



ECHO Session Date: 9/19/24

Thank you for presenting your student at ECHO Idaho – K12 Supporting Students with Autism session. Please keep in mind that your School District policies and Health Services procedures, medication administration protocols, process guidelines, remain the guiding principles to your practice.

After review of the case presentation and discussion of this student’s case among the ECHO Community of Practice, the following suggestions have been made:

Student Grade Level: 9-12th grade

Summary:

Our challenge is that the behavior we see with the student in the classroom is vastly different than what he presents during IEP meetings. (i.e., is fully verbal, but in IEP meetings will only use sign language). He has refused to do his work in class, but the general education teachers and academic testing indicate he is fully capable. The mother insists he still needs a 1:1 paraprofessional to support him in class. His mother has also demanded that he have accommodation that he is to have no homework being sent home. Consequently, the student is not doing well with his grades as he has a history of missing work. The student has no services outside of the school. How do we promote independence in this student when he engages in behavior that suggests he needs support only under certain circumstances?

Question:

The student has no services outside of the school. How do we promote independence in this student when he engages in behavior that suggests he needs support only under certain circumstances?

Recommendations:

Building trust and supporting the mom’s involvement:

- Emphasize the importance of self-care for Mom, as it will help her manage stress and better regulate emotions, allowing her to more effectively support her child’s growth toward independence.
- Focus on understanding and addressing Mom's fears to rebuild trust and support the goal of fostering independence for her child, possibly starting by identifying specific concerns she can articulate.
- Be cautious in conversations with parents, especially when advocating for less support, as pushing too hard can backfire if the child struggles and reinforces the need for support.
- Avoid creating situations where removing support could prove the parent right about the child's need for continued assistance.
- Encourage Mom to witness her child’s success discreetly, potentially improving her trust and confidence in the child’s growing independence, while being mindful of the impact on their relationship.
- Focus on acting based on known facts rather than assumptions or hypotheses, ensuring unbiased decisions while celebrating successes and providing Mom with a new perspective on her child's capabilities.



Gradual steps toward independence:

- Consider gradual steps toward reducing one-on-one support, using baby steps and functional routines as part of the IEP goals, while involving Mom in creating a multi-year plan for the child's independence.
- Start with a fade plan to identify times when the child can be completely independent, ensuring goals are data-driven to show reduced need for supervision.
- Consider overlapping the check-in/check-out Tier 2 support with the behavior intervention, creating a unified plan, and then gradually fade out non-critical times with the behavior interventionists to see if the student becomes more independent with just the check-in/check-out process.
- Encourage communication with the IEP team to establish a shared goal of independence, ensuring Mom feels comfortable with each step in the process and highlighting successes along the way to build confidence.

Involving the child in the process:

- Consider using methods like Ross Green's Plan B to build the child's self-advocacy skills by giving them a voice and engaging them in problem-solving.