

# Using iPads to Support Student Participation in the IEP

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# Research on Student Led IEPs

Students who participate in their IEP meeting:

- Have been shown to be more likely to reach goals (Agran & Hughes, 2008; Arndt, Konrad, & Test, 2006; Martin, Van Dycke, Christensen, Greene, Gardner, & Lovett, 2006;)
- Tend to demonstrate enhanced communication and self-advocacy skills (Mason, McGahee-Kovac, Johnson, & Stillerman, 2002),



# Research on Student Led IEPs

Students who participate in their IEP meeting:

- Improved academic performance (Schunk, 1985).
- Have elevated rates of completion of high school (Benz, Lindstrom, & Yovanoff, 2000).
- Positive outcomes upon employment and quality of life as students become adults (Furney & Salembier, 2000; Halpern, Yovanoff, Doren, & Benz, 1995; Wehmeyer, Agran, & Hughes, 2000).





# Extent of Student Led IEPs



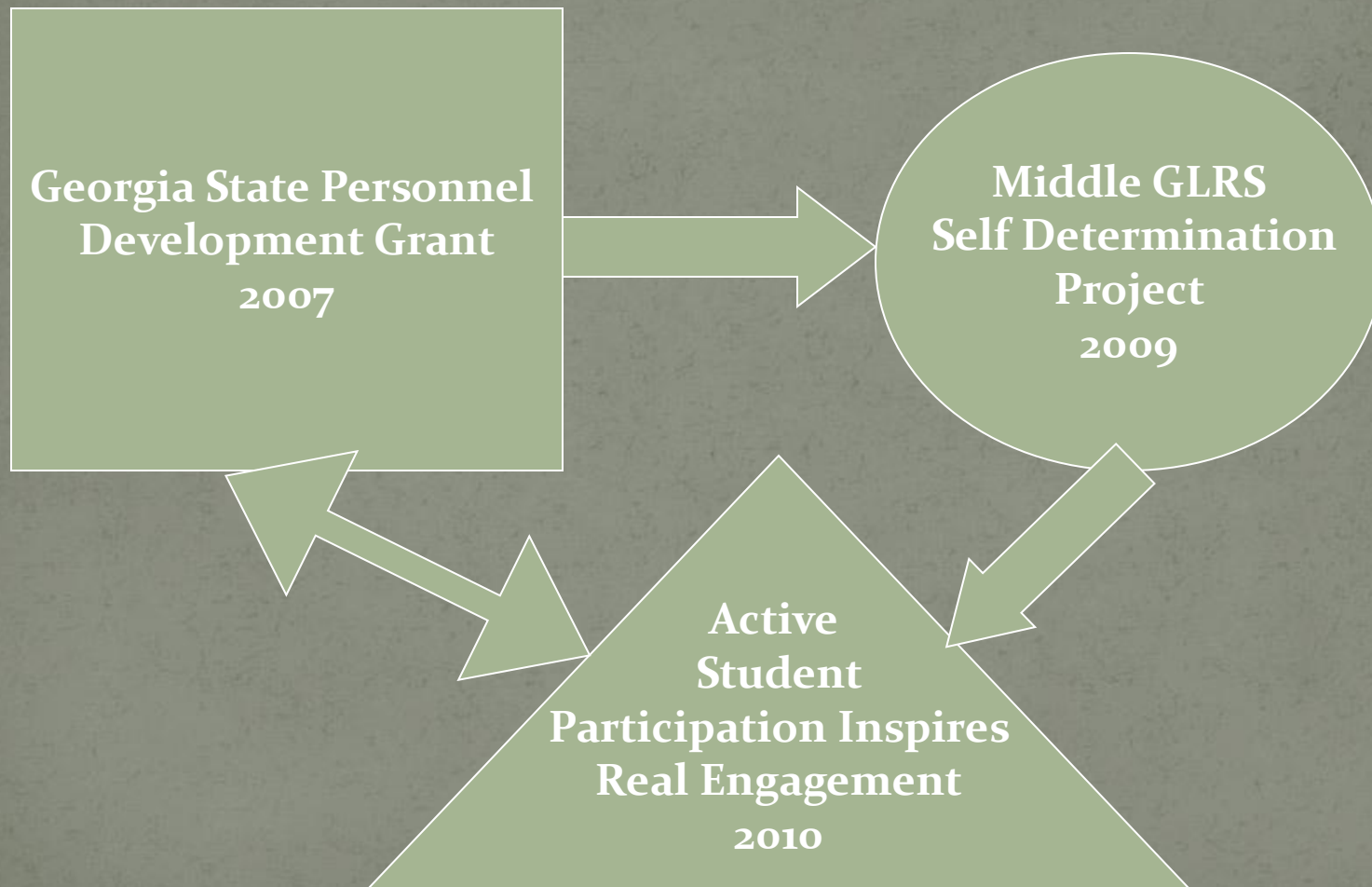
- A body of resource material has emerged during this period to describe the steps in preparing students for participation in their meetings. (Konrad, 2008; Konrad, & Test, 2004; Mason, McGahee-Kovac, & Johnson, 2004)
- Students who do lead their IEP meeting regularly describe their experience was one of the most memorable learning experiences of their year. (Hawbreaker, 2007)
- However, the practice remains under-utilized (Stanberry, 2010)

# AT and Student Led IEPs

- Stanberry (2010) suggested that the use of technology in student-led IEP meetings could help provide motivation for students to take a more central role in the planning and conduct of these meetings.
- Case studies presented appeared to indicate elevated involvement in meeting preparation and leadership.



# Initiatives





# Something's Missing



# TECHNOLOGY !!!





**Vital  
Behaviors**

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graph TD; VB[Vital Behaviors] --> RP[Right People]; VB --> RPL[Right Place]; VB --> RBL[Right Buy In]; RP --> RP_L["Students<br/>Parents<br/>Teachers<br/>Administrators<br/>Consultants/Experts"]; RPL --> RPL_L["School<br/>Community"]; RBL --> RBL_L["Access to:<br/>Technology<br/>Post-Secondary<br/>Opportunities"];
```

Right People

**Students  
Parents  
Teachers  
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Right Place

**School  
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Right Buy In

**Access to:  
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Opportunities**

# Research Question

- Will the use of iPads for the preparation for and participation in IEP meetings lead to greater student leadership and participation in the IEP meeting?



# Research Team

- **Linda Curry**, Director Middle Georgia GLRS
- **Laura Meldrum**, Teacher, Crawford County Schools
- **David Shepard**, Teacher, Crawford County Schools
- **Ben Satterfield, Ed.D.** , Research Consultant with Center for AT Excellence/ GA Tools for Life



# Research Methodology

- 12 Students would go through ASPIRE training as a group.
- Students would be divided into two groups:
  - 6 Students would be provided with iPads
  - 6 Students received no technology
- All students would lead their IEP meeting
- Survey taken following IEP
  - Students, parents & staff all take part
  - Rate student's participation & leadership

# ASPIRE:

## Active Student Participation Inspires Real Engagement

- ASPIRE is a curriculum that seeks to foster active student participation in their IEP meeting, by providing the student with skills to direct and lead their meeting (Lynch, Crain & Moore, 2012).
- ASPIRE was adapted from the “I’m Determined Project” of the Commonwealth of Virginia Department of Education Training and Technical Assistance Centers. This approach was embraced and piloted by the Georgia Department of Education (GADOE).
- GADOE had selected 14 districts for a broader implementation of the principles of ASPIRE under the Partnership for Success program.

# Curriculum

- Modified ASPIRE curriculum
- 10 lessons, some of which extended to multiple days
- Lessons delivered in Teachers-As-Advisors setting
  - Once a week
  - Approximately 40 minutes in duration
  - All students moved to Ms. Meldrum's advisement for consistent instruction
- Follow up in class setting
  - Some students had daily access to Mr. Shepard
  - All students had daily access to Ms. Meldrum



# Curriculum

- ASPIRE Lesson #1 (“Deciding My Dreams”)
- Goal Setting & Goal Assessing
- Transition Planning Questionnaire & Review
- Self-Advocacy Checklist (from ASPIRE) with Self-Advocacy Exploration
- SPED Accommodations Assessment
- Skills for Classroom Success (from Bartow County) with Assessment
- CCHS Credit Balance Sheet
- IEP Guide Questions (adapted from NICHCY’s “A Student’s Guide to the IEP”)
- Understanding and Personalizing the PLOP
- Writing Invitations for the Transition Planning and IEP Meeting

# Survey

- Based upon Post-IEP Meeting Survey instrument (Martin, et.al. 2006)
- Students' participation evaluated in these areas:
  - Prior knowledge
  - Transition Issues
  - Meeting Behaviors
  - Positive Perceptions
  - Leadership
- Based on 5-Point Likert Scale (1 least, 5 most)

# Treatment Group

- Treatment group was provided with iPads and training for the purposes of:
  - collecting work examples
  - preparing & delivering presentations at the IEP mtg.
- Technical assistance and training in the use of the iPad was provided to the students over a 6 month period:
  - 2 whole-group trainings
  - 4 sets of meetings with students individually or in small groups to address specific issues.



# iPads

iPads were provided to students by the MG-GLRS

- iPad version 2 equipped w/ camera.
- Survivor protective casings were provided along with a stylus.
- In addition to those that come standard on the iPad, apps provided included:
  - Keynote
  - Dragon
  - Inspiration
- As the project proceeded students requested access to additional apps such as:
  - G Docs
  - Google Drive
  - Quickoffice
  - Documents

# RESULTS

- Prior Knowledge – iPad group scored slightly higher (mean scores 4.800 to 4.400)
- Transition Issues – iPad group scored slightly higher in general.
  - Much higher with regard to
    - plans for after high school,
    - supports needed after HS,
    - services in community

# RESULTS

- Meeting Behaviors – IEP Group was seen as slightly better – but viewed particularly better when talking about personal strengths and needs.
- Positive Perceptions- slight differences: iPad group seen as more comfortable expressing thoughts and feeling good about meeting outcomes. Otherwise very similar scores.



# RESULTS

- Leadership – area of most significant differences
  - introduced themselves
  - introduced team members
  - stated the purpose of their meeting
  - reviewed recent progress
  - asked for feedback
  - asked questions when they did not understand
  - identified needed supports
  - expressed personal interests
  - described their own skills and limits
  - closed the meeting by thanking those in attendance

# COMMENTS FROM STAFF

- “The students who had iPads seemed to grow in confidence. They were proud to have the device. It was a boost to their self-esteem. Now they were special.... But, this time, for a good reason.”
- “The students demonstrated a sense of responsibility for the iPads.”

# COMMENTS FROM STAFF

- “The students’ use of the iPad (presenting slides and talking about their plans and ideas) made for a more effective IEP meeting. The focus of the meeting was more on the student. The IEP was about what the student is doing instead of what we (the staff) will do for the student.”



# COMMENTS FROM STAFF

- “These students’ IEP meetings were phenomenal. They presented themselves in a way we had never seen them before. In the way they spoke... some had only spoken when they responded to a direct question in class.”
- “There was more self-advocacy than ever before. They really spoke up.”
- “It seemed like the project gave them a voice they didn’t know they had. I think some just realized what they were capable of..”

# COMMENTS FROM STUDENTS

- “It was better to show it than to describe it all yourself.”
- “Then you are actually just saying it to the person – in your own words – just talking like telling them how you feel.”
- “You show it as you go. It helps everyone else who is looking at it put the pieces together more quickly than if I try to tell them.”
- “That way they know what you are talking about and you can go into more detail about what you are doing.”

# COMMENTS FROM STUDENTS

- “You already had the information on the iPad.... so all you have to do is hook it up to the [Promethean] board. And its right there. And you just talk about it as you go.”
- “It helps get your thoughts out there better than you just trying to get it from scratch... better than just writing it on a piece of paper.”



# COMMENTS FROM STUDENTS

- “The iPad made me prepare. So I felt more prepared at the meeting. Afterwards, I felt like I had accomplished something.”
- “It’s not only that I know where I am going, [I know] its going to be me that makes it happen!”

- Video

# Conclusions

- The presence of the iPad platform likely made a difference in two respects:
  - Setting the students apart as special in a positive way and providing them a sense of responsibility and purpose in this project.
  - Laying a foundation on which confidence was built as they developed a presentation that contained their ideas on this platform.





# Conclusions



- The ASPIRE training provided students in both groups with the background understanding for participation in their meeting. Each student demonstrated that they understood the key questions to address in their meeting.

# Conclusions

- The technical assistance sessions in preparation for their meeting provided students with the opportunity and support to craft their personal responses to the key questions. This step forced them to address these questions.





# Conclusions



The centrality of the student's own ideas at the meeting, presented in multimedia form, together with the acceptance from staff and parents, provided a further encouragement to students to be assertive and provide leadership at their meeting.



# QUESTIONS



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