

# Project MAX: Statewide Parent Network

*Leading change, fostering high expectations, and presuming competence*



MAX Statewide Parent Network Quarterly Newsletter

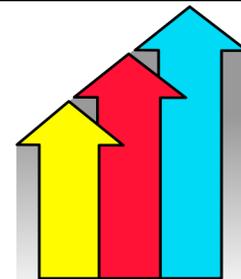
Spring 2017

## About Project MAX

The purpose of Project MAX is to increase opportunities for students with the most complex needs to learn the same schoolwork as their classmates without disabilities. Now in its fifth year, the project continues to allow students to be more prepared for adult life.

Read a conversation with Natalie Sokol, Ph.D., BCBA-D, Educational Consultant at PaTTAN and the Statewide Lead for Project MAX to learn more.

Maximizing  
Academic Access,  
Expectations, and  
Learning



Supports for Educating Students  
With Complex Instructional Needs

## A Conversation with Natalie Sokol, Ph.D., BCBA-D

***We have heard parents provide positive feedback when their students in Project MAX classrooms are presumed competent. What would you say is the most promising outcome, to date, that you have seen with Project MAX?***



**Natalie Sokol, Ph.D.**

There are several promising outcomes. Both special education and general education teachers reported being able to identify and use standards-aligned learning targets for their students with complex instructional needs; something that wasn't necessarily considered for these students before Project MAX. They were also using assessments, and integrating new resources to improve instruction. In addition, more student's Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) indicated a need for assistive technology (AT) and augmentative/alternative communication devices or services to provide access to grade-level curriculum. It is likely that more teams are making AT considerations during the IEP team meeting. Our most exciting outcome, thus far, is that students are spending more time receiving grade-level, academic instruction reading, math, science and social studies.

***We often hear parents ask how they could get their student into a Project MAX classroom. How would you address that request?***

The prospect of having your child receive the benefits of Project MAX is exciting; however, this initiative is not child-specific. Project MAX consists of systems-change efforts, training, and coaching of educators in classrooms, school buildings, and, potentially, entire districts. Many, but not all, Local Education Agencies (LEAs) in Pennsylvania are learning and implementing Project MAX. Our goal is that every classroom in the state provide grade-level, standards-aligned instruction to students with complex instructional needs, but the rollout of Project MAX was intentionally deliberate, to provide the proper support to each participating LEA.

***“Our most exciting outcome, thus far, is that students are spending more time receiving grade-level, academic instruction in reading, math, science and social studies.”***

***A goal of the initiative is to work with future teachers in colleges and universities to introduce the theories of Project MAX. Could you talk about that a little bit?***

Since 2015, Project MAX has partnered with 10 Pennsylvania Institutes of Higher Education (IHEs). The goal of this collaboration is to share Project MAX principles, materials, resources, and tools with our IHE partners, so that they can incorporate these concepts and utilize the resources in their coursework for students learning to be teachers. The IHEs included: Clarion University, East Stroudsburg University, Indiana University, Kutztown University, Seton Hill University, Bloomsburg University, Drexel University, Millersville University, Saint Francis University, and West Chester University.

## Statewide Parent Network Activities

The Statewide Parent Network continues to grow and there are many ways that you can get involved. Simply signing up for the network opens opportunities to connect with other parents.

### Stay Informed

- Sign up for Project MAX Network Newsletters
- Discover upcoming trainings, webinars and events

### Connect with Families in the Network

- Register for the Parent Network Gatherings April 28-29
- Join meetings online, by phone or in person
- Schedule a Project MAX Parent Training



**Access to the General Education Curriculum Training  
HUNE, Winter 2016**

### Schedule a Project MAX Statewide Parent Network Training!

1. Presuming Competence: Fostering High Expectations
2. Access to the General Education Curriculum
3. Maximizing Communication and Learning for Your Child
4. Collaborating on School Teams in Ways that Make a Difference
5. Leading Change

*My son Andrew for the first time had a curriculum goal in his IEP.*

*Katy, parent*

## Save the Dates

- **March 22:** PEAL Conference, Beth El Congregation, Pittsburgh
- **Parent Network Gatherings in Eastern & Western PA:** April 28-29 Kalahari Resorts & Seven Springs
- **Autism Conference:** July 31-Aug 3 at the Penn Stater Hotel & Conference Ctr.
- **PA Deaf-Blind Project:** June 23-24 Family Learning Conference Penn Stater Hotel & Conference Ctr.
- **Transition Conference :** August 9-11 at the Penn Stater Hotel & Conference Ctr.

For more information about Network Activities and to schedule a training, contact Lorie or Tammi at [1-866-950-1040](tel:1-866-950-1040) or Enid or Yovana at a la Línea de Asistencia del Proyecto MAX: [\(215\) 595-5866](tel:215-595-5866) (Español e Inglés) or email the Parent Partners at [parentnetwork@pattan.net](mailto:parentnetwork@pattan.net). We look forward to hearing from you.

