



Effective Practices for Success of SAPs and SICCs

In working with State Advisory Panels and Interagency Coordinating Councils (ICC), certain practices seem to lead to a more effective and efficient Advisory Panel/ICC meeting and outcomes, which ultimately lead to that Advisory Panel/ICC making a positive difference for infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities. The Advisory Panel and ICC are both in a very influential position to leverage change and improve services. Each member represents all children who are eligible under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and each member represents a stakeholder group. Listed below are the indicators for an Advisory Panel or ICC to be effective and to leverage change to improve services for children with disabilities:

Indicators for Success

- 1- The SAP/ICC **follows functions and duties outlined in IDEA.**
- 2- Effective Panels/ICCs have **established by-laws** that meet State Open Meeting Requirements. The by-laws are reviewed and, if necessary, revised annually.
- 3- The **membership of the SAP/ICC reflects IDEA requirements.**
- 4- The **membership of the SAP/ICC tries to reflect the demographics of the State** (gender, culture, rural/urban).
- 5- The Panel/ICC has **a close working relationship with either the State Director of Special Education or Lead Agency Administrator/Part C Coordinator.** They might not always agree with each other, but they trust and respect each other.
- 6- The Panel/ICC **conducts an annual orientation**, usually during their first meeting of the year. Best practice would be to involve all members of the Panel/ICC at the orientation so they all have a common understanding of their purpose, membership requirements, and functions under IDEA. By-laws and meeting requirements should be reviewed

during the orientation.

- 7- The Panel/ICC **approach their work as “advisory” in nature**. For the ICC, their required work includes “advisory and assistance.” The Panel/ICC gains an understanding of the difference between advisory and advocacy.
- 8- **The State Director/Lead Agency Administrator reports back** to the Panel/ICC on recommendations that have been made.
- 9- The Advisory Panel/ICC are **involved in meaningful work** that makes a difference for children with disabilities. The Advisory Panel/ICC meetings are more than presentations. The Panel/ICC makes relevant recommendations and provides advice on important issues.
- 10- Each group should set a time and develop **a process to establish annual priorities for the year**. The best time to do this is after the annual orientation at the first meeting of the year. Effective Advisory Panels/ICCs limit priorities to 3-4 per year and remain fluid in case another priority surfaces during the year.
- 11- The Panel/ICC **uses current and reliable** data from the Annual Performance Report (APR) and other sources to determine priorities, using more than one source of data to arrive at a conclusion.
- 12- **Ongoing communication** between the Executive Committee and the State Education Agency (SEA) or Lead Agency (LA) is vital to maintain a mutual respect and collaboration between the two.
- 13- **A strong connection should exist between the Advisory Panel and Interagency Coordinating Council**. Both advisory groups have a lot in common, such as the transition of a child from Part C to Part B services. They should meet together once a year in a common place and for an hour or two. Assigning a member that serves on both groups, maybe the Section 619 Coordinator, will help maintain the connection between the two.
- 14- Effective Panels/ICCs have a **dedicated SEA/LA** staff to support and assist with meetings and logistics.
- 15- Effective Panels/ICCs support and provide advice around the **improvement efforts of the SEA/LA**, such as the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP).
- 16- A **collaborative agenda building process** is in place and includes input from the SEA/LA and all Panel/ICC members.

17- The Panel/ICC meet between 4-6 times each year. During disasters or public health issues, such as pandemics, the Panel/ICC continues meeting and conducting business through a virtual platform.

18- Each Panel/ICC receives an annual update on the **importance of maintaining confidentiality** during, and in between, Panel/ICC meetings.

19- The Panel/ICC “markets itself” to make sure individuals across the State know and understand the purpose and functions of the group. Panel/ICC members create awareness brochures, post information on the SEA/LA website, and hold an organized public comment process at all meetings.

20- An effective Panel/ICC **develops an Annual Report** providing a summary of the group activities and recommendations for the year.

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