

Operational Definitions for LAFF Strategy Skills

LAFF Skill	Operational definition	Example
Listen, Empathize, & Communicate Respect		
Greet the parent	SLP makes a welcoming statement at the beginning of the interaction.	<p><i>"Hi, how are you?"</i></p> <p><i>"Hi, it's nice to meet you."</i></p>
Ask about the reason for meeting	SLP makes a statement that invites the parent to state his or her concern.	<p><i>"What would you like to talk about today?"</i></p> <p><i>"What brought you in today?"</i></p> <p><i>"So, I see that you're concerned about Jessica."</i></p>
Make a statement of empathy and understanding	<p>In response to the parent's concern, SLP makes a statement that recognizes the parent's concern about the problem.</p> <p>The statement of empathy can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> describe understanding of emotions/concern <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> show concern/empathy for the emotions of the parent <p>*This can occur at any time through the interaction</p>	<p>Describing understanding of emotions—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>"I can understand that must be frustrating..."</i> <i>"I can understand why you are concerned."</i> <i>"That's definitely a concern."</i> <p>Showing concern for the emotions of the parent—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>"I'm sorry that this has been so difficult..."</i> <i>"That must be frustrating."</i>
Thank the parent for coming to meet you	<p>SLP makes a statement that shows appreciation for coming to the meeting.</p> <p>*This can occur at any time during the interaction.</p>	<p><i>"I appreciate that you came to speak with me today."</i></p> <p><i>"Thank you for coming to meet."</i></p>
Show appropriate body language and non-verbal behaviors; maintain appropriate eye contact	<p>SLP shows appropriate body language and engagement throughout interaction.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sits beside the parent, or diagonally from the parent (i.e., not on the opposite side of a table) Demonstrates "open" body position (i.e., does not have tightly crossed arms) 	

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Ask Questions		
Ask the parent for permission to take notes.	SLP asks for permission to take notes before asking questions.	<p><i>"Do you mind if I take notes while we talk?"</i></p> <p><i>"May I take notes to remember what we talk about?"</i></p>
Ask relevant open-ended questions	<p>SLP asks 2 or more relevant open-ended questions to get more information about the problem.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open-ended questions allow the parent to respond in a number of different ways. <p>*If the student adds a "could you" or "can you" before an open-ended question, this may still be counted as an open-ended question (e.g., <i>"Could you tell me about a time..."</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Closed questions typically require a specific response (often yes/no or one-word answers). <p><i>*Ask yourself, can the parent answer in one word?</i></p> <p>*Do not count questions that are not aimed at getting more information (e.g., <i>"Tell me when would be best to meet."</i>)</p>	<p>Open-ended questions—</p> <p><i>"Tell me about a time..."</i></p> <p><i>"How are you feeling about..."</i></p> <p>Closed questions—</p> <p><i>"Has your son already received his device?"</i></p>

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Focus on the Issues		
Summarize the parent's concerns	SLP provides a summary of the main concerns expressed by the parent.	<i>"I'd like to review what we have talked about"</i>
Check for accuracy	SLP explicitly makes a statement or asks a question to check for accuracy.	<i>"Have I got it?"</i> <i>"Please let me know if I misunderstood anything."</i>
Ask if the parent would like to add anything	The SLP explicitly makes a statement or asks a question to see if the parent would like to add anything.	<i>"Is there anything else you'd like to add?"</i> <i>"Please let me know if there is anything to add."</i>

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Find a First Step		
Consider the information provided and identify a plan	<p>The SLP states a <i>specific</i> plan for what will happen next in terms of addressing the parent's concern (e.g., gaining more information from the child's teacher, observing the child at home, gathering information for the parent, etc.).</p> <p>*The parent must agree on the appropriateness of the next step.</p>	<p><i>"I'd like to get more information and then we can start to think about possible solutions together. If you agree, I'd like to observe John in his classroom next week."</i></p> <p>NOT a generic plan, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>"We'll find a way to fix the problem."</i> • <i>"We'll find something that works for her."</i> • <i>"That's something we can work on."</i> • <i>"Maybe I can work on that in therapy."</i>
Plan a follow-up meeting	SLP states a specific timeline for follow-up with the parent.	<p><i>"I will be back in touch by Friday."</i></p> <p><i>"I will call you next week to set up a meeting."</i></p>