



## Concurrent Session: Did We Do What We Said We Would? Why Developing a High-Quality IEP Isn't Enough

**Amy Peterson** So welcome to Did We Do What We Said We Would? Why Developing the IEP isn't Enough and I'm excited to be joined by my colleagues Steven Prater and Aleksis Kincaid for this session. As you guys have seen many times before in this event, I am Amy Peterson. I lead out our universal technical assistance work. Steven comes to us from our intensive technical assistance team, where he co-leads some of that partnership work with our sites across the country, and Aleksis is with us from our knowledge development team where he really focuses in on synthesizing the policies and research and evidence from the field in order to help shape our work overtime so excited to have both of them join us today.

And we can go on to the next slide. Our session outcomes are really going to focus on the following elements. We'll talk about and think about why fidelity of implementation is really important. Then we think about free, appropriate public education or FAPE.

We will then describe 5 elements of fidelity and considerations from what we might want to think about as we're thinking about fidelity as a construct. And finally, we'll share some resources, and tools both in thinking about developing and implementing high quality educational programming and monitoring fidelity in order to ensure that we have that high quality, fidelity of implementation in our work.

As always, we want to ground this conversation in kind of why we do what we do and what we really want for our students. You have seen this question time and time again already in this in this event, but we want you to take a second to think about this.

Many of you reflected on this question of what do you want for your students, previously. We want you to think about what drew you to supporting students with disabilities and what you want for your students, as you think about this session. Because we oftentimes when we think about fidelity kind of get in the weeds on kind of the construct of fidelity or fidelity as a topic that's doesn't seem as fun and exciting as maybe some of the other reasons why we actually got into special education.

So, in the chat go ahead and identify your purpose if you're interested in sharing that with others. Feel free to also jot that down for yourself as a quick reflection. But we want to think about this because we really recognize that if we are really going to do what we said we were going to do,

if we're going to have an impact on our students and if we're going to be able to help students to be successful in the ways that we desire, we have to make sure that we're actually putting into practice what we said we were going to do on paper.

So, we really need to think about kind of what does this look like? How can we take from what we design well, and as we think about as our goals, and how do we put that into practice for implementation and really focus on that implementation lens?

So, excited to see some of the things that you all are putting into the chat. Really thinking about kind of why you got into this work—You saw people that were students that weren't being supported and should be. Possibilities and options for happiness and success for students.

How can we get there? So, what are some of the things that we need to keep in mind in order for us to get there? And we also know on the next slide you can see from our knowledge of IDEA, that it's our duty right, and our obligation to ensure that we're providing FAPE. And so, as we think about kind of what that means, and what, what that means for fidelity and implementation, we have to take that to heart as well.

So, we come with, our, what it means for us and then we also come for what it means for the purpose in the law. And on the next slide you all probably saw this yesterday in the keynote address, but if you weren't able to be there this might be new to you. But we want to think about these three kinds of components of FAPE. As we're thinking about FAPE and as we're thinking about fidelity, we think about the procedural aspects, did we do what we said we should do from IDEA? Have we included all the components of the IEP? Have we followed and complied with the procedures set forth in IDEA? Do we have all of those parts of the bicycle to be put into place? And then we can think about that second component that's substantive. Will our bicycle move forward? Is our IEP reasonably calculated to enable the child to make progress in light of their circumstances—that we can take from that Endrew F decision. So, as we're thinking about that bicycle analogy that we talked about yesterday, the procedural component—do we have those key parts of our bicycle. The substantive—will our bike move forward and move together with us in order to be a vehicle for change, and then we get to the implementation piece, and we talked about that yesterday as well.

If we don't focus on implementation—our bike is great, well-designed bike that has all the procedural components in it and it was designed in order to calculate—to move the student forward and achieve progress—it will just sit in the garage and get dusty and dirty, and not be used to drive forward. So, we need to make sure that we're putting that implementation piece into place. So, are we implementing the IEP as it was designed? Are we providing the instructional services and supports that need to be in place in order for our students to be successful?

So, if we look a little bit deeper into implementation and some failure to implement cases, what we often see is that parents have asserted that the school or district has denied FAPE based on the claim that the school or district failed to partially or fully implement the child's IEP. And you can see on the second quote here from MC. versus Antelope Union School District, from 2017, that we can think about the IEP like a contract. right? So, if we put the components of the IEP into place, then we think about it like a contract. Well, when we have a contract for any kind of any work—if we have a contract for work on our house, or anything like that, if we could design a really great contract but if it isn't actually implemented, then it's not successful for us. Our house will not have the updates that we are looking for. So, we need to think about the IEP like a contract that we actually believe that it's a binding commitment that provides notice to both parties. Both the school and the district, as well as the parents, that the services will be provided to the student.

So, thinking about kind of what we need for implementation, we really need to fulfill what we put into that IEP. And Tessie mentioned this, these 2 kinds of buckets that we see in those implementation cases as well, yesterday. One is fidelity of implementation which we'll talk more about in the session today, and the second is the capacity to implement. So first, if we do what we said we would, and second, do we have the capacity to do what we said we would. We might need to think about what are the additional supports that we need to put in place to support our educators in order to implement, as well. So we think about fidelity of implementation and capacity to implement those kind of go hand in hand, because if we don't have the capacity to implement, we won't actually do what we said we would and if we didn't do what we said we would, we might need some additional training and support or other to look at our systems to think about kind of how can we do better about implementation?

And Tessie also talked about this equation yesterday. And if we look at this equation and ground ourselves in this equation, we know that implementation is the active ingredient that we really need to put into place in order to take the development of our high-quality educational programming into improved access and outcomes. Without that implementation piece, we aren't going to see the results that we want for our students. We all know in multiplication that if we zero out implementation or our implementation is very small, the likelihood that we have improved access and outcomes becomes negligible or very small, right.

So, in thinking about our implementation, we really need to focus on both developing a high quality program that includes those procedural components, that is substantively sound, but also that we can put in place that we can implement and affect change for our students. And we can think about that, as we think about kind of the quality of the instruction and the programming we're designing over time.

If we don't know how well, we're implementing we can't figure out whether or not, you know, there's an issue with the design of our program or if it's an implementation issue that we might not have put

that program in place. So we need to look at some data and we'll talk about that. And Stephen will talk about further how we can monitor fidelity of implementation over time to help us understand whether we're actually doing what we said we would, or what we might need to focus more on. What do we need to do to shift our practice in order to be able to do what we said we would? If we provide, you know, say we were going to provide this amount of instructional time, and we don't actually provide it, what might we need to do to be able to better ensure that we can actually provide that programming that we designed?

So that's kind of how we want to ground our conversation for today. And as I shift it over to Aleksis in just a second, I want you to take a second to think about a word or a phrase that you think about as you think about fidelity. So, take a second write that in the chat, but don't press enter yet. Many of you probably experienced a chaterfall in one of your sessions yesterday. So go ahead and just type it in and then, I'm going to count to 3 and then say, go, and then you'll go ahead and put the response right into the chat field and press enter so write that word or phrase that you think about as you think about fidelity. What are some other things that you might come to mind that are important as you think about fidelity? I'll give you just couple seconds to put that in just a quick phrase in the chat. Alright, I see it. some response is already coming in, so go ahead and put all of your responses in. Go.

Yeah, I see consistency, accountability sticking with it, all in, love these. Correct, consistency, authentic reliable these are all important for us to think about as we're thinking about fidelity. If you haven't had a chance to do it yet keep putting those words and phrases in. But I'm going to turn it over to Aleksis and he's going to talk more about kind of how we can think about the construct of fidelity, and why it's important.

**Aleksis Kincaid:** Yeah, thank you, Amy. So it's helpful to think about fidelity using Melanie Barwick's analogy of baking a cake. So when we follow a recipe they're essential ingredients and specific processes that need to be in place, we wouldn't want to leave out a specific ingredient, like flour or sugar or over mix but we also have some flexibility. So for instance if we're working on it we might replace some ingredients to take care of allergies that people that we're making the cake for have, or we might use a different tool. So maybe we don't have a blender, but we have a whisk, so we can still mix those ingredients together.

Similarly, when we think about fidelity of an intervention or an educational program, there are key parts of the intervention that, if not implemented well, will change the intervention and the outcome for the student. And this is what we really want to try to avoid. However, within that we also realize that we sometimes we have to deal with unexpected situations. So, we could have a snow day. There could be a student who is absent, a program comes up in this school, a dropped zoom call, so we just want to make sure we're really documenting this information. Because it'll become really critical for us when we're trying to make data-based decisions about what's working and what's not working for a student.

So within special education we can also think about fidelity kind of falling into those buckets we were talking about earlier, so we can think about the fidelity of our development of the IEP asking ourselves have we complied with the procedures that were set forth in IDEA as we were developing this IEP for the student.

We can also think about it in terms of our instructional programming. So once we lay out those procedures in the IEP, we have the meetings, are we actually implementing that instructional programming as it was designed in IEP, and as the IEP team intended in the conversations.

When we think about fidelity, we often talk about kind of 5 elements of fidelity and I'm going to walk through each of these in just a second, but fidelity overall really tells us how closely we follow the procedures that need to be followed to make sure that we have the impact we want for a student. So it really relates to how well the program is designed for the student and the quality of the implementation. And now we're going to walk through each of these pieces individually.

So, when we discuss adherence, we're really focusing on how well we stick to the plan or the curriculum we're using or the assessment, we're using to measure student outcomes. Within an IEP, we think about how well we implement all pieces of the IEP as it was intended to be implemented. For a specific intervention or instructional approach, we think about how well we implement all pieces of that intervention or instructional approach.

Exposure refers to how often a student receives an intervention, and how long an intervention lasts. So when thinking about fidelity we're considering whether the exposure or the duration being used for the student, matches the recommendation by the publisher. When we are thinking about it in the context of an IEP, we want to make sure that if we've written in a certain number of service minutes or times per week, that a student should be receiving an intervention or support from a service provider, that we're actually able to provide that service to them at that level. However, if we're not, we want to make sure that we're really documenting what is stopping us from being able to provide that support.

So, for instance, it could be a student attendance. It could be severe weather; staff being pulled for other responsibilities. Because that's really important to document so we have an idea of how we can address that that obstruction in the future.

We also really want to think about quality of delivery. And this really refers to how well we deliver the instruction to this student. For example, do we use good teaching practices? And this is pretty, this is something we can observe, right. So, if you're reading off of a script for the intervention, and you're not making eye contact with the student or if you're really engaged in using the inflection, in

your voice to help this student become engaged in the intervention.

Just as quality of delivery is critical, so is the program specificity, or how well the intervention is defined and how well it's different from other interventions. So, we really want to make sure that we have clearly defined interventions that allow teachers to more easily adhere to the program as it's defined. So we might just be asking ourselves is this program a good match for the student needs. And if we can't actually identify what parts of the program are helpful for the student, then we don't know what we should be focusing on for fidelity. Similarly, you can think about when you qualify a student within a certain category, are we offering the same services to all students that that qualify under specific learning disability and reading or are we making sure that we're developing an IEP that's really specific to that student's needs.

We also really want to think about student engagement, and student engagement, or how engage they are in the intervention, can be just as critical. We can have a really well, prescribed IEP that's really well fit to the student, but if they're not engaged in instruction or they're not present for it, they're not going to get that impact of the IEP. So during the delivery of services that are outlined in the IEP you might need to use different strategies to manage student behaviors. So you could include elements of competition, utilizing reward systems, or even just increasing the opportunities for students to respond within intervention.

Alright, so we want to give you an opportunity to review the Considerations for Effective Implementation 5 Elements of Fidelity handout from the National Center on Intensive Intervention—It gives an overview kind of those 5 pieces of fidelity I just talked through—in your groups. We're going to put you in breakout groups, and we want to take 10 min to look over that sheet, and then just kind of discuss the prompts we have here.

So how have you accounted for these elements of fidelity within the context of implementing IEP's and interventions in special education? And which of the 5 elements pose the most challenge for you and why? Please be prepared to share be prepared to share it when you come back.

I'll probably focus on the first one first so just how have you accounted for these elements of fidelity within the context of implementing an IEP or an intervention in special education. And I'll as you're thinking of your responses, you can drop them in the chat also feel free to come off mute and just share out with everyone you don't have to turn on your screen, just to share out.

**Participant:** So what we really started talking about was this this hesitancy, and I guess I'm sorry I hijacked your question, I really kind of took over, but so working with university students that are heading into the field, looking at early teachers, the hesitancy and the reluctance to try to even begin implementing. Because there seems to be this, this anxiety around it being perfect, and instead of not doing it, not actually initiating this process, but striving for progress instead of perfection,

and recognizing that you know those first couple of weeks will likely be a dumpster fire.

They will absolutely, they're going to be rough and really focusing on you know, still being able to develop those student relationships. And just polishing and looking back at data you've collected and refocusing and analyzing and having people come in and building confidence and looking at all these sort of moving components that are not always obvious and just that it's going to be a very vulnerable process. And that we need to celebrate every step.

**Aleksis Kincaid:** Yeah, thank you for sharing out. And I think to what you're talking about building space for that vulnerability to have those conversations and really dig into the data to see how is it going for a student? Are we meeting their needs? It's important to have that space for educators who engage in the conversation.

**Participant:** I'll go ahead and share too, I know with our group we, the first thing we kind of said that led to some other conversations is that educators tend to be a little bit more engaged or willing to engage around academic interventions. They feel more comfortable. However, where we start to have more barriers is when we're getting, with challenges for some types of explosive behaviors where people we'll start to maybe not adhere as much to or be as willing to expose and have interventions happen over a duration of time. They want that quick fix because it is so challenging. So, we were just talking how educators are more comfortable with academic interventions in comparison to behavior interventions, and they're looking more for that quick magical fix that doesn't necessarily happen right away.

**Aleksis Kincaid:** Yeah, thank you. I've experienced that working in schools as well that that we feel comfortable in academics as we move into education and less familiar in behavior. So building the capacity of staff to really implement those behavior interventions with fidelity, as we outline in an IEP is really crucial.

**Participant:** And time and training then, that was follow up then. So for everyone, including our paras and all staff.

**Aleksis Kincaid:** Yeah, definitely, Thank you. How about that second question? Which of the 5 elements really posed the most challenge and why? I think we've we spoke a little bit to the challenges already, but I'm interested in hearing other thoughts on which part of those 5 elements, fidelity, are hard to implement.

**Participant:** I'll go, I'll go. First of all, in my group I didn't say anything, and for anyone that knows me that's a huge upset.

Our group talked about student engagement. First of all, I'd say something that was interesting at least three of us were not—One of us was a university people and I'm a regional person that used to be a State person, and State person—and the professor did most of the conversing, so that's interesting that I don't know where your audience aim is but I think we have a lot of folks that aren't currently implementing, if that changes your view—but you know we talked about, you know, how are you building this engagement? And largely people talked about building relationships. I think you know the student, you know that what's going to engage them and having an interest in them you know how to engage them. And the people that naturally build relationships are making effort to build in relationships, build engagement, and when they make decisions based on the data or based on how they know the child that builds engagement, and they understand when it's not working and they go back and they try something different.

It's okay to fail. It's not okay, to do the same thing when it's failing, right? So, and I think with the IEPs you know, you do get people kind of thrown into the deep end. For me, I think, having the PLOP and the goal and the monitoring is pretty important. Oh, man, if you don't have a PLOP and a goal that you can understand, I don't know where your chances are for everything else. That's my two cents on that. I'm really enjoying this. Thanks.

**Aleksis Kincaid:** Yeah, thank you for sharing out and I'm sure there are many people that agree that you know, knowing your students when you're working with them can really help you when you're seeing that that student engagement is not there, and adjusting intervention to really support them.

Or is there maybe one other person that would feel comfortable coming off mute and kind of sharing out?

**Participant:** Sure. My group agreed on exposure and duration as the most difficult, especially in the elementary level, because it seems like there's always something else going on in the classroom. And the gen ed teacher might say, oh we are doing this activity, or we have an assembly, or something else like that seems to be big reason for not getting the kids to come out of class. And then trying to make up those minutes with them is really difficult when the special education teacher has her day, you know, back-to-back with groups and other students and you know, and trying to fit that kid into another group may not always be easy or feasible to do. So that's the one that we thought that was most challenging.

**Aleksis Kincaid:** Yeah, yeah, especially when you do have that, when you're trying to balance, you know the support and being able to be with peers in the in the general classroom with making sure you meet the service minutes in the IEP.

Yeah, that that can definitely be tricky. Thank you. Thank you for sharing out. Yeah.



Alright. So I wanted to share out some resources. that the PROGRESS Center has developed to that you can use when you're thinking about implementing an IEP with fidelity. We've grouped them into a couple groups here.

The first one is really looking at these three components of fidelity—the program specificity, or how well, it really meets the students needs, adherence to it, what we've written in the IEP and then that exposure, so providing those minutes for them. Thank you.

Yeah, So, as mentioned before, when thinking about fidelity within special education, we want to think about developing an IEP that meets those procedural requirements within IDEA and provides FAPE for a student, or a free appropriate public education. We developed these tip sheets that provide an overview of each of the components of the IEP including the IDEA definition within them along with some tips for implementation. So, they can be really helpful when you're in that stage of developing an IEP for a student, or if you have new educators that are new to writing IEPs as well. You can find these tip sheets on the PROGRESS Center website under resources and tools for educators. And we just dropped that link in the chat as well.

Going along with those tip sheets. we have some online modules, and these are a series of online, self-paced modules. They each take about 30 min to complete you'll need to register or log into an account in the PROGRESS Center, but each course then provides a collection of resources that they highlight in the module and an option to print a completion certificate once a module has been completed. We highlighted 3 modules here. The first one is IDEA and the IEP From Compliance to PROGRESS and it really provides an overview of the required components of an IEP. The What and Why of Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance or the PLAAFP—also I heard called the PLOP. I know it ranges from state to state—provides an overview this one provides an overview of the PLAAFP and the role it plays in the development of a high-quality IEP that promotes progress for students with disabilities. And then the What and Why of Measurable Annual Goals and this outlines IDEA requirements for measurable annual goals, essential elements of a measurable goal, and provides tips for developing these goals.

We also have a set of webinars where you can, where you can hear from experts and practitioners about developing and implementing high quality educational programming. Each is about an hour long. you can download transcripts, handouts, and slides from the presentations. We've highlighted just 4 of them here We have the IEP What Every Educator Needs to Know to Promote Progress, The Role of the PLAAFP as the Foundation of an IEP for Promoting Progress. The Role of the Goal, and then Creating a Comprehensive Statement of Special Education and Aids and Services within the IEP.

The webinars can be located on the Development Section on the PROGRESS website, or by filtering for webinars, using a search function under all resources and tools.

The IEP tip sheets, the online modules and the webinars, can all be used in concert together for your own professional learning, leading training for staff, or for PLC. So, they're just up there and publicly available for your use. So thank you.

With that I'm going to turn it over to Steven to continue the conversation about fidelity.

**Steven Prater:** Alright. Yeah, thanks, Aleksis. So as Aleksis said, we kind of group these into two big groups of the way to think about the implementation of fidelity.

So the next group that we're talking about is student engagement and quality of delivery. So fidelity not only considers how well you stick to that plan, but also how well that plan is delivered. So that's where quality delivery and student engagement comes in. So ensuring that teachers are delivering instruction with quality, will help improve student engagement. And so, therefore, if they improve student engagement they'll improve their student outcomes.

And I think we've mentioned this already too, quality instruction delivery means that the teachers are engaged in what they're teaching. They're excited about what they're teaching, they're animated in their delivery. So that's part of this quality of delivery, but even if a teacher has high quality teaching techniques sometimes they still need resources to help keep students engaged so we're going to look at some resources for each of these areas.

Alright. So as far as instructional practices, we do have the set of what we call instructional practice briefs. So this is a series of practice briefs. It highlights 6 evidence based high leverage practices that research has shown to support implementation of high quality, instructional programming for students with and at risk for disabilities. So these have been shown to be effective, regardless of their disability category or the age span of the students. So these are, these are for all disability areas and all grade levels.

The way these practices were identified was through a very extensive systematic meta-analysis of the high leverage practices for students with disability. So there's many more of these high leverage practices. These were the ones that were found to be the most impactful.

So, each of these briefs kind of follow the same 3 phase cycle for planning, delivering, and reviewing and intensifying instruction for small groups and whole group for individual small groups and whole group instruction. They're really designed to be a quick reference guide or a tip sheet of sorts and they're all very short. I think they're all between 3 to 4 pages long, so not a lot not a lot of reading there, but you could also use them to structure conversations in your professional work, groups in your learning communities and your college courses and your professional development.

So there are 6 of these, but in our in our presentation here. We're going to highlight 4 of them. So, there's, the first one there is about planning for instruction, but we also have this one about delivering instruction. And you can see it kind of has the same kind of layout as the first one. There, the next one is about the cognitive and metacognitive strategies, and the last one is teaching social behavior.

So these are the 4 of the 6 that you can, that we have. So that we're just highlighting in this one, but feel free to check all 6 of those out They're very good information to help you with some high-quality instructional practices.

Okay, So this hits to something that people were talking about earlier when they were talking about student engagement, making sure those students feel they feel a part of the community school community. They feel included in this school community. So that's the really the difference between what we say, what we call belonging and inclusion, because there has been a big push for inclusion, you know, in the past, several years. So, when we think of inclusion, we really think of including those students in the general education classroom, you know as much as possible, you know, you know. And so that's what we talk about when we inclusion more of academic focus when we talk about belonging. We're talking about us making sure students are present. They feel invited, welcome, known, accepted, involved, supported, befriended and needed. So, all those good descriptor words there we want to make sure that's what students feel, and that's how they're best going to learn in our schools.

So, we currently have a couple of resources about belonging we have a webinar there that's shown there on the slide. And then we also have stories from the classroom. So, I think you've seen a couple of the stories from the classroom yesterday. That was the one of those about Billy that you saw yesterday. And then I and I think the there's been another one shown, or maybe was in the session I gave yesterday. But these stories from the classroom, we have several different kinds of stories from the classroom, and we're going to have more for about those in the in the near future. But these are all videos free to use on our websites. There are videos about educators or from educators and leaders just sharing their strategies, sharing their tips, sharing their stories from their experiences.

And there's also another session specifically on belonging that you can, you can join, if you'd like so if this is an interesting subject to you, you want to know more about making sure those students are included and belong and feel you know, included in your community, then there's another session about belonging that you can join in our in our online sessions today.

Alright. So how do we know if we have implemented with fidelity? So, if you think back to why you said you work with students with disabilities. Okay, so think about what you put earlier. So if we don't think about implementation—fidelity of implementation also, then how will we know if we're going to get to that end.

How are we going to know we're going to have improved outcomes? If we're not making sure that we're doing what we said we were going to do.

And we all know that what we measure is what we pay attention to. So, if you actually take the little bit of time to actually measure your fidelity, make sure it's being done, and taking data on it, then it's more likely to actually be done, because what we, we do, what we measure, right. So, if we don't monitor fidelity, then we can overlook some challenges that may be coming up either system-wide challenges, or maybe challenges going on with a specific educator or challenges going on with the student. So it's, and we'll talk a little bit about that in a minute, how we can, this fidelity data can help us figure out where there may be issues going on.

So, schools should have procedures in place to monitor the fidelity of implementation of their interventions. So these don't have to be formal, these are don't have to be formal procedures but it is important to consider whether people are implementing programs the way they're supposed to be delivered. So again, it doesn't have to be a formal thing but it is something that should be done.

So, considering all the responsibilities of educators throughout the day, even small checks of fidelity can make a big difference in keeping services for students on track. So this slide here just provides some considerations for data sources across the elements of fidelity that we just discussed. So the element there is listed on the left, and then possible data sources there are listed on the right. So we're talking about just things, simple things like self reports, observations, looking at student work, lesson plans or other kind of artifacts right?

There, those are just some examples of how you could check the fidelity of each of those elements, and

Our partners at NCI they have a fidelity monitoring tool. And so this is also linked on the PROGRESS Center website. But when you think about fidelity there's many competing factors that influence implementation, there's many things that can affect it, right? And we've mentioned some of them going on as we've gone on through our presentation but our goal with focusing and collecting fidelity data is to make a balance between what's realistic, like what can we actually expect teachers and educators to do during the day, but also something that's reliable because we want to make sure whatever data we collect, we can use that data to make informed decisions.

Okay, So this this tool is from the National Center on Intensive Intervention. It's a fillable pdf and it's on the NCI website as well as our progress center website. But it's just a simple way to monitor intervention fidelity. Sorry about that. So here, if you see there's a little blow up a part of the of the tool. Just through this little simple tool, this little check boxes, you can gather data about adherence so was that intervention implemented as

planned. You can get information about the exposure and duration, and you can also get information about the student engagement. So you can collect those 3 pieces of data just from this simple form. Okay, and there's also another tool from the State Implementation and Scaling up of Evidence-based Practices. I don't have a picture to show you. But the acronym for that is SISEP. So it's a state implementation and scaling up of evidence-based practices. It's another national center. They have an observation tool for instructional supports and systems. So what it can be used, this observation tool, can be used with any kind of practice, any kind of program, any kind of grade level. So it's agnostic it doesn't have to be a part of some specific program that you're using, and it was designed to be selected with evidence-based practices or programs that don't have their own measure of fidelity because sometimes programs do come with a fidelity, checklist or fidelity check. So that was designed to be used for those programs that may not have something.

So how do we use fidelity data with our decision making? Okay, So if we look at this graph here, if a teacher brought this progress monitoring graph to our team meeting, the first reaction might be okay we need to change the intervention. We need to make an adaptation to what we're doing, because this student is obviously not responding to the current intervention. Okay. But what if we also found out that during the course of this month and a half that the students been getting their intervention, they only got half of the intervention time that they should have received. So that might make the team stop and think about how could we improve the intervention delivery before actually making a change in delivery, or an adaptation to our intensification to the delivery that you're doing. So, as you can see in this example, if you just think about that you can make sure and look at our fidelity data and it can help us understand if we implemented the instruction as intended.

So if you didn't, then you can't really make a judgment on whether the intervention worked or not, right. We can also, we are able to see just what I said. We can link the student outcomes to their instruction or not—you know if they were not getting the instruction, then we can't really attribute the either the success or failure of the of the intervention, if it, wasn't being delivered as we intended—but with this data we can also make more informed decisions about what our next steps are. So do we need to actually change the intervention or do we just need to make sure we're implementing it with fidelity, implementing it as it's intended and this can help us understand there's if there's something wrong with the system that's impacting the fidelity or is it going on with the educator or something on with the student engagement?

So it's going to help us understand what barriers systematic or otherwise, are going on with this with this student. And another thing to remember. I know not, as many schools are doing virtual schooling now that you know, a lot of schools are back in session as far as COVID 19 or other situations like that, but if a school does have virtual instruction or concept, some kind of blended instruction collecting fidelity data in those situations are still very important. So just if you think back to that analogy of baking so just because you're using different utensils. It doesn't mean that the essential ingredients still don't have to be there for that recipe to work, right. So same thing, just because you're using different

tools maybe virtual tools, you still those that if fidelity of implementation still has to be there in order for those interventions to still have the effect that they're meant to have, so we've seen evidence-based interventions applied in virtual settings. It is just as important to have those implemented with fidelity as you would as in person delivery.

Okay, So this kind of helps us to wrap up what I was I was talking about earlier. So, fidelity data can help us consider developments and implementation across multiple levels. Okay, so it's not only going to tell us is there something on with the system. Are we not, allowing students enough time for intervention? Are we not, do we not, have enough staff to help us with our invention? I saw people posting about that earlier. So, what's going on with this? So, it can have to see if there's something going on with the system as far as implementing these services. Number 2 is there something going on with specific educators? Do they need more training? Are they not following the plan as it was intended? So again, fidelity of implementation data can help us determine that, or is something going on the student level, you know, is a student not engaged well enough? Do they not feel a part of the community, or that? Are they not able to grasp the concepts? For whatever reason do we need to intensify interventions? So, fidelity of implementation data, even though it sounds like something small, can help us to make decisions about all these systems, all these levels in education.

**Amy Peterson:** And I just wanted to jump in before you go on to this slide, but to share a little bit of a story and an experience from one of the sites that we have worked with. Another hat I wear is with the National Center on Intensive Intervention. And in some of the sites that we were working with in Wyoming, when they were really looking at that implementation fidelity and using that student intervention implementation log—I heard some of the conversation earlier about some challenges with that duration and exposure and Steven was just mentioning, thinking about like getting pulled for activities and other things or staff issues or things like that— by documenting that data and collecting that data over time, they were able to do to bring that information to their leadership teams, to their systems levels teams to look at that at the systems level of how can we protect the time for our special educators, in order to be able to deliver the instruction and intervention for our students with disabilities.

Because what we're seeing is that we're constantly getting pulled, or we're constantly getting distracted by an event or something else and so it's impacting our ability to provide that free appropriate public education for our students with disabilities.

But as Steven mentioned before, if we are not documenting that information and we're just coming with this is a challenge that we're seeing sometimes, that's a harder conversation to have. So, by simply kind of making some a focus on tracking that information, it might be a good data source to bring to that conversation.



And I think another thing that I heard earlier on in the reflections on the fidelity piece is how do we change the conversation around fidelity from you know it being like you can't try this because it might not be perfect, but how can we use it to get better? And I think we have to shift our mindset, you know, be vulnerable, like Alexa said, into thinking about, how can we look at this data to help us be better and to look at that continuous improvement process of like well, we aren't seeing students as engaged in our lesson, what might we need to do to enhance engagement? Do we need to think about our quality of delivery? Do we need to think about making some changes to the supports that we're providing in order for students to be more engaged in that intervention and supports? Or maybe the student is not regularly attending the session, do we need to look at the schedule for when we're trying to provide some of those instructions and supports or do we need to have some conversations with the parents and families to figure out if they need some additional supports in order to ensure the student is able to get to school and to get access to those services, and support. So, thinking about using this information to kind of continuously inform our process and reflect on kind of what we have put into place, and what we need to do differently rather than at feeling like It's like a gotcha or an evaluation kind of experience. But really using that data in that continuous improvement cycle. And I know that's easier said than done, right.

It's easy for us on the outside say using it as a you know, continuous improvement rather than evaluation, but having those conversations and creating that trust and experience for the educators in the building, the you know, administrators in the system level folks, you know, down to the connection with parents and families and the student to make sure that it is feeling like we're trying something, we're putting it into place, we're collecting data and information on this to understand whether it's working, and if it's not working, we're going to make a change So we can better meet the needs of our educators, of our students, of our system as a whole.

So, I think those are just some things that we'll want to think about as we think about implementation and fidelity is that you know it has to become that continuous improvement process and the data source helps us to really define that over time. So sorry Steven, I'll put it back to you.

**Steven Prater:** No, that was great thanks for giving that. practical experience that you've had with the with the NCII schools that you've been working with. Alright, so this is really we're up we're about to wrap up here. I know we're close to closer our time or ending time with you. But so, this goes back to that one that slide that you've seen with Tessie, you saw at the beginning of our presentation, but I just wanted to use it again to kind of wrap up our conversation. So, in developing our, in developing and implementing, we need to make sure we develop high quality educational program with fidelity.

So that means we are making sure we have all the required areas of the IEP, they align, and they work together, right with the bicycle analogy that we've talked about several times during our couple days here, and then when we're implementing we're also implementing with fidelity, so making sure we're

sticking to the plan, we're using evidence-based strategies and we're engaging students so to ensure that we're providing FAPE and improving the outcomes and access for the students with disabilities.

So, like, Amy said earlier. If one of these areas is a 0 or a low number, then those outcomes are going to be low. But if both of these are high quality, and both of these have a lot of fidelity, then we're going to have the improved outcomes for our students. So that's it for our presentation today here's some information about how to keep track, keep in contact with us if you have questions or want to follow us there's our Facebook and our Twitter.

And then, if you have questions there's an email address there, progress center at air dot org, you can send email there, and somebody will respond to you. There's the promoting progress dot org website that's our PROGRESS Center website. And we do have a couple minutes left if anybody has any other questions or comments feel free to put them in chat feel free to come off mute, and we've got about 4 min left in our session, and Amy, Aleksis and I will stick around for these last four minutes if anyone would like to talk a little more.