

63RD CONFERENCE ON EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

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What Educators Say and Parents Hear

Sorting Through Mixed Messages

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Exceptional Children Division





Session Goal

The participants will cite and apply strategies for effective communication between home and school.



Plan for the Session

- Review Examples of Communication Chaos
- Discuss Parent Involvement
- Identify Barriers to Communication
- Discuss Six Indicators of Professional Behavior
- Discuss Continuum of Collaboration and Partnership

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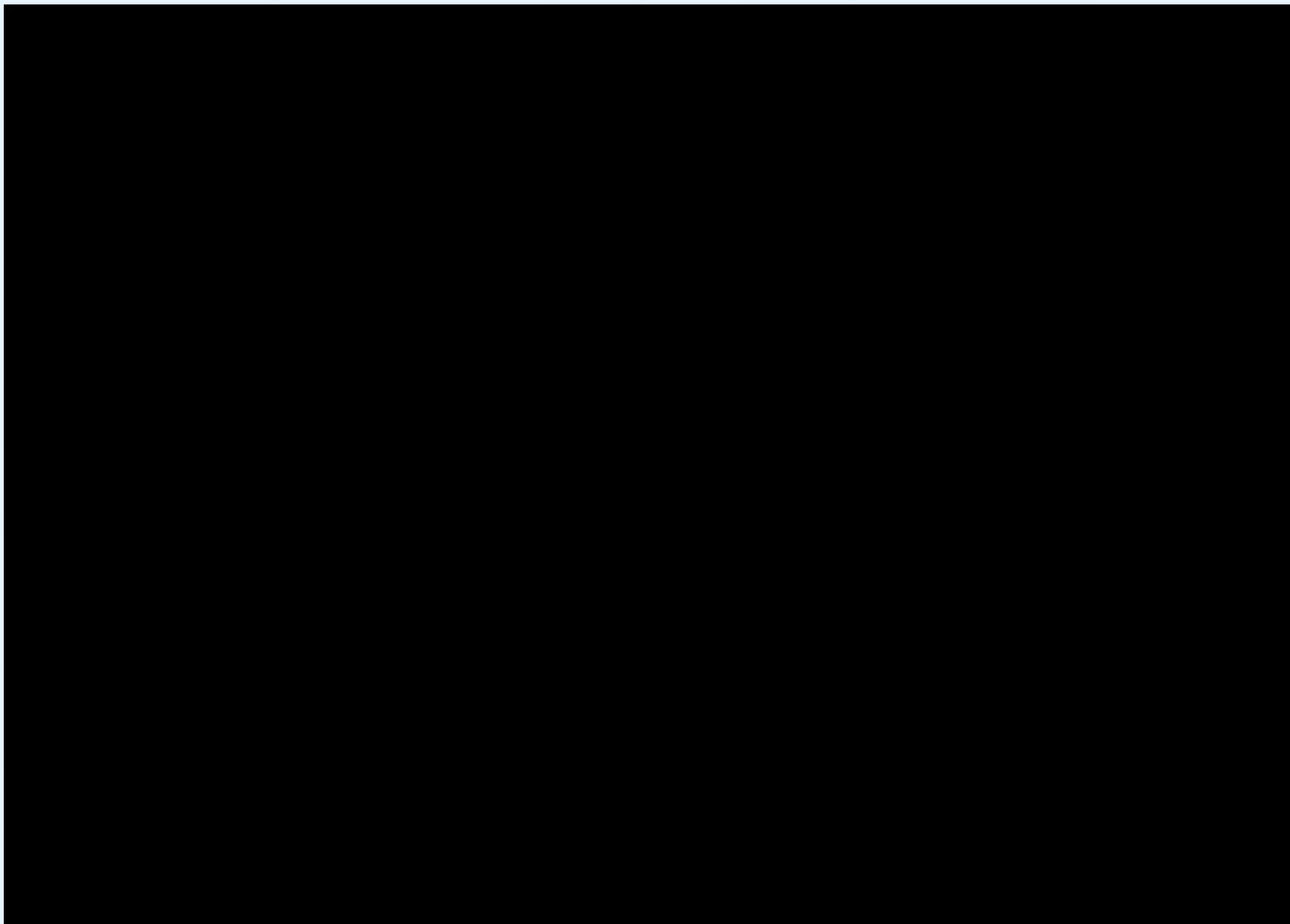
Communication Chaos





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ECAC
FAPE
LRE
IEP
DHH
FBAEC

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Parent Involvement





34 CFR§300.322(a)

PARENT PARTICIPATION

“Each public agency must take steps to ensure that one or both of the parents of a child with a disability are present at each IEP Team meeting or are afforded the opportunity to participate.”



Meaningful Parent Participation

Before the Meeting

- Informed of the purpose of the meeting
- Provided the opportunity to add items to the meeting agenda

During the Meeting

- Provided a clear description of present levels of academic achievement and functional performance
- Provided a clear explanation of options proposed or rejected that are based on data

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Barriers to Communication

Robert Bolton, *People Skills*, (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1979).

Thomas Gordon, *Parent Effectiveness Training: The “No-Lose” Program for Raising Responsible Children* (New York: Peter H. Wyden, 1970).





Barrier #1: CRITICIZING

“Well, you brought that on yourself.”

“Well, if your child did his homework every day, he wouldn’t be failing my class.”

“Well, if you would look on my website, you would know that I offer tutoring on Tuesdays and Thursdays.”



Barrier #2: NAME-CALLING

“Johnny is just lazy.”

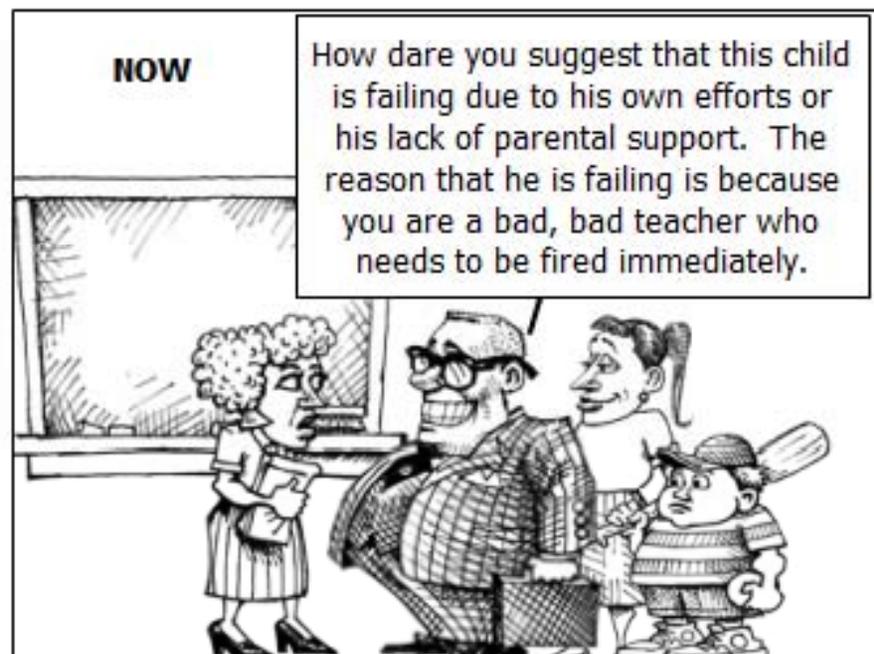
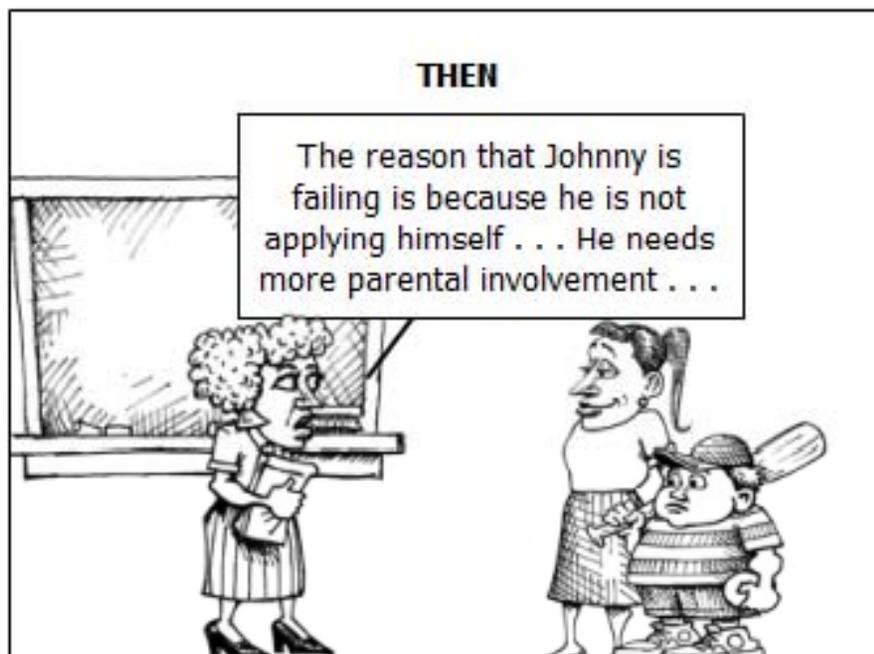
“Rebecca is the class clown.”

“He is just SPECIAL.”



Barrier #3: DIAGNOSING

Education Today by john horse





Barrier #4: ORDERING

“You just need to sit him down and tell him who’s boss.”

“If you would reduce the sugar in her diet, she would be able to sit and pay attention in class.”



Barrier #5: THREATENING

“If you don’t sign the IEP, we are going to implement it anyway.”

“You can call your attorney and we’ll call ours.”



Barrier #6: MORALIZING

“You ought to apologize to her.”

“You need to be thankful that she is willing to work with your child.”



Barrier #7: EXCESSIVE/APPROPRIATE QUESTIONING

“Did you check his backpack?”

“Did you look on the website?”

“Have you spoken with the teacher?”

“Have your spoken with the principal?”



Barrier #8: ADVISING

“If I were you, I would get him a prescription.”

“If I were you, I’d put him on a schedule so tight,
he couldn’t breathe.”

“You really need to have a talk with her about her
attitude.”



Barrier #9: DIVERTING

“If you think that’s bad, let me tell you what happened to me.”

“You think your child has difficulty paying attention, let me tell you about...”

“Your child is not the only student I have.”



Barrier #10: LOGICAL ARGUMENT

“If you don’t provide structure at home, he’s not going to respond to structure at school.”

“If you allow the her to make all the choices, she will never respond to discipline.”



Barrier #11: REASSURING

“She’s a smart kid, she’ll be fine.”

“Everybody likes him, he will pass the class.”

“I know plenty of students with learning disabilities, they all survive high school.”



Activity #1

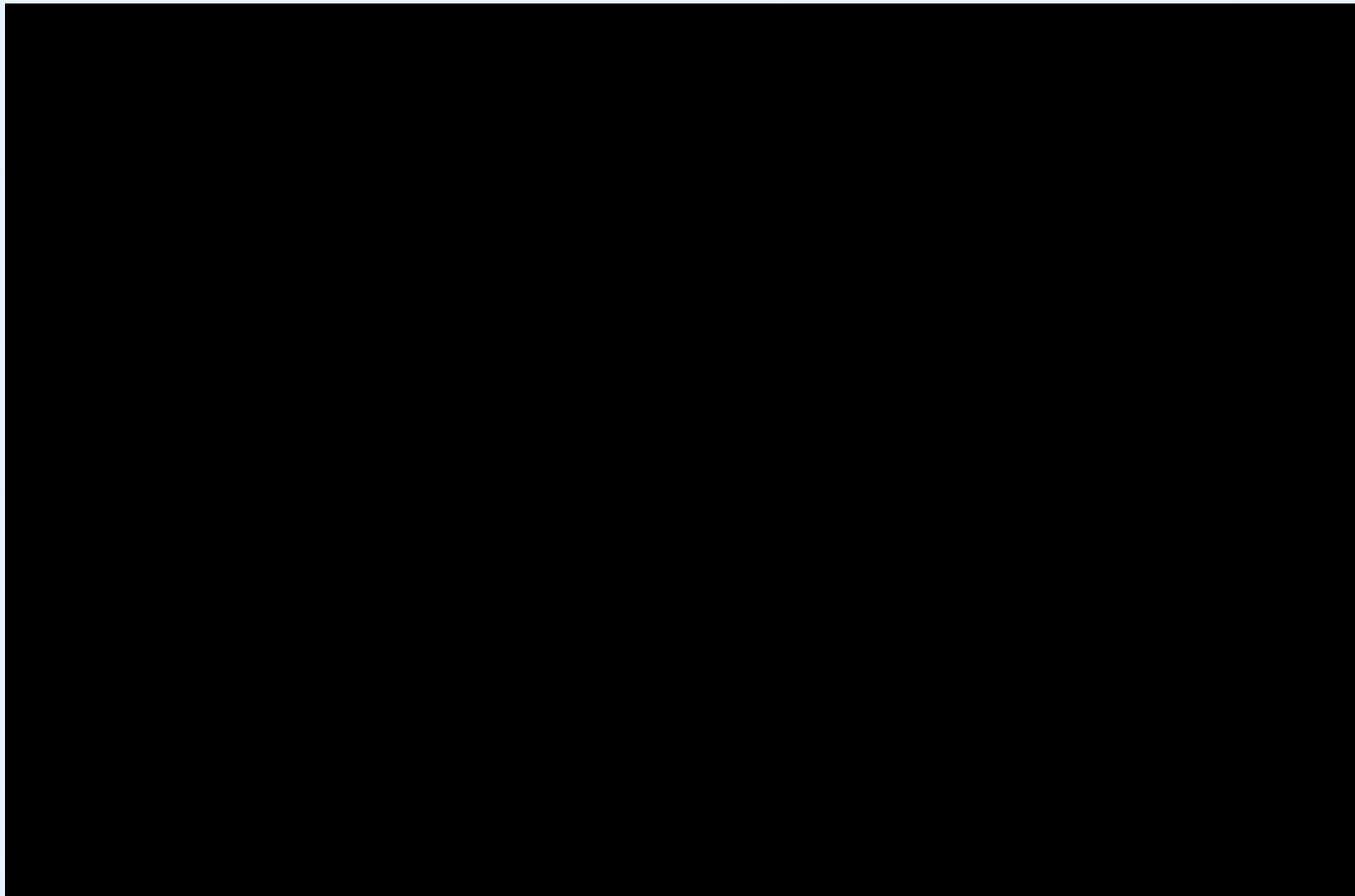
*Watch the following clip of an IEP
Team meeting.*

*Were there barriers to
communication?*



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Reflection #1

Give examples of barriers to communication found in the video clip.

Criticizing

Name-Calling

Diagnosing

Ordering

Threatening

Moralizing

Excessive/Appropriate Questioning

Advising

Diverting

Logical Argument

Reassuring

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Six Indicators of Professional Behavior

Blue-Banning, M., Summer, J.A., Frankland, H.C., Nelson, L.L., & Beegle, G. (2004).
Dimensions of Family Professional Partnerships: Constructive Guidelines for
Collaboration. *Exceptional Children* 70 (2), 167-184.





Indicator #1: Communication

Methods

Verbal

NON-VERBAL

LISTENING



Verbal

“No man would listen to you talk if he did not know that it was his turn next.”

Edgar Watson
Howe

Non-Verbal

Eyes

Arms

Shoulders

Posture

Attire

Organization

Timeliness



Listening

“We have two ears and one tongue so that we would listen more and talk less.”

Diogenes



Methods

Face-to-Face

Telephone

Email

Handwritten Note



Indicator #2: Commitment

*“Say what you will do,
and do what you say.”*



Indicator #3: Equality

Each member of the team has a role. Every role is important.



Indicator #4: Skills

- Engage in ongoing professional development
- Keep current on educational trends
- Base decisions on DATA
- COLLABORATE



Indicator #5: Trust

- Takes work!
- Goes in more than one direction.
- Is gained over time.
- Is FRAGILE- Handle with Care!



Indicator #6: Respect

- Must be given!
- Has to be earned.



Activity #2

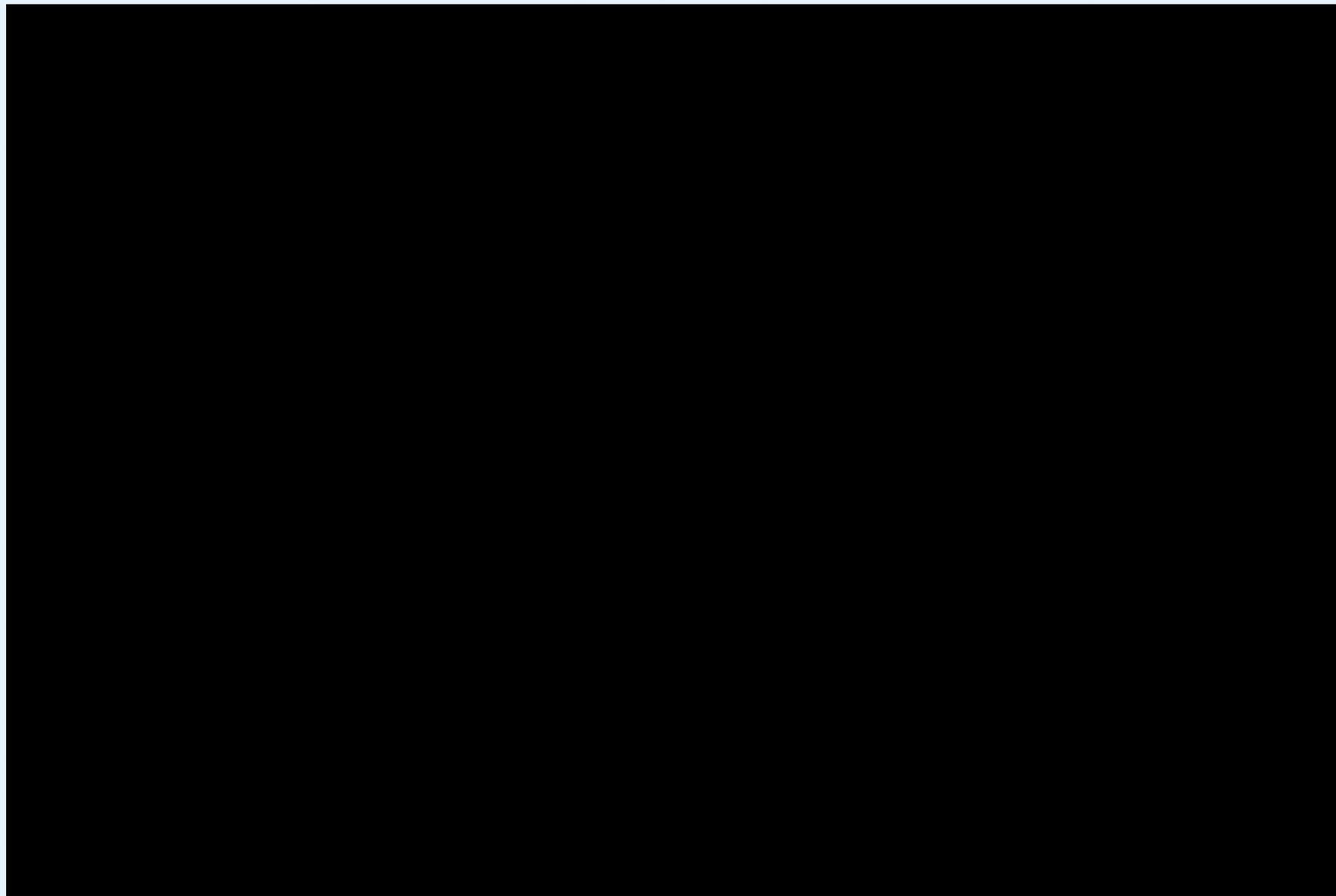
*Watch the following clip of an IEP
Team meeting.*

*Were there examples of professional
behavior?*



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Reflection #2

Give examples of professional behavior found in the video clip.

Communication

Skills

Commitment

Trust

Equality

Respect

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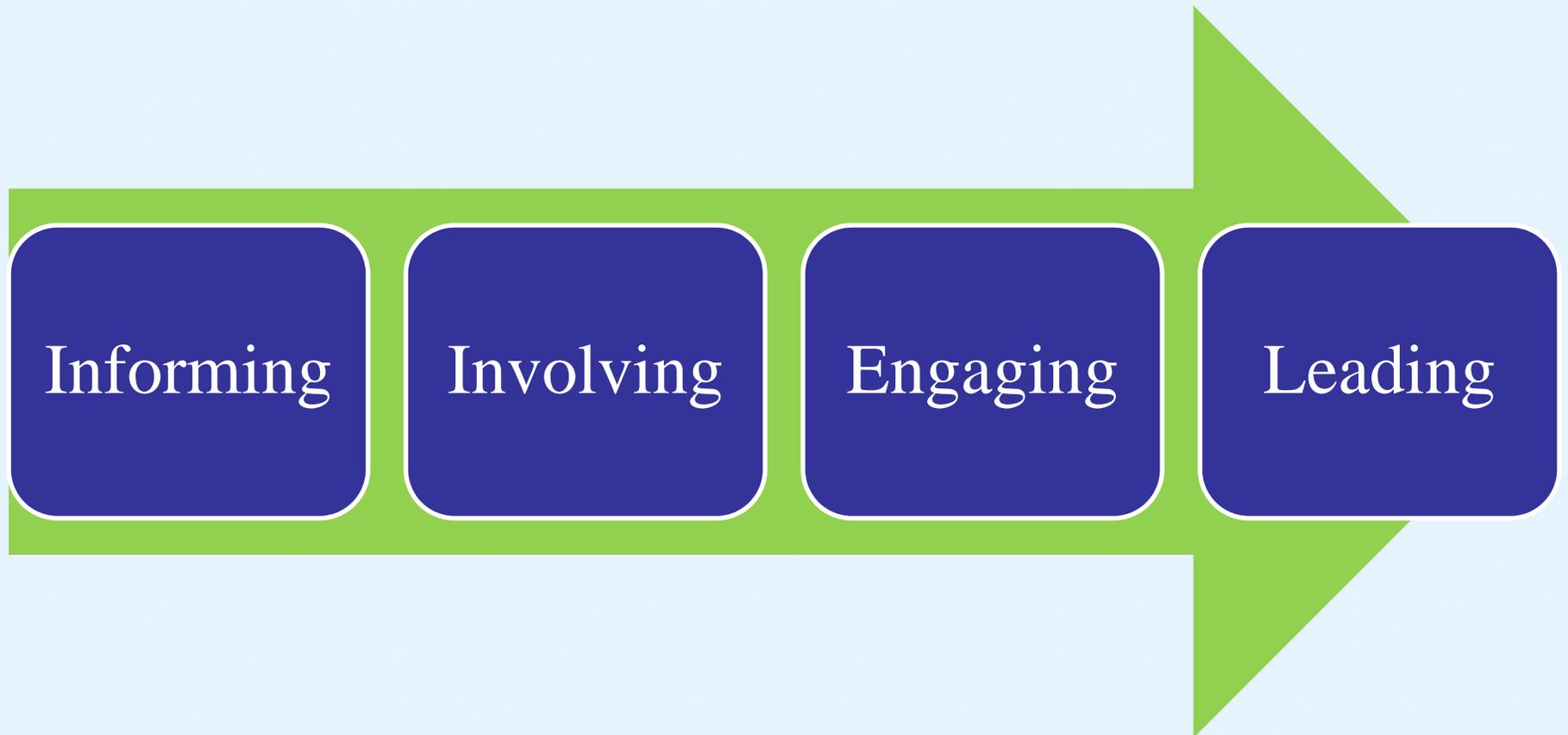
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Continuum of Collaboration and Partnership

Amendt, T. (2008). *Involvement to engagement: Community education practices in a suburban elementary school and an inner-city community school*. Unpublished Master's thesis, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, SK, Canada.





Increasing degree of collaboration and partnership



Thank you!

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What Educators Say and Parents Hear: *Sorting Through Mixed Messages* Guided Notes

Meaningful Parent Participation

I. Before the Meeting

- a. _____
- b. _____

II. During the Meeting

- a. _____
- b. _____

Barriers to Communication

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| 1. _____ | 4. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 5. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 6. _____ |

Six Indicators of Professional Behavior

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| 1. _____ | 4. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 5. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 6. _____ |

Continuum of Collaboration and Partnership

