

Addressing Family Engagement: Issues & Challenges



Amy Pleet-Odle, Inclusion Focused Coaching
www.amypleet.com

Arizona Transition Conference
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Outcomes

Participants will:

1. consider top 7 challenges to building family engagement & family partnerships.
2. generate possible solutions to those challenges.

Challenge #1

All stakeholders do not value family partnerships.

- ▶ Stakeholders?
- ▶ Partnership?
- My experience...
- ▶ Benefits?

National Post-School Outcomes

National Longitudinal Transition Study 2, Wave 5 (2009) www.nlts2.org

Currently employed	59%
Attended postsecondary institution in last 2 yrs	32.6%

U.S. Dept of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics

Available to work & employed:	Sept. 2008	May 2016
Adults 16+ non disabled	71.6%	68.4%
Adults 16+ w disability	23.6%	20.5%

Research findings:

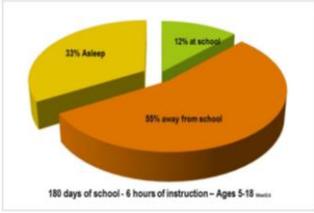


- Many students with IEPs exit high school
- without disability awareness
 - without knowledge of civil rights
 - without registering for disability supports in higher education

McGahee, Mason, Wallace & Jones, 2001



Leveraging Time: Connecting Home and School



Parent Involvement Research

Parent involvement in education benefits all children in multiple ways (Fan & Chen, 2001).

- ▶ More consistent **attendance** (Falbo, Lein, & Amador, 2001)
- ▶ Improved **homework** completion and greater time spent on homework (Callahan, Rademacher, & Hildreth, 1998)
- ▶ Improved in-school **behavior** (Domina, 2005; Gonzalez, 2002)
- ▶ Improved **academic performance** (Finn, 1998; Keith et al., 1998)
- ▶ Higher school **completion rates** (Rumberger, Ghatak, Poulas, Ritter, & Dombusch, 1990).

Parent Involvement Research

Benefits of parent involvement & expectations - for SWD (Newman, 2003).

- ▶ **academic achievement**
- ▶ **post-school outcomes** (Test et al., 2009).
 - ❑ Post-school employment
 - ❑ Post-secondary education
 - ❑ Self-determination

Challenge #2

Families and practitioners do not trust each other.

- Trust has 4 parts:
- ▶ Integrity
 - ▶ Intent
 - ▶ Capabilities
 - ▶ Results
- Stephen M.R. Covey, *Speed of Trust*

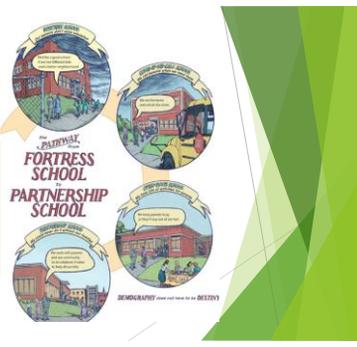
US DOE

...a compass, not a road map...



Challenge #3

Families do not feel welcomed by professionals, especially diverse families.



Hard to reach families...

Why plan for families you know?
 You **MUST** identify and plan for families you do not know!!

- Free and Reduced Lunch
- Homeless
- Disabilities
- Ethnicity
- Family Structure
- Literacy
- ESL Students
- Geography
- Culture
- Education Experiences
- Political Barriers

Challenge #6

Youth do not graduate prepared with self-determination/ self-advocacy skills.

- ▶ Opportunities to support ownership?
- ▶ How could professionals build family capacity?
 - ▶ Instruction vs instructions



Challenge #7

Family voices are not heard on decision-making/ advisory boards.

- How?**
 - ▶ Surveys
 - ▶ Focus Groups
 - ▶ Testimony
 - ▶ Committee member
 - ▶ Board member
- Preparation?**
 - ▶ Orientation
 - ▶ Handbook
 - ▶ Mentor
 - ▶ Board preparation



My Contact Information

Amy Pleet-Odle, Ed.D.
 Inclusion Focused Coaching
 Email: inclusioncoach@gmail.com
 Website: www.amypleet.com