

## Lesson 16 Transcript

### Look Out! Here Comes A New Idea

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### Positive Behavioral Supports Project

We're getting down to the end here, but we did want to talk to you for just a few minutes about teaming. So all the things that that we talked about, all the components, works best, and in fact it's essential that we have a team approach to implement these strategies with. When we look at that, and we go from school to school, the sophistication and the organization of the team varies tremendously, not just from school to school, but around kid to kid and sometimes works well and sometimes doesn't work so well. How many of you feel in your schools that you have a really good, functioning team that meets together regularly, has the roles and responsibilities adequately designed, efficiently designed, and moves the process forward rather than becomes a barrier to the process? If everybody raises their hand then we can skip this part. It's usually not that easy.

I love this little graphic. It's kind of typical of team meetings. Well? Well what? What's this meeting about? I thought you wanted a meeting. Man... Hmm... Need we say more? Is that not typical of some meeting strategies? What we're saying about collaboration is that you have to have teamwork. Take a look at that graphic. Is that not a great example of teamwork? Wouldn't it be nice if we could all just support each other to get that goal met? So collaboration is a style of direct interaction. It's not passive. It's direct. It's between at least two coequal parties. It's engaged in shared decision making, and as they work towards a common goal. So it's the power of the team.

Now when you look at your teams, there are core teams that you work with, which is the small group that has more day to day implementation factors with the student. So their most involved and they meet regularly to plan. Remember we talked about that concept at the end of last day. Planning is essential. If you go out of this workshop with wondering where do I start, what do I first do, my advice is put your team together and start that planning. Find out where you start to make that match between your student and the classroom. Start working with your team. Then all these strategies will just come rushing in that you could apply to make that program more effective. So you have your core team and then of course you have your extended team that has the previous and future teachers. Now is the time of year when we're doing transitions. We have to do an adequate job of transitions in order to maintain the integrity of the program. Your support personnel who kind of come in and out. What we do a lot on these team meetings is do we need the speech therapist there for this agenda. At least for sure once a month, but is this a kid that we need her there every week and why? Do we need the PT or OT there for what the agenda presents or can we have a smaller team meeting and include them the next time. So core team extended team.

It involves shared responsibility. Think about that. Anybody in the special ed teacher role feel like it's all your responsibility? What about the paraprofessional? Sometimes it becomes the feeling that it's mostly the paraprofessional's responsibility. So shared responsibility, equality in the turn taking of ideas, the reciprocity of ideas. It's a problem solving orientation.

I know one of the best teams I ever worked on, they'd learned to problem solve so well and so effectively and so efficiently, but it often didn't sound very nice to an outside person who didn't know what was going on because they'd cut to the chase, argue the position, agree to disagree, come up with a resolution, implement the program. But in this school they'd have new assistant principals every year as training to be principals and so about October, he'd come to me and say, "Are they ok?" It's like, "That's what team meetings is about. "It's efficient and fast and effective. And they had their mechanism of conflict resolution.

This kind of says it all doesn't it? This is an actual photo from a newspaper. Winner of the not my job award by the department of transportation. The yellow stripe goes right over the dead armadillo because it wasn't his job to pick it up. Need I say more?

We're going to just review roles and responsibility. What is my job? Case manager, this is what your job is. You maintain focus on the child's IEP. You coordinate the team process. You act as that team liaison. Organize and schedule the learning environment. Trains the paraprofessionals. Supervises the staff, students, and the teaching processes. Communicates important information about the child and his program to all staff. Handles day to day emergencies. If you're case manager for a student, look at all of the multitasking you're going to do throughout the day when you times that by how many different students. You're the one again primarily responsible for what it takes to implement that IEP. It doesn't say up there that you do all of the implementation. You're the manager of the program. Keeps the big picture in mind.

Roles and responsibilities of the general ed teacher. What do those look like? Top priority, we ask our regular ed teachers to treat the student like any other student. To prepare lesson plans and have them available in advance. Planning meetings are not going to work if we don't have the lesson plans from the regular ed teacher at the time that we meet. Draw the student into your class activities as per indicated on the IEP. We want the regular ed teacher to monitor the student's participation. To follow through with use of reinforcers and behavior plans. And use the assistant as a liaison between you and the special ed teacher. Watch social interactions to make sure they are positive or rewarding for both the student and for the peers. So we do want involvement and ownership, shared ownership from the regular education teacher. But are we saying to the regular education teacher, "You have to teach all the programs. You have to design all the programs. Here's your kid. Check in with us at the end of the year. We'll talk about what worked and didn't work." No regular ed teachers would do that. On the other hand we're also not saying, "We just want to use your classroom environment. Don't worry. It will be OK." So you see the difference of two extremes. We want to work as a team member with those following responsibilities. And notify special ed staff if you have concerns.

The roles and responsibilities of the paraeducator. They advocate for and work with the student. They assist the general ed teacher. They implement program procedures as specified by the team. Does that have any meaning to anybody? Instead of going off on their own, deciding what to do. You'd be amazed at the number of sites I go into and it's the paraprofessional who is making all of the decisions and the control, who has worked with the kid for two years, and when you talk to the teacher, what does the teacher say in response to some of your questions? I'll have to ask the paraeducator. The paraeducator does facilitate interactions with peers and teachers. They're kind of that liaison and that go between.

They're the social coach. They're not the person who does it all. They're not the person who replaces, but they're the social coach that teaches those social skills. They promote independence for students, and what we want them to do, as Mike said earlier, we want them most of all to work their way out of a job. To be able to distance supervision, intervene when necessary, but be on call rather than on that one on one.

When we look at the administrator now. The role of the administrator. What do you think that's going to be? Maintain a positive school climate. Play an active role as a team member, which means being at team meetings, supporting the staff, and reviewing the student progress. We want the administrator to allocate those necessary resources and to oversee the program quality providing a feedback loop for improvement. Mike and I have talked many times about one of the trainings we might do next year is for the administrators. How many of our administrators, and I'm looking at Kevin, and you're the special ed administrator, but how many of our building administrators really know what kind of program components we want to have in place. Do they know when they have a fire in order to call the experts in or the fire trucks in? Do they know the program quality standards we're going to give to you at the end of today? Do they know that that's what they should be administering and checking, and evaluating for? So we have a lot of training to do with our administrators. So they set the tone and they lead the team. If we have an administrator in a building who is of the opinion of, "OK the kid's here but whatever it takes to keep it all quiet so that I don't have complaints." Then we're probably not moving forward with program quality.

Roles and responsibilities of the related service staff: Provide direct service and consultation in their specialized areas. Communicate effectively with other team members regarding embedding skills across the day. Now we know on our IEPs that some students will have direct service from the related service specialist. Some students will have consultation. A lot of students will have a combination of both, because it doesn't make much sense to have a fifteen to twenty minute session twice a week if those same skills are not embedded across the school day. So we need to have them very much work as a team when we do the curriculum matrix, and write those activity analyses. Where can we embed those skills from their special area for the student. They attend team meetings as requested. As I said earlier, it might be not very realistic to have them at every team meeting, but when they're available, or when you request for them to come, make sure the agenda is what they need and you get the information at that time. Provide training to staff as needed from their area of expertise.

Parents, what role do we want them to play? Advocate for and support the special education program. We want our parents to be working with us as team members all the way through the process. Knowing what their priorities are for their child, helping us with the program components, etc. We want them participating as an active member. Supporting those social relationships. How can we generalize those into the home with the socialization piece? Assists with adaptations and homework coaching. So if this is what's going to happen in class, can we do some of the preteaching and pretraining? Is the parent available for that?

The problem with all of this is that, when you look at the black and white, don't you sit here and say of course. Collaboration between special ed and general educators, needs to be that shared responsibility, but that's not what's always happened in the past. We had that separation in our training programs.

We have been talking for years about when teachers, all teachers go through preservice training, how do we incorporate special ed knowledge and regular ed knowledge so that we produce this individual called a teacher who has a skill set that is required for some of the more difficult kids. It is not happening that way. And I'm hearing talk of it getting a little bit worse instead of better. So I'm not sure what that's about.

Shared information, what we want is creating that owner's manual that I mentioned yesterday. We want all people who work with the child to know: Who is this kid anyway? Why is he in the classroom? What exactly is the nature of the disability and the challenges for that student? What are his strengths and needs? What techniques and strategies do I need to know to work with him? What are his unique behaviors and learning abilities? What is my role? How will his work be graded? What are his goals? What does it say on his IEP? What supports will he receive daily and weekly? If you're in the beginning, of a transition process, this is the information that needs to be transferred from year to year, teacher to teacher, switches of case manager. This is the information that provides what we need to know about the student for quality programming.

In order to do that we know we have to have ongoing inservice in our buildings. We're hoping that through this project, we can give you a lot of inservice training that you can use with your staffs at your schools. These are the areas that we know we need to train in. We know that we have to observe and coach our staff. We can't just hire that paraprofessional and put them out. Communicate daily. Review how it's going weekly. One of the biggest breakdowns in training and supervision of our paraprofessionals is that there's no time meet. They come, they're hired, at the moment the students come, they leave the moment the students leave. How again within our daily schedules will we do the training and communicate the need for that. That's also where your administrator comes in as providing the resources and support. How do we maximize on training days? How do we on training days provide the paraprofessionals with what they most need to know? A lot about follow up, follow up, follow up, giving them feedback, making sure that when we supervise, we use that five to one positive to negative ratio that we use with our student population for success.

This is just a little thing about a good team. Sometimes we look at our teams and it seems like the members, that maybe we have a Tate team member called dictate who tells us what to do. And a rotate member who wants to change up everything and mess it up. Then we've got agitate and irritate. They just want to make you a little upset, get the team blood pressure up. We have hesitate and vegetate who just want to wait around to implement anything and never get anything done. We have imitate who just doesn't have an opinion and sits on the team. We have devastate who destroys the team, etc. We've got a couple good team members down there. We've got facilitate, felicitate, cogitate, meditate, but most of our teams kind of have combinations of people.

The ten top characteristics of a functioning team. They have a sense of purpose. They know what their priorities are and that they implement those priorities. They know what roles and abilities to do the task. The decision making lines are well defined and understood. There are dealt with openly when it's conflict. It's not hidden. Personal traits, they have unique personalities. There are norms for working together that are set. It's effective in that the team meetings are productive. You feel like you came out and something actually got done. And success is about when recognizing when the team has met success and celebrating that success.

And ten, training opportunities provided and taken. We're going through this very quickly because of our time crunch but those are very important components to create a functioning team.

Do you like this little cartoon on conflict? Would you excuse me a moment? Someone's trying to get my attention. Not a very effective communication strategy, is it? We know that resistance is characterized as not being able to get what you want from the environment. It is a response to change that has a personal impact. People get pretty passionate about their ideas around resistance. When you have resistance, you've got team members that refuse to participate. What if you had a party and nobody came? Or they came and nobody said anything? You've got supporting without substance. So they might just be supporting a buddy that they've aligned with but it has no substance to the complaint or concern. Displaced responsibility. It wasn't my job. Nobody told me to pick up that armadillo off the road. Deferring to future time. I love this one. When I'm stressed and I'm in a not very productive team situation, it's like, "Maybe we should meet on this tomorrow." That's a tendency I have. "I think today is just not a good day to make this decision. Let's try it tomorrow." Rely on past practices. We never did it this way before or we don't do that here, we don't do windows in this school.

When you're on a team, just a quick reminder of what not to do. It's sometimes easier to look at what not to do than what to do, because what to do seems like of course. How much of this do we actually participate in, in some of our meetings? Insisting on precision and being correct. Cross examining. I worked with a physical therapist once on a team and boy could she cross examine. React negatively, discouraging, or putting down. Being cynical, skeptical, or noncommittal. Supporting confusion, ambiguity, or uncertainty. Not listening. Ordering, directing, threatening, and warning. That doesn't work very well. Demanding. I get into this a lot. Preaching or moralizing. Being competitive, and assuming that it can't be done. If you assume it can't be done, there's no accountability and you can dissolve your team meeting.

Building relationships and productive teams. What affects everyone can best be solved by everyone, but it's not easy to have a productive team. You need to build trust. You need to have your problem solving mechanism in place. You need to be able to resolve the conflict, because it's the crisis point that brings about resolution that leads to quality in your programs. Don't we all as educators kind of want to shy away from conflict. There are sometimes, we actually go in and we meet with a team and what's needed is we have to prompt the crisis to move people into the action that needs to be taken.

Remember teaming can be very stressful. We hear a lot of teachers who say "It's not about the kids, it's about this team that I can't work with." I love this cartoon. Step one of the stress seminar is entitled leaning to relax. Do you think they have a lot to learn? Do you feel like that at the end of the day?

Just a closing note. Here's some kind of crazy, zany stress reducers. When you have a good working team, they work hard, they plan hard, you resolve conflict, and they also need to have a little fun. So here are some ideas of both team and individual things you could do. Have a popcorn party but don't put the lid on. Put mosquito netting around your desk and play jungle music. Eat lots of chocolate. I engage in that regularly. Page yourself on the intercom but don't disguise your voice. Make up a language and ask for directions. Sit in a parked car at lunch. Point a hairdryer at passing cars and see if they slow down.

To give you some kind of sense of control that you don't have on your current team. Stare into the tines of your fork and pretend you are in jail, and then convince people you don't have to go to treatment. Go shopping, buy a lot, sweat in it, and then take it back. That's your passive aggressive response to stress reduction. We could spend a whole lot of time on team meeting. If we come in to help you on site, we'll be working on helping your team function as a team because we all know that is the essential component to making everything else work.

On this note Mike is going to quickly review some things about scientifically researched and evidence based programs. Then we're going to talk to you again summarizing the activities of the PDA technical assistance grant and give you further direction of where we can go from here.