



**LEAders Engaged**  
 in the IEP Process:  
 Your Leadership Matters

July 31, 2017  
 Summer Special Education Conference  
 Lisa Robinson, Special Education Director

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**It's Your Party**

- IDEA is both an educational and a civil rights law
- Focus on student's individual needs
- FAPE
- Your role is vital and it matters!

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**What is my Role as an LEA?**  
**Local Education Agency Representative**

The Superintendent has designated you, as an administrator, to serve as an LEA for Jordan School District, representing your building/assignment.

1. Qualified to serve
2. Knowledgeable
3. Resourceful
4. Authorized

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### Qualified

- JSD has determined that building administrators serve in the role as LEA
  - You supervise those that are providing special education services
  - You may have provided special education services yourself
  - You know your building, your community, your student body, and your resources
  - You know how to be a LEADER
    - Gracious
    - Attentive
    - Organized
    - Courageous

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### Knowledgeable

- You know the general curriculum requirements for the grade level of student
- You know the staff members in your building and can ensure that the right people are in attendance
  - IDEA required IEP team members include:
    - Parent
    - Special Educator\*
    - LEA
    - General Educator
    - \* Person trained to interpret the assessment results
- You can often see the bigger picture related to the student needs
  - Behavior concerns
  - Social interactions
  - Health needs
  - Access to the facilities and resources

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### Resourceful

- You know how to tap into resources throughout the district
  - Related services – Motor or vision specialists, audiologists, Jordan Family Education Center
  - Transportation – requests, access
  - Extracurricular activities – access to participation, no discrimination
  - Funding sources – equipment, aide requests, staffing requests
    - Requests for critical needs assistance
    - Work closely with your Teacher Specialist and Program Coordinator
  - Start with proactive statements
    - "I'll research how we can make this work to address the "needs" we identified."
    - "Let's try that for \_\_\_\_ weeks and take data on the effectiveness in meeting the needs we identified."

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### Authorized

- You, as an administrator, are tasked with ensuring that the IEP is actually being implemented as written
  - Timelines are being followed
  - Parent requests are being considered and responded to appropriately
  - Progress Reporting on all goals as required (same time as other students)
  - When no progress is being made, IEP Team is reconvened to revise the plan
- If the parent has a concern, they should know that you are the person they should contact and that you will
  - 1) look into the concern
  - 2) take corrective action as needed
  - 3) follow up directly in a timely manner

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### What LEAders can do to Engage in the IEP Process

- Create a climate of openness
- Listen analytically
- Ask the right questions
- Synthesize and lead

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### Creating a Climate of Openness

- Engage parents in all aspects of the process
  - Written Prior Notice of Meetings are clear and arrive in a timely manner
    - PS – These are actually coming from you as the LEA – Remember, it's your party!
  - DRAFT information is provided to parents with enough time to review and prepare questions
    - "Prepared" is not the same as predetermined
- Welcoming physical environment

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Utah Part B Parent Survey  
2015-16  
JORDAN DISTRICT

### Utah Special Education Parent Survey Results 2016

Number of Parents Who Completed the Parent Survey: 67

Display 6: Individual Item Results

Indicate the level of agreement with each question.	# Answered	% Answered	% No SA	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Average
1. I work in partnership with the IEP team to develop my child's IEP.	67	100.0%	0.0%	4.5%	4.5%	44.8%	46.2%	31.0%
2. I feel comfortable sharing my ideas about how well special education services meet my child's needs.	67	100.0%	0.0%	1.5%	0.0%	52.2%	37.3%	39.0%
3. The teacher(s) benefit(s) in touch with me regularly about my child's progress.	67	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	11.0%	47.8%	31.2%	76.0%
4. My relationship with the staff has a positive effect on my child's education.	67	100.0%	4.5%	3.1%	4.7%	50.0%	42.2%	62.2%
5. Administrators are available to discuss my questions or concerns.	67	100.0%	4.5%	4.7%	1.0%	57.8%	31.9%	53.8%
6. My child's school helps me play an active role in my child's education.	66	98.5%	0.0%	1.5%	0.1%	51.5%	37.0%	69.4%
7. My child's school encourages my involvement to improve outcomes for my child.	67	100.0%	3.0%	3.1%	7.7%	45.2%	40.0%	69.2%
8. The school explains the options I have if I disagree with the special education process.	67	100.0%	7.5%	1.0%	14.5%	48.8%	37.1%	61.9%
9. The parents' rights (procedural safeguards) were explained to me so that I understood them.	67	100.0%	0.0%	1.5%	0.0%	55.2%	37.3%	62.0%
10. The IEP team communicates with me in my native language.	67	100.0%	1.0%	0.0%	1.0%	33.8%	60.0%	53.8%
11. At the IEP meeting, we discussed what classroom accommodations my child needs.	67	100.0%	10.4%	3.3%	1.0%	45.0%	40.7%	51.7%
12. At the IEP meeting, we discussed how my child would participate in state and district testing.	66	98.5%	16.7%	7.3%	12.7%	47.0%	32.7%	60.0%

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## Creating a Climate of Openness

- The tests of parent participation:
  - Did the school IEP team members come with an open mind and several options?
  - Did the team discuss and consider the parent's placement, goal and accommodation recommendations and concerns before making final IEP recommendations.

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## Listening Analytically

- Be a facilitator
  - Ensure that information is being provided in bite sized pieces
  - Check for understanding all along the way
  - All IEP Team members have a voice – but all have a role or area of expertise too
- Be solution oriented
  - When disagreements occur, ask focused questions to pinpoint the root cause of concern
  - Present Levels: *Do you think the proposed statement of present level is too high or too low? What data supports your view?*

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### Listening Analytically

- Listen for absolute or non-child centered language
  - Keep a "What to say and Not to say" reminder in your notebook
  - Be careful to focus on what the STUDENT needs, not what PROGRAMS we provide
  - Remember the STANDARD ANSWER to "out of left field" questions or requests
 

WHAT??? – I didn't think there were standard answers in special ed

Frame your answer with reference to 1) evaluation data, 2) the IEP team, 3) the "concept of student's need", and the 4) requirement to provide FAPE

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### Listening Analytically

- *"I understand that you are concerned about your child's ability to function independently during their math class. Let's reconvene the IEP Team to review the DATA related to your child's independent skill level to determine their NEED for additional support in order to receive a FREE and APPROPRIATE Public Education. If the IEP Team determines that your child NEEDS additional assistance, we will figure out a way to make it happen."*

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### Synthesize and LEAd

- Make sure that IEP Summary notes are being taken – you might want to be the note-taker
  - Always capture considerations and final decisions in notes
  - Make sure that the IEP document and the notes are aligned
  - Review notes at the end of meeting and provide participants with copies
- In the dictionary "Consensus" means "general agreement" or "group solidarity in sentiment and belief".
  - May not reflect everyone's perfect or first choice
  - The school is not bound by every remark made in the IEP meeting. The school IS bound by what is written in the IEP.

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### Synthesize and LEAd

- Annual IEP meeting **DOES** mean:
  - The IEP must be conducted at least annually within one year of the prior IEP meeting.
- Annual IEP meeting **DOES NOT** mean:
  - This plan is set in stone for an entire year no matter what
- IEP Teams can reconvene when:
  - Progress is not being made and documented
  - New data comes to light that could reflect additional needs
  - The student's needs changed within the year
- The School (LEA) is obligated to initiate and convene IEP team meetings as needed to develop a reasonably calculated plan that meets the students needs in their individual circumstance to provide a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE).

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### Resources to support your LEAdership

- Administrative Program Coordinators
  - Julie Brown X 88200 – Secondary
  - Courtney Titus X 88904 – Elementary
  - Debbie Ballard X 88512 – Preschool
  - Fulvia Franco X 88390 – School Psychology Services and 504 Coordinator
  - Brian King X 88208 – Behavior Supports and Home Instruction
- Call ahead of a high risk meeting to “walk through” conversations
- Invite them to attend as a support and resource to you

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### THANKS!

For taking the time to learn more about special education services  
 For being a LEADER that makes a difference in schools for kids  
 For all that you do  
 Your LEAdership Matters!!!

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