

# Parent Engagement on Committees

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More Than Filling a Seat

with Stephanie Nicholls, Statewide Training Manager



# Today's Discussion

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Committee information

The value of parent voices

Why a parent would want to serve

Sharing information



# Kinds of Committees

- Local Interagency Coordinating Councils (LICC) required by *Early On*®
- Michigan Interagency Coordinating Council (MICC) required by the state
- Parent Advisory Committees (PAC) required by each ISD
- Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) required by the state
- Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council (DD Council)
- Community and Local Level Groups

# How are LICC and MICC different?

- Purpose of LICC: Provide opportunities for community partners and families to advise and assist the local lead agency and participating agencies in the coordination of early intervention services for infants and toddlers and their families. Activities may include child find and public awareness, community needs assessment, system evaluation, and assisting with professional development opportunities.
- Input on local decisions
- Members invited by LICC Chairperson
- Purpose of MICC: Advisory board to MDE to ensure the development and implementation of a coordinated interagency service system for infants and toddlers with disabilities and/or developmental delays and their families; and to serve as the major state level advisory board for early intervention.
- Advise and assist in state policy-making decisions
- Members appointed by the Governor

# Your Experience Shapes Your Perception

Spear

Fan

Rope

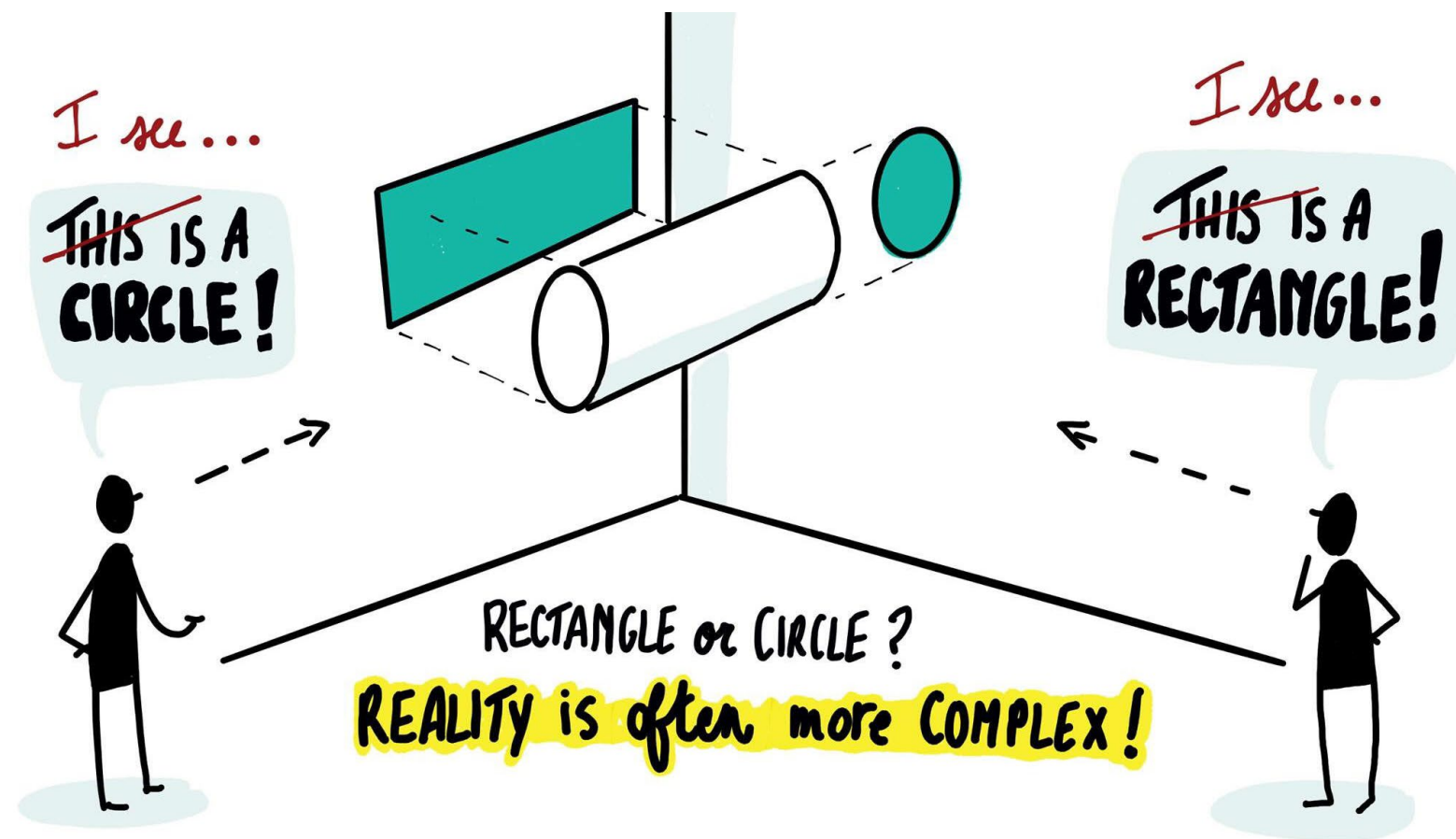
Tree

Wall





# Different Perspectives



# Parents on Committees

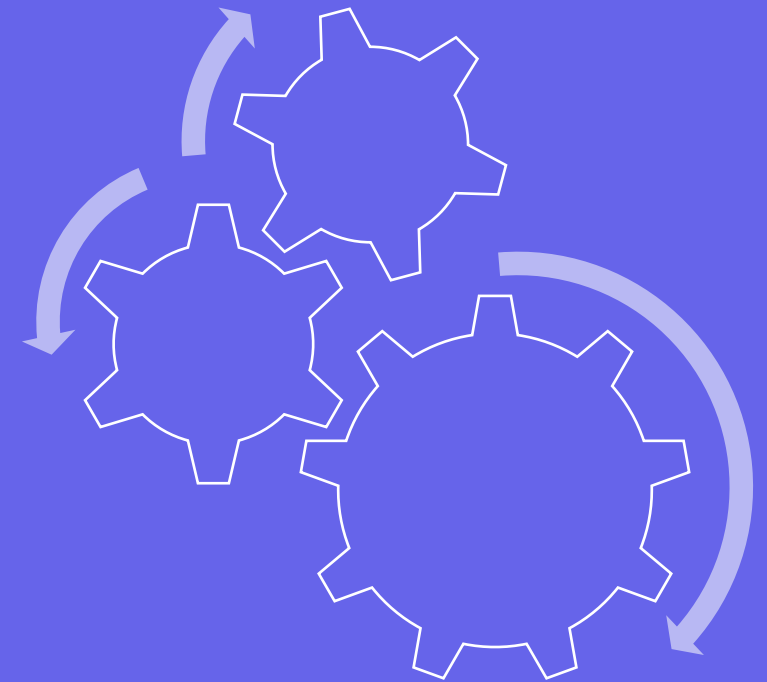
Family and professional partnerships are at the center of an effective early intervention system.

Family representatives bring their knowledge of the strengths and needs of the child and family unit. LICCs are a place where families and agencies from a community work together to share expertise and resources to provide the best and most effective early intervention system for their community.



# Value the Parent Voice

- Parents and school or community personnel gain more accurate and positive views about each other's attitudes, intentions, and abilities
- More parents are equipped to act as advocates for and supporters of public schools and public programs throughout the community





# What does engagement and collaboration look like?



Adopted from “Leading by Convening”

# Facilitating Parent Engagement

- Share Committee Guide to Participation, meeting schedule, and member roster
- Provide orientation from a committee member
- Have another parent member call to welcome and answer questions
- Set and clearly communicate expectations
- Start meetings with introductions and make sure names are visible at all meetings
- Actively solicit parent input at each meeting – not just standing time for comment
- Provide training opportunities

- Model and demonstrate respect to all participants.
- Provide access to supports such as translators and interpreters
- Prepare stakeholders to participate by offering overview sessions for new participants. Extra important in empowering families to meaningfully participate
- Be flexible when scheduling to meet needs
- Provide meeting notes



# Commitment to Inclusion



# Communication

- Share committee information, meeting schedule, and member roster
- Shared drive
- Email agenda and minutes week prior
- Text reminders day of the meeting

# Recruiting Parent Members

- Ask district Special Education staff or service providers to recommend parents
- Ask current parent-members to recommend other parents
- Put a recruitment notice in local library, school newsletters, district website, local papers and public-access television
- Schedule meetings at parent-friendly times and locations
- Offer stipends to cover childcare or transportation expense



# Why might families want to be involved?

- Increase parent involvement
- Impact issues they care about
- Foster community understanding of special education / *Early On*
- Learn about resources

Research has shown that parent involvement helps improve student achievement.

# Positive Impact

- Help the district / ISD / MDE to understand the need for parent-friendly materials
- Represent all parents of children with disabilities
  - Learn about student needs
  - Encourage feedback from other families
- Ensure appropriate communication with families of children with disabilities
- Support high expectations for their child
- Model home-school collaboration and respect

# Share Information

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- Group
- Membership
- Operating Procedures
- Meeting Logistics
- Parent Role

# Share Information: Group & Members

## Group Information

- Governing or Advisory?
- What is the defined purpose, mission, and vision?

## Membership

- Appointed, elected, or volunteers?
- What is the process to join?
- What is the length of the term?

# Share Information: Operating Procedures

- Formal or Informal?
- How are decisions made?
- Who coordinates meetings?
- Who leads the meetings?
- How do members add to the agenda?







# Share Information: Meeting Logistics

- How often does the committee meet?
- What is the schedule?
- Where? Virtual or in person?
- Is travel required?
- Is a stipend provided?
- Is childcare provided?

# Share Information: Set Expectations

- The role
  - Share a job description
- Long-range, systems change issues for all children, not just one
  - from “ME” to “WE”
- Read the agenda and be prepared to contribute to the discussion
- Review previous minutes and be prepared to discuss any questions or vote on approval
- Communicate: share your perspective and listen to others



# As a Parent Committee Member

- Share parent experience
- Contribute to discussions about the needs of families in the district

Willing to learn

Willing to ask questions

# to be an **Effective Member**

Encourage members to become familiar with:

- Annual Performance Report / State Performance Plan Indicators
- Early Childhood Outcomes of children exiting *Early On* in your area
- Staff and parent concerns that affect outcomes for children with disabilities and developmental delays

# Issues to Consider: APR/ SPP

## PART C State Performance Plan Results Indicators

**2 Services in Natural Environments:** Percent of infants and toddlers with IFSPs who primarily receive early intervention services in the home or community-based settings.

**3 Early Childhood Outcomes:** Percent of infants and toddlers who demonstrate improved: positive social-emotional skills; acquisitions & use of knowledge & skills; and use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs.

**4 Family Involvement:** Percent of families participating in Part C that report early intervention services have helped the family: know their rights; effectively communicate their children's needs; and help their children develop and learn.

**5 Child Find (Birth to One):** Percent of infants and toddlers birth to 1 with IFSPs compared to national data.

**6 Child Find (Birth to Three):** Percent of infants and toddlers birth to 3 w/IFSPs compared to national data.

**9 Resolution Sessions:** Percent of hearing requests that went to resolution sessions that were resolved through resolution session settlement agreements (applicable if Part B due process procedures are adopted).

**10 Mediation:** Percent of mediations held that resulted in mediation agreements.

**11 State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP):** A comprehensive, ambitious, yet achievable multi-year plan for improving results for infants and toddlers with disabilities.





# Issues to Consider: Family Involvement

## Part C – Indicator #4

Percent of families participating in Part C that report early intervention services have helped the family:

know their rights;

effectively communicate their children's needs;

and help their children develop and learn.

# Issues to Consider: Local

- Major issues your district / area faces, if any
- Whether the issues affect the families receiving *Early On* services
- How your committee can help resolve the issues



# Explore the tools

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Committee Guide for Participation  
(about your committee)

[Parents Exploring Opportunities](#)  
(for families to fill out)



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# We are here to support you!

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# Michigan Alliance for Families

Michigan Alliance for Families is an IDEA Grant Funded Initiative of the Michigan Department of Education, Office of Special Education, and Michigan's federal Parent-Training and Information Center (PTIC) funded by U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP).

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