Concurrent Session Template

Key points identified in session on: **Professional Development Models**

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| **WHAT’S WORKING?** |
| What do we know/think is effective and working? |
| * Working through a state’s regional education centers (and using deaf-blind specialists or other consultants employed by those centers). * Using pre-existing training materials (e.g., SKI-HI Curricula, OHOA Modules). * Establishing a training program that is repeated regularly (e.g., intervener training). * Embedding PD into state educational initiatives. * Embedding PD into other events (e.g., state conferences) to reach more service providers. * Holding events at the same time as a parent conference to save on speaker fees. * Partnering with a university: * Embedding training into coursework. * Offer credits for PD (benefit to teachers who want to build their careers). * Blended learning – a combination of distance and on-site training. * Use personalized web sites for students. Builds team knowledge and expertise. You can hand pick and post things relevant to a particular student. * Think of training in terms of districts rather than schools. Train teams whose members can then become the consultants within their districts and across districts. (Not a feasible model for rural districts.) * Think of PD from a marketing perspective, not an educational perspective. Need to tailor PD delivery to what the recipients want to know. * Brief (e.g., 20 minute trainings on specific topics) that can be downloaded onto a tablet. * Apps that allow you to share data, videos, and information. |
| How can we use our national network to replicate, learn from, etc.? |
| The primary suggestion in this category related to figuring out some sort of system that would allow state projects to have access to each other’s online training materials. One person commented, “How do we find out what is going on in each of the projects? Everyone is willing to share, but how do we find out what everyone has?”  We need some sort of system that allows us all to easily find and use other projects’ materials. For example, one suggestion was to develop a comprehensive list of all the various training modules that state deaf-blind projects have created and put links on the NCDB website.  When developing training materials state projects need to think about how they can be shared with the network, not just within a single state. And we need a mechanism for sharing this information.  *Note: The suggestions in cell 4 (“How can we partner to address common challenges and issues?”) also apply to this section.* |

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| **CHALLENGES?** |
| What are the issues? |
| **Content**   * Struggle with how to cover a wide range of content areas. TA recipients have so many needs— DB101 plus targeted support on a variety of topics. * Keeping up with new knowledge. Some things are consistent over time for content, but other things change as a result of new research. It is important to make sure we have the right content.   **Keeping up with numerous educational initiatives**  There are so many—common core, alternate assessment, teacher evaluation. We need to weave (embed) our PD in with other initiatives so teachers don’t feel that that everything is disconnected, but how do you stay current on all of the initiatives?  **Retirements**  Nurturing new people.  **Technology**   * Restrictions on the use of technology has an impact on distance education for PD. Some agencies have limitations on the tools that can be used by their employees (e.g., may not be allowed to use Dropbox, Facebook). * Limited access to support from IT people (even if the deaf-blind project is housed in an agency that has tech support, the deaf-blind project may be low on its priority list). * Technical and legal issues about how to share videos can be difficult to overcome.   **Other challenges related to distance education**   * Takes an amazing amount of time and expertise. * Teachers are already so busy and usually have to participate in distance education on their own time. * School personnel need assistance to learn how to use web-based technology.   **Balancing the demands of child-specific work and systems work**  State project PD needs to support the individualized needs of particular children, but also respond to state requirements to demonstrate impact in a variety of areas.  **Offering advanced learning opportunities**  Providing advanced learning opportunities (e.g., advanced intervener training) when your state project fte is low. |
| How can we partner to address common challenges and issues? |
| **Figure out ways to share solutions to common problems. Share topics with NCDB to coordinate discussions.**  For example, one of the challenges listed above is technical and legal issues related to video-sharing. During the session a number of participants mentioned they have solved a lot of these problems.  **Let others in the network know what you are struggling with so that we can provide advice to each other.**  For example, during the session participants provided support to others and ideas about how they approach difficult issues.  **Work together on joint projects that bring state project staff together around a dedicated topic.**  The development of the OHOA modules was cited as a recent example of this that has enriched many network members both personally and professionally.  **Topical workshops and regional workshops.**  We don’t have much time to see each other and share. People really miss coming together and sharing. We can’t allow face-to-face meetings to go to the wayside. |