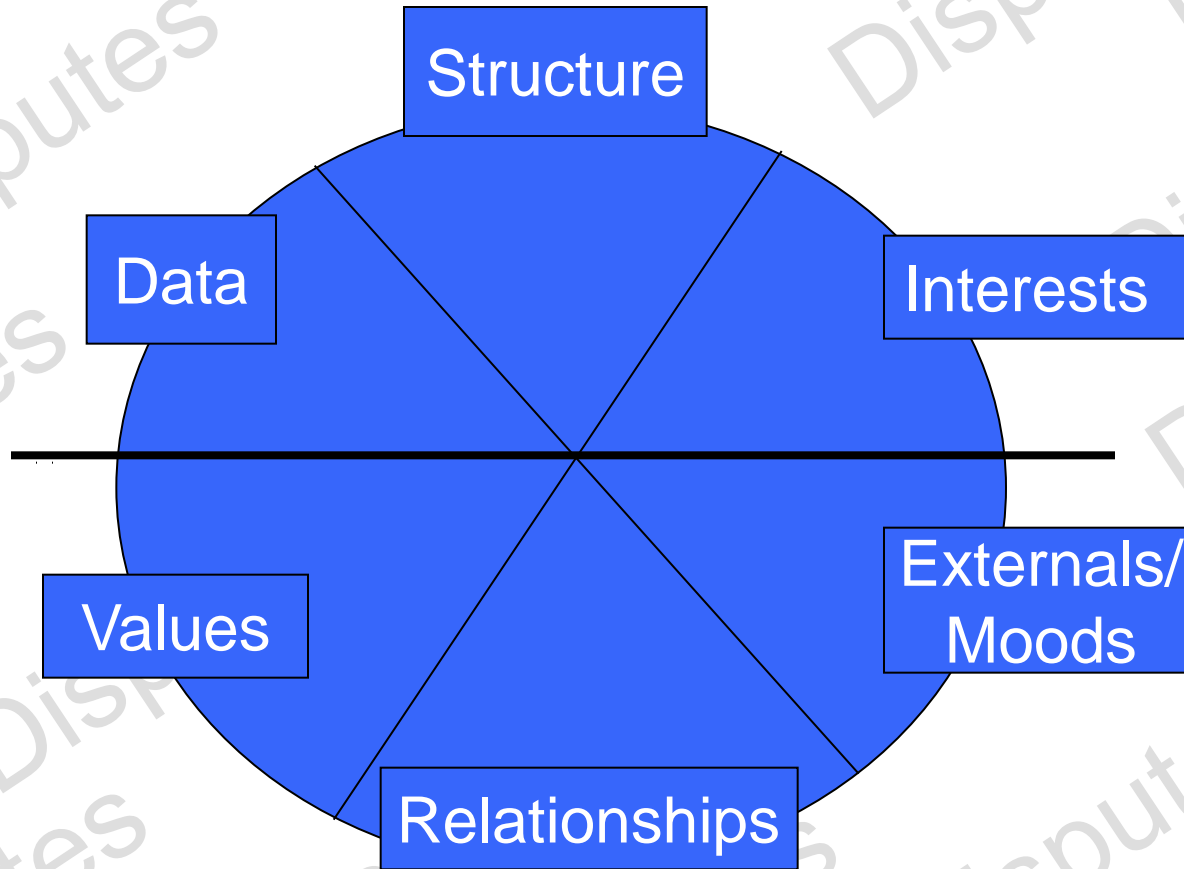
Our Way





Above or below
the table?

TYPES OF CONFLICT:



Gary Furlong

**Knowing a
conflict
resolution
strategy can
keep you
calm when
weathering
the storm.**



Step 1: Set the Stage

Would you like
to try to work
out our
disagreement?



Step 2: Listen



2 minute activity

Step 3: Clarify Issues & Interests




Step 4: Generate Options

Step 5: Evaluate Options

Step 6: Make a Plan

- Who?
 - What?
- When?
 - Where?
- How?
 - What if...?



*With your new
perspective you
will see conflict
differently.*

Differences *can* produce a
stormy IEP meeting.



Weather the storm with effective
conflict management skills.



Think of the difference you
can make for your student!



You can calmly respect other's perspectives and resolve differences.





2009: three day training for the ARC Greater Twin Cities advocates

2010: one day communication and collaboration training for five hours;
developed second five hour training on conflict management

2011: both available to districts and parents, in the fall

2012: Student Needs

Disagreement about needs continues to be the main reason conflict resolution processes are requested.

A new training is in the developmental stage.

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