

continued

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ONLINE CONTINUING EDUCATION FOR THE LIFE OF YOUR CAREER

How to Advocate for Students with IEPs through Professional Role Empowerment Strategies

Lara L. Wakefield, PhD, CCC-SLP

Moderated by:
Amy Natho, MS, CCC-SLP, CEU Administrator, SpeechPathology.com



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How to Advocate for Students with IEPs | Through Professional Role Empowerment Strategies ⁶

- Lara Wakefield, PhD, CCC-SLP
- Co-owner SMARTER Steps
- Parent & Student Advocate
- COPAA Member
- IEP/IDEA Consultation
- Parent education and support



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continued[®] Learner Outcomes

As a result of this course, participants will:

- 1) define the term Default Role.
- 2) Identify the top 3 reasons for burn-out in special education.
- 3) Select 3 empowerment strategy phrases to apply to scenarios



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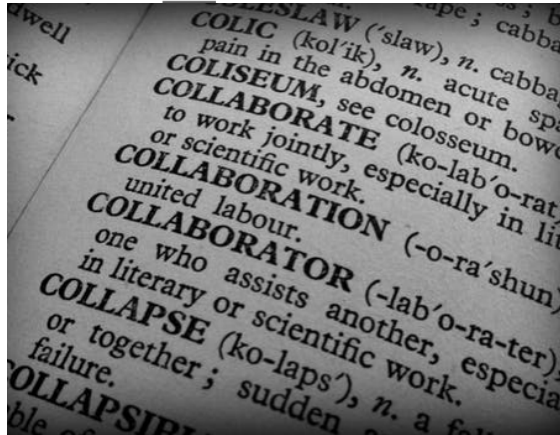
continued[®] Overview

- Definitions: Micro and Macro
- Self Advocacy = Student Advocacy
- Professional Role Issues: Problematic Default Role
- Research
- Burn-Out
- Myth Busting
- Advocacy Strategies: IDEA phrases, Self-Value, & Building Relationships
- Practice Scenarios
- Cues for Quiz question: Q1, Q2, Q3, etc.

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continued

What kind of
advocate are
you?

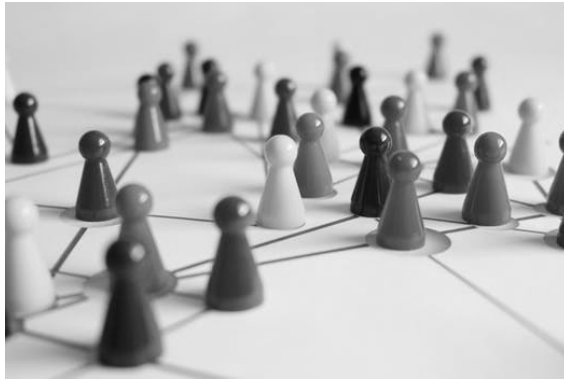


Definitions

Advocacy

- Supporting
- Recommending
- Influencing decisions
- Proposing solutions
- Defending and promoting rights of individuals
- Collaborating

CONTINUED



Definitions

Advocacy

- Micro-Advocacy
 - Individual level
 - Ex: IEP Meeting
- Macro-Advocacy
 - Systemic level
 - Ex: Changing Eligibility criteria/wording at state level
- Need both
 - Complex network

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CONTINUED

Everyone Should Be a Student Advocate



The Advocate and School Staff are on the SAME side.
We are on the student's side.

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CONTINUED

continued

“Marginalizing and ignoring the needs of Special Education professionals is a form of discrimination towards students with disabilities.” – Dr. Lara Wakefield



I need space,
time, training, and
tools to do the
best possible job
for my students.

Without those
essentials, my
students will fail.

Self-Advocacy = Student Advocacy

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continued

Micro-Advocacy

Planning time, Technology,
Adequate Learning
Contexts, Qualified
Personnel, Materials,
Professional Development,
Compensation, Support



IEP Meetings are Micro-Advocacy



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continued

CONTINUED

Definitions

- Roles
 - Job duties/division of labor
 - Leadership or Support
 - Behaviors
 - Rights
 - Hidden vs. Explicit
 - Default (Q1 & Q2)

Not my job!

There was an important job to be done and Everybody was sure that Somebody would do it.

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CONTINUED

Q1 & Q2

Default Roles

"Your room is closest to the cafeteria, so you're on breakfast duty."


"We've always done it this way."

"The person before you did it."

"Everyone has to pitch in."



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Default Roles Q3

Problems with Default Roles


- Assumptions
- Undefined duties
- Unclear Expectations

Waste time and energy instead of focusing on students' learning needs.



"Hey can you do a 30-minute presentation at the faculty meeting on Friday about trauma-informed schools. The counselor was going to do it, but she's got a dr. appt. and no one else has time to do it. We have to do it by Friday for our building compliance review."

1
9



Default Roles

- Recognize a Default Role: Label it & Know it
- Does not align with IDEA
- Interferes with your Self-Value of your Profession
- Leads to Burn-Out and you leave the field
- Attrition hurts progress for Students with Disabilities

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continued Definitions

- The Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act
- Federal law requires schools to serve the educational needs of eligible students with disabilities.
- Protect rights of children with disabilities
- (FAPE) Free Appropriate Public Education
- Are you delivering FAPE when engaging in default roles?
- Provide parents an opportunity for a voice in their child's education (Procedural Safeguards)




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continued

Is IDEA Against Me?

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continued


Self-value

Where do you fit in IDEA?

How can you make IDEA work "for" you and the children you serve?

Re-frame: IDEA is not against you, it created your job

13 Federal Mandates



continued

Helpful phrases

I can not meet compliance of IDEA with _____ or without _____.

I need assistance with figuring out where to put _____ in my schedule and still meet IDEA compliance.

I'm concerned that doing _____ is a misappropriation of IDEA funds and I need to discuss other options with you.

I'm concerned that doing _____ will be a violation of my profession's Code of Ethics.

I'm concerned that doing _____ will not be providing FAPE or meaningful educational benefit to my students. We need to problem-solve this matter.

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CONTINUED

Helpful phrases: Case Study

Dear Ms. Supervisor,

I can not meet compliance of IDEA with my current caseload numbers.

I need assistance with figuring out where to put 7 of my students with Language Impairments on my schedule and still meet IDEA compliance. These students goals require intensive intervention minutes with a evidence-based program that states 20 minutes per day is required to show progress.

I'm concerned that being on lunch duty 150 minutes per week instead of serving my students with with IEPs is a misappropriation of IDEA funds and I need to discuss other options with you.

Also, I'm concerned that only serving as a consult for all students with stuttering diagnosis will be a violation of my profession's Code of Ethics.

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CONTINUED

Avoid Emotions: Case Study

Dear Ms. Supervisor,

I'm feeling so stressed out with my caseload. I can't do this any more.

I'm extremely frustrated with the teachers in this building. They are so hateful and inflexible and won't let me group 7 of my students into a language intervention block.

Lunch duty is killing me. I don't know how you expect me to do this 3 days a week on top of all of my other requirements. It's as if lunch supervision is more important that serving my students with IEPs. What were you thinking?

I can't believe you are constantly pressuring me to put every kid who has a stuttering diagnosis as "consult only" in IEP meetings. It's wrong and I'm not going to do it any more. You obviously have no clue what SLPs do.

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continued Goals Drive the Services

- Summary of the Main IDEA Strategy:
Goals Drive the Services
- Talk about goals first, then minutes needed to achieve them
- Did you Prioritize the Goals?
- Did you write your service minutes in a realistic manner to achieve the goals that were set?
- Is the majority of your day devoted to achieving those goals?

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continued Self-Value

AVOID BURNING OUT!



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continued[®] Burn-out

Professional Burn-out

Lack of self-care = Reduced Effectiveness

Lose trained and caring people = NOT beneficial for children with special needs.

Our schools and communities become “less caring and inclusive”



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continued[®]



Burn-out

Burn-out = Attrition = Costly

Shortage of staff = difficulty recruiting and maintaining

Schools lose their investment in that professional development

Most “replacement” sped/related services staff are first year professionals

Too many new professionals = more challenges with behaviors & continuity

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“46% of new teachers leave within first five years.”

-Hill, 2011



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- Billingsley (2005) Special Education Staff Report:

- #1 Reason

Over 90%: need for staff development in IEP policies/procedures, collaboration, modifying instruction, measuring progress, and addressing student behaviors.

- #2 Reason

75%: Paper work burdens and extra duties interfering with instruction

- #3 Reason

33%: No access to curriculum and materials

- Spinning their wheels for 5 years playing catch up? Does anyone listen to them?
- Is the cycle of burn-out inevitable?
- How can you advocate for change?

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Beyond Burn-Out

Highly empathetic professions = High Risk for Compassion Fatigue (Figley, 1995)

Burn-out = Process rather than fixed condition

Compassion Fatigue = Cost of caring by experiencing the secondary stress of trying to care for a person experiencing traumas, discrimination, bullying, etc. Begin to shut down and lose your empathy over time. (Joinson, 1992)

Compassion Fatigue

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Dealing with Burn-Out

Self-Advocacy Strategies to Address Burn-Out

Self-Value: You are an Investment

Managing Time: Prioritization

Managing Relationships: Clarification Questions

Managing Stress: Health, Hobbies, Family, Friends, Exercise



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continued

Self-Value

- You are valuable
- You are an investment and you are invested
- Positive self-talk: Success Consciousness



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continued



Self-value

Your value does not decrease based on someone else's inability to see your worth.

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continued

continued

Self-value

Let's put a price tag on it:

Cost of "turn-over" rate = 25% of the teacher's salary

Upper end = 200% of teacher's salary

Turn-over rates range from 15%-30% across states

Example: Texas = 15.5% turn-over rate (2000)

Cost Texas = 2.1 billion dollars
(Texas Ctr Ed Research Report)



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continued

"You know what your problem is?" Q9



You don't know
how to prioritize

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CONTINUED[®] Time Contradictions

Managing Time

- Time is our friend? Enemy?
- We work with students who are on a different timeline
- Everything takes longer than we are allotted
- Rapid pace of school; finite time
- Need to learn to push the pause button, no time to reflect
- Focus on realistic and attainable goals
- AND AMBITIOUS!



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CONTINUED[®]

Myth busting

Myths feed the burn out

If only we work longer hours, we can help their disabilities go away

These families have no one

These kids have no one

The teacher needs help

You can not do this alone: let go of that thinking



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continued

Myth busting

Statue of Liberty Syndrome

"Give me your tired,
your poor, your
huddled masses
yearning to breathe
free..." -Emma Lazarus



continued Myth Busting

- Math Self-Talk
- 180 days out of 365
- 36 weeks of school
- X amount of hours for the school year
- Example: 36 hours if 1 hour per week
- What can you accomplish in 36 hours of intervention for a child REALISTICALLY?



4
2

continued

continued

Time

Limits: Set them and stick to them.
Affects service delivery

Remove distractors

Use strategies to focus on small blocks of time

Prioritize

Ask for help

Delegate tasks when possible

Communicate to team when your time is crunched



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continued

Time-Savers

- Tools & Technology
 - Communication
 - Calendars
 - Data tracking
 - Goal templates
 - Prioritization Worksheets
 - Therapy materials
 - Assessments
 - Training
 - Productivity Apps

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continued

S.M.A.R.T.E.R. STEPS

Prioritization Worksheet

Student's Name: _____ Date: _____

Team Concerns	Area of Need	Priority Code

SAMPLE

Areas to Address in this IEP Cycle	Person to Collect Data

SAMPLE

Areas of Concern to Address in the future	Priority Code

SAMPLE

Priority Codes:
 1 Safety 4 Reading 7 Social
 2 Behavior/Emotion 5 Writing 8 Other
 3 Communication 6 Math 9 Other

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continued

Time: Art of politely declining

AVOID the drama: IDEA funds my time, so....


It's ok to skip happy hours

It's ok to opt out of Secret Santa

It's ok to politely step away from the gossip in the lounge

It's ok to walk for 20 minutes on your lunch break

It's ok to opt out of every fund-raiser



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Relationships

Supervisors/Administrators,
Parents, and Colleagues

Meaningful communication

Goal-directed talk

Plan of action presented

Solution-oriented



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Relationships: Admin/Supervisors

1

Provide a
summary of what
you have already
tried

2

Provide a few
possible
suggestions to
solve the problem

3

Stress the issue of
compliance with
IEPs and IDEA

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Relationships: Parents

Parent engagement

Continuum: Disengaged parents to overly involved parents

Managing the time, emotions, and legal mindfields

Parent education and supports are severely lacking

Parent training can be included under supports for personnel or related services but often overlooked

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Relationships: Parents

- Parents: Communication
- Meaningful, Understandable, and Positive
- Pictures, Texts, or Letters about the child



Ms. Conners,

Carson chose a book during
“Read to a Partner” time today.
He produced great /t/ sounds on
the words with his peer.

-Karen

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Relationships: Co-workers

Colleagues: Allies

Collaboration: Time and Space

Meaningful
conversations

Documentation

Offering alternatives



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Example

"I need the _____ to..."

- have evidence-based interventions
- allow for meaningful participation from parents
- accurate data for eligibility decisions

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continued

Strategies Q10

Avoiding
assumptions

Ask clarification
questions



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continued

Stressed

- Stress outlets outside of work
- Exercise, Hydration, Fresh air, Gratitude Journal
- Family and friend time: Date nights, Book Club, Girls Night, Poker Night, Cooking Class
- Time to yourself: positive reflection, pursue your hobby
- Spiritual
- Doctor, dentist, annual health
- The world needs you!



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continued

continued

Scenario 1 Q7

- “I’ll do the extra duties, if you can pay me over time.”
- “Someone else will need to evaluate the students suspected of disabilities because I have extra duties that take priority.”
- “If I’m assigned extra duties, I cannot meet the compliance of IDEA due to lack of time for evaluating students who are suspected of having a disability.”
- “I don’t like to do extra duties because it’s inconvenient.”

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continued

Scenario 2 Q8

- a. “I’m concerned that supervising students who are not on my caseload could be a misappropriation of IDEA funds, and we need to discuss other options for supervision.”
- b. “I’m not comfortable doing that.”
- c. “I will supervise them, if you allow me to leave an hour early today.”
- d. “I will supervise the students, in exchange for a teacher covering my caseload tomorrow.”


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continued

Strategies: Macro-Advocacy

Request meaningful professional development

Compliance training: helps you avoid dispute



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continued



Strategies:
Macro-Advocacy

Training paras,
volunteers,
student teachers,
PARENTS

continued[®]



Organize a SEPTA
Organize a Study Group
Organize a Book Club

Strategies

Think Outside the Box:
Organize Grassroots Level

continued[®]

Macro-Advocacy



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ED Releases Final IDEA Rules on Significant Disproportionality: Equity in IDEA

January 9, 2017

The U.S. Department of Education (ED) has released final regulations that promote equity in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) by amending the regulations under Part B that govern the Assistance to States for the Education of Children with Disabilities program and the Preschool Grants for Children with Disabilities program. The regulations become effective on January 18, 2017, when they become part of the *Code of Federal Regulations*. States and local educational agencies (LEAs) are not required to comply with these regulations until July 1, 2018. They are also not required to include children 3–5 years old in the review of significant disproportionality with respect to both (a) the identification of children as children with disabilities and (b) the identification of children as children with a particular impairment, until July 1, 2020.

continued[®]



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GRASSROOTS ADVOCACY

TAKE ACTION

2018 PUBLIC POLICY AGENDA

Advocacy

News

2018 Advisory Council Election Results | (8/10/2018)

2018 Board of Directors Election Results | (6/7/2018)

CMS Proposes Significant Revisions to the SNF PPS Beginning October 2019 | (5/16/2018)

MORE NEWS

ASHA Member Advocacy

- Take Action! Voice support for legislative efforts on behalf of the professions.

State Information and Advocacy


Find information on your state related to licensure, regulations, and important contacts. View model bills and policy resources and see the latest trends in state licensure.

Billing and Reimbursement Advocacy

Find extensive information on audiology and speech-language pathology specific issues related to Medicare, Medicaid, private health plans, billing codes and health care reform.

Macro-Advocacy

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Macro-Advocacy

Success Stories

- Find out how one member advocated for funds from her school district PTA for FM system in the classroom.
- Learn more about other local advocacy success stories.
- Read success stories posted on the National Coalition on Personnel Shortages in Special Education & Related Services website

Other Funding-Related Resources

- Personnel Shortages
- Schools Survey
- School District Foundations
- National Alliance for Medicaid in Education

Learning About Education Funding

Basics of School Funding

- Overview of Funding for Pre-K–12 Education
- Understanding State School Funding (Education Commission of the States) [PDF]

IDEA Funding

- ASHA's IDEA website
- Early Intervening Funding Implications for Audiologists [PDF]
- Early Intervening Funding Implications for Speech-Language Pathologists [PDF]

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continued

Questions?

Please contact me at:
team@smartersteps.com

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