

Does your school or district have challenges with...

- Reaching non-English speaking families?
- Collaborating with all stakeholders in your school community?
- Getting information out to your families in a timely manner?
- Getting high-quality input from families and youth with disabilities?
- Smoothly transitioning students from elementary to middle and middle to high school?

CPAC is here to help!



Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center



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Working Together: Family and School Collaboration

www.cpacinc.org

Connecticut's Resource for Children with Disabilities;
EMPOWERING AND EDUCATING FAMILIES

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BUILDING COLLABORATION: With support from the CSDE/BSE, CPAC staff is available to help district leadership teams create a framework for a comprehensive set of activities designed to build collaboration between families and schools.

BUILDING A COMPREHENSIVE OUTREACH PLAN: The function of CPAC staff will be to facilitate information gathering, team planning and execution of the plan, as needed. CPAC staff also bring a wealth of experience as parents and from our work with diverse families and multiple community and educational resources. The expected outcome is a multi-faceted plan to bring school staff, students with disabilities and their families together and working more cooperatively for the benefit of the student.

THE TEAM: A leadership team will differ with each district. Generally, there is a need for district administration, staff, families and if possible, community members. Having diverse representation is critical to creating a plan that will have the broadest reach.

INFORMATION GATHERING: The first step is to determine areas of need. By obtaining information from families and other stakeholders, the leadership team can create plans and begin the collaboration between school, family and community.

EXAMPLES OF ACTIVITIES:

These discussions would likely include ways to improve communication, clarifying processes for families and staff and learning in a dual-capacity environment so everyone is learning the SAME information. Below is a short list of examples of some past activities districts have chosen:

- Help district to establish an Advisory Council including seating and facilitating the group's first meeting.
- Facilitate a focus group of families to do a review of website for timely, relevant and understandable information.

·A comprehensive transition plan, between schools to help all students, including students with disabilities, to feel comfortable with the transition.

·Monthly/Quarterly evening forums and/or morning coffee with the director, or supervisors. One district has different related service staff each month to talk with families about their role.

·Dual Capacity training opportunities on special education topics, with CPAC support or other local resources.

