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Collaboration to Empower Every Learner

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BACKGROUND

The vision of Empower the Learner is that “Each child is unique and needs to be understood, valued and empowered to.....achieve agency, self-advocate for their learning and realize their hopes and dreams.” To support this, ETL has created a tool to help students recognize their strengths and learning challenges and express those to the educational team. The Maine Parent Federation and the Autism Society, with funding through the Maine Developmental Disabilities Council, joined with ETL to modify the program to make it accessible to children who are impacted more significantly by their disability. The goal is to not only empower ALL students but to promote and encourage reasonably higher expectations for children.

PARTNERS

Maine Parent Federation (MPF)

A private non-profit organization that provides information, training, support and referrals to parents of children with disabilities. One key mission of MPF is “The right for every individual to have their opinions and feelings valued, respected and listened to as an equal voice in our society, regardless of ability or disabilities.”

The Autism Society of Maine (ASM)

A non-profit organization whose mission is to promote lifelong access and opportunity for all individuals on the Autism spectrum to become participating members of their communities.

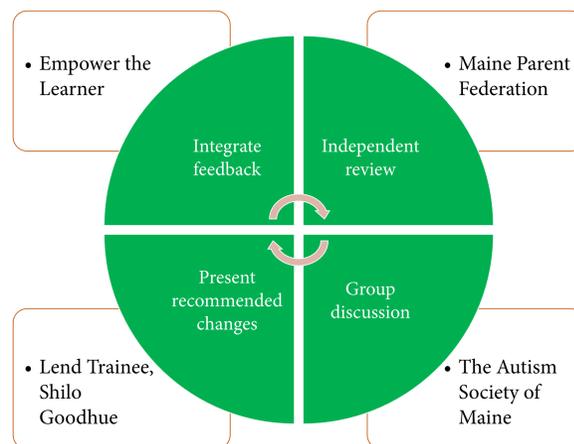
Empower the Learner (ETL)

Maine and New Hampshire are the home states of The Empower the Learner program creators. The trio have decades of experience and expertise in education, coaching and parenting a child with a disability.

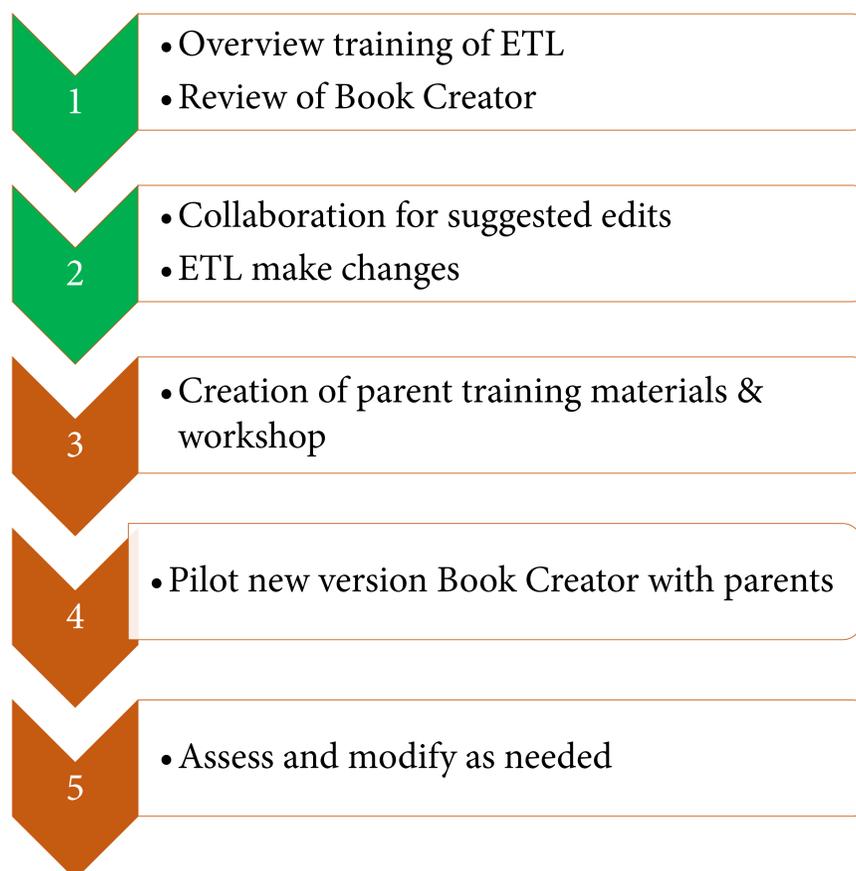


Step 2: Collaboration

Modifications to the ETL Profile through Book Creator



Empower the Learner – Maine Collaborative Project



RESULTS & NEXT STEPS

This multi-phase project continues. Phase 2 brought together professionals with different perspectives and the same goal- to create a product that is more accessible to those impacted by intellectual and developmental disability. Through independent review, team collaboration and negotiations, the ETL Book Creator was edited for:

language, content, accessibility and length

It is being reformatted to be used by parents of children who are more significantly impacted by their disability.

MATERNAL CHILD HEALTH LEADERSHIP SKILLS:

Self: understand value of partnering with family-community organizations, evaluate evidence-based programs, interact with others to solve problems.

Others: share ideas in discussions, listen attentively, tailor information to intended audience, apply strategies of effective negotiation, use consensus building, demonstrate family-centered philosophical constructs, establish relationships with family led organizations, give and receive constructive feedback.

Wider community: implement accommodations to increase accessibility, manage a project, use implementation science, build coalitions.

REFERENCES

- <https://www.mpf.org/programs>
- <https://www.asmonline.org>
- <https://empowerthelerner.com/home-accessibility>
- <https://mchb.hrsa.gov/training/leadership-00.asp>