



## **FAMILIES TO THE MAX:** Pennsylvania Statewide Family Network

**Our Mission:** Leading change for children with diverse needs by maximizing opportunities in the home, classroom, and community.

**Our Vision:** Empower students, families, and communities to believe that all children can reach their maximum potential.

### **Presumption of Competence**

**We presume that every child:**

- Has unique thoughts, feelings, and ideas to share
- Interprets and communicates language in many different ways and for children whose first language is other than English, communication may be even more diverse
- Has the ability to learn challenging academic content and skills
- Belongs and contributes to their class, school, family, and community

**We believe every child deserves to be:**

- Respected, recognized, and treated with dignity
- Regarded with the presumption of competence
- Listened to and provided with structures and supports, if needed, to be understood
- Taught the grade-level, academic content as same-age peers, with high expectations for learning
- Valued as a person
- Prepared for a life beyond school



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## F2MAX Maximizing Principles

- ❖ The **FAMILIES TO THE MAX** Network is focused on maximizing learning for all students, regardless of educational placement.
- ❖ We believe that it is important to hold high expectations for children with diverse needs and to teach in ways that maximize access to grade level academic content.
- ❖ F2MAX Network and Coalition members are in agreement about *how* children should be educated, although we may hold varying perspectives about *where* children are best educated.
- ❖ We acknowledge that since students are educated in a variety of settings, it is critical that high-quality, accessible, academic instructional materials are available to students across all educational placements.
- ❖ We believe that it is important for families to understand that many factors affect the degree to which all students, including those with diverse needs, are supported to access the general education curriculum.

## Optimal Practices

We have identified six key areas of educational practice that must be considered when identifying strengths and needs for improvement that are focused on maximizing access and learning for diverse learners:

- 1. **Leadership** – District and school leaders work together with families and teachers to make changes that lead to increased access and learning of the grade-level, general education curriculum for **all** students.
- 2. **Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment** – Instruction is delivered in multiple ways so that **all** students, including those with diverse needs, learn grade-level academic content aligned to the general education curriculum.
- 3. **Least Restrictive Environment** – When IEP teams utilize a variety of supplementary aids and services (learning tools and support), students with diverse needs have access to grade-level general education curriculum in the least restrictive environment.
- 4. **Individualized Student Supports** – Specially designed instruction, related services and supplementary aids and services are provided in ways that ensure that each student is learning academic content aligned to the general education curriculum.
- 5. **Family and Community Involvement** – Families and community agencies work together as partners with schools to support meaningful participation and learning of grade-level general education curriculum for students with diverse needs.
- 6. **Collaboration and Problem Solving** – A school culture that values educators and families planning together and solving problems related to access to grade-level general education curriculum for students with diverse needs.