ASPIRE

Active Student Participation Inspires Real Engagement

Administrator Meeting

(School Name)

(Date)

Presented by:

(Presenter’s name here)
ASPIRE

A Collaborative Initiative between
The Georgia Department of Education,
Division for Special Education and Student Services
and
The Georgia Council on Developmental Disabilities

Funded by the Georgia State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG), Georgia Department of Education through a grant from the Office of Special Education Programs, United States Department of Education and is a collaboration with the Georgia Council on Developmental Disabilities.
ASPIRE

What’s In A Name?

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ASPIRE provides training and follow-up activities to enable students to actively participate in the development and implementation of their IEP. This process is referred to as:

- Self-Directed IEP
- Student-Led IEP
ASPIRE Goals

ASPIRE is a student-led IEP initiative designed to develop **self-determination skills** in the following areas:

- Problem solving
- Self-evaluation
- Choice-making
- Decision-making
What is Self-Determination?

- A combination of skills, knowledge, and beliefs that enable a person to engage in goal-directed, self-regulated, autonomous behavior.

- An understanding of one’s strengths and limitations, together with a belief of oneself as capable and effective, are essential to self-determination.

Field, Martin, Miller, Ward, and Wehmeyer (1998)
What is Self-Determination?

In plain English, **self-determination** is …

- Knowing and believing in yourself
- Knowing what you want in the future AND making plans to achieve those goals
- Knowing and asking for the supports you need to achieve your goals
“Providing support for student self-determination in school settings is one way to enhance student learning and improve important post-school outcomes … and to meet federal mandates to actively involve students with disabilities in the Individualized Education Planning process.”

Deci & Ryan  July 21, 2004 psychologymatters.org

“Students … knew more about their disabilities, legal rights, and appropriate accommodations than other students … students gained increased self-confidence and the ability to advocate for themselves.”

Mason, McGhee-Kovac, Johnson & Stillerman, 2002
Why are Student Led IEPs Important?

During the process students:

- learn how to speak for themselves
- learn about goals and objectives that form the basis of their education and why these goals and objectives are important for them; and
- ultimately, become more involved in their own education.

Kupper, 1995
Results of Participation

- Helps students learn more about their disability and how to explain it to others
- Helps students define their strengths as well as their challenges
- Provides an opportunity for students to express their likes, dislikes, and interests
- Helps students learn about accommodations and the types of accommodations that might help them succeed
Results of Participation

- Helps students see relevance of school work to their lives
- Provides structure for goal setting and attainment
- More focused, motivated, and engaged youth
- The IEP process becomes more meaningful to everyone involved…
Results of Participation

• Allows students to develop communication and negotiation/compromise skills, such as talking with teachers about accommodations, classroom progress, and needs

• Students become engaged in their own education and transition planning

• Students see that people care about their opinions and their successes

“It’s not just paperwork anymore”
Benefits for Your School

- Increase in graduation rates
- Decrease in office referrals/discipline issues
- Decrease in drop-out rate
- Increase in student achievement
Benefits for Families

Studies show that students who included self-determination goals in their IEPs were more likely to earn a higher income one year after graduation.

(Wehmeyer, 2004)

- Improved communication with teacher
- Increased understanding of the IEP process
- More self-determined child (goal setting, decision making)
- Positive interaction with school personnel

“It’s not just paperwork anymore”
By utilizing a student-led IEP model, the IEP meeting becomes a cooperative experience of working together to assist the student!
ASPIRE is for All Students

Students of all ages
- Kindergarten through age 22

Students with all disabilities
- Mild, Moderate or Severe Cognitive Disabilities
- Physical Impairments
- Visual Impairments
- Hearing Impairments
- Other health Impairments
- Speech and/or Language Impairments

Students in any instructional setting
- General Education Classroom
- Collaborative Classroom
- Co-Taught Class
- Part Day Separate Class
- Full Day Separate Class
Students in your system may participate in their IEP meetings in a variety of ways:

- Creating an invitation to their IEP meeting.
- Introducing themselves and others at the meeting.
- Selecting pictures to show at the IEP meeting about a typical school day with them doing the things they enjoy.
Student Participation

- Clicking a mouse on a computer to move from one slide to the next in a PowerPoint presentation and describing each slide during the meeting.

- Helping narrate and select images for a slide presentation that portrays the subject areas they are good at, those they struggle with, and how teachers can help.
Discussing goals for life after high school and how to reach them.

Facilitating the agenda of the IEP meeting.

Leading the meeting and mentoring other students.
The vocabulary and degree of participation will vary from student-to-student. However, the emphasis remains on the student, what is important to them, and using that information in planning.
Expectations

- No fewer than 3 teachers per school
  - Teachers will receive an initial 2 1/2 - 3 hours of training

- No fewer than 9 students per school

- Designated Teacher Liaison (usually lead teachers)
  - Someone who will communicate with the teachers and ASPIRE personnel

- Designated Parent Mentor / Liaison
  - Required to Conduct a Parent Training – Usually 1 hour meeting

- Completion of assessments, surveys and data collection
Assessments and Evaluations

Needs Assessment
- Individual school/classroom evaluation
  - Each teacher completes the needs assessment based on their classroom practice or
  - Each department completes the needs assessment as a group

Pre-Survey (complete within 4 weeks of training)
- Perception of IEP involvement
- Surveys for students

Post Survey (complete following IEP meeting)
- Participation level and evaluation
- Surveys for teachers, students, and parents

Fidelity Checks
- Responsibility of designated Team Leader
What’s Next?

- Select teachers that will participate

- Identify Teacher Liaison
  - Someone who will communicate with the teachers and ASPIRE personnel

- Identify Parent Representative/Liaison
  - Parent Mentor if participating in the Parent Mentor Partnership

- Teacher Training

- Complete Needs Assessments, surveys and data collection
ASPIRE
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Inspires Real Engagement

Questions?

Review of Expectations and Requirements
Contact Information
Georgia Department of Education
Division for Special Education Services and Support
Professional Learning Unit
404-656-3963

For information and materials for ASPIRE visit the SPDG's website (www.gaspdg.org).

(Place current consultant's/presenter's name, email and phone number here)

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