

EMPOWERING STUDENT VOICE

PRACTICAL STRATEGIES FOR STUDENT-CENTERED TRANSITION IEPS

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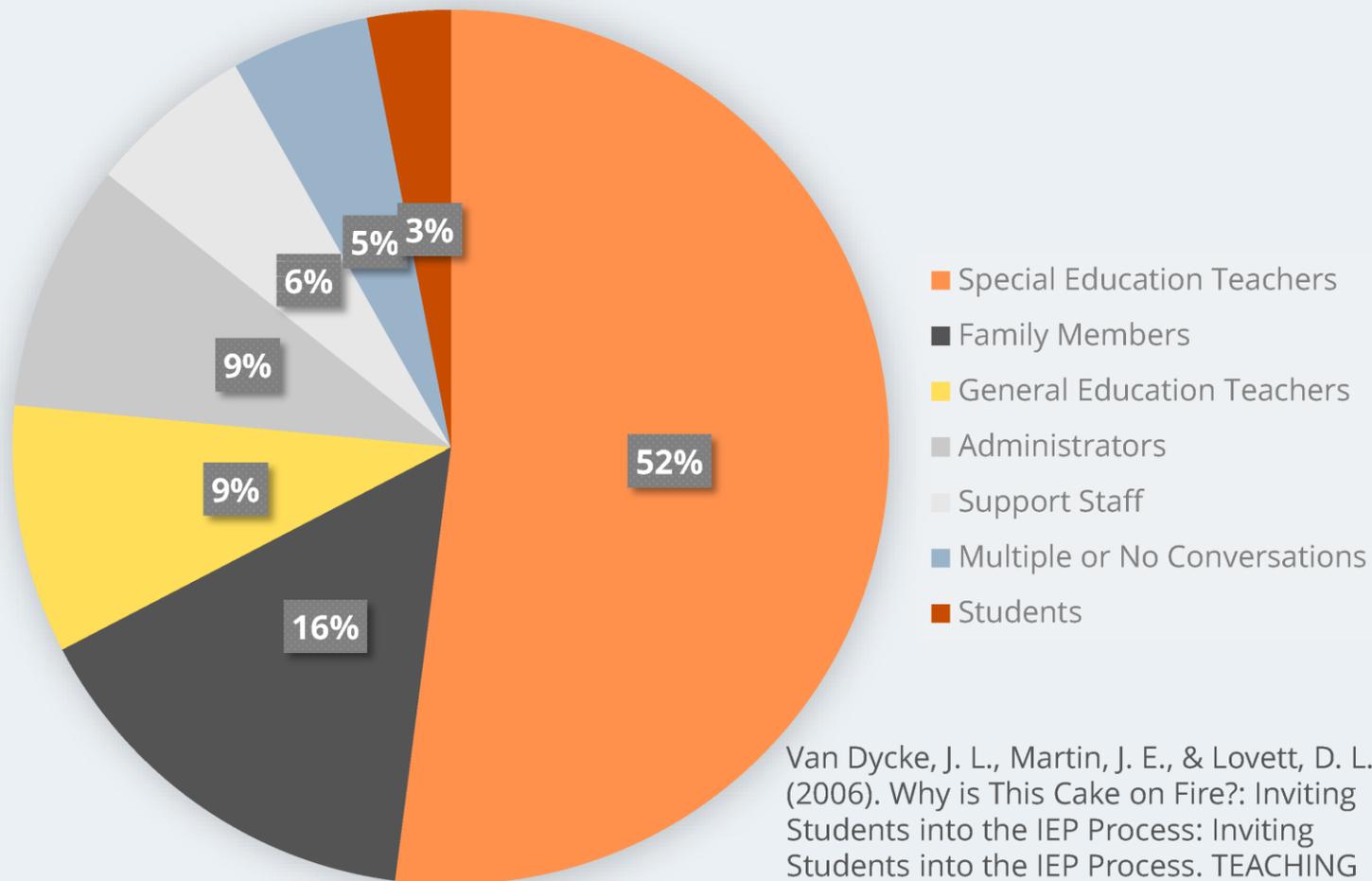
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WHY STUDENT VOICE MATTERS

Student voice does not happen
by invitation alone.

STUDENTS
MAY ATTEND
IEP MEETINGS,
BUT RARELY
PARTICIPATE

Percentage of IEP Team Talk Time



Van Dycke, J. L., Martin, J. E., & Lovett, D. L. (2006). Why is This Cake on Fire?: Inviting Students into the IEP Process: Inviting Students into the IEP Process. *TEACHING Exceptional Children*, 38(3), 42-47.

This is not about maturity or ability.
It's about instruction and expectations.

THE NEW MASSACHUSETTS IEP IS
DESIGNED TO **CENTER STUDENT VOICE**

Practice hasn't caught up yet.

THE IEP NAMES **STUDENTS** FIRST

- **Student** and Parent Concerns
- **Student** and Team Vision
- **Student** Profile

- ...and it offers space for **student's strengths, interests, and preferences**

VISION AND POSTSECONDARY GOALS ARE EXPLICIT

Student voice is intentionally developed over time

- Short-term vision for younger students
- Short-term vision AND clear postsecondary goals for transition-age students

VISION AND GOALS ARE NOT GUESSWORK

- The IEP places student vision up front, while assessment documentation appears later in the document
- The structure assumes assessment has already informed the student's goals
- Legally, postsecondary goals are based on **age-appropriate transition assessment**

TRANSITION PLANNING IS IN THE IEP—NOT AN ADD-ON

- Present levels and current performance related to education/training, employment, and community experiences/independent living
- Projected date of graduation/program completion
- Planned course of study
- Community and interagency connections
- Transfer of rights
- Decision-making options
- Transition to adult service agencies (688 referral process)
- Accommodations, Modifications, Services Delivery, Goals, Objectives, Additional Information
- Response section

STUDENT VOICE IS A **SKILL SET**

The IEP assumes student participation.
Instruction makes it possible.

Students struggle when we
expect skills we haven't taught.

SELF-AWARENESS

- Strengths
- Preferences
- Interests
- Challenges
- Impact

SELF-ADVOCACY

- Knowing needs
- Knowing what's available
- Asking for support
- Explaining what helps
- Contesting when rights are not respected

SELF-MANAGEMENT

- Initiating
- Monitoring
- Coping
- Following through

DISABILITY DISCLOSURE—A JOURNEY, NOT A MOMENT

- A process
- No magic age
- Descriptive information versus labels
- Recognizing impact rather than minimizing
- Disability is not a dirty word. Neither is support!

SELF-DETERMINATION

- Choice-making
- Goal-setting
- Problem-solving
- Ownership

Without the student, there is no IEP.

STUDENT INVOLVEMENT WORKS

- Students with higher self-determination have better school experiences
- They are more likely to engage in learning and goal-setting
- They have better adult outcomes
- They have better quality of life

TRANSITION ASSESSMENT IS PREPARATION

ASSESSMENT BUILDS...

- Understanding
- Confidence
- Agency

Assessment is done **with, not
to** students.

Assessment helps students
decide what to share.

WHAT THIS LOOKS LIKE IN PRACTICE

BEFORE THE MEETING

- Education
- Preparation
- Coaching
- Reviewing strengths/needs

DURING THE MEETING

- Student role
- Accommodations/modifications
- Structured participation

AFTER THE MEETING

- Reflection
- Skill-building
- Practice
- More practice

PRACTICAL SHIFTS FOR EDUCATORS

- Prepare students (and families) before meetings
- Shift roles during meetings
- Build skills between meetings

EXAMPLE GOAL:
THE STUDENT
WILL BE ABLE TO
ACTIVELY
PARTICIPATE IN
ALL SCHOOL-
BASED MEETINGS
BY THE END OF
THE IEP PERIOD

- With visual supports, the student will communicate a minimum of 7 strengths and 4 disability-related needs to familiar and unfamiliar adults in 3/3 opportunities
- With visual supports (e.g., app, worksheet, PowerPoint/Slides, etc.), the student will express leisure, extracurricular, and academic interests to familiar and unfamiliar adults in 3/3 opportunities
- By midyear, the student will name one personal goal for the calendar year, and three short-term objectives for meeting that goal
- The student will engage in questionnaires, discussions and role plays in order to plan their meeting participation and they will follow through with at least 80% of their plan in the upcoming annual IEP meeting
- Over the next 12 months, the student will attend all transition planning and IEP meetings for the full duration

EXAMPLE GOAL:
WITH FADED
SCAFFOLDING, THE
STUDENT WILL BE
ABLE TO
COMMUNICATE
POSTSECONDARY
PLANS AND GOALS
BY THE END OF
THE IEP PERIOD

- The student will be able to name an independent living goal, including type of housing, number of occupants, necessary supports, and location with 100% accuracy
- The student will be able to name a postsecondary learning or training goal, including the type of certification or degree, necessary accommodations and support services, and institution/location with 100% accuracy by the end of the IEP period
- The student will be able to name a long-term competitive employment goal for themselves
- The student will be able to name 3-5 ways in which they plan to engage in their local community as an adult, including transportation and leisure activities as well as identifying the steps to get connected or involved in each activity with 100% accuracy

HOW THE REST OF TODAY
BUILDS ON THIS

WHAT'S COMING

Preparing Students (and Families) for
Meaningful Participation in the IEP Process

“But I’m not a Transition Specialist”: Using a
Team Approach for Transition Assessment

Student-led IEP Meetings and Design

If students are expected to own their futures,
we have to teach them how.

THANK YOU! LET'S STAY CONNECTED

- Thank you for joining today's session!
- Let's stay in touch:
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