**STUDENT, FAMILY, AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

The effective and meaningful engagement of students, families, and communities is critical to the successful development and implementation of supports and services that lead to positive outcomes for students with disabilities. TEA will expand upon systems that facilitate effective stakeholder engagement at the state level. TEA will leverage the experiences and expertise of these stakeholders to ensure that programs and services developed for students with disabilities appropriately meet the needs of the individual student and lead to improved student outcomes. The state must meet stakeholders on their terms, so this engagement will include both in-person and virtual engagement.

***Action Steps for TEA***

1. **Outreach Campaign to Identify, Locate, and Evaluate (CA: 2.a.):** As described above, the outreach campaign is reiterated here to establish the critical importance of ensuring an accessible campaign that clearly informs families and provides actionable steps they could take.
2. **Family Support Call Center and Portal:** As discussed in the section on Child Find, a set of paper and web-based resources will be created for parents and for LEAs to help understand special education eligibility. Beyond that, TEA will also provide a more substantial support structure, beyond static resources, to help parents navigate the process of identification, evaluation, eligibility, and admission into special education services. This would include a streamlined call center staffed with process experts coupled with an online portal that provides clearly outlined process steps and tracking systems to support easier navigation for parents of children with disabilities. This online resource will help parents navigate a process that can be highly complex and difficult to understand. The portal would provide for a statewide trackable timeline for parents that would have the ability to trigger reminders, supports in communication, etc. The call center will help support parents to help them understand relevant information. All calls would be documented and reported to LEAs on a monthly basis with identifiable information removed, to help with their efforts at process improvement.
3. **Parent Brochures:** TEA will create "user-friendly" definitions, flowcharts, etc. to assist LEAs and parents in understanding Child Find and the process for referral for an initial evaluation. These resources may not be policy documents, but rather resources containing information with regard to guiding questions to ask in ARD meetings, data and evidence to consider in conversations, and timelines and agendas to facilitate productive and student-centered meetings. These documents will also provide families with clarification on the information and data they may want to consider bringing to meetings to help in decision-making. Documents may also reference existing networks in place to support families. Examples of such assistive networks include the Parent Coordination Network and ESC-based parent training supports.
4. **Ongoing Stakeholder Engagement:** TEA will release a request for Letters of Interest (LoI) for a Stakeholder Engagement Partnership. This partnership would provide the infrastructure and logistical facilitation necessary for TEA to gather meaningful feedback and input related to special education. Given the size and scope of needs in Texas, and the challenges of a state agency to conduct effective and comprehensive engagement at scale, TEA will need consistently focused capacity to ensure inclusive and representative feedback and discussion. As a result of this partnership, TEA will significantly increase opportunities to engage with various stakeholders on an ongoing basis. Stakeholder groups will include students, families, educators, LEAs, ESCs, IHEs, and others.