Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired

Outreach Programs

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Get to the point! Succinct Communication with Educational Teams at the Beginning of the School Year

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# Agenda

* Discuss difficulties and issues with sharing information about your student to team members.
* Tips for creating a short but effective presentation for educational team members.
* Using an “Elevator Pitch” as another model for quick communication with team members

# It’s Prep Week!

Slide contains detailed image of an eyeball

* You call a meeting with the student’s educational team to tell them all they need to know about her. (Arrow pointing to an image of a group of students in a lecture hall listening intently to the instructor.)
* But it doesn’t take very long before it turns into this. (Arrow pointing to an image of people staring intently at their phones.)
* Or maybe even this. (Arrow pointing to a clip of Charlie Brown and Peppermint Patty listening to a muffled teacher voice as Patty falls asleep.)

# So What Can You Do to Keep Them Awake and Engaged?

* Focus on key information about your student.
* Create an engaging presentation (like this one) with smiley face emoji
* Develop an “elevator pitch”

# What Makes a Presentation Engaging?

Relative content: you need this information because…

* This kid is really cute! (Yes, she is but that’s not a reason why)
* She is on your class roster
* She has accommodations and services in her IEP that you need to know about.

# Presented in an Easy to Read Format =

* 30-point font
* High contrast
* No more than 5 bullets per slide

# Like This

Information on slide is in 30-point font, high contrast (yellow text on blue background) and has 3 bullet points

* Maria has a visual impairment that affects her visual acuity (clarity of vision)
* She uses large print materials for math (18-point font)

She uses several tools to help her complete her work more efficiently

# And Like This

Information on slide is in 30-point font, high contrast (yellow text on blue background) and has 3 bullet points

* She is sensitive to bright light so needs to sit with her back to windows.
* She has difficulty filling in class notes due to her vision impairment and will need a completed copy.
* She has good computer skills and prefers long reading passages in a digital format.

# Not Like This

Image of an arrow pointing to the abstract of an academic research paper with dense text

# Avoid Jargon and “Alphabet Soup”

Slide lists the following examples: COMS; TSVI; ECC; CCTV; DB; CVI with an image of a confused stick figure.

# Here’s a Not So Great Example

* According to her IEP, I see her 2 times per week.
* Most of the time I am working on ECC skills.
* Sometimes, I will work with her in the class.
* She has a CCTV and is learning to use it.
* I can show you how to make large print copies on the copier.
* I also have consultation time in the IEP per month.
* We can schedule a time before or after school for that.
* She has photophobia so she can’t be seated facing a window.
* I also see her for O&M 1 time per week.
* But, since we sometimes leave campus to practice outside, those lessons take longer so she will be late to math on those days.
* She is due for a new FVE, LMA, and O&M eval this year. I think her REED will be in November.

# Add Pertinent Images

* Unusual response to light.

Slide has images of an electronic video magnifier, a talking calculator, an example of ZoomText on a computer screen, and a long white cane.

# Maybe Not So Pertinent

Slide contains an image of a detailed pie chart showing world wide data on the percentages of vision loss related to the type of eye conditions.

# Remember, Information About Services Is Also Relevant! Here’s an Example.

Slide contains a head shot photo of the facilitator and an image of a person walking with a white cane.

* Maria receives direct instruction from her Teacher of Students with Visual Impairment (me) 2 times per week.
* My instruction focuses on specific skills in areas impacted by her vision impairment.
* Maria also receives direct services from a Certified Orientation & Mobility Specialist (also me). Instruction focuses on the effective use of a white cane

# The “Elevator Pitch”

Slide contains an image of a woman holding an elevator door open with her arm.

This a good option if you can’t give a presentation. The purpose is to provide information quickly to the student’s educational team.

# What is an Elevator Pitch?

It’s a short speech (**30-60 seconds!**) used to convey information. Typically, it is used in business to persuade someone to buy a product or service. It can also be written out and sent via email.

Why an Elevator Pitch?

This type of approach allows you to:

* Quickly convey key information about your student to busy and stressed out staff at the BOY.
* Speak one-on-one to staff
* Begin to establish working relationships

# Examples of Elevator Speeches- What to Include

* **Who you are, what you do** *(Hello, I’m Emily Leeper and I am a Teacher of Students with Visual Impairments aka the VI Teacher*)
* **Why** **the listener may want to hear the speech** (*Kaitlin J. is a student in your 5th period science class who is blind*.)
* **What you have to offer** (*She is a braille reader who also uses an electronic braille device or a laptop with a screen reader to complete her work. My role is to* ***support*** *you in obtaining materials in braille or tactile formats, and adapting lesson activities with you as needed. I also work with Kaitlin directly and am on campus almost every day. Please don’t hesitate to reach out to me if you have any questions! Here’s my card.*)

# CVI Version of Elevator Speech

* **Who you are, what you do** *(Hello, I’m Emily Leeper and I am a Teacher of Students with Visual Impairments aka the VI Teacher*)
* **Why the listener may want to hear the speech** (*Carter B is a student in your class this year who has Cortical Vision Impairment (CVI), a brain-based visual processing impairment. His eyes see but his brain isn’t always able to make sense of what he sees*)
* **What you have to offer** (*My role is to* ***support*** *you in accommodating materials and activities so that Carter is able to access visual information in a meaningful way. I also work with him directly and will be on campus twice a week. Please don’t hesitate to reach out to me if you need any assistance. Here’s my card.*)
* Now after that short and to the point speech, the staff may have many more questions for you. This is a good thing! Image of a smiley face thumbs up emoji.

# Advice

* If you are giving a presentation bring the “stuff”. Hands-on with devices/materials is always a good idea.
* Think carefully about blindfold and simulation activities.
* Bring a lot of business cards and give them to everybody!

**Questions? You can contact me at:**

Emily Leeper [leepere@tsbvi.edu](mailto:leepere@tsbvi.edu)

Thank you!