

Clay County Collaborative - IIIP Work Group Minutes

Tuesday, January 10, 2012

1:10 – 1:40 p.m.

Family Service Center, mtg. room 2

In attendance: Norma Altmann-Bergseth (Lake Agassiz Special Education Cooperative), Bryan Hanson (Lakeland Mental Health), Lanette Krinsky (parent representative), Carolyn Strnad (parent representative), Dawn Tommerdahl (Clay County Collaborative) *Guest: AJ Schuler (The Village Family Service Center)*

The group generated the agenda for today:

- How AJ can coach special education teachers in dealing with conflict, dealing effectively with conflict.

Norma talked about the need to strengthen interagency teams by teaching special education staff to deal with conflict effectively.

- Attend meetings that teachers or parents know might be contentious.
- Train teachers to deal more effectively with parents
- Dealing with baggage parents bring from other (sometimes negative) experiences with school staff, other service providers in the community.
- Rebuilding relationships with parents who come with previous broken relationships with school staff.
- Help special ed. teachers develop facilitation skills.

Observation: Often the conflict is not due to programming but rather body language or comments that have been directed to parents, students, or school staff.

Observation: It's hard to build trust, strengthen a team when it only meets once a year.

Observation: The beauty of having neutral facilitation is that the facilitator doesn't have a stake in the agenda or issues, other than following the agenda.

Question: IEP: school controls who at a minimum is required to attend. Parents can invite additional people.

Protocol:

- Start meeting with strengths, followed by concerns
- Prior to meeting: AJ is made aware of potential conflict (from the school staff and from parents)
- Strongly encourage people who can't stay for entire meeting to submit their information in writing.

Ideas for staff training:

- Learn about dealing with conflict; conflict resolution skills. **MUST** be relevant to what special ed. staff want! Norma will get feedback when she meets with her staff next week.
- Watch AJ facilitate a meeting.
- Practice those skills with AJ as coach.

Question: Case management: child must have multiple services that need coordination – Social Services is not necessarily involved.

Examples of common conflicts:

- Parents want child to have a para all day long – teacher feels the child could get along with a para in one or two classes.

- Child has a certain behavior at school that doesn't exist at home, parent feels school can't manage the child. If you didn't do A, B, C, child wouldn't explode.
- That child has this service, why can't mine get it?

Training

Recognizing healthy conflict vs. unhealthy conflict

- Manage conflict in a professional manner; keep themselves sane and safe
- Make sure the parents are heard.

Work through some scenarios

Length: ½ day in February - possibly 17th? AJ could do it in the afternoon.

Conflict can occur over the phone, at IEP meetings, in other communication.

A motion to use the training line to pay for subs (if necessary) to attend conflict management training with AJ and to pay up to \$1500 from the miscellaneous line for AJ to develop and deliver the training passed unanimously. (Carolyn/Lanette)

Norma will feel free to invite AJ to attend/facilitate an IEP meeting if she knows it will be particularly contentious.

Dawn will send AJ the link to our IIP training manual.

Next meeting: Tuesday, February 13, 1:00 p.m., meeting room 2

Respectfully submitted,
Dawn Tommerdahl
Clay County Collaborative