

Dr. Marisol Martinez-Garcia

10:15 - 11:30AM

Amplifying Your Voice: Empowered Parental Advocacy

Parents have long stood as the driving force of the disability rights movement, spearheading the demand for equity and inclusion. While traditional advocacy training focuses on legal rights and federal laws, this session digs deeper into the human capital that makes a parent an effective advocate.

Drawing from a mixed-methods study of parents across the U.S., this presentation analyzes the specific attributes that empower parents of children with multiple support needs to advocate for inclusive education settings. By utilizing Carter's 10 Dimensions of Belonging and Yosso's Community Cultural Capital, we will explore how parents find their place within the IEP team and leverage their cultural funds of knowledge to drive collaboration.

Join us to move beyond what the law says, and discover who effective advocates are and how they are made.



With 25 years of experience in public education, Dr. Martinez-Garcia has served in multiple roles, including paraeducator, teacher, substitute teacher, school psychologist, and, for the past 15 years, school administrator.

She holds a Doctorate in Education, with her research focusing on the attributes of parents who advocate for inclusive education. She serves as a parent facilitator for Club 21's Stepping Up program, where she supports families in understanding the Down Syndrome Learning Profile and how to best support their child's education.

She is blessed to have two wonderful children: a caring and gifted 12-year-old daughter and a joyful 9-year-old son who proudly rocks an extra chromosome. Marisol brings her professional expertise and lived experience as a parent to support families on their advocacy journey, helping ensure that children have opportunities to thrive.