

Collaboration Video Transcript

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Desi Peña: Dually identified students have really particular needs that need to be met through a carefully crafted IEP and through careful collaboration. So, these students are really owed and really require interdisciplinary, uh, coordination and collaboration across the different professions.

So, if there's a child who is identified for a speech and language impairment, let's say, that child would really benefit from the collaboration of not only the teacher, the special education teacher, uh, but the speech language pathologist with the English language learner teacher or the world, um, sorry, the multilingual learner teacher. So, the team should definitely figure out how to make, whether it's shared planning or, uh, just case coordination happen so that the student's academic needs are being met.

As part of any IEP team meeting, we have to include any specialist or any teaching staff that is going to be supporting the student. So, making sure that everyone is invited to participate, whether that is somebody that's a related service professional, such as a speech language pathologist or an occupational therapist, but also making sure that the regular education teacher's present, that the parents are, uh, present as well and able to engage, like, for example, if they need an interpreter, that that interpreter is provided. Um, and then also importantly, that members of the special education team, um, are present and give their input in addition to the multilingual learner teacher.

I do connect with parents because they are crucial informants in the evaluation process when you're first identifying a child for a speech and language impairment. So, parents really hold all of the knowledge around culture and language for that child's, um, home or heritage language. So, it's really important to make sure that we know what are the contexts in which that child is using that language? What percent of the time are they using that language? Are they mostly using it in an expressive manner? In a receptive manner? Um, how is it that they are communicating at home? So, if we can understand how they're communicating at home, and we can understand how they're communicating at school, that's really the foundation, the essential foundation for determining how a speech and language evaluation will be conducted, um, and what

tools that speech language pathologists should be using in order to determine whether the child actually has a disability, uh, or if they're just experiencing, maybe it's, um, multilingual language development, maybe it's just second language acquisition. That's how we make that distinction by carefully selecting tools and collaborating with parents because they're the ones who hold all of this knowledge about what the child's communication looks like outside of the classroom.

The coolest thing that I've been able to accomplish is to get people to buy in. And I think that that's more so the hump than any particular success story. Like, if I'm able to change somebody's mentality around bilingualism, multilingualism, um, you know, supporting the unique ways in which students might communicate, I feel like I've done my job, um, because I know that the, sometimes the barriers may be, you know, you might have a, I, I work with students that are at this intersection of multilingualism and ableism, right? They, they're experiencing, um, and sometimes more, sometimes they're experiencing racism, they're experiencing culture shock, right? We, we have students that lie at all of these different intersections, and we have to figure out, you know, how to support the team in moving beyond some of the barriers.

And I wish I had a specific teacher in mind, but I think that when teams start to bridge these gaps, and they start to connect the dots, and they start making decisions on behalf of that student that make sense, that's when I really see success. That's when I really see that the, that schools are ready and districts are ready to actually make change happen for these students.

WIDA Staff: We would like to thank Desi Peña, who graciously shared her time and voice. We appreciate you!