

Can a Team Member Wear Multiple Hats?

Given scheduling conflicts, time constraints, challenges contacting Team members, etc., it may be attractive to have one person serve multiple roles on the IEP Team. However, having a Team member serve in multiple roles may put the district at odds with IDEA.

Some points to remember:

- ✓ ***Always seek written parental consent to excuse a Team member*** ... if the permission to excuse is received, make sure that the person excused provides the Team with his/her input.
- ✓ ***Don't attempt to use a minimum number of people to fill the Team*** ... In a 2011 OSEP letter, holding a Team meeting with a two person Team (which was the question the OSEP letter addressed) in which a parent and one district representative assuming all other Team member roles was not permissible under IDEA.
- ✓ ***Make sure that an individual who may be serving in multiple roles is qualified*** ... If an administrator serving a Team chair is going to fill the role of diagnostician (interpreting the results of another professional who conducted an evaluation), s(he) must be appropriately licensed and address the diagnostic piece prior to moving to IEP discussions that will require him/her to serve as the district representative.
- ✓ ***Pay close attention to who is the general and special educator of the child*** ... Just because the principal also has licensure as a special educator, it does not mean that she is the special educator of the child. Remember, the general and special educator participating on the Team must be someone who is or may be responsible for implementing the student's IEP.
- ✓ ***Use introductions to clarify each person's role at the beginning of the meeting*** ... Consider introducing each team member even if the parent(s) met them before. This clarifies each person's role at the meeting.

