SELF-DETERMINATION IN POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION: STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

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AGENDA

- Postsecondary Education and Disability
- Transition from High School to College
- Postsecondary Options for Students with Disabilities
- Self-Determination for Students with Disabilities
- Self-Determination Instructional Strategies
THE BENEFITS OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

- INCREASED EMPLOYMENT AND LIFETIME EARNINGS
- MANY NEW JOBS REQUIRE POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION
- STATUS
- INCREASED SOCIAL CIRCLES AND NETWORKS
- SEEN BY MANY AS WHAT YOUTH OF THAT AGE DO
- OTHER BENEFITS?
WHY POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION?

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION?

WHAT WAS YOUR MOTIVATION?

SHOULD COLLEGE BE FOR EVERYONE?

WHY POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION?
Graduation rates for students with disabilities is still far below that of typically developing peers.

Institutions of Higher Education need to be better prepared to support diverse learners for success (Horn, Peter, & Rooney, 2002).

Rates of students with ASD attending post-secondary education are climbing, though we don’t know exact percentages.

The number of students with disabilities attending institutions of higher education comprises approximately 11% of the entire college student population and is continuing to grow (Raue & Lewis, 2011).

Post-Secondary Education and Disability
POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION AND DISABILITY

1. Watch this short video clip from the VCU Center on Transition about students with disabilities in post-secondary education.

2. While watching, think about challenges that students with disabilities may face when transitioning to postsecondary education.
Brainstorm a list of the social and academic challenges students portrayed in video faced or faced by young adults you know as they transitioned to college.

Consider how each of those challenges might differ for young adults with:

• Learning disabilities
• Intellectual disabilities
• Autism
• Other disabilities
SERVICES CLIFF
DIFFERENCES BETWEEN HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE

Let’s examine the difference between disability support services in high school and college.

These contrasts will provide background information and explain the underlying origins of many of the transition issues that students with disabilities often encounter.
### DIFFERENCES BETWEEN HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE

These legal guidelines set the stage for the myriad of differences between supports in these two environments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High School</th>
<th>College</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• The school conducts evaluations at no cost to the student and reevaluates on a prescribed schedule</td>
<td>• The student must get an evaluation at his/her own expense.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• The school creates an IEP or 504 Plan</td>
<td>• Students are not generally required to be re-tested after initial documentation is approved.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• The documentation required varies depending on the specific disability.</td>
<td>• An IEP or 504 plan is not always sufficient.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• May need to provide documentation of current results of aptitude and achievement tests administered by a qualified examiner.</td>
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<tr>
<td>ROLES OF STUDENTS, PARENTS, AND SCHOOLS ARE ALSO DIFFERENT</td>
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**HIGH SCHOOL**

- The school is responsible for identifying and supporting students with disabilities.

- The primary responsibility for ensuring that a student receives his/her accommodations belongs to the school.

**COLLEGE**

- The student must self-identify to the designated office for disability support in order to receive accommodations.

- The student bears the primary responsibility for ensuring that he/she receives his/her accommodations.
## Roles (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High School</th>
<th>College</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Parents have access to their student’s records and participate in the process of accessing services.</td>
<td>• Per the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), parent do not have access to their student’s disability records unless the student provides written consent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Parents advocate for their student.</td>
<td>• The student must advocate for him/herself.</td>
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### Coursework Is Different

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High School</th>
<th>College</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• The curriculum may be modified at the course level (e.g., foreign language waiver) or the classroom level (e.g., slower pace, abbreviated assignments).</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Grading standards may be modified for students with disabilities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Teachers may use a multi-sensory approach or other techniques (e.g., UDL, direct instruction) to enhance learning.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Colleges are not required to make any curriculum modifications.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Students with disabilities are held responsible for meeting the same standards as students without disabilities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Grades reflect the quality of work submitted, as grading standards are not modified.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Professors tend to rely heavily on lecture, and may or may not use alternative techniques to enhance learning.</td>
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</table>
Time Management

SCHEDULE IS DIFFERENT
QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS TO CONSIDER

01 Can you read up to 200 pages in a week?

02 Do you have a system for taking notes?

03 Do you know which academic tasks give you difficulty?

04 Do you have a strategy for completing tasks you find boring?

05 Do you have an academic subject you find interesting?

Source: Landmark College’s Guide to Assessing College Readiness
TYPES OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION EXPERIENCES

1. K-12/Special Education Options
   - Dual enrollment program for students with ID or ASD, age 18-21, who are still in high school but receive transition services in college

2. Postschool-Higher Education Options
   - Postsecondary education program designed to support adults with ID or ASD in college

3. Individualized access to existing college options
Many students find great benefit in starting at a two-year college

Affordability

Stepping stone to four-year program

Class sizes often capped at 25/30

Better chance of individual attention

Before you commit, always tour the school and meet with DSS staff to ensure a good fit
PATHWAYS TO COLLEGE

Traditional Matriculated
- Placement tests and essays
- Pursuing a degree
- Reasonable accommodations
- Full access to course catalog

Alternate/Non-matriculated
- Person-centered planning
- Individual support plan
- Focus on employment goals
- May not pursue degree/credit
WHAT IS SELF-DETERMINATION?

“The attitudes and abilities required to act as the primary causal agent in one’s life and to make choices regarding one’s actions free from undue external influence or interference” (Wehmeyer, 1992)

“Acting as the primary causal agent in one’s life and making choices and decisions regarding one’s quality of life free from undue external influence or interference” (Wehmeyer, 1996)

“Self-determination behavior refers to volitional actions that enable one to act as the primary causal agent in one’s life and to maintain or improve one’s quality of life” (Wehmeyer, 2006)
FUNCTIONAL THEORY OF SELF-DETERMINATION

Volitional Actions: Students who are self-determined are being purposeful and acting as a causal agent over their own lives (Wehmeyer, 2005)

Causal Agency: Students with disabilities are self-determining when they act with the intent of being a causal agent or of causing the things they want to happen in their lives (Wehmeyer, 2005)

Quality of Life: Researchers have identified key domains of quality of life that include emotional well-being, interpersonal relations, material well-being, personal development, physical well-being, self-determination, social inclusion, and rights (Schalock et al., 2002)

Shogren (2013)
SELF-DETERMINATION AS A PREDICTOR OF POSTSCHOOL SUCCESS

Definition: Self-determination is the ability to make choices, solve problems, set goals, evaluate options, take initiative to reach one’s goals, and accept consequences of one’s actions (Rowe et al., 2015)
IMPORTANCE OF SELF-DETERMINATION

Students may be more academically successful and engaged in schoolwork (Martin et. al, 2003)

Students may contribute actively to their educational and transition planning (Martin et al., 2006)

Students may experience more postsecondary involvement (Field, Sarver, & Shaw, 2003)

Students report higher quality of life and more positive experiences in early adulthood (Wehmeyer & Palmer, 2003)
SELF-DETERMINATION SKILLS

- Choice-making
- Decision-making
- Problem-solving
- Goal-setting and attainment
- Self-management
- Self-advocacy
- Self-awareness
- Self-knowledge

Shogren (2013)
GROUP DISCUSSION

What do you see as the most important components of self-determination?

What areas of SD do you focus on with your students?
The adjustment to a college environment presents challenges for all students, though the responsibility of managing accommodations along with coursework presents an additional set of challenges that are unique to students with disabilities (Getzel, 2014).

Students with disabilities report barriers resulting from a lack of acceptance, difficulties accessing the necessary services and supports, and concerns in the area of self-advocacy (Lehmann, Davies & Laurin, 2000).
IMPORTANCE OF TEACHING SELF-DETERMINATION

- Students who have greater involvement in setting educational goals are more successful in achieving their goals (Martin, Marshall, & Sale, 2004).

- Transition components are stronger if students provide information directly to team members (Martin, Marshall, & Sale, 2004).

- Teachers believe self-determination is an important concept to teach to students with disabilities (Mason, Field, & Sawilowsky, 2004).
BEING A SELF-DETERMINED STUDENT

- Watch this short clip from the Green Mountain Self-Advocates about the importance of Self-Determination and Self-Advocacy.
TEACHING SELF-DETERMINATION SKILLS

Autonomously motivated students:

- Study harder
- Pay more attention in class
- Ask more questions
- Get better grades
- Show enhanced cognitive flexibility, conceptual understanding, and active information processing (Legault & Inzlicht, 2012)
Preadolescence (ages 9-13) is a critical time in the life of children because during this time students experience increased social pressure and make decisions that lead to lasting peer relationships (Farmer et al., 2008).

Teaching self-determination skills will provide the knowledge and skills to make informed decisions and choices, enhance engagement, and improve student academic outcomes.
BUILDING SKILLS TO MAKE INFORMED DECISIONS

6th Grade
- Self-Awareness
- Self-Acceptance

7th Grade
- Setting Goals
- Making Plans to Reach Goals

8th Grade
- Self-Expression (Novice Level)

9th Grade
- Self-Awareness
- Self-Acceptance
- Reaching Goals

10th Grade
- Self-Expression (Practicing Level)
- Share Decision-making

11th Grade
- Self-Expression (Proficient Level)
- Shared Decision-making

12th Grade
- Self-Expression (Generalization Level)
- Active Decisions-Making

Adapted from Peterson, Sedaghat, Burden, Van Dycke & Pomeroy, 2013 Presented at 17th DCDT International Conference Williamsburg, VA
### INSTRUCTIONAL TOOLS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Topics</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| 6th   | Possible Selves (Initial Instruction)  
Self-Determination Strategies (Initial Instruction) |
| 7th   | Student-Led IEPs (Initial Instruction)  
Self-Determined Learning Model of Instruction (Initial Instruction) |
| 8th   | Student-Led IEPs (Review)  
Advocacy Presentations (Initial Instruction) |
| 9th   | STEPS to Self-Determination (Initial Instruction)  
Take Action (Initial Instruction)  
Self-Advocacy Strategy (Initial Instruction) |
| 10th  | Self-Advocacy Strategy (Review)  
411 on Disability Disclosure (Initial Instruction)  
Choosing Education Goals (Initial Instruction)  
Choosing Employment Goals (Initial Instruction) |
| 11th  | Self-Directed IEP (Review)  
411 on Disability Disclosure (Review)  
Choosing Education Goals (Review)  
Choosing Employment Goals (Review) |
| 12th  | Student-Directed Summary of Performance (Initial Instruction)  
Transition to Postsecondary Education: Strategies for Students with Disabilities (Initial Instruction)  
Adult Agencies: Linkages for Adolescents in Transition (Initial Instruction) |
SELF-ADVOCACY STRATEGY, WHOSE FUTURE IS IT ANYWAY?, AND SELF-DIRECTED IEP ARE ALL EVIDENCE-BASED CURRICULA USED TO TEACH YOUTH TO BE INVOLVED IN THEIR OWN IEP MEETINGS.

NEXT STEP AND STEPS TO SELF-DETERMINATION ARE RESEARCH-BASED CURRICULUM.
AREAS FOR ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR STUDENT INVOLVEMENT

- Communication challenges
- Indecision about life goals
- Lack of training for professionals
- Absence of self-determination skills
- Postsecondary goals that do not match skill level
- Poor self-concept
- Fear of risk taking
**SELF-REGULATED STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT (SRSD)**

Framework allows the teacher to prepare students for combined self—determination and writing process

The SRSD model involves six stages:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Develop background knowledge</th>
<th>Discuss it</th>
<th>Model it</th>
<th>Memorize it</th>
<th>Support it</th>
<th>Establish independent practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

SELF-DETERMINED LEARNING MODEL OF INSTRUCTION (SDLMI)

Setting a goal
- What do I want to learn?
- What can I do to make this happen?
- SMART

Taking action
- What could keep me from taking action?
- What can I do to remove these barriers?
- When will I take action?

Adjusting the goal
- What actions have I taken?
- What barriers have been removed?
- What do I still need to know?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase 1: Set a goal</th>
<th>Guiding questions</th>
<th>My responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What do I want to learn?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What do I know about what I want to learn?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What must change for me to learn what I don't know?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>What can I do to make this happen?</td>
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<tr>
<th>Phase 2: Take action</th>
<th>Guiding questions</th>
<th>My responses</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What can I do to learn what I don't know?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What could keep me from taking action?</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>What can I do to remove these barriers?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>When will I take action?</td>
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<tr>
<th>Phase 3: Adjust my goal or plan</th>
<th>Guiding questions</th>
<th>My responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What actions have I taken?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>What barriers have been removed?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What has changed about what I don't know?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do I know what I still want to learn?</td>
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</table>
## Goal-Setting Checklist

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal benchmark/action step</th>
<th>Date attempted</th>
<th>Date completed</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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Challenges or barriers to completing the goal:

Strategies to be successful:

Ways to problem solve and overcome barriers:

Final result:
Go 4 It Now!

Specific to IEP Goals & Paragraph

To generalize to other paragraph writing

Use the top part of this worksheet to do your prewriting.

Goal

Objectives

4 (4 objectives)

1.

2.

3.

4.

Identify

Timeline

Name your topic.

Order your details.

Wrap it up and restate topic.

Remember to use the transition words pyramid:

First

Then

Second

Then

Next

Third

Then

Last

Finally

Fourth
Write a 5-7 sentence paragraph to describe your goal.

Goal: to become a flight attendant.

Objectives:
1. Research job duties of a flight attendant
2. Determine what accommodations I will need on the job
3. Explain why I need these accommodations on the job
4. Describe how having these accommodations will impact my performance

Identify a Timeline: By the end of this school year (May 2018)
Write a 5-7 sentence paragraph to describe your goal.

**Name your Topic**

**Order your details**

**Wrap it up and restate topic**

After high school I want to work as a flight attendant for a major airline; however, I will need certain accommodations to be successful. To accomplish this goal, I will first learn about the various job requirements needed to perform the job. Then I will determine what accommodations I need to be successful on the job. Next, I will make an argument for why these accommodations are needed and discuss how having access to these accommodations will impact my performance on the job. This will assist me in advocating for my needs on the job.
DREAM SHEET

The Dream Sheet

My strengths

Support I need

My Dream

Steps for achieving my dream

Source: Snow & O'Brien, n.d.
SUMMARY AND CLOSING THOUGHTS

Many benefits to postsecondary education

Services and supports in postsecondary education will look different than in high school

Important to teach Self-Determination skills

Start Early!

Student involvement is important!
THANK YOU!

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