

CADRE and JAMS Foundation Present:
Voices from the Field
Interview Clip #3 Transcript – Nissan Bar-Lev

Nissan: What I would like to do is share with you how my participation in the WSEMS over the past fifteen years affected me personally. As you know, part of my responsibility is outreach. So over the past fifteen years through to our system being neutral and driven by our stakeholder both Jan Serak and I have been involved in outreach activities and over the past fifteen years we've worked very closely together in preparing PowerPoint materials and other presentations. As we prepared for that, Jan would often share with me horror stories, war stories of parents having difficulties with school including anger and frustration about different situations that occurred in school. I listened to that, if I was able to better understand the level of stress and pain that parents felt and took it to heart and incorporated that into my dealings with the parents in my district. So I really believe that my participation on the project and involvement with Jan Serak has made me or transformed me into a better special ed director and I think the reverse is true as well. As we were preparing for materials and outreach activities I will often share with Jan Serak also the situations, the tough situation that schools find themselves and would explain what schools can and cannot do realistically in these difficult situations and I believe that made Jan a better director, better PTI director, because in her dealing with parents she was able to recognize what schools can and cannot do as well what schools difficult situation and the level of their involvement on a daily basis, the challenges that they face on a daily basis. I'd also like to say that another contributing factor to the quality of our program has been the incredible assistance, technical assistance and know-how of Nina Meirerding who is an individual with over 4,000 mediations who is international trainer, an attorney, professor at several universities and we have been the beneficiary of that immense knowledge that came to our state.