


Building An AT Team

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Why Work in Teams?

- Effective practice
- Legal Requirement
- Outside factors
- Our Cheese Keeps Moving!
 - Children change
 - Education changes
 - Technology changes



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Why Offer AT Teams Projects?

- Paradigm change in AT Services
- Need for LEA Teams
- Need for collaboration with highly skilled professionals
- Need for collaboration with general education

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Louisiana Regional Projects

- Region 1: 2007
New Orleans and surrounding Parishes
- Region 8: 2009
Northeast Louisiana Parishes
- Other Regional Replications: 2010


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Meet Donna Broussard: LDE Presenter

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AT Advisory Team



Task: To develop a plan to provide equity of access to quality AT devices and supports

Question: Why aren't students with disabilities getting the needed AT supports and services?



Reasons given for lack of AT

- Not enough stuff
- Nobody knows what stuff we need
- The stuff's too expensive
- They don't know what to do with the stuff even if we had it
- The stuff's too hard to manage
- They can't use the stuff on school networks
- We don't know if they can use the stuff on tests...

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AT Advisory Team Recommendations

Provide statewide leadership to promote consistency and equity of AT services to students, provide extensive professional development to all stakeholders, and build AT capacity in districts.

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Response

- Established 8 AT Regional Centers
- State
 - AT Coordinator at LDE
 - AT Framework for Consideration and Assessment
 - AT collaboration
 - State Special Education Initiatives
 - State Regular Education Initiatives
 - UDL
 - Survey/Data

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What we've learned about AT over the years:

It ain't the stuff!

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Changing the AT Landscape

Regional Center Focus Changes

- Establish AT policy and procedures
- Maintain district portfolio
- Identify district AT leaders/models
- Reduce dependency on AT centers for district-level AT services

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New Directions

- Continued support for the teaming process
- Continued and increased demand for
 - collaboration with **special education** projects
 - collaboration with **regular education** projects
 - AIM
 - professional development
- More **emphasis on data** to support needs and document growth

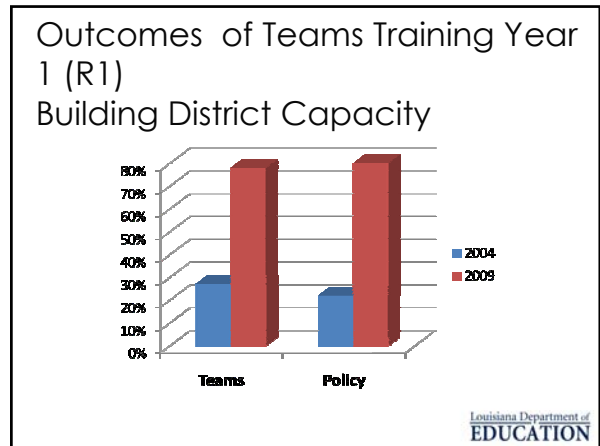

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Other Collaborative DOE Projects

- Accessibility Initiative
- Access Guide
- Significant Disability Project
- Statewide Testing
- Regular Technology Initiatives
- Literacy/Numeracy
- Curriculum -> Accessible textbooks -> AIM

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Project Overview

- Team training-combination of face-to-face and Blackboard
- Limited number of teams
- Shared commitment with DOE, Regional office, and local agencies
- Development of a project that can be replicated

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Teams Projects Summary

- Intensive team training
- Limited number of teams
- Shared commitment with Regional Support Agency and Local Education Agency (LEA)

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LEA Commitment

- Identify team members
- Identify supportive administrator
- Meet monthly
- Provide release time
- Cover travel expenses

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Support Agency's Commitment

- Coordinate activities
- Identify team needs
- Provide training
- Provide ongoing support
- Identify and support mentors

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Sample Team Priorities

- Develop an AT evaluation system for all students
- Develop/refine a written district process
- Improve AT Implementation
- Create a system that will make sense of our needs, demographics and resources
- Develop team member expertise in the provision of AT services
- Include parents and all other IEP team members in decision making

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Sample Team Project Activities

- QIAT Self Assessment Matrix
- Training in AT Assessment Concepts
- Training in AT Implementation Concepts
- Training in AT Consultation and Collaboration Strategies
- Focus on Team and District Process

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Team Projects in Other States

- Arizona
- Florida
- Iowa
- Oregon
- Texas

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Activities from Other Projects

- Year-long assignments for PDUs
- College Credit
- Administrator Participation Required
- Online Support
- Team Mentors
- State-wide networking
- Libraries, shared resources
- AT as a part of other initiatives (e.g. RTI, UDL, AIM)


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How do we "build" teams?

- Know what you want to accomplish.
- Remember: What you would do to develop an overall sense of team work is different from building an effective, focused work team.



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Establishing the Team's Focus and Priorities

Team or Working Group?
QIAT Self Evaluation Matrix
Administrative Participation
Sharing With Other Teams

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Teams:

- Leadership is shared among members.
- Effectiveness is measured directly by assessing team work products and outcomes.
- Team efforts are celebrated, as are individual contributions to team's success.
- Membership is ongoing, a change in membership requires work to reestablish team norms & identity.
- Members work at maintenance of the team.
- In meetings, members discuss, decide, and do real work together.
- Decisions are made by consensus.

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A Group Becomes a Team:

- ✓ When there is shared purpose and goals.
- ✓ When there is mutual accountability.
- ✓ When members value the team.



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Team Effectiveness Research

- Working in teams results in higher individual productivity.
- The highest productivity results when teams work cooperatively rather than competitively or individualistically.
- Working in teams promotes:
 - Social support among members
 - Greater psychological health and self esteem
 - Greater social competence and positive relationships

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What do we know about AT teams?

From: *Assistive Technology Teams: Many Ways To Do It Well*

NATE Network
www.nateneetwork.net

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AT Teams can be:


- Experts who help IEP teams work with AT
- Building-level teams who help IEP teams and can look to others for help
- Multidisciplinary expert teams that make recommendations to IEP teams
- District-level teams that guide AT processes
- An individual assigned to "do" AT for students who need it

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Changing the AT Landscape

Focus on Teams


Provide a model that would encourage and/or strengthen the district's capacity to sustain its own AT needs.



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To Develop a Shared Team Purpose


Is your goal to build capacity in others to meet student's needs or to directly serve children?



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What does it mean to Build Capacity?

Capacity building is an ongoing process through which individuals, groups, and organizations enhance their ability to identify and meet new challenges.



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If the team's goal is to build capacity:

- What do you know about strengths, interests, and needs of staff?
- What opportunities are there for connecting with others?
- What are your team's strengths and resources to build capacity in others?
- What is your administrative support and how can you use it?


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Steps of Building Capacity

- Diagnose what is missing or needed
- Develop strategies to change the situation
- Educate/train personnel to carry out change
- Evaluate results.



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QIAT Self Evaluation Matrix

www.qiat.org

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Administrative Support

- Key to success
- Don't go on without it
- Administrator's role:
 - Develop vision among all stakeholders
 - Model importance of AT
 - Advocate for AT
 - Develop policy/procedures
 - Include in supervision
 - Lead program development

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What Makes Workplace Teams Successful?


- Clear objectives
- Metrics that allow the team members to assess their performance
- Ongoing training in communication, and other team skills
- Decision-making authority over ways to achieve goals
- Easy access to team-specific information
- Team-based rewards and evaluation

Harvard Business School: *Teams that Click* 37

Structuring Teams

- Keep teams small
- Select team members based on expertise and potential to develop expertise, not position or personality.
- Obtain resources the team will need to function.


□ Johnson & Johnson (1997)



Developing Teams

- Develop mission.
- Redefine into specific goals.
- Have frequent and regular meetings.
- Pay attention to first meetings.
- Establish rules of conduct.


□ Johnson & Johnson (1997)



Nurturing Teams

- Ensure accountability by measuring progress toward goals.
- Show progress and celebrate it.
- Provide information to help enrich understanding of mission, purpose, and goals.
- Provide training on both taskwork and teamwork.
- Hold frequent team processing sessions.

Johnson & Johnson (1997)



To increase likelihood of successful team outcomes:

- Relate to overall school goals
- Provide necessary tools
- Identify a "buddy" and work together
- Provide source of technical assistance and support
- Enlist aid of immediate supervisor
- Have a plan to measure progress

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Critical Features of AT Teams Projects

- Focus on Processes and Procedures
- Administrative involvement and support
- Attention to sustaining team efforts

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