INTRODUCTION TO EFFECTIVE TEAMING

TEACHERS PREFER SUPPORT FROM A COLLEAGUE TO IMPLEMENT A NEW INTERVENTION STRATEGY.

(LANE, MAHDAVI & BORTHWICK-DUFFY, 2003)

COLLABORATION IS MOST EFFECTIVE WHEN TEACHERS FEEL SAFE ASKING QUESTIONS AND REVEALING WEAKNESS TO THEIR PEERS

(FUCHS, FUCHS & BAHR, 1990)

"[AN] EMPHASIS ON COLLABORATION ACROSS DISCIPLINES AND ACROSS GENERAL AND SPECIAL EDUCATION BOUNDARIES…**REQUIRES ONGOING TRAINING** IN COLLABORATIVE TEAMING"

(MARSTON, MUYSKENS, LAU & CANTER, 2003, P. 190)

IN EFFECTIVE MTSS MODELS......

- collaborative teams are formed using the resources, talent, and personnel across the educational system.

IN EFFECTIVE MTSS MODELS…

All educators work together and are accountable for the outcomes of each and every student!

REFLECTING ON MTSS TEAMING

EXAMPLE FROM WYOMING SCHOOL DISTRICT

In the beginning...

The mistakes:

-We did not take time to consider all of the stake holders that would be involved in implementing Multi-Tiered System of Supports.

-Teams were comprised mainly of staff who either volunteered or were assigned because they weren't on other building/district teams. In some cases teams had significant representation from one particular group.

Drawbacks...

Team work became very insular. In other words... MTSS is something that team does...

Being able to effectively explore ideas from the different stake holders perspectives was difficult or impossible.

Slowed down implementation because we needed to restructure teams and bring new members up to speed.

New team dynamics required us to revisit work we had done to make sure we were incorporating new team members perspectives.

Communication to various stakeholder groups was restricted or non existent which slowed buy-in.

The Middle...Getting back to best practice.

RTI/MTSS Teams

All of the following conditions are met: (1) the RTI team is representative of all key stakeholders; (2) structures and clear processes are in place to guide decision making; and (3) time is set aside for the team to meet regularly.

National Center on Response to Intervention-RTI

Fidelity of Implementation Rubric

District Team 1.0...
1. Superintendent
2. Sped Director
3. Reading Coach
4. Reading Coach
5. Math Coach
6. Consulting Teacher
7. MTSS Coordinator

District Team 2.0...
1. Superintendent
2. Sped Director
3. Reading Coach
4. Math Coach
5. Consulting Teacher
6. MTSS Coordinator
7. School Psychologist
8. Principal
9. School Board Member
10. Teacher Representative

Building Implementation Teams...

Each of our Building Implementation teams has a little different makeup. One school has representation of all major stakeholders.

1. Principal
2. Consulting Teacher
3. Reading Coach
4. Grade Level Representative-Each Grade
5. Sped Teacher
6. Parent Representative

In the end: Continued process... but...

Benefits: More rich dynamic discussions.

Communication is more fluid between teams and stakeholder groups.

As forms, procedures, and processes are developed we are more confident that buy-in will happen because a stake holder representative had a say in the decision making and development.

Lesson Learned...
It is not enough to have people sitting around a table and calling them a team. The necessity is to have the **_RIGHT_** people.

ALL TEAM MEMBERS BRING THEIR OWN UNIQUE EXPERIENCES, BACKGROUND, AND AGENDAS TO THE TABLE.

RECOMMENDED MTSS SCHOOL TEAM MEMBERS

- *School Principal*
- *General Education Teacher(s)*
- *Special Education Teacher*
- *Instructional Coach*
- *Data Coordinator*
- *School Psychologist*
- *School Counselor*
- *Parent*
- *Others*

ROLES OF TEAM MEMBERS

ROLES ARE ASSIGNED TO FACILITATE EFFECTIVE MEETINGS

- **Meeting Facilitator** - directs team through the meeting (should not be the Principal).
- **Case Manager** - makes sure all stakeholders are invited and present; coordinates implementation of team decisions.
- **Scribe** - takes notes and completes the RTI Intervention Plan document.
- **Timekeeper** - redirects team to immediate focus of meeting; keeps and calls "time" for various meeting components in problem solving.

GUIDELINES FOR THE FACILITATOR

-Stick to the issues, not individual personalities
- Be aware of what each person brings to the table

- Be prepared
  - Issues can become complex, be ready for anything

- Keep the process going

- Recognize when constraints are blocking consensus and make adjustments as needed

GUIDELINES FOR THE TIME KEEPER

- Monitor the time and remind participants to remain on topic

- Provides gentle reminders when time is almost up

- Stops everyone when allotted time is up
  - Suggest that topic is placed on the schedule to be revisited at a future meeting

GUIDELINES FOR THE SCRIBE

- Takes notes during the meeting
  - Consider creating a template to use for each meeting

- Files notes and makes sure each team member receives a copy of the notes after the meeting

OTHER ROLES

- Food Czar
  - Arranges for snacks at meetings

- Celebrator
  - Comes prepared to quickly share two items worth celebrating since the last meeting

- Evaluator of Team Effectiveness
  - Thumb check/survey/interview
  - Gain feedback about how to improve efficiency and effectiveness

DEVELOPING NORMS

Group Norms are…

- Principles and practices that define how we make decisions and resolve conflicts

- Ground rules or habits that govern the group

- Norms can be:
  - Informal
  - Formal

DEVELOPING NORMS

- **Norms help…**
  - To ensure that all individuals have the opportunity to contribute in the meeting

  - To increase productivity and effectiveness

  - To facilitate the achievement of our goals

EXAMPLE GROUP NORMS

1. Respect other opinions
2. Cell phone on silent and answered only for emergencies
3. Be prepared and on time
4. Communicate misunderstanding or disagreement
5. Allow all voices to be heard

CRITICAL ELEMENTS FOR MEETINGS

- State the purpose

- Attention to structure
  - Agenda
  - Topic outcomes
  - Content vs. process

- Clarity about meeting roles

- Meeting closure and review action steps

Source: Hannon, 2007, Collaboration Works, Inc

CONSIDERATION FOR TEAMS

- The Team should determine a regular place and time to meet.
- Members of the team are clearly identified along with attendance expectations.
- Roles are assigned to team members

CONSIDERATIONS FOR TEAMS

- Establish expectations for meetings
  - Task oriented
  - Problem oriented
  - Stay within specified time frame for meeting
  - Regular attendance
  - Complete assigned responsibilities
- Use effective consensus building strategies

THE TEAM PROCESS LOOKS A LITTLE DIFFERENT IN EVERY SCHOOL.

The composition and number of collaborative teams needed will be based on the needs of

- students
- staff
- the local culture
- resources available
- size of school!

CONSENSUS IS NOT NECESSARILY EVERYONE AGREEING
RATHER IT IS...

Everyone agreeing to support or at least not sabotage the group's decision

Conflict or resistance will not necessarily be overcome immediately or easily.....

DON'T COMMIT ASSUME-I-SIDE

- Don't "assume" we can SKIP this phase
- Don't "assume" we have enough commitment to go forward
- Don't "assume" the staff will just be compliant

Harkin

CONSENSUS BUILDING TOOL: FIST-TO-FIVE QUICK CHECK

- Building Consensus -
  - Fist-to-Five

Harken

FIST-TO-FIVE QUICK CHECK

FIVE   All for it…I can be a leader for this decision.

FOUR   All for it…You can count on me to support this no matter what

THREE   For the idea…I will support it in concept but may not be out in front of the gang leading in implementation.

TWO   I'm not sure…But I trust the group's opinion and will not *sabotage* the decision.

ONE   I'm not sure…Can we talk some more?

FIST   No…We need to find an alternative.

Harken

FIST-TO-FIVE QUICK CHECK TOOL

HOW to USE it:

- Someone makes a statement that he/she needs consensus on

- If anyone holds up a fist, or only one or two fingers, the group has not reached consensus. You will need more discussion or dialogue.

- If you get all three, four, or five fingers showing, you can declare consensus.

Harken

FIST-TO-FIVE QUICK CHECK

Our school team should move forward with implementing MTSS schoolwide.

ESTABLISHING EFFECTIVE TEAM

- Use the WY Team Planning Document
  - Brainstorm the benefits of MTSS implementation for multiple stakeholder
  - Come to consensus about 2-3 primary reasons for implementing schoolwide MTSS
  - Identify potential challenges with teaming and implementing MTSS
  - Identify MTSS team members and roles – Do you have everyone at the table?
  - Establish team norms
  - Create a meeting structure and potential agenda items

TEAM BRAINSTORMING PROCESS

- Identify a recorder and timer
- Find Team Planning Document
- Follow BRAINSTORMING RULES:
  - Silence is okay
  - No elaboration of responses
  - Piggy-backing is okay
  - Don't judge!
- Clarify responses following official brainstorming to provide comprehensive list.

ADDITIONAL TEAMING RESOURCES

- [Establishing and Running a District-Level RTI Leadership Team: Frequently Asked Questions](#), Jim Wright

- [Effective Teaming and Collaboration within RTI](#), RTI Action Network (2009). Shares lessons learned for middle school implementers.

- Book: *RTI Team Building: Effective Collaboration and Data-Based Decision Making,* Broxterman & Whalen (2013)

- [Color Personality Quiz and Other Teaming Resources](#), Montana OPI RTI Project