



OSEP Symposia Series: Increasing Capacity for Developing High-Quality IEPs/IFSPs

Symposium Live Recording

June 18, 2018

Terry Jackson
"Welcome"

>>Terry Jackson: Good afternoon everyone and welcome to the second 2018 OSEP Symposia Series event, *Increasing Capacity for Developing High Quality IEPs and IFSPs*. I'm Terry Jackson with the Office of Special Education Programs and I'll be serving as your moderator for today's events. First, just a bit of information about the technology that we're using for this symposium. Participants will be muted throughout this Symposium. We invite you to submit any questions to the Ask a Question box, and that's under the Q & A tab, near the bottom of your screen. We'll try to address as many questions as possible, during the Q & A session at the end of the event. Additional questions may be addressed in subsequent discussion opportunities, which can be accessed through the collaboration spaces.

Now, for the best viewing experience, we recommend closing all other programs, and internet browsers, including your email, throughout the Symposium. If you do happen to lose audio or video, refreshing your browser, logging on through a different browser or asking for help in the chat box, is really helpful. Additional tech support information can be found at the Symposium website.

During this year's Symposia Series, we're discussing the important role of developing and implementing high-quality IEPs and IFSPs, and how it plays in ensuring that each child with a disability can be successful. The three Symposia are interconnected. First, back in April, we laid the policy and research foundation to establish a common understanding and set of principles on the impact of the Endrew decision, and today, we will explore what high quality IEPs mean in practice. Specifically discussing what teachers, leaders and IEP teams [need to know] and [the skills] IEP teams need to develop and implement high quality IEPs and how we can support these needs. Finally, in the fall, we'll learn about how education agencies, families, and other stakeholders are working together to develop and implement high quality IEPs.

Today's symposium will focus on increasing capacity for developing high quality IEPs [and] IFSPs. We'll discuss supporting high quality special education services to children with disabilities by addressing the capacity needs of educators, IEP teams and administrators to develop and implement high-quality IEPs, to conduct effective IEP meetings. During this presentation, you'll hear from experts including current OSEP grantees as they discuss the impact of Endrew F. on IEP/IFSP development and meetings. An example from the Georgia State Personnel Development Grant, working to improve their IEP process, the critical role of the school principle, IFSP considerations, behavior considerations, how national organizations can partner in supporting school success and how students and families can successfully participate in the IEP process.

Alright, so let's get started with our first speaker. Now, I'm proud to introduce our Assistant Secretary in the Office of Special Education Programs and Rehabilitative Services at the U.S. Department of



Education, Johnny Collett. In this capacity, he serves as the advisor to the Secretary of Education on matters related to the education of children and youth with disabilities, as well as employment and community living for youth and adults with disabilities.

Johnny Collett
"Opening Remarks"

>>Johnny Collett: Thank you, Terry, and welcome everyone and thank you so much for joining us. I really do appreciate you carving out time to participate in today's event and my hope is that as a result of our time together this afternoon or this morning, wherever you may be, that you will have found it a time of rich conversation and a time of really renewed focus and what we hope will lead, in all of our cases and experiences, to real improvement as we support states and local teams in developing and implementing quality individualized education programs, and individualized family service plans.

As Terry said, in the first Symposium, we did focus this year on the importance of IEPs and high expectations and appropriate supports. Today we'll focus on increasing capacity for developing and implementing high-quality IEPs and IFSPs. As we think about that, one could think that this is always a natural progression in the conversation around developing and implementing quality program plans for the infants and toddlers, and children and youth with disabilities, that we serve. However, the conversations in my view don't always extend so naturally. My experience has been that while we often talk about what kids need, which should always be our first and primary focus, we don't seem as often to extend that conversation to include what everyone in the system that serves them needs.

What everyone in the system that serves them needs, how we know that. How we know what those folks need and then what we're going to do about it. These conversations and considerations must occur together, if we're to realize the improved outcomes that we, and most importantly, the individuals that we serve envision.

A couple things here from my perspective, as you spend time together today and hear from different folks, and I hope it's helpful that you know where my head is around these things and my view and lens into this. I think, as many of you would agree, an IEP, an IFSP, that is compliant with the law is foundational. However, an IEP, an IFSP, that is merely compliant with the law will not, by itself, improve outcomes for kids. Developing and implementing quality IEPs and IFSPs includes, of course, determining the services and supports that children need, but I believe it must also include understanding and addressing the capacity needs of those in the system that serve those infants, toddlers, children and youth with disabilities.

I think as you would all agree and one of the things that we try very hard to highlight every day, in our work, in some way, across OSERS is that primarily and ultimately, our work is about each individual child and their needs. It is about what's best for kids. It's about delivering on the promises that we've made to kids and families across this country. I'm encouraging you; I'm encouraging you today, and I'm encouraging you in your work as this makes sense to you, but I want to be very specific. I'm encouraging you to rethink and question anything. That's right, rethink and question anything, that you believe puts you in a better position to serve the children who are in your care.

I don't have to tell you that the need is too great and the stakes are too high for us to not get this right. I understand and acknowledge the difficulties and constraints of what I'm suggesting. I've been a teacher, like many of you. I've worked in other settings, I've helped develop many IEPs, many program plans for kids and done that within systems and bureaucracies and supported others who did. I don't know every

answer to every question, but on some level, I understand the constraints. I understand the challenges for extending these conversations to the places that I'm suggesting they must be extended, if we're going to really achieve the outcomes we envision for those that we serve. I understand those difficulties and constraints.

What I would share with you is something I try to remember myself each day is that the presence of challenges does not remove our responsibility to do what's right by children. It is incumbent on us, that's the you and me of the world. That's you and me today, that's all of us. It is incumbent on us who have been charged with the care of this nation's children to figure out how to do better. As we continue in our time together today, I'm encouraging you to do a few things. You'll know best how to make sense of this in your context. You'll know best what works for you and what doesn't. Within what makes the most sense to you, let me encourage you to do a few things today.

First of all, I want to encourage you to think big. You didn't carve out time today, you had to say no to something to say yes to this. You didn't carve out time today to think small, I imagine. I want to encourage you to think big. I want to encourage you not just to think, but I want to encourage you to rethink. You say, "Johnny, what do you want me to rethink?". That's for you to decide, but let me offer you a framework. Rethink what you do, rethink how you do it. Rethink when you do it. Rethink where you do it. Rethink with whom you do it, and maybe most importantly, rethink why you do it. As we spend time together today, I want to encourage you to think. I want to encourage you to think big, I want to encourage you to rethink.

Then I do want to put a finer point on this, I want to encourage you to question, anything and everything that could put you in a better position to serve the infants and toddlers, children and youth with disabilities in your care. I want to encourage you to imagine, to imagine what could be if as a nation, we did not just enough to meet some requirement, but did the very best we could do in service to individuals with disabilities and their families. I'm incredibly excited about the time you get to spend today and incredibly excited about extending that conversation to the capacity issues that everyone in a system has, everyone in the system needs, in order to deliver on the promises that we've made to kids and families across this country and in order to ensure that they achieve the outcomes that we and again, most importantly they, envision.

With that, I'll turn it back over to Terry and thank you again for your time today.

>>Terry Jackson: Well thank you, Johnny. Our goals here today are to leave you with three things; an understanding of how to increase the capacity, provide resources, provide examples, to assist school leaders, teachers, service providers and families to facilitate effective IEP meetings and develop high quality IEPs and IFSPs. Now, before we continue, I just want to encourage everyone to read the full bios of each speaker, which are available on the OSEP Ideas That Work website.

All of our presenters are undertaking fascinating work and you're getting just a small glimpse of their achievements today. Next is ... our next speaker is Dr. David Bateman. He'll be describing the impact of Endrew F. on IEP [and] IFSP meetings and development. Dr. Bateman is a Professor in the Department of Educational Leadership and Special Education at Shippensburg University in Pennsylvania, where he teaches courses about learning disabilities, special education, and special education law to future teachers and administrators.

Dr. Bateman has been a classroom teacher of students with learning disabilities, behavior disorders, intellectual disabilities and hearing impairments. Dr. Bateman.

David Bateman

"Impact of Endrew F. on IEP/IFSP Meetings and Development"

>>David F. Bateman: Thank you very much for the opportunity to present today. Before I begin, I want to sincerely encourage all individuals to observe the previous webinar that was put out on this. The information that was provided in that was well done, succinct, and especially the information that was provided related to the history of the Endrew F. decision. That lays all the foundation for many of the things we'll be talking about today. Put these two together, don't view them as singular webinars, make sure you watch one and then compare [to] the others.

I'm here talking to you about, following up on what Mitch Yell talked about laying the history of the foundation of where we are relating to the Endrew F. decision. Go back, review his section of that [symposium] specifically and you can see why we're talking about that and what we're talking about today, so that we can have some discussions of this. My focus today is talking about IEP teams and then moving on from there.

Just to lay the foundation, before we go into some more of the implications, is just to remind everyone, not to talk down to you, just to remind so we're all talking about the exact same thing. The primary requirements of the IDEA are to provide a special education that confers a free, appropriate public education. Using that as the foundation for what we're talking about not only in the previous webinar but also today in the third webinar, please make sure that you understand that this is the foundation for where we are going and why this is so very important for what we're doing. This is one of the basics of what we're talking about and keep this as our focus where we are.

I'm going to be talking... I'm going to build on what Mitch Yell said about the Supreme Court decision. A little over a year ago, which came out as a surprise as I wasn't expecting that day, the Supreme Court issued a unanimous decision. What it said, very specifically, "To meet its substantive obligations under the IDEA a school must offer an IEP reasonably calculated to enable a child to make progress appropriate in light of the child's circumstances."

Now, go back and see what Mitch said about the history of this. It's really important to use this as our foundation for the implications that I'm going to be addressing. Because building on this, we can really have a better understanding of what we need to do as IEP and IFSP teams, in order to appropriately identify and provide services for kids with disabilities.

Let me just go... I've got several important points and we'll follow it up with some specific guidelines that I want to recommend for you. The first important point, this is a really, very important one. The Supreme Court rejected the de minimis or trivial educational benefits standard. There was a dispute as part of the arguments that were heard in the Supreme Court that day. I was there, it was a very cold day. I remember having to line up for it. As a part of that [case] there was a dispute versus what the parents were seeking and what the school district was seeking. The Supreme Court came firmly down on the side close to what the parents were seeking, but firmly rejected the de minimis or basic education standard. This is very important because what we're expecting now is we're expecting kids to actually make progress.

You can see this. This is, again, a direct quote from what the Supreme [Court] said. "A student offered an education program providing merely more than de minimis progress from year to year can hardly be said to have been offered an education at all." The reason we're doing this is to make sure that kids with disabilities, who have disabilities at no fault of their own, are actually provided services, and not just warehoused in the school. What we need to do is make sure that they're provided a service that can help them reach their potential as we work to provide services with them.

Now, what's important about this? [To understand] this, we have to read this decision. Remember, the Supreme Court issued this decision in Rowley back in 1982. Shortly after the original signing of the law that we now are working to implement. It's been a long time of us dealing with the Rowley decision, but what we have to think about is the Rowley decision, the Endrew F., decision did not replace or overturn Rowley. Those of you who, as a part of your special education programs studied the Rowley decision, it clarified the standard. It clarified and extends the standard, and helps us understand exactly where we need to be going as part of this and helps us understand what we need to be doing to help implement this.

It doesn't overturn [the Rowley decision], please make sure [you understand this]. People were thinking it was going to be overturning this [Rowley decision], not at all. It just helps clarify and helps build on this. Now, what's important about this is the Supreme Court's decision emphasizes progress. That's what we're expected to do with kids. That's the demand that we have. That's why we're doing what we do. We want kids to make progress, and that's what we're expected to do as teachers and as professionals. That's what we'll be talking about some of the implications of that in a few minutes. What I want to make sure is you understand is our job is for kids to make progress. We need to arrange it so that kids can make progress and the kids receive a service from which they benefit from. That is a very important thing.

Now it's hard to think about this, but what we have to think about it make sure, based on the child's unique circumstances that kids do actually make progress. Building on that, there are some additional points that I want to address.

Now, talking about what I was saying earlier, the Rowley standard and talking about the two parts, how I said it did not overturn Rowley. I want to look at this and I want all IEP teams to pay attention to this. There is basically a two-part definition to a FAPE that extends Rowley and what many of us are now calling the Rowley/Endrew standard. This is very important because what this is helping us clarify as IEP teams what we need to be thinking about and making sure that we understand was. The first part, in the development of the IEP, [is the question], has the IEP team complied with the procedures set forth in the IDEA?

For many of us, that's an easier standard to understand and it's easier for us to understand [and] implement because what we're having to focus on is, "is the team following [the procedures]? Are they meeting the timelines? Are they paying attention to making sure that they have the right people in the room? Do they have data from the appropriate individuals to include as a part of the child's present levels? Do they have these things?" Those are easier check off things than the second standard. That's something that many of us who have been involved in special education understand, we've been dealing with the standards and understanding this. That doesn't change. The standards are what they are and we've been living with them [and] continue to deal with them.

The second one though, this is the harder one to understand. This is the harder one for districts to actually wrap their heads around. Is the IEP reasonably calculated to enable the child to make progress that is appropriate in light of his or her circumstances? Now, the term his or her circumstances is a direct quote from the Supreme Court decision, written by Chief Justice Roberts. Why I'm talking about this is, you have to think about this, there is no formula for this. It's based on the individual needs of the child. Why we're talking about this is second, this first part of these two standards, the first part is easy. Much easier to understand. The second part though ... is the IEP reasonably calculated? Can we make a determination if the kid is actually making progress or doing this? That's what we're going to be wrestling with, and that's something we're going to have to clarify as a part of this.



The next point, now what's important, and this is something that all school district administrators need to be aware of, is the Endrew decision provides guidance to administrators, educators, and IEP team members in developing IEPs that meet the Endrew standard. The Endrew Standard, the Endrew court, the decision raised the standard of what we are expecting for teachers and in teams to do for kids with disabilities. No longer, as I said earlier, no longer can we have kids just barely make progress. We are expecting kids actually to have teams spend time finishing and calculating and trying to determine what can we do to arrange it so kids can be successful. That is our obligation. That's what we're focusing on. That's what we need to do and that's what we need to spend our time on.

This is a very important part of the process. We need to make sure that all IEP teams are aware of this. This is not just for special ed directors, this is not just for special education teachers. This is not just for principals who are serving as local educational agency representatives or general education teachers. This is a team decision. We need to be part of a team in developing this and making sure that the IEPs reflect the new, higher standard of which we are expecting IEPs to be addressed for all kids, not just some kids, all kids. That's a very important part of the process.

Next, think about this. As a part of an IEP team. As a part of an IEP team, we need to make sure that we're addressing ... focus on the particular child as part of the core of the IDEA. Every single decision for a child needs to be focused on their needs, based on their individual needs. Not on their needs based on their disability, but based on the needs that the individual that this child presents. The instruction offered must be specially designed to meet the child's unique needs through the IEP program. An IEP is constructed only after careful consideration of the child's present levels of achievement, disability, and potential for growth. Which, this is going to raise the expectations for the determination of more accurate present levels.

In order for us to determine whether a child's actually making progress, we're going to need to have clearer present levels, so that we have to have better data from individuals so we can make determinations. Is a child actually being taken from where they were to where they need to go? And then how are we actually making that determination? You can only do this by making sure that you have accurate, present level data that helps us understand what's going on as part of this. I'll hit on this in a minute, but pay attention to making sure we talk about a child's potential for growth. This is a conversation that we have to have as IEP teams with parents. There's some individuals who think that just because a kid has a disability that they're not expected to make growth. Now we have to think about, we have to arrange it, as I just said about a minute and a half ago, arrange it so kids can be successful. That is our obligation as professionals. That's what we need to do to make sure that kids receive ... there's growth and there's progress as a part of this.

Some very specific lessons. I'm really, I want to make sure that you understand. Pay attention to the lessons from Endrew. Make sure that you tell your staff, make sure you tell your principals, make sure you tell your general and special education teachers about this. Make sure you explain to the parents as a part of this. There are some very specific lessons that we need to understand that we can clarify as a part of this. There are some things that we need to address that understand and will lay the foundation for kids as we're going to make sure that they're receiving services. This lays everything out.

Go back, as a part of the resources that we have for you. There are some very specific resources. It includes some background information on the decision, but also pay attention to those as we talk about the lessons. The first lesson, the IEP must be drafted in compliance with a detailed set of procedures that emphasize collaboration among parents and educators. Emphasize the first, the IEP team must be drafted in compliance under a detailed set of procedures, that's the first part of the Rowley/Endrew

decision, two-part decision that I was talking about just a few minutes ago. Pay attention to the specific procedures. We follow the timelines, we follow the procedures and we do, we make sure that all the individuals are in the room and can provide appropriate information as a part of this and then make the determinations based on this.

One thing we want to emphasize. You can see, the second part of the sentence is a direct quote from the Supreme Court decision, [it] emphasizes collaboration among parents and educators. Parents play a big role in a child's education and we need to make sure that we allow the parents not only to participate, but we also listen to the parents and we pay attention to the parents' questions as a part of this. We address the parents needs and we make sure that the parents are a part of the whole decision-making process. The Supreme Court was really very clear about the role of making sure that parents are part of the team. We need to make sure that we listen to parents and address the parents' needs and address what's going on as a part of it.

Next, the nature of the IEP process, from initial consideration through the state of administrative procedures ensures that parents and school representatives will fully air their respective opinions on the degree of progress the IEP should pursue. Now, this is a very important point. Why am I saying this? It's to make sure that parents are given the opportunity to share their information, that parents are able [to share information], we listen to parents and we pay, really pay attention to what their dreams, their desires, their hopes are for their child.

As a parent of two kids, I understand that parenting doesn't end. Both my kids are now hopefully doing well but it's interesting about this, I share with you that parenting doesn't end. Pay attention to this when the parents walk in. For many IEP teams, they often participate in 20 - 30 IEP teams during the course of the year. For parents, this is their one time that they come. Take it very seriously. Pay attention, they've taken time off from work. They've taken time to come into a school and we need to make sure that we listen to what they have to say and we don't just say to them, "Oh, this is my fourth IEP of the day, can we get this over and done with quickly?" Give them the time and listen to them so they fully air what's going on as a part of this. Pay attention to what they have to say and honor what they have to say.

Second point, you understand this also, I'm starting with the emphasis on the parents. Ensure meaningful parent involvement in IEP meetings and that their concerns are considered in establishing their child's educational/behavioral goals. Make sure we listen to what the parents have to say, specifically about what their education. If they really want to focus on reading or they really want to focus on behaviors, or they really want to focus on social competence areas. Pay attention. Endrew F., covers not just academic things, but also covers behavior. We need to make sure that we address behavioral issues as a part of this.

For parents, that's often what we need to address and spend our time focusing on. For general education teachers, that's often what we feel we need to address, is any issues relating to behavior goals for kids with disabilities.

Next, now the IEP is not a form document. It is not a document that we write ... As all of you working and involved in IEP teams, we write and then we have to revise it again next year. It's not something that we write and then put on a shelf and look at it 350 days later, then to rewrite it again. This is not a form document, it's constructed only after careful consideration of a child's present levels and potential. What we need to think about as a part of that is making sure that as a part of addressing the kid's needs, that we don't just check the boxes. We actually pay attention to the individual needs of the child,

emphasize the I of the IEP, focusing on that the child has individual, specific needs that we need to pay attention to.

Also, I emphasize this very specifically, the child's potential for growth. We're addressing not just where they are, but where they potentially will be going. That's a very important part of the process. Next thing, this is, I alluded to this just a few minutes ago. When developing the content of a student's IEP and subsequently reviewing it, be sure that the present levels of academic achievement and functional performance, the PLAAFP statements, based on evaluations and other relevant data that are current. Make sure that we have current data, not just ... I've seen teams develop really good evaluations on these children and then incorporate them as a part of the present levels, but then not change based on what's going on, one, two, even three years later. Make sure that you have current data from the general education teacher, the special education teacher, anyone else who works with the child, so we have understanding of where they are.

Use the data that we have from the previous evaluations, but also then update them and provide information, not only information from the teachers, but any additional information that you may have from the parents or the nurses, anyone who may have come into contact with the child, so we have a better understanding. Make sure the data is current. Next.

Ensure annual IEP goals are challenging, appropriately ambitious, and measurable. I say that like I have marbles in my mouth, but measurable is something we need to make sure that we actually address, that it's something we can actually quantify and demonstrate. I don't want to hear that a child has a reading goal where we just, to clarify, "That he seems like he's doing okay." Or, "That's good." I want to see goals that someone else can measure.

It's not a misstatement that kids with disabilities, many of them are transient. What we have to make sure is the IEPs that we write can be picked up from one location to another, and that others can then view what's going on specifically with this child. The IEP is their living, breathing plan that we then need to address and provide an assortment of assistance as a part of that. Next.

The IEP must be reasonably calculated to enable a child to make progress appropriate in light of his circumstances. This is, again, a direct quote from the Supreme Court. There is no form, there is no formula that we have to address as a part of this. We have to make sure that children make progress. Okay? Next.

As I alluded to before, it's not just something we put on the shelf just for 350 days and then rewrite it because we have to do it annually. Continuously monitor and measure a child's progress. Make sure that the annual goals are applicable and demonstrate that progress has been made. This is one of the most important things that IEP teams need to focus on. Determine whether a child is making progress and then whether we're doing what we're supposed to be doing as a part of this. We need to make sure that we adjust what we're doing with the kids and if the kid is not making progress, change something. Change the grouping, change the instruction, change the reading method, changing the level of instruction. Change the amount of time, change something. That is contingent upon IEP teams to do this. It's not contingent upon parents, because parents aren't often in schools and understand exactly what's going on. Make sure things are changed, based on the progress or lack thereof that the child was making.

Again, building on this, this is probably the most important point. I'm involved in due process hearings all the time and one thing I'm going to make sure is we need to have data that talks about making changes. When I said making changes, when progress reports don't identify where the data's making changes, we need to make sure we reconvene the IEP team, make instructional changes, change



something. It's contingent, we don't need these kids to suffer anymore. We need to make sure what we're doing for these kids is appropriate. That progress is being made.

And if progress is not being made we need alter it so that progress does get made. That is our obligation. And we need to take that very seriously. Because if we don't take that seriously no one else will. And the last thing I want to emphasize is, that we have some resources here.

But one of the best things that you can read, and this is a resource is a part of the USDOE website that we have as a part of this, is make sure you read the Q & A document on the Endrew F. decision that was issued on December 7, 2017. This is really well done and I highly recommend that you share this with your team. Thank you very much.

>>Terry Jackson: Thank you Dr. Bateman, very passionate for what he presented. I know some of the takeaways that I had from it was enabling the child to make progress, the use of accurate and current data, making sure that your IEPs are in compliance with a detailed set of procedures, and also meaningful collaboration with parents.

Again, the Endrew document, decision document, isn't on this particular symposium, but it was posted on the collaboration site after the first symposium so if you don't have it, please go to the resources after that first symposium. Our next presenter is Dr. Laura Brown. Dr. Brown is the project director for Georgia State Personnel development grant. In her role she has worked with state and regional leaders to develop infrastructures and capacity to sustain initiatives. Dr. Brown.

Laura Brown

"Georgia's State Personnel Development Grant"

>>Laura Brown: Thank you so much for allowing me to share today. We want to talk to you about ASPIRE, Active Student Participation Inspires Real Engagement. ASPIRE is a student led IEP initiative designed to develop self-determination skills in several areas. Including problem solving, self-evaluation, choice making, and decision-making. This is a student directed process. And it shifts the focus from the adults to the student. Students have much more involvement in educational decision making.

In ASPIRE we have particular competencies, and we share these competencies with the students, with the educators and with their parents. IEP awareness, there are several aspects of IEP awareness that we take for granted that students understand, but we consciously teach those. We teach IEP participation, IEP content, knowledge of strengths and challenges, and communication skills. These competencies are addressed in the context of classroom instructional activities every day.

For example, students may be asked to identify things they've done to prepare for their IEP meeting and what else they can do. They're also are looking and talking with their parents about: what are the participation needs of the student and where can they really step up to take a leadership role?

In communication skills we are doing that ongoing each and every day and the students are using their mode of communication to make that happen. Through this whole entire process with ASPIRE we are increasing student voice. And this is really all about rethinking what we've done in the past. We are helping students define strengths and challenges and truly expressing their interests, likes, and dislikes.

We are helping students practice communication, and negotiation skills, engaging in goal setting, evaluating progress, and expressing how to adjust activities accordingly to meet those goals. For example, negotiation skills might take a lot of work. Have to ramp up your listening skills, have to pay



attention what the other person is saying. You might need to anticipate what's going to happen and learn the art of compromise.

ASPIRE has a very positive focus. And students are always being asked, what they want to do in the future? And what do they need to do to get there? What compromises do they need to make? How do they need to work toward their goals?

And what we're also finding is that, they are learning to not only ask for the supports they need, but to express why they truly need them. Throughout ASPIRE, the entire process, students are learning to make choices, decisions, and taking more control over their educational decision-making.

Within this process of increasing student voice, we're partnering with families. We're partnering with those parents, and sometimes adults may find this difficult, our educators may find this difficult of increasing student voice because it is a new way of work.

It does require training. And it does require follow up activities including coaching to enable students to actively participate in the development and implementation of their IEP. This training includes overview and expectations. It includes training of what really is self-determination and strategies to get there. And how do you self-advocate?

Participating in the student-led IEP process is also part of the training. And we have administrator, educator, and parent sessions. Sometimes we have them all together. Sometimes we have separate sessions. But we find it so important that this training and this coaching is really part of the process.

Our state personnel development grant helped us get started. And helped us provide that coaching and develop a state infrastructure, and move to a regional support level throughout this process. We are working with other partners to expand our work and to make sure that we can sustain this work across Georgia.

We are partnering with Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency, the division of our CTAE, our career, technical, agricultural, education division; tools for life; bringing all of these together to expand our work and make it very meaningful for the students, their parents, and the educators.

ASPIRE promotes educator engagement, parent engagement, student engagement. But we're also finding that it promotes post-school outcomes and secondary transition. As we work together with all of our partners, and as we work to build our infrastructure, and to take our work to the next level, to leverage resources and supports, and pull all of this together, we know that ASPIRE is doing really, great work, and we're having significant results from that work. And we're seeing as part of our other efforts, seeing our graduation rates increase.

You'll see at the bottom of this slide, I snipped this from a student's IEP presentation, and this particular high school student made some introductory remarks, and she talked a little-bit about herself, she's shy, reserved, but then confidently she turned away from her PowerPoint presentation. And she turned to that IEP committee, and she said, "And this is my IEP." I knew then I was seeing ASPIRE truly in action.

We have some great numbers. We have participating schools, we have just shy of 600 schools participating in ASPIRE as of March. We have 112 districts who are participating. And we have 2600, just shy of 2700 teachers who have gone through our training. That leads us to 38,000+ students who are participating in ASPIRE, who are leading their own IEP at whatever level is possible for them. Who are becoming leaders, self-directing, self-determined, and advocating for themselves.

We do have some resources for you. And we encourage you to check out our website. We have success stories. We have some videos. And we have our manual. You can follow this process. But I would say,



think about the coaching that is needed. Think about what it really takes to support and sustain an effort like this. And as we rethink our work in Georgia, we welcome to hear from you. Thank You.

>>Terry Jackson: Thank you Dr. Brown. It's great to see how a state program is increasing student engagement. Earlier we listened to about the policy in family engagement. Now we just listened to Georgia and how they're using a program to involve students in the IEP process through regional partnerships.

Next up we have Dr. Sarah Melton, who is the principal of Beverly Manor Middle School in Augusta County, Virginia. Dr. Melton has just completed her 11th year as an administrator for Augusta County Public Schools, where she served as a special education administrator and school testing coordinator. As well as the school based 504 coordinator and assistant principal. Dr. Melton.

Sarah Melton
"The Critical Role of the School Principle"

>>Sarah Melton: Thank You. Good Afternoon. I'm honored to be here today to speak from the perspective of principals as the instructional leaders in their building. My first role as an administrator was the special education administrator in the school. And it was during that time that I realized the importance of having an administrator leader be invested in the time, in the instruction, for that particular population of students, and then in turn how that can impact and enhance the instruction for all.

The role of the principal as the instructional leader of the building starts with setting high expectations for student achievement. You cannot have high standards of student achievement without engaging in rigorous instruction. And we all know, that starts with rigorous and meaningful learning goals. And this should be especially true for the students with the most complex needs in order for them to make true progress.

We have rigorous state standards that we are expected to get our students to achieve, and that in turn drives our instructional expectations and practices in our buildings. Special education should not be a separate entity within this or something that we delegate to someone else in our building.

The principal is the person who is ultimately responsible for the education in the building, and that includes setting high expectations for student learning for all students. Again, this begins with the individual goals, and obviously in context today, we're talking about the IEP goals.

It also includes ensuring effective IEP meetings, and the development of the IEP that results in high-quality IEPs and then the further implementation of those IEPs and what that instruction looks like in our schools. The IEP is the living document and the purpose behind the goals and services should be to close that instructional or behavioral gap that exists for students with an IEP.

As a school, if we are not setting rigorous goals, then we simply end up maintaining the gap that exists year after year, or worse, we see it widen as students get older. This can be very defeating. Students can become apathetic about their own learning. Or worse, they become too reliant on adults and others and the lower expectations from them in the classroom.

This is not the cycle we want to produce, and breaking that cycle starts by expecting these students to achieve, by expecting them to learn. And that comes from setting those rigorous and meaningful goals.

We also need to expect our teachers to provide meaningful instruction toward these goals, and expecting the students and their parents to be partners in this process. Rigorous goals need to be based on their specific barrier skills. And those need to be identified by appropriate and current data collection. So how do we do this? And specifically, as the instructional leader in the building, how do we facilitate that?

In my experience I think that sometimes school administrators take a little bit more of a hands-off approach when it comes to special education than maybe the other instructional areas in our building. It doesn't tend to be our area of expertise or maybe even our comfort level. And I think some of that comes from not having all of our own personal experiences within that setting as we have with our other classes.

This is also an area of high specialization and there's a lot of trust in our highly specialized and trained special education teachers, as there should be. However, there also tends to be, sometimes maybe too many assumptions made about the specialized instruction being provided and the data collection and the IEP development. And we need to be more directly involved in that process.

Special education teachers are highly trained professionals, but we have the advantage of the instructional big picture for these students in our schools. We wouldn't leave the math department to create their own curriculum and their own assessments and watch progress monitoring without setting those expectations from us, monitoring that instruction that's happening, and looking at the student outcomes from that instruction.

Special education should be no different and in fact should probably ask for more of our time. We need to remember that as the instructional leader, we need to ask those some driving assessment questions for our special education, as we do for all other areas of instruction. What kind of data do we need? How do we collect that data in order to identify those specific needs? How do we design that instruction based on those identified needs and then monitor progress? How often do we need to collect data? What kind of tools should we be using? And are we using them with fidelity?

Several years ago, in my own building, I noticed my teachers were using multiple tools of measurement, all valid tools, all research-based tools, but we were probably using too many that confused the data that we were collecting. And we weren't always using these tools for their intended purpose. If we were using the same tools, we weren't always using the same language for reporting progress which made it difficult to have a clear understanding of that student's progress from year to year.

At that point, as the instructional leader I pulled that team together, we sat down, and we decided we needed to create a more clear data collection plan in which we created an assessment plan, starting from initial baseline data collection, all the way through progress monitoring data collection, including what tools we're going to be using, how often we would use them.

And then from there I needed to see what additional training I needed to set up for my teachers to ensure the accurate use of those tools. We also addressed the need for common language, for reporting data, and progress. Not only did these efforts improve our data collection process, it has led to more accurate IEPs and goal development. It's also worked to improve discussion and communication with parents.

When we use consistent language and consistent processes for developing those annual goals, which then in turns drives our instruction and our service delivery. We need to remember sometimes that in these IEP meetings, we use these terminology, and these data collection tools on a daily basis.

We live in this language, and often times our parents do not. So we need to make sure that we can make that process as consistent as possible, and as clear as possible, in order to make parents feel comfortable, in order to participate in meetings and the development all along before we even come to the table.

For us there is also a need to develop a process for developing the goals and monitoring goals. Sometimes, I think developing a goal can be a little daunting depending on the behaviors that we're looking at or the instructional models that we need to look at. This is a process that can be facilitated by administrators to bring your special education department together.

This does not have to be a process that they do in isolation. We look at goals together and decide, is there a clear criterion for success? Is there a defined mastery? Is it clear how the goal is going to be measured? And then what will that instruction look like?

From that point my teachers also see that I'm invested in this process and these are the things that I will be looking for in the classroom as well. There needs to be regular discussion about student progress. Not just the quarterly report that goes home to parents, but as an instructional team with ongoing discussion with the parents.

Are students making progress? Why or why not? And then developing an action plan that involves discussion with the parents before we're even developing the next draft. There should be the expectation for frequent data collection. From the division down to the schools. 1-2 data points collected weekly. We cannot afford to wait for a length of time before we realize students are not making progress and adjusting instruction.

Consistency for this starts at the division level. I'm fortunate enough that I work for a division that has a very clear vision of what they see for education for our students and those high expectations. They've set those specific timelines, expectations for us, guidelines, process guides, but division leadership relies on the individual principals to implement, monitor and ensure the IEP meetings are effective and the process results in an IEP that continues to set high expectations for student progress.

Division leaders also rely on the school principals to ensure the implementation of sound instructional practices that result in high student achievement. Again, this includes all instructional areas. There's a need to take ownership of this process. And not just as a required member of the IEP team. The building principal needs to be more than just the signature on the participation page.

With multiple case managers in your building, managing multiple students and their families, across multiple grade levels, it's the building administrator that is the common thread throughout the process as students progress throughout your school. Our role should be quality control in a sense. Ensuring consistency in IEP development, discussions leading up through that development, documentation and facilitating discussion during the meetings.

Our role in the building dictates a different level of authority and so with that comes a great responsibility to understand the IEP process. Not just for compliance for teachers or making sure that we've met those deadlines, and making sure that we've met those minimal pieces.

But also, to be able to interact and discuss students' progress and performance with their families. This helps to ensure that not only are the required components deadlines met, but that the plan becomes part of a continuum of an educational plan for that student, that progresses toward their long-term goals of closing that gap.

One way is to look at and have a process for looking at IEPs before they even go home. Having those ongoing discussions with the case managers about student process and progress, looking for appropriate goals, well documented present level of performance, and clear and current data that allows any reader to understand that student's progress and current needs.

As principals, we need to continue to monitor this quality and meet with case managers, discussing our students and be sure we are consistent throughout our school building. Administrators are the consistent piece in a student's time within our buildings, and with that mindset we also have the opportunity to build relationships and trust with our families as we participate not just at the yearly meetings but as we work together in setting high expectations for students and providing the services and support to meet them.

High expectations in IEP development are just two of the three critical pieces that a building administrator provides in regard to quality special education that results in true progress. The third is providing the necessary support to special education and general education teacher teams in order to actually implement the IEP and then monitor that instruction as it moves forward in the classroom.

This really begins with scheduling. And the approach and design of the master schedule all the way down to the individual student schedules. Sometimes I've been in conversations and all of the new technology that we have as schools that are designed to help us schedule our students faster and more efficiently. It's not always the best thing for these students with these complex scheduling needs.

We've sometimes heard that it gets frustrating when special education becomes the tail that wags the dog. But we need to remember that education is not about being perfectly equal. It's about making sure that all students have what they need. My question typically when I'm met with that response is, why wouldn't you work first on scheduling the most complex needs in your building? And that's sometimes our students with special education needs. And sometimes it's not.

Sometimes it's students with other needs but why wouldn't we start with those complex needs first? And ensure that all of those pieces are in place for them to be successful. The other pieces fall into place beyond that. Otherwise, we're trying to fit the very square peg into a round hole and we tend to miss things that these students need in order to make true progress.

There's no magic wand, other than time and commitment to attention to detail in order to ensure that our schedule enables the amount of service time needed. There should not be a set master schedule for special education. It should change every year based on the needs that are within your building that year. The IEPs are what determine that, and they should determine how many sections of resource reading, or resource math, or co-taught language arts that you need in your building.

When we look at beyond that into the instruction in the classroom, co-teaching for example, we all know that ideally co-teaching inclusive classrooms, our co-teachers come to co-teaching and can choose who they're working with and there's an immediate commitment to that co-teaching process.

But we also know that in reality that's not always the case, it's not always possible. So again, this is where the building administrator needs to step in to play an active role in order to ensure the success of these co-teaching teams and ultimately the success of the students in that classroom.

Principals should plan to invest the time, to meet with their co-teaching partners in order to set expectations for both instructional roles in the classroom, with an emphasis on how both teachers can enhance instruction in that setting and both teachers own the instruction in that setting.



This is a unique relationship that takes time to develop. It takes time to develop trust. It takes time to develop those logistics in the classroom. And often times it needs a facilitator. That's our role. The role of the principal should also be to provide access to co-teaching resources for both teachers in working toward building a culture of parity in the classroom.

Principals can encourage and arrange for both teachers to attend workshops for professional development that can develop a plan for ongoing discussion and evaluation of the instruction that's happening in those settings, in order to help with instructional planning and ensure meaningful instruction is happening, service time and service delivery is met and to work on monitoring student goals. When building a master schedule, co-teachers must have a co-planning time. This is crucial and essential in order to build that ownership between the two teachers and develop that relationship.

How they use that time and the expectations of how that time addresses service delivery and design of instruction, that comes from the expectations of the building administrator. Beyond the meetings and facilitating that further professional development, there's a need for monitoring the performance in the classroom.

A building principal should be approaching special education like any other educational classroom in their building. Good instruction is good instruction. It should be aligned a specific student learning objectives, engaging and challenging instructional activities that lead to student growth.

For my own staff I know that my expectation is that they're lesson plans should include the specific IEP goals that are being addressed, and the instructional delivery should be aligned to those goals. In the case of a co-taught classroom, the design of the instruction and choice of co-teaching models should really clearly be connected to the service delivery model. And should enhance the instruction within that setting. Again, when we go back to that universal design this in turn enhances instruction for all.

Both teachers should be held accountable for the instruction within that setting. And this can be done through a variety of observational tools, post-observation conferences, ongoing data collection of what the actual instruction looks like in the classroom, and the follow up conversations truly complete the cycle of setting those high learning expectations, and the critical role that a principal plays, from setting those expectations through the IEP development, ensuring a quality IEP meeting, and finally, high quality outcomes for student achievement in the classroom.

Again, education is not the one size fit all, and we all know that. But as building principals we need to prioritize the amount of time we devote to student achievement. And the greatest needs necessitate the greatest time and attention from us. Thank You.

>>Terry Jackson: Thank You Dr. Melton. A true testament to great school leadership. She's an exemplar of what a great principal does in a school to provide high expectations, the use of data and just making sure all needs of students are being met.

And just a little note that Augusta County, just to show you a testament to Dr. Melton's commitment, is three hours west of Washington D.C., so she made the commitment to drive three hours to be here and it'll be four hours going home, so there you have it.

Next up, we have Dr. Toby Long. Dr. Toby Long is a professor in the Department of Pediatrics at Georgetown University and a training director of the Center for Child and Human Development, University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities.



She's also the director of the graduate certificate program in early intervention offered by Georgetown. And director of the comprehensive system of personnel development for the District of Columbia's early intervention program called Strong Start. Big mouthful. Dr. Long.

Toby Long
"IFSP Considerations"

>>Toby Long: Good afternoon. Like my colleagues I want to thank the Department of Education for having me here and hopefully sharing some key information about the individualized family service plans and early intervention for children from 0-3.

I want to first thank my colleagues at the Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center for some of their resources that I used in preparing this presentation on high quality IFSPs.

As we know early intervention is a system of integrated services and supports for families to help them help their children participate in activities that they would like them to participate in, or they are expected to participate in.

Key to that program, is creating a high-quality IFSP that reflects the families and other caregiver's concerns, priorities, and resources.

High -quality IFSPs clearly relate services to outcomes and this is a very key message in developing high-quality IFSPs. First, the team, which includes the family, decides on what the IFSP outcomes are, those outcomes that we would like our children to achieve, and then we decide which services and supports are necessary to help the child and family achieve those outcomes. In order to reflect those priorities, concerns of the children and the families, high-quality IFSPs have outcomes that are measurable with clearly stated criteria, procedures, and timelines.

In developing IFSP outcomes there is one key question we must ask our families. We start the conversation with: what would you like your child or family to do over the next several months that we can help you accomplish? By asking that question, we can develop either child-related outcomes or family-related outcomes. Child-related outcomes can either be participation-based or resource- or routine-based outcomes. Key to the child outcomes is that achievement will enhance learning through functional participation in everyday activities which is key concepts that will be reflected in the whole IFSP and certainly reflected in the services and supports given to the child and families to support the IFSP.

We could also have family outcomes that oftentimes IFSP teams forget about, but there are two types of IFSP family outcomes that include participation-based outcomes or resource-based outcomes. These are developed to help families support their own child by enhancing their capacity or enhancing their ability to access community services and supports outside of the early intervention system.

Either family outcomes or child outcomes are developed using a certain procedure that focuses on participation and Robin McWilliams has developed a four-step process in developing participation-based outcomes. Key to those participation-based outcomes and that process is the third word rule. The third word rule states that on IFSP outcomes, on every IFSP outcome, the third word is an action word. It's contextualized and it's functional.

For example, we could have that the child will eat the meal with his family or that the child will point to certain pictures in a book during reading time. No matter if the outcomes are family- or child-related, the high quality IFSP outcome will be functional for the child and family's life, reflect real life situations,

should be written in jargon-free language, clear and simple so everyone understands what we mean. An IFSP outcome emphasizes the positive, not the negative, so we always write that the child will do something, not that they won't do something. And we use active action words rather than passive words, so you should never see on an IFSP that a child will receive a certain service. That's not a participation-based outcome.

When developing child outcomes, when a parent says to you, "I wish he ...", child with cerebral palsy, could sit in his high chair without slipping out. A child participation-based outcome could be Romeo will eat meals with his family sitting upright in his high chair, not that Romeo will improve his muscle tone for sitting. When a parent says, "We want to be able to take Romeo with us in a car. We need a travel car seat". A family outcome could be, "Karen and Mark will explore options with financial assistance to obtain a car seat". Rather than, "The service coordinator or the staff will find out how the family can buy a car seat."

High-quality IFSPs start with collecting information from families on what they care about, what they need to help them as a family accomplish and do the kind of activities they would like to do every family, so that they could help their child grow, develop, and participate. IFSP teams use that information to create meaningful, functional, participation-based IFSPs that reflect those needs. That is a working document that changes over time. We're working with very young children that hopefully change very rapidly. We must feel that the IFSP will change over the course of our time working with them.

It takes practice for IFSP teams to develop high-quality participation-based outcomes and there are resources that have been developed to help us do that including ones that are developed from the Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center which provides lots of activities and practice on developing these kinds of outcomes. I would suggest that you take advantage of these resources and other resources that are freely available to you at all times. Thank you.

>>Terry Jackson: Thank you, Dr. Long. Next up we have Dr. Renee Bradley who will focus on behavioral considerations. Dr. Bradley joined the U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education programs back in 1997. I just wanted to emphasize that for you. As a Program Specialist, she now serves as the Deputy Director of the Research to Practice division. I also want to thank Dr. Bradley for stepping in on such short notice to present on this part of the symposium. Dr. Bradley.

Renee Bradley
"Behavior Considerations"

>>Renee Bradley: Thank you, Terry. States and districts and schools are engaged in systematic and comprehensive efforts to make schools safe and effective learning environments for all children. For children with disabilities whose behavior interferes with their learning or the learning of others, the IEP is a valuable and critical part of the plan for teaching student behavior that's necessary for school success.

Some of these slides might look a little familiar to you because we shared them last year when we focused on creating positive and safe learning environments but we wanted to reiterate, in light of talking about the IEP, that the high-quality IEPs are not limited just to academic and developmental performance of children. During an IEP team meeting, IEP teams are encouraged to consider the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports for students. Including social, emotional, or behavioral goals and objectives on an IEP is not limited to a specific category or label.

In fact, many children with disabilities need extra support with skills such as building independence, improving on-task behavior, improving attention, and other self-regulation activities. For example, a goal could be Brianna returns to independent assignments within one minute of a teacher prompt 80% of the time. When a child displays inappropriate behaviors such as violating school code, student conduct, or disrupting the classroom, this may indicate that the behavioral supports should be included in the IEP. If an IEP team is aware of behaviors that interfere with a child's learning or the learning of others, that behavior should be addressed as part of the IEP, especially if there is a pattern of behavior that results in the child being removed from the instructional environment.

Examples could include for a child who is disrupting the classroom, "Michael will gain teacher attention by raising his hand 70% of the time in a class period". For a child who is behaving inappropriately in group work or possibly using words that they should not be using in school, an objective might include "When participating in class group work, Emerson will contribute to the discussion in a relevant context and positive manner at least one time every 15 minutes as observed by a teacher".

If the child displays inappropriate behaviors despite having an IEP that includes behavioral support, this may indicate one of two things: either that the goals on the IEP are not the appropriate goals to meet the child's needs or that the goals on the IEP are not being implemented appropriately. In this instance, the IEP team should reconvene and problem solve. They should question are these the right objectives there to support the child or is the problem for implementation or are the objectives not well matched to the child's need and intensity level?

The next slide talks about the importance of using evidence-based practices. Fortunately for our viewers, both on this first symposium this year, the one last year that we did on positive school learning environments and again this time, there are several resources that we've gathered that will assist teachers, families, leaders in making sure that they have the skills needed to appropriately identify and deliberately choose and match evidence-based practices to the child's individual needs.

Lastly, LEAs also need to consider the capacity needs of staff and what supports are needed for teachers and leaders in addition to what the student needs. IDEA states that LEAs may also consider capacity needs of staff, so it's just not developing an IEP and implementing supports for the child, but what do teachers and leaders need, and others in the system, to be able to effectively support the child and their individual needs?

>>Terry Jackson: Thank you, Dr. Bradley. Next, we have Melissa Turner who is the Senior Manager for State Policy with the National Center for Learning Disabilities. Melissa is part of the public policy and advocacy team and supports parent mobilization and advocacy around issues that impact students with learning and attention issues including policies related to the Every Student Succeeds Act, and Melissa will be presenting on supporting school success.

Melissa Turner
"Supporting School Success"

>>Melissa Turner: Thank you, Terry, and thank you to OSEP for inviting NCLD to be part of today's symposium. You can go to the next slide, please. NCLD was founded in 1977 and our mission is to improve the lives of the one and five children and adults who struggle with learning and attention issues in the United States. We do this in a couple of different ways. The way that I primarily work on this is by helping parents get accurate information so that they can advocate for their children.



I was asked to speak today about building a better IEP as a method of realizing the promise of the Endrew F. decision. As discussed earlier by the other presenters, and they covered it really, really well, Endrew changed a little bit what the standard is for what states need to do and districts need to do with their IEPs. Endrew says that IDEA requires an educational program reasonably calculated so that a child can make appropriate progress towards his or her goals. To tie this into the IEP, I came up with four key tips that I'll share right now.

The first tip to making a better IEP is to make sure that it is standards-based. A standards-based IEP means that the IEP team considered the student's current performance relative to grade level expectations and develops the IEP with the goal of closing the gap between where a child is and where he or she needs to go. The second tip for today is to ... and this has come up before in a number of the other presentations. It's to make a SMART goal. Using SMART goals in your IEP means that the goals are specific, measurable, attainable, results-oriented, and time bound.

There's an example of a SMART goal up on the screen that you can see right now, but if you're curious and want to see more examples, you can go to understood.org and just plug in SMART goals and we've got dozens of examples for different content areas and different ages which might be helpful for your district staff. IEP goals should not be vague or general. A SMART IEP goal will say when and how often a child's progress will be measured. It is important for IEP goals to be stated in a way that can be measured by standardized assessments, curriculum-based assessments, or other screening tools. SMART goals will help schools and teachers make sure they are meeting the standard of Endrew.

The third tip for today is to support and encourage student self-advocacy. Self-advocacy is exactly what it sounds like. It's helping students have the ability to ask for what they need. Being able to be a self-advocate will help them succeed not just in an IEP meeting, but also in school, academically and socially, and in their futures, when they leave and go to post-secondary education and the workforce. School can help support students in building the necessary confidence to be self-advocates. NCLD has developed a series of self-advocacy materials and I will share a link to that later on in the presentation.

The fourth IEP tip is to meaningfully include student strengths in the IEP. We all know that IEPs must address areas of weakness for students in order to identify where they need to help and to support them to grow and improve. However, sometimes when we focus on the areas of need, the IEP meeting can become somewhat negative and it can feel really intimidating to families, and we know that the IEP itself then might not help a teacher figure out how to help that specific student.

When you add strengths into an IEP, specifically the skills where students excel or where they are confident, and use those strengths to develop and support growth in the areas of need, it provides more of a road map for teachers. It's a much more actionable document and it also flips the script and makes a better relationship between the school and the family. As discussed throughout today's symposium, the landmark Endrew F. decision changed the standard of what an IEP must provide and what we mean by FAPE. The decision in Endrew says that IDEA requires an educational program reasonable calculated to ensure a child to make appropriate progress in light of the child's circumstances.

To fully implement this decision and support students in making appropriate progress, schools and district need to review their IEP procedures and standards to make sure they're providing students with the right kinds of opportunities and experiences. Following the tips in today's discussion making IEP standards-based, using SMART goals, encouraging self-advocacy, and incorporating strengths into IEPs are just four of the strategies that schools can use to realize the promise of Endrew.

On the last slide of the presentation, we have a list of resources that I reference in this discussion and so you'll see that we have an Endrew F. toolkit that is developed. It's largely parent-facing, but it will be

useful to you to get sense of what the advocacy community is sharing with other parents, and we also have a professional development toolkit that goes into more detail on strengths-based IEPs, and then we have a series of self-advocacy resources that are available for you to share as widely as you'd like, and then you also have my email address. I want to thank you today for your time and please be in touch with me if you have any questions or need additional information. Thank you.

>>Terry Jackson: Thank you, Melissa. You've heard a lot today so far about the importance of self-advocacy, the use of data, meaningful student and family engagement, as well as the importance of great leadership, school leadership, as well as understanding the current policy. Next, we're going to do something a little bit different. I'd like to introduce two videos that will describe how students and families can and should be co-creators in the process of developing a high-quality IEP. The first video is from Nicole Bucka which shows a parent's perspective and the second is a video from Chris Coulston and Kevin Fortunato, two young adults who provide their perspectives on self-determination and the IEP process.

Nicole Bucka
"Parent Perspective on the IEP Process"

>>Nicole Bucka: Hi. My name is Nicole Bucka and I'm here to give you a little bit of a parent perspective with being involved in the IEP and any kind of educational process for students with disabilities. I'm an educator. I have been for my entire career. I'm a special educator. I teach English language development and I've also been a general education English teacher. Currently, I'm an RTI coordinator at a school district and I previously did the work at the state level, as well.

Special education is definitely, though, a passion of mine. In addition, I have two children with disabilities. Both of my children were born with autism spectrum disorders. Ethan, my 10-year-old, just turned 10, is what we consider high functioning autism or Asperger's. He's also twice exceptional. He has 148 IQ. He's over the 95th percentile in all standardized tests for reading, writing, and math, and he has a lot of social struggles and work completion struggles and compliance struggles, and the nature of his needs are communicative and social.

My youngest son who is seven years old, Owen, he has more severe autism. He's nonverbal. He has an intellectual disability. He has a variety of medical ailments and he also has sensory regulation problems, and he is in more of a significant self-contained type setting. We're here today to talk about the importance of parents being at the table. I thought given I have two children and they're sort of two ends of a very broad spectrum, I thought it would be good for me to give the last example I can think of where I was at the table and it was really critical for each of my children to get what they need.

Ethan, the 10-year-old high functioning child, the last time we were at the table, Ethan was, not unexpectedly, struggling with some behavioral problems at school. They had done a wealth of assessments, the BASC. He had come up with some oppositional defiance, clinically significant indicators. Work compliance was as an issue. Argumentative, a variety of those issues. The goals that were written in the IEP were mostly around social skills and then problem solving, understanding cause and effect, and making good choices.

Because I'm lucky enough to be in education and therefore I understand the data and I understand the terminology, I was able to look at that comprehensive evaluation that was done and notice my son's strengths and weaknesses. While he's clinically superior in all these areas, he is extremely low, like 10th

percentile and below, on cognitive rigidity or flexibility, whichever way you look at it, and pragmatics, language pragmatics.

In that IEP meeting, I was able to advocate for, but again, I'm not your average parent. I understand the data and I understand the language of the words we're using and how it all fits together conceptually. I was able to advocate that this solution, this problem-solving cause and effect, was not the nature of my son's problems. I said, "He gets what's right and what's wrong and he understands the consequences." He doesn't understand his own rigidity. He doesn't have words to put to it. He doesn't have strategies for how to handle and he dis-regulates. He loses his ability to self-regulate, and so I found an intervention, because of my background as a coordinator, called Unstuck and On Target, and we as a team agreed to change the goal to that goal with that intervention and implement it, and it has been amazing.

He stills struggles, but now we all have common language. He has strategies to pull from and we all understand, and I think had I not been at the table, not been an advocate, if I had not known that that was not the nature of why my son struggles and if I hadn't spoken up about that, then I think that he would still be struggling immensely much more than he is now.

The second example is my youngest son who's nonverbal and intellectually disabled. The last time we were at an IEP, his staffing ... when you're as severely impaired as he is, it would really be optimal if staffing looped. Staffing doesn't loop. So, every year, we get a brand new team, new educator, new speech, new OT, new social ... just new everybody. I'm the only person at the table that has seen my son all seven years of his life in every form of therapy he's been in and everything that works and everything that doesn't.

We were at the table and there's this speech pathologist at this school. Her reputation in this State is profound. She's the best of the best and I was excited to have her. But at that first IEP I had to say to her and to the rest of the team, "My husband and I have made a decision that was a hard one for us. We are no longer trying to get my son to speak."

He's going to be eight years old. He's had the best, most intensive therapies five days a week, four days a week, one on one, full hour, touch therapy, touch prompt therapy, the best of the best. We did all of our homework. Paid out of pocket. You name it. He was not speaking. Response to intervention data says nonresponsive for that long, let's move on. And so I had to say to this speech provider, "It's not a reflection of you. I know you're amazing. I need this time to respect our family decision and to focus on the augmentative speech approach."

We want the thoughts in his head, because he has a lot of them, we want him to be functionally sharing them across people in a setting in a functional way and I had to ask the team to do that and I want to say that this team was very receptive, but we have had that conversation with a team in the past, a different team, who basically gave me the yeah, yeah, yeah nod and yet by the end of the year, augmentative speech goals had made very little progress.

So again, another example of how the family knows the child the best, the parents, you have to speak up when you think something is wrong and it's uncomfortable sometimes, but also the team has to be willing to hear you. It has to be part of the culture. Then for significant disabilities, particularly like my youngest son's, I think that we need to start with life goals in mind from day one, pre-school, kindergarten.

For my youngest son, there is no shortage of things to work on. There are no shortage of goals, but I think that where we often disconnected was when the school would come to the table with each person



bringing their own goals in isolation with no parent input, or little, and then parent would be thinking long-term what we want to accomplish and that some of the things are just not as priority as others.

Kevin Fortunato and Chris Coulston
"Young Adult Perspectives on Self-Determination and the IEP Process"

>>Kevin Fortunato: Hi, I'm Kevin John Fortunato and I just graduated the Technical College High School where I studied early childhood education. I am NOCTI certified and the Pennsylvania Department of Education gave me this stamp of approval, baby. There's nothing on the certificate that lists my disability or what I can't do. Nope, just like you, I'm pursuing a profession based on my strengths and where I can shine. I'm a motivational speaker who happens to be on the front cover of the Delaware News Journal. I also empower students and educate families and teachers about what transition planning really looks like when capacity is built in students.

>>Chris Coulston: My name is Chris Coulston. I was a VIP with an IEP, but now, I'm an employee at Christiana Care Health Systems. I make a good salary. I file taxes. Look at me. I am IDEA fulfilled. Building capacity means teaching students self-determination. When we focus on ability, it's amazing what we can accomplish.

>>Kevin Fortunato: Chris, today we're going to talk about the importance of self-determination and transition. Tell me, when did you first go to your IEP?

>>Chris Coulston: Kevin, I first went to my IEP when I was seventh grade in middle school.

>>Kevin Fortunato: Chris, tell me, what happened in seventh grade when you led your IEP meeting?

>>Chris Coulston: I presented a four slide PowerPoint on my strengths, my goals, my interests, and what I need to be successful in the classroom.

>>Kevin Fortunato: Chris, tell me, how did you feel during the meeting?

>>Chris Coulston: Kevin, I felt good during the meeting; like how the teachers and staff were talking to me asking me the questions rather than my mom.

>>Kevin Fortunato: Chris, you just got done leading your first IEP meeting. How did you feel after it was over?

>>Chris Coulston: Kevin, it was a good thing I went to that meeting because I had all the answers.

>>Kevin Fortunato: Chris, you just got done leading your very first IEP meeting. How did your mom feel?

>>Chris Coulston: Kevin, my mom felt pretty good at the meeting because they were talking to me and she said, "We're gonna be going places," and in fact she said, "We're going to Friendly's after this."

>>Kevin Fortunato: Chris, why is it so important for you to lead your IEP meeting?

>>Chris Coulston: Kevin, it's important for me to lead my IEP meeting because I know the answers and it's developing your voice. Like when you go for a job interview, talking to college professors, talking to your coworkers or managers, supervisor, about an issue.

Kevin, now I talked about what I did for self-determination self-advocacy. How did you do self-advocacy?

>>Kevin Fortunato: You taught me that transition is all about being in the driver's seat of your own future and that you get to make all the decisions because it's your life, baby.

>>Chris Coulston: Kevin, tell me how you use self-determination?

>> Kevin Fortunato: I use self-determination every day. It's my oxygen.

>>Chris Coulston: Kevin, was it hard learning self-determination?

>>Kevin Fortunato: It wasn't hard. My mom had started to label the self-determination skills and then eventually I started to make the connections: self-determination, self-awareness, problem-solving, informed decision-making. I'm bringing self-determination to my preschoolers because it's never too early to start.

A way that I use self-determination is never, ever, ever giving up. One time, I was at the gas station and I was trying to put the nozzle into the hole. I couldn't figure it out, though, so I asked the woman next door to me if she could help me out and I wasn't ashamed or afraid to ask for help because self-determination does not mean doing everything by yourself. You are allowed to have supports along the way.

>>Parent: Is it true that everybody can have self-determination?

>>Kevin Fortunato: Absolutely. No matter who you are regardless of challenge, every single person deserves the gift of self-determination.

>>Parent: How about you, Chris? When you saw self-determination, what did you think?

>>Chris Coulston: When I saw it in others, I wanted to be that.

>>Parent: And you took the steps?

>>Chris Coulston: And I took the steps to be a self-determined self-advocate.

Questions and Answers

>>Terry Jackson: All right, well welcome back everyone. So, I've asked our presenters to join us for a live Q&A. We've received numerous questions throughout this symposium. We'll try to answer as many as we can. If you still have a question, please submit it in the "Ask a Question" box under the Q&A tab near the bottom of your screen. So, this first question is for our Dr. Melton. The question is, 'What's been the biggest challenge to get parents involved in the IEP process and the IEP meetings?'

>>Sarah Melton: That's a good question. I think for students, especially as they progress and get older, parents have a harder and harder time finding a way to get involved in the school setting in general, let alone the IEP process. I think as a school we have to do everything we can, including getting creative on reaching out to parents as many times throughout the year. As I said in my earlier portion, having those discussions all along the development of the IEP throughout the year and not just when we're preparing the draft. One thing that I ask my teachers to do right in the start in the beginning of the year is to contact parents right away and establish that relationship. Make sure they know who their case manager is, introductions, offer to come in and meet with them personally, so that we start to build that trust and relationship. Beyond that, offering flexibility of meetings. We really want to get the parents to the table as much as possible to continue those conversations, but even when they can't, making sure that we ensure their participation, ensure their input, and again look at ways outside of school, even before school, to take time to talk to parents and listen to parents. And again, I think that's beyond just the case manager's role, that's also the school principal's role, too. To be able to talk to parents about

their questions, because often times teachers aren't available right when they want to call. So, letting me field some of those questions first and then passing that on to facilitate that discussion.

>>Terry Jackson: Great, thank you. This next question is for Dr. Bateman. Does the Endrew decision apply to just academic IEP goals?

>>David F. Bateman: No, not at all. And that's an important part of the Endrew F. decision. We have to realize that many of the problems that Endrew was experiencing were behavioral issues. We have to think about increasing not only academic goals of children with disabilities, but also increasing behavioral goals. Which what we need to make sure is, we get a lot of academic data on children with disabilities, but we also need to make sure we take good behavioral data on kids with disabilities. We need to make sure teachers are taking data on the number of times a kid talks out, number of times a kid is out of their seat, number of times referred to the principal's office. In addition, maybe even train some of the paraprofessionals or aides to take this data to provide assistance. Because a part of this is because the teachers are often busy doing instruction in front of the classroom. Behavioral goals are something we really need to change and focus on a part of this because as anyone whose worked in schools knows it's often behaviors that get kids more into problems than academic issues. So, no it's not just academic behaviors that needs to be clearly addressed.

>>Terry Jackson: Thank you very much. We're going to jump a little. This is for you Dr. Long. What could IEP teams learn from IFSP teams about building partnerships with families?

>>Toby Long: That is a great question and I was thinking of it when Dr. Melton was answering. I think a key to developing a really strong IFSP, and a strong IEP, is the team's ability to listen to families. We all know families are the experts on their children, and we really need to open up and be available to them, and ask them questions that allow them to talk to us. We often are so wrapped up in giving information that we don't take the time to ask the questions that allow families to express what they're concerns are, what their priorities are, and what they have available to themselves to help them meet those concerns. They want us to support them. Listening is certainly the very first thing that we have to do.

>>Terry Jackson: Absolutely, great. This is for you Melissa. How do you help educators start from a strength-based perspective?

>>Melissa Turner: Really we talk a lot about how parents really are the first step in this. We advise the parents actually reach out to their child's teacher and say, "Let's talk about this. What is my child good at in school?" Because that looks a little bit different than the things might be really good at home. It's a different perspective on the child's whole portfolio of skills and abilities. We advise that educators and parents work to gather to figure out what are the things the child is best at, or what are those strengths that we can capitalize on in the classroom to really use those strengths to build in the areas where children need to grow.

>>Terry Jackson: Great, thank you. This is for you Dr. Brown. Given the work of the multi-tiered system of support how can schools ensure that students with disabilities are included in the MTSS efforts and supports?

>>Laura Brown: That is a question that we have been grappling with. But, definitely as you work with ASPIRE and students that are involved with ASPIRE as they begin to lead their own efforts and their own IEP, they make sure that they are included. They speak up, they advocate for themselves, and they make sure that whatever supports are available in the school that they are a part of them.

>>Terry Jackson: Great, thank you. Back to you Dr. Melton. How do you develop an effective culture of co-teaching to meet instructional needs?

>>Sarah Melton: Again, as I said earlier I think that the school administrator really has to facilitate this. It's not always something that can always just happen naturally for a pair of co-teachers. There needs to be a long-term plan and an investment in time toward that culture, climate in your building. It comes from scheduling all the way to the instruction that's happening in the classroom, the follow-up that happens. It's an investment in time. I know when I first started, again, my role was special education administrator and I think I went to a Marilyn Friend co-teaching conference and came back and developed a five-year plan. That's about how long it took to change that culture and climate, and truly create parity in the classroom. It's everything from little things to making sure both teachers names are on the door, and that both teachers are truly owners in the classroom. All the way through to really getting to the nitty gritty of what instructional co-teaching models we're using. And again, that's a large part of my role in facilitating that. It's a lot of time and a lot of investment and those things don't happen overnight. But, I think coming up with a good plan and a long-term plan and then going through everything from terminology all the way through the implementation of the instruction in the classroom. That is how you can really affect change.

>>Terry Jackson: Great, thank you. This next question is for you Dr. Long; many parents don't know what their child's needs are, they want the specialist to tell them what to do. How do you engage parents in this process?

>>Toby Long: That I think is a question that many of the providers have, that they assume families don't know what they need. Often times, families have been given the message that they don't know what their family needs. So, they look to the specialist to tell them the answer. I think this ... the answer lies in having a conversation with families. In early intervention we have a system if collecting information could Routines-based Interviewing, in which we actually ask families what they do during the day, what those barriers are to what they want to do during the day. Then we help them develop a list of priorities that they would like the IFSP team to address. But, it starts with having that conversation. Of really opening up their ability to share with you what they do during the day, and what perhaps because their child is having some struggles, is interfering.

>>Terry Jackson: And it seems like all of you are doing something to kind of engage not only the students, the parents, but the schools. I know we talked about ASPIRE and the way you're engaging your students to really kind of take charge for themselves. And hopefully, the students will go to the parents and engage them in the process, and that self-determination you're talking about. So, speaking of ASPIRE, what are the profiles of students participating in ASPIRE?

>>Laura Brown: We have all students in some of our school districts who are participating in ASPIRE. One of our large school districts, the superintendent said, "If this is right for students, it's right for all of our students. If we truly believe that ASPIRE means that students are engaged in leading, then that means even for our students that have the most significant disabilities, that they too will be involved."

>>Terry Jackson: Great, thank you. To you again, Melissa. What misconceptions have you heard about standards-based IEPs?

>>Melissa Turner: I think with standards-based IEPs, and strength-based IEPs, we actually hear a lot that they are at odds with each other. That you can't do both. There's some questions about whether or not you can do a standards-based IEP, that has strengths. The answer is yes, you can do them both together. I think there's some concerns in the field that a standards-based IEP might not be appropriate for all students depending on their needs. We definitely hear that, that is a misconception, we really do push schools to think creatively about how they can help all students work towards grade level standards.

>>Terry Jackson: Okay. The last question that I have, is for Dr. Long. Team members often say that their Practice Act doesn't allow them to do certain things, like teach other team members' strategies. Is this true? And also, how can we help teams collaborate?

>>Toby Long: Yeah, collaboration and the concern for many of the team members, especially the licensed providers. In early intervention, unlike with older children, some of the primary providers are the physical therapists, occupational therapists, and speech-language pathologist. Who are licensed under each State, and they have a practice act that tells them what they can and cannot do. Some States are very prescriptive, many States are very loose. Often times the therapists are under misinformation that they feel that their practice act, says that they cannot participate in ... release, or primary service provider models, or trans-disciplinary models. But, when they look at the practice acts they tend not to be true. They allow that. Certainly, you would not want to teach someone something that is dangerous or requires the skill of a licensed therapist. Another area that I think that therapists and other providers need to focus more on is collaboration. And understanding how to collaborate with one another. One of the technical assistant centers that are funded by the Department of Education is the Early Childhood Personnel Center, which has looked at the competencies and standards across all the disciplines that work young children from zero to five, probably even older, and they have found that there are certain competencies, or standards, that cross all of these needs. There are four of these areas- collaboration is one of them. It's amazing when you open up to the providers and say, "You know, everyone talks about family centered care. Everyone talks about collaboration. Everyone talks about evidence-based practice." We all do this together and we need to share information among each other in order to create an integrated program plan for the children and families.

>>Terry Jackson: And collaboration is good. One of the things I wanted to emphasize too with collaboration is, collaboration isn't just about doing something together, but it's about doing something together to make a change in something that you're going to work together to make a change. Whether you want to create common language, or you want to do something that's going to have an impact on your other stakeholders. I think when we talk about meaningful collaboration that's always something important to emphasize. Thank you. This next question is for Dr. Melton. How would case load look like when we, in your words, dream big and reach high? And the second part of that, if I can throw in a second part, what can States and districts do to support principals and schools? But, let me just, the first part; what would case load look like when we, in your words, dream big and reach high?

>>Sarah Melton: I'm going to speak ideally here as if budgets were not an issue, one of the things I've spoken for years is I feel caseloads have built on a number of students in a building, versus the level of need. I think that we have to change the mindset of how we are providing services to our students in the building. If we truly want to hold these high expectations, it requires time and personnel. Often, we're limited by budgets and we're limited by those pieces. We look at our school when I'm building that master schedule, how much time is needed and where those teachers need to be, and where I can build in those collaborative pieces for them. But, truly I think we need to flip the mindset and start looking at caseloads built on how much time is needed versus the number of bodies that are on that caseload. Ideally, that would be my dream big. If that answers that question.

>>Terry Jackson: And then the second part is; What can States and districts do to support principals and schools?

>>Sarah Melton: I think encouraging and providing that professional development. I know for me, when I became that administrative role, I was coming from being a band director, not exactly the same worlds, and I took it upon myself to really do as much research and educating myself as much as possible within

even my teacher ed leadership program. I don't know that I would have gotten that same level of knowledge background and training if I hadn't done those things on my own. I think that beyond just the division leadership, even just looking at Ed leadership programs need to devote more time to training us and providing information on good special education practices and resources. There needs to be more time, we spend a lot of time on assessment and data collection, but there should be a lot more time spent on that special education side because that's one of our critical roles, and I don't know that we get that. When we move into that division piece, again I'm fortunate, I do have this great leadership in my division and we do have a really good vision and a lot of support. As many opportunities and encouragement or, "I'm sending you to this training. I'm sending you to this conference." So, that we can bring back these ideas and look at how the instruction is happening in our classroom. And then continuing to have those discussions in the buildings. I know that my division pupil services director came out multiple months to my own building of my request, but she came and worked with my special education department, took time out of her schedule to do that. She made it a priority. That constant conversation needs to be happening from the top down.

>>Terry Jackson: Thank you. This next question is for both David and Toby. Did I say that right? Okay, I'm sorry. How should IHE's faculty embed information from Endrew within their programs of study?

>>David F. Bateman: What's interesting about this, there's not a demand for competencies relating to special education for a lot of administrators. Piggybacking off of what you just added to. So lots of administrators get to being building level or administrative level administrator, and they haven't had a lot of training relating to kids with disabilities. We have to realize that there are ways that kids with disabilities are part of the everyday landscape. And though they are only account for, depending on which State, 13 to 16 percent of the school age population, that they account for a lot of the time that they spend. We need to make sure that as a part of their practicum experiences, as a part of their law classes, as a part of their instructional classes, as a part of their data collection experiences. That we realize that not all kids learn the same way, there needs to be alternatives. But, we also need to incorporate instruction related to UDL, Universal Design for Learning. We also need to incorporate instruction related to involving parents. Getting parents heavily involved in the processes, as I articulated earlier. There are competencies out there for principals, what they need to know about special education. We just need to get more people incorporated into what is going on. The hard part is most of these training programs cut their programs down to the bare minimum. The principals and administrators often suffer because they don't have the skills necessary to perform their jobs. So, we need to do a better job of not only providing pre-service instruction, but then also as part of practicum experiences hook-up future administrators with good administrators. So, they can have the opportunity to experience those things.

>>Terry Jackson: Next one right here.

>>Toby Long: See now that's a really interesting question for the Early Intervention group because often times I think that people assume that Endrew was not for Part C. It was in Part B decision. However, it told us that we need to think high, and aim high, like Laura said, for our kids, all kids. And when we think of it as young infants and toddlers, and think of it within the context of participation it opens up opportunities for things like Universal Design. If you think about how can I help this child participate in this library story book group? I have to think very imaginatively, rather than just say, "Well, he needs to learn how to sit." Because that's what he doesn't do on his developmental checklist. I want him to be participating, really enjoying himself, sitting being a part of it. I think that's one of the messages from Endrew was to look at it that way, that's really high expectations for children. Not just going through a list of developmental skills.

>>Terry Jackson: Excellent point. Next question, back to you Dr. Melton. How do you work with other principals in your district to support systems change across other schools?

>>Sarah Melton: It can be tricky. I think we meet regularly as an entire total staff, from all the principals in the buildings along with the division supervisors and superintendents. We meet monthly and then from there we do break out meetings. Again, it really starts with the division leadership, I think for that collaboration. I know in our middle school principals' meetings we're often talking about instruction and what that looks like, including special education and whose doing what. And how are you doing this? And again, data collection. There's a lot of discussions and from that collaboration we take back ideas to our own building. But, again I think that starts with the division expectation of that collaboration. Again, I'm fortunate that I work for a division that is highly collaborative. I think we process through a lot of ideas from philosophical down to the nitty gritty, and how we're going to implement that in our buildings.

>>Terry Jackson: Thank you. I just want to say thank you to the audience for the wonderful questions. These are really good. This next question is to you David; how do we set baselines for IEPs that are challenging, appropriately ambitious, and measurable?

>>David F. Bateman: The first thing is, that's a multi-part question, the first thing is establishing a baseline. Making sure that we grab the understanding of where the child currently is functioning, so we need really good assessments from a team, not just one person, but a team that looks at this process, that looks and understands the child and all the issues that may affect this child's education. That's the first thing. The second thing is then, try to determine where this child is going to be. Now people may not be aware of this that special educators can predict the future, and what we have to do is when we write these IEPs we are predicting the future. It doesn't work with lottery scores I've tried. But what's interesting is that, what we have to do is, we have to predict the future and then plan for where we expect this child to potentially be in a year. But, then as I said earlier, if the child is not making progress appropriately towards that, what we then need to do is make sure that we change what we are doing so that the child starts making progress. Not all kids move the same way, not all kids develop the same way, not all kids learn the same way. And the Supreme Court was really articulate about this based on "in light of the child's ... own circumstances". The development and progress of the development of an IEP, there's no formula for how much progress a child is supposed to make during the course of a year because children change, incentives change, and their motivations change, as does their instruction change. What I look forward to doing is extending this answer more in detail as a part of the final Q&A that's a part of this.

>>Terry Jackson: Thank you. This next question is for Melissa and Laura. What successes have you witnessed when families and students are focused on the self-determination strengths?

>>Laura Brown: What we notice is that students are very engaged, and they set goals that are higher than the adults may have set for them. And when they are engaged like that, they make the choices, the compromises, and the decisions of how to reach those goals. And it might have not been the path we might selected for them, but it's the path they choose. And they reach those goals. I'm not saying everyone does, but we see it in a significant level and that they are more challenging to themselves than we might have anticipated.

>>Melissa Turner: I think that's right we definitely see children say, "This is what I want to do, I want to focus more on science," for example. And then we hear, well sometime the school said, "Well, no you struggle with that a little ... slow down a little bit." And sometimes when the student is able to really advocate for him or herself and say, "This is where I want to go." And to say to the teacher, or the



district staff, "Please help me get there." They can put their heads together and help the child figure out that path forward, and sometimes students do set higher goals for themselves. And they often beat them. I mean, we all know this when you set high goals for kids they reach them. So, when they set them for themselves that's incredibly powerful.

>>Terry Jackson: Great, thank you. Well, first of all I want to give a big round of applause to all presenters. We really appreciate you being here. As you as participants that are participating we hope that you walk away with a few things, one is an understanding of what educators and leaders need to develop and implement high quality IEPs and how we can support these needs. We also want to remind you don't forget to check out the resource collection that's available on the OSEP Ideas that Work website. During our final symposium that will be held in October, we'll learn about how education agencies, families, and other stakeholders are working together to develop and implement high-quality IEPs. Additionally, again, I want to thank all of our participants, and thank you for all of your questions. Now, if your question wasn't answered by our panelists, we'll make sure to include it in the collaboration space on the OSEP Ideas that Work site. And lastly, if you come up with a question after we close our meeting together, again log onto the collaboration space and add your question to the conversation. Again, thank you for joining us today and enjoy the rest of your summer.