



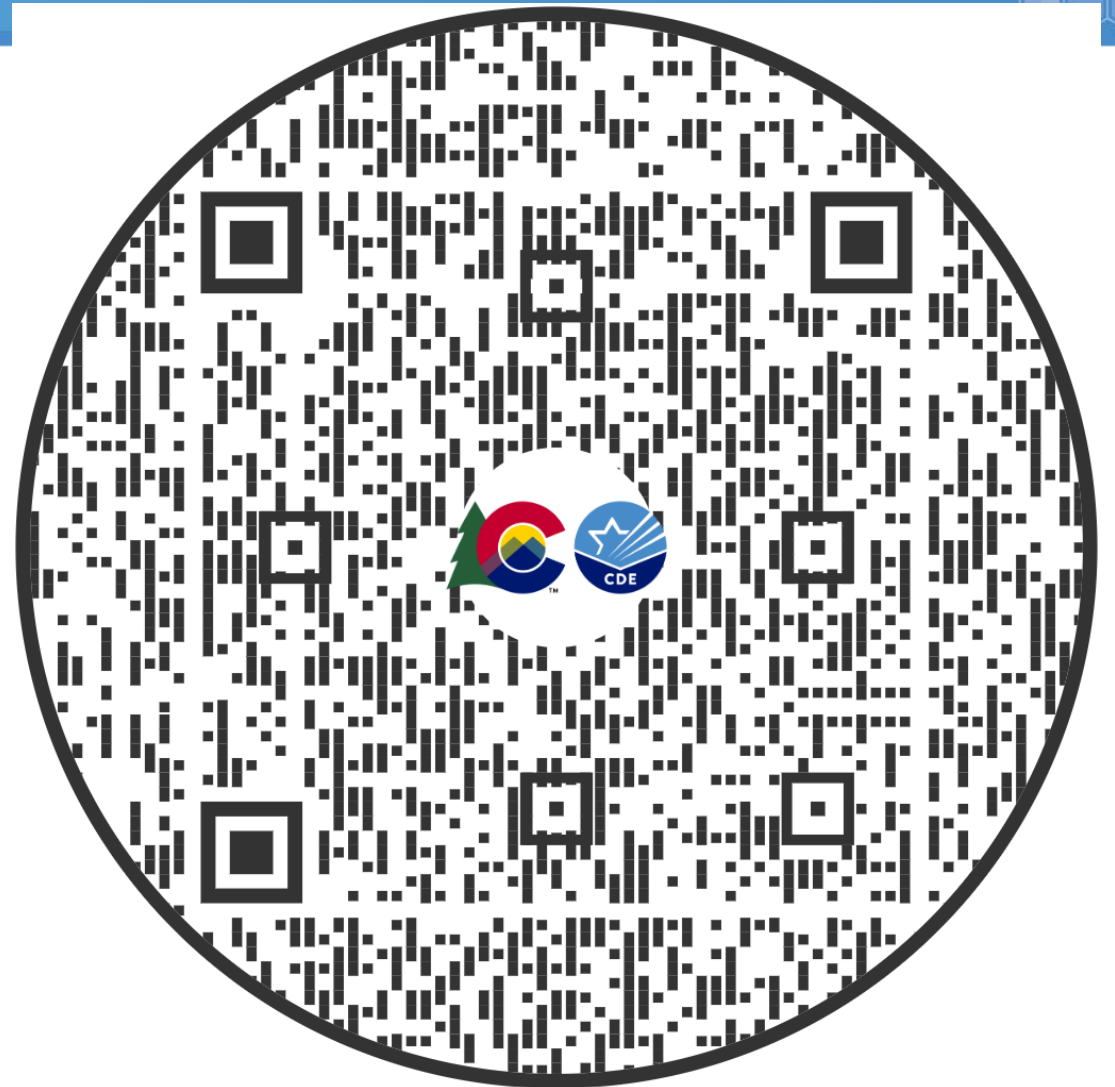
COLORADO
Department of Education

A Community of Practice Supporting Inclusive Practices for Students with Disabilities

Today's Topic- Family Interviewing- A Case Study

Remember to Sign- in

*"Supporting
Inclusive
Practices for
Students with
Disabilities"*



Facilitator Information



- Michael Ramirez, Ed.D. (He/Him/His)
 - Exceptional Student Services Unit, Colorado Department of Education (CDE)
 - Supervisor, Equity Projects Specialist
 - Facilitative Leader and Coordinator for IHE CoP
 - Adjunct Faculty at Colorado Christian University
 - Background:
 - CDE Leadership (RtI, PBIS, Building Bridges MH Grant, Restraint / Seclusion Rules)
 - Supervised CDE's initial implementation of MTSS
 - Founder of a Facility School's flagship program (Shiloh House, Inc.)

Facilitator Information, Continued

- Bryn Harris, PhD, NCSP (she/her/hers)
 - Professor - University of Colorado Denver
 - School of Education and Human Development & Department of Pediatrics (Developmental Pediatrics)
 - Background:
 - PhD - Indiana University
 - Licensed Psychologist (CO) and School Psychologist (CO)
 - Bilingual in Spanish
 - Practicing School Psychologist (part-time) - Denver Public Schools
 - Research focuses on identification of autism in culturally and linguistically minoritized populations



Member Introductions



Introduce yourselves in the chat!

- Name, preferred pronouns, role, district/region/BOCES.
- From which location in Colorado are you joining us?
- “If you could have one superpower to make engaging students and families easier, what would it be?”

Grounding in Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

- *Form Relationships as Peer Mentors:* Opportunities for connection extend beyond the limited time we have in sessions.
- *Overcome Dominance or Balance Issues:* Ensure everyone has an equal opportunity to raise questions and share ideas.
- *Remain Solutions Oriented:* Don't spend all your airtime dwelling on problems or challenges; instead, commit the limited time we have to sharing practices and considering opportunities.

Today's Agenda

- This Community of Practice (CoP) is a forum to discuss research-based strategies to improve outcomes for students with disabilities.
- Introductions
- Lessons learned from prior CoP sessions
- Discussion Regarding “Family Interviewing Case Study”
- Reflective Activities
- Closing



Setting the Context

During this session we will explore innovative and impactful practices that build and strengthen family and school partnership.

- Topics for the year's sessions:
 - ✓ 1st: Setting the Stage for Family Partnerships
 - ✓ 2nd: Forging Family Partnerships
 - ✓ 3rd: Promising Practices in Family Partnerships
 - ✓ 4th: Family Interviewing Case Study (Today)

Two Rounds of Breakout Discussions

- Both rounds will have multiple simultaneous breakout rooms.
- You may self select a breakout room based on audience.
- Questions are in the note catcher, please copy and save for your breakout session.
- You may want to adopt and adapt the questions for your staff meetings.
- Session 1, ~12 minutes, & Session 2, ~12-minutes.
- Note catcher: Appoint a scribe and reporter.

Reflection Activity- Round 1: What Exists?(12 min)

- How do you currently conduct family interviews in your context? For what purpose? Who is involved?
- What is currently a strength regarding your family interviewing practices, and where do you have gaps?
- During family interviewing practices, how are strategies modified to welcome multilingual families and those with unique identities (e.g. economically vulnerable, those that have work schedules that do not align with traditional school events)
- After reviewing the [Culturally Responsive School-Based Family Interviewing: Engaging in Empathic Family Partnerships](#) resource, how might this (or aspects) be integrated into your practice?
- What would demonstrate that you were centering families in the MTSS and special education processes in your context? What would that look like in practice? What do you think that would feel like for families?

Reflection Activity Round #2: Case Study

Scenario: A school team would like to meet with Manuel's parents to discuss his academic difficulties and plan for MTSS or a possible Special Education evaluation. The team's goal is to learn more about Manuel and his family, to share information about current concerns, to understand the parent's perspectives on his progress, and to partner with the parents in the decision-making process.

- As the school team prepares for a meeting with Manuel's family to discuss his academic challenges and the possibility of a special education evaluation, consider the following:

Reflective Activity #2 (12 Min.)

- How might your own cultural identity, assumptions, or communication style influence the way you approach Manuel's family?
- How might we frame the purpose of the upcoming meeting or interview in a way that feels collaborative and supportive, rather than clinical or intimidating?
- What steps can we take to ensure that Manuel's family feels empowered, not judged, in conversations about his learning challenges?
- What assets might Manuel's family bring to the partnership, and how can we acknowledge and build on those strengths?
- What strategies can be used to build trust, reduce anxiety, and ensure the family feels valued and empowered in the decision-making process?
- What kind of questions should we ask Manuel's family during the meeting to learn more about his learning at home, his interests, and their perspective on his strengths and needs?

Reflection Activity #3: Future Opportunity

What role could a family liaison, culture broker, or bilingual staff member play in supporting communication and comfort during the family interview?

How will we follow up with the family after the meeting to ensure that they feel heard, valued, and kept in the loop throughout the process?

Final Reflections and Commitments

In the chat,

1. Share relevant breakout notes in the Chat.
2. List your top takeaways from today's discussion.
3. How will you use Reflection # 3, with your team?
4. Identify one commitment, goal, or next step, based on today's learning.

A Vision Toward the Future

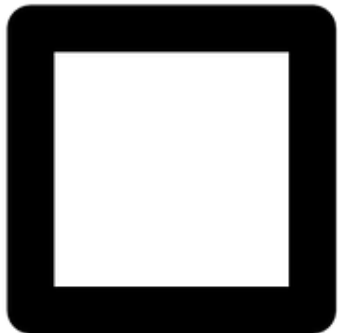


This session will be posted on the website:

[Supporting Inclusive Practices for Students with Disabilities](#)

- ✓ September 16, 2025
- ✓ October 14, 2025
- ✓ November 4, 2025
- ✓ December 9, 2025





Look for additionally
resources to be posted
on the website.

[Supporting Inclusive
Practices for Students
with Disabilities -
Colorado Department
of Education](#)

Evaluation and Certificate



- *CoP of Practice for Advancing EDI for Students with Disabilities.*
- *Today's Topic: "Family Interviewing – Case Study"*

Contact Information

Bryn Harris, Ph.D.

University of Colorado Denver

bryn.harris@ucdenver.edu

303-315-3899

Michael Ramirez, Ed.D.

Colorado Department of Education

Ramirez_m@cde.state.co.us

720-460-6251

Beth Donahue. Family Engagement Specialist

Colorado Department of Education

donahue_b@cde.state.co.us

720-926-1453