

HLP 2: Lead Effective Meetings with Professionals and Families



High-Leverage Practices for Students with Disabilities

The effective special educator wears many hats. One key responsibility is leading meetings with colleagues and family members. Because of our specialized knowledge about practice, assessment, and decision making, but also the delegated responsibility to run IEP meetings, the ability to organize and run a coherent meeting is essential. If the special educator is not skilled at communicating with their peers and family members it is possible mistakes can occur, and misinformation can spread. Some educators are more naturally charismatic and comfortable with families and their colleagues than others. For those who are not, it is possible to become skilled in this area through dedication and practice. Instructors, mentors and other collaborators should make an explicit effort to provide novices with feedback on their ability in this important area. An effective special educator who works alongside their colleagues (HLP 1) and families (HLP 3) will have the knowledge, buy-in, and appropriate players at the table to run effective meetings. This HLP also requires knowledge and skill with HLPs 4-6 within the Assessment domain.

This resource is intended to support school leaders looking to embed the HLPs in professional development, implementation, teacher observation and feedback efforts at their school site.

The major source for content within this resource is the chapter by Jocelyn Washburn and Bonnie Billingsley in *High-Leverage Practices in the Inclusive Classroom*; the book *High-Leverage Practices in Special Education: The Final Report of the HLP Writing Team*, and content on www.highleveragepractices.org.

● Teachers Who Effectively Lead Meetings

Prepare for Meetings

- Set a clear goal for the meeting so participants can attend to priorities that need to be accomplished.
- Determine necessary team members and their common availability when scheduling the meeting.
- Share the finalized, date, time, place, length, and agenda for the meeting with all team members.
- Share the expectations for preparation and participation with all team members. If making instructional decisions, team members were notified of specific data they are responsible for bringing to the meeting (e.g., results of assessments, behavior checklists, cumulative file, etc.).
- Ensure staff responsible for greeting and/or guiding parents/families to the appropriate location upon arrival have positive, welcoming communication skills.

Facilitate Effective Meetings

- Welcome participants with a positive tone and remind the team of ground rules and/or the agenda. If possible, the meeting agenda is displayed for all team members to view throughout the meeting.
- Provide time for all team members to introduce themselves.
- Promote discussion, equal voice, and contributions from all team members, with special attention to encouraging parent input, by using guiding questions and checklists.
- Maintain the efficiency of meetings by encouraging consensus-building while ensuring that conversations stay on-task with the meeting goal(s).
- Ensure that all team members understand any student data shared to support participation in instructional decision-making.
- Summarize what was accomplished (e.g., reviews student goals and plans) and schedules a follow-up meeting if needed.
- Discuss any follow-up activities that need to occur after the meeting's conclusion (e.g., scheduling with a related service provider).

● Tips for School Leaders to Support Teachers

- Evaluate teachers' skill and comfort with respect to running meetings for various purposes.
- Provide opportunities for novices to observe models of leading effective meetings for a variety of purposes.
- Provide instruction around skills needed to run effective meetings, including technical aspects (e.g., IEP components, FBA steps, manifestation determination, etc.) but also appropriate interaction skills used to put participants at ease.
- Provide feedback on their performance and corresponding pointers and/or professional development on skills/areas to improve.

● Questions to Prompt Discussion, Self-Reflection, and Observer Feedback

- Why is it so important to have a clear purpose/goal for a meeting that involves a team of individuals?
- What strategies can you use to promote and encourage participation from all team members?
- What commonalities are evident in HLP #1 and HLP #2? How do you see these two HLPs working together?
- Why is it so important to utilize a variety of data sources when making instructional decisions for students?
- How can you support other team members with preparing and understanding student data?

● References & Additional Resources

Online Resources

[High-Leverage Practices in Georgia Webinar Series | CEEDAR](#)

This series is a 7-part webinar that creates awareness of High-Leverage Practices and how these practices align within Georgia's Tiered System of Support for Students. This series provides information and resources that are applicable to stakeholders in various settings. Webinar 1 covers Collaboration, Assessment, and Social/Emotional/Behavioral HLPs.

[High-Leverage Practices: A Professional Development Guide for School Leaders](#)

A downloadable online guide providing school leaders, including administrators, principals, mentors and coaches, with practical tools for engaging staff members in learning about how high-leverage practices can enhance student learning in the school and district.

Journal Articles

Black, K., & Hill, P. (2020). The quick collaborative meeting: Promoting success in an inclusive setting. *TEACHING Exceptional Children*, 53(2), 004005992091912. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0040059920919128>

Blackwell, W. H., & Stockall, N. (2019). RISC: Four steps for interpreting and communicating high-stakes assessment results. *TEACHING Exceptional Children*, 51(4), 265–275. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0040059919826027>

Diliberto, J. A., & Brewer, D. (2014). Six tips for successful IEP meetings. *TEACHING Exceptional Children*, 47(2), 128–135. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0040059914553205>

Lytle, R. K., & Bordin, J. (2001). Enhancing the IEP team: Strategies for parents and professionals. *TEACHING Exceptional Children*, 33(5), 40–44. <https://doi.org/10.1177/004005990103300506>

Montgomery, D. J. (2005). Communicating without harm: Strategies to enhance parent-teacher communication. *TEACHING Exceptional Children*, 37(5), 50–55. <https://doi.org/10.1177/004005990503700507>

Rossetti, Z., Sauer, J. S., Bui, O., & Ou, S. (2017). Developing collaborative partnerships with culturally and linguistically diverse families during the IEP process. *TEACHING Exceptional Children*, 49(5), 328–338. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0040059916680103>

