



IEP Implementation: Communication and Collaboration

Competency

Educator, as a member of the Individual Education Program (IEP) implementation team, uses communication and collaboration strategies to increase the supports for student attainment of established goals.

Key Method

The educator, in order to successfully implement an IEP, creates and utilizes a communication and collaboration plan that includes all stakeholders, the sharing of instructional strategies, related services, and a feedback process.

Method Components

To develop a wider range of communication and collaboration skills, the IEP implementation team needs to work together to identify mutual goals and use negotiation skills to address the needs of students with disabilities.

Members of this team should include:

- Parents/guardians
- The student (when appropriate)
- Specialized Instructional Support Personnel (SISP)
- General education staff
- Special education staff
- Administrators



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Co-Teaching

Co-teaching may be defined as the partnering of a general education teacher and a special education teacher or other specialist for the purpose of jointly delivering instruction to a diverse group of students, including those with disabilities or other special needs. Co-teachers need to share a common mission that includes the idea that all students should be held to high standards of learning while also ensuring that each child's unique instructional needs are met effectively. They must also align standards with the individualized goals and objectives of the IEP.

Collaboration, Consultation, and Teamwork

When the IEP implementation team collaborates, the stigma of special education disappears and the student becomes OUR student. Not mine, not yours. Goals become more meaningful because there is no longer an "IEP" goal on top of general education demands. Education becomes a fluid and more effective process.

Parent/Family Engagement

Parents are an invaluable source of information about their child's past experiences and skills in settings other than your classroom. Talk with parents one-on-one to learn more about their child's goals, strengths, and support needs. Ask families for specific ideas on how your team might successfully include their child in the IEP process, and then be sure to incorporate their suggestions.

Parents are considered to be full and equal members of the IEP team, along with school personnel (34 CFR 300.322). Parents are crucial members of the team because they have unique knowledge of their child's strengths and needs. Parents have the right to be involved in meetings that discuss the identification, evaluation, and educational placement of their children, as well as IEP development for them. They also have the right to ask questions, dispute points, and request modifications to the plan, as do all members of the IEP team.

Student Engagement

As appropriate, students with disabilities should be included in the IEP process. Many students are able to advocate for themselves, and by including them in the process, you are providing them with a voice and empowering them to be proactive in having their educational needs met.

Highlights of IDEA:

- Public agency must include the child with a disability at the IEP meeting "whenever appropriate."
- The child must be invited to attend the meeting "if the purpose of the meeting will be the consideration of the postsecondary goals for the child"



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and the transition services needed to assist the child in reaching those goals.”

- Until the child reaches the age of majority under State law, unless the rights of the parent to act for the child are extinguished or otherwise limited, only the parent has the authority to make educational decisions for the child under Part B of the Act, including whether the child should attend an IEP meeting (71 Fed. Reg. at 46671)

Supporting Rationale and Research

Elser, C. (2017). *The power of team in IEP meetings*. Retrieved from Electronic Theses and Dissertations, University of Northern Iowa, 419:
<https://scholarworks.uni.edu/etd/419>.

Friend, M., Cook, L., Hurley-Chamberlain, D., & Shamberger, C. (2010). Co-Teaching: An Illustration of the Complexity of Collaboration in Special Education. *Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation*, (20)1, 9-27. DOI:
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10474410903535380>

The IDEA of Collaboration in Special Education: An Introspective Examination of Paradigms and Promise
https://doi.org/10.1207/s1532768xjepc0902_2

Nolan-Spohn, H. (2014). Increasing Student Involvement in IEPs. *Mid-Western Educational Researcher*, (28)3. Retrieved from
<https://www.mwera.org/MWER/volumes/v28/issue3/v28n3-Nolan-VOICES-FROM-THE-CLASSROOM.pdf>

Resources

Template for Assignment

[Communication and Collaboration Plan Template](#)

Collaboration

[Collaboration Between General and Special Education](#)

[What is Online Collaboration?](#)



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Parent and Family
[Boosting Family Involvement in IEPs](#)

Student Engagement
[Transition Suite, a series of nine resource pages](#)

[Students Get Involved!](#)

Technology Assistance
[How to use Dropbox shared folders](#)

[Get started with docs, G Suite Learning Center](#)

[Types of Sessions and Presentations](#)

Submission Guidelines & Evaluation Criteria

To earn the micro-credential, you must receive a passing score in Parts 1 and 3, and receive a proficient score for all components in Part 2.

Part 1. Overview Questions (Provides Context)

(250–500 words)

Please answer the following contextual questions to help our assessor understand your current situation. *Please do not include any information that will make you identifiable to your reviewers.*

- Describe your school site. Include student demographics, the total number of students, the percentage of the student population identified as having a disability, and the role of each member of the IEP team.
- Describe the students you engage with daily. Include grade level, subject area, cultural backgrounds, and special considerations regarding student characteristics (English language learners, students with exceptionalities, etc.).
- What are the typical communication patterns between the adults (and students, when appropriate) on the IEP team?
- How many students are you serving overall, and how many of these are students with an IEP?



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- Describe how issues regarding diversity, equity, cultural competency, and/or bias are addressed.
- Identify the current strengths in and barriers to communication and collaboration, including the ability to have difficult conversations, with the IEP implementation team in your work site and assess how these impact your day-to-day practice.

Passing: Responses should lead the assessor to have a clear understanding of the demographics of the student population, the current role and involvement of the educator and other IEP team members, and the current strengths in and barriers to communication and collaboration.

Part 2. Work Examples/Artifacts/Evidence

To earn this micro-credential, please submit the following **three artifacts** as evidence of your learning. *Please do not include any information that will make you or your students identifiable to your reviewers.*

Artifact 1: Communication and Collaboration Plan

Generate a communication and collaboration plan, utilizing the template provided in the resource section, for one student with an IEP who needs a variety of services.

Artifact 2: Documentation of Effectiveness

Over a period of 20 to 30 school days, assess and document the effectiveness of the communication/collaboration plan, noting progress, successes, barriers, and/or concerns. (Add to template Part 2: 1 in the last column.)

Artifact 3: Feedback from IEP Team

Ask for the following feedback from two members of the IEP team.

- How has IEP team communication and collaboration improved?
- How has improved team communication and collaboration supported students' attainment of their goals?
- What should the team's next steps be?

*Compile feedback responses into **one document** and submit in the designated area.*



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Part 2. Rubric

| | Proficient | Basic | Developing |
|---|--|--|---|
| Artifact 1: Communication and Collaboration Plan | <p>All parts of the template are completed.</p> <p>Plan notes all critical members (using initials and role only) and clearly defines their roles.</p> <p>Shows clarity and evidence of the frequency of communication with specific members of the IEP team.</p> <p>Includes evidence of shared planning between all stakeholders.</p> | <p>Plan is missing 1-2 of the required components.</p> <p>Plan is missing 1-2 critical members, or is not clear in defining their role(s).</p> <p>Lacks evidence of frequency of communication with specific members of the IEP team.</p> <p>Includes evidence of shared planning but does not include all stakeholders.</p> | <p>Plan is missing 3 or more required components.</p> <p>Plan is missing 3 or more critical members, or is not clear in defining their role(s).</p> <p>Lacks evidence of frequency of communication with specific members of the IEP team.</p> <p>Lacks evidence of shared planning between stakeholders.</p> |
| Artifact 2: Documentation of Effectiveness | <p>Includes sufficient documentation to show fidelity of implementation of communication and collaboration plan.</p> <p>Documentation may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Measured progress toward goals -Shared successes -Barriers and/or concerns <p>Documentation directly relates to student's IEP.</p> | <p>Includes some documentation of communication and collaboration but may not be enough to show fidelity of implementation.</p> <p>Documentation is weakly related to the student's IEP.</p> | <p>Lacks documentation of progress, successes, barriers, and/or concerns.</p> <p>Documentation does not relate to student's IEP.</p> |



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| | | | |
|---|---|--|---|
| Artifact 3: Feedback from IEP Team | Feedback from 2 people is submitted. AND Feedback from both addresses all 3 questions. | Feedback from only 1 person is submitted. AND/OR Feedback from both does not address all 3 questions. | No feedback collected. AND/OR Feedback not related to communication and collaboration of IEP team. |
|---|---|--|---|

Part 3. Reflection

(300–500 word limit)

Use the word count as a guide to write a personal reflection about your work on this micro-credential. For tips on writing a good reflection review the following resource:

[How Do I Write a Good Personal Reflection?](#)

Please do not include any information that will make you identifiable to your reviewers.

1. Reflect on the process and assess the impact the plan has had on your practice.
2. Consider your educator voice; has this process of learning affected your ability to communicate and collaborate more effectively and efficiently with IEP team stakeholders?
3. How has this process affected student outcomes?

Passing: Reflection provides evidence that this activity has had a positive impact on both educator practice and student success. Specific examples are cited directly from personal or work-related experiences to support claims. Also included are specific actionable steps that demonstrate how new learning will be integrated into future practices.



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