

The Art of the Child-Centered IEP

Seven Strategies for Success



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PARTNERSHIP PROJECT



An IMPORTANT Message

- YOU are the only long-term stakeholder that your child has.
- The Law gives you power to make educational decisions on behalf of your child.
- There are no permanent people. There are no permanent promises.
- There are only the Permanent Interests of your child.

Strategy #1 - Always ensure your child's PRESENCE in the room

- Create a Parent Profile of Student
- Say your child's name regularly during the meeting
- Bring a framed photo of your child
- Have your child in attendance whenever it is possible

Strategy #2 - Agency vs Emotion

- Remain Calm
- Submit a Parent Agenda before the meeting and bring copies
- Ask questions; Make suggestions
- You have the Right to take more time to reflect and/or request another meeting

Strategy #3 - Powerful Positions vs Positions of Power

- It is not always necessary to go straight to the “top”
- Building a relationship with an influencer can be *more* substantial

Strategy #4 - Beware the “Trap of Too Many Things”

- Prioritize your requests to no more than 4-5 items
- Acquire the art of negotiation and be prepared to engage
- Provide evidence of the need for the service or support you are requesting.
- Accept that you may not always get what you are asking for and seek to identify alternatives.
- When you do prevail, thank the IEP team for their support in writing

Strategy #5 - Proper Documentation Changes the Conversation

- Paperwork is Power
- Keep your records in order
- Focus on Facts and Evidence (evaluations, assessments, observations, data)
- You have the right to tape record the meeting and receive a copy of meeting minutes**

** Verify your state and school district laws regarding recordings and consent

Strategy #6 - Know the difference between a Friend, an Adversary and an Ally

- These positions can Change
- Friends are motivated by concern and connection
- Allies are motivated by mutual interests
- Adversaries are motivated by benefits and liabilities
- Learn to leverage their motives to influence favorable outcomes for your child

Strategy #7 - Give up a Pawn to take the Queen

- Understand the Value of Incremental Power
- Power moves in two directions
- The Art of Attrition - The process of gradually reducing the strength or effectiveness of someone or something through sustained attack or pressure
- The Art of Ascension - The process of rising to an important position or higher level

A Final Word

- Take care of your child's parent
- Advocating for your child requires sacrifice
- Actively seek support and make use of all available resources
- You "Are Not" alone

Key Definitions

- Strategy - a plan of action or policy designed to achieve a major or overall aim
- Tactic - an action or strategy carefully planned to achieve a specific end
- Discipline - the practice of training to obey rules or a code of behavior
- Power - the capacity or ability to direct or influence the behavior of others or the course of events
- Partnership - any number of individuals willfully invested in a shared interest or a specific objective
- Agency - action or intervention, especially such as to produce a particular effect
- Ally - a person or organization that cooperates with or helps another
- Adversary - one's opponent in a contest, conflict or dispute
- Agenda - a plan of things to be done or problems to be addressed
- Allyship - a process of building a relationship on trust, consistency and accountability
- Efficacy - the power to produce an effect

Special Education Law & The Legal Rights of Parents and Students

- Resources on Family Advocacy and the Law:
 - [Wrightslaw Website](#)
 - [Hawaii Disability Rights](#)

IEP Support - STATE OF HAWAII

- [Leadership In Disabilities & Achievement of Hawaii](#)
- [Special Parent Information Network](#)

Family Engagement & Employment

- [Hawaii Statewide Family Engagement Center](#)
- [Jobs Now Partnership](#)
- [Hire Abilities Hawaii](#)

THANK YOU!

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 - Hawaii Statewide Family Engagement Center
 - Center on Disability Studies - UH Manoa

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