Serving on Groups that Make Decisions
Types of Decision Making Groups

- Governing
- Advisory
- Leadership
- Planning
- Evaluation
- Practice

Groups can look very similar while having different purposes.
What Do These Groups Have in Common?

• Structured
• Shared Vision
• Representation
• Equal Partners
• Collaboration
• Shared Responsibility
• Information Sharing
• Producing results
Helpful Tools Groups Use

• Meeting Facilitator
• Ground Rules
• Agendas
• Meeting Minutes, with action items
• Written Guidance, such as bylaws, policies, charge, and/or procedures
Tips for Effective Meetings

• Starting and ending on time
• Strong facilitation
• Shared voices – no dominators
• Encourage all to participate; support where needed
• Allow enough time for deliberation
• Expectations for outcomes of meeting
• Processes for reaching consensus/agreement
• Meeting rules, such as Roberts Rules of Order
Improving Group Dynamics

Group strategies can include:

• Having time for members to get to know one another
• Orientation for new members
• Refresher for current members
• Training and mentorship for members
• Providing background information and history of group

Source: Serving on Groups that Make Decisions: A Guide for Families
Facilitating Meetings

- Keep discussions on track
- Be mindful of agenda and time
- Give all an opportunity to speak
- Encourage those who have not spoken to speak; ask specific questions
- Be neutral in opinions
- Assign roles – timekeeper; note taker
- Summarize discussions and move to action
- Connect with members between meetings as necessary
Participating in Meetings

• Contribute information that is relevant to discussion
• Ask questions – if you have a question, chances are someone else also has the same question
• Actively listen to others
• It is your responsibility to participate; you were asked to serve on a group because of your knowledge and expertise – share your thoughts
• Do not dominate conversation
Preparing for Meetings

• Agendas and supporting materials should be sent out at least a week before the meeting – READ THEM!!!

• Know the anticipated outcomes of the meeting

• If you are uncertain about information that will be discussed, call the Chair or meeting facilitator

• Connect with other members of the group before the meeting if you want to discuss the agenda items
The Voice of Family Members

• One story is just one story
• Use your story as a way of framing perspective
• Use your story as a way to provide a real life example of a problem or solution

“Story telling is extremely powerful. Whether I am telling the story of my son’s experiences or the experiences of other children and families, story telling can be very effective in communicating information. I have seen family stories about their experiences influence policy at both the local school level and at a district wide level.” Source: Serving on Groups that Make Decisions
So, What about Data?

- Provides facts for helping to make decisions
- Helps make family stories more compelling
- Types of Data:
  - Qualitative
  - Quantitative
- Data needs to be:
  - Reliable
  - Valid
  - Accessible and understandable
Do YOU Want to Serve on Groups?

• Do you know what your interest areas are?

• How to identify what groups you want to join?

• How to get connected to groups?
More Learning!

Webinars offered by Wisconsin FACETS:

• October 6, 2016, 12:00 – 1:00 (Processes Groups Use)
• October 13, 2016, 12:00 – 1:00 (Tools Groups Use & Tips and Strategies for Groups)

• [http://www.servingongroups.org/upcoming-trainings](http://www.servingongroups.org/upcoming-trainings)