

WEBVTT

00:10-->00:58

Patrick R Blevins: Hello and welcome to the New Mexico Autism Project podcast for educators. These podcasts, as well as our on-line training series, have been developed by the University of New Mexico Center for Development and Disability, in collaboration with the New Mexico Public Education Department, as a resource for educators who would like to learn more about evidence based practices for working with students with autism Spectrum Disorder. We hope that you enjoy this series and if you have any questions about these resources or how we may support your school district through the NMPED Autism Project, please contact me, Patrick Blevins at the email address shown on the slide or call the UNMCDD at 505-272-3000.

2

00:01:04--> 00:01:18

Maryann Trott: Welcome to this podcast sponsored for you by the New Mexico Public Education Department and presented by the Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities Programs at the UNM Center for Development and Disability. I'm Maryann Trott and will be your host.

3

00:01:19--> 00:01:35

Maryann Trott: Today we're talking about transition, and while I really hesitate to assign a different level of importance to the topics that we are presenting, in my experience as an educator, this topic is one that, although extremely important, is sometimes neglected.

5

00:01:36--> 00:01:49

Maryann Trott: Transition deals with the topic of what our students will do when they are no longer our students and other words, the whole rest of their lives. Our focus on transition often falls into the category of too little, too late.

7

00:01:50 --> 00:02:08

Maryann Trott: Discussing transition issues with me today is LaDelle Hash. LaDelle has experience with students from elementary through high school and in transition services. I learned so much talking with her in preparation for this podcast and I'm really looking forward to a productive conversation about transition.

9

00:02:09--> 00:02:11

Maryann Trott: LaDelle first of all, would you introduce yourself to us?

10

00:02;12--> 00:02:32

LaDelle Hash: Well sure. Good morning. I'm Ladelle Hash. I'm the Special Education Lead in Las Cruces and at Centennial High School previously -

this my 20th year teaching so I've always been in the special education realm of it all and been working with the high school kids for this is starting my ninth year.

12

00:02:33 --> 00:02:38

Maryann Trott: Great. And then, you have, so you did tell me that you have worked with all levels, though right?

13

00:02:39--> 00:02:53

LaDelle Hash: Absolutely yeah. I spent 12 years in the elementary setting and I did my student teaching with the middle school and I work really closely with the middle schools now, as we have kids transitioning from middle school up to high school.

16

00:02:54 --> 00:03:13

Maryann Trott: Oh, okay, so that is one part of transition and, as I say, I learned so much talking with you that I'm really looking forward to this conversation for our listeners. So, will you remind us of what exactly transition refers to in the IEP and what some of the, you know basic rules are?

18

00:03:14--> 00:03:33

LaDelle Hash: Okay, great. Well transition, the way it looks for us in the high school setting is, it's required in the IEP. When we work with students in the elementary setting we focus a lot on their academic goals and looking at where we need to do to improve their skills and learn and really learning.

25

00:03:34 --> 00:04:14

LaDelle Hash: And, when we get up into the secondary part of it all, we, to have, we have a bigger focus on what that transition need is. First we look at what is, what is the student's goals or ambitions? What do they want to do? (and I'm putting quotes) "When they grow up". And we tend to focus then, from there, we follow the guidelines that have been given to us which is called Indicator 13 and I could go over that in just a second but, we look at what they want to do, then, how are we, what are we going to do within the IEP to help them get there.

29

00:04:015 --> 00:04:41

LaDelle Hash: It's focusing in on what their, what courses they're going to be taking that can kind of tap into those things, to see if they like it. Taking assessments on what career interests they have where we put in their annual goals looking at you know we're learning to do these reading tasks in order to aid them in their post-secondary goal of you know, being a farmer or whatever it is that they're interested in.

32

00:04:42 --> 00:05:07

Maryann Trott: That sounds great and is it, while I realize it's the same regardless of the level of support that students require, Can you just briefly talk a little bit about how it might be different for a student who has you know pretty much been on a lot of academic pathway versus some of our students that require more support in terms of their education?

35

00:05:08--> 00:05:44

LaDelle Hash: We look at how that transition happens, a little differently between our our students that might be college bound or career bound, we do have different pathways that that the IEP follows. And we also have our students who are on that ability pathway, and we have set up different programs throughout the state where we call them our 18 to 21 program and that helps our students who aren't necessarily going to go from high school, graduate, and then go to college or go on to their career but needs some of that job coaching and stuff like that.

39

00:05:45 --> 00:05:07

LaDelle Hash: A lot of times it's our low incidence population that will have, that require, you know building those skills, and so we can allow them to continue with the public schools until they're 21 but doing this transition piece where they can go and, for my school, in particular, the kids they go off campus they might arrive here on campus but then they're learning to use the, you know, the public transportation or figuring out routes to get to their job sites and they have an opportunity to work with the job coach and learn different skills, maybe they'll start as having you know working in a cafeteria setting and helping with cleaning up and bussing and stuff like that, and then move on to dish washing or something like that, and that can even go on to being serving and getting that real sense of accomplishment and figuring out what it is they, like to do, and even if it wasn't in that type of industry, maybe even moving on to you know animal care different types of things just figuring out what they like to do and how that you know becomes satisfying for their lives.

45

00:07:08--> 00:07:19

Maryann Trott: That is so important, and I want to go back and touch base there again, but before we do that would you just briefly explain the 13?

46

00:07:20 --> 00:08:14

LaDelle Hash: Oh, Indicator 13.[Maryann: Indicator 13] Yeah so there's a, we have guidelines that are set forth for us to that we follow starting when a student is 14, they are, the IEP is really starts to belong to them okay so, students are required, you know a lot of times we have the IEP and we meet with the parents and then students are just kind of told about what's happening later, but once they start at the age of 14 is the expectation is for them to be involved in the process of their IEP and figuring out, you know, because that transition piece is so big, starting

with by the time they turn 14 there's a part of the IEP that becomes required for you to complete as part of their plan.

50

00:08:15 --> 00:09:42

LaDelle Hash: So there are eight sections and it's called indicator 13. There's eight sections that we really focus in on and look at and has to be part of the IEP process. First is really creating their post measurable secondary goals and that's you know, looking at: What kind of training, are you going to need? What kind of education and what employment do you want to partake in by the time you're done? So, there's always three parts to those post-secondary goals. One is for the employment. So an example would be "upon graduation from high school, so and so will obtain a job in the field of animals". That's just an example. Beneath that would be the education piece. So, "upon graduation from high school, so and so will enroll in a program with an emphasis in vet tech" or something like that. And then, the third one, which is, which is big for our low incidence population is the independent living skills. So where would they be as far as post-secondary? What's the plan? Are they going to be staying in a dorm? Are they going to be staying in a certain facility? Are they staying home with parents? Is the plan to be out as much as possible?

58

00:09:43 --> 00:09:52

LaDelle Hash: Next then that we have the post-secondary that they want to check to make sure that we are, we are discussing that and having that conversation with the students annually.

59

00:09:53 --> 00:10:42

LaDelle Hash: We also have that we use the transition assessment to be able to come up with that so giving the students the opportunity to look at the different types of transition assessments that are out there and being able to you know that this assessment supposed to try and hone in on where they like to be so if they're taking a Transition Planning Inventory, which is what we call the TPI, they answer certain questions: Do you like working with animals? Do you like working with people? Do you like to be by yourself a lot? You know, and all of the way that they answer certain questions would be able to help them figure out what's the best kind of job that they're looking for.

{pause}

63

00:10:44 --> 00:11:12

LaDelle Hash: There's also Transition Services in their course of studies. So if they're interested in working with animals or maybe you want to work at the animal shelters or anything like that, then we would definitely want to make sure that they're taking classes that relate to animal science, biology class maybe or having those opportunities. You know, a kiddo wants to be a police officer then maybe they would want to take the law studies class.

67

00:11:13--> 00:11::45

LaDelle Hash: We update their annual goals which generally focus in on the academic piece, but we want to add in "Why am I making you do this academic goal?" Well it's to help you out in this area. And then we always want to make sure that the student is invited to the IEP and we do show evidence of that and if they need any representation from an outside agency, we would make sure that they were aware and had the opportunity to bring that person to the IEP.

70

00:11:46 --> 00:12:06

LaDelle Hash: A good example would be if a student is interested in joining the military, we would see about a recruiting officer being able to attend. Or some of our other kiddos that might need the help or the service of DVR, the Department of Vocational Rehab, being able to have somebody from there come in and show how their services would help.

{pause}

72

00:12:08 --> 00:12:09

LaDelle Hash: Sorry, that was a lot. [laughter]

73

00:12:10 --> 00:12:59

Maryann Trott: No, that was perfect. That was exactly what we needed to know and I really appreciate you taking the time to do that. And, there is a, it's called Classroom Essentials, it's a Classroom Essentials sheet that goes along with this podcast and does have a lot of that information on it, but it just really helps to hear you know how it actually plays out with individual students because transition planning is a person centered process and really [Ladelle: absolutely] does need to include the students, so I appreciate you going into that and you kind of touched on it, but kind of if you would explain a little bit more, the transition process and then transition services and how do those kind of meld into one another and differ.

82

00:13:00 --> 00:14:13

LaDelle Hash: Yeah, so we do have, there's different agencies out there, depending on where the students want to go as far as meeting that next step. So one thing that happens with Indicator 13 is what I fill out for their IEPs and do all that. We also have what's called Indicator 14, which is where a year or two after they graduate someone checks back in to say "Hey I'm looking at your IEP that you had right before the end of school. Did you did you get a job in this area or did you know how did it go do you feel like this IEP helped you get ready for that next piece?" So there's another piece that leads into that just to check back with them, but it's really important to find out where those skills are at so that we can know which way to push them, you know which way to go in that

direction, but not just leaving them like "Well we kept you to your 21 now go for it, you know and it's your turn you know?" We want to make sure that we have given them enough information that they know where that next step is.

90

00:14:14 --> 00:15:33

LaDelle Hash: For example DVR. DVR is going to be the people that help them, and this could be for any student with any type of disability, you know depending they bring in their IEP and they it helps them in their evaluations and DVR is able to help them apply for jobs, build resumes, they may know of certain agencies that are looking for certain kinds of skills that these kids could provide so and then they also have information on, you know, maybe it's not necessarily a job that they go to, but maybe some kind of day program where they can go to cooking classes and, you know, carpentry classes, or something like that they're interested in and still be able to meet with other adults with disabilities and be able to kind of keep in that in that community. We also have DVR will help guide them in funding that the students might be receiving on how to access speech therapy outside of class or outside of the school system and access. You know, a companion or a job coach or something like that can be assigned and they still have the benefit of a case manager.

99

00:15:34 --> 00:16:01

Maryann Trott: Boy that is just so much information and it's really very, very valuable. So how do you prepare? Because there is so much information and there are so many requirements, how do you help families be ready to think about I mean both, how do you help both students and their families to be ready for this meeting, and to really think you know sort of a head in terms of the meeting, and not just toward the end of school?

102

00:16:02 --> 00:17:08

LaDelle Hash: We really we really start to emphasize a lot about transition once they turn 14 and really when they start to turn 16 and getting into that high school setting. But really it goes way back to when they first qualify for special education services. Some of our students even qualify, or they know that they're going to need support for probably the rest of their lives, starting when they start in pre K, you know they're starting in the DD program, DD preschool or anything like that. Being realistic about what that plan is and thinking about what can happen. So I think going back as far as you can to try and start preparing for these different things and figuring out and, you know, all of our kids they have big dreams and that's wonderful and we want to keep with that, but it's being able to have that dream in mind and being able to show them how they can get it, you know.

109

00:17:09 --> 00:17:49

Maryann Trott: Well that's such an important point. I know I've talked with you know, teachers and families and teachers have said well the family has such unrealistic expectations like yeah I think you know, maybe this student is going to go to college and the student maybe isn't toilet trained yet and that's really okay cause the first step to going to college is that you need to be toilet trained. [Ladelle: yeah] And so we can go from there, and I appreciate the fact that you know you're we're not limiting their dreams in any way, but we're kind of it sounds like steering those you know sort of looking at the very basic prerequisites in order to meet those goals.

114

00:17:50 --> 00:18:12

LaDelle Hash: Yes, absolutely. And being realistic and just sometimes it's even it takes, what's helpful, is it even inviting the parents into the room and seeing how things are going up not there all the time, because we want the kids to start being independent away from their parents, but being able to see what their abilities are and where they're at and seeing what's possible.

117

00:18:13 --> 00:19:01

LaDelle Hash: But I do want to touch on a little bit about the college, you know. I've been doing some looking at some transitioning for some of our low incidence kiddos on what the next step is because you know we have really great school that specifically has programs for students with you know intellectual disabilities, autism, all kinds of programs. There's one in Roswell. There's one in Silver City I believe. There is college opportunities here in Las Cruces. We have, there's, there's one of the Community colleges offers courses to help them get a little more prepared outside of the high school range for, so.

122

00:19:02 --> 00:19:13

Maryann Trott: That is really important information [Ladelle: yeah] and school districts in general should have good information about where those programs are in relationship to their location. Is that correct?

123

00:19:14 --> 00:20:29.190

LaDelle Hash: Yes, yes, so if that's the plan, then we just, I've been fortunate that the schools are sending me information, and so I can pass that along to parents and give them that opportunity, but we do have, most of the high schools have a transition planning person either downtown or that we try to invite to the different meetings and they have really good skills as far as knowing which direction each of these students need to go. You know, this one needs to definitely sign up with DVR, this person needs to go wait, maybe we can look at the school for them and lots of different opportunities out there.

126

00:19:58 --> 00:20:21

Maryann Trott: Well that's really important information appreciate that. So what in a transition plan or you know the whole process, is there anything in particular that stands out in your mind that kind of gets overlooked or neglected? Or do you feel like the schools and the families really take a pretty careful look at all of the pieces?

129

00:20:22 --> 00:21:42

LaDelle Hash: Well, of course, there's always going to be that area that we just got to get done, you know what I mean? We just do it just because it's supposed to get done. I really think that we need to get better at that transition assessment. You know, really looking at that or maybe one transition assessment is not enough - it doesn't give the right kind of information. But looking at taking various kinds of transition assessments that might help figure in a little better, I think that me, and maybe my team, could get better about transition assessments instead of just "Oh, they took one and we got to jot it down" you know, but really looking at where does it say your interest areas lie and let's go with it let's talk about it - let's have that conversation "look you scored high in, you know, with your people skills". What kind of jobs out there have really good people skills? Maybe it's teaching; maybe it's nursing; maybe it's childcare you know or something like that. So I think that's an area that could be improved upon, and that might not be true for everyone, but it's something that I would like to get better at.

136

00:21:43 --> 00:22:17

Maryann Trott: Oh, I think you're probably speaking for a lot of people that work with students that are transitioning and certainly in my experience, those are really important because it's so hard to have, you know, a one size fits all and many of our listeners are working with kids with autism spectrum disorders and so could you talk just a little bit about what might be different, particularly for kids with autism spectrum disorders that have you know the social communication characteristics and the really perseverative interests as part of their diagnostic criteria?

139

00:22:18--> 00:23:50

LaDelle Hash: Right well so there's all kinds of different assessments out there for, to figure out their interest areas, you know, maybe one that doesn't require reading but looking at pictures and certain things like that might help us kind of gear them in what their interest areas might be. And, I think really, you know, there's so many jobs out there that don't necessarily require a whole lot of interaction, but it's learning about those tasks and figuring out, you know, what kind of, you know, they get, the students get real used to in the classroom, learning schedules, and being consistent in that, and I know that a lot of students appreciate that consistency because there's not surprises and things like that to throw them off and maybe cause, you know, a meltdown or anything like that so - but it's about know that, we all know life doesn't roll that way that we are always caught with certain surprises, and we have to learn new things, but it's giving them an opportunity that "Even though I'm moving to a place that I don't know or I'm not familiar



with if I give it a little bit and we start, and I have this, at least this familiar person with me helping me with that transition into the new place, then I start to learn new schedules and new tasks and new things to try" and hopefully that helps them a little bit. Did that kind of answer your question?

150

00:23:51 --> 00:24:26

Maryann Trott: It really does [Ladelle: Okay] and it just kind of feeds into what I frequently tell teachers is you know the our point with our students with autism is not to feed into their routinization, their, you know, their desire to be very routine, but to figure out ways that we can help them be more able to take the things that are a little bit different and a little more encourage flexibility, a little more than the real strict routinization, which is of course not all kids with autism, but some so that is exactly what I was thinking.

[laughter]

156

00:24:28 --> 00:24:40

LaDelle Hash: Well, maybe change becomes their routine you know, maybe we could figure out how to do that, you know, "I'm expecting something different every day", that becomes part of their change.

158

00:24:41 --> 00:24:48

Maryann Trott: Right that could be so, and we know novelty is really helpful many times as well. And the other thing that I was thinking of is their difficulties in social communication. And you mentioned that with the assessments, a person with autism may be really good with, you know, the files in a doctor's office or something like that.

161

00:24:49 --> 00:25:48

LaDelle Hash: Or, even with animals or, you know, just, then there's so many things out there. I would be able to tap into one and "Oh, there's this and there's that" so lots of things happen in the IEP where, if you just start having that conversation instead of it just being, you know, we got to get through this paperwork and these are the things I have to ask and getting through it that way, but having that conversation, another reason why it's so important to have the student there with you to have that conversation with. It's like you as teachers might have some ideas, they're 15, they don't know they don't know that that's out there for them. There's lots of opportunities for them to learn from during that IEP.

168

00:25:49 --> 00:25:54

Maryann Trott: So it sounds like this meeting, or meetings, you said at 14 and 16, is when you mean?

170

00:25:55 --> 00:26:20

LaDelle Hash: They've brought the age down. We, it used to be at 16, we need to make sure that all these indicators were met and that we're talking about those and discussing them. We brought that recently down to, it's always been 14 that you start looking at that, but now it's a requirement for the 14 year olds and up. So every year we discuss it, but those were the big years.

173

00:26:21 --> 00:26:38

Maryann Trott: Okay, well, I'm glad you made that distinction. So it sounds like those, you really need to plan some time for those meetings and planning them out. And individualization.

176

00:26:33 --> 00:27:20

LaDelle Hash: Right, and like with adults, we change our minds. I changed my mind and college. I was not going to be a teacher because that's what my mom did and that's what my grandparents did, and my great grandparents. I was gonna go do something else, and you know, and it's a calling. But, kids change their mind too. You know, they think they want to go into the military and then it's all maybe I want to be a police officer. And it's telling them that's okay, we can go with the flow. The IEP is a living document, if you, we don't have to meet once a year, if you want to meet four times a year, then we'll do that - we'll make those changes and we'll start to figure out what it is that's best going to meet your needs. Individually, we need to make a plan for you.

181

00:27:21 --> 00:27:52

Maryann Trott: Oh, that is also such an important point and I know a relief for families for sure and certainly for a lot of teachers as well, to know that, you know, we, that this is an ongoing conversation. So one thing that you and I talked about a little earlier as well, was how teachers of younger students help to facilitate a successful transition and you mentioned earlier on, that you know transition actually begins, you know with those three year olds in a program. So talk a little bit about that, if you would please.

184

00:27:53 --> 00:29:45

LaDelle Hash: Well, you kind of tapped into it a little bit too where, you know, they need to be potty trained in order to go to the next step. It's going to start that way in preschool and moving on up to the elementary schools and we're looking at certain skills and that they're starting to find themselves, the kiddos, and what they like to do. Then when you start, you do a tran...they don't call them transition meetings anymore. They're more promotional meetings when they're moving up from fifth grade to the middle school setting. Middle school's where they going to have that first opportunity to take a class that they want. And so maybe it's, maybe they'll be able to take Spanish, or take band, or something like that and be able to start building that "this is what I

want to do with my life" type thing and then they have those few middle school years. And then we transition up to, to high school and now we're really start thinking about what is it going to take to do what you really want. And then, now they have more opportunity to take multiple classes that they want to take or try. So maybe they get into the culinary arts class thinking that they're going to be this chef and all these things, and they get there and they don't like getting their hands dirty. Now's the time to learn that, and they are able to move on from there. But starting to nurture that figuring out what you want to do and the things that you like starts so early with these kiddos when they're little little you know.

196

00:29:46 --> 00:30:19

LaDelle Hash: My own son, he knew he liked the animals and stuff like that and, as he got older realized that he wanted to work, continue working with the animals, but he liked being outside, so what do I gotta do? He wants to be a game warden, you know, and he started thinking about that when he was little, 3-4 years old, and it's the same for these kids that just start thinking what you like to do, and we can help you get generate ideas.

198

00:30:20 --> 00:31:09

LaDelle Hash: I had a student, we were in his IEP and we're trying to figure out the next classes for him to take. He wants to be a firefighter, that's what he wants to do. So, it's a good idea for him, in our school, to take that drafting class cause he knows like where social were. Not social, I'm sorry. Where building structures are at and being able to know these are safe spaces, when you know if you're thinking about a fire in a building, taking a drafting class helps with understanding of building structure. And he also probably needs to know a little bit about the law and he needs to take PE because he needs to be physically fit. All of these, we don't necessarily have a fire, fireman program in this high school, but we have lots of these classes that can aid to that, but trying to figure that out.

203

00:31:10 --> 00:31:31

Maryann Trott: Yeah those are such important points, and then the other thing that I think you and I talked about a little bit is the whole idea of independent living and you know how you know, we need to really start thinking from early ages, about the fact that they are not always going to be easily managed and taken from one spot to another.

205

00:31:32 --> 00:31:36

LaDelle Hash: Sure they grow up and you can't pick them up and carry them one from one place to another right, anymore?

206

00:31:36 --> 00:31:37

Maryann Trott: Exactly.

[laughter]

207

00:31:39 --> 00:33:19

LaDelle Hash: Yeah, really, you know, one example, I think that we talked about was, you know, a parent had all these things that they wanted their student to do, but then they were working with them and realized that they couldn't cross the street. They weren't safely, you know, being able to look both ways and create those habits and in, and knowing that there's so much more than just that academic piece where we're learning all these things, and the kids they really like to do those things but there's all these other pieces that go along with it like crossing the street. You know, is it getting their driver's license and figuring that out? And it might just be that whenever I walk into this office area I am not going to go sit right next to the other person and maybe invade their space. Lots of different things to touch on there, but it's for the independent living that they may want, they may have these "Oh my kiddos going to go stay here", but those are other skills that we have to build on as far as independent living: Can they can they write a check or even keep a check bank account? Can they cross the street without getting hurt or causing trouble for whatever's around them? Or even just approaching, maybe, even approaching an animal in the park, you know so many different things to just have conversations with.

[pause]

217

00:33:21 --> 00:33:40

Maryann Trott: Wow! That is just, [laughter] it's really, they're kind of daunting, thinking of all, there is, but I'm really glad that you mentioned those things. And I really appreciate all that you've shared with us and what have I missed? What, what do you want to share with us about transition, transition planning, transition services that we haven't yet talked about?

219

00:34:41--> 00:34:49

LaDelle Hash: Well, I think it's important that you know we touched on that before saying that it needs to start really early even sooner than when we're supposed to be talking about it. But I really, I really think, to that, it's really, it's important that parents understand what this transition means and at some point they're gonna have to let their little ones walk away and go do a job for a little while, you know? And the transition's important for the parents too, I think, and for them to be really involved in knowing what that's going to take. And I think that being very real and open and honest with everybody in the IEP team and knowing that, you know, parents have to be there, and a teacher has to be there, and a case manager has to be there, and the student has to be there, and we're all having these conversations and the parent may be realizing that this is a transition for them too - that their kids are going to transition to where they need to, where they need to go.

226

00:34:50 --> 00:34:55

Maryann Trott: Such an important point, cause it's often very difficult for parents as well.

227

00:34:56 --> 00:34:56

LaDelle Hash: Yeah.

228

00:34:57--> 00:35:25

Maryann Trott: So thank you so much LaDelle. This has really been very helpful and I know our listeners will learn a lot. And again, just a reminder that there is, along with the link for this podcast, there is a, it's called a Classroom Essentials - sort of a tip sheet regarding transition - and LaDelle shared a lot of really important websites and information with me that I added to that tip sheet. So again, thank you so much LaDelle and we really appreciate you talking to us.

231

00:33:26 --> 00:35:26

LaDelle Hash: My pleasure.