

## Facilitated IEPs

### Who is a facilitator?

*A facilitator is a person who is:*

- \*acceptable to both parties
- \*substantively neutral, impartial
- \*well-versed in the requirements of the IEP process
- \*an advocate for the IEP process, not for either party
- \*a person who models effective communication and listening techniques

*A facilitator is not:*

- \*a decision maker
- \*a mediator
- \*a member of the IEP Team
- \*a consultant or trainer
- \*a clerical assistant to the IEP Team
- \*responsible for evaluating any IEP component
- \*a judge of what the IEP Team does

### When might you use a facilitator?

You conclude that discussions or interactions at IEP meetings are creating an unproductive climate.

You want some assistance before relationships start to fray.

Multiple IEP meetings are not reaching resolution or completing a quality plan.

### What are the benefits of a facilitated IEP meeting?

Concerns may be resolved at a local level.

The trained facilitator can assist keeping the IEP meeting on track with regard to content and process.

The challenges of communication during an IEP meeting where parties are encountering continued difficulty may be improved with the aid of a facilitator.

### What can you expect a facilitator to do?

*The facilitator will:*

- \*assist the Team in establishing an agenda
- \*Make sure everyone has a chance to speak and be heard
- \*Help keep the team on task and within the time allotted
- \*seek to improve clarity and understanding in communications

### How is facilitation different from mediation?

It occurs at a regular IEP meeting.

There is no written document, other than the IEP and prior written notice.

Mediation is the format to use when there is a *difference of opinion* between parents and school staff and is typically used when there is a significant disagreement which the parties have been unable to resolve.

### How is facilitation requested?

Like mediation, a joint request needs to be made by the parent and local education agency. The request needs to be forwarded to Art Stewart, Coordinator of Mediation.