



64TH CONFERENCE ON EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

**WORKING TOGETHER
TO ACHIEVE STUDENT SUCCESS**

**Implementing
Assistive Technology
with Accountability
in the Self-Contained Classroom**

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Objectives

Participants will be able to:

- 1) evaluate individual/classroom need for AT,
- 2) determine the AT strategies/equipment appropriate for a variety of situations,
- 3) implement these strategies/equipment into the classroom and
- 4) measure accountability of AT use among classroom staff.



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Our Project:
Creating a County Modal for AT Implementation

- FUNDS
- PROCESS
- EQUIPMENT/STRATEGIES
- ACCOUNTABILITY

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Our Questions

1. What *Funding* resources do we have to *purchase* equipment?
2. What *Process* should we use to determine the *appropriate* equipment to purchase that will *meet the needs* of our students?
3. How do we *Distribute* the equipment?
4. How do we encourage teachers to *Incorporate* AT into their daily lessons?
5. How do we keep staff *Accountable* for use and care of equipment?
6. How do we *Inventory* this equipment from year to year?

What are our funding resources for equipment purchase?

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2009 Stimulus Funds

EC Director choose AT equipment purchase

- What kind of equipment?
- How much do we buy?
- Who will receive it?
- Commissions AT team to create "kits" of AT equipment
 - Classrooms of Students with Multiple-Disabilities (15)
 - Students with Autism (10)

What process do we use to evaluate classroom need?

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Process Requirements

- Evaluate overall class strengths and needs
 - Multiple Disabilities (MU)
 - Autism (AU)
- Differentiate MU and AU Classes
 - Student need
 - Physical classroom environment
 - Instruction modal
 - Expected tasks

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SETT Process

- **S** TUDENT
- **E** NVIRONMENT
- **T** ASK
- **T** OOLS
 - Originally developed by Joy Zabala as a thoughtful, collaborative process for determining AT equipment for an individual student
 - Apply this process to determine equipment for an entire classroom

Most of our AU students exhibit:

- Cognitive impairments
 - Variable IQ; 60 or lower
- Issues with auditory stimuli
- Issues with tactile stimuli
- Intact motor skills for all extremities
- Ability to recognize symbols
- Writing skills vary
 - Some students were writing letters, words
 - Some students were writing numbers
 - Limited interest in writing in general

Both MU and AU Students show:

- Limitations in communication (verbal and written)
 - Poor articulation of speech, echolalia, non-verbal
 - Limited vocabulary
 - Limited comprehension of instruction
 - Poor organization of language (verbal and written)
 - Limited means to communicate wants and needs to teachers
 - Limited social interactions with peers
- Some will attend a few regular education classes

The Environments



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Physical Classroom Environment

MU Classes

- Centrally located by zone
- 1 teacher and 2 assistants (minimum)
- Group tables
- Instruction includes circle time, language arts, math, science
- Multiple grade levels in some classrooms
- Changing area
- New Lenovo desktops ordered when tools for kits were ordered; additional computers in room may be older Macs
- Smart boards
- Document cameras provided

AU Classes

- Centrally located by zone
- 1 teacher and 2 assistants (minimum)
- Individual desks
- Instruction includes circle time, language arts, math, science, work boxes
- Multiple grade levels in some classrooms
- Changing area
- New Lenovo desktops ordered when tools for kits were ordered; additional computers in room may be older Macs
- Smart Boards
- Document cameras provided

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Classroom Support

MU Classes

- Elementary schools: school-based SLP; OT 1-2 days/wk.
- Middle schools: part-time SLP; OT 2x/mo.
- High schools: part-time SLP; OT 1x/mo.
- PT's work with individual students in the classrooms
- Adaptive PE intervention
- Inclusive or whole group art, music, and or library available

AU Classes

- Elementary schools: school-based SLP; OT 1-2 days/wk.
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- PT's work individual students in the classrooms
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The Tasks







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What tasks are expected and what outcomes are desired for our students?

- Attend to task
- Initiate communication with staff/students and respond appropriately in social and academic settings
- Initiate and maintain conversation with peers
- Participate in small group, calendar time, math, reading, science, writing
- Comprehend reading material and ask WH? questions
- Complete journal writing or variation of letter recognition
- Complete worksheets
- Access the computer/Smart board
- Complete work assignments as independently as possible
- Participate in pre-vocational tasks
- Participate in classroom experiments/labs
- Participate in non-instructional activities such as cooking, cause-effect and scanning software and educational websites

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The Tools

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What “types” of equipment are needed to reach these desired outcomes?

- **Communication**
 - Low tech to high tech
- **Writing**
 - Graphic organizers
 - Keyboarding
 - Specialized software
 - Speech to text
- **Computer access**
 - Switch interface for switch access/touch access
 - Adapted keyboards/mice
 - Touch Screen Access
 - Mounting
 - Special Needs Software
- **Environmental control**

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MU Kits

- **Communication Devices**
 - 2-Step-by-Step Communicators
 - iTalk2 Communicator with levels
 - 7-level Communication Builder
- **Computer Access**
 - USB Interface
 - small Pal Pad switch
 - Jelly Bean switch
 - Wobble switch
- **Special Needs Software**
 - Symbol Creation Software
 - Boardmaker Plus
 - Cause-Effect Software
 - Big Bang (elem), Switch-It! Wildlife/Scenes, Cause-Effect Factory (mid/high)
 - Scanning software
 - Choose and Tell Fairy Tales (elem), Choose and Tell Legends (mid/high)
 - Educational software
 - First Categories Software
 - Classroom Suite 4
 - First Author
 - Alternative Writing Pencil
- **Mounting for AAC and Computer Access**
 - Goose Neck mount/Lockline mounting system
 - Maxess Switch mount
 - Maxess Switch Tray
- **Environmental control**
 - Power Link
 - Adapted Tape recorder in original kits; MP3 in newer kits

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AU Kits

- **Communication Devices**
 - PECs communication notebook
 - Talkable 4 Communicator
 - 7-level Communication Builder
- **Computer Access**
 - Switch Interface
 - 2, small Pal Pad Switches
 - Ergo Mouse (trackball)
- **Special Needs Software**
 - Symbol Creation Software
 - Boardmaker Plus
 - Writing Software
 - Prowriter 3
 - First Author
- **Writing Tools**
 - Writer word prediction keyboard
- **Sensory**
 - Weighted Vest – Small/Large
 - Weighted blanket or lap pad
 - Sensory tube
- **Environmental control**
 - Time Timer

How do we distribute the Assistive Technology Equipment?

Distribution

- Really Useful Box
 - Equipment with identifying sticker
 - Equipment list
 - Item name
 - AT sticker number of that particular item
 - Each box labeled with 3 identifying markers
 - Classification MU/AU/LD
 - School name
 - Number – Kit 1, 2, etc.

*Kit pick-up at AT office during opening workdays
 *Kit collection last week of school by AT team

How do we encourage teachers to incorporate Assistive Technology into the classroom?

Start with their Lesson Plan

- How do we get teacher/TA “buy-in”?
 - PARTNER/COLLABORATE with the teacher
 - **Listen** - to the teachers plan for each lesson
 - **Offer** - AT options for those plans that will allow all students to *actively* participate in curriculum
 - **Create** - AT option/s for the *first* lesson plan and demonstrate it; becomes a template for future plans
 - REGULAR visits to the classroom to observe, encourage, tweak
 - MENTOR/teach a problem-solving modal

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Classroom Video

How do we keep staff accountable?

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Accountability for

- *Consistent use of Assistive Technology
- *Care of AT equipment

- Our solution:
 - Regular classroom visits for support
 - AT Classroom plans
 - Assign responsibilities
 - AT Student Plans
 - Assign responsibilities
 - AT Competency sheets for Teachers

How to keep track of our inventory?

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Inventory of Kits:

- Identification stickers
 - On each piece of equipment
- Equipment list
 - Taped to the inside of each box lid
 - Item name and sticker number
- Spreadsheet for kit location
 - Each kit is numbered
 - Assigned to a particular classroom/teacher
- End of year Accounting for all kits
 - Kits return to AT office in June: inventory broken or missing items (repair/replace), clean

Thanks for your Attention!

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