

INSTITUTE FOR COMMUNITY INCLUSION - UMASS BOSTON
EMPLOYMENT FIRST FLORIDA
SECONDARY TRANSITION OF YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES WITH PROJECT 10
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>> The coordinated set of services that is involved in the transition process. All the way to summary of performance when a student is exiting high school and into post secondary. So if you needed to do professional development for continuing education credits, you work with your school district or your immediate supervisor to give like an overview of the syllabus and then the criteria for the activity, the follow up activities. There is a lot of utility in this and the best thing about it -- while there is a lot of great things about it, but it's free and been vetted by the Florida Department of Ed. There is nothing proprietary we are offering here. It's all just research based practices and information. Our course called using data to increase graduation success and focuses on early warning systems. So that's a dropout prevention strategy to help ensure our schools are using supports and identifying students that are in need of some check-in and support. And so it's the area that you work in whether it's a school or another entity wants more information on what an early warning system looks like. We provide that through this on-line course.

And we have a course on graduation requirements and is that good example of how we try to help to bridge the gap between legislation and policies.

>> We had to make sure our training and technical assistance were

updated and develop more way to get this information down to the teacher level in the school building level.

Some other new resources that have come out, we have been really busy and so we actually just released a few brand-new resources hot off the press within the last few weeks. So I'm excited to share. First off our dropout prevention -- our newest dropout prevention training has been out for a few months but we just keep refining and it's really, really I think well done. The training is called it's time -- TIME, for dynamic dropout prevention and it's all about -- and student success so taking a more proactive approach and I find so much of this relevant to the general education population and administrators as well. So making this more than a special education or disability focused initiative and making it more about reaching all students and making sure all students are successful. The family guide the secondary transition planning for students with disabilities is a -- it's a guide that was around right when we started in 2009 but so much had changed. It has been in a draft form being updated for years. And so we finally finalized that and it's a pretty document that is about 78 pages so it's probably best accessed on-line. So it's free and available for download on our publications page of our website which is very close to our training page. And it says for families, but -- for family, but it is really good for anybody and if somebody is not really familiar with education, I know we talk -- we speak our own language sometimes and it's a great entry point and has glossary of recently used terms in secondary education and special education. So I think it's a great resource for anybody that's just not familiar with this field. I encourage you to check that out. The development guide really talked about -- it takes -- it could take a teacher or an administrator somebody at the school level through developing school day center pride with their student. It is aligned with standards and even aligned with some of the access standards as well. It brings in just everything from language art to math to science. And also really brings in a base curriculum for creativity and it gives students thinking outside of the box. And we have many, many school day throughout Florida -- enterprise development.

Community based instruction is what we got released. We had this guide developed back in the day, too about 2009, and we finally updated it. It was content standards and really thinks there will be an increase in use of community based instructions especially for students in 18 to 21-year-old programs. I will

talk more about that in a few minutes.

I talked about our on-line courses, but I want to draw your attention to the secondary transition road map for families. And we have two different versions. We have one focused on graduation. And then another focused on dropout prevention. And a Spanish version will be available soon and these are short eight to ten pages. Just go-to guide and again I know it says for families but it's really useful for anybody. And I know many teachers that we give them the information at IEP meetings.

And here is our publications section on our website. So all of those guides and brochures and info packets are available for free download on PDF. And I also wanted to mention to join our mailing list, we have these things called topical briefs and they are bi-monthly release. Sometimes they are monthly if they are special issues we need to get out. They are topical. Sometimes they are related to the time of the year like this fall we will be doing some things on bolstering attendance and highlighting national resources like attendance work. But we also do a lot around employment in the secondary education so you can see the topics that we have done recently on self-employment, school based enterprise and labor market trends. They will come right to your in box and one of the most useful parts of this is we include upcoming webinars and events that are transition focused. And transition is a huge topic because it includes really everything about life after high school. So everything you get the employment pieces and also the post secondary education and other opportunities, independent living, transportation, all of that. Highly recommend just subscribing. We won't spam you and give you a lot of junk.

John endorses the topical brief.

So if you have any questions, I would be glad to take them how to and we will do another poll, too. So. So will help us with the poll and wanting to know which resources do you think you will use after the webinar?

>> As a quick reminder as Sheila brings the poll up towards the top right corner of your screen, if you have any questions for Danny, we know she is presenting a lot of valuable information today and I know one person asked the question about if anybody on the call was from the Sarasota or manatee school district. If you are, please let us know on the questions and comments. Is

there something that you are look for in particular, Jennifer? Just looking for a networking connection? I will wait for Jennifer as she responds in the questions and comments pod here. Just looking for like minded friends. That's certainly a great goal. Hopefully if somebody is not on the call today, hopefully somebody who comes across the recorded -- the recording of this webinar will hear your questions.

Any other questions so far?

>> And I wanted to mention to Jennifer, you have a regional transition representative and we call them RTRs because we need more afternoons in indication, and your local RTR is Frederico, he goes by Freddie Valdez. And he is very connected in that area. So I would be sure to make that connection for you guys afterwards.

>> And one other question, Jill Thomas writes, Jacksonville school for autism is building their vocational program which includes supportive job training and job coaching. The majority of our students are non-verbal and not have the qualifications to take courses or complete trainings like the ones I'm seeing on the site. Are there any major resources for those individuals who may be more severely affected?

>> Yeah, that's a great question. We -- and I should have said this to start with. Covered all disability, all types of disabilities and levels of ability and so there are different resources. I could pull together, Jill-- and I could send them to John and Sheila to post afterwards that are for students with more severe disabilities. And you will see a few -- I don't know if you will be able to see them in my coming slides, but in post secondary education we -- we have a section for students with intellectual disabilities and cognitive disabilities. So there are -- patches within the website that are more disability specific but we cover the whole gamut of disabilities. I would be glad to follow up and provide more specific resources.

>> Thank you.

>> So it looks like with the poll I should be getting a lot more subscribers to our Listserv for the topical brief and I'm so excited about that. And I cut you off, John. I'm sorry. What were you going to say?

>> No I was actually going to just go to the poll as well. You're anticipating the next part.

>> Cool. All righty.

And so then moving on to post secondary education resources, we have two major sections of the website in that category. Planning for post secondary and also post secondary options. So here we cover things like apprenticeship, CTE vocational training, extended transition programs for students that prefer their diploma and are still -- defer their diploma and still receiving services after they would traditionally graduate. College and university programs, inclusive post secondary programs with students with more severe disability or intellectual disabilities. The theme here and it goes back to what I was talking about with Jill's question is that there isn't a one size fits all. Having students -- there are so many options out there. With secondary transition we need our goal is to make students aware and help them know what is out there and what their career path could be. And what post secondary options are out there.

One of our newer products is an extended transition list and it's actually one of your handouts. It's called extended transition in your handout and it's a three pager and it summarizes some of the options available for students with more significant disabilities that are eligible to receive services through 21 or 22, depending on district policy. And we have termed those extended transition programs. We might be familiar with other ways of referring to them like 18 to 22 programs or 18 to 21-year-old programs. And the list just gives a general overview of the types of models that are out there. And it can be used in one of two ways. Part of it is that parents or teachers could help locate what's available in their locations and in their district, but it can also give ideas for what could be developed within a district. Things like project search sites, CVBE programs, inclusive post secondary programs that are dually enrolled and that kind of thing. So I definitely want to alert you to that handout.

And then with identifying post secondary options -- I skipped ahead. This has just a lot more in terms of how to go about identifying what is out there and what type of path a student will be pursuing. This chart is super cool. It's aligned to the -- and this is all under the post secondary

education section of the website. But it really highlights, it follows the transition and features a list of resources broken down by the transition taxonomy area and all clickable, too. It's sort of like a map for this area in terms of helping students plan for post secondary. And I also wanted to mention inclusive post secondary education options in Florida. We have -- I think in Florida where we are very unique and very fortunate to have two -- and very -- well, not very different but two but different options for inclusive post secondary education. And by inclusive post secondary education, I mean opening up opportunities for students with intellectual disabilities who would not normally have had the opportunity to attend college. And so the first one to the left is the Florida consortium on inclusive higher ed. This is their website there. They are a federal grant from the -- what's called TPSID program. And this is the second iteration of TPSID funding we won in Florida. We have been doing this since 2010. And we have grown the number of programs in this area from just a handful to up to 16 or 17. And so we just had a lot of growth and been a leader in the nation in this area. And the Florida consortium is trying to continue that and they are doing research and provide technical assistance including mini grants and they will even provide mini grants to help a program that is thinking about developing go and shadow another program to see what that looks like so they can get a program up and running.

And then the Florida center for students with unique abilities is actually a state funded initiative and it's pretty recent in the last few years. And they really have exploded in terms of the number of programs that they helped develop with the Florida post secondary comprehensive transition program. And they have also provide mini grant funding up to 300,000 to start up programs and they provide student scholarship to attend the programs. That's the post secondary comprehensive transition programs. And they also help support at the K-12 level. And there is a lot of opportunity there.

All righty, another poll. So what kinds of information will help you support youths with disabilities find employment and/or explore career path? Is that short answer. It's anonymous. So please feel free to type whatever comes to mind.

>> Great. Continue to type if you like to That's no problem. We are getting some great feedback. The first few answers so several people talk about families. Information for families.

When do you engage with families and how early. And I think the earlier the better. Whenever you are talking with the young children about what do you want to be when you get older, we should be doing that for students with disabilities, too. There is some information on benefits, list of employers willing to hire. These are all really, really good topics. And I think that we probably have information on our website on all of this information. And then again, it's not because project has all of the answers, it's because we are trying to link and pull in all of the information that one would need it to help support the secondary transition process. So thank you so much. Guys and gals so much for lending to that pool.

And so that is sort of a segue into some of the resources we have around employment. And so we have a whole section on employment on our website, and it's broken into several sections, both like accommodations and considerations, career development and the actual job search and there are subsections under there. Under each section.

The first slide that I'm showing you is planning for a future career. And that starts with a set of questions to sort of guide a student in their career search paired with actual resources for students to do some of that research. And whether it's assisted or independent or with a peer or a mentor, it walks through some of the skills and knowledge that goes into searching for a job.

Under exploring careers, it talks a lot more on the career aspects of job markets, labor markets and things like that. So we are linking to that and some of those other national Department of Labor resources. And then otherwise that different states have developed.

Under job search there are a ton of resources including career one net. And Florida resources, too. Like my career shines and Florida shine. Which is a great resource and it's relatively new. It's been around for the last few years. I think it's one that finally starting to take root at the secondary level.

The employment check list is really nice as well it can be used by teachers or case managers, Voc. rehab counselors as well to guide the sort of skill base that a student would need or a person would need to find a job and find their career, not just a

job. And I see questions on Monica about self-advocacy. That's perfect timing because we have another poll. And so this is just a yes, no or not sure. Do you think self-advocacy and or self-determination can help students graduate college, career and life ready? Give you a few seconds for that.

And it looks like the majority -- no one said no. A majority of us said yes. Self-determination and self-advocacy is huge. And that goes -- Monica asked, do we have anything written for self-advocates? And we do have some resources for self-advocates on -- advocates on our website and we need a few minutes to give those out for you. I will say they are there and we work with self-advocacy networks. The Florida has the Florida stand network for self-advocates. And there are national resources that -- and even the Florida developmental disability council has resources specifically for self-advocates to hone in their skills with that. Most of what we are putting together on the website are for professionals in this realm, although we do some thing for families as well. That's to orient you to the content on our website. Although that's not to say we have nothing for self-advocates but certainly I would need to pick those out for you.

And so we have a whole section on self-advocacy and self-determination -- my screen changed a bit. That threw me off a bit. Sorry.

And we have things like resources, curricula, so really thinking from the case file realm. Here you can see the courses. Both things that have been developed here in Florida and also throughout the state -- or throughout the nation. We have a lot from Illinois, Virginia and Kansas. They have been really big meters in this field. And we have a lot of persons that are planning, too, including several different models. We featured cultivated the best of the best out there and we even developed our own person center planning model for Florida. In this -- and this came out of being post secondary education movement. We are trying to develop a person center planning mechanism for students with more significant disabilities. But that was applicable to college or some type of post secondary training and not just straight to employment. And so this is a newer curriculum. It's free, totally accessible. There is a 25 minute webinar to give the overview for facilitator of this, but certainly this would be a great tool for self-advocates to engage in this process as then they would end up with their own star plan and it's very visual

and it's an engaging process with their circle of support so then translate that into their goals and in their action plan they are reaching those goals.

And not only do we have an on-line course on that, we can also project RTR are also happy to provide the training on that, too.

And then check and connect is an initiative -- all of our project 10 personnel are check and connect trainers that have been involved in the implementation team and leadership teams and check and connect is the only evidence based mentoring program that I'm aware of. And it's dropout prevention -- it's a dropout prevention strategy and many school districts have been using it I think since 2012. We are implementing this in Florida with the state personnel development grant. And if you want more information on this, I can definitely direct you to a colleague of mine and then also our regional transition rep can provide more with that as well if you are looking for mentoring information or develop a mentor program, check and connect is an awesome option that we are rocking it out here in Florida.

And then also wanted to mention the bureau of exceptional education and student services, affectionately known as BEESS. They have done a great job of populating the information in everything from the local educational agency transition contacts to employment related information and other initiatives that affect secondary transition and students in Florida. And then also the secondary transition specialist is your go-to person for secondary transition in Florida and she is our direct liaison with project 10.

And it looks like there might be a few questions.

>> Yup. We can -- Danie, we can ask the questions and we can go over those if you have another minute or two. The questions were, do you have just how do you advertise or share information with folks? Do you have social media sites or is it primarily the newsletter.

>> Yeah, thanks. That's an awesome question. It is primarily the newsletter. We -- just from working with the university and then also with the Department of Ed it's a bit difficult to have a social media sites ongoing. So we are not as social media savvy as we wish we could be. We do collaborate a lot with the

family network on disabilities and our other parent training information centers. So that we can get the information out because we know that parents and others aren't really surfing the web for our things. We need to reach them where they are, on social media. So we try to branch that way. In general the topical briefs are best way to communicate.

>> Another question, someone is curious about technical assistance. What are people asking for when it comes to technical assistance?

>> That's a great question and I think it depends on the time of the year. And -- we work mostly -- well, not mostly, but our primary constituents are district personnel and so in the beginning they are thinking a lot about how are we implementing new initiatives to help bolster evaluation and attendance and implementing the early warning systems. And later in the year it could be things like dropout coding and student coding to ensure they are finding students and that students are coded appropriately. We get a lot of questions still on graduation, diploma requirements and things like that. And also we do a lot of with prostart up. How to develop the one-year-old program and transition programs. And then also how best to collaborate with other agencies. Like if there is a lot with vocational rehabilitation and the W -- the work force of innovation and opportunity act, how is that all coming, the new initiatives and things? How are those coming into place so that there is that really strong partnership between the school districts and the Voc. rehab and other agencies. So it varies.

>> Thank you, Danie. How about any other questions for Danie this afternoon? We will pause for a second and see -- to give folks a chance to reflect and see if there is something else that would be on their minds. Monica might be writing another comment or question here. We will give it -- give Monica a second.

>> I'm so glad that you put in the resource for self-advocates from the employment first floor group. How can I forget about that?

>> I never miss a chance for a little bit of shameless self-promotion. It was pertinent and it was -- and I also pulled up the link to a project 10 self-advocacy page you had in your presentation as well there is a lot of good information there for folks to explore. And kind of has pulled from everywhere. So

Monica's other question is, do you think it's working are more kids getting jobs. Good questions.

>> That is a great question. You know, I think that with -- I always think of this in terms of indicator 14, possible outcome data that we received and it's live data so we won't know for a year or two whether it would be initiatives that we have been ramping up and putting into place this past year are working. And so I hope so. I think so. I think that people will start to see those outcomes greatly increase because the expectation is increasing. Is expanding that everybody should be working or should be in some type of training to lead to employment. And no matter how -- no matter what your abilities are. And so I do think it's working. I think the hard part is it's not instant success. I think between the post secondary ed increasing initiatives and the employment first initiatives, I do think that we will start to see -- instead of just that stagnant outcomes, really an increase in outcomes for students.

>> Thank you. That is a great question and it's helpful to orient everyone to kind of -- how you answer that. How do you interpret what's changing in Florida. Got one -- well, Sheila is typing a response.

Any other questions for Danie? Just pause for one more second otherwise we can move to wrap up as well. And for folks who may have missed the live event but are accessing the recording, Danie's contact information is up there on the slide in case you haven't noticed and always feel free to ask her questions as well about anything that she had presented today. Anything else? It looks like we have a few more people typing in the questions and comments. People are thinking about what you said today so we will see what's going on.

Reminder from Sheila, I will post the closed captioning transcript and recording on our site. Sorry about the issues with closed captioning today. We did have a link that we got up a little later. Usually we have it in the event itself but the technological Gods were not with us today. We do have -- we will have that captioning. We have Jose and Brenda typing some questions or comments. We will see what they have to say. Thanks, Danie for the great resources and we are getting confirmation we attended this training. Great presentation info. Thank you.

Danie, is there anything you would like to add? Thank you so much for your -- it was really -- you had a lot of great information and a lot of great resources for people. Anything else?

>> No, I think that's it other than feel free to contact me and I will put you in contact with your local regional transition rep or whatever resources you are looking for on our website or with other organizations. Just please don't hesitate and thank you so much for your time this afternoon and thank you for the invitation to be here. We really appreciate it.

>> One more quick reminder as we wrap up, if you liked what you heard today, definitely go to employment first Florida and check out the grass roots group page. And you can get a sense for the kinds of topics we talk about and we've got a archive of our old events. They are old just in terms of dates and still relevant to the state of Florida and what's going on. And definitely check out our October 23, put a save the date in your calendar for 3:00 to 4:00. And we will announce a topic in the coming weeks. And I think that's all we can stop recording. Thanks.