

Facilitating Student-led IEPs

Presented by Lindsey Anderson



OSSE Division of Specialized Education
Secondary Transition Webinar Series

Webinar Overview

Objective:

- Identify what educators need to know and do in order to start and support the student-led IEP process for their students and their school communities.

Guiding Questions:

1. What do educators need to know and do in order to introduce the student-led IEP process to students, families and other educators?
2. What do students need to know about themselves and their IEPs in order to benefit from the student-led IEP process?
3. What do quality student-led IEPs look and feel like for students, families, and teachers?

Reflection

Think about the most recent IEP meeting that you have attended.

What team members attended?

Who participated the most? The least?

How do you define participation?

IEP Participation

Who Attends?

- Approximately 80% of students attend their IEP meetings
- Family Member(s)
- Special Educator(s)
- General Educator(s)
- Support Staff
- Administrator(s)

Who talks?

- Special Educator(s): 51%
- General Educator(s)/ Administrator(s): 18%
- Family Member(s): 15%
- Support Staff: 6%
- Student: 3%

Impact of Educator-Led IEPs

- Students often do not know the reason for IEP meetings.
- Students report that they make few if any decisions at IEP meetings.
- Students do not know what is expected of them during IEP meetings.

Benefits of Student-Led IEP Planning

Educator-Directed Transition



Student-Directed Transition



Students who actively participate during their IEP meetings are more likely to be employed and/or enrolled in higher education after graduation.

Schools with high levels of student participation in IEP meetings have higher indicator 13 scores.

Guiding Question 1

What do educators need to know and do in order to introduce the student-led IEP process to students, families and other educators?



The Best Me I Can Be – Getting Started

Student-Directed IEP Continuum

IEP takes place without student present

Student present with minimal participation and/or preparation

Student present with some participation (presents information, gives input into goals, answers questions)

Student present and actively participates

Student present and takes responsibility for one piece of the process

Student present and takes responsibility for most of the process

Student leads and directs all aspects of the process

“Student participation throughout the IEP process should be individualized and based on the age, needs, and abilities of the student. “

- OSSE Secondary Transition Website

Defining the Student-Led IEP



Defining the Student-Led IEP

There is no one “right” way to hold a student-led IEP. The challenge is for **students, teachers,** and **parents** to find creative ways to involve students in exploring themselves and their needs and provide ways for students to have a voice in creating their goals and planning how to achieve them.

Family Involvement

Parents can:

- Talk to their child about his/her disability
- Share their own IEP preparation experiences
- Help students understand and navigate the IEP process



Student-led IEP activities enhance communication between parents and students.

Guiding Question 2

What do students need to know about themselves and their IEPs in order to benefit from the student-led IEP process?



The Best Me I Can Be – Building Self-Awareness

Talking about Disability – Teacher Tips

When working to build self-awareness about a student's disability, the following progression in conversation is helpful:

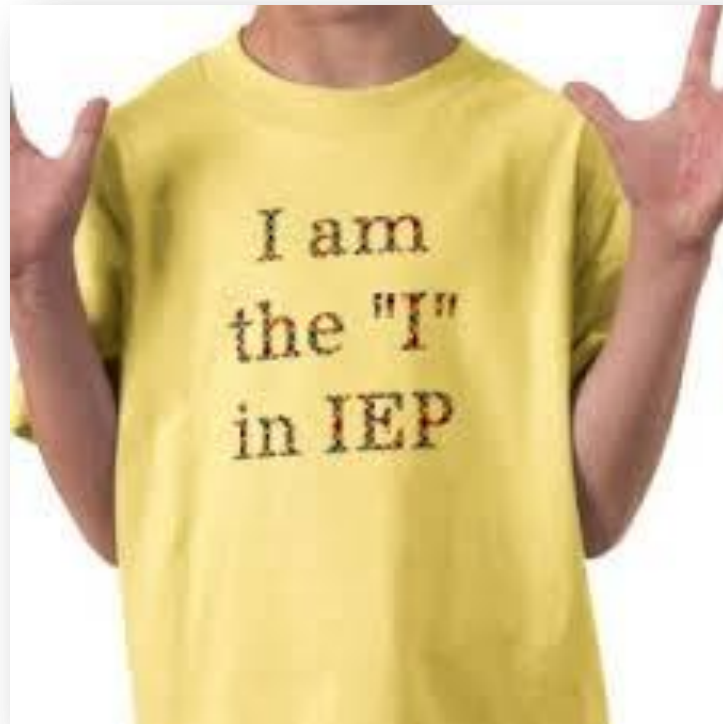
- First, discuss what a student is good at; what does the student enjoy doing?
- Next, move on to exploring what is harder for the student; connect these limitations to the specific disability of the student.
- Lastly, work with the student to identify strategies to overcome limitations.

Talking about Disability – Teacher Tips

- Make the case that all people need to better understand their strengths and limitations. Students with disabilities just do it in a more formal way.
- Don't be afraid to be personal. Share your own limitations and how you overcome them.
- Encourage students to do independent research on their disabilities.
- Introduce the student to other people who share the same disability.

The Best Me I Can Be – Understanding Your IEP

Understanding Your IEP



Students who understand their IEPs are more likely to:

- Work toward accomplishing their goals
- Advocate for themselves in the classroom
- Be invested in learning and educational progress
- Understand the role that related services and supports play in their success

Understanding Your IEP

- Help students become familiar with IEP vocabulary and components
- Help students to understand their special education rights
- Share and explain IEP data



Guiding Question 3

What do quality student-led IEPs look and feel like for students, families, and teachers?



The Best Me I Can Be – Preparation for Participation

Student Participation Examples

- Prepare and send invitations
- Conduct introductions
- Make a presentation
- Communicate strengths, weaknesses, needs, and interests
- Request accommodations
- Define future goals and dreams
- Write sections of the IEP
- Facilitate all or part of the meeting



Student Participation – Teacher Tips

- Involve the student in making decisions about who should attend their IEP meeting.
- Develop the IEP meeting agenda with the student.
- Be sensitive to the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse youth and their families.



Student Participation – Teacher Tips

- Utilize technology to support participation.
- Develop questions ahead of time.
- Provide opportunities for practice.
- Create an “out” for the student.



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The Best Me I Can Be – Student Led IEP

Student-Led IEPs – Teacher Tips

- Plan for the unexpected
- Debrief with the student after the meeting
- Have a contingency plan for handling any conflict that emerges

Using Assistive Technology

- Develop PowerPoint presentations
- Create student opportunities to demonstrate their assistive technology during the meeting
- Videotape the presentation ahead of time if the student is too anxious to speak during the meeting itself
- Record the meeting and use the video during debriefing

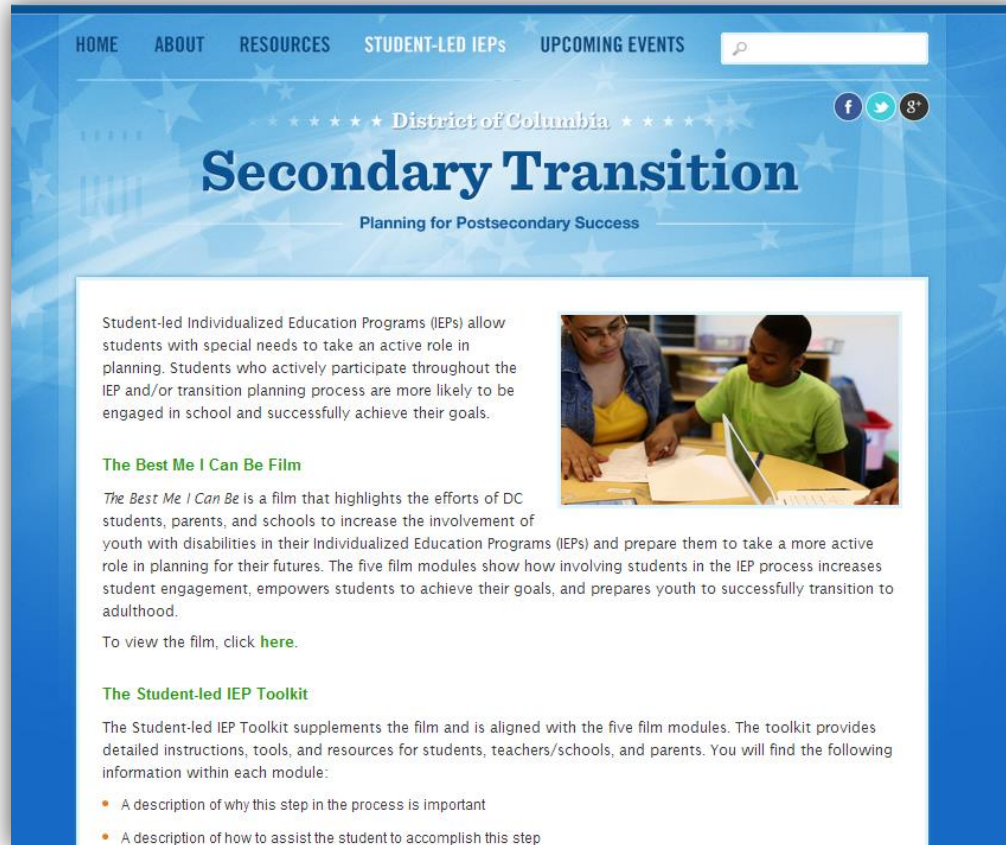


Getting Started

- Obtain administrator and leadership buy-in
- Start small
- Determine the appropriate level and type of participation for each student
- Make time to work with students
- Engage with parents and other family members



OSSE's Student-Led IEP Toolkit

The image shows a screenshot of the OSSE Secondary Transition website. The page has a blue header with navigation links: HOME, ABOUT, RESOURCES, STUDENT-LED IEPs, and UPCOMING EVENTS. There is a search bar on the right. Below the header, the text "District of Columbia" is centered, flanked by stars. The main title "Secondary Transition" is in a large, bold, blue font, with the subtitle "Planning for Postsecondary Success" below it. The main content area is white and contains text about Student-led Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), a section for "The Best Me I Can Be Film" with an accompanying image of two students working at a desk, and a section for "The Student-led IEP Toolkit" with a bulleted list of information provided in each module.

HOME ABOUT RESOURCES STUDENT-LED IEPs UPCOMING EVENTS

District of Columbia

Secondary Transition

Planning for Postsecondary Success

Student-led Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) allow students with special needs to take an active role in planning. Students who actively participate throughout the IEP and/or transition planning process are more likely to be engaged in school and successfully achieve their goals.

The Best Me I Can Be Film

The Best Me I Can Be is a film that highlights the efforts of DC students, parents, and schools to increase the involvement of youth with disabilities in their Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and prepare them to take a more active role in planning for their futures. The five film modules show how involving students in the IEP process increases student engagement, empowers students to achieve their goals, and prepares youth to successfully transition to adulthood.

To view the film, click [here](#).

The Student-led IEP Toolkit

The Student-led IEP Toolkit supplements the film and is aligned with the five film modules. The toolkit provides detailed instructions, tools, and resources for students, teachers/schools, and parents. You will find the following information within each module:

- A description of why this step in the process is important
- A description of how to assist the student to accomplish this step

http://ossesecondarytransition.org/studentled_ieps

Wrap-Up

1. What do educators need to know and do in order to introduce the student-led IEP process to students, families and other educators?
2. What do students need to know about themselves and their IEPs in order to benefit from the student-led IEP process?
3. What do quality student-led IEPs look and feel like for students, families, and teachers?

References

- I'm Determined – www.imdetermined.org
- Martin, Jim. “Time is Now!” *University of Oklahoma at Norman – Zarrow Center*. PowerPoint. 2010.
<http://www.ou.edu/content/education/centers-and-partnerships/zarrow/presentations.html>
- OSSE’s Student-Led IEP Toolkit - http://dc-transition_guide.frameweld.com/studentled_ieps
- The Zarrow Center for Learning and Enrichment – <http://www.ou.edu/content/education/centers-and-partnerships/zarrow.html>