AT for Access and Communication for Students with Complex Support Needs

PaTTAN AT Expo, November 6-8, 2012

[handwritten note in margin: most AAC users reflect ≥ 15 way time]

•**PaTTAN's Mission**
The mission of the Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network (PaTTAN) is to support the efforts and initiatives of the Bureau of Special Education, and to build the capacity of local educational agencies to serve students who receive special education services.

•**Students with Complex Support Needs:**
- •Are those student with disabilities who comprise about 1 – 2 % of all students; and,
- •Are most often are assessed via the PASA, rather than the PSSA; and,
- •May include students who have intellectual disabilities and/or may need life skills support, multiple disabilities support, autistic support or physical support; and,
- •May require augmentative communication systems (AAC) and assistive technology in order to access, participate and progress in learning.

•**PDE's Commitment to Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)**
Our goal for each child is to ensure Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams begin with the general education setting with the use of Supplementary Aids and Services before considering a more restrictive environment.

•**What are we providing access to?**
•Same content that other kids have access to, in ways that allow the student to meaningfully participate and learn grade level and instructional level content

•**Access to the General Curriculum**
- •The IEP team must determine <u>how</u> a student with complex support needs will be provided access to the general curriculum regardless of the setting(s) in which the instruction is delivered.

•**AT must be considered for every student with an IEP.**
- •How can we provide opportunities to engage with interesting content and materials?
- •How do students who do not speak communicate what they know?

•**AT Team Decision-Making**
- What does the student need to do that he/she cannot do? What are the critical tasks and barriers?
- Are there tools can we use to provide access – *to invite increased participation* and opportunity to learn?

•**What does it take to access to the general education curriculum?**
- Reading, Writing, Speaking, Listening?
- Through a UDL lens: Acknowledging that learner variance is the rule, not the exception.

•**UDL Principles:**
- *Multiple means of representation,* to give learners options for acquiring information and knowledge
- *Multiple means of action and expression,* to provide learners options for demonstrating what they know,
- *Multiple means of engagement*, to tap into learners' interests, offer appropriate challenges, and increase motivation

- **Options for accessing, representing and interacting with materials:**
  - Accessible texts, multimedia and talking books
  - Digital Video

- **Choices of texts in variety of formats**
  - <u>PowerPoint books</u> with actual and/or adapted text
  - <u>Tarheel Reader books</u> (from the collection or generated by you) with text to speech
  - Digital version of textbooks from publishers, or other sites, including Bookshare and Learning Ally.

- **Video/audio options for providing background knowledge**
  - <u>Safari Montage</u> or Discovery Education Streaming (subscription services)
  - <u>80 Alternatives to YouTube:</u>   A free e-book
  - "<u>Watch and Learn</u>- 20 free educational sites
  - <u>Khan Academy</u>: a library of over 300 instructional videos.
  - <u>MIT Video</u>: More than 10,000 educational videos organized into more than 150 channels.

- **Options for action and expression (voice)**
  - For AAC users, provide vocabulary on activity-based display or on voice-output AAC device.
  - Target vocabulary can be provided using words, pictures/symbols, or both.
  - Utilize images from text in conjunction with picture, text and other symbols

- **Options for written expression**
- Use sound/voice recordings tools (e.g. <u>Voice Thread</u> <u>Show Me</u> app, <u>Explain Everything</u> app, <u>Voice Note</u> app).
- Writing programs options that allow students to complete sentences with a mouse click (e.g. <u>Clicker 5/6</u>, <u>Classroom Suite</u>)

- **Options for "vocal" expression**
  - Allow students to use AAC and/or speech to
    - gain attention of teachers or peers
    - choose tasks, material, partners,
    - comment on predictions and responses made by peers (e.g. "I was right/wrong" "Jen was right")

- **Ways to get started.**
- Provide lots of opportunities for participation, and many ways to communicate.
- Model the use of AAC (pictures, words)
- Have pictures and words around - not just nouns - verbs, words to combine
- Pause (the pause that says "I know you can tell me. We'll wait.")
- Choices of topics, materials, activities

High expectations
Flexible means

- **What does UDL look like?**
Teachers provide:
  - Flexible ways of presenting lesson content
  - Flexible methods of expression, and assessment
  - Flexible options for student engagement

Students have:
- •Options for how they receive content
- •Options for how they demonstrate their learning
- •Choices which will engage interest and sustain effort

•**What was that third idea?** *Engagement and interest*:

•*Ask yourself-*
- •What do you want to talk about?
- •Is it weather? The day of the week?
- •Is it that you are hungry or thirsty?
- •What are your students interested in?
- •How do you know?
- •Are you sure?

•**Our students need**

•Opportunities to engage around varied topics (*curriculum*) in meaningful ways

•Rich vocabulary to understand and talk about things that interest them

•High expectations

•Flexible materials

•**Moving Forward**

Least Dangerous Assumption:

In the absence of absolute evidence, it is essential to make the assumption that, if proven to be false, would be least dangerous to the individual.

•**At the AT Expo**

•Visit exhibitors and ask questions about reading and writing tools

•Inquire about AAC vocabulary arrangements and symbol systems

•Investigate switch access for meaningful participation

•Ask questions like "I have a student who…" to find out about other resources and stories.

•**Resources**
- •PaTTAN www.pattan.net
- •PIAT (PA's Initiative on Assistive Technology) http://disabilities.temple.edu/programs/assistive/piat
- ⋇•Resources compiled on "The Complex https://sites.google.com/site/thepacomplex/adapted-books
  - o Denham, A. (2004). Pathways to Learning for Students with Cognitive Challenges: Reading, Writing and Presenting. Interdisciplinary Human Development Institute, University of Kentucky. [Online] Available: http://www.ihdi.uky.edu/IEI /

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