

CALIFORNIA PROTOCOL FOR ADDRESSING SIGNIFICANT DISPROPORTIONALITY IN SPECIAL EDUCATION (CAPE)



CAREGIVER FOCUS GROUP

Focus Group Participants	4-10 Parents/caregivers of children with disabilities in the district.	Focus Group Facilitator(s) ● Technical Assistance Facilitator(s) or ● Researcher(s)
Format	Zoom or in person. If in person, a community center, or family resource center is highly recommended.	
Data Analysis	Option 1: While collecting data. Option 2: Recording, transcribing and systematic coding (more rigorous) .	

OBJECTIVE

- Use this tool to gather and analyze family/caregiver input in a Local Educational Agency (LEA) with a racial/ethnic significant disproportionality in special education.
- Use the findings of this tool to include in your root cause analysis.

STEPS

Focus Group Facilitator Tasks	Time	Tips
Schedule 3-6 focus groups at the most convenient time for caregivers in the LEA.	1 hr-2hrs	● Every LEA community is different, in some communities zoom might be best, while in others in person might be best.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekday evenings (5pm or later) over zoom have been shown to be
<p>Allocate 1-1.5 hour for each focus group. Facilitate Focus Group using the prompts in the attached PowerPoint (English & Spanish).</p> <p>Link to protocols here.</p>	1.5- 9hrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make sure you target caregivers who are relevant to the significant disproportionality group (e.g., Hispanic, Spanish-speaking parents when LEA is significant disproportionate with Hispanic children).
<p>Data Analysis- Reach Saturation</p> <p>Option 1: While collecting data- count the number of statements that have each code from the codebook below as you hear them in the focus group.</p> <p>Option 2: Go back to the recording and transcripts and count the number of times you hear the statements.</p>	1-6hrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If coding while collecting data, familiarize yourself with the codebook below.
Post-data collection & analysis	1hr-2hrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss your findings with a caregiver liaison or relevant LEA official.

Codebook

Use the codebook to analyze the focus group data.

Code	Description/Example
Equity Mindedness	Participant expresses a statement how the school is equitable in serving students and families. For example "I a always provided with a translator during meetings" or "the school hosts events that are relevant to our community"
	Statement reflects cultural and/or linguistic bias; or statement mentions stereotypes (whether positive or negative) about groups of

Deficit Orientation/ Bias	students. Statement expresses a belief that students and/or their families are lacking the skills/ abilities to be successful in school. For example “I notice that we are treated differently, or our concerns are dismissed for our Black parents in the district“
Family Engagement Needed	Participant expresses a need to engage all families in the special education process in a more equitable way. For example, “The teacher does not reach out to me unless my son is in trouble“
Inappropriate Evaluations	Participant mentions the need for more culturally sensitive and appropriate special education evaluations. For example “ My son is learning English, he was tested for special education in English only“
Pre-referral Interventions	Participant mentions the need for pre-referral interventions, academic and socio-emotional supports for students BEFORE they are referred for special education evaluation. For example, “ I do not recall my son getting any support or help before the evaluation, they just told me he needed an IEP“
Professional Development Need	Participant expresses a need for teacher or school staff professional development. For example “Some teachers are rigid and do not provide choice in assignments they give to students“

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