

# **DISTANCE MENTORSHIP FACILITATOR'S GUIDE: USING TECHNOLOGY TO PROVIDE CONSULTATION FOR TEAMS SUPPORTING LEARNERS WITH DEAF-BLINDNESS**



This guide is the product of a development research project supported by the Office of Special Education Programs Steppingstones Program, through Grant Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education, through Grant DED0068253 to the University of Kansas. The opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not represent views of the Office of Special Education or the U.S. Department of Education.

## Distance Mentorship Facilitator's Guide

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This Guide is the product of a federally funded project, the DMP Development Project, awarded to the University of Kansas by the Office of Special Education Programs. Our purpose is to develop and test a Distance Mentorship Project (DMP) serving learners with DB and their school teams. In cooperation with one DMP serving learners in Kansas, we have been trying out, revising, and refining the steps needed to successfully implement a DMP, and also learning more about the potential impacts of a DMP. The DMP team is a collaborative effort of the Kansas Deaf-Blind TA Project, the Kansas State School for the Blind, and the NCDB team "lead" for its Technology Solutions initiative.



### **Suggested Reference for this Guide:**

Summers, J.A., Buzhardt, J., Dove, S., Cote, M., Higgins, S., Taylor, R., Harding, J., & Tallman, N. (2014). *Distance Mentorship Facilitator's Guide*. Kansas City, KS: Juniper Gardens Children's Project, University of Kansas. Available at [www.jgcp.ku.edu](http://www.jgcp.ku.edu).



## DISTANCE MENTORSHIP FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

### Table of Contents

	<u>Page</u>
Introduction: Purpose of Distance Mentorship and Format of this Guide . . . . .	4
Diagram of the DMP process	
 Module 1:     Getting Ready: Preparing the Ground for Effective Distance Mentorship	
Characteristics of an Effective DMP Consulting Team . . . . .	10
Using Technology to Facilitate DMP Consulting . . . . .	11
Identifying Potential Local DMP Teams . . . . .	16
Module 2:     Starting Up with a Local Team . . . . .	19
Module 3:     Maintaining and Continuing Support . . . . .	24

### Handouts

1. Suggested flyer to publicize the DMP
2. School Characteristics Checklist
3. Administrator Agreement Form
4. Family Consent
5. Team Expectations Form
6. Technology Quick Start Handout
7. Person Centered Checklist
8. Sample Action Plan
9. Instructions for Accessing the Learner Managed Online System



## DISTANCE MENTORSHIP FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

### Purpose of this Guide

The purpose of this Guide is to provide step-by-step support and recommended guidelines for TA providers and other consultants to establish and implement the DMP model to support school-based teams serving learners with deaf-blindness (DB). Our primary audience is DB TA providers in other states, and our focus in both content and examples will involve learners with DB, their families, and their school teams. But we also believe the DMP approach will be useful to other consultants, professional development specialists, and TA providers who are serving learners with a complex set of needs, or in providing more long-range and effective options for developing or reinforcing skills for use in the classroom. We believe this approach will enable states and other TA and professional development providers to multiply their impact both in terms of the quality and quantity of support they can provide to improve outcomes for children with DB.

### Background: The Unique Needs of Children with Deaf-Blindness

Learners with deaf-blindness (DB), like others with low incidence disabilities, have multiple and complex needs that impede the ability of school teams to provide effective instruction. The low incidence of this disability means that school systems rarely have personnel who are trained in current, evidence-based practices to facilitate these students' inclusion in and access to the general curriculum and to high quality instruction. However, despite their lack of capacity, schools are increasingly expected to serve children with severe and low incidence disabilities in settings that enable them to participate in the least restrictive environment. Most telling is the indicator in IDEA which requires states to meet increasingly lower percentage benchmarks for serving students in separate settings (defined as institutions, out-of-district placements, separate schools, or homebound instruction). In its most recent Report to Congress on Implementation of IDEA, the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) reported that "students with deaf-blindness or multiple disabilities are most likely to be educated in separate environments" (p. 44), with percentages of these disability groups being served in separate environments reported at 28.6% for deaf-blindness and 24.7% for multiple disabilities, respectively (OSEP, 2010). Moreover, 33.9% of students with deaf-blindness and 45.1% of students with multiple disabilities were being served outside the regular class more than 60% of the day (OSEP, 2010).

The failure to instruct students with DB and other multiple disabilities in inclusive settings is not due to a lack of effective instructional strategies to facilitate meaningful inclusion, active engagement in social interactions, and academic learning. Great strides have been made in the last decade related to reading instruction and literacy (e.g., Jackson, 2006; Luckner, Sebal, Cooney, Young, & Muir, S., 2005); communication and language assessment and development (e.g., Amaral, 2003; Bruce, 2002; Parker, Grimmet, & Summers, 2008); engaging students and encouraging social interactions (e.g., Chen, Klein, & Haney, 2007); and tactile learning and communication strategies (e.g., Chen, Downing, & Rodriguez-Gil, 2001; Mathy-Laikko, Iacono, Ratcliff, Villarruel, Yoder, & Vanderheiden, 1989; Rowland & Schweigert, 2000). These advances in instruction have led to expected outcomes for students with DB that were unimaginable in the past (Killoran, Davies, & McNulty, 2006). They do, however, require sophisticated and multi-disciplinary strategies that encompass a range of vision and hearing assessment strategies, functional behavioral analysis, motor development and positioning, orientation and mobility techniques, and applications of assistive technology, among other skills (Killoran).

The barrier to implementing these evidence-based practices to facilitate learning and inclusion for students with DB and other multiple disabilities is primarily due to a lack of training and available personnel to meet needs in home districts. Teachers are increasingly being expected to serve a wide range of students. In a 2005 Report to Congress, OSEP reported that almost 80 percent of special education teachers were serving students with two or more primary disabilities, and 32 percent were serving students with four or more (OSEP, 2005). At the same time, supports available to these teachers and their students is lacking, with only 49% reporting use of paraeducators, 26% offering vision services, 45% providing assistive technology supports, and 37% providing hearing/audiology services (OSEP, 2005). This problem is even more widespread in rural school districts (Cates & Smiley, 2000). Furthermore, even when special education teachers are certified, they may not have adequate preparation to serve complex needs.

## **Distance Mentorship Facilitator's Guide**

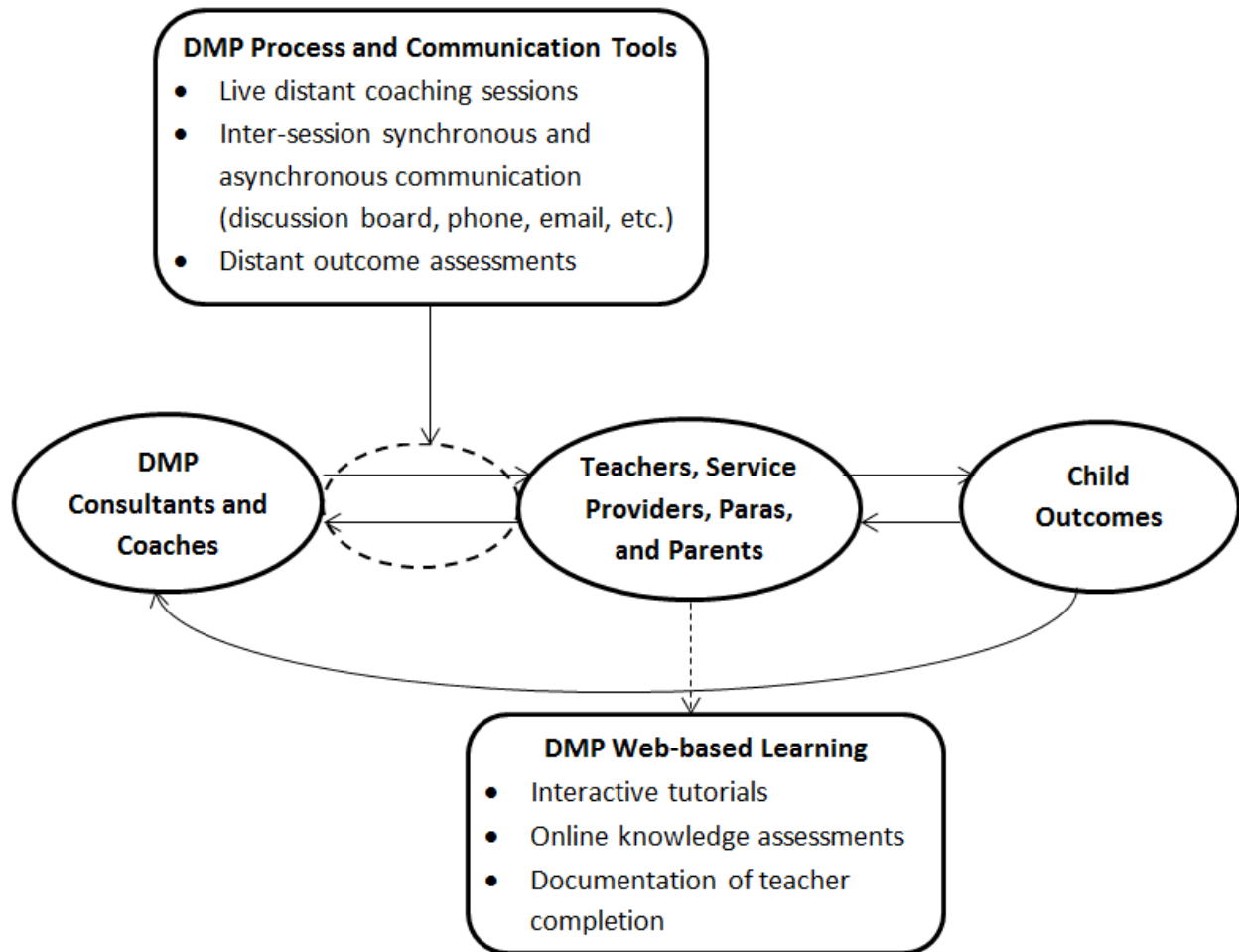
For example, only 28% of bachelors' level and fewer than 25% of masters' level special education teacher preparation programs currently offer training in use of assistive technology (Judge & Simms, 2009). In short, teachers are ill-prepared and ill-supported to serve students with multiple disabilities, including deaf-blindness. Further, with increasing budget cuts for education in states across the nation, prospects for provision of additional supports for students with low incidence disabilities and their teachers are grim.

### **What is the DMP Model?**

Distance consultation is one promising approach to addressing the need to provide supports to bring evidence-based practices to teachers in community schools. Distance technology such as video-conferencing (Israel, Knowlton, Griswold, & Rowland, 2009) and e-mentoring (Homitz & Berge, 2008) have shown promising results in teacher preparation and in in-service (Vismara, Young, Stahmer, Griffith, & Rogers, 2009) applications. Initial research in distance strategies indicate that distance instruction can be as effective as live instruction in teaching a complex, hands-on model for therapist to train parents of children with autism (Vismara, 2009). Video conferencing has also been found effective in practicum supervision for student teachers in special education (Israel, 2009).

The diagram below shows how the DMP model incorporates multiple technologies and modes of communication to provide individualized consultation and coaching. Because DMP consultants do not provide direct services to children, the teachers, caregivers, and staff working with the child are at the center of the model. Therefore, the purpose of the DMP model is to affect child outcomes by improving providers' knowledge and skill in using best practices with children with DB. This guide describes the steps for implementing the DMP model, suggestions for web-based resources to facilitate communication and learning, ways to assess a DMP team's impact on teacher and child outcomes, and strategies for maintaining support.

### The DMP Model



## **Distance Mentorship Facilitator's Guide**

### ***What you will Find in this Facilitator Guide***

The three modules that follow take you through the steps needed to develop a DMP in your state or community. Here is a brief description of what you will find in each Module:

#### ***Module 1. Preparing the Ground.***

Module 1 will provide you with the information you need to create the structure and resources for your overall DMP. It will help you answer these questions:

- What are the skills and knowledge you need as a consultant team to provide successful distance mentoring?
- What technology resources will you need to work with local teams?
- What do you need to do to identify school teams in need of DMP support?

#### ***Module 2. Start Up DMP Implementation with Local Teams***

Module 2 focuses on the initial, start-up activities you will need to complete with a local team in order to get the DMP process off to a smooth beginning. In this module, you will learn the answers to these questions:

- What do you need to do to orient the local DMP team to the process?
- How can you support the technology set-up?
- How do you conduct the initial person-centered plan for the learner?
- How can you provide initial resources and foundational information for the team?

#### ***Module 3. Maintaining and Sustaining the Local Teams***

We expect the local school teams to grow and evolve over time in their use of the DMP as a tool to serve their learner(s). In this module, you will learn to answer the following questions:

- How can the consultants support the changing needs of both the learner and the local team over time?
- How can you chart progress and document the effectiveness of the DMP team's work?
- How can you build leadership and shape increasing empowerment on the part of the local team?
- How can the DMP process stay in place through the transitions of the learner from one team to another?

To accompany the discussion of each of these points, we provide an Appendix containing flyers, forms, and checklists which you may use and modify to meet your needs, as well as references and other basic content information that you might find useful.



## **Module 1, Getting Ready: Preparing the Ground for an Effective Distance Mentorship Program**

### **Part 1: Characteristics of a Successful DMP Consulting Team**

#### ***Who are the Key Consultants?***

***Content Experts.*** Consultants who provide support using Distance Mentorship should be, first and foremost, established experts in working with learners with deaf-blindness. This may include Coordinators and staff of state Deaf-Blind projects, staff from the National Consortium on Deaf-Blindness, the Helen Keller National Center, or, perhaps in a large district with a number of learners with deaf-blindness, an instructional specialist at the district level. There are very few higher education programs that provide specific training in educating learners with deaf-blindness. Therefore, the credentials of a consultant may include training as educators for students with severe disabilities, vision specialists, or hearing specialists. The biggest credential, from the point of view of the school-based teams receiving DMP services, is evidence of hands-on experience in the classroom. Consultants should be confident and competent around learners who are deaf-blind, and should be comfortable demonstrating procedures to use with these students. More than that, they should be passionate about “their” learners and be able to demonstrate actively that they really like the children with whom they work.

***Adult Learning Experts.*** An ideal consultant will also have the background and expertise to provide effective instruction to adults on the school team. There have been many books written on adult learning styles and providing professional development to adults; we will not repeat that here. A few of the adult learning principles that seem most important are

- recognizing that adults are not a “blank slate” and helping the adult learner to “hook” new information to what they already know
- respecting the knowledge and experience that adult learners already have while modifying and shaping change
- providing opportunities to discuss and interact
- being supportive and positive about attempts to try new things

***Technology Experts.*** At least one member of the DMP consultation team should be capable of providing support in the use of the DMP technology. This includes the ability to implement all of the components described in Part 2, Technology, below. The DMP consultant should be able

## Distance Mentorship Facilitator's Guide

to show the members of the school team how to access the wiki, how to upload videos, and should be available to troubleshoot problems, either with the wiki or with the monthly teleconference. Many of the districts with which we have worked did not have adequate IT support, or the IT specialist was not familiar with the technology we were using. It is important to have someone on the consultant team who can step in and provide that support.

***The Trust Factor.*** Participation in a DMP involves emotional risks for school team and family members. This includes the familiar risks involved in any face-to-face consultations as well, i.e., the risk of admitting that one needs help, that one does not have all the facts, information, and skills to work with a learner with complex needs. Added to that is the prospect of having a video recording of a team member attempting a procedure, and having that video posted on the internet wiki. Even though the wiki is a secure site, it involves public display of a practitioner's actions for everyone on the team to see. Furthermore, that "everyone" includes the family. Practitioners do tend to be reluctant to display any gaps in their competencies in front of family members. For family members, there are the added privacy concerns about having videos of their child on a wiki, and in addition, videos of themselves and their homes if they choose to show their child engaging in a behavior at home. Some family members worry about the possibility of "hacking" and note that no website can ever be one hundred percent secure.

Therefore, it is very important to earn the trust of the prospective DMP school-based teams before beginning the process. This means that part of the consultant's qualifications is the ability to inspire trust and encourage risk-taking among the team members. This is why we have included in this guide the recommendation that all DMP teams should begin with face-to-face connections. In Part 3, below, we describe further the steps to identify and encourage participation from school teams. Here, we simply list the characteristics of DMP consultants needed to win trust and have a high quality partnership (Blue-Banning, et al., 2004):

- Being consistent and reliable – always fulfilling promises to the team and never making promises that can't be kept
- Being unfailingly supportive – always maintaining a positive connection and seeing strengths in the team and the learner
- Being trustworthy – never revealing confidential information and in particular never talking about one team to another ("what is she saying about us?")
- Being useful – providing concrete help or support that solves a problem in a demonstrable way

### Part 2: Using Technology to Facilitate DMP Consulting

***Ongoing Sharing and Open Communication:*** This is a key principle to successful DMP consulting. In order for the DMP consultants to provide effective and individualized support, they must know 1) the areas in which providers need help, 2) who specifically needs the help, and 3) whether or not the help provided is making a difference. When consultation is provided onsite by local consultants, these objectives often can be achieved with minimal use of communication technology. However, when the consultants are more than a couple of hours

## Distance Mentorship Facilitator's Guide

away, effective use of collaborative, 'cloud-based' communication technology becomes necessary.

What do we mean by 'collaborative, cloud-based' technology? Often referred to as 'Web 2.0,' this simply refers to technology that allows people to share information over the Internet (the cloud) via a common website or portal. Facebook® is currently the most popular collaborative technology in the world, allowing over 1 billion users to discuss common topics, share information, and post media within a single system. YouTube® is another example of a popular Web 2.0 tool where people share videos and engage in ongoing discussions about individual videos. Advantages of these types of tools for DMP consulting are that multiple people can communicate about a single topic at any time (unlike a phone call where everyone must be present at the same time), and there is a permanent record of the discussion so others can reference it later. However, because of their public nature, we do not recommend using Facebook or YouTube for DMP consulting with school teams. Therefore, this section provides recommendations for using other sites to facilitate sharing, open communication, and teacher learning using more secure and private platforms.

### *What types of tools and resources are needed to support the DMP Model?*

Below is a general list of technology resources needed to implement DMP for the school team and the DMP consultant team. Following this list, we describe how these tools are used, including how to access the online learning modules, and options for creating an online 'wiki' for sharing information between the school and DMP consulting team.

- For the school team
  - Email address for all team members
  - Portable digital video recorder, which can include any of the following
    - Smartphone (iPhone, Android, Windows, etc.)
    - Tablet
    - 'Flip' camera
    - Digital camera
    - Laptop computer
  - Computer (preferably a laptop or tablet) with a built-in camera
  - Broadband Internet access (preferably wireless and in each classroom)
  - User accounts in the DMP online Learning Management System
    - To be created by the DMP consultants
- For the DMP consultant team
  - Email address for all team members (preferably Gmail)
  - Computer (preferably a laptop or tablet) with a built-in camera
  - Broadband Internet access (preferably wireless)
  - Access and administrative rights to a secure, password-protected wiki to support online discussion and multimedia sharing (see below for more information)
  - Access to and training to utilize a video conferencing program, such as Adobe Connect
  - Access to the DMP online Learning Management System for all team members
    - At least one DMP team member needs an instructor account

***Using a 'Wiki' to support online discussion and multimedia sharing.*** A wiki is essentially a website that can be edited through a web browser by multiple people. In the DMP Model, a wiki is a website used by the DMP Consultant team and School team to share ideas, problem solve, share and discuss video of child behavior or teacher use of strategies, and plan goals and objectives.

Think of a DMP wiki as a central repository for discussions and multimedia specific to the child. The wiki will have several "pages," including documents such as the current (and past) action plans, meeting notes, resource information the Consultant team might post, the video files and related discussion threads. Members of the team can always refer back to recommendations and past discussions without sifting through emails or text messages, or trying to recall what was said during a phone call. Phone calls and text messaging can certainly be used for communication, particularly when the subject requires confidentiality, but we recommend using the DMP wiki for most team discussions so everyone on the team has the opportunity to ask questions or make comments, and everyone is on the same page.

***How to get a wiki started.*** The simplest and quickest way to begin your wiki is to contact the Kansas DMP Technical Development team in care of Dr. Jay Buzhardt: [jaybuz@ku.edu](mailto:jaybuz@ku.edu) to discuss setting up a basic DMP wiki for you. The figure below shows an example of an existing DMP wiki used by the Kansas DMP team. However, the wikis can be customized to suit the needs of your consultant team or even to the unique needs of specific school teams.

In this wiki, links to different sections within the wiki can be accessed by clicking on links on the top menu. For this manual, we have provided descriptions of each section. Although it looks like a standard website, it can only be accessed by users through a secure login controlled by a member of the DMP Consultant team. This also makes it easier to contribute to discussions because the site already knows who you are, so you don't have to identify yourself whenever you comment to a discussion thread.

## Distance Mentorship Facilitator's Guide

The screenshot shows the 'Distance Mentorship Project' website. At the top right is a search bar. Below it is a navigation bar with links: Home, DMP Meetings, Meeting notes, Resources/Forms/Files, Satisfaction Survey, and Videos. Callouts point to these links: 'General info about school team, and general discussion' points to Home; 'Notes from video-conferences with School Team and Consultants' points to Meeting notes; 'Online form for reporting satisfaction with DMP consulting' points to Satisfaction Survey; 'Info about planning & scheduling meetings' points to DMP Meetings; 'Files and documents (other than videos) related to child' points to Resources/Forms/Files; and 'Videos and discussion posted by School Team and Consultants (see sample below)' points to Videos. Below the navigation bar is a section titled 'Discussion Avenue' with the logo 'IDEAS that Work' and 'Office of Special Education Programs'. To the left is a list of 'SCHOOL TEAM MEMBERS' with names redacted. In the center is a photo of a young girl, Hannah. To the right is a welcome message: 'Welcome to Hannah's Team Collaboration Site!' followed by a paragraph about the site's purpose and a list of goals for Hannah: 'Increase Hannah's independence with walking', 'Increase Hannah's ability to access things that she wants', and 'Increase Hannah's ability to communicate (# of signs and words)'. A callout points to the 'Videos' link in the navigation bar.

**Uploading and discussing video on the Wiki.** An important purpose of the wiki is to provide a space for the team to upload video to illustrate behavior of the learner, or techniques the team is using, to enable discussion and feedback among the team members and with the DMP consultants. One part of the technology includes uploading video content. During the orientation it is a good idea to have a practice session to make sure everyone knows how to upload videos to the wiki.

It is important that videos adequately show the targeted skill or technique in the shortest amount of time. Remember that the main point of the video is to illustrate an issue and invite discussion. So, a general rule of thumb is to keep your videos to one minute or less. If you really need more time, consider breaking a longer video into segments.

### Rationale for short videos:

- Lengthy recordings make it more difficult for the consultants and other members of the school team to focus in on the specific behavior or procedure the posting team member wants to illustrate.
- People tend not to have the time to watch a lengthy video—make it easy for the team members to find and look at exactly what the person wants.

## Distance Mentorship Facilitator's Guide

- Long videos take up considerable memory; shorter ones are easier to upload, and also easier for people to open and view on their computers. The following is an example of a discussion thread around a particular video:



**Setting up your own wiki.** If you have the technical expertise, or an ambitious web-savvy person on your consultant team, you can also set up your own wiki using various free resources on the web. Below is a list of wiki-development resources:

- Google Sites: <http://sites.google.com>
  - If district/school has a Google Apps license, site will be more secure,
  - Highly recommended for a free wiki that you don't have to host and does not have ads.
  - Google is a trusted platform
  - Has been used for DMP consulting
  - Maximum space with free account:
  - Requires a Gmail account
  - Some schools may not be comfortable sharing identifiable educational information on commercial servers.

There are several other wiki development and hosting sites that are less well-known. They are free, but they will probably have ads on your site. You should avoid sharing identifiable educational data on these sites.

## Distance Mentorship Facilitator's Guide

- PD Works, easy to use invitation system, requires HTML, no video sharing, has monthly costs
- Wiki Spaces: <http://www.wikispaces.com/>
- Wikki: [http://wikki.com/wiki/Free\\_Wiki\\_Hosting](http://wikki.com/wiki/Free_Wiki_Hosting) (probably has ads)
- Wiki Dot: <http://www.wikidot.com/>
- Wiki Site: <http://www.wiki-site.com/>

**Conducting regular video conferences.** In addition to the wiki, an essential component of the DMP is a regularly scheduled video conference in which the school team members and the consultants discuss their issues, the videos posted on the wiki, and decide on an action plan for the upcoming next time period (e.g., monthly). There are many options for conducting video conferences. Adobe Connect® has been used for DMP video conferences in the past. Like other similar programs, it enables the consultant or other designated hosts (it can be a school team member as time goes on) to post documents or other questions during the meeting, bring up example videos to illustrate the conversation, and keep an audio recording of the conversation. There are other available technologies for video conferencing, including Go To Meeting, Lync, Polycom, WebEx, and OnStream Media.

Regardless of the video conferencing solution your team uses, all of these programs require a high-speed internet connection for anyone joining the call. If anyone will be joining the call from within the school, which is fairly common, make sure that the program is not blocked by the school's firewall. If it is, usually the school can add an exception to allow access. It is strongly recommended to do a video conference 'dry run' prior to starting the monthly meetings to make sure everyone can login, their internet connections are adequate, and that they can use the appropriate tools.

### Part 3: Identifying Potential Local DMP Teams

#### *Step One – Identify and obtain commitments for participation in the DMP*

The DMP process is not for everyone. Despite the considerable savings in time and travel for the TA provider, engaging a DMP team to improve their services with a learner who is deaf-blind is time intensive. You want to maximize your chances for success by finding "fertile ground" to establish a DMP team in a local school or other agency. Here are some suggestions for making sure the prospective DMP local team is ready to participate effectively:

**Provide an accurate description of the DMP process.** You want to be able to succinctly and accurately describe what the DMP process is all about. Handout 1 is a suggested brochure for the DMP. You should feel free to modify it to be relevant to your program.

**Request that the team complete a 'readiness' evaluation.** The purpose of this survey is to provide a quick overall indication the school and staff's ability to benefit from DMP services. The survey should be completed with input from the district's Information Technology (IT) staff, the principal, and the child's teacher. Team responses will provide information about the school's technology capacity, student demographics, and any existing legal actions that may influence the success of DMP services. Handout 2 includes a suggested School Characteristics Checklist.

## Distance Mentorship Facilitator's Guide

***Choose a team with whom you have at least an initial trusting relationship.*** Any TA process, whether face-to-face or delivered by distance connections, has the potential to be threatening to the school team. If the team does not know you, and does not recognize you and your colleagues as a resource they can use to their benefit, then the distance mentorship process may be difficult to achieve. At least one, and often more than one, initial on-site visit is highly recommended to begin the DMP process on the right foot.

***Make sure you have “buy in” from key participants.*** Key participants would be those who are most closely involved with the learner, and who are going to be responsible for coordinating the DMP process at the local level. First and foremost, they need to believe there is a need for the process. If, for example, the parent wants you to go to the school and provide TA, but the school team does not believe they have a need for the consultation, then you will not have a successful experience. Conversely, if the school team wants to engage in a DMP consultation, but the parent is unwilling or reluctant, it will be very difficult to have a successful experience.

***Determine whether the prospective team has the technological capacity to participate in the DMP process.*** By “technological capacity,” we mean both the availability of equipment and connections as well as the “technological mindset” of participants. Schools and family homes have varying degrees of available equipment and varying connectivity to the internet. Both are necessary to have a successful experience. Some school districts have firewalls and other policies which will make connections difficult. If the district has an Information Technology (IT) support staff, it will be important to work with that person or persons to help the DMP team have successful connections. If they do not have an IT person, it will be important for at least one member of the team (for example, the teacher) to be at least somewhat knowledgeable about using technology.

Just as important as having the right hardware and connectivity, is the need for one or more of the DMP school-based team members to be comfortable using technology. This person or persons will become your liaison for setting up the connections for meetings, for troubleshooting any problems that arise, and for helping to guide the other team members in using the technology. People will become more comfortable with the technology as the DMP process goes on. But in the beginning it is critical for at least one person to be comfortable working with technology.

***Obtain commitments from critical stakeholders for participation.*** Critical stakeholders include not only members of the school team, including parents, who will be participating on a regular basis. It includes the school principal, the administrator (for example, Special Education Director), the IT coordinator, and any others who have authority. These stakeholders need to give their approval of the DMP process, including allowing part of the team's planning time to participate, space for the video connection meetings, and so on. We recommend a meeting at which the expected participation is clearly discussed and school team members sign an agreement form for their participation. In addition to the Administrator Agreement Form (Handout 3), you should obtain written consent from the parent. A suggested form is shown in Handout 4.

## **Distance Mentorship Facilitator's Guide**

While “buy in” and commitments can work with informal agreements, we recommend that all these stakeholders discussed above should read and sign a formal agreement to participate in the DMP process. The agreement will include expectations for their participation and a clear idea of the supports they will receive in return. Handout 5 is a sample list of expectations for the team to participate, including spaces for participants to sign and provide their contact information.



### **Module 2: Starting up with a Local Team**

Any successful enterprise requires careful planning and preparation to be successful. Creating a successful distance mentorship relationship with a local team serving a learner with deaf-blindness is no exception. Following selection of a team and obtaining their agreement to participate, there are several steps required to ensure that the DMP technical assistance process gets off to a healthy start. In this Module, we provide tips and checklists related to the process of “starting up” a DMP team.

We strongly recommend that an initial orientation to using the DMP be conducted in an on-site visit. We make this recommendation because building rapport does require some face-to-face relationship building, because it will be important for you as a consultant to have a hands-on experience of the learner, and because it will be easier to provide the hands-on training some team members may need to learn to use the technology they will need to participate in the DMP.

Initial start-up and orientation activities could be accomplished in the course of one initial meeting. It is possible, however, that some of these activities will need to be conducted over the course of more than one visit, and/or that some of the orientation could be finished remotely. The start-up and orientation activities include:

- Orient and train the DMP team for their participation – establish ground rules and expectations for participation
- Support the technology set-up requirements for the DMP team
- Conduct an initial person-centered assessment with the learner and the team
- Provide resources for basic foundational information as well as more advanced techniques through the DMP training modules

#### ***Orient and Train the DMP Team in How to Participate***

This initial orientation visit could take place at the same time you collect signed agreements from the administrators and school team members to participate that we described in Module 1. Presumably, you have already received at least their verbal commitment to participate. If you as a consultant have previously made site visits to this school to work with the learner who is the focus of the new DMP, the process will be easier because you have already begun trust-building with the team.

## **Distance Mentorship Facilitator's Guide**

The orientation meeting should include the principal members of the team that work with the learner. This means: classroom teacher, special education teacher (if that is not the classroom teacher), related services personnel who are working with the learner (e.g., vision specialist, OT, PT, psychologist, etc.), and para-professional(s). If the para-professional is a trained intervener, that person is an even more critical member of the team. The school administrator (principal, special education director, etc.) should attend at least some part of the meeting in order to get a sense of the purpose of the meeting, agree to release time required for DMP team members, and to sign the administrative agreement to participate. Finally, the parent(s) are critical participants from the beginning; they will need to provide their consent for the wiki and the overall DMP process. Equally important is the invitation for them to also contribute to the videos and discussion from the perspective of the learner's behaviors at home. When we refer to the local DMP team throughout this Guide, we are always including the parent(s) as a member of the team.

The purposes of the orientation meeting are (a) to open up the group to discussion of creative possibilities and issues the group would like to cover, and (b) to provide expectations for minimum involvement on the wiki and during monthly video conferences.

First, it is important to begin the meeting by hearing a little about the strengths and concerns each member of the team may have about the learner and/or their own sense of comfort and competence about working with a learner with DB. Then as you move forward to the more technical parts of the orientation, you will be able to place your comments in context of their needs and hopes for the process.

Second, we have found it useful to provide ground rules in the form of expectations for minimum participation by all members of the team. Expectations we have used are that team members will be expected to:

- ✓ Identify the person who will be the main source of contact between the LEA team and the consultants
- ✓ Identify LEA team members who will participate in monthly distance mentorship meetings
- ✓ Allocate time for monthly distance mentorship meetings
- ✓ Participate in monthly distance mentorship meetings
- ✓ Ensure that technology is accessible and functioning for mentorship meetings (may require contacting and asking for assistance from IT person in district).
- ✓ Implement suggestions, identify areas of need, ask questions, and identify outcomes
- ✓ Complete feedback/satisfaction forms on an agreed-upon schedule
- ✓ Agree to record and post videos of student participating in classroom activities on a weekly basis
- ✓ Agree to check wiki weekly and participate in online discussion with DMP consultants

As we noted in Module 1, Handout 5 in the Appendix reproduces these items.

### ***Support the Technology Set-up***

## **Distance Mentorship Facilitator's Guide**

As we noted earlier, not everyone is equally comfortable with technology. In the initial meeting, you should be prepared to provide orientation and training in a range of technical activities, including taking videos, uploading them to the wiki, posting comments, and participating in the monthly video conferences.

Ideally, you should arrive at the orientation meeting with the initial “shell” of the wiki for the learner already established. See Module 1 – the wiki would consist of the front “page,” the page for posting reference documents (e.g., the child’s IEP), and the page for posting videos. Perhaps when you obtained the parent’s consent, you might also have obtained a recent digital photo of the learner to post on the front page. You may wish to use Handout 6, Technology Quick Start, as a guide to use while “walking” the team through their wiki.

You can invite participation by asking for brainstorming for the name of the wiki, and changing the name from your initial title to the new one – the group could identify creative names such as “Carly’s Corner,” “Justin Avenue,” and so on. The purpose is to encourage a sense of ownership of the wiki from the beginning.

Depending on the team’s level of comfort with the technology, you may provide an opportunity to practice taking a video and demonstrate how to post it to the wiki. This could just be a practice video (e.g., a video of two members of the team having a conversation), or a video of the learner engaging in some activity. The hands-on demonstration should include how to take the video, how to download it from the video camera (e.g., a cell phone, a camera on a tablet), and how to upload it to the wiki and post it with a comment/description.

Next, if there is time, the team could practice accessing the wiki, viewing the video, and posting a comment. You may do this by using a projector so everyone at the meeting can view the video together, or by passing around a tablet and enabling each person to manipulate the online buttons to access the video and discussion page. This would give you a chance to assess different levels of comfort with the technology.

### ***Conduct a Person-Centered Assessment and Develop an Initial Action Plan***

By “person-centered plan,” we are NOT referring to the learner’s IEP. The purpose of this assessment is to arrive at both broad goals and immediate strategies to be implemented by the team. We use the Magill Action Planning System (MAPS, Forrest & Pierpoint, 2001), or, for older learners needing to plan transition to adulthood, the PATH (Planning Alternative Tomorrows with Hope; Amado & McBride, 2001). A person-centered plan is a broad profile of the learner’s strengths and challenges, as well as hopes, dreams, and fears about the learner’s future. In contrast to the IEP, the MAPS planning process is more informal, contains no legal requirements, and may include creative maps drawn on poster paper of the learner’s strengths, needs, support network, and plans. Key principles of person-centered planning include a focus on the individual’s preferences and needs, focus on community inclusion, assistance from trusted allies (for example, extended family, friends, classmates of the learner), provide coherent support, and ensure that the support is personalized and individualized (Brown, Galambos, Poston, & Turnbull, 2007). The literature on person-centered planning is extensive; one of the most comprehensive step-by-step discussions about using person-centered planning can be found

## Distance Mentorship Facilitator's Guide

in a facilitator guide developed at the University of Minnesota (see Amado & McBride, 2001). See Handout 7 for a checklist to use as a guide to ensure completion of the person-centered process.

For purposes of the DMP, each group member might share their own strengths and uncertainties. For example, the classroom teacher might share that she feels very confident about using the technology, but has never encountered a child with DB before and needs basic information about working with him or her. Team members may or may not be open to disclosing their own uncertainties, which suggests these may need to emerge over time. But if they do feel comfortable expressing their need for information or training, this will provide you as a consultant with some clues about where to start in providing training and support.

With this broader vision in mind, the group brainstorms together and develops a set of immediate strategies that EACH member of the group agrees to do over the next month or other timeframe on which the group agrees. This is another distinction from the IEP – the activities in the action plan should be short-term and should reflect specific and achievable outcomes for the next time period. A blank action plan which you may wish to use with your school team is shown in Handout 8 in the Appendix. Each member of the team should have access to the plan; you should post the plan on the wiki along with your other supporting documents.

### *Provide Resources and Foundational Information for the Team*

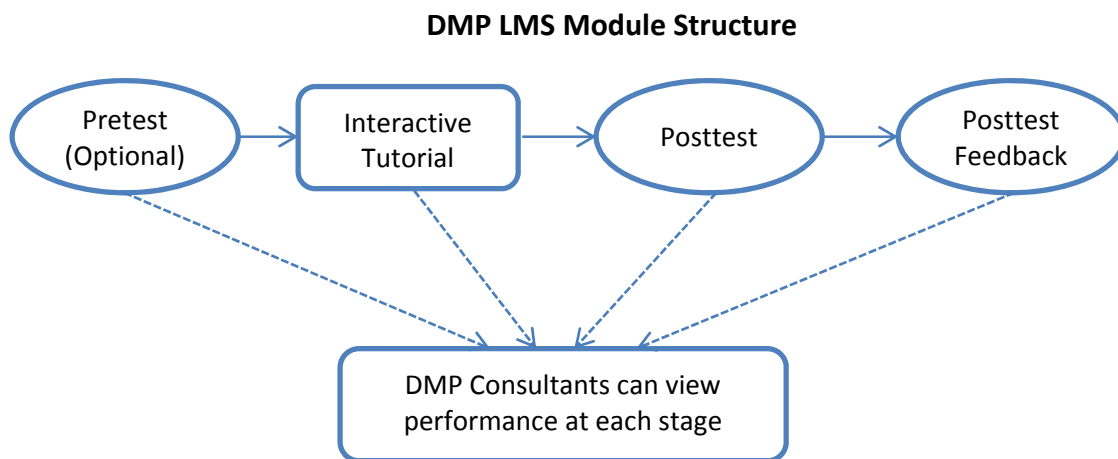
**Using the DMP online Learning Management System (LMS).** The DMP LMS is a free resource developed specifically for use by DMP teams. It contains 12 interactive learning modules and assessments about DB and common strategies for teaching learners with DB. An overview of the modules and their learning objectives can be found at <http://training.distancementorship.org>. Step-by-step instructions for using the DMP LMS can be found in Handout 9 in the Appendix.

The goal of the DMP LMS is to ensure that all school teams working with learners with DB have a basic understanding of DB and are familiar with common strategies and tools used to teach this unique population of students. **School teams are *not* required to complete these learning modules.** However, because DB is such a low-incidence disability, many school staff have limited experience with DB, including parents and SPED teachers. Therefore, we have found that most school teams have a few members that could benefit from one, if not several, of the modules.

**How the DMP LMS works.** The DMP LMS is a single system where school staff can complete tutorials and assessments, and DMP consultants can view their performance on the modules and manage who has access to them. In order to access the system (<http://training.distancementorship.org>), each user needs a password-protected account. Therefore, at least one member of the DMP Consulting team needs an account. Once the DMP Consulting team has an account, they can add members of the School Team, who can then login to complete modules. Again, see Handout 8 in the Appendix for information on accessing the DMP LMS. (To find out more about getting an account, contact Ms. Susan Higgins: [kusus@ku.edu](mailto:kusus@ku.edu) or Ms. Megan Cote [mcote@kssdb.org](mailto:mcote@kssdb.org).)

## Distance Mentorship Facilitator's Guide

After a member of the DMP School team has an account, he or she may login to the system to complete modules recommended to them by the DMP Consultant team and any additional modules he or she would like to explore. The structure of each module is shown in the figure below. The pre- and posttests help the team member and the DMP Consultant team determine the degree to which he or she understands key concepts of the tutorial. However, the pretest is optional because some teams may be primarily concerned with how much the learners understand *after* completing the tutorial, and some learners are uncomfortable with taking pretests over unfamiliar content.





### Module 3: Maintaining and Continuing Support

In the previous two modules, we have provided steps to (1) preparing the consulting structure and identifying potential teams to participate, and (2) orienting and getting an individual team “on board” with the DMP process. Now comes the heart of the DMP work: Using the system over time to provide high-quality consultation from a distance. This also includes empowering the local team to begin problem-solving without as much intimate involvement from the DMP consultants. Finally, what happens when the learner, or another member of the school team, moves on? In this module, we will consider the following issues:

- ✓ Moving from goal to goal to accommodate changes
- ✓ Charting progress and keeping data to document effectiveness of strategies
- ✓ Building leadership for the DMP process in the local team
- ✓ Transitioning to new teams or new settings

#### *Moving from Goal to Goal*

One of the most critical functions of the monthly video conference calls (or on whatever frequency the group has agreed to) is to take stock of progress made on the action plan objectives from the previous month. The facilitator of the call (usually the DMP consultant in the beginning, but later on one of the local team leaders) may begin by reminding the group of the goals that were set in the previous month, which may include displaying the action plan on the Adobe video screen. He or she may then ask for discussion about how well things are going. In addition to the discussion, the DMP consultant may point to particular results seen on a video to provide examples of what is going well and perhaps what needs continuing work. As we have said previously, this needs to be approached very positively and with every opportunity to point out strengths, so that no one feels publicly criticized.

Based on the discussion and feedback, the consultant may recommend a new strategy to continue working on a current goal, or a perhaps set a new goal for the coming month to scaffold on to progress the learner has made. This will yield a new action plan which becomes the agenda for the following month's video call, and so on, from month to month.

We should note that changes in goals or strategies may not necessarily be due to progress made in whatever the learner's goals may be (e.g., learning particular signs for communication). Changes may be needed due to some new situation or behavior that the learner has begun to exhibit. Many learners with deaf-blindness may have medical conditions requiring changes in

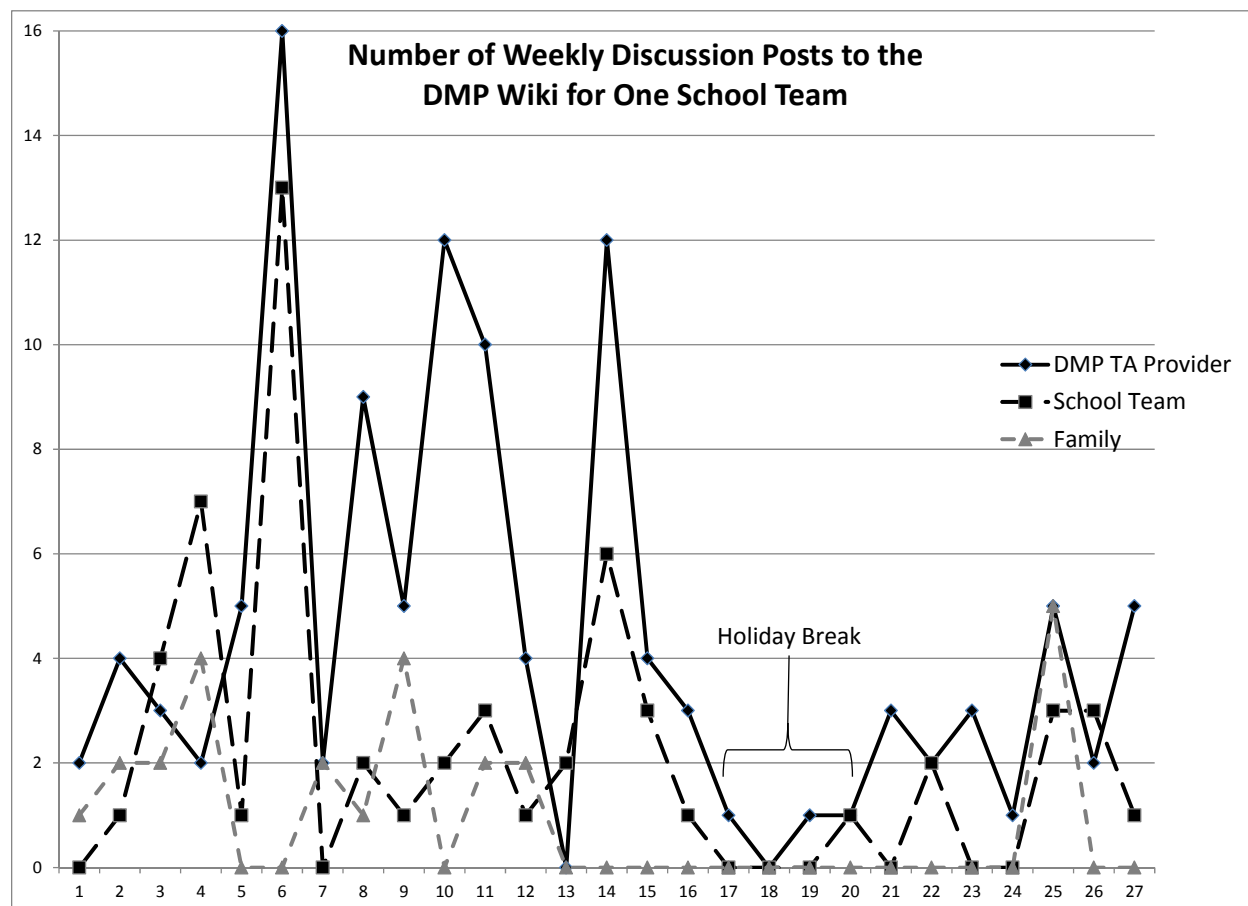
## Distance Mentorship Facilitator's Guide

medication and/or stays in the hospital for surgeries, etc. The DMP consultant, family, and the school team, all need to be in close communication about these changes and adjust approaches accordingly.

In addition to the learner's goals, the monthly action plan may also include professional development goals for the DMP team members. Participants can discuss issues or questions that arose from the DMP LMS modules, for example. We have found that some DMP team members have used the wiki as an opportunity for group study of some of the DMP LMS modules. If this is the case, the facilitator can guide the discussion, answer questions, and identify the examples of learning principles, if possible, from the posted videos on the team's wiki.

### *Charting Progress*

**Tracking participation.** It is usually clear who has and has not been participating in the discussions on the wiki. But sometimes it is helpful to track participation over time. This provides information about who is most involved, and what issues or circumstances may lead to increases (or decreases) in participation. Fortunately, most wikis have a built-in “dashboard” feature that enables the wiki administrator to chart participation by participants (through their IP address) over time. Below is an example of a graph tracking participation in the DMP discussions across a 27-week period.



## Distance Mentorship Facilitator's Guide

The people who are part of the team can easily understand the meaning of the ups and downs in the participation graph. In some cases, changes in participation might signal some discomfort with the DMP process, or some other problem which needs to be addressed. On the other hand, it might simply denote changing circumstances that have nothing to do with the DMP process. For example, in the graph above, the parent participation dropped to zero for a period of time – during the preparations for her wedding to her new husband. Regardless, having the graph is a good conversation piece to help monitor the degree to which the DMP process is being successfully implemented.

**Tracking outcomes.** The easiest way to track outcomes is across the goal attainment of the action plans the team generates each month. Therefore, keeping all the action plans posted on the wiki and including notes about achievement of those goals, provides a nice record for the team to be able to view their progress. This means not only the goals set for the learner, but also the goals set for the members of the DMP school team. Perhaps annually, or on a time frame to which the team agrees, the DMP consultant can tally goal attainment for the team. This is not just a “feel good” exercise – it is a good way to be able to tell if the team is making progress across time.

Many learners with deaf-blindness make progress in very slow increments. Further, it is sometimes difficult to know whether the learner is engaged. Eye tracking, head movement, or behavior challenges may all be signals of whether or not the learner is picking up on his or her environment. If a learner acquires a new sign to communicate, for example, it may not become clear for some time if he or she is using the sign in an appropriate context or in response to the correct stimulus. Viewing the videos from several months apart can give the team concrete evidence of progress on a given objective. In other words, it is a good idea for some of the videos posted to be samples taken from a similar target routine, so that the team can have an opportunity to assess the emerging wanted behavior and/or reduction of an unwanted behavior. Observing the video from the first month of the DMP and comparing it to a video of a similar routine taken in month six, for example, can provide evidence of progress that might not be evident in the day-to-day activities of the classroom.

### ***Building Local Team Leadership***

Over time, a successful DMP team will need to rely less and less on the DMP consulting team. They may acquire skills needed to support the learner in his or her communication, social, and academic skill development to the point that they no longer need constant support from the consultants. We have observed that DMP teams will gradually take over leadership of the DMP, including making decisions about goals, uploading and monitoring discussions on the wiki, and facilitating the video conferences. One way to see this happening is through the participation tracking feature on your wiki – you should begin to see fewer comments from consultants and more from the school team and parents. Although we have seen this occur naturally, you may want to work with your school teams, particularly those entering their second semester or second year with you, to begin deliberately to assign leadership. For example, you may ask the local team leader to take charge of the agenda for the next call.

## Distance Mentorship Facilitator's Guide

Despite having an increasing sense of empowerment, however, most of the teams with which we have worked have wanted to continue having access to the consulting team in one way or another. Perhaps they reduce the frequency of the teleconference meetings to every other month or even less. And certainly they take ever greater leadership in problem-solving and deciding on the next short-term goals for a learner. But they like having the option to call on the DMP consultant. They also like having the structure of the wiki for team communication. This is especially true when some members of the team (e.g., the related services personnel) are not housed at the school where the learner is located. Once the team has learned to communicate through the wiki (as opposed to, for example, email), many teams learn to prefer this whole-team way of communicating with one another. They also like sharing videos, especially with parents, about specific behaviors they see in the learner.

In short, the hallmark of a successful DMP consultation is not necessarily the “completion” of the process, in the sense that the team “signs off” the wiki and disengages from the TA provider. The successful DMP teams are those who take ownership of the process and who continue using it as a tool to support their learner with DB.

### *Accommodating Transitions*

Nevertheless, DMP teams may come to an end. Remember that the DMP is focused around a specific learner with DB. If, for example, the learner moves from preschool to kindergarten in a new building and with a new school team, the DMP process would need to begin anew, if possible, in the new setting. Since deaf-blindness is such a low-incidence disability, the “old team” may not have a learner that they need to serve through the DMP. If the “old” DMP team is anticipating or already has a new learner in the classroom which they believe is appropriate for the DMP process, as a Facilitator you can help the team work with the family to create a new wiki and start the process with that new learner. Hopefully, since most participants will have already been through the initial process, it will be easier with a second (or even a third) learner. In particular, you can expect key local team members to take more leadership initiative in setting up the team, establishing the ground rules, creating a wiki for the individual learner, and so forth. However, our point here is that this is a *new* DMP serving a different learner, and not a continuation of the old team.

For the learner who transitions to a new setting, the DMP can be invaluable in preparing the receiving team to begin working with the learner with a wealth of information. If the new team is receptive to the idea, they may agree to take over the learner's wiki and participate with you as a Facilitator. In more than one case, this transition has occurred with the urging of the parents, so that they may be assured that their child does not lose gains made with the previous team. In one case, the “hand off” of the DMP was made by a preschool teacher who took leadership (with permission from the parent) to share the wiki for a learner with the receiving team and then to invite them to a monthly video conference. The receiving team agreed to participate and took over the wiki from the preschool team. This relatively seamless transition provided support both to the learner and to the family. Needless to say, if the receiving team is not familiar with you or the DMP process, or if they perceive the parent's urging as a lack of confidence in them, you will need to employ your trust-building skills to convince the new team of the advantages of participation.

### *In conclusion . . .*

We recognize that a DMP consulting team cannot keep acquiring new teams ad infinitum – there are, of course, only so many local teams that can be accommodated at any one time. But we do believe that with the natural growth and empowerment of the team, and with transitions of the learner, it is possible to maintain a more intensive relationship with new teams while *at the same time*, empowering and transferring leadership to more experienced teams. In some larger school districts that serve a larger number of learners with deaf-blindness, it is possible to provide support and training for local leadership to take most if not all of the responsibility of the DMP. Even with local team use, however, school teams and parents continue to appreciate the ability to communicate and learn together, in an online community. We hope this Facilitator's Guide enables your teams to have this kind of positive experience.



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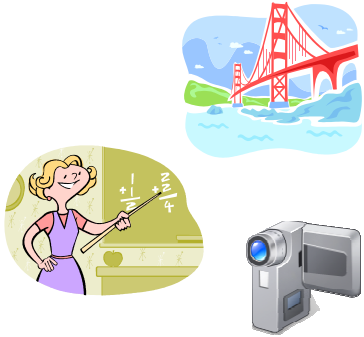


## **APPENDIX**

### **Handouts**

1. Suggested brochure for DMP
2. School Characteristics Checklist
3. Administrator Agreement Form
4. Parent consent
5. DMP Team Expectations Checklist
6. Technology Quick Start Guide
7. MAPS Process
8. Person-Centered Observation Completion Checklist
9. Suggested Action Plan Form
10. Instructions for Accessing and Using the DMP

A bridge to better  
teaching: **mentorship**  
via distance  
technologies.



Our team of consultants is offering technical assistance via distance technologies to select teams working with complex children who have multiple disabilities, including vision loss and/or Deaf-Blindness. This unique approach will afford teachers and service providers the opportunity to increase their competency and implement promising practices with the support of experienced, trained professionals. Your district will be one of the first teams in Kansas to receive this intensive assistance using new and exciting technologies.

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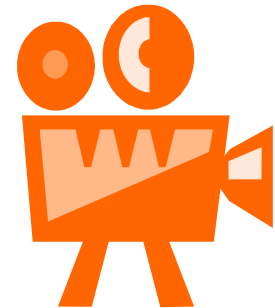
KSSB  
NCDB  
KS DB Project

**Contact:**

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National Consortium on Deaf-Blindness  
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KSSB  
NCDB  
KS DB Project

**Kansas  
Distance  
Mentorship  
Project**



Bringing expertise closer  
to the classroom via  
technology.

## Using technology to help teachers working with 'complex' children.

- Even the best teachers are often unprepared to instruct children who are 'complex'. Children with multiple disabilities, especially sensory loss, present unique challenges for instructors.



Interactive videoconferencing software is used to connect participants.

- In these situations, it is critical that teachers have access to experienced practitioners who can help them develop an educational program that considers the child's unique needs.
- Traditionally this has meant waiting long periods for a consultant to visit the school. New technologies, however, allow us to bridge this gap and deliver promising and evidence-based practices in a timely and effective manner.
- Research has shown that interactive videoconferencing can increase the likelihood that knowledge transfers to the settings in which it will be relevant. It creates new learning opportunities and increases communication between consultants and teachers.\*

ERS.\* (Interactive Videoconferencing as a Medium for Special Education: Knowledge Acquisition in PreService Teacher Education; Angie Dal Bello, Earle Knowlton, Jerry Chaffin; Intervention in School and Clinic, Vol43, No.1, Sept. 2007)

### Overview:

- Expert consultation is provided for approximately 12 weeks to select teams working with students with multiple disabilities, including sensory loss (Visually Impaired, Hearing Impaired, Deaf-Blind). Students must be between the ages of birth-21.
- Consultation is provided by specialists from the sponsoring agencies, with occasional assistance from external consultants who have expertise in the field.
- Teams working with school-age children must include the child's primary teacher, parent or guardian, a paraprofessional/intervener, and an administrator. Each team will appoint a contact person for purposes of communication and consistency.
- The Distance Mentorship project typically begins with an on-site visit to meet the team, establish expectations, ensure the requisite technology equipment and skills exist, and gather signatures.



Video capture devices help track progress.

- Teams will agree to collect video of the child in his/her customary environments and share this with the consultants. Outcomes are selected in advance and measured over time.
- A wiki site will serve as an electronic repository for the project, hosting video samples, action plans, best-practice resources, and a discussion forum.

### Benefits

- Teachers and teams of professionals will receive timely assistance and immediate feedback on suggested best-practice interventions.
- Interactivity between the consultants and providers is markedly increased.
- Children will receive the benefit of 'best practice' interventions, enhanced via data collection and review.

### Costs:

- Fees will be negotiated with Local Education Agencies and KSSB, based on the total number of contact hours

### Timeline:

- Consultations will begin in the fall of 2009 and will last approximately 12 weeks.

### Contact:

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4330 Shawnee Mission Pkwy, Ste. 108  
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E-mail: jon.harding@hknc.org



## School/Agency Characteristics Form

### School and District Information

1. Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Job title: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Your School: \_\_\_\_\_
4. How many students in your school?
  - a. Less than 250
  - b. 250-500
  - c. over 500
5. What is your district? \_\_\_\_\_
6. How many schools in your district?  
Elementary \_\_\_\_\_  
Middle School \_\_\_\_\_  
High School \_\_\_\_\_
7. How many students on IEP plans do you serve in your building? \_\_\_\_\_
8. How many children are in the child's classroom? \_\_\_\_\_
9. What staff is available to work with the child?

### School Technology Readiness

10. What is the availability of IT support for your school? (Choose one)
  - a. Full time on-site support
  - b. Part-time on-site support
  - c. On-call district IT support
  - d. No IT support available
  - e. Don't know
  - f. Other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

11. What is the availability of laptop or desktop computers for teacher use? (Choose all that apply)

- a. All classrooms have at least one computer
- b. Most classrooms have at least one computer
- c. Some classrooms have at least one computer
- d. There are one or more designated computer rooms with at least one computer
- e. No computers are available for teacher use
- f. Don't know
- g. Other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

12. What is the availability of **mobile** computers (laptops OR desktops on a mobile cart) (Choose all that apply)

- a. All classrooms have at least one computer
- b. Most classrooms have at least one computer
- c. Some classrooms have at least one computer
- d. There are one or more designated computer rooms with at least one computer
- e. No computers are available for teacher use
- f. Don't know
- g. Other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

13. What type of computers are available? (Choose all that apply)

- a. PC (Microsoft Windows)
- b. Macintosh (Apple)
- c. Other (Explain): \_\_\_\_\_
- d. No computers available
- e. Don't know

14. Are tablet computers available?      Yes                      No

15. If yes, what is the availability of tablet computers? (Choose all that apply)

- a. All classrooms have at least one tablet
- b. Most classrooms have at least one tablet available to techers
- c. Some classrooms have at least one tablet available to teachers
- d. Teachers can checkout a tablet to use
- e. Don't know
- f. Other (Explain): \_\_\_\_\_

16. What type of tablets are available? (Choose all that apply)

- a. Android (Galaxy, Google, Xoom, etc.)
- b. iPad (Apple, iOS)
- c. Other (Explain): \_\_\_\_\_
- d. No tablets available
- e. There are tablets available, but I don't know what type

17. Is video conferencing available?      Yes                      No

18. If yes, what type of video conferencing system is available? (Choose all that apply)

- a. Polycom or similar dedicated video conferencing system
- b. Video conferencing available only through existing computers/laptops
- c. Video conferencing is not permitted in our school
- d. Other (Explain): \_\_\_\_\_

19. What type of internet access is available?
- a. Wired high-speed broadband
  - b. Wireless
  - c. No internet access
  - d. Don't know
  - e. Other (Explain): \_\_\_\_\_

20. Please briefly describe any other technology issues or limitations that might be relevant to teachers receiving live video support for the Distance Mentoring Program, or accessing materials via the internet (e.g., unique or particularly restrictive firewall)

**Other Considerations**

21. Is your school involved in due process or other litigation related to this student?      Yes      No

22. If yes, is the teacher involved in any of the legal proceedings with this student?      Yes      No

23. Is your school on an improvement plan?      Yes      No

24. Are you willing to work with/support this teacher/staff in their one time a month meetings with the Distance Mentoring Project?      Yes      No



## **Administrator Agreement Form**

LEA Team members will be expected to:

- ☐ Allocate time for LEA team members to participate in monthly distance mentorship meetings.
- ☐ Ensure that technology is accessible and functioning for mentorship meetings (may require contacting and asking for assistance from IT person in district).
- ☐ LEA team members will implement suggestions, identify areas of need, ask questions, and identify outcomes.
- ☐ Complete evaluations
- ☐ LEA team members will record and post videos of various team members participating in learning activities with the student on a weekly basis.
- ☐ LEA team members will check wiki weekly and participate in online discussion (ask questions and respond to posts) with DMP consultants

Occasionally some children present a behavior or condition that is complex or outside the area of experience of the DMP Mentors. If this occurs a professional with expertise may be contacted to provide consultation to the team. This consultation, if sought, will be at no expense to the school or family.

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

## **DISTANCE MENTORSHIP PROJECT**

### **Parent Consent Form**



Dear Parent,

Thank you for your interest in participating with our Distance Mentorship Project, which will provide your child, your child's school team, and yourself, with supports and services to help us all meet your child's needs. This form provides you with more information about what you can expect as we learn to work together using Distance Mentorship. We hope this information helps you decide whether you want to participate.

### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of Distance Mentorship is to provide a way for you and your child's school team to work together and to get the support of our Kansas Deaf-Blind Consultants through the use of technology. This will include:

*A secure website, called a "wiki" for posting documents, information, videos, and discussions about your child.* The advantages of the wiki are that everyone will be on the same page in looking at examples of your child's behavior and talking about strategies that work best. The DMP Consultants can look at the information and provide suggestions, ask questions, or otherwise provide feedback. This means your Consultant can be available much more often than would be possible with onsite visits.

*A regular monthly video conference among all the team members.* The telephone conference is a regular "check in" to talk about progress and decide next steps.

Your child's wiki will be on a password-protected, secure website. This means it is not available to the general public. While we do our best to make sure the site is secure, we cannot guarantee that it will always be protected from people who might accidentally find the site. While we think this potential risk is small and worth it, this is a consideration in your decision about whether to participate.

### **YOUR ROLE**

If you decide to agree to let us establish a wiki for your child and the team, we very much welcome your participation to whatever degree you want. You can participate in a variety of ways, including:

Checking in on the wiki site and viewing the questions and videos about your child that are posted by the school team.

Posting questions and providing feedback about your child based on what you know about him/her at home.

Posting videos of your child engaging in some behavior or achieving a goal, at home.

Participating on the monthly video conference call to discuss issues and ask questions

Please know that if you choose not to allow your child to participate in the DMP services, this will affect the other services you are already getting from the school or from the Kansas DB Project.

If you need more information about the DMP project, please feel free to contact your child's teacher, or, contact the DMP consultant at: \_\_\_\_\_.

Thank you for considering participation. We believe this will greatly enhance the ability of your child's school team to meet your child's needs.

Sincerely,

DMP Consultant  
[contact Information]

### **Distance Mentorship Project Study Acceptance Form**

***Yes!*** I read the consent form and want to participate in the ***Distance Mentorship Project Study***. I have read the description of the services you plan to provide and have answers to any questions. I also agree to allow my child to take part in this study as a research participant.

**Please PRINT all information clearly!**

\_\_\_\_\_  
*First Name*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Last Name*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Street Address*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Apt/Unit/Lot #*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*City*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*State*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Zip Code*

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_



## Expectation Checklist

Team members will be expected to:

- ☐ Identify the person who will be the main source of contact for the LEA team
- ☐ Identify LEA team members who will participate in monthly distance mentorship meetings
- ☐ Allocate time for monthly distance mentorship meetings
- ☐ Post agenda items and participate in discussion during monthly distance mentorship meetings.
- ☐ Ensure that technology is accessible and functioning for mentorship meetings (may require contacting and asking for assistance from IT person in district).
- ☐ Implement suggestions, identify areas of need, ask questions, and identify outcomes
- ☐ Complete evaluations
- ☐ Agree to record and post videos of various team members participating in learning activities with the student on a weekly basis.
- ☐ Agree to check wiki weekly and participate in online discussion (ask questions and respond to posts) with DMP consultants

\*\*Occasionally some children present a behavior or condition that is complex or outside the area of experience of the DMP Mentors. If this occurs a professional with expertise may be contacted to provide consultation to the team. This consultation, if sought, will be at no expense to the school or family.

Team Members/Roles	Name	Contact Information E-mail/Phone	Best Times/Preferred Mode to Contact
___ Parent/Guardian #1	_____	_____	_____
___ Parent/Guardian #2	_____	_____	_____

___ General Ed. Teacher	_____	_____	_____
___ Special Ed. Teacher	_____	_____	_____
___ Para-educator	_____	_____	_____
___ Speech Pathologist	_____	_____	_____
___ Occupational Therapist	_____	_____	_____
___ Family Support Specialist	_____	_____	_____
___ Medical Personnel	_____	_____	_____
___ Orientation and Mobility Spec.	_____	_____	_____
___ Interpreter	_____	_____	_____
___ Physical Therapist	_____	_____	_____
___ Other Therapist	_____	_____	_____
___ Case Manager	_____	_____	_____
___ Other	_____	_____	_____
___ Other	_____	_____	_____
___ Other	_____	_____	_____

## DMP Technology Quick Start

### Using the Wiki

**Purpose of the wiki:** A wiki is simply a website where designated visitors can add, remove, and edit certain content. We use the wiki as a space to share information related to your collaboration with the DMP team. This information includes:

- online discussions with the DMP team and/or other members of the school team about your work with your child
  - video demonstrations of strategies posted by the DMP team,
  - videos of members of the school team or family practicing strategies discussed with the DMP team,
  - notes from past meetings and information about upcoming meetings
- **General Layout**
    - **Homepage** – basic information, purpose, and team members
    - **Discussion Avenue** – discussion about general topics not specific to a video or the meeting notes
    - **Events** – this page is used to
      - Document scheduled meetings (primarily the monthly video conferences),
      - Document the location of the tablet
      - To add a new event, complete the events form that appears at after the list of events
      - Document the location of the tablet anytime its location changes for more than a day. The purpose of this is so the team is always able to know where the tablet is and who is responsible for it.
        - For example, check in would *not* need to be recorded if the family is using the tablet at home, and it goes to a school or center with the child for part of a day, and returns home the same day.
        - If you're unsure whether or not to check in the tablet, check it in.
        - To checkin, complete the events form as shown above. Please include the name of the person responsible for the tablet in the event name.

**Event Name**

Tablet Check-in - Jay Buzhardt \*

The event name. Example: Birthday party

**When**

This is a recurring event. ☐

From 4/8/2012 to 4/8/2012

Event starts at 12:00 AM to 12:00 AM All day ☒

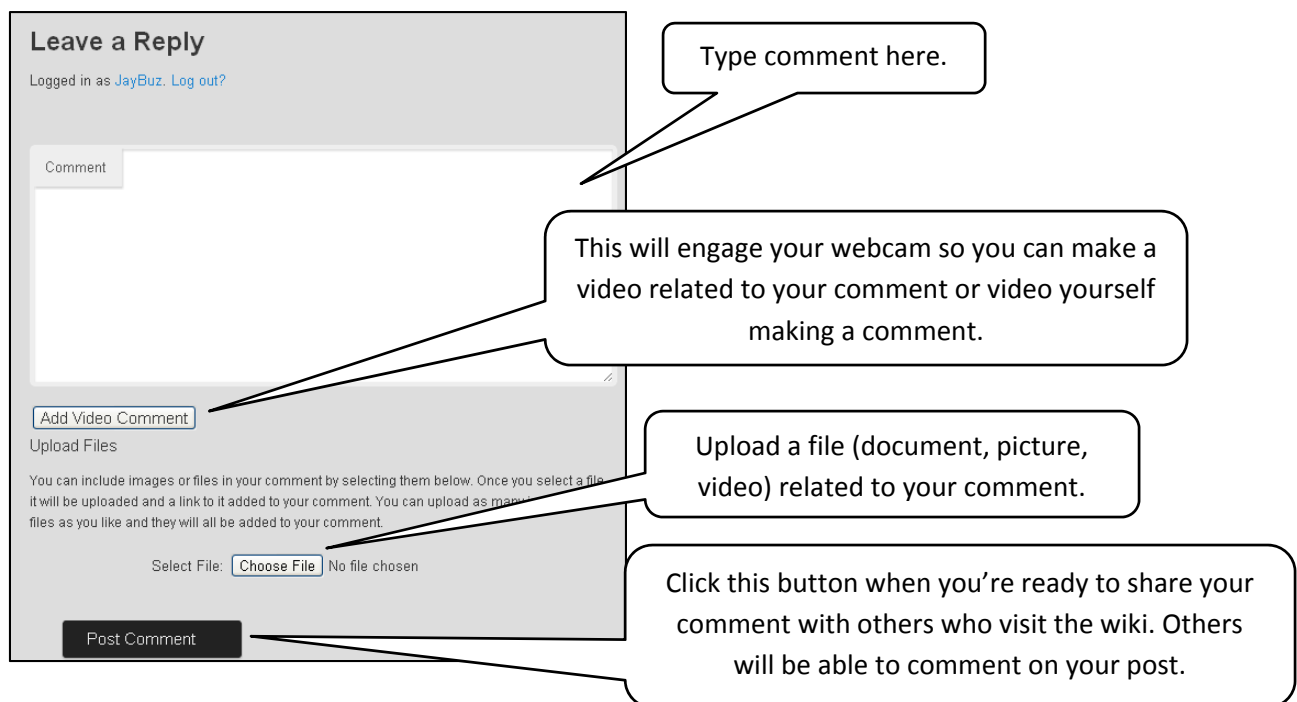
**Where**

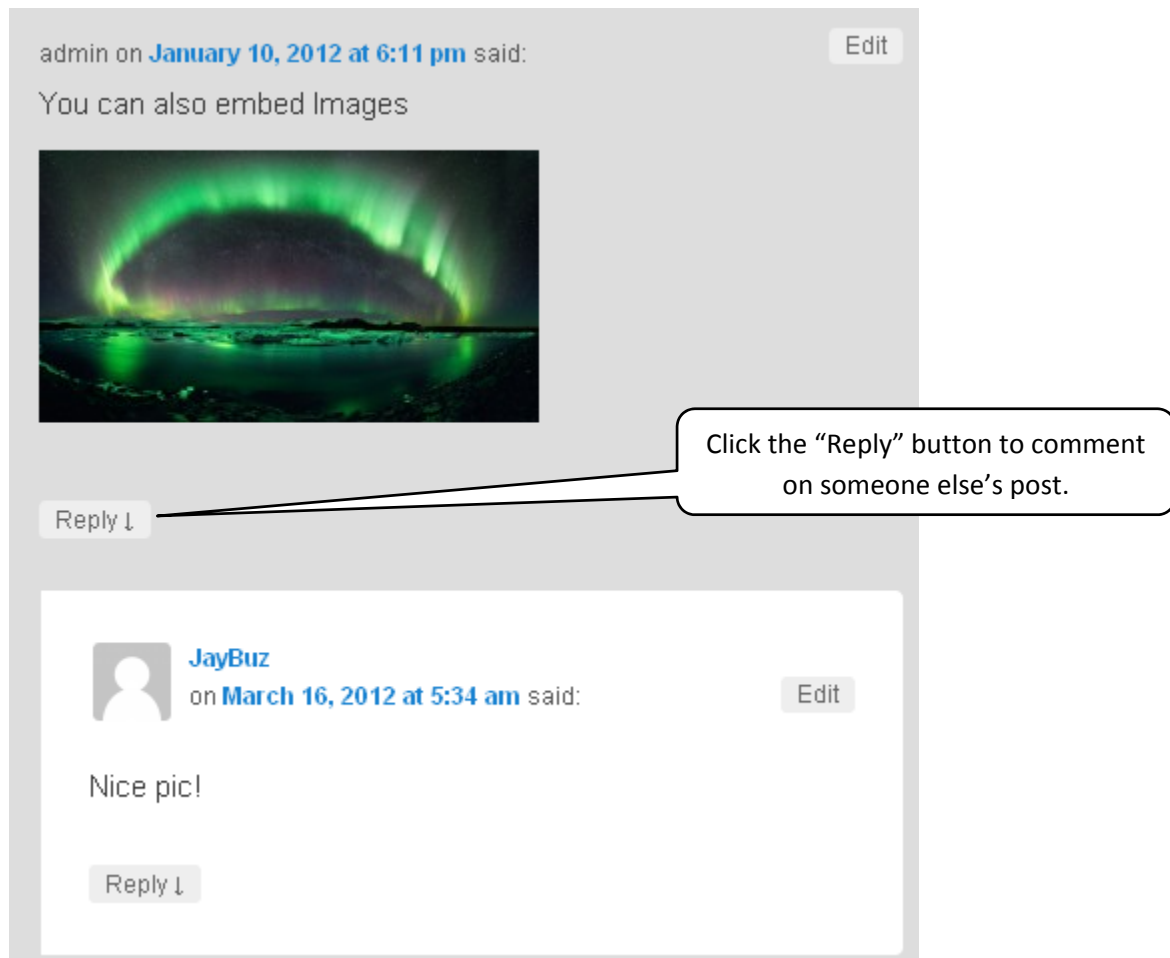
☐ This event does not have a physical location.

**LOCATION**

NAME: Juniper Gardens Children's Museum \*

- **Meeting Notes** – Notes from past meetings, comments about meetings
- **Videos** – video sharing and discussion
  - Progress videos - videos of the child's team practicing strategies discussed with the DMP team.
  - Challenge videos - videos that show examples of challenges that the child's team would like to address.
- **Adding and editing information**
  - Posting comments and replying to comments
    - On any page of the wiki, you may post a comment or reply to an existing comment using the “Leave a Reply” box (see Figure on next page)





- Videos
  - Adding videos (also see Using Tablet for adding videos recorded with the tablet)
    - Use the “Leave a Reply” dialogue described in the “Adding and Editing Information” section.
    - Upload the video using the “Choose a file” button
    - Include a comment about the video so others will know something about the content of the video before they open it.
    - Comment on a video by clicking the “Reply” link at the bottom left of the video or comment section

### Using the Tablet

**Purpose of the tablet:** For DMP mentoring, the tablet will primarily be used to facilitate video conferencing, creating videos for upload to the wiki, minor editing of videos, and accessing the DMP wiki.

- **Video Conferencing** – Use the tablet to engage in live video conferences with the DMP team. Some advantages of using the tablet instead of a computer for video conferencing include:
  - Allows the team to easily move the camera to the team member who is talking to the DMP team at the time.
  - You can toggle between the front- and rear-facing camera during conferencing.
  - The tablet can be taken into another room (e.g., classroom) during video conferencing
  - The use of a 4G cellular connection instead of wifi avoids problems often encountered with district networks

To use the tablet for video conferencing, we recommend setting it up as indicated in the pictures below.



- Ensure that the rear camera shows through the hole in the back of the case.
  - Fully charge the tablet before video conferencing because it is difficult to keep the power adapter connected to the device when it is in a vertical position. However, if you do not plan to use the rear camera, you may insert the tablet into the case upside down so that the adapter can plug into the top.
- **Starting a video conference**
    - The DMP team will always host the video conference and will email you a “Meeting URL”
    - Tap the “Connect” icon on the tablet
    - Enter the meeting URL into the field at the top. It is recommended to copy this URL from the email and paste it into the field
    - Tap the “Next” button and follow the instructions
    - Additional help documentation is available by tapping the “?” icon at the bottom right of the screen

- **Recording videos with the tablet**

- **Caution: The tablet must be at least 10% charged in order for the camera to work, even if the tablet is plugged in.**

- To record a video, click the camera icon on the table's home screen:

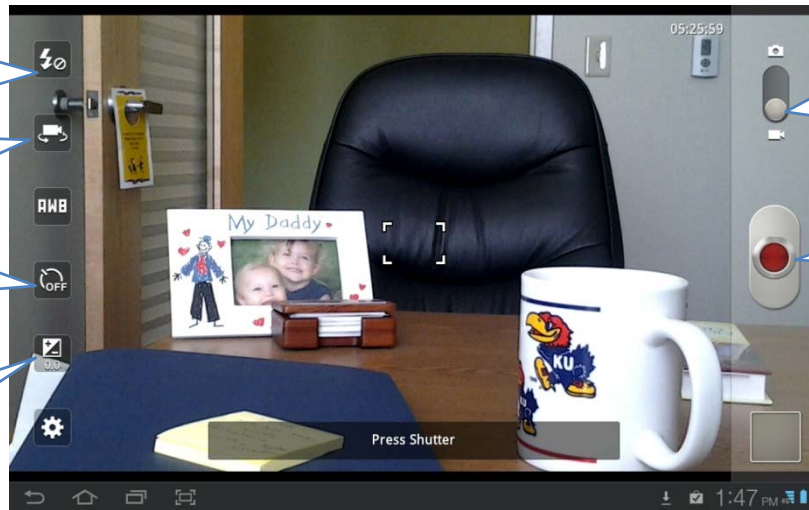


Turn on/off flash  
(constant light for  
video in dark areas.

Toggle between  
front & rear camera

Set the camera  
timer

Brighten or dim the  
recorded image.



Slide the toggle  
switch down for  
video recording

Tap to start or stop  
a recording

- Tap the screen to focus on a specific area
- Try to limit the videos you post to the wiki to about 3-4 minutes
- You can use the "Movie Studio" application to edit videos on the tablet, including embedding text descriptions and labels directly into videos.

- **Uploading video to the wiki using the tablet**

- Login to the wiki at [www.distancementorship.org](http://www.distancementorship.org)
- Go to the appropriate video page
  - There are two separate video pages, one for videos that show challenges that the team is experiencing (Challenge Videos), and another for videos of the team practicing or demonstrating techniques recommended by the DMP team (Progress Videos).
- Tap/Click the "Choose file" link in the "Leave a Reply" section

*Continued on next page...*

The screenshot shows a 'Leave a Reply' form. At the top, it says 'Logged in as JayBuz. Log out?'. Below this is a large text area for a comment. Under the text area is a button labeled 'Add Video Comment'. Below that is a section titled 'Upload Files' with instructions: 'You can include images or files in your comment by selecting them below. Once you select a file, it will be uploaded and a link to it added to your comment. You can upload as many images or files as you like and they will all be added to your comment.' Below the instructions is a 'Select File:' label followed by a 'Choose File' button and the text 'No file chosen'. At the bottom of the form is a 'Post Comment' button. Two callout boxes with arrows point to the interface: one points to the 'Choose File' button with the text 'Tap/click to add a video.', and the other points to the 'Post Comment' button with the text 'Tap/click to post video after it has uploaded'.

Leave a Reply

Logged in as JayBuz. Log out?

Comment

Add Video Comment

Upload Files

You can include images or files in your comment by selecting them below. Once you select a file, it will be uploaded and a link to it added to your comment. You can upload as many images or files as you like and they will all be added to your comment.

Select File: Choose File No file chosen

Post Comment

Tap/click to add a video.

Tap/click to post video after it has uploaded

- Tap the “Gallery” option
  - Choose the file to upload, likely from the “Camera” folder
  - Add a comment to describe the video, including any specific points on the video you would like the DMP Mentoring team to observe
  - Tap “Post Comment”



## PERSON CENTERED PLANNING (PCP) OBSERVATION FORM

- 1) Which PCP tool was used? \_\_\_\_\_ MAPS \_\_\_\_\_ PATH
- 2) How many people attended the PCP meeting? \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) Did all members of the team provide ideas and information for the plan?  
\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No If no, how many people contributed \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) Were people provided information on the PCP process prior to the meeting?  
\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No
- 5) Were all of the process steps completed during the meeting?  
\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

Please check the steps that were completed:

### MAPS:

- |                     |       |
|---------------------|-------|
| 1) History          | _____ |
| 2) Who is           | _____ |
| 3) Dream            | _____ |
| 4) Nightmare        | _____ |
| 5) Strengths/ Gifts | _____ |
| 6) Areas of Need    | _____ |
| 7) Ideal Day        | _____ |

### PATH:

- |                     |       |
|---------------------|-------|
| 1) Dream            | _____ |
| 2) Goals            | _____ |
| 3) Now              | _____ |
| 4) Enroll           | _____ |
| 5) Getting Stronger | _____ |
| 6) 3 Months         | _____ |
| 7) 1 Month          | _____ |
| 8) First Step       | _____ |

- 6) Was there discussion about how the action items need to be reflected on the IEP?  
\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No
- 7) Date of last IEP: \_\_\_\_\_

ACTION PLAN

Learner: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Team Members Involved in Action Planning: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Action Items: Task to be Completed/Strategy Implemented	Person Responsible	Start Date	Target Date	N I P F	Comments

Degree of Implementation Code:

N - Not Implemented0%

P - Partially Implemented51%- 99%

I - Initiated1%-50%

F - Fully Implemented100%

(Comments on Back)  
Page \_\_ of \_\_



## Instructions for the DMP Learning Management System

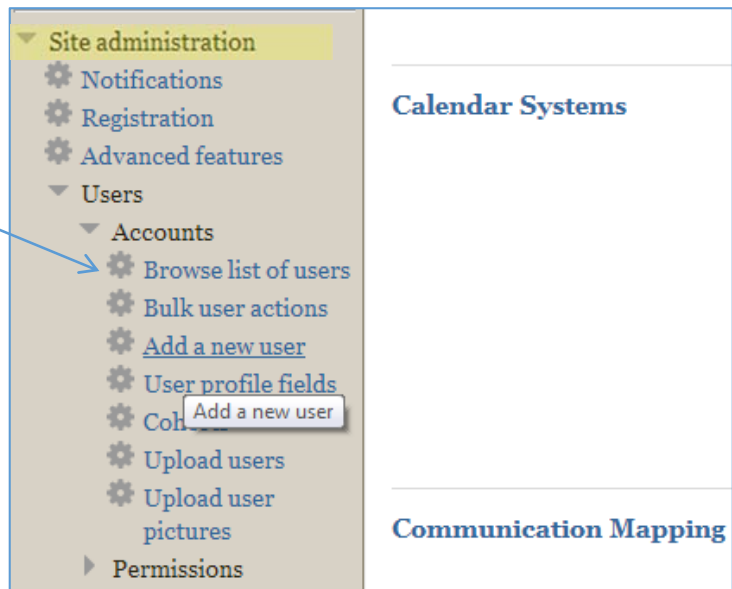
Moodle is the learning management system used to host the 12 DMP interactive modules.

To get started a DMP consultant will need to be assigned the role of instructor. Once you are set up as an instructor you will then be able to follow the directions below to set up access (user accounts) for school team members to will complete modules.

### **Setting up a new user**

#### **Set up new user**

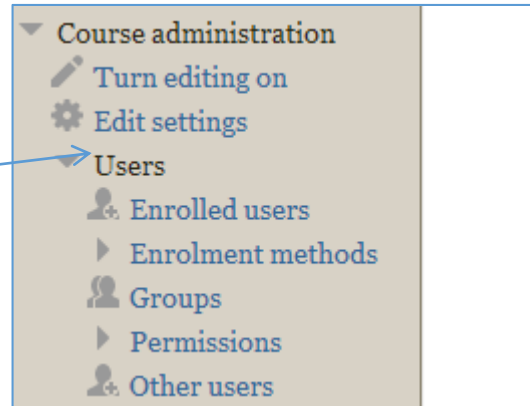
- *Step 1 Add user*
  - On the left navigation bar:
  - Click on “Site Administration”
  - Click “Users”
  - Click ”Accounts”
  - Click “Add a new user”
  - Fill in the required information (user name, password, first name, surname, email address, city, and country) then scroll to bottom and click “Create user”



- *Step 2 Enroll User in Courses/Modules*
  - Click on a course/module you want the user to have access to



- On the left navigation bar:
- Click on “Course Administration”
- Click “Users”
- Click “Enrolled Users”
- Top right of page click on “Enroll Users”
- Click “Enroll” by the name of each user you want to enroll in course/module
- When you are finished enrolling users click “Finish enrolling users”



the

Email template to send to new users with log in directions

Dear Ms. Nielsen,

Thank you for agreeing to test our DMP online modules about deaf blindness! You have access to all the modules however, we are in need of feedback and data on the **Gestures Modules**, the **Piaget and the Symbolization Continuum Module**, the **Introduction to Hearing Loss**, and the **Routines Module (listed in the order of need)**.

Below, you'll see information about this project and how we protect your privacy. Near the bottom of the email is the link to start trying out the modules, your username and password, and contact information in case you have problems.

### Project Information:

Thank you for choosing to work with the Kansas Deaf-Blind Project and our collaborating partners at the University of Kansas to test our online modules about deaf-blindness and strategies that educators can use when working with children with deaf-blindness. Your participation in this research is strictly voluntary. If you choose to participate, you may withdraw at any time. If you do not participate, it will not affect your relationship with KU, the Kansas Deaf-Blind Project, or the Distance Mentorship Program if you are receiving this support.

Your feedback is valuable to us and will help us improve these learning modules for use by educators throughout the country. The only perceived risk of participating is in the event that your responses to questions are compromised if someone gains unauthorized access to the KU servers. However, all data are stored securely by KU, and this is an unlikely event.

If you choose to participate, please click the link below and use the provided username and password to login to the system. Logging in indicates your willingness to participate and that you are 18 years of age or older. We will ask that you 1) complete a brief online demographic survey, 2) complete at least one module which includes a multiple choice pre- and posttest over the module content, and 3) answer 10 items about your satisfaction with the module. Each module that you complete will take about one hour.

### Instructions:

1. Go to the link below and login with the provided username and password

2. Complete the Demographic Survey
3. Choose at least one module you would like to complete
  - Click the module
  - Complete the pretest
  - Complete the tutorial
  - Complete the posttest, which includes satisfaction questions

Go to <http://training.distancementorship.org/>

Username: \_\_\_\_\_

Password: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Questions?**

If you have any problems accessing or completing a module please send your request for help to:

Nick Tallmon [ntallmon@ku.edu](mailto:ntallmon@ku.edu)

Jay Buzhardt [jaybuz@ku.edu](mailto:jaybuz@ku.edu)

Best Regards,

\_\_\_\_\_