

MASSACHUSETTS ADMINISTRATORS FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION

FRIDAY, MARCH 23, 2018 STATEWIDE CONFERENCE
COLLEGE OF THE HOLY CROSS, WORCESTER



~ THEME & PRESENTATION DESCRIPTORS ~

“Controlling the Stress Associated with a Stressful Time in the School Year”

***“What you’re supposed to do when you don’t like a thing is change it.
If you can’t change it, change the way you think about it.”***

--adapted from Maya Angelou, author/poet

~ KEYNOTE ~

Surviving and Thriving in Challenging Times

Session Focus: Life in special education grows ever more complex. Expectations rise but resources don’t. Caseloads increase in number *and* severity. So do parental anxiety and demands. Staffing remains a continuing challenge. And all of these issues accelerate in the spring. No wonder, then, that stress levels rise across the board. Special education leaders have to help their staff manage this stress—and cope with their own. How can they manage these twin tasks? Rob Evans will outline these key dilemmas, put them in a new context, and offer concrete ways to cope.

Rob Evans is a psychologist and the Executive Director of The Human Relations Service, in Wellesley. A former high school and pre-school teacher, and a former child and family therapist, he has worked with schools and families for forty years and has consulted to more than 1,700 schools and districts around the country, working with teachers, special educators, and administrators. His presentations are known for their lively wit and plain talk. He is the author of many articles and three books, including *The Human Side of School Change* and *Seven Secrets of The Savvy School Leader*. He can be reached at robevans.org.

Keynote Speaker: Rob Evans, Ed.D , Clinical and organizational psychologist, Executive Director of *The Human Relations Service*, author, national speaker/consultant



~ PLenary SESSION ~

The Development of IEPs and the IEP Process: Maximizing the Opportunities in Managing IEP Team Meetings, Decreasing the Challenges Connected with the IEP Process, and What it Might Look Like in the Future.

Session Focus: There are many and varied stressors and anxious moments for many staff and team chairs connected with the development of IEPs and the IEP process. This session will focus on several successful pointers for managing the stress and anxiety associated with the IEP process, such as strategies to build school district/team capacity for successful IEP outcomes; discussion on what not to do as a staff member in the IEP development; anticipating the future direction of IEPs from DESE and getting ahead of potential new directions with new strategies, techniques, and promising practices.

Presenter: Allan Blume, IEP expert, consultant to school districts, and former Associate Professor of Practice at Simmons College

~ BREAKOUT SESSION DESCRIPTORS ON REVERSE ~

🌀 BREAKOUT SESSION 🌀
“To Settle or Not to Settle”

Session Focus: School Districts typically struggle with the decisions regarding moving forward to a hearing or to settle a case. No easy fete to determine! March is a time in the school year when rejected IEPs may become more prevalent. What do school special education administrators and school team leaders need to know in order to move forward in decision making to settle or not to settle a case?

This session will provide a discussion that will assist districts in developing a strength-based settlement posture by reviewing several techniques/strategies that may assist district decision makers. Discussion will include:

- ✓ How to analyze your school district’s case
- ✓ Strategies/techniques for improving district settlement outcomes
- ✓ The “Do's and Don'ts” of a school district’s settlement case efforts

Presenter: *Paige Tobin, Esq.*, Murphy, Lamere and Murphy, P.C., Counsel to School Districts, Consultant to the Massachusetts Administrators for Special Education



🌀 BREAKOUT SESSION 🌀

Determining if a BSEA Mediation is the Appropriate Process for Resolving a Dispute

Session Focus: This presentation is applicable to administrators and special education professionals. Mediation through the Bureau of Special Education Appeals provides a free, voluntary, forward facing method to resolve these issues through a participant friendly collaborative process.

This session will walk participants through the mediation process from start to finish with a focus on how to best use the mediation process. The presentation will cover topics including: when to request mediation, when to decline a request to mediate, how to prepare for mediation, who to bring to mediation, dealing with combative or toxic team dynamics, Mediation Agreements, as well as discuss challenging cases and how to approach them through the mediation process.

Presenters: *Myrto Flessas* and *Rebecca Stone*, Mediators, Massachusetts Bureau of Special Education Appeals.



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