



# Communication



IEP Meetings

# Hey! Where'd you go?

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- ▶ Lack of understanding of the school system
- ▶ Lack of knowledge of how to help their child
- ▶ Feelings of inferiority
- ▶ Language Barriers



# Education

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- ▶ You can't participate effectively if you don't understand
  - ▶ The disability
  - ▶ Educational concerns as they relate to the disability
  - ▶ Educational strengths and what part they play in assisting the student



## What a parent brings-

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- ▶ Increase the teacher's understanding of the child's environment
- ▶ Increase the school's understanding of the child
- ▶ Collaboration is key to mutually agreed upon educational goals.



# GOALS

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- ▶ Remember- You are the professionals
  - ▶ Developing Goals
    - ▶ SMART
    - ▶ Remember GOALS are not OUTCOMES
      - Be willing to readjust and do it often
  - ▶ Think SOAR: STRENGTH, OPPORTUNITY, ASPIRATION, RESULTS
    - ▶ Each objective should have strengths under it
    - ▶ The goal is for strengths to overcome areas of opportunity
  - ▶ Short Term Goals (**Objectives**)
    - ▶ Day, Week, Month
  - ▶ Long Term Goals
    - ▶ Annual



# Think in terms of SOAR helps to focus on strengths

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## ▶ **S = Strengths:**

- ▶ What a student is doing really well, including their assets, capabilities, and greatest accomplishments.

## ▶ **O= Opportunities:**

- ▶ External circumstances that could improve goals- unmet student needs
  - ▶ **threats or weakness reframed into possibilities.**

## ▶ **A= Aspirations:**

- ▶ What the student can be; what the student desires to be known for.

## ▶ **R=Results:**

- ▶ The tangible, measureable items that will indicate when the goals and aspirations have been achieved.
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# Focus on SUCCESS

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➤ **To the student:**

Tell us about some of your successes this year. (If appropriate, add: What have you done well and what has worked well for you? What's been happening to make you successful?)

➤ **To the parent:** What successes have you seen your child enjoy this year? (If appropriate add: tell us about what's been happening to help make your child successful?)

➤ **To the teachers and specialists:** What successes have you seen for [the student]? (If appropriate, add: Tell us about what's been happening to help make him/her successful?)

➤ **To the group:** What suggestions or changes can you think of to make [the student]'s program work even better?

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# In advance of the meeting

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- ▶ **Share any assessments in advance**
  - ▶ Give parents time to think about the situation and develop questions
  - ▶ Supply websites where assessments are explained. Each assessment has areas of strength and weaknesses. Share those pitfalls with the parent in advance.
- ▶ **Share any proposals in advance**
  - ▶ Explain how each proposal will relate to the child's needs and highlight the child's strength
- ▶ **Share information on why you have developed a DRAFT**
- ▶ **Ask for questions in advance of the meeting**



# Strength based

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- Be **comprehensive** when initially stating student's strengths
- Build the language of strengths into the instructional objectives themselves
- **Strength-Based Strategies**
  - Assistive Technologies/UDL
  - Enhanced Human Resources
  - Positive Environmental Modifications



# little PEARLS

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- ▶ Tell the parent who will be at the meeting and what their role is in detail
- ▶ Encourage the parent to bring someone to the meeting
  - ▶ It is impossible to listen, take notes, and come up with questions all at the same time
- ▶ Don't congregate in the conference room waiting for the parent
- ▶ Highly encourage everyone in attendance to actually play a role in the meeting



## In the meeting

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- ▶ Introduce everyone at the table and explain how they relate to the student
  - ▶ Don't just read the assessment scores. Talk about the scores and what they mean to the student.
  - ▶ When developing goals...explain **why** what is being proposed will help the student reach the goal
  - ▶ Explain the ***Specially Designed*** instruction
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## In the details-

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- ▶ **Explain the setting**
  - ▶ Benefit and detriment (explain both)
- ▶ **When will you assess the goals?**
  - ▶ How will you report this to the parent?
  - ▶ Give dates
  - ▶ What if there are concerns. What is the best way to communicate these and to whom?



# Everyone needs to feel/be valued

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- ▶ What can the parent/student do at home?
  - ▶ Don't promote silos

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-icS8MpCIYw>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ELpfYCZa87g>



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- ▶ You are modeling every single day
  - ▶ You are changing lives every single day
  
  - ▶ GO forth and change the world and don't forget to be

**AWESOME!**

