Administrators as Allies in Improving AT Services: Part 2!

How We're Increasing Family, School Team, and Administrative AAC/AT Involvement

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HELLO!

Maggie Judson, M.S, CCC-SLP, ATP

AAC Facilitator

Belleville Area Special Services Cooperative (BASSC)

Financial Disclosure: Salary from employment,

Stipend from AbleNet for presenting

Non-Financial Disclosure: ASHA $+$ SIG 12, RESNA, USAAC

HELLO!

Jeanna Antrim, M.S., CCC-SLP

AAC Facilitator

Belleville Area Special Services Cooperative (BASSC)

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WHAT WE WILL TALK ABOUT TODAY

AGENDA

- Capacity Building
  - Administration
    - What we're doing & why
  - Families
    - What we're doing & why
  - School Teams
    - What we're doing & why

- Take Away & Next Steps

- Questions

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Analyze current system and identify one idea of a capacity building strategy to implement in the school setting.

Identify one resource to help guide an AAC/AT capacity building plan.

Discuss three ways to build capacity around AAC/AT for school teams.

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WHO WE ARE

- Belleville Area Special Services Cooperative (BASSC) AT Department

- 23 member districts
  - About 60 schools
  - 29,500 total students
  - 5,474 students with IEPs
  - 41 classrooms within the BASSC program

- Responsible for providing AT consultations, evaluations, direct therapy, equipment maintenance, lending library, and trainings

What is your roll?

SLP

ATP

Parent

Administrator

Teacher

OT/PT

Consumer of AT

Other

CAPACITY BUILDING

What Is Capacity Building?

What Does "Capacity Building" Mean?

- Developing sustainable AT services

- Building administrative support

- Providing multiple types of professional development

- Building on-demand resources

- Reaching out to other stakeholders

Nate Network
(Contributed by: Denise DeCoste, MA, and Gayl Bowser, OR)

"

AT used only in isolation is ineffective. Real use in meaningful activities is the only way that AT can increase or improve a child's function.

Gayl Bowser & Penny R. Reed, 2018

CAPACITY BUILDING:
Shift from Expert to Capacity Builder

- **Started with self-reflection/evaluation**

- **Went to the experts!**

- **Thought through how to work smarter, not harder**

- **Came up with a plan!**

Admin

Families

School Teams

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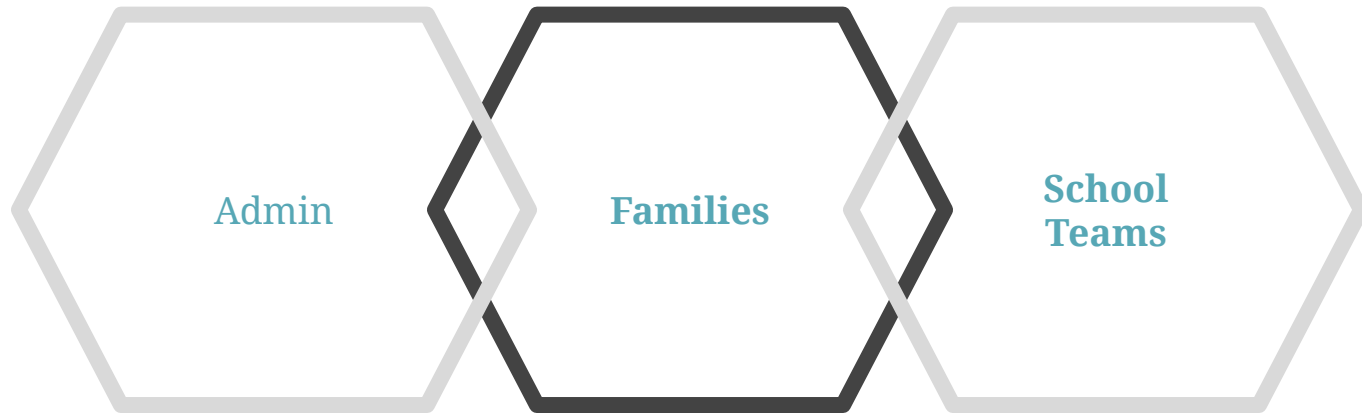
ADMINISTRATION

How We're Increasing Administrative Involvement

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As a leader of leaders, the administrator has a powerful effect on the performance of the staff

Ash & Persall, 2007

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Administration Capacity Building

Done That...

- Updates on what AT/AAC trainings are being offered
- Occasional discussions around AT for specific students

But...

- We were really not addressing this at all!

Administration Capacity Building

Now Doing

- Increasing Admin AT Knowledge
- AT Focus In Interviews
- AT Questions in Staff Evaluations
- Creating a Culture of AT Participation

Administration Capacity Building

Increasing Administrators AT Knowledge

- Personally invite admin to professional development opportunities

- Monthly AT Department meetings
  - Creating opportunities for our admin to be engaged
  - Celebrating the wins!

Why?

As AT Leaders for our organization, it is our responsibility to support admin in developing their AT vision

If admin doesn't know what they don't know, they won't know!

Administration Capacity Building

AT Focus in Interviews

- Discuss with admin incorporating specific AT questions in interviews
- Review hiring practices to determine where AT fits into job announcements, job descriptions, and interview questions

Why?

"Only administrators have the assigned responsibility to recruit staff members who are qualified to provide AT services"

Bowser & Reed, 2018

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Administration Capacity Building

AT Questions on Evaluation

- Discuss with admin including AT focus during staff evaluations
- Review forms used during staff evaluations to see where AT might fit in
- Keep asking!

Why?

"When administrators include AT in their staff evaluation, educators see it as important."

Bowser & Reed, 2018

Administration Capacity Building

Culture of AT Participation

- Discuss with admin their role in affecting perception of AT importance

- Keep bringing it up!

Why?

"Whether or not they are aware of it, administrators set the tone for how AT is valued by staff."

Bowser & Reed, 2018

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FAMILY

How We're Empowering Our AAC Families

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Family members… need knowledge not only in the operation and upkeep of the components of the AAC system but also in techniques to develop the functional use of the AAC system over time

Johnson et al., 2006

Family Capacity Building

Done That...

- AAC Carry-Over Practice
- Individual AAC Trainings
- Phone Calls, Emails, Notes Home
- Data Logging Visuals

But...

- Wanted to increase our support to families

Family Capacity Building

Now Doing

- AAC Family Support Network
- Family AACtivity Night (FAN) Training with make-and-takes

Family Capacity Building

AAC Family Support Network

- Contact List of AAC Families for Support & Questions

Why?

"It's your job (as professionals)... to help these families connect with other AAC families (online or in person)"

Nieder, 2017

Family Capacity Building

Family Capacity Building

FAN make-and-take

- Review Core/Fringe Terminology
- Demonstrate Communication Functions
- Practice Aided Language Input
- Videos
- Make-and-Take a material/activity

Why?

"If you are asking parents to do specific tasks, make sure they have easy access to the materials needed to do the task at home"

Gail Van Tatenhove, 2017

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Family AACtivity Night

Come be a FAN!

Time to Read

Time to Read

- Comments
  - *likes
  - *dislikes
  - *drawing attention

Words to Focus On:

like, don't, good, bad, different, that, happy, sad, it, I, look
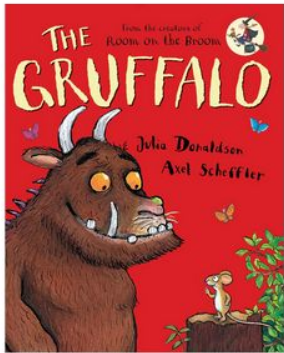
Modeling/Prompting

Dad modeled language using Josie's device every chance he could!

He

*Creating communication opportunities

*Modeling how to communicate with AAC

Levels of Prompting
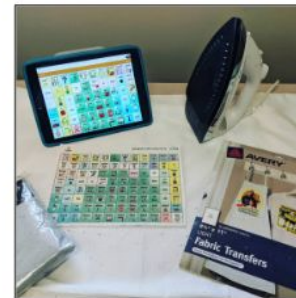- pausing
- repeating
- pointing to symbols

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Make and Take

THE GRUFFALO

From the creators of
Room on the Broom

by Julia Donaldson
Axel Scheffler

If you read just one book a day to your child, they will have been read 1825 books by their 5th birthday.

Every Day Counts.
Every Book Counts.

good	where	I

Make & Take

Family Blogs

1. Atypical Son
Kari Wagner-Peck is an advocate and activist and a mom. Her writing will inspire you and help you to frame issues you or your child may be experiencing.

2. Love That Max
Blogging about her son Max since 2008, currently Ellen is juggling pregnancy, Max's bar mitzvah, and a major reno. It's easy to understand how Ellen's blog has racked up all those awards.

3. Small but Kinda Mighty
Deanne Shoyer shares great ideas of how she is using AAC with her son along with other observations that will keep you coming back for more.

4. Squidalicious
Have you heard of The Thinking Person's Guide to Autism? This is co-author, Shannon Des Roches, blog and she blogs about AAC, her son Leo, and all things autism. Plus, more!

5. Uncommon Sense
Dana Nieder's writing is honest and sincere. She is able to clearly explain complex issues about AAC, about families and everything in-between with humor.

Back To School with AssistiveWare
5 fantastic family AAC blogs
family
AssistiveWare

SCHOOL TEAMS

How We're Increasing School Team Involvement

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There is a need for professional development about AT. Studies repeatedly show that both special education & general education teachers receive very little training about AT in their teacher preparation programs

Gayl Bowser & Penny R. Reed, 2018

School Team Capacity Building

Done That...

- AAC Representative Trainings
- Individual Team Trainings
- Active School Presence
- Emails to update about trainings and equipment

But...

- We felt we were not doing enough!
- Not enough ongoing trainings
- Not enough coaching support
- Not reaching our teams in the most effective way

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School Team Capacity Building

Now Doing

- MATerial Trainings
- POWER AAC Cohort
- MASTER PAL Cohort
- CHAT @ BASSC
- Classroom In AACtion
- Social Media

School Team Capacity Building

MATerial Training

Make-and-Take
- Visual Supports
- Communication
- Reading
- Writing

Hands-on material making

Why?

"To increase the likelihood that your participants will implement what you trained them to do… provide the tools they need to implement back in their own setting"

Reed, Kaplan, & Bowser, 2009

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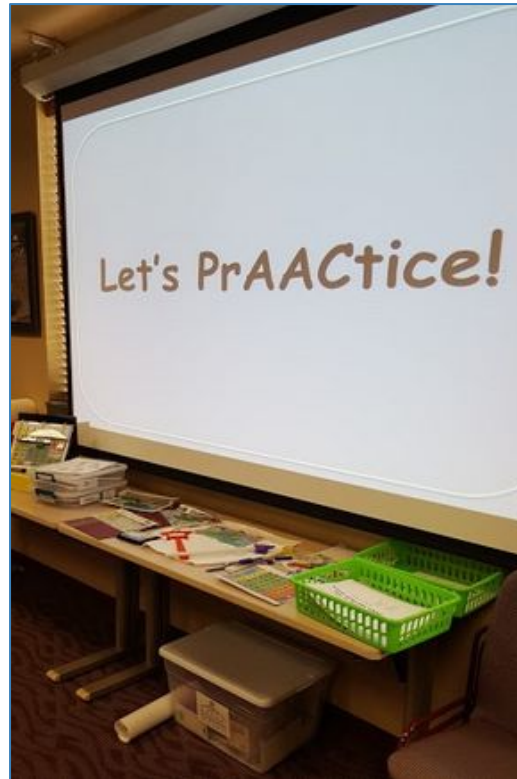
School Team Capacity Building

MATerials

- Trainings are designed to be appropriate for a wide range of grades/ages and multiple disciplines
- Once a quarter, 4 times throughout the school year
- Full and half day offerings

"The biggest takeaway was having the materials to take home and to know how to use them!"

Bar chart titled "School Team Capacity Building" with legend: yes (blue), somewhat (red), no (yellow).

- This training series helped me improve my AAC teaching practices: yes ≈ 97, somewhat ≈ 3
- This training series had a positive impact on my students' communication skills, through my learning: yes ≈ 95, somewhat ≈ 5
- I have used the materials I made at the trainings with my students: yes ≈ 100

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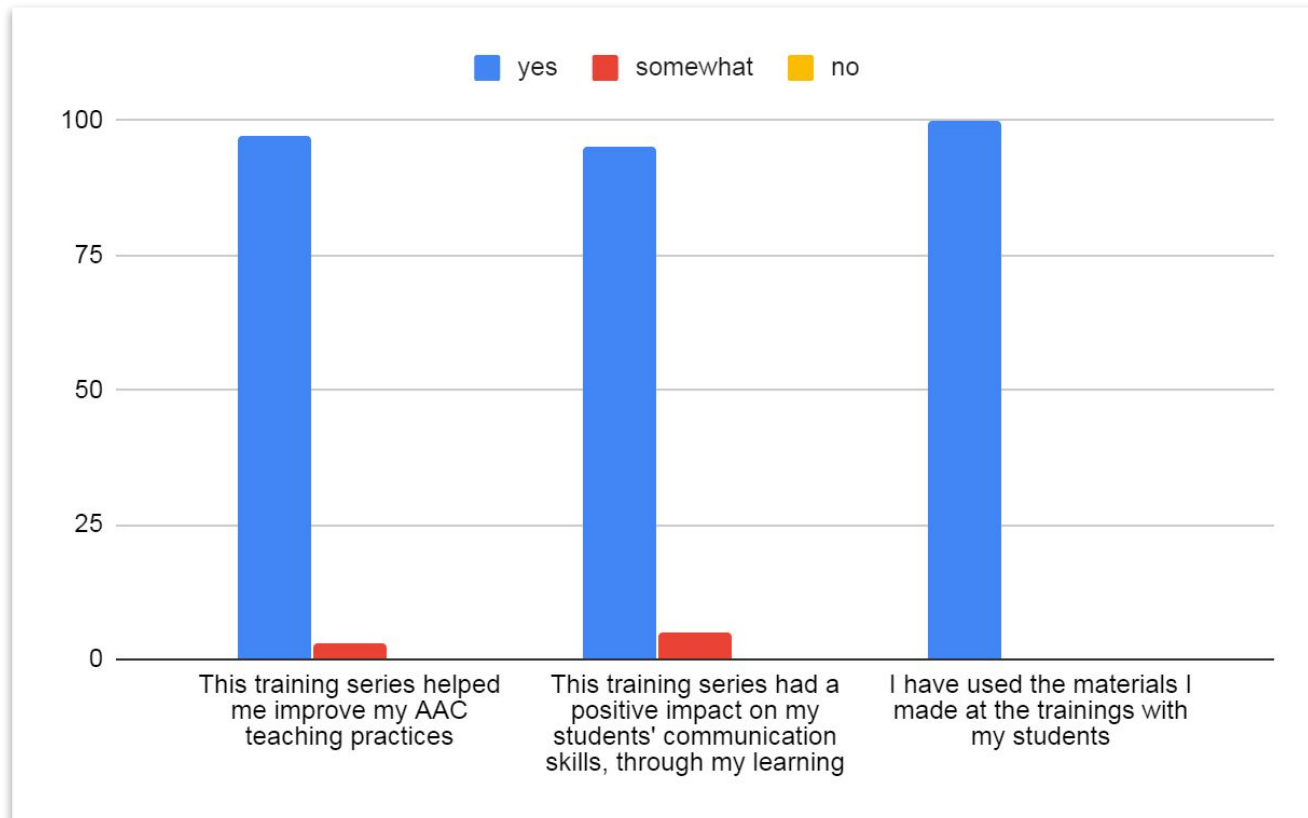
School Team Capacity Building

POWER AAC Cohort

- POWER AAC Modules (PaTTAN, Gail Van Tatenhove)
- Professional learning group
- Meet monthly throughout the school year

Why?

"Creating a professional learning community is one strategy to help teachers work together to manage their learning and plan constructive change"

Zimmerman, 2006

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Action Planning Worksheet
POWER AAC Cohort

Module(s):

Idea/Concept:

Intended Implementation:

What I will need:

Follow-Up: What I did, when I did it and how it worked:

Adapted from *The Assistive Technology Trainer's Handbook*

School Team Capacity Building

MASTER PAL Cohort

- MASTER PAL Training Series (Tabi Jones-Wohleber/PrAACtical AAC)
- Professional learning group
- Meet monthly throughout the school year

Why?

"Creating a professional learning community is one strategy to help teachers work together to manage their learning and plan constructive change"

Zimmerman, 2006

Module 1
Introduction to MASTER PAL

Reviewing Communication Basics

Original Creation: Tabitha Jones-Wohleber, M.S., CCC-SLP (2018)
Adapted by: Jeanna Antrim, M.S., CCC-SLP
Maggie Judson, M.S., CCC-SLP, ATP (2020)

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School Team Capacity Building

CHAT @ BASSC

- Specific to SLPs
- **C**ollaboration
- **H**ow-To's
- **A**rticle Reviews
- **T**ime-to-Network
- Work in AAC information and knowledge into each session

Why?

Increasing the number of "Finders" (a person who is familiar with the potential impact of AAC) is "one of the greatest challenges faced by the field of AAC

McNaughton, Light, Beukelman, Klein, Nider & Nazareth, 2019

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School Team Capacity Building

Classroom in AACtion

- Pre-K
- AAC across the classroom as a universal environmental support
- Coaching
- Team Support
- On-going

Why?

"Coaching is the primary support strategy that increases the trainee's ability to retain and apply new information to almost 90% of the content provided"

Joyce & Showers, 2002

School Team Capacity Building

Classroom in AACtion

- Structured around the 'TELL ME PROGRAM - AAC IN THE PRESCHOOL CLASSROOM' program by Dr. Carole Zangari and Lori Wise

- Focus on embedding AAC supports and core word learning throughout the school day

- Incorporate literacy activities - reading and writing - daily

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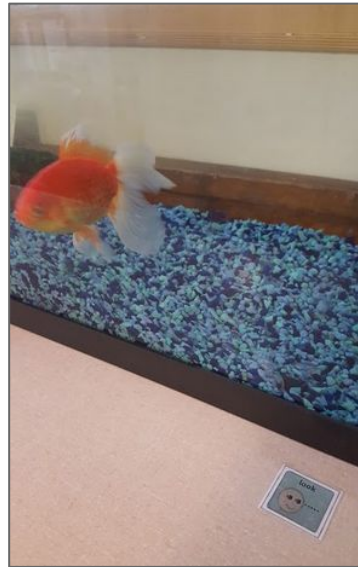
School Team Capacity Building

Social Media

- Instagram
- YouTube

Why?

Learning On-Demand and On-the-Go are becoming the norm.

We want to support our teams where they are showing up!

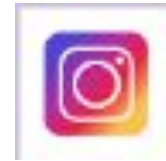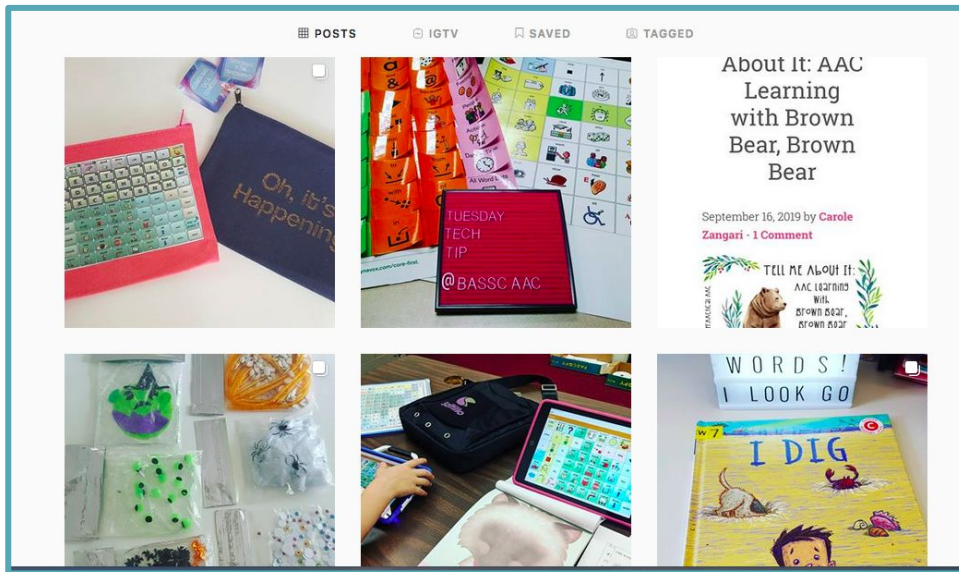"One sure way to build capacity is by building access to a variety of online resources. This provides on-demand support for school staff just when it is needed."

Gail Bowser, NATE Network (2019)

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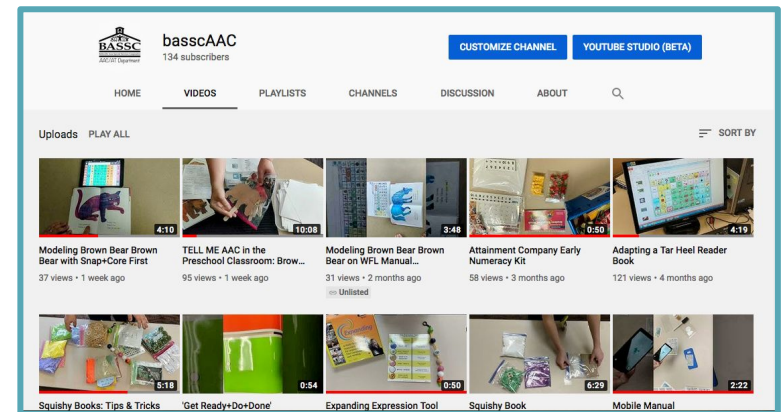
Looking Forward

Our Next Steps

- Keep at it!

- Adjust areas to distance platform

- Add in more virtual trainings via cohort style

- Add in more stories from people who use AAC, families of people who use AAC in trainings

"You can't information your way out of attitudes, but you may be able to story your way out of attitudes"

-Marlene Cummings, Addressing Barriers
to AAC Implementation: Lessons from the Field, ATiA 2020

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Look For The Little Wins!

Take Away

"Increasing skill levels of educators, and developing their view of the value of AT, requires training, practice, and coaching, as well as <u>time to mature</u>"

Ashton, Lee, & Vega, 2005

AT service delivery takes a team to make it work well
Keep at it - don't give up!

NEXT STEPS

Where To Start

- QIAT Self-Evaluation Matrices
- Nate Network
- Look to your state for guidance
- Think long-term, ie. a 1-, 2-, or 3- year plan
- Content from AAC Users and Families
- Staff Needs Assessment
- *Leading the Way to Excellence in AT Services*
- Assistive Technology Teams: Many Ways to Do it Well' by DeCoste, Reed & Kaplan
- 'The Assistive Technology Trainers' Handbook' by Reed, Kaplan & Bowser

Biggest Takeaway

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Any Questions?

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Thank You For Attending!

- **Email us!** basscaacat@gmail.com

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