Building Connection and Community in Middle and High School Settings

WHAT ARE PEER-MEDIATED INTERVENTIONS (PMI)?

Peer-Mediated Interventions involves engaging peers and students with developmental differences to provide mutual support in the classroom and purposefully build connections across various school settings.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF PMI?

PMI cultivates understanding and acceptance among all students, reducing bullying, feelings of anxiety, and isolation, as well as improving mental health and academic outcomes and aids in the formation of identity.

WHAT IS NOT PMI?

PMI **IS NOT** peers becoming 'mini-therapists' to adjust autistic students' behavior towards the neurotypical.

WHAT ARE SOME TYPES OF PMI?

Peer Supports (PS) in academic or special class settings involves 2-3 students working together to enhance engagement, collaboration, academic achievement, and connectedness.

Peer Networks (PN) in outside class settings involves 3-6 students interacting together to enhance engagement, connectedness, and have fun.

WHAT ARE THE STEPS FOR IMPLEMENTING PS AND/OR PN?

Peer Supports:

1. Identify goals for group
2. Identify and ask group members
3. Develop a peer support plan
4. Orient students to their role
5. Implement peer supports in classroom
6. Ongoing facilitating by staff

Peer Networks:

1. Identify goals for group
2. Identify and ask group members (if not in an established club already)
3. Orient students to the network
4. Meet weekly as a peer network
5. Encourage contact outside of the meetings

HOW DO I SUPPORT AND MONITOR PS AND/OR PN?

- **Believe** in the capacity of middle and high school students.
- Facilitate Peer Supports in class by re/arranging seating and supporting and/or touching base with group.
- Facilitate weekly Peer Network meetings by having conversation/activities, discussing/planning out-of-group interactions, and reminding of next meeting.