Building Broad-Based Multidisciplinary Teams: Effective Collaboration Among Parents, School Personnel & Other Professionals

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Objectives

- Understand the school system frameworks
- Review characteristics of effective teams
- Identify barriers to multidisciplinary team collaboration
Public School System Framework

IDEIA

School Personnel & Students

Campus Rules

District Policies

T.A.C. T.E.C.
Educational vs. Clinical Model

EDUCATIONAL

- Eligibility + “Educational Need”
- At no cost
- Eligibility re-established (3yrs)
- Individualized Education Program (IEP)
- Academic & Functional
- Annual progress & educational benefit

CLINICAL

- Condition / DSM Diagnosis
- Limited benefits
- Continues indefinitely
- Treatment or intervention plan
- Addresses all areas of need
- No specific mastery criteria
What IS a “Team”?

A team is a group of people working together to achieve a common goal.

(Webster, 2009)
The common goal?

improving the life of a child.
IDEA requires multidisciplinary team participation for the provision of special education services:

- Parent
- School administrator
- General education teacher
- Special education teacher
- Assessment specialist
- Other individuals who have knowledge or special expertise regarding the child
Many key stakeholders:

- Parents
- Campus Administration
- Teacher(s) Gen/Sped
- School Therapists
- Other School Professionals
- Private Providers
The Individualized Education Program (IEP)

- Legally binding document
- Must address academic and functional needs of the child
- Emphasis on instruction and access to the general curriculum
Developing an Effective IEP:

– Plan ahead
– Schedule collaboration sessions
– Maintain a focus
– Follow an agenda
Development of the Individualized Education Program (IEP)

Present levels of academic achievement and functional performance (PLAAF)

• Blueprint for the entire IEP
• Establishes baseline for the calendar year
Goals & Objectives

• Developed at least annually
• Updated consistent with the district grading periods
• Reports of progress
  usually @ 3, & 6 or 9 weeks
• May be amended without an ARD/IEP meeting with parent consent

*Is not intended to be all inclusive*
Additional considerations:

- 11 Strategies, “Autism Supplement”
- Autism specific, not exclusive
- Addressed throughout the IEP
- Summarize and document student needs on the supplement

(19 TAC § 89.1055)
Eleven Strategies: “Autism Supplement”

- Extended educational programming
- Daily schedule reflecting minimal unstructured time and active engagement in learning activities
- In-home training and community-based training or viable alternatives
- Positive behavior support strategies based on relevant information
- Futures planning
• Suitable staff-to-student ratio
• Communication interventions
• Social skill supports and strategies
• Professional educator/staff support
• Teaching strategies based on peer reviewed, research-based practices for students with ASD.
• Parent/family training and support

(19 TAC § 89.1055)
Characteristics of Effective Teams
Effective Teams:

1. Focus on goals and targeted outcomes
2. Set clear expectations of roles & responsibilities
3. Recognize and appreciate differences
4. Build on individual strengths
5. Compromise
6. Plan and execute action items
7. Communicate openly and respectfully
8. Admit mistakes and take ownership (not blame)
Barriers to Effective Teams
Logistics

- Consent
- Scheduling
- Time constraints
- Visitor limitations
- Location
- Accessibility
Other Barriers:

- Conflict
- Discrepant views/theoretical backgrounds
- Terminology
- Cost
- Commitment level
- Expertise
Keys Points

• Recognize and appreciate similarities, differences, strengths and weaknesses.
• Make collaboration a priority
• Promote open communication
• Remain child-focused
• Acknowledge effort and commitment
• Be willing to compromise
• Maintain a sense of humor!
Each member of the team is important to the child’s success.
Questions?

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