Even though I have been a member of an ESST for the last five years, I attended ESST meetings at a two different schools. Many changes were being implemented at the end of the school year last year and these changes have since been put in place this year. In attendance at the first meeting were three EST-R, one EST-G, two Administrators and the SIW.

The ESST used the minutes template provided by ASD-W but did not really like it. They had made a few changes, removing items they did not feel was needed at their meeting. For example, they did not get a regular update from ESS-Literacy since their school did not have one. They had established meeting norms at the beginning of the year and held to those well. The norms were at the top of the minute’s template. They had not been consistently using an agenda but simply going from the minutes from the last meeting. They did however, have an agenda for this meeting and it was sent to the team members the day before. The agenda included the following items: Successes, Inclusion, Attendance updates, SEP Updates, TAP Protocol and Student Concerns.

The meeting started with a review of minutes. Members of the ESST, prior to the meeting, are to update any actions from the previous meeting on the minutes saved on the portal. The updates must be entered in red so they can be easily identified. However, this is not being done consistently by all team members prior to the meeting and was not really addressed as an issue but did take time away from the meeting by having to give verbal updates.

The team then moved on to discuss what I consider to be the systems section of the meeting. This is where the ESST struggled to know what and how to discuss. They started with successes but this focused mainly on individual students and not the system. The same happened when they discussed Inclusion. The person taking the minutes then asked for clarification on how to enter this information on the template. The principal asked me what I had learned so far about the new format. I then shared what had discussed in class last semester and the team then moved to discuss more general system issues such as Positive Learning Environment, Student Council Initiatives, and UDL.

This ESS Team is trying to move toward the new model of discussing the “Big Picture” items and individual students. There was discussion on how to include teachers more; it was suggested to move the meeting to the end of the day so teachers can come after classes are over. As yet, they do not keep track of time and can sometimes spend the entire meeting discussing the “system” or individual students.

The person taking the minutes complained about the format of the district template and when the meeting was over, I showed them the template provided to us in ED6166 last semester and they are going to change their template for next meeting.

The second meeting I attended was at a much smaller school and the only people in attendance were the principal and the EST-R. Usually the guidance counselor is there as well but she was out sick that day. This team meets every 7-10 days depending on the schedule. It is a small middle school on a 6 day rotation so depending on the day of the week and the day on the schedule they meet on a Tuesday, Wednesday or Friday depending which one is a day 2.

The agenda from this meeting is included as an attachment. They tend to spend the majority of their meetings discussing “big picture” issues. This particular meeting they spent most of the time discussing the literacy interventions that were taking place school wide. The ESST had grouped the students and the EST-L had coached the staff on how to run a guided reading group at a previous staff meeting.

During the meeting, RTI and inclusion practices were also discussed and how to continue to move forward in those areas. Inclusion will be the PD focus at the next staff meeting and the principal and resource teacher spent time planning. At this meeting there were no student referrals so no individual students were discussed.