Student-Led IEP's

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Goals for today:

1. Identify three reasons why student-led IEP's are important
2. List five key strategies to engage students in the IEP planning process
3. List three ways a student can participate in the IEP process
4. Increase your awareness of three resources that can assist students and IEP teams in increasing student engagement
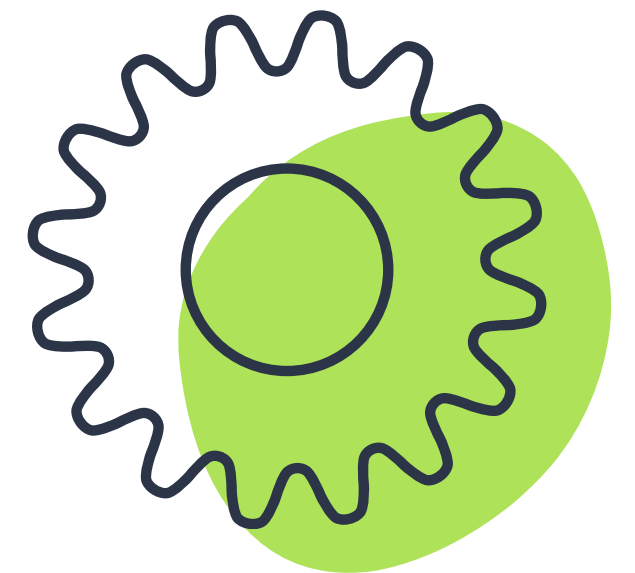
When I say IEP, what is first word that comes to mind?
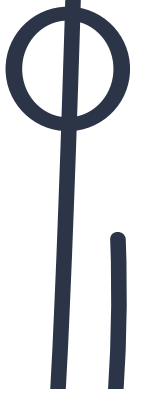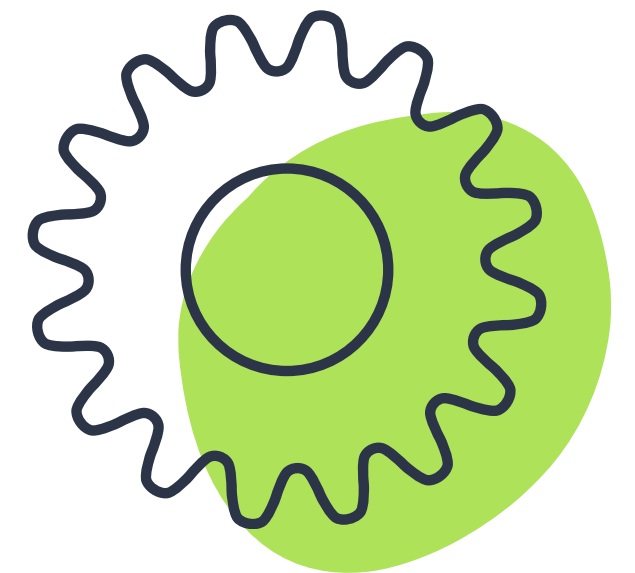
Think about the most recent IEP meeting you have attended.

Consider the questions below & type your answers in the chat!

Who participated the most? The least?

How do you define participation?

The IEP team includes:

(i) the parents of a child with a disability;
(ii) not less than 1 regular education teacher of such child (if the child is, or may be, participating in the regular education environment;

(iii) not less than 1 special education teacher, or where appropriate, not less than 1 special education provider of such child;

(iv) a representative of the local educational agency . . . (v) an individual who can interpret the instructional implications of evaluation results . . .
(vi) at the discretion of the parent or the agency, other individuals who have knowledge or special expertise regarding the child, including related services personnel as appropriate; and
(vii) whenever appropriate, the child with a disability."

The student is the 'I' in IEP. The student is a member of the IEP team.

Transition in Illinois begins at age 14½ in Illinois and continues until the student graduates or reaches age 22.

What is "too early" or "too late" to include a student in their IEP process?

Teach about the IEP Process

IEP Skill Development and participation

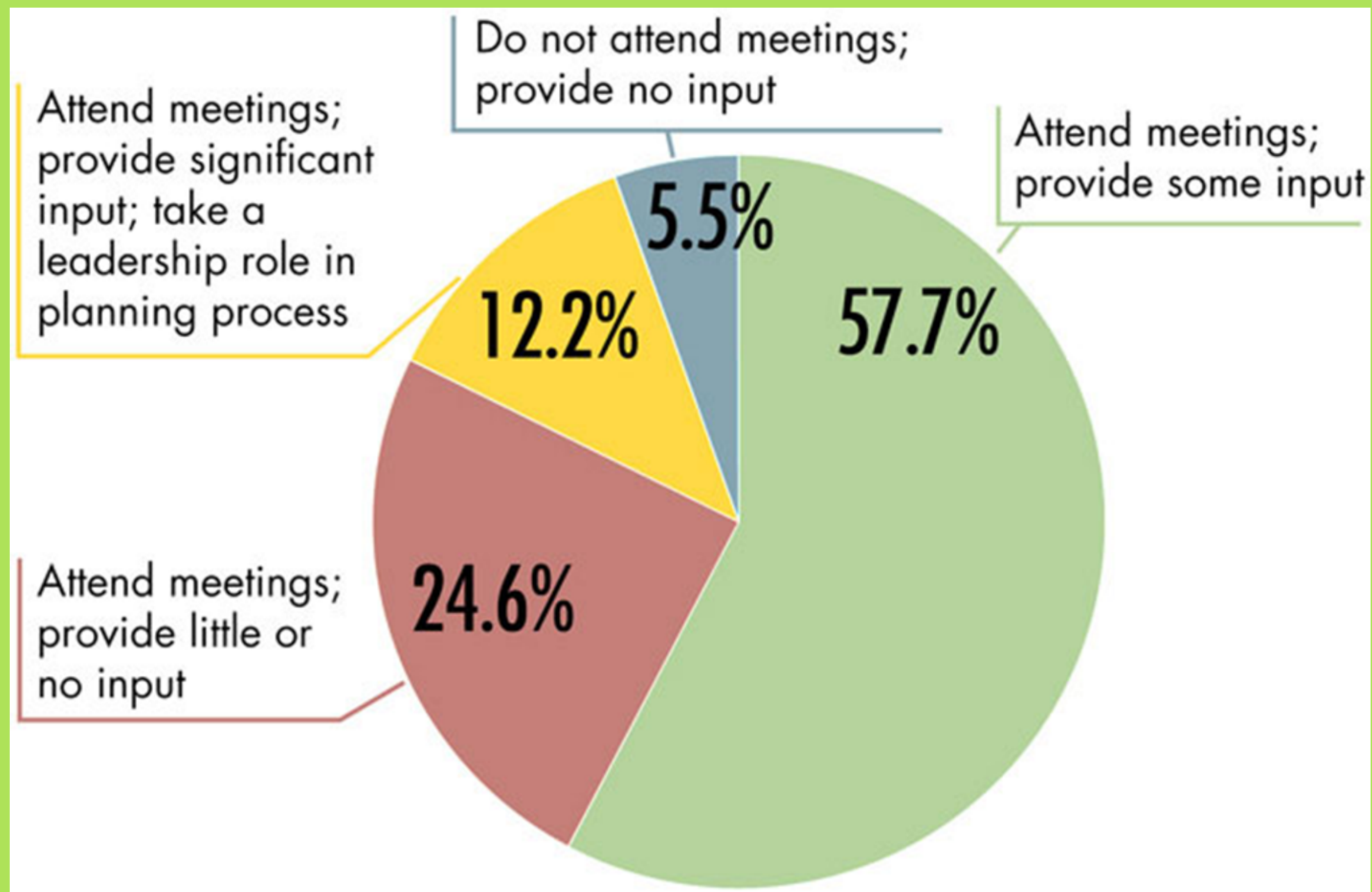Participation in and high expections about Person-Centered Planning

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LEADS TO

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Student Involvement in IEP Meetings

Attend meetings; provide significant input; take a leadership role in planning process — 12.2%

Do not attend meetings; provide no input — 5.5%

Attend meetings; provide some input — 57.7%

Attend meetings; provide little or no input — 24.6%

Can you get an accurate picture of a student's needs and interests if they do not feel empowered and confident to participate in a meeting that is designed to be about their needs and interests?

Page 1: Student Involvement in the IEP Process

In the United States, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) governs the education of...

IRIS /

Why is IEP Student Engagement participation meaningful?

Self-Advocacy

Asking for what you need, when you need it is a core life skill. IEP meetings present the perfect environment to safely practice self-advocacy skills
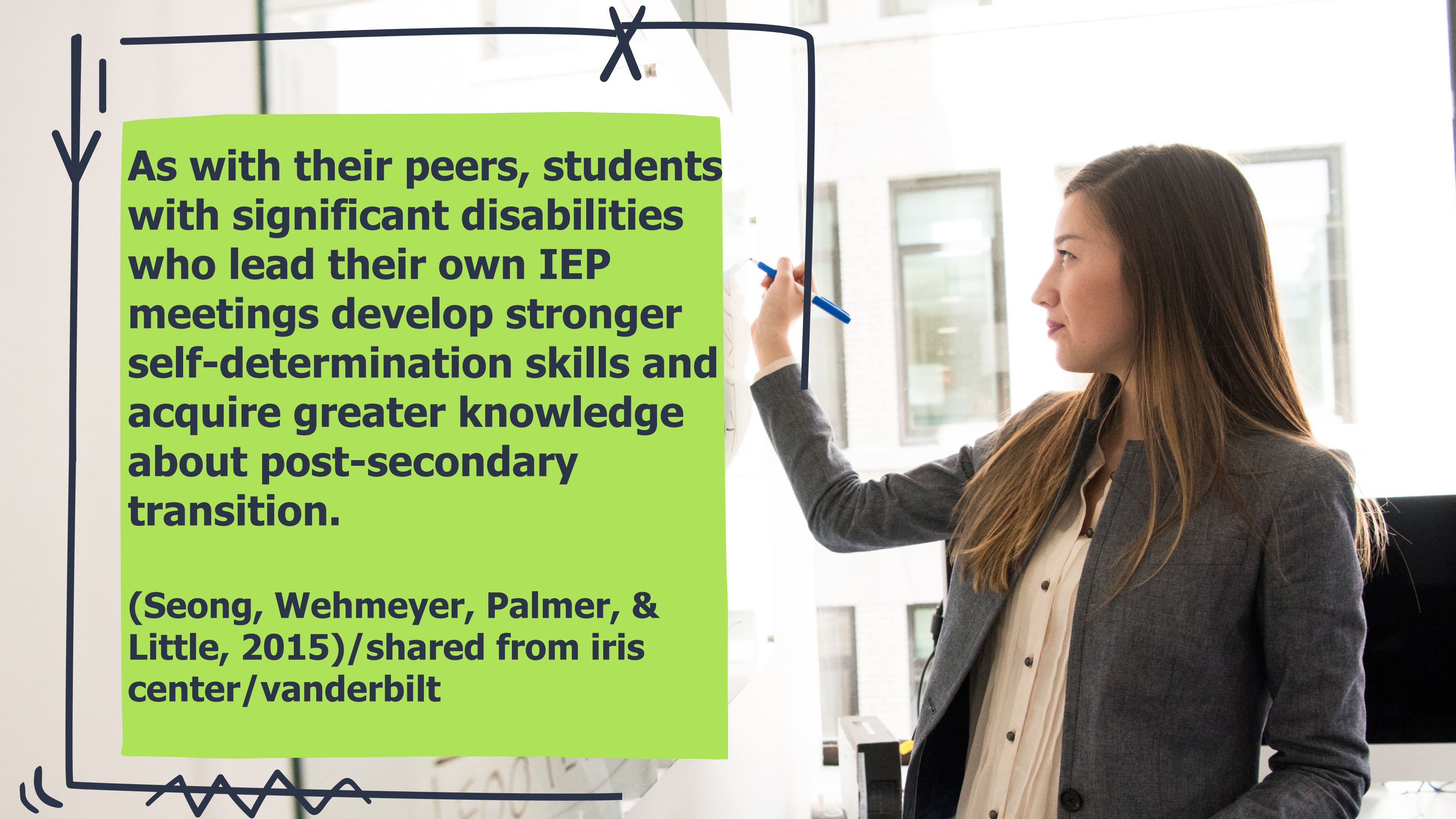
It is their meeting!

"Nothing about me without me!" The meetings should be focused on the needs, goals, interests, strengths and challenges of the student. Who speaks to those topics better than the student?

Shared agreements

With all participants at the table, it is much easier to develop a shared understanding of what supports are needed and how they can best be implemented

As with their peers, students with significant disabilities who lead their own IEP meetings develop stronger self-determination skills and acquire greater knowledge about post-secondary transition.

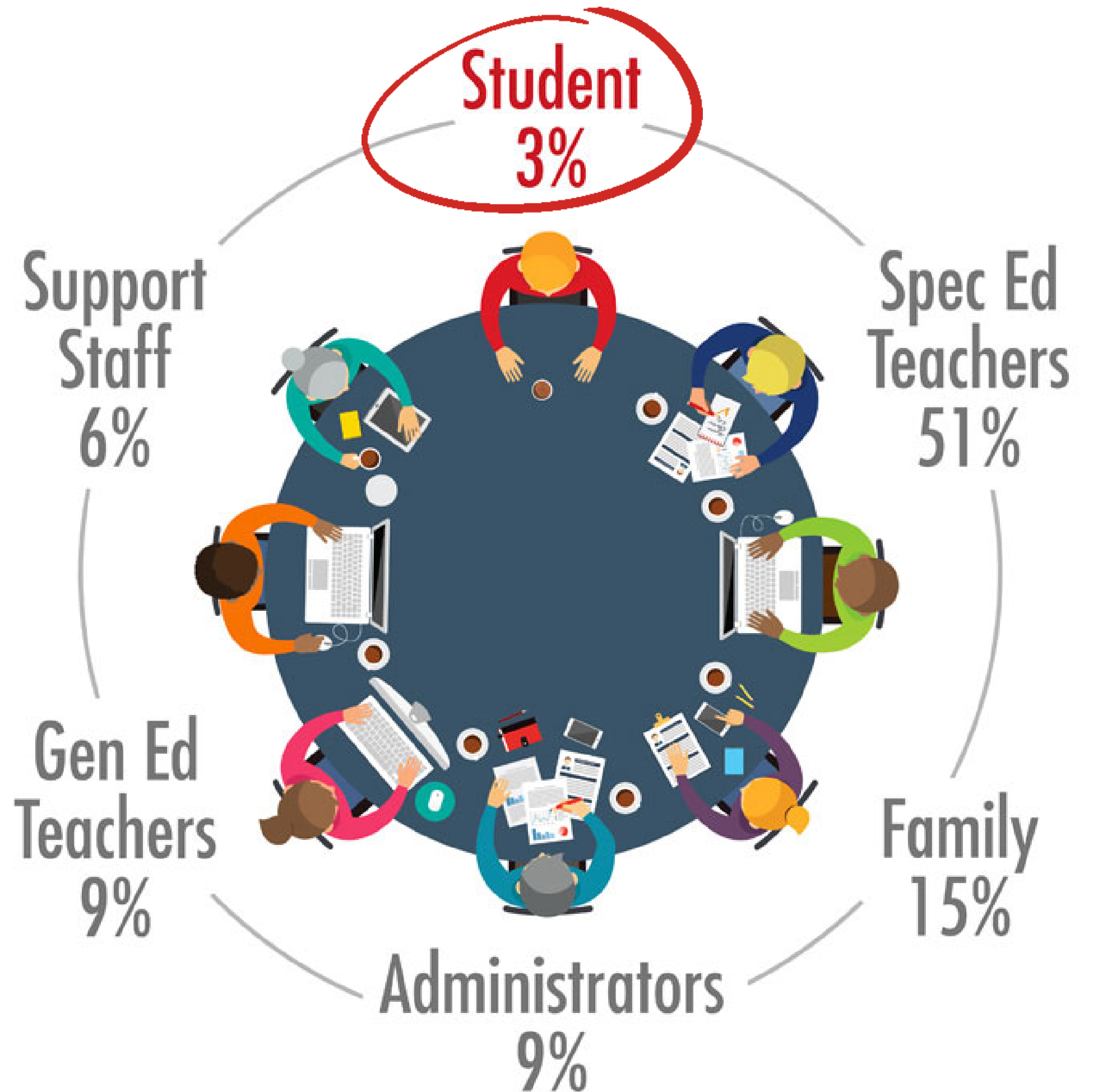(Seong, Wehmeyer, Palmer, & Little, 2015)/shared from iris center/vanderbilt

Why do students avoid IEP participation?

They are not specifically invited

They do not know what to expect

They do not feel prepared

They have had bad experiences in the past

They feel anxious and self-conscious listening to the team talk ABOUT them

They do not have a "plan" in place to support them in participating

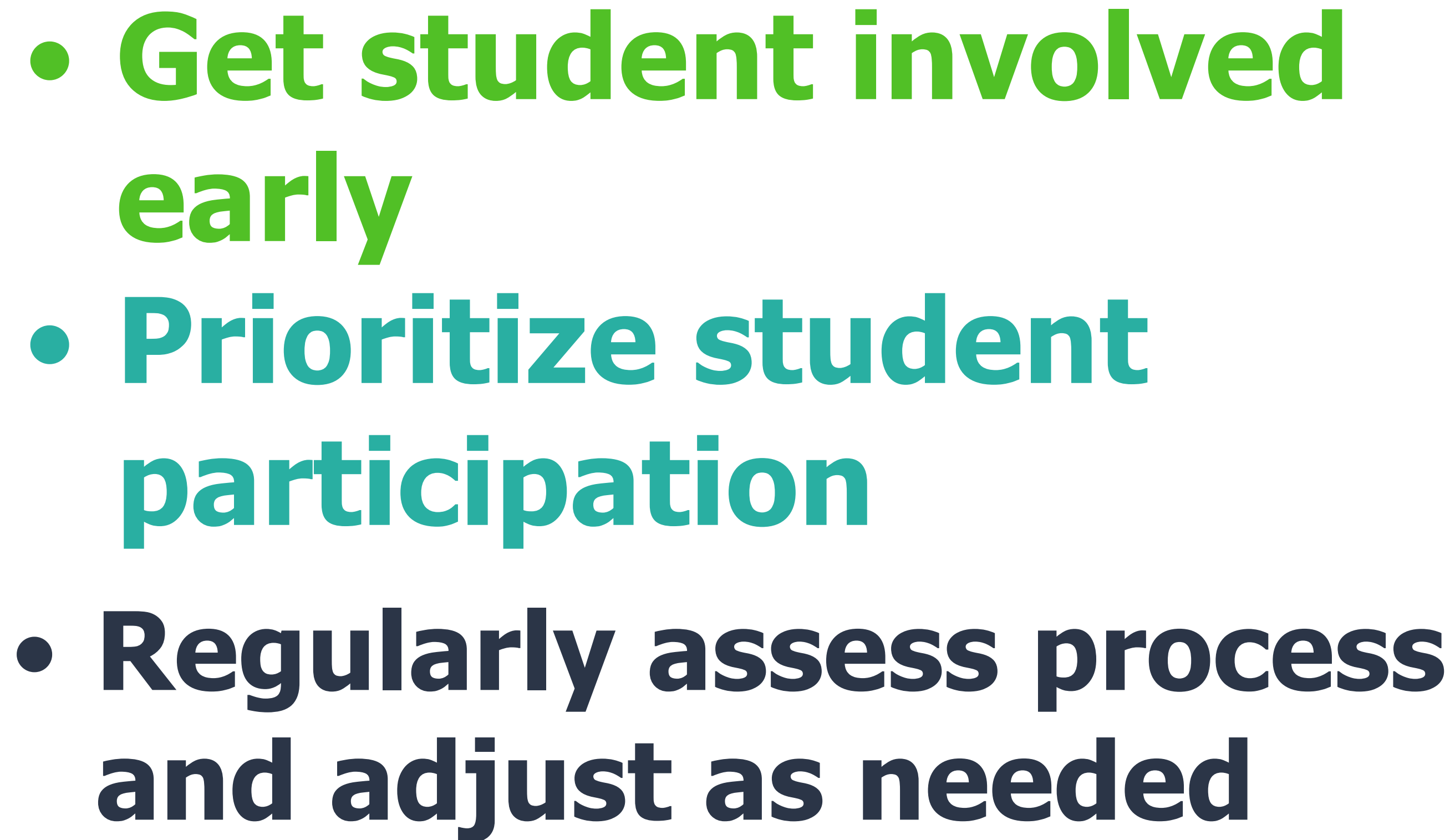**What can we do to increase the student participation time?**

Student 3%

Support Staff 6%

Spec Ed Teachers 51%

Gen Ed Teachers 9%

Family 15%

Administrators 9%

Adapted from Van Dycke, Martin, & Lovett, 2006

Barriers to Student Engagement in the Meeting

- **No predeveloped agenda**
- **Tight schedule, little time for idea development and sharing**
- **Distracted participants**
- **Lack of prep with student**
- **Caught in cycle of focusing on deficits**
- **Not assessing strong points of interest and engagement <u>with</u> student**
- **Student lacks knowledge about their own disability**

- **Get student involved early**
- **Prioritize student participation**
- **Regularly assess process and adjust as needed**

Map out clear and MEANINGFUL decisions that can and should be made by the student

Keys to success in student IEP engagement

Strengths

Ensure communication is strengths-based; be authentic in your efforts to engage the student

Flexibility

Support the student to communicate in a way that is comfortable for them - writing, text, video, eye-gaze, text to speech - utilize the needed tools and take the time needed

S **F**

O **P**

Take the opportunity to plan ahead with the student. Ask for their feedback on scheduling, the agenda topics, team member invitations, & goal setting

Opportunities

Work with the student and team members ahead of time to adjust expectations and set a positive and productive tone

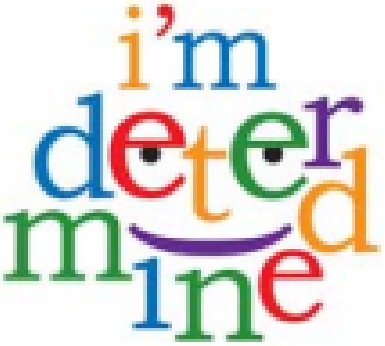## Prepare

What are concrete ways to involve students in their IEP?

Assess Student Support Needs

Student Rubric for IEP Participation

i'm determine

Student Name:_____   Date:_____

	Level I	Level II	Level III	Level IV
Abilities and Disabilities Awareness	I am not sure of what my disability is and how it affects me.	I have knowledge of my abilities and disabilities, but I do not share it with others	I can describe my abilities and disabilities to others in my IEP Meeting.	I describe my abilities and disabilities to others outside of my IEP Meeting

Source: Example from I'm Determined; full rubric & source on resource page

Takes notes

Facilitates the meeting

Brings snacks

Invites participants

Presents priorities

Presents summary of year

Writes draft goals

Develops agenda

Develops and presents Student Portfolio

Inviter and supporter

Helps assess meeting effectiveness

Prepare a student for success

Review IEP process and document

Prepare an agenda together

Consider showing video of IEP meeting

Clearly decide upon and define role student is comfortable with; ensuring positive experience is key to future participation

Practice, practice, practice

Assure student that they are in control of their own level of participation

Exploratory Questions:

What has surprised you about your participation in .... class?

What is most frustrating to you during the school day? When completing homework?

What is something you are good at that people don't really know about?

When you think about what you would like your life to look like in 5 years, what stands out?

What do you most enjoy about (Math, Art, ELA, Social Studies)?

If you had a magic wand and could change 1 thing about school, what would it be?

Ideas to contribute to success:

- Offer a student mentor or pair student with a peer who has successfully participated in their IEP meetings
- Use the communication strategy that is most comfortable to the student; for example, can you facilitate the meeting via text while in-person?
- Utilize all needed Assistive Technology with fidelity
- Build in extra time for initial meeting
- Minimize staff that are not required
- Have fidgets and snacks available

How to Participate in Your IEP Meeting

Share

Watch on ▶ YouTube

Source: IncludeNYC

How will you know it was a success?

- **Student participated in making a decision**
- **Student disagreed!**
- **Student shared something important to them**
- **The meeting remained positive in tone**
- **Student suggested a goal**
- **Student requested a goal be removed**
- **Student felt heard**
- **Student was able to share/communicate in a way that was comfortable for them**

Resources

CADRE: https://www.cadreworks.org/cadre-continuum/stage-i-prevention/participant-stakeholder-training/student-led-ieps-district

Edutopia: https://www.edutopia.org/article/4-ways-students-can-take-active-role-their-iep-meetings/

Virginia Dept of Ed Training & Tech Assistance: https://ttac.odu.edu/intellectual-disabilities/how-to-make-student-led-ieps-a-reality/

I'm determined: https://www.imdetermined.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/studentrubricforiepparticipation-1.pdf

Let's Get to Work WI:
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IDEAs that Work

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