



South Dakota Parent Connection

Connecting families who care for individuals (birth to age 26) with disabilities or special health care needs to information, training and resources in an environment of support, hope and respect.

Issues we can address:

Education/Special Education

Parenting Topics

Programs and Resources

Specific Disabilities or Health Conditions

Medicaid and Insurance

(SDPC Brochure)

We Are Here to Help!

Email: sdpc@sdparent.org Website: www.sdparent.org

South Dakota Parent Connection

✓ Parent Training Information Center (PTI)

South Dakota Parent Connection, Inc. is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that was founded in 1985 by a group of dedicated parents and professionals to provide training and information statewide to meet the needs of parents and families caring for individuals with disabilities.

Since 1985 South Dakota Parent Connection has served continuously as the state's only Parent Training and Information Center (PTI). In 2005 South Dakota Parent Connection partnered with the South Dakota Department of Education, Special Education Programs to establish the **Navigator Program**. In 2007 South Dakota Parent Connection received a grant to serve as the state's Family to Family Health Information Center (F2FHIC) and continues to serve as our state's F2FHIC.

✓ Navigator Program

The Navigator Program provides individualized guidance to parents who suspect or have a child with a disability, and school professionals, at no cost. The program is a partnership between the South Dakota Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs and South Dakota Parent Connection. Working with a Navigator is an informal, time-limited, problem-solving process.

Navigators remain objective and neutral as they help both parents and school personnel.

✓ Family 2 Family Health Information Center (F2FHIC)

Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs (CYSHCN) have (or are at increased risk for) a chronic, physical, developmental, behavioral, or emotional condition and who also require health and related services of a type or amount beyond that required by children generally. Because the health care needs of CYSHCN may be chronic and complex, parents and caregivers often struggle to find the resources and services their children need. The Family-to-Family Health Information Center (F2FHIC) provides information and guidance to families, and the professionals who serve them, to access services and resources.

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Family Engagement

Building
Meaningful
Connections
Between
Family and
School





Why are we here?

This is what we are hearing from parents:

Parent quote, “I don’t know what I don’t know.”

- ▶ Parents are confused with the transition portion of the IEP.
- ▶ Parents are not understanding the vocabulary, acronyms, process, procedure, services available, community resources, etc.
- ▶ Parents are in a panic about their young adult’s future calling us when their son/daughter turns 17 with 1 year before becoming an adult.
- ▶ Parents are not aware of the services available from individuals that can attend their young adult’s IEP meeting.

“How would I know to ask for that service?”

- ▶ Parents do not understand their responsibility in the transition plan process.
- ▶ Parents sign an IEP but not clear about what they signed.
- ▶ “Summary of Performance, I’ve never heard of that.”
- ▶ Parents are not clear how child qualified for IEP.

Sections in the Transition Plan where parents seem to be most confused. You are familiar with the terms and process, but this is a whole new world for parents.

- Measurable Post Secondary Goals (MPSG) and their importance
- Course of Study
- Guardianship
- The difference between receiving a District Diploma or Certificate of Completion (unclear understanding of accommodation vs. modification and its impact)
- Coordinated Set of Activities
- Educational Goals and Objectives
- Accommodation/Modification
- Summary of Performance

ALL of It!! 😊

A Walk through the Transition Plan

Time for reflection . . .

- What do you do to develop a positive and meaningful relationship with your families? (even with the tough families)
- How do you explain the Transition Plan to parents and students in an understandable way? What has worked?
- How do you engage parents to be active members in the IEP decision making process?
- Do you feel you are able to empathize and really understand the concerns and needs of the family?
- How effective are your communication skills with families?
- Parents' realization that their role is shifting as their young person moves from high school to adult life.
“Guide on the side.” (can be emotional)

Your guidance impacts the student and his/her parent.

❖ *Families are in uncharted territory.*

What is the difference between Family Involvement and Family Engagement?

Family Involvement

- Participating in already determined activities by a school/provider.

Family Engagement

- Active and meaningful participation.
- Being part of the decision-making process.

For Your Information...

- ▶ Because parental engagement has demonstrated many significant benefits, federal law encourages schools to implement the practice.
- ▶ Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA): Requires schools to meaningfully engage the parents of all students and ensure that they are given input and influence in decision-making.
- ▶ Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA): Requires that the parents of students with disabilities are full and equal participants with school personnel on their child's individualized education program (IEP) team.

Is that happening in your IEP meetings?

A large, light blue puzzle piece is shown against a bright yellow background. The puzzle piece is slightly offset, creating a shadow. The overall design is modern and clean, with geometric shapes and a color palette of yellow, blue, and white.

Engaging Families...

Engaging families happens when educators actively encourage families to participate in **meaningful** ways, and families support their children at home as well as at school. This establishes a **mutually beneficial relationship**, one in which educators are committed to listening and collaborating with families and families are committed to prioritizing their children's education.

The IRIS Center. (2008, 2020). Family engagement: Collaborating with families of students with disabilities. Retrieved from <https://iris.Peabody.Vanderbilt.edu/module/fam/>

Scenario from *Partnering with Parents*, Luz Santana, Dan Rothstein, Agnes Bain

Strong partnerships emerge when parents learn to play three key roles effectively:

- ▶ **They support** their children's education at home
- ▶ **They monitor** their progress
- ▶ **They advocate** for them when necessary

Support

Monitor

Advocate



Let's Talk!!

Are you open to providing true parent engagement?

You just might be the catalyst for change!

3 kinds of teachers you work with...

Group 1- A small group of teachers the “peppy” teachers

Group 2- The largest group - “the wait and see-ers”

Group 3- Usually the smallest group- “not gonna do it”
(They pack a powerful punch)

Good Ideas spread among teachers!



We often wish we had more parents who were actively engaged in their children's education.

What are the barriers?

Scenario from Engage Every Family - Five Simple Principles, Steven M. Constantino

*Half sheet discussion sheet

Supporting Family Engagement

Are we understanding?

- Be a listener
- Where are parents emotionally?
- Do they have the capacity to really be engaged? (this can vary depending on what is going on in their lives)
- Anxiety/overwhelmed/fear of the future/lack of confidence/what ifs
- Language/culture/social economic status

Are we providing what the parent needs?

- Give sufficient notice of meetings
- Do they have questions prior to the meeting that will help them prepare?
- Give drafts of evaluations, IEP's prior to meeting
- Inform parents of options/choices

Are we empowering parents?

- Teach about the transition process, **review** at every meeting
- Provide agenda
- Parent Feedback form
- Help them understand services. This is all new to them.
- Acronyms and other special education “lingo”.

Samples to help “level the playing field” for parents...

Parent Input to IEP

Please take a few minutes to complete this form for your student's upcoming Special Education Meeting. The information you provide will assist the special education team in developing an appropriate educational plan for your student. Return this form to: _____

Student Name _____ Case Load Teacher _____

1) Student Strengths: (describe your student's social and educational strengths)

2) Behavioral Performance: (describe behavior at home or school and list specific examples of behavior that interferes with academic performance)

3) Social Interaction: (describe the student's interaction with parents, siblings, teachers and other students including specific incidents where ever possible)

4) Please describe your concerns for your student (including future goals)

5) Please describe areas that you feel your student needs assistance

6) Describe any concerns that your student may have about school

7) Additional Comments:








Signed: _____ Date: _____

Provide paperwork to parents prior to the meeting

Invite parents to arrive a few minutes prior to a large meeting start time.

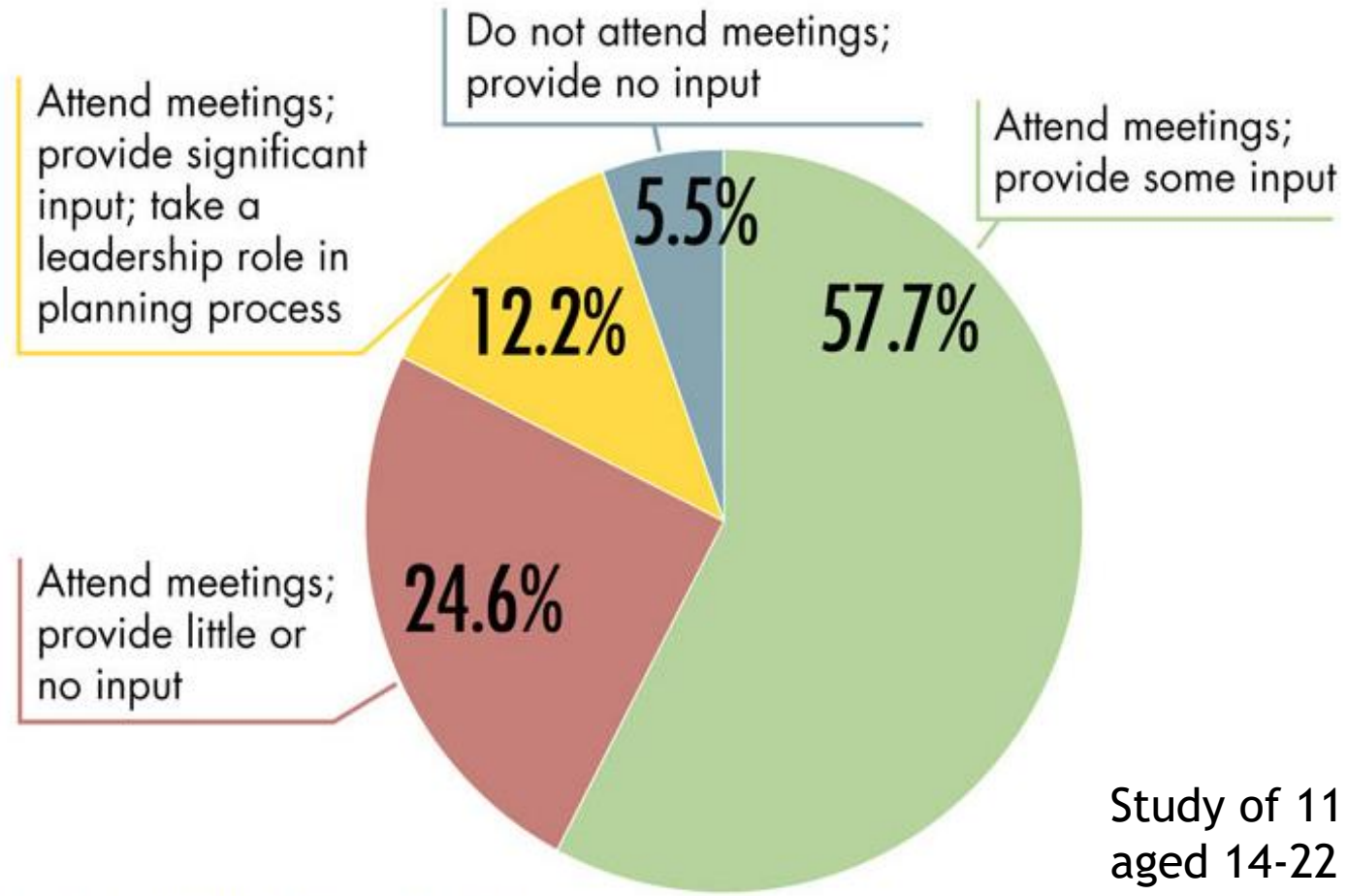
What ideas can you share?

IEP MEETING AGENDA

-  **WELCOME & INTRODUCTION:**
 - Introduction of team members
 - Review of meeting agenda
-  **REVIEW OF PRESENT LEVELS OF PERFORMANCE:**
 - Academic and functional Performance
 - Assessments and data
-  **PARENT, FAMILY, AND/OR STUDENT INPUT:**
 - Input on strengths and concerns
 - Review goals with team members' input
-  **PRESENTATION OF DRAFT IEP GOALS:**
 - Review of goals and objectives
 - Modifications and accommodations, including testing
-  **REVIEW PLACEMENT & SERVICES:**
 - Discuss class placement, staff ratio, gen. ed inclusion
 - Highlight therapy services minutes, transportation, ESY
-  **TRANSITION & BEHAVIOR PLANS (IF NEEDED):**
 - Planning for post-school transition for learners 14+
 - Highlight strategies to shape positive behaviors
-  **CLOSING:**
 - Address additional concerns
 - Develop follow up plans

*BeltransBehaviorBasics

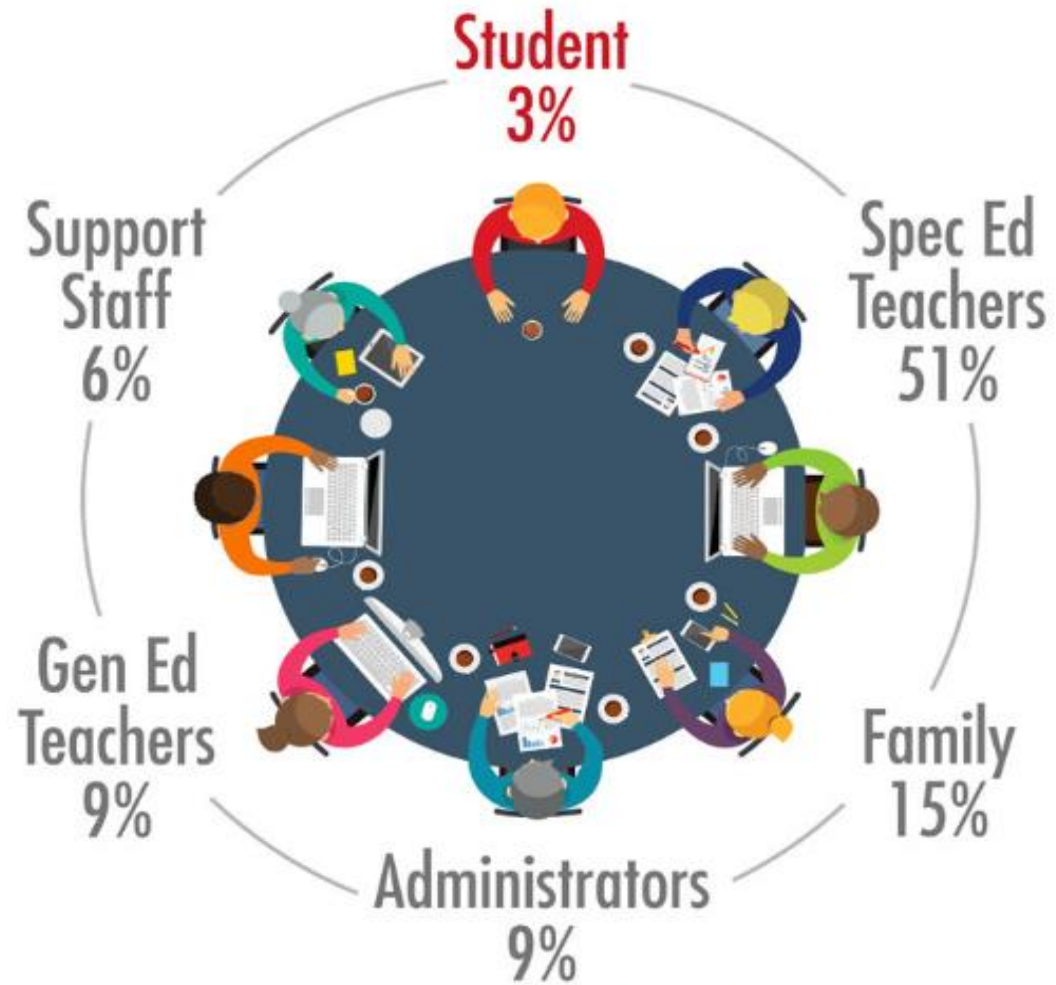
Student Involvement in IEP Meetings



Study of 11,000 students aged 14-22 years old.

Source: National Longitudinal Transition Study-2

Percentage of Speaking Time by Role



Adapted from Van Dycke, Martin, & Lovett, 2006.

WHAT DO YOU DO WITH A CHANCE?



Written by Kobi Yamada 📖 Illustrated by Mae Besom

Creators of the New York Times Best Sellers *What Do You Do With an Idea?* and *What Do You Do With a Problem?*

Written by
Kobi Yamada
Illustrated by
Mae Besom



Important questions to leave you with - - - -

- ✓ If families truly have a choice as to where their children will receive an education would they choose your school district?
- ✓ Your school?
- ✓ Your classroom?

If your answer is a strong yes, then ask yourself the logical follow-up question: Why?

What is so compelling about your product that a customer will choose it over the other possible options?

To assist us in improving our training, and meeting the requirements of our funders, please complete scan the QR code to complete a brief evaluation form.



South Dakota Parent Connection

South Dakota Parent Connection www.sdparent.org

Engage Every Family, FIVE SIMPLE PRINCIPLES, Steven M. Constantino

Partnering with Parents to Ask the Right Questions, Luz Santana, Dan Rothstein,
Agnes Bain

PEAK Parent Center, INC. www.peakparent.org



SOUTH DAKOTA
ParentConnection

Resources for families of children with disabilities

sdpc@sdparent.org

(800) 640-4553

Sioux Falls
3701 W. 49th St, Ste 102
Sioux Falls, SD 57106

Rapid City
2310 N. Maple Ave
Rapid City, SD 57701

Aberdeen

