



### History of OEO Tackling the Opportunity Gap in K-12 Schools in Washington

#### Founded by Legislature in 2006

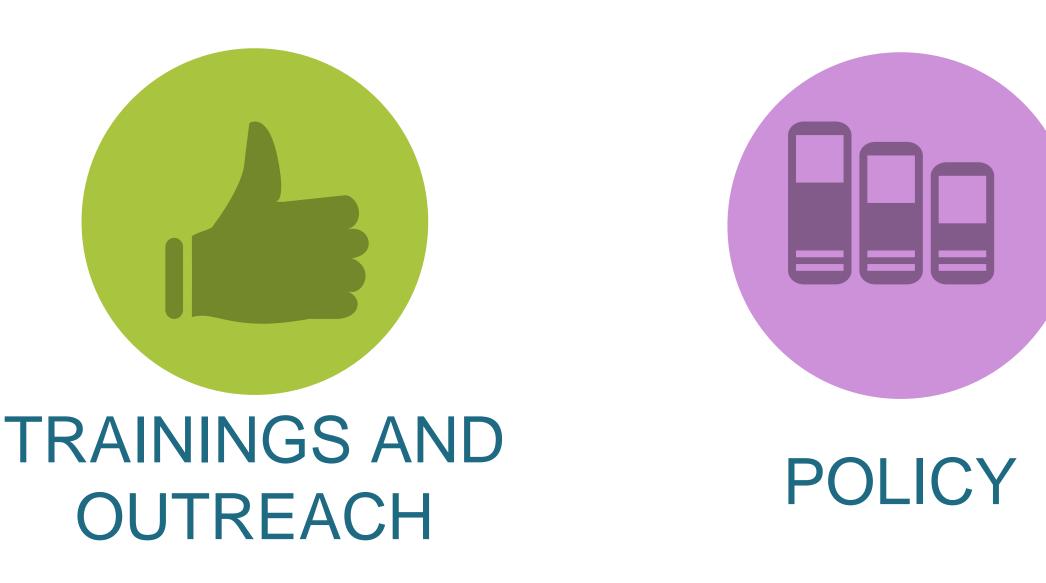
Our mission: We work with families, communities, and schools to navigate educational challenges and increase collaborative problem-solving so that every student can fully participate in and benefit from public K-12 education in Washington





### What OEO Does We listen. We inform. We help solve problems.





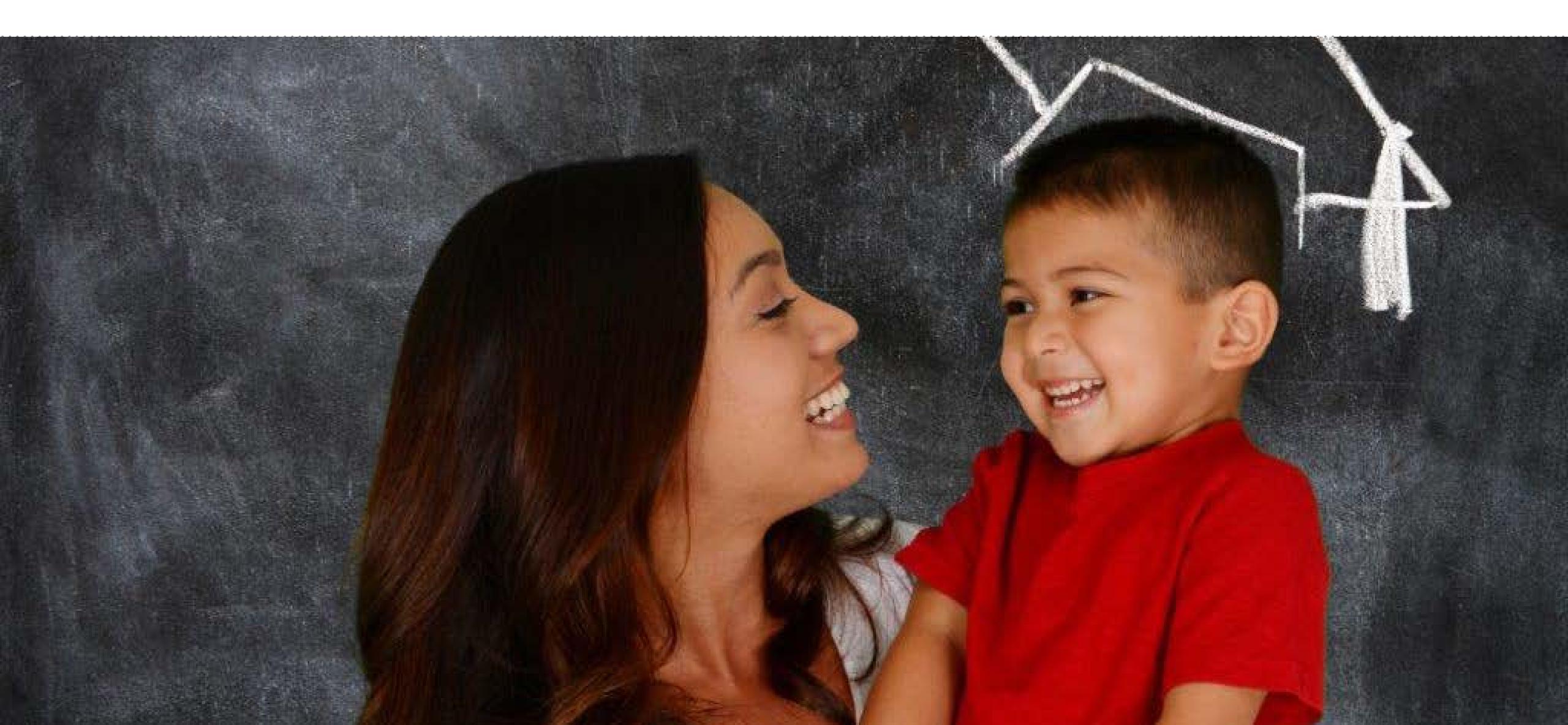
Check out our Family and Community Engagement Resources (including our report): http://oeo.wa.gov/education-issues-topics/family-involvement/



# Family Panel: From where you stand, what does effective engagement look like?

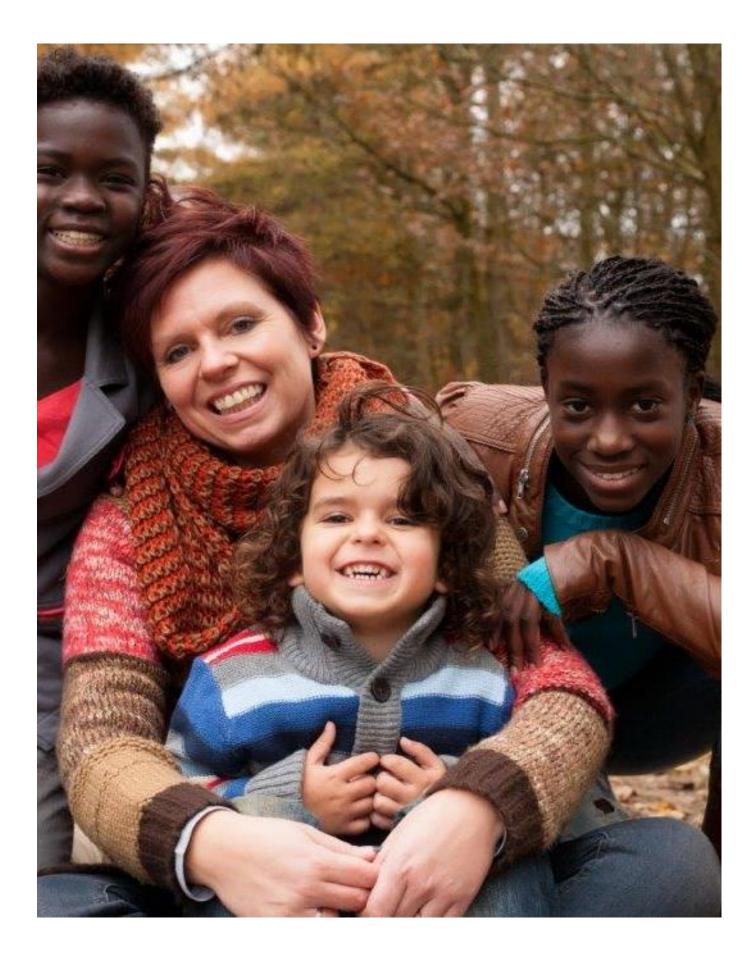


# What does it mean for that relationship to be responsive to your family and your child's needs?





## First Steps for Families: Communication is a process Preparation: School Meetings Like a Pro



better

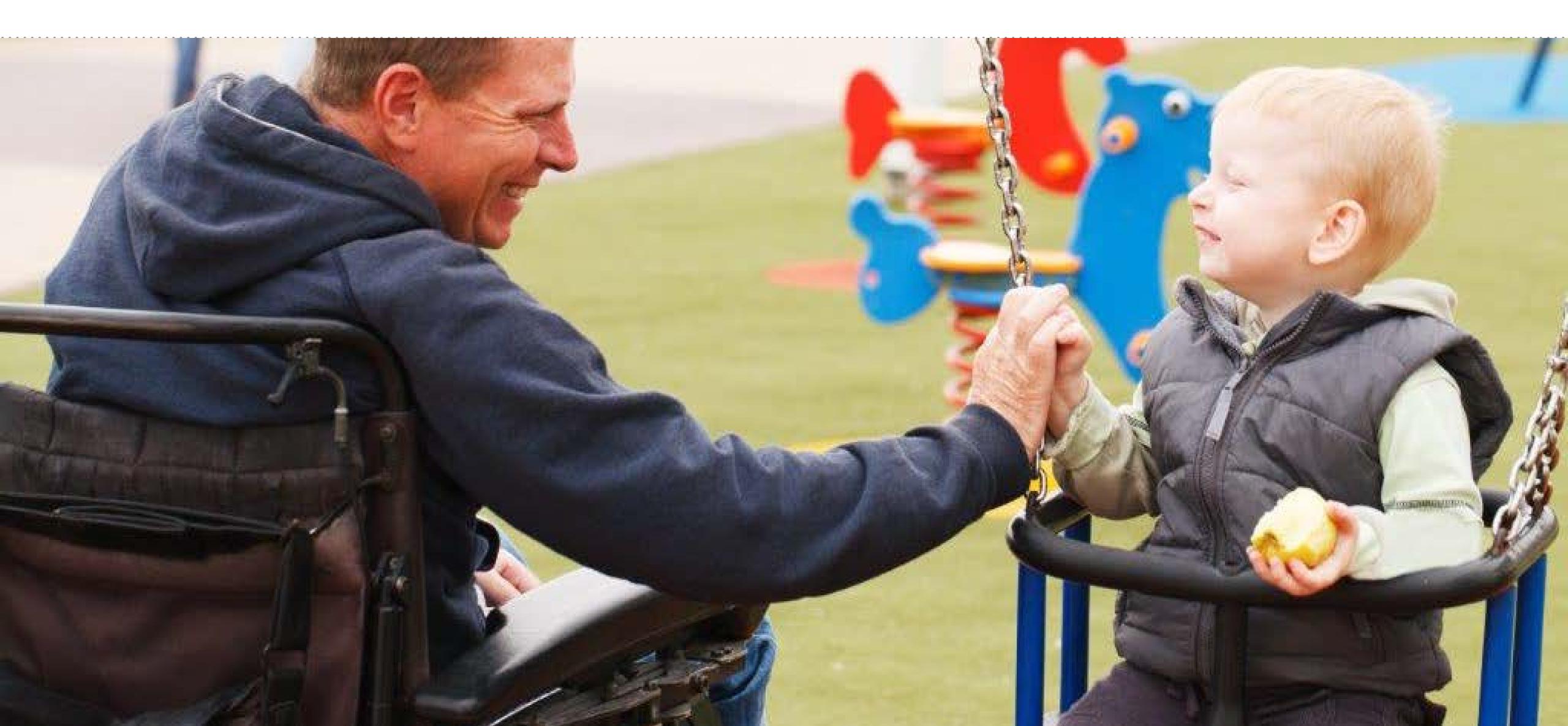
- Consider role of private providers in meetings and reports
- Give and request documentation
- Document discussions and questions in writing
- Ask for a summary/meeting minutes
- Discuss action steps and timelines– what's next?

### The friendlier, the more business-like the

• Organize your info



# What tips would you add to that list when it comes to communication?



### Special Considerations When Your Child Has a Disability Your perspective is invaluable and unique

#### Three Tips

- Request to see the same documents as other members of your team (IEP or 504)
- Share your concerns, observations, and hopes for your child: what you see, hear, hope
- Ask questions







## Goal: What Special Education Should Look Like

Individualized

Team Approach

Parent and Student Participation



#### **Specially Designed Instruction**

#### Least Restrictive Environment

#### Free Appropriate Public Education









# How have you dealt with conflict at school? What would you suggest to other parents, as well as educators?





#### **Conflict Happens** Are there ways to avoid it or navigate it? Conflict=human

#### We all want a positive meeting:

- Listen & share in equal parts (facilitation when that is not happening) Acknowledge concerns (including pausing)
- Keep the discussion on track and explore options
- Look for opportunities to learn more/fill gaps and provide that help to others
- Try to identify the WHY
- Consider how to share outside medical and specialist perspectives, if applicable



# How have you navigated the emotions embedded in conflict?

#### Feelings that arise when:

- You think a student you care about is not doing well?
- You aren't sure what is happening at school? You aren't sure why things aren't going well?
- You haven't had great experiences communicating with school staff?
- You are concerned that stigma about your child's disability, race, ethnicity, language, gender identity, or other experience is shaping how adults respond?





## Communicating in Difficult Situations Moving toward Understanding & Agreement

### **Self-Awareness**

What am I feeling? What am I expecting from this meeting?

#### Listening to Understand

Maybe I still won't agree, but I can try to understand.



#### Interests over Positions

Ultimately I want \_\_\_\_. I think the right way to get there is \_\_\_\_. but I'm open to other options.



#### Next Steps

- Get the decision (or document the disagreement) in writing: use of PWN
- If it's an IEP: ask the team to reconsider or postpone a change until there is more info/discussion
- Work out a plan to take more data; review reasonable time period
- Seek help; seek an outside perspective

# Special Considerations SWDs: What if Focusing on the Lowest Level of Repairing Relationship Hasn't Helped?





# Which community supports or resources have been helpful to you?







- Parting Ideas
- The Change You'd Like

## **Questions for** Us?

Panelists:

to See



## Contact OEO

#### We are here to help!

www.oeo.wa.gov oeoinfo@gov.wa.gov **Toll-free phone: 1-866-297-2597** Phone interpreter services available

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