

**CADRE and JAMS Foundation Present:**  
***Voices from the Field***  
**Interview Clip #2 Transcript – Cindy Swain**

**Marshall:** Complaints investigation is very challenging and demanding work and when I had a chance to come down and work with you and the Texas Education Agency I got a real kick out of the system that you've used to screen for potential new complaints investigators. Tell me a little about that system.

**Cindy:** Well I'm so glad you zeroed on that. I think that it is a very strong element that we got the right people and we continue to get the right people. We post a job description that of course explains that this is an investigative position but it also has to do with being able to interpret regulations and apply them to situations. We ask for people, we screen for people who have conflict resolution experience and of course special education expertise. Now those are preferences, because a strong background in conflict resolution could overcome what we might consider a slight deficit in special education because we know we have continuous professional development in special education and we can bring people. We also have people in our division who may be in administrative positions or in specialist positions, but we constantly collaborate with them about our process and about what a good investigation is so that people can step in if they want to. Well, anyway, the process of screening has those qualifications. Then we ask the individual to come in and study a set of questions related to conflict resolution, to special education, to being able to do a desk audit and other responsibilities in an investigation and also being able to talk to parents since that's an important part of our early intervention before a complaint is actually filed. So, we have ten questions, they study those questions and develop some responses for about fifteen minutes and then they come in and make a presentation. And that's how we score them is on the basis of their thoroughness and answering those questions. But we can also see through their making a presentation kind of like this, what's important to them. And that goes into our scoring. And you know, it's a team, involving investigators, intake administrator, other specialists who maybe reap the results of the process but aren't directly involved in the process who also interview.