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CONSUMER: CASEY JUDD

EHDI

INTERNATIONAL A – A SEAT AT THE TABLE: DIVERSE PERSPECTIVES

MARCH 3, 2019

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>> We're going to go ahead and get started. It's 1 o'clock. Welcome to Illinois. My name's (speaker far from mic) and I'm the room monitor and you're at ‑‑
>> (Background chatter).
>> This never turned on. I'm not sure why.
>> Is this one on too?
>> This is on but we need to get this one on. I thought he ‑‑ turned it ‑‑ well I'd like to welcome everyone to a seat at the table. Does everyone have a seat at the table? Is everyone comfortable? We'll have jokes the whole time about having a seat at the table. We're going to introduce yourselves but I would love to welcome you ‑‑ we need to turn it off. Technical difficulties, hold on. Okay. Room monitor. Yeah. She's going to turn ‑‑ okay.
>> That light.
>> We need it off, yes. Okay. Let's start again. I'd like to welcome everyone to a seat at the able. We are excited to be here today. We're excited to spend the next three hours that will be filled with a lot of activities, a lot of discussion. It'll probably go very, very quickly. Although for us it might not feel that way. But today we're going to be talking about diverse perspective on school and parent and professional collaboration. And these, we will introduce ourselves but I just wanted to say, these two women are my colleagues, and they have become friends. As we all know when we do things together, EHDI brings us together from different worlds, different perspectives and this kind of started because we started this conversation about a topic that is kind of the in now, parent‑professional‑collaboration but we realized is there a lot written on it? Is there a lot ‑‑ how do we keep the conversation going? How do we in this day and age, bring this and keep this perspective to the forefront?

How do we help parents, professionals, and when we say professionals, we mean medical professionals, school professionals, service providers. Anyone that has a professional role in the child's life. How do we kind of make that triangle work and get better? So that's where we're coming from in this presentation. This is our disclosure side. We wear many different hats and we will talk about that. But this is just our disclosure side so the hats we wear and I will allow us to all introduce oust ourselves. My name is Dejenne‑amal Morris. I we are many ‑‑ wear many hats as my husband says. We do wear so many hats.

I am a parent of three children. 22 ‑‑ oh my goodness, 24, 23 tomorrow and 17. One of whom Malik has CHARGE Syndrome, he has deaf blindness with other multiple disabilities.

I am the president of the Hands & Voices headquarters, the board of directors, for Hands & Voices headquarters. I'm also parent educator with beginnings. I do consultant training, et cetera, et cetera. I got my start so many, many years ago but one of my specialties is working with children who are deaf with other multiple disabilities.
>> Hi, everybody. Not too loud is that okay? I'm Karen Hopkins. Thank you all for coming and welcome to EHDI 2019. I also wear many, many hats. I think the three of us do as Djenne said we have many hats and seats around the table and that brings a lot of perspective I think as we go through the years so my first and foremost important hat is I'm a mom. A 23‑year‑old boy, a 19‑year‑old daughter and an almost 16‑year‑old daughter that's just, just lost her hearing so as a deaf adult I thought I had three hearing children and then, boom, she's lost her hearing. Quite a bit of it so we're getting a new hat to wear on my head. When I went to get the stickers today I said I have to put parent on now so I am kind of processing that and she's very excited and fine and ran her own 504 meeting and doing great so new hat for me. My professional lens is I'm an early interventionist, a teacher of the deaf, a school administrator and the principle investigator in Maine. I oversee birth to 21 deaf and hard of hearing children in the state from the hospital screening although the way through. So many hats as you can see and we'll try to weave them in throughout the day for you.
>> My name is Amy Szarkowski, I'm a psychologist and also a mom. I have a daughter who is eight and five. They are hearing as am I.

In this context I'm going to be talking about being an outside contractor. For 11 years I was at Boston Children's Hospital in their hard of hearing area. And I was often writing reports that would be brought to the school or I would present my role has changed. I am the clinical director for the Beverly school for the deaf. I maintain a faculty appointment at Harvard Medical School, department of psychiatry and I'm involved in teaching in the LEND program which is leadership and neurodevelopmental disabilities. So for this context, although we wear these many hats and that infuses who we are and our approach to the world we're sort of going to stick to sort of the parent perspective, the school perspective and the professional perspective at this table.

That's how we're set up for today.
>> Okay. So just wanted to, Illis ‑‑ I'll let you look at the overview of what we'd like to accomplish today.

Many of you have been in these sessions and you know we want to accomplish a lot more than we really get to accomplish. I'll let you read that. But really what our goal is to start the conversation, to take the conversation to another level. To think about parent professional collaboration, where your seat is at the table. And that's what we really want to encourage everyone to do. Wherever you are at that table and we're going to talk about that in a minute, think about it from that perspective, but also looking at it from the perspective of the other people at the table. So we'll talking about what it mean to have the seat at the table. Why does it matter? Why does it matter that the parents and the professionals cooperate, collaborate and get along. We're going to have some role‑plays. As you can see we have a couple of teachers up here and we're going to do some art projects and then we're going to talk about strategies for promoting a parent professional collaboration.

We are three professionals in our field. We're parents. We're but so are you. And so really we would love this time to be, we will not stand up here and lecture you the whole three hours. We promise. So, but this is interactive. We will be doing some projects, having some vision boards.

Just doing things where we can collaborate with one another. What I will ask before we move onto the introduction of the audience is that if you could starting about some case studies and/or scenarios that you are currently working with or dealing with now. Because as an outcome we would like for you to take away one or two suggestions for an actual experience that you can take home and hopefully have some tools in your toolbox to move those along in terms of professional and parent collaboration. Just some grounds rules, as we always say, what's here stays here. We want to have accessible communication, accessible conversation, respect, et cetera, et cetera. So if we can do that, that would be great. The next thing I'm going to do, I'm going to attempt to do ‑‑
>> Hello?
>> Okay. So we're going to attempt the impossible. We talked about this and we said we have about 45 people in this room, can we really have everybody introduce themselves? So we will attempt that and the reason why is we feel that it's important to know who is at the table, why are you coming to the table? And why is it important for you to be here at this table today? Because again, we introduced ourselves but we are all at the table really with the goal of helping our children to get the best access to education and communication so I am going to take the mic, if you are not comfortable that's fine. So just say your name, who, what seat you have at the table and maybe why it's important. So. I will come around this way.
>> My name is Jennifer. And I have been ‑‑ I'm an audiologist by degree and I've been away raising my family, living abroad because of my husband's job. I'm actually just kind of getting back into the field and I'm interested in difficulties and what is going on with parents, professionals, so that's why I am at the table today. Just to be more informed and learn from you actually.
>> My name's Jesse, I'm from Utah, I am ‑‑ I have a six‑year‑old son who's deaf and I'm at the table because I should be. I don't know where else I'd be so here I am.
>> I am Jessica and I am parent of a 7‑year‑old little girl with hearing loss from New York.
>> Hello, my name is Camilla Strauss, I'm from Vermont I am the coordinator for the deaf and hard of hearing program and I also do early intervention myself.
>> Hello my name's Terry. I am from Virginia, well that's where I live. And I have three children, my oldest is eight and profoundly deaf and I am also the chair of Virginia Hands & Voices.
>> My name is Sarah Ruth and I'm the executive director for Kentucky Hands & Voices and of course the main reason I was brought to the table is a wonderful little boy who is now six and is deaf and so it's important to me for one for him but also because I know he represents also a bunch of other families across our states that we can impact and help.
>> I'm currently an early interventionist in the state of Arizona. My background training is in interpreting, deaf education and audiology. I'm very curious, so I keep trying new jobs. And I was ‑‑ I actually switched into this session and I want to say what can we do to make this easier and better?
>> Good afternoon, everyone, I'm Tommy, I'm very involved with EHDI and the community. I'm a product of the educational and EHDI system myself so I am very hands on in seeing what's going on. I'm a community advocate at heart.
>> Hi, I'm Lisa, I'm from Colorado. I have a 16‑year‑old. I am a parent of a 16‑year‑old who uses cued speech. So we've been pioneers everywhere we've went. We've gone so far.

I'm also a Colorado Hands & Voices board member and working to change the system in Colorado as well as new board member of a new organization called cue sign that is ASL and cued speech so I'm the liaison for that organization and so I'm working to try and implement that into the system and I'm also an education attorney. I work in our state education agency.
>> Hi, I'm Kara. I work at the Minnesota Department of Health in the EHDI program and I am very interested in and committed to pushing us to think outside the box and hear from and learn from and bring in diverse perspectives.
>> Hi. I'm Tara Smith. I'm a new addition to the Kentucky chapter of Hands & Voices as guide by your side and I also have a beautiful 7‑year‑old little boy who is deaf so that's why I am here.
>> Hi, my is Hope. I have a six‑year‑old little boy who is deaf blind with multiple disabilities.
>> Hi, my name is Janelle and I'm from Michigan. I have a 17‑year‑old boy who is deaf plus and I'm here today because I am the executive director of Hands & Voices and run our ASTRA program. So we work doing this all the time and can always use more tips to help families and schools be able to cooperate and get along.
>> Hi. I'm Gail the director of early learning at the Florida School for the Deaf and Blind and I'm also a sky high trainer and have been at the table for 35 years trying to make sure parent's voices are heard and I love the attention to it.

It's something we need to learn a lot more about. So, thrilled to be here.
>> Hi, Kathy, I showed up late so I'm not exactly sure what I'm supposed to say but I'm from Montana. Hands & Voices board. We just recently got started in Montana so that was exciting. Deaf mentor. Helped bring deaf mentor training into Montana so that's exciting and sky high trainer in Montana. And I am just here because we're constantly having these conversations with parents and professionals and all of that as outreach consultants.
>> Hi, I'm Jolene and my identity is changeable. It melds to the situation. I want to say I'm a deaf individual, I'm an advocate for human rights, for deaf children and deaf babies and I want to help the parents enjoy their baby that is deaf.

I am early intervention provider, deaf mentor, trainer, like you had mentioned from Montana I was there a few weeks ago. And it was really a freezing cold state but ‑‑ I'm an adjunct professor with Gallaudet in the infant and family mainstream collaboration approach. And you're right. I am a mother as well. I do have four sons. All adults now. Two of my sons live with cancer. And one is completely blind. One is blind in one eye. They're all deaf. So thank you for reminding me, yes, I am a mother, that is true. I am super woman mom but I tip my hat to all of you for all of your experience. I surely do.
>> Hi, my name is Emily. I am a North Carolina audiology EHDI consultant. If I'm going to be quite honest I was supposed to be in another session and then I saw Djenne Morris on this agenda and I was like, oh, I have to be here. But North Carolina has a great beginnings program and I put a lot of my parents off to beginnings when it comes to school system.

But it's good to help to know more and sometimes my parents want me to come along and if I do come along I want to be prepared.
>> I am the voice interpreter.
>> I am from South Dakota. I am a parent first. I have two boys the oldest is 21, deaf plus and the other one is hearing. I work for the state parent training information center. And also the family to family health information center. I'm sorry also a sky high mentor trainer. I grew up as ‑‑ in a deaf family, mainstreamed in public schools. My husband is deaf. And so my children who are deaf and one is hearing we learned to communicate and express in any way that we need to. I'm at the table because of all the different hats that I do wear and although the experiences I have seen. And lived through. I have experienced a lot of emotions myself. And I've experienced a lot of multi ‑‑ many other different perspectives and the other thing is I am involved in the South Dakota Association of the Deaf but I'm not sure if your state has an association of the deaf but that would be good to be involved ‑‑ it's a good way to get into the community. I'm vice president with them. I think I'll just leave it at that.
>> I am the follow up coordinator for the EHDI program.
>> Hi, I'm Mandy from Wyoming. I have a young son who is five with bilateral hearing loss who also has the diagnosis of down syndrome. I am assistant director of our chapter Wyoming and also guide by your side. I want to help my son have a voice and to channel that.
>> Hi, I'm Kelly, I'm the outreach coordinator. My six‑year‑old son, Noah, has unilateral hearing loss and so for me it's important to be around the table to see how best to advocate, you know, for children such as him. To get the best accessible services I can.
>> Hello, everyone. My name is Brenda. I'm from Montana. And I really wanted to go to another workshop but that workshop was full and so I came here so I think I'm here representing as deaf mentor. And I wanted to be involved with this particular topic. Thank you.
>> Hi, I am the Hispanic parent guide for Indiana outreach coordinator for guide by your side program. I am here as we submitted our application for ASTRA and I'm waiting for approval. Please cross your fingers for Indiana. To serve all the deaf community in the state of Indiana in my heart, because I want to see those Hispanic families do as well as anyone else.
>> I'm Michelle, I'm from Vermont. I'm the parent of a five‑year‑old deaf blind plus son and I'm also the president of the Vermont chapter of Hands & Voices. I come to the table mostly as a parent but I'm hoping we can build our Hands & Voices group to be at the table as well.
>> I'm Janna from Omaha. I have three tornado shaped boys at home.
>> Hi I'm from Washington. I have just recently started with Hands & Voices and I also have a four‑year‑old son who is, like she said a bit of a tornado and he has hearing loss.
>> I'm Janet and I'm the loan Canadian in the room. I'm a faculty member, I'm a codirector of the deaf education program at University of British Columbia. Parent of two grown sons. And I am here because I am involved in preparing these professionals. And I am concerned that we focus too much on preparing them in terms of, you know, competencies and capabilities and not nearly enough in listening.
>> I'm Cody, the executive director of Tennessee's Hands & Voices. I'm at my family's table and other family's table. Your table. Whatever.
>> Ellen parent to parent of New York State, New York City my son is 40 and he's bilateral hearing loss.
>> My name is Kim and I am from South Dakota. I work at the South Dakota School for the Deaf. Which in 2009 it shifted to all outreach.

So we serve about 570 kids in our state with 11 consultants and so across the state with all the varying hearing levels that are out there. There are many times throughout the table and there's tricky situations that come up so that's one thing there so as a teacher for the deaf for many years and then the director of outreach right now I'm coming to get more ideas and to network with all of you here. I'm also on our South Dakota EHDI advisory board.
>> My name is Erin. Oh, sorry. Hello.

I'm a service coordinator and early intervention and I'm here because as the many professionals that work with families I'm one of the lucky ones that gets to go into their home so I feel like it's my responsibility to bring the right people to meet the family's needs but those needs keep changing so the more parents and professionals I can hear from the better education I'll be.
>> I'm Maureen, I'm an educational audiologist from Iowa. With the services that we provide I do birth to 21.

But I feel like I'm an information gatherer. I'm an information diseminor. I'm an advocate for the family and I have to be for the school district to I feel like I have all these different comings and goings so this is just good knowledge.
>> I'm Shannon, I work in Iowa and been working with deaf and hard of hearing students for 26 years now.

Sit at the table regularly with parents, students, administrators, and collaborate with them and just want to learn to do that in the best way possible.
>> Thank you so much. Everyone is included? Okay.
>> I will introduce myself, thank you. Hi, I'm Catalina, I'm from California, L.A. And I'm here just to see, get a pulse, see what's going on. How the diversity can be maintained in the school system for us.

I am from a different country myself. I grew up in a different country. Came here to the United States and I want to see how the schools, the parents, the administration and all that can work together.
>> Thank you. Oh ‑‑ one more. We cannot leave you out.
>> I am Carol, the director of outreach for the Montana school for the deaf and blind. We work with a variety of agencies serving birth through 21 and I'm just here to collect more information to bring back to our state. Thank you.
>> And as Amy's coming up, thank you so much for introducing yourselves. I just wrote try to capture, I'm sure I didn't get them all but the diversity of knowledge, of expertise, and of heart in this room is, I'm very, very impressed. And so please make sure that we utilize one another in the areas that we can learn from one another and I'm going to have Amy come up.
>> Yep.
>> So this year is a less desirable situation with parents, schools and professionals at the table. We want to acknowledge that it sometimes is true that it's a very frustrating kind of situation. So that's what we want to move away from and we'd like to move toward why parents, school professional, collaboration matters. This is a nicer looking picture for one. And the idea of what's being focused on are things that matter so it's a little bit less of just looking at those individuals and their own experience and sort of saying how do we bring together the things that really matter for this child and for this family? We want to talk about who it is at the table. Outside professionals, so we do have people who are trained, people who are training teachers of the deaf. People who are audiologists and as my role as an outside professional, one of the things that we would bring to the table is sort of like reports and those things so we want to talk about both what's happening at the table, the conversation, and then also what are the outcomes that are related to that? Importantly we want to say what does it mean to have a seat at the table? It doesn't just mean that you're present sometimes that is what it feels like for families. Here I am and here's twenty other people. I am here because they told me to be here at this time. What does it mean to be involved we want to give you a chance to share your thoughts about that. What does it mean to you to be present at the table? Not just being there physically but contributing. Is there any thoughts you want to share to that?
>> I mentioned I have a daughter who is deaf and sort of my other side of my life as I'm also a special ed teacher. When we first started having our own meetings it was different to literally be on the other side of the table and it was much scarer than I ever ‑‑ my husband kept saying this is your thing and I said, I know but I don't feel like it is. And shortly after we ‑‑ we ended up moving so that daughter could have better access to services and the district that we chose was so welcoming I sort of felt like it was just by default going to be that first picture and right from the get‑go they really looked at us as parents as experts but also said, our daughter was enrolled in a program at the school for the deaf and they said bring the whole school, bring whoever needs to come here and they said multiple times you teach us and we'll go from there. And it's more than just giving us what I want. I truly believe that they want to know why we need that service and how it can benefit, you know, other kids that may come into the district. So my experience so far has been very positive and I hope it continues that way. We're fairly new to the district but I think the biggest part is we feel not only respected as parents but as professionals almost. They really look at us and say, what do we need to do because you're ‑‑ you can tell us more than we can guide you at this point. Which may sound scary but we trust them so we're not, you know, we don't feel like we're completely leading them but just the fact that they've given us the choice to say who do we need to be here and what do we need to do is really comforting and took us to the second picture and not the first one.
>> Just on that in many cases there isn't respect which is what Jessica mentioned is one of the things that made her experience much more pleasant.

For a number of parents, they approach ‑‑ they come to is empty containers and it's the job of the professional to fill it up and there's very little respect given to the parents with suggestions or thoughts.
>> Thank you.
>> For me, what's it mean to be at the table? I am wondering as a deaf educator myself, how much do you, as a deaf person myself, as a sign language professional, as an advocate what, kind of impact does my comment have to the people or those sitting at the table. Some of the miscommunication that occurs at Gallaudet University is talk about bilingualism. I fully support English and American Sign Language. Some students don't know sign language and I support them and that leads to a false label that Gallaudet is against English. That is not true at all. I wonder at my table if you look at me and you take my comments as a professional, and take them seriously.
>> I would also mention as a parent it's almost what you were saying. My son was mainstreamed. We didn't have a residential program, a deaf school anywhere at the time so we tried to figure out how to give him the services that he needed as well as his other disabilities OT/PT which is all great but the communication and American Sign Language was difficult because he didn't know ‑‑ my husband and I were deaf. We tried to expose to ASL and literacy and all that sort of stuff but it was difficult for them to listen to us and then later we started to see words, how can I help you, that phrase. What do you think that phrase, what is your opinion, so they included the parents more and I felt at that point it'd become more collaborative and a member of that team.
>> I'll keep it simple but I think it's very important for decisions to be made together rather than ahead of time by the team and then presented to the parents.
>> I just had an interesting situation happen literally this week with a ‑‑
>> Try to get you step one step back.
>> Thank you, sorry. The child was transitioning from.

 0‑3 program to a preschool program and his mom was, I thought she was well prepared. She has a home visitor. She's deaf herself, deaf family. Keeps going to preschool at the deaf school. The boxes were all checked and then he didn't ‑‑ he came for a half day I think. And then he didn't come back and when I asked mom she said he's just so little and, anyway, the bottom line was the parent, even though I thought she was well prepared, we have strong parent infant program. We have a relationship I see her as the program administrator I see her on a daily basis coming in and out of the toddler group. She didn't want to leave the toddler group. Woe we had never even discussed it.

I know but I didn't know. I missed it. I feel like coming to conversations like this maybe helps not miss as much? I feel really bad. I have a legwork to do when I get back to repair that.
>> Thank you for sharing that.
>> I think being at the table means I come prepared to listen. And lot of times we try to have, if we know we're going to have a big meeting we like to get the family together, parents together, mom, and just talk about things beforehand in a nice confidential, quiet, comfortable, respectful manner and have the parents take notes and then bring those to the meeting. Having the parent to be like I have something I'm bringing into. Trying to let them know they're a huge part of this team so listening is huge. And then educating them in a nice easy way. We call it a ‑‑ kind of call it we're doing the dance. You're sitting about at the table, you're not telling them what to do but you're asking, have you thought of this, here's some best practice kind of things and as working to understand each person's perspective, each person around that table has a different perspective, they're all coming from different places. Some are look through the deaf lens and some are not. It's made our strategic plan, our main mission, theme, is partnering, our partners in educational success. So we try to help the parent feel like they are a partner. And we go in and, you know, have success with your child.
>> Sounds like your team is doing a very good job to own that space. Trying, of course. Always in progress. Yeah. Let's take maybe two more comments. One more here in the center?
>> I just wanted to address your question about having a professional at the table. I am an adoptive mom of my son. So this is new world, new adventure. I don't know what the services are. I don't know a lot of things but I'm learning them. So I want the professionals at the table to help, not just look at me as the parent and say, well, what do you want? Well, I know what I want but I don't know if that's what my son should have. I don't know what's best for him at this point or how to do that.

I look to the professionals to have a respectful levelled playing ‑‑ conversation with me. Not just expecting, well, you know what to do.
>> That's a really important perspective. Thank you for sharing that piece.
>> Hi. In my case, I definitely depend on the professionals at the table and I always have. In their areas of expertise. But in my case, because I have chosen a mode of communication that most professionals even in the deaf education profession don't understand, I have become the expert in that. In every single meeting, in every single situation. And it has been a burden that has been extremely difficult on me and my family to have to do that. And I have found that the professionals and the school districts respect me as that professional until a mistake is made and they haven't put resources into what they need to put resources into the program for my family and that's when things break down. I think people want to do the right thing all the time but I think they're restricted by administration and that is extremely difficult.
>> Yes. Okay. What it means to have that seat differs for people. But I think that asking all of those at the table in some way, what does that mean to you, can be a part of that process. That for the parents who are new to the game in whatever ways, to say, we have lots of information. We don't want to overwhelm you. You're going to be the decision maker but tell us what you need to know to help make that decision or if you come as the parent who says I have a special education background. We can skip the BS part but let's talk about my kid and this is different from the 20 other IEPs that you sent in this quarter. You can own the space by saying this is what I need, whether the parent or the professional. What it means to have a seat at the table would be. You can outline that and then share that sort of idea with others. I think that that can be a powerful way to help your needs to be met.

That doesn't need to be confrontational to say we are all here at the table. Here's what that would mean to me. Okay?
>> So okay so I grew up an in northern Maine the only deaf child in my family, in my town and at some point thought I was the only deaf person in the state of Maine I didn't meet another deaf person until I was 18 years old when I went to university. So why I say all that is thinking about my mom. And her seat at the table and the huge impact she had on my life. When she found out that I was deaf at five, she was also a teach every and processed a lot through the years about what that meant to be a teacher and a mom and a friend and an advocate and all those different roles. We talked lot about vision in my family. A lot about what do you want to be when you grow up, what impact does your deafness have and so on and so forth. Working with families for the past 20 years I've found that vision is a very lofty word. It's a big word. And I've used it while growing up. What's your vision for life, for future, and going into IEPs, I found that when we break it down it's actually very helpful for families to think what their vision, what's a vision going into that meeting? Sometimes short‑term vision, sometimes long‑term vision, sometimes in the middle sometimes but talking through families is very helpful and you professionals in the room think about what is your vision for that meeting for that child? What's your vision for being at that table? And what do you think this child's vision is going to be when they're old enough to be at the table? So what I'm going to do right now is show you a vision board. Have any of you seen vision boards before? They can be as simple as a little note, piece of paper where you write your vision on. They can be big bulletin boards, a vision, or something like this. We're going to do paper for you today but as I shared when I first stood up here this afternoon, my daughter Adrien we just found out she was hard of hearing. We do visions with my family. Where are we going with this family and with life. She came downstairs the day after and said I have a new vision board! I said, hm, okay, what's this going to be because she has a vision board.

I know what her vision in life. You see her name in the middle. Family's really big. She's always wanted to be a PT. She loves our dog. ASL for deaf kids, ASL is very important for her. Friends are important. Her health is important. Dancing. She's a dancer. She loves to dance. Loves cars. She's getting ready to get a license. Get a brain boost right now. I'm not sure what that means. Maybe she wants to be smart. Music. But what was very interesting about this vision board is that it gave me a new perspective to be thinking about working with families in my own work was the fact that she added Velcro.

PT is now something she takes off. Music she put Velcro. The other things are glued on. I said why are they Velcroed on? She says well, I don't know, this is kind of new for me.

She goes, you enjoy music. So maybe that's going to be okay. But maybe it's not. I don't know. And I could just see her thinking and processing really fast and saying, I'm going to Velcro it on because I want it to stay but if I end up losing 100% of my hearing then I know I'm going to have to enjoy music in a different way. Maybe I'll feel it, see it but I may not be able to hear it. So that's why it's Velcroed. Okay and then PT she's always wanted to be a PT I said why have you change ed that? My mom lived with us, she's had a lot of PT in her life.

She says, well, I've listened to you long enough to know that deaf children need deaf adults in their life. So if I'm going to be a deaf adult maybe I should do something with deaf kids. So maybe she's going to have a career change but I told her deaf kids need deaf PTs as well. Weal ‑‑ we'll see what she does with this but this is a 16‑year‑old process her life. This was before her 504 meeting.

She was processing that, researching different websites and getting ready for that meeting. But professionals getting ready for meetings, parents getting ready for meetings and the vision involved for that. So when we were preparing for this session today we said let's do some vision boards so from your perspective, your seat at the table and as we talked about many of us have different seats at the table. So pick any one that you want. We're going to invite you to come up here today. There's lots of different materials, small paper, big paper, scissors, tape and even some Velcro if you want to add some Velcro. There's stickers, markers, we encourage you today to work by yourself, work with your partner, work with a team and come up with a vision board for your seat at the table. Any questions. You can get as creative or as simple as you want and at the end we're going to have a few of you share your vision. So please come up.
>> Just come up, grab some things, take it back to your table.
>> And you're free to decide how you do it. And from what perspective.
>> If you want to take some and come back later to get more, that's fine.
>> If some folks want to come this way, we can move so we can make it go faster.
>> If I could make a quick announcement. Just grab something and take to it the table. If we try to do it here at the table we will be here until 5 o'clock. If you see a sheet, grab it. There's plenty.
>> I can see everyone's having fun. We'll talk about five more minutes.
>> Because my seat at this kind of table disappears. My vision is that families that I've worked with together will think fondly of me. You can probably tell this is me. I photoshopped myself a little here I want the families that worked with me to think fondly of our time together but also for it to have been a positive experience for them it's really important to me, the reason that I do the work that I do is because of the deaf community. And ASL and so I've never thought that I would be where I am now but I am because of that. Watch, I'll start crying now so it's really important to me that I'm representing that in a positive light.

That I'm who I am supposed to be to give back for that. So, and my family of course, the million hearts, I don't know if this was the right idea but so it's really important that as I navigate the experience I am moving for all the new families so that they're ready to go into the unknown. Question mark sign there. That's what I have so far.
>> I love that. Thank you for sharing and there is no right or wrong with this so don't feel there is. It's your path, your vision. Who's next? Come on up. If you could say again your role.
>> All right. I am a parent of three deaf and hard of hearing kiddos. I am also the executive director for Tennessee's Hands & Voices so my board I tried to capture all of that in this so start each day with a grateful heart. And that's focusing on the positives and what is working. That's pretty important to me because we all go in and we want to change things, we go in with our goals in mind and we forget to focus on the good things that are happening at this school and what everybody is doing right as well. Today is the day. So we are going to start today as soon as I sign on that line. These changes will be made and we will be working towards a positive future for this child. I love your face is my next one. Because that can be kind of hard but I really try to remember that each person at that table is different. We have different skills, different expertise and we need to focus on that. Sometimes it's not their face, it's their skills because their face makes me mad but their skills make me happy. Be kind. It's classy we may not always want to be nice but being mean is not going to help anybody in there so we really have got to focus on those good things. Yield I have so it's time to listen, I need to sit there and I need to listen so before I go, nope, you're wrong and stop them, I need to make sure that I am listening to everything they say because there may be something good in there that I need to focus on first. And then we can work around all that wrong. And then I have take note. So take time to write it all down because there is good stuff happening and we want to go back to that good stuff that just happened. And then I put wildlife on there because, really, it's a journey, we're kind of all going through these lost woods trying to navigate to make it out for this kid and then the little kid in there that's got his tongue stuck out that's really my youngest just so you know. But the focus is on them because that's why we're all there. We are all there to make sure that child's shining.
>> Wow. Thank you.
>> (Applause).
>> Maybe one more? One more?
>> I need a holder. So you can see that I've got a lot of drawn pictures. What they represent is diverse group of people all come together around this center, working with me, working together, it goes both ways I work with them, they work with me. I added no words. Just colors. I added one sticker that says I can and I will. Meaning what I can do I will do. I commit to doing it and I expect the same of you. If you can, you will. There's another sticker that says remember you are loved and that shows our value in one another. The last sticker says work hard, play hard. And I believe that once you worked hard you will enjoy the benefits. Also I added lots and lots of birds flying away and that represents the future. We're not going to hang onto that child forever. We're going to give them wings to fly. If I can and you can we're going to build some wings and build a future for this kiddo. You see nobody holding hands. We are all standing independently working together for the benefit of the child. Always working together but also working apart. But believing in ourselves to achieve the vision. There you go.
>> So beautiful, thank you, all for sharing. We're going to take a little break. Maybe ten minutes. Go to the bathroom, stretch, come back, when we come back we're going to give you some tools and tips from here on out for you. So have a good break.
>> Wake up for that. Yes, hopefully you stretched. Okay. So it turns out that this idea of parent professional and school at the same table hasn't actually been very well studied. When I proposed to my copresenters we got to look at the research on that, Karen said that's you. What I will tell you is there is a growing field of literature that looks at parent and school partnerships.

School and community collaborations. Different. Parent school collaboration. Which is different than partnership. And professionals in school based consultations. You can find research on those. What you really can't find is this idea of how do all of these come to the same table and what role do they play? So when we do think about collaborations across these three sort of roles that are being representative we are talking about interactions and experiences within homes and schools. So what are those interactions like? What are they uniquely and together, how do they form that foundation for developmental trajectories? So that's what we're thinking. We're really looking at all of those roles. Having an important piece in playing, not just at the table, the experience of being at the table but really informing and influencing how a child grows through the educational system. Okay this won't surprise you that parent involvement influences child outcomes but it really does. It's important for parents to know that and be empowered by that and also for professionals and school professionals to sort of say, we need to really engage and partner with parents because what they do is going to have a greater impact than what we do in the classroom. So that's a big deal. And we need to make sure that parents feel they're not just one person at that table but really that everybody is in service of that child and that family. Taking into account and statistically making sense of a child's abilities, so we're not comparing, sorry, that was not intended. We're not comparing children who are in special education programs versus gifted programs. We're not going that, we're controlling for that and controlling for social economic status, SES. When we control for those, we still see that parent involvement has these following impacts. Increasing academic achievement. Improved self‑regulation, self‑regulation in children is the thing that gets them in trouble the most. When a child is better table regulate him or herself, that's good. Fewer discipline problems, better study habits. More inclined to do things like homework those are important things too. More positive attitude towards schools, more likely to continue to go to school and higher educational aspirations given where they are. For their own capacities. Right? But that parent involvement piece is really important. So whether you're training teachers or you're the profession who comes in occasionally just knowing how much we can help parents to both feel empowered by and a little bit responsible for helping to facilitate those outcomes and their kids, that really matters. It can be hard as the parent. It's your job to educate, folks. Yes, but it's your job as the parent too to help follow through to the extent that they are able and to follow through. Because it will make a difference on the kids. That's an elephant in a room. So there is this elephant in the room that we need to address. Parent involvement is shaped by race, class, gender, culture, and language. All of those things the parent, what the parent presents, who they are, influences how schools respond to them and they respond differentially to families who are different than the majority who are sitting at the table. Elephant in the room needs to be talked about. There are power differentials. Absolutely. I live in Massachusetts. Wellesley, Massachusetts is like the richest town around. That every set of parents because you can't afford to live in Wellesley unless you are a doctor or surgeon practically. And so the parents who come to those tables are treated in a way that have very different than the parents south of Boston and that's a very incredibly different socioeconomic and ethnic background kind of community so they might be ten miles apart and they are worlds apart in terms of the experience of the parents have at the table in those situations. I'm going to hand it over to Djenne to say a few words.
>> This is one of the areas that I do a lot of training on cultural reciprocity. But just getting back to what Amy said in the previous slide, how the parent involvement influences the outcome of the child. The parent involvement also not more importantly but it's up there. Influences the outcome of the education system. And listening to some of the stories that each one of you have told I can see Lisa and Janelle, people they know, you have influenced ‑‑ we as parents have influenced educational systems and educational change. Part of why I am here in the cold Chicago, this was not my trajectory. This was not my life. I was going to be a psychologist with heels with the red on the bottom in New York City, whatever they're called the Prada heels in New York City. In a high‑rise. And that was going to be my life. Listening to other people's challenges and helping them. That's where I was headed. Until I was given the family that I was given. And one of the things that I realized and I was taught the professionals in my life, we started out when Malik was born, we were in Massachusetts, my husband's from Massachusetts, I call Boston home. Malik went to the school for the blind and he was in their deaf blind program and that's really where I got training in parent advocacy, being a deaf blind family specialist is that I do have a voice in the room and part of that, well a lot of that really was because we were fighting the Boston public school systems for Malik to go to the school for the blind and I had to learn really quickly that I was the most important person in the room. Of course Malik is the center but my husband and I because we know Malik best, but also I have the power and the ability to change, to be the change agent. In the system not only for my child but other children as well. I said I can influence the system and that started my journey. Growing up I was taught you don't do it for your own but the children that are coming next to you and behind you so as much as I'm doing for my children I'm doing for the other children. So we were able to really edge ‑‑ influence that system. In terms of the elephant in the room, we don't like to talk about it. We ‑‑ and when we say culture, diversity, a lot of times our minds conjure up race, ethnicity, SES, different languages, but really we all have a culture. That's a whole other three hour workshop. But we all come from a culture. That's why we wanted you to share where you come from. Because where you come from, how you were raised, whether it's the part of ‑‑ it's rural, wherever it's from, influences how you, number one, we, view our children, how we view the education system. How we view authority. I was recently teaching in Malawi South Africa and one of the things I learned is the services that the child get by the family is is it a matrilineal society or patrilineal society.

The view of a child with disability. And you have to understand the culture of what, of where you are and I'm not saying being culturally competent because I don't think we can but being culturally understanding also the culture of the school system. Before I go in and I know and I advocate in IEP meetings I know who all is at that table and one of the things I try to do is help the families understand. I am a parent who has become professional. I wear both hats. I can explain. I know you want the moon. Or you want to shoot for the stars, let's try the moon because on the professional side this is what they're able to give you.

And on the parenticide I know what you want and I can be that conduit in between. One of the things that I think is very important that we try to strive for when when I do a lot of trainings especially for professionals, there's a term called cultural reciprocity. And it's not, it's a term that it's reciprocal. I'm not going to become, and we can't become an expert in every single culture but if I can, number one, look at my own bias.

That's the first thing. I've got to look myself in the mirror. What is my bias? What do I think when I walk into a room, what do I carry? I carry my ideas as a parent but also as a professional. I look at this meeting and I go yeah, it's going to be a hard one because it's that dad, it's that mom or do I go in and say, okay, what can we work on. I have to look at myself, my own bias. The second principle is exploring the parent's perspective and inviting the parent's perspective.

And a lot of times that's slowing down and we're going to talk a lot about that as we ‑‑ this afternoon within IEP meetings. Really changing the culture of IEP meetings. We gasp, changing the culture. But what is the parent's perspective. How do they view their child somewhat are their goals? Their values? Never mind the goals but the values. What is important to them? What do they want their children to do? We just did vision boards? What is the vision for their child based on their own values in my own family we have three children and we wanted all three of our children to fly the coop.

Give them ones. I love that. We want to give each one of them wings. So that they can be the best that they can be so that they can be independent. And some of my colleagues say, Malik's deaf, blind, he's got a G‑tube and all of the things that Malik has.

I said, and, he has chores, he needs to pick up after himself. There are rules. We have the same expectations that we have if for girls and one of those expectations is to get out of our house because I've been doing this a long time and I'm tired. Okay? But for other families, in ‑‑ they ‑‑ their value is they're going to set up and have the child live with them. That's fine. There's no judgment but this is the culture in our family and we were very blessed. Our oldest daughter is in Texas. She graduated and is working. And so then comes to Malik. And we're trying to figure out what we're going to do with Malik. Malik went to the school for the deaf for 14 years in North Carolina and we knew through a series of evaluations and we went through a person centered plan. This gives a vision and you do a certain, about three or four times.

Usually starting in middle school towards graduation and you get all the stakeholders at the table. People at the table. That are working with the child. And make plan, a vision for what they want to do. Because as parents we do a lot of interpreting for what our children want when they're younger. They can't really make the decisions, right? But there comes a point where we need to stop and look at our children and say what do they like regardless of their communication, abilities or styles. What do they like? Malik is a ‑‑ with the CHARGE Syndrome he's not a huge signer so I can't say Malik, what do you want to do? What do you like? He's going to look at me. And you know what he'll say, chips. That's all I get out of the boy. Chips. Cognitively he can't so we had to really see what does he like and that's through different jobs, different opportunities that we've given him. And we were able to see, he loves work. He loves going to school. How do we know he likes going to school? Six o'clock Sunday night he get dad's keys and he's signing. Eat. They go and do their man thing and go eat and they have this place they go and dad would drive him back to school. I know Malik loves to be independent. Long story short we found a group home for him and in my mind and culture group home means it's not good but we found a group home, a man that owned several group homes who with our help decided, you know what, let's start a group home for young men who are deaf. And he hired deaf staff and those that were hearing he sent to school the local school to learn basic sign. There are four young men in the house right now who are deaf. And Malik has lived there for almost a year. And it has been amazing. Because we were able to take our value, our culture and provide an opportunity for other young men. The third principle and I'll go quick. The third principle is explaining the provider's perspective. Oftentimes when we have a child we're trying to do an IEP or IFSP. As professionals. We have an agenda. We h ‑‑ know what needs to happen.

What goals, what therapy but really taking the time to explain those to the parent based on their values. And their needs for their child. And the last is using all of that to collaborate on that goal. One of the things with Malik's group home we use these principles with the owner. The owner had nine other homes with individuals with intellectual disabilities but this is the first one with young men who are deaf. So it took a lot of, he had to look at some of his bias. You know, he told me, I met with him last week and he said, Miss Morris, I didn't think we could do this. I was afraid. I didn't want to mess up but he was able to tell me his bias. We were able, over the last year, to get him the support that he needed, the values he needed with the parents whose children live in the home and we were able to collaborate and provide a place for young men, that is really becoming a state of the art in our state and hoping to bridge a gap in other states so folks can live on their own and be supported. I know that was a long way to say that but I think that's important to share. It's not easy to let our children fly the nest.

There are fears. Who is going to take care of them? All of those fears but if we can use who we are to leverage and provide that build capacity then we can help our children to have that independence.
>> Thank you. Related to participation so the idea of authentic participation is something that does come out in the literature and says that that's really necessary. So again, if it's not just presence at the table, it's participation at the table. So strengths of that, when we ‑‑ when it's democratic, when there are learning objectives to put out there. When there's an idea of collectively this is where we want to focus our energies, our meeting, our thinking. Those things matter. When leaders facilitate the opening of space. It's unfair for the professional, the school based and the outside professionals at the table to say, parents weren't engaged. That's not really fair. It's the onus of who is setting the climate and establishing the school culture. Those are the people responsible for engaging that participation. It is also not always the participation of set of parents. Studies that have looked at ethnic differences in groups will say, for example, in communities where there's a large number of people who are from the Vietnamese community who have a parent that claim their stance can be really difficult but what you can do if you're in a community where it has a subculture such as a Vietnamese community to say can you bring in a community leader to help us understand those norms and values as well.

Sometimes you engage with a community. Not an individual or set of parents. That can be one way, both to educate ourselves and own our biases and to become aware of what might be the greater needs. It might be difficult for a particular parent to have the onus on them to educate us about what we don't know about cultures that are different from our own so by learning about that in other ways we can help to say those are the things that are attributable to your culture, your religion or your affiliations of these kinds and then these are the things that are unique to you as a parent or representative from that group.

Okay. So the research also talks. About the ecology of the school. So there's a researcher who talks about ecological theory. The child in the middle and concentric circles that go out from there. You're influenced by your family, your extended family and your direct community and your affiliations also be where you live and the government systems in play. All of those things influence who we are. Schools also have that sense of ecology. What ‑‑ how do they organize? What are the transactions like? Does parent always have to go through the school secretary before they can talk to anybody? Or do they feel like, you know, somebody's given them permission to say when you have a question, please reach out to me. That is really empowering for a parent and it might be that they only use that contact once but when a parent feels like I've been invited to contact you with questions, I've been invited to share only thoughts or have that pre‑meeting and sort of learn how to prepare before going into that hugely powerful.

Whether they take advantage of that or not creating a system that builds that in is one way that we can welcome family to the table.

Changing from the reductionist perspective, here's where I would argue that's what a lot of schools do sadly. We talk about what the child's not doing well. What services or supports they need and how we can get them moving along. It's kind of boils it down to what our challenge is. Instead, I think if we think about the developmental or the ecological of those systems around the child what do we need to do to bolster those. That sounds much better and is much better from the parent perspective to say how can we use what the strengths in my community to help build these skills rather than focusing on what is perceived as not strengths for my child.

We may have concerns in math. How they're not meeting certain goals or we can say math is an area we really want to bolster. Can you think of any ways in your community or using your extended family that we can bolster that. Oh, I have an idea. It turns out my uncle's an accountant. Maybe we can set up a time for the child ‑‑ that can be a positive way to address a math challenge rather than saying the child has deficits. By thinking a little bit more around the developmental sphere around the child that allows us to be more creative and find strategies to say that empowers the parent to feel they're doing their part. My child struggles with math but I have a cousin or an uncle or whatever who can really foster this. Let's do that and that can be positive for the family and help bolster those child's skills. Okay. Karen.
>> How many of you have ever been in an IEP? Almost everybody so we're going to use the IEP, individual educational planning process for an example of having a seat at the table. From the parent's view, that's what we're going to talk about for pretty much the rest of our time together. So, an IEP should be a collaboration. I have two people tell me what collaboration means to you? Anybody, collaboration. Working together. One more. Respecting each other, thank you. Does that always happen in an IEP? No, it doesn't. Why not? Anybody have an idea why?
>> (Speaker far from mic).
>> Yeah. That's one of many. One more?
>> I think two things are very important. E ‑‑ expectations and assumptions.
>> Thank you. Okay. You are absolutely right. Expectations, assumptions, time, hurried, reports not there in time. All those things and many more. We're going to share Djenne, Amy and I first some bad experiences that we've had.

And then we're going to shift over and share a successful story because you always want to end on a successful note and then we're going to give you a few tips. Can you click that? So not so good experience. That's a picture of how I felt before an IEP. I don't know if any of you have felt that way both as a parent and as a professional I've felt exactly like that. So my not so good story. I am going to say that in this story, I was the professional that was brought in. But I was not at the actual meeting. I'm going to talk about the same amer ‑‑ family in my not so good experience and my good experience. This mom has a child that has a unilateral hearing loss.

So one ear. And she was recently diagnosed with autism. A little girl. She's three or just turning three so it was her transition IEP into part B. And baby services into school services. Mother has a vision for her child. She's a part of a deaf community. Her language is ASL. And she's very involved in everything to do with deafness, American Sign Language culture, she wanted her little girl at the school for the deaf. The system, the school, showed up at the IEP with an IEP that was already written. All done and placement was not at the school for the deaf. The placement was at the school for children with autism. So again, I was not at this IEP. I heard later from mom. I heard later from the school, the advocate and everyone else.

What happened was everybody not mad. Mom got furious the minute she saw the IEP already written especially when they went through inch by inch and realized they already had a plan. She got very upset. Very angry. Threw things at the IEP administrator, got on the table. Stamped her feet. It was not a good scene. Very scary. The school director IEP administrator got very angry. Threw some papers down. Got up, stomp ‑‑ stomped out of the room. Came back.

My staff didn't know what to do. Two hours later the meeting's still going on. It was chaotic. They said, Karen, we need you at this meeting. We're going pause. So they stopped the meeting. Poor mom left. The school administrator left. And not one thing was decided in that meeting. Everybody left feeling sick. Feeling not heard. There was no process done. It was really, really awful. I will tell you the second part of the story in a few minutes.
>> Hard to top that but I'll tell you a story from the professional side of a not very good IEP meeting. Now early in my career as a psychologist I had done an outside evaluation. So I did cognitive testing I came to an IEP meeting. Assessment was paid for by the school district so I thought that meant they wanted it. That doesn't mean they actually wanted it. I shared the results. I explained the child's learning profile.

I explained recommendations and offered ideas for placement and it was all yes. Parents felt supported. Very good. We get around to the last person who is the placement coordinator who said, well, we're not doing that. End of story. That was it. But wait I just spent like 20 hours assessing this child if school has no obligation in any way, shape or form to take an outside opinion.

That was not the parent's understanding going into it. They probably may not have committed the time that they did. And they said the school based assessment which was done by a school based psychologist who didn't sign. The child did. The school psychologist said I don't know how to assess this child admittedly and kudos to them.

But did give something and so that was what carried the day. And it was my first experience of being an outside professional where my opinion mattered not at all in terms of changing what happened for this child.
>> So I'm going to give you a story from a cultural perspective. This is a child that I had worked with in my role at beginnings I met him when he was maybe about one years old. Profound deafness. And the ‑‑ and there was some concern that he might have autism. This is a family from Nigeria and the mom had another child and the dad was working, going back and forth. Over the next several years, it was decided that this child would do so much better if we, if the family agreed to have cochlear implants. The father was not in agreement. The mother wanted to do whatever she needed to do for her son. The father was not in agreement. They had taken the child back to the village. Tried to get healing done. The child still was deaf. And the professionals from early intervention were just having a hard time. And the mother was having a hard time because she was in conflict with her husband. And it got to point the where he had to take it before the villagers to see if they could get the village elders to see if they could get permission for the child to have implants. Again, the professionals, I mean, just the angle, well, this is what he needs and I'm not a cultural broker. But in this instance, I was because I do understand the culture and just, even from what she from just my up bringing but what she was explaining but having to tell them we have to wait. We cannot push her and pressure mom to do something that her culture is driving right now. But he's losing time, he's, you know, there's so many things he's losing the access and we understood all of that but we needed to give time. And it turned out a year later he was given permission to get the implants. He got the implants and went to school and was really, he was doing so well. Sweet, sweet boy. We started with some sign with him and his brother and they were really working together and he went to school and he ended up being switched to several schools. For one reason or another because they didn't feel that they could ‑‑ they just kept saying this program will educate him better. This program will educate him better. Now knowing all this history I'm sitting in a meeting with the mom, an IEP meeting, five, six years later in fact. And the teacher just said well, I can't, I can't educate him. I don't know what to do with him. And he is not doing X, Y, and Z. What you were saying about the reductionist versus what he could do. He did get a diagnosis of autism as well. We have a lot of professionals support for the teacher but the teacher couldn't get past her own bias. And we were sitting in the meeting one day and she just kind of said I'm done. And looked at the mom and said, this, it comes from the home. In so many words. You know, that's where I kind of took my glasses off, I'll be honest with you and I said, do you know who this mother is and what she's gone through to get to where she needed to get for her child?

And I kind of talked about what she had to do even going against ‑‑ being willing to go against her own culture to get the implants when is best for her child. I said you're not talking to a mom who is uneducated ‑‑ all the things that she was implying. I looked at the mom and I said, tell her who you were back in Nigeria. She was a biochemical engineer, educated and, you know, was working in a lab and all of these things.

And the teacher's mouth just dropped open. Because she was treating her as someone who didn't know and here am I going to make decision for you because of what I think, my own bias. And we got to the point where we just stopped the meeting and I said we can't go forward because this teacher right here is not able to teach this child because of her own bias and had to get the principal involved and eventually the child was removed from her classroom. Because she could not get past her own bias in working with the child.
>> So some nicer experience. That's the goal. Not to have these horror stories so to finish off my story I decided I was going to do some pre‑work before the next IEP. I had to calm everyone down and listen to mom and the administrator and try to see what happens. I had some pre‑visits. We walked into the meeting and I said anything I learned about an IEP is you don't schedule an hour. IEPs should never ever be rushed and I think somebody said over there when I said why don't they work that's what usually happens. The administrator is looking at their watch, like we have to get out of here so we plan three hours. Everybody blocks their time. That was the first successful piece. And then we started with mom. I said let's start with mom. He talked about her little girl and other things that she can do, what she enjoys, what mom's vision for her was and I said let's talk to the school so they talked about what the school has to offer. What do we see the school for the deaf offering this little girl.

What can they do? What can't they do? So it became much more of a discussion. In the meantime we had also sent in ASL specialist to do an observation of the little girl in a few different environments. At the school for the deaf, and then in the autism program. Surprisingly to mom the ASL specialist thought she was better served in the autism program so what we did was we took all the things that mom said she wanted and we made them happen in the program for children with autism. By starting with mom and listening to all the whats that she wanted and not focusing on the exact place and the exact thing, talking about the what, not the where. Made all the difference in the world.

When you take placement out and you start with what do you need, what do you want? Mom was calm, the administrators were calm we also had an empty IEP. We put it on a projector just like this. We had a laptop and it was projected up and we walked through every line of the IEP together. It was blank. So mom was able to fill in each line. Talking about strengths. How many IEPs where they skip over the strengths? Don't skip over that. And always start with the parent and then the teachers. An IEP administrator should never fill out the strengths. What about concerns? What goals are we going to work on? Mom started. She gave her goals. She gave her concerns. And then the school went and then the IEP administrator we flipped everything around instead of starting with the IEP administrator we started with mom. And by going through the process it made a world of difference. So that little girl is attending school in the program for children with autism. She has an ASL specialist that sits with her everyday. A deaf mentor going in. She has an educational interpreter so we put a lot of the things that mom wanted into that program. Mom felt heard. She has a cultural perspective embedded into the process and left feeling really good.
>> Good job, Karen. So a positive example, as an outside professional. I was able to establish an ongoing relationship with a regional program that served deaf and hard of hearing children up to around second grade. One of the things that we found to be successful is to remove the emotion that very often parents had emotions going into this and as did the school and it could be heightened and so as the person who does psych assessments I could say, well not necessarily. Sometimes you do need to have the conversation about needs and wants and sometimes you need to raise it to a different level of looking at child's development. And when you take out some of those pieces that can sometimes be very successful. But the conversation that happened with the parents in advance and with the school in advance to say, what role can I play in this particular situation can be very fruitful. Sometimes, as an outside professional I might go in and present this, a report, or sometimes it's much more educational. I might talk about what does this look like? When I'm looking for problem solving abilities in a child who has not had sufficient access to language early enough. What is it that I'm looking for?

There's certainly situations where parents feel angst. You see stuff we might not see. When you frame it in terms of abilities and also what it is that you're looking for and the bigger scope of things, you can lead to some really positive success.
>> I'll share another family that I've worked with become pretty close with. Child ‑‑ now is 13. And has CHARGE Syndrome. And mom just over the years has been feeling very frustrated, she moved from another state where they had a deaf blind intervener and in the state of North Carolina we don't have, our Department of Public Instruction doesn't have the title of deaf blind intervener. And mom has always wanted her son to have a deaf blind intervener.

And it's just been a series of challenges with her trying to understand that and a lot of it is just her going, she knows what he needs. And going through her own grief. Grieving process. And he's got a lot of challenges going on but not acquiring the language she feels he should be.

Again, this is another child that has kind of bounced from school to school so I received a call saying the day before an IEP. From mom saying I need you to be at this IEP because we're going to go to due process. Because if they don't agree to have a deaf blind intervener, I'm going to ‑‑ we're going to go to due process and I knew that wasn't ‑‑ the minute she said that, you know, meeting was going to close down and she was just going to go in a place that it did not need to go into. Talk to mom, met her earlier and said, let's hold that. You know, I wanted to validate her feelings because she ‑‑ he needed a one‑on‑one. We knew that but I said, let's hold that whole due process talk until, you know, let's see what they'll give us.

We went into the meeting. They had somebody from the Department of Public Instruction there to act as a mediator because they had a feeling that mom ‑‑

It was escalating. The wonderful thing was that we were able to say ‑‑ mom was saying for years and years and years I wanted him to have a deaf blind intervener. The person from DPI said, let me explain, we don't have that person. But what are you looking for? And I brought a paper that had the duties of a deaf blind intervener. And I said, okay, let's look at these responsibilities. Because really mom is look for, not the what but the who. Who would be best in helping give this child access to education, communication, and so we were able to take several of the deaf blind intervener roles and put them on the IEP. We said, can we list this. This is the type of person and remember he's 13 and will go into high school next year. We need to have listed the type of person the qualities that they need in order to help him to succeed. So we really replicated the roles of a deaf blind intervener.

Never called it a deaf blind intervener because we couldn't. We called it a paraprofessional and luckily the principal said I have the best person that can be in this role and they're willing to be trained in deaf blind education from our deaf blind specialist in North Carolina.

And so we were able to do that and this person, is able to follow your son into high school. And mom just kind of de‑escalated and she's tough cookie and she said I still want deaf blind intervener and I said that's where you can go to the legislature because everyone is trying to get a deaf blind intervener recognized and the mom said I can do that and gave her something to do because the school system was able to give her whom she needed for her son and that person will be following the child to high school.
>> Okay. So different IEP stories. IFSP stories that you've all had. You can reflect back, look back, and think about what worked and what didn't work. We're going to have you take a few minutes and just work at your table. Talk with your teammates around you. And just share some ideas and then we're going to have each table report back one or two things that you discussed, what worked and what didn't work. Go ahead. Anybody need an interpreter?
>> Okay. I know that there are some good conversations. Going on. One, two, three, four, should we have each table just maybe ‑‑ okay. At this time if we could just have each table choose one and we'll just talk about what you talked about at the table maybe one thing that worked and one thing that didn't work. Anyone want to be the ‑‑
>> So our group talked about having a common language amongst your parents and professionals. And then building that winter relationship so that you're assuring when you're talking to each other that you're both understanding and having the same perspective when you are thinking the child in mind and we used one simple example like the word "included" well included from a professional standpoint might mean one thing and from parent standpoint might be something totally different. You might think the kid is included because you send them out with the group recess and yet the parent is thinking I want them included within the classroom so using real specific language.
>> So what I am hearing is comment specific language but both parties explaining what that language means to them so that they can come to a common agreement. Thank you. Excellent. Someone from this table, please.
>> We talked about the parent report that the parents prepare for the professionals and give to them at least a week or two before coming to the meeting. And there were a lot of great things that can happen within that IEP meeting once the professionals understand where the parents are and also in that parent report from the very beginning including the student so within that parent report you include your strengths, your challenges, goals maybe some modifications of things that your child would need and a vision for your child and your child's vision for themselves. So you start including the child's perspective right from the very beginning within that parent report. So eventually, that will turn into the student report and they will lead the parade thinking that, you know, you teach the parents how to advocate and then the parent ‑‑ the child will learn how to advocate themselves later. What doesn't work is when we come to the table, we spend about an hour or two discussing all those things that could be done prior because parents have given that information to the school and also with the schools providing a draft earlier for the parent so they can look over the information as well.

So everyone's prepared, coming to the meeting and that six hour meeting turns into maybe a two hour meeting. Not a one hour meeting but, you know, a two or three hour meeting.
>> Excellent. What I'm also hearing you saying is having the school and the parent having the buy in that each report is important and agreeing to reading them and providing them early before their meeting.
>> Yes. And if the school does not kind of recognize that we ask the parents that during the parent input section, that they bring up the report, and go through it. At that point just to make sure that that was included.
>> Thank you. Anyone from this table want to report out?
>> Go Tennessee, go.
>> Just so you know I didn't volunteer, I was thrown under the bus. Okay. So we talked about the all about me child reports and so the child can draw their picture, draw their goals. You can focus on emotional goals as well not just academic and you can start to see what the child wants the parent can value the child's input from early on and then you can move on and as the child gets older you see their goals change, their perspective of themselves change. You see the parents take hold of that but we also talked about what didn't work and that was silence so just sitting there, we were talking about, you know, trying to get families encouraged to come out. And be at these IEP meetings and so we were trying to decide what worked and the only thing we could really decide that didn't work is to just have silence. Not try. Not do anything. We've got to at least try.
>> Excellent. Thank you. That all about me report is wonderful. I have had that for Malik since birth. And it's changed from medical to educational and I hand it to every medical professional and if they don't read it when they come into the room I say, have you read the report, oh, well have a seat, take a minute and read it. This way we can have a conversation, an informed conversation rather than asking me the million questions and then educationally it's the same thing. And it could be used even to fill in that parent piece. Anyone from this group would like to share?
>> Something that one of the people at the table said was very challenging as part of being a teacher for deaf children who when the parents come at the table and there's nothing to say or they're just sitting there. And how she truly appreciates the parents being in bold, in having an opinion and being able to make decisions instead of saying you decide. You tell me what to do. You know, you write and it that was very challenging on that part another thing that we shared in my state. I was sharing that once we, you know, place a child in the school for the deaf, I know that child will be taken care of because the teaching staff at the school for the deaf are amazing advocates for deaf children and they will work with the the system, against the system, truly strong advocates for deaf children. The biggest challenge is when deaf children go back out to the school for the deaf out to the mainstream that's when we have a big challenge again because the school staff are no longer that strong advocate for the children.
>> Okay. So we were, I guess they decided to pick me. We had a bit of discussion that was a little bit different than yours working with IEP and parents and deaf kids. I have an opposite experience here. I'm a mom, I have two coda children. So they're both codas. They both had problems in school. Because the school didn't know how to handle the children who had parents who were deaf or hard of hearing. And there's positives and negatives about that but they would focus on the negatives with the children rather than the positives. It was always about the negatives of the children. How many of you already know that coda ‑‑ how many are codas in this room? Or are aware of coda in this room? Okay, so coda, all right, more people know what it means, okay, great. So it's children of deaf adults. Coda. And they can be, you know, any child who has a parent who is deaf or hard of hearing but the kids live with us 24/7, in a house, that is a very noisy house. It's a very, very noisy house everyday. A deaf house is a very noisy house. There's stomping and screaming and trying to get attention. That's our culture. That's how we live in our house and that's my children. They're used to that. When they go into school, they want to make the noises and the stomps and then the school feels there's something wrong with the children and the teachers perceive something is wrong. They will report to the principal that maybe there is some behavioral things going on. Maybe we should get an evaluation and so the principal that happened in my school, the principal called me, they didn't tell me that there would bother people in the room at this meeting. I thought it was just going to be the principal and myself so we came to the meeting and there's this whole team of people sitting around the table, seven or eight different people if I recall, we're a little confused we're thinking something's wrong with the kids. We're not sure what's going on. We go into the meeting. They talk about a loud behaviors, all of these negative things. Everyone's talking about all the negative things going on in the school and all of them are negative of course. So we're sitting there listening to all these comments and thinking I'm ready to believe to be honest but I'm not going to leave I'm here. So I'm sitting there asking them to go ahead, share with me what you have. And then I ask, do you know what it means to be a CODA? Anybody else? And so like you people you experience, you know, but they all looked at us like, hm. Imagine living with a deaf person 24/7. They can't imagine that of course so they don't know what our house is like. It's a noisy house. It's our culture. The one thing is is that normal? That is normal for us. Touching is normal for us. Making noises is normal for us. There's nothing wrong with that behavior. They didn't understand that concept at all. They didn't get it at all. So that's one example of what we can do to look at taking a negative and making it a positive. And then my daughter preschool, the principal was approachable in a very positive way. They called me, said can we have a meeting, can we talk a little about your daughter's progress? I was up for that. Went to the meeting, sat with the principal and then she asked me to, do you know where I can get an interpreter so I had a list of where she could get an interpreter. They brought in an interpreter for the meeting for us. We had the meeting and she said I don't know how to say this and I said say it anyway you need to say it. I'm here. Say it. So you know that your daughter doesn't speak right, right? You know that, right? And of course I know that. We're a deaf family. I don't know what she sounds like when she talks but I didn't think that was any weird thing. I'm like, you can teach the phonics, you can teach the sounds, go ahead, do that. So that everything's fine. But that, I mean her first language understanding is sign language. I don't want that to be messed with. I want to leave that in place but speaking English is important too.

So in the future I don't want bullying from other students because they sound funny or something to that effect and the principal was fine with that. We touched the phonics of English. Everything was fine but the point is that was a totally different approach than the first one. It's a little different than maybe your discussions but we as parents have power to make the change in the system.
>> We're going to talk about strategies for promoting this parent school collaboration. We have touched on these things as we've gone through the afternoon together.
>> We've talked a little bit about this. As Amy said the things we have are things you have come up with. As I said in my story I think always starting with the family makes such a difference when you can start with mom or dad or if the child is old enough to be there start with them.
>> Using photo to anchor the conversation can be very powerful. Asking parents to bring in ‑‑ when you come to that IEP meeting bring a picture from home that you really cherish. This can help everybody at the table to remember which child they're talking about if they're sitting in slew of meetings back‑to‑back and make sure people say, oh, that is that family. That help to represent that piece. It also can be powerful to have ask the school to have a picture. If you show a child interacting with their peers that might be a big concern for a particular set of parents and you say, look, here's us doing art. And here's how well your child is integrated included in that situation. It can be illuminating on both sides.
>> So thinking about the vision boards and vision statement again and the concept of values as I said before vision is a very big word and it's hard to describe that sometimes for parents and/or professionals but as you think about values, helping families see, and the school perspective see what's important to you. What do you value and starting with that. If you can start your meeting with the concept of values on both ends of the spectrum on the school side, the outside professional side, the parent's side, everybody think about what they value in that child in the process in their own seat at the table. Sometimes verbalizing that, going around the IEP themselves and starting with the family. What do you hope for today and what do you value for this child? It just puts a very positive spin on a meeting.
>> One example of what that might look like. For example, going from the vision of my child currently has 50 words and I would like for them to have 75. The value that underlies that might be we really value communication and want to be able to know what's happening with our child and right now the communication isn't strong enough for us to have a strong sense all the time about what's really going on so it feels different. It's not just a difference in changing one word to another but it shifts that focus to what drives that family and that's an important shift. Yes.
>> I just wanted to add for especially for those who have the luxury of time with the families, the luxury of time. And so I think you are very, very important in helping families to tease out what your values are. Because families can think, okay, I'm going into a meeting. I have to dot my Is and cross my Ts and it's going very didactic. Rather than what are the values.

I have two pieces of paper and we talk about, you know, the strengths, the challenges, of the child. But then I say, I have a blank one and I have one that I fill out with the family. And I ‑‑ I say I'm going to interview you. Tell me what your values are. What is your vision? And that vision, like what do you mean, I say, well, it could be for this meeting or for the next year, for five years, for the future. What can we do to help in three, five, future years? What supports do you need?

I have a series of question that I ask the family. It's hard. But I also ask clarifying questions to the family. And say, just dump it all on me.

Just talk and I write it down and I say, okay, this is what you've said. Now you have the blank peace of paper. And usually it's with the moms because it's during the day. I say take this to not only your spouse or significant other but this is a good time for dinner time conversation with the rest of the family. And the child. This is what you have given, fill in the blanks with the rest of the family. And this is going to be kind of your value statement. So when you get to the IEP or a meeting you have something concrete, something written, that shows what you value, what your family values.
>> Amy and I have talked a lot about this. I kind of grin and look up and see what that is. Amy has done some consulting with our school and has done a lot of evaluations for students that are in our school district and throughout the state of Maine and we talk a lot about the report. The report. Quote. And how reports we've gotten from Amy or other psychologists or speech therapists, the report comes, it's red in the IEP and then goes in the file. I've asked Amy and asked Amy, how do we change that? How do we make it a living document? There's got to be a way for team to talk about "that report" and how to make that live throughout the next year in the IEP. Are they going to take it out again? Are they going to have the psychologist come back. Because Amy, spends 20 hours writing these reports. And then it's just on the shelf or sits in a file. What good is it really going to do? Those numbers, those recommendations, all the information that's there was done for a reason. The team made that recommendation to have that evaluation and it's not just about numbers it's about that child and working together to keep those documents really viable and alive and ongoing as something that's a big passion of mine and I think it'll make for a more positive outcome for the child. Do you want to add, Amy, from your outside perspective?
>> Yeah, I will say that as a psychologist you're doing a three year reeval. It can be really difficult for school to say here's all these recommendations and we can't do them all now. I love the idea of both reports being written in ways that sort of break it down a little bit more like in the short‑term and in the longer term and also think about these things. If you have in‑house people, if it's school based people who are doing those assessments I love these ideas around how do we make sure that it gets represented. That we revisit that last report when we have an annual progress report meeting rather than relying on the idea that they were supposed to have remember it. Three years is a really long time. Kids change. They grow. But it really should be capturing a moment in time. To the extent that you can be creative in making these reports carry more weight in time. Really serves the families well. One possible solution is being a paid consultant for Maine but we're working on that. Okay, having the frame of mind that, you know, you go into an IEP and you're going to win or you're going to lose pretty much means you're going to lose. If you switch that frame of reference and that perspective, it's really not winning or losing and I think the examples that both Karen and Djenne shared were good ones where the family went in saying this is what I want and you were able to boil it down to, what are the facets of that that are really important. Can we work to meet those? That's one way to move away from I'm ‑‑ I'm winning because I am getting what I asked for. These are the things that I think are important. These are things other people think are important and where do we find that medium where we do what we can to best serve the child and optimize their development. Part of that is moving away from having a really set agenda and being a little bit more flexible which can be hard but we have to challenge ourselves to do that.
>> Are there any other strategies that your ‑‑
>> What's a strategy?
>> Anything else ‑‑ strategies are hard because there's so many things that we can do and we wanted to kind of give you an idea but if anyone has ‑‑ before we close up, you're going to make me laugh.
>> Because I'm laughing ‑‑ the reason I'm laughing is because at the end of the discussion I realized that we have not talked about children who have cochlear implants. And how many times when families come either to early intervention or to a three‑year‑old they think a cochlear implant, this is an interpretation, is going to cure that deafness. And that's something that we haven't addressed. The reason I was laughing because when I said it she said get mic and I said no and she gave me a hairy eyeball.
>> I want to do add something, or a strategy that we use to get the data that you're talking about, brought up in reoccurring IEPs and that is for specific recommendations that weren't going to be used to be written in the written notice. And that has helped dramatically for remembering that, you know, we didn't, this recommendation was given but we didn't accept it at this time because of this X, Y, and Z. We will revisit it next year or whatever it is in six months that having it written in the IEP, you know, then you have record of it. It's there. And it has made a difference in making sure that, you know, the parent will say, hey, you know, you said you ‑‑ use this thing but we would revisit it at this point and so that's ‑‑ at least a way to ‑‑
>> We've talked about what doesn't work or how to help with people that are noncompliant on our team. We haven't talked about what happens when we go in and things are working right. We're not appreciating those on our team that are focusing on our child. We're not focusing on the good at this point. We need to appreciate everything that they are doing. Whoever it is on the team. Because when you do have an issue with that person, it's going to be lot easier to ask them to help you if you've been appreciative along the way for what they have done.
>> Along those same lines a great IEP I went to, the parents came in with a bunch of doughnuts. Doughnuts can help start a meeting really well and when you have the picture of the child and that kind of thing. Talk about that, it can get you started off right. I've always talked with a parent who has that win lose attitude and saying before this next meeting I want you to write down all the positive things here and then, you know, some of the things that aren't working so well. We know that already. But I think the school needs to hear those positive things first to thank them and then you eat the doughnuts.
>> Can I add to that? Just a cultural perspective from that. I worked at the family from Pakistan so instead of doughnuts they brought tea and they brought I can't pronounce the name of it but something like a biscotti from their culture. That was a really brilliant way to open that up here's a treat but here's something from our culture and that gave, you know of course this naturally leads to conversation around culture and a curiosity on the part of the people around the table. So, yeah.
>> A different perspective too I'm an educator as well. So I know that as a parent I usually walk into IEP meetings for my son and there is probably ten different professionals sitting around that meeting already having had conversation already.

So it's an uncomfortable feeling when I walk in. So as teach, I always invite the parents to come into my classroom, fifteen minutes before the meeting starts so that I can set it up differently so I don't put a parent in that perspective because it's not a good feeling.
>> Just briefly I want to emphasize another our table we talked about three things first the school, the family and the professional.

Those three things. Those three elements. Parents are quite important but don't forget the student is part of that family and we need to bring the child's perspective into the conversation.

Put the child in the IEP meeting. It's appropriate to have the child there. But as a parent, we need to advocate for the child why they have these goals, what the child wants and the parent speaks for them. Do you want to be a signing child? What is it that you want. Empower that child to have a voice so they are truly represented during the meeting and understood throughout the process because that's who it is about. It's about the child. It's a student centered meeting and the interpreter's role in the IEP. Yes the child may have an interpreter that serves them during the class but when they enter the IEP that changes their role. They are free to express their communication access, what's working, how the child is communicating and they are being communicated to.

That's representation of the child. That interpreter is closely aligned with that child everyday. And that should be emphasized in the IEP. So that if a different interpreter comes in and interprets the meeting if necessary.
>> We're talking I think about a very traditional approach to deaf education, deaf schools, deaf students in public schools, deaf students using sign language. We're not really talking about children and I have no way of knowing what, who is in room. Children who have cochlear implants who are not using sign language, who are using only the cochlear implant, who are not being educated in the traditional deaf manner. No matter what, that traditional may be to each person in the room and I think seeing the change in culture over my son is 40 years old and when we work with individuals now the presence of cochlear implants, the presumption of cochlear implants I think we need to address that as people who participate in IEP meetings.
>> I work with a lot of kids with cochlear implants and I think most of the successes have been for their parent who is are really big advocates for their kids to say, yes, my child has access to all those speech. That doesn't mean he learns the same way that Suzie and Johnny and I think that's been my role and Shannon's role, and the early interventionist role. That professional piece to educate the moms and dads and grandmas and grandpas so say, now remember when you go into that meeting what we've been talking about because they're going to take it from you better than they're going to take it from me. And I ‑‑ kudos to all the moms and dads who have done that but that's the pace we have to teach is yeah, they have access to speech but that doesn't mean their brain is functioning the same way as all their little friends and that's a hard thing to get your educators to understand. Because they act like hearing kids but they don't learn the same way so it puts a whole new spin on it.
>> Hi. I have a seven‑year‑old that is bilaterally implanted at 14 months. He we want to an oral program the day he turned three. Had a two year delay at that point in language. He has other additional programs. He will learn sign language for about two and a half years but his hand is shot. He was never a signer. It just did not work for us. He left that program at the age of six. I'm sorry. I'm trying to remember. The age of six. With a language gap of about six months. So he was very successful the challenge today, he's fully mainstreamed with standardized testing for 73% for literacy. 83% for math. The challenge is having educators that know how to work with an oral child that is deaf. It's a huge challenge and I have been ‑‑ I mean I see for other people's case conferences three times a week. They think they know what they're doing and that, it's a huge challenge because I want to respect what they're doing, they help, they're providing for my child on their own capacity but they don't know what they don't know and they don't want to hear that many times and it's very hard to bring that up. But that's a big challenge. You know, we work so hard as parents and we try our best for our kids and they're doing good and you just have that feeling that it's slipping through your fingers.

Something's slipping through your hands. I think it's just part of the years go by and the educators getting better and working with children with cochlear implants. It's possible. We're just not there yet.
>> One more comment and we will wrap it up.
>> I'm going to try to keep this short and sweet and hopefully not forget anything. We need to also emphasize that it's not want the parents for the child it's what the child actually needs. We'll see often parents will say I want for my child this, I want this, but really we need to look at what the child needs and every child is so different so that's an important focal point. Personally what I've learned from my own son is to say to the team, listen, this discussion is not personal. Right now, what I'm sensing for specific situations sometimes I'll sense that there's not a right fit for some professionals and that we need to get other people at the table and just to be table say, listen, you're not qualified to work with this child and it's not personal. It's just we need to stay focused on what the child needs. And we as parents are there to speak up for our children. So we have to remember what we say at those tables are not personal. This is about what the kids need. Two more things I know my brain is going crazy but two more things I promise. I think when we look at the, what each letter stands for, right? So if we actually look at, and especially progress being something that we're striving for, we really do want to make progress in this process. We do want to take note of the data, what's available, what research is out there. And then, you know, find out what the percentages are, for example, are 55% our goals met. Let's keep our eyes on that data and track that data. 50% would be halfway, right? So 50% however according to the grading scale traditional and school would mean an F so people aren't going to be satisfied when they say 50%. We need to keep that in mind. One more thing IEPs use things like English language deficiencies or proficiencies. English language proficiency. Yeah. I'm sorry. I can't see. When we're talking about limited English proficiency. LEPs. Most of the time schools quickly check yes or no and often check the no box. Children will struggle but it's important we check yes and focus on that as well. Okay? That's it. I'm done.
>> I want to thank everyone for their comments. You know, we have done a lot in the last three hours. We've talk ‑‑ we started with the vision. Our vision boards and you can feel free to take some more and, what I ‑‑ we don't have time to talk about it but really think about through this ‑‑ this is the ‑‑ beginning of our EHDI conference. How is your vision different when you leave in how can it be different, how will it be different when you leave? The other thing is ‑‑

What will you do? I appreciate that everything folks have shared, the strategies, we could have listed one hundred strategies but it's not about what we give, it's about you really thinking about what can you do. How will you be different at your seat at the table with whom you sit at the table on Monday ‑‑ Wednesday morning or Thursday morning depending on when you go home. And I would just like to thank everyone. Is there anyone, can I just have one or two quick what will you do? What ‑‑ from this ‑‑ time together. I'm sorry, my brain is going. What ‑‑ what will you do differently? Or just do?
>> Well, I literally made my vision board for my daughter's meeting next month and I feel like I'm really ready to ‑‑ not that our district has been this way but really ready to work more as a team I guess, be more flexible like you guys were saying. I think initially we thought we wanted things and we had a very positive experience in the sense that they said, I love that idea, we don't have that. But we, you know, this is the TOD is here. Is that role that you could fill in, they were like, absolutely, so I think, I'm just excited to go into our next meeting. I don't always feel excited.
>> Excellent. Then it's been, we have been successful. I also want to remind everyone to fill out the evaluation. You can also do it on your phone. Is that right? Okay, well if you could do it here that would be helpful. One more? One more. Miss Janelle.
>> I am going to include cultural differences from the family to bring into that parent report, the student report, and to bring into that meeting. I bet that was something I haven't thought about but I think it could be very meaningful and could make a difference.
>> Thank you. Karen and Amy would you like to just one last comment. I think we have half a second left nothing to add. Well thank you, everyone. I think we're at our end. Go forth and, but, really, we really appreciate what ‑‑ we've learned a lot. I took a whole page of notes even from what was said here. And really, you know, even from the CODA, just not thinking about that culturally. The gratitude. As an adoptive parent. The seats disappearing because our child's ‑‑ children move so much. So you all have impacted us and I know I can speak for my esteemed colleagues and friends that we have learned just as much and so we thank you for your attention and participation. Have a wonderful conference. Thank you.
>> (APPLAUSE).