

Transitioning students in special education

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Interview and Observation of Students in Transition to Adulthood Joann Watson Azusa Pacific University Special education teachers can teach students in the transition age of 18 to 21, and make an unforgettable impact in their students' lives. It does not end at the age of 17 or 18 like general education students. The students continue to get better acquainted with job skills, and learning the community, and how it can serve them, and “ since 1990, special education law has mandated that secondary school educators, via the IEP team, include a transition goal in the IEPs of students with disabilities,”(Eckes ; Ochoa, 2005, p.). The teacher interviewed for this paper enjoys what she does, and has done so for eleven years.

She gave me many facts about how she helps her students plan for independent adult life. The place of the interview was at March Mountain High School, and the title of the program that she teaches is ‘ the action program’. We were able to talk inside the classroom. The interview and observation was two hours long. The students were still doing some of their math and writing skills lessons but were about ready to go and get lunch.

The students are not disruptive in any way, and although moderate to severe, they were able to communicate their needs in a clear way.

The demeanor of the teacher was pleasant and calm. She was very inviting. The classroom had three aides that were in the classroom as well. I felt that the teacher was honest and forthcoming with her answers, and I could tell that she thoroughly enjoys her job. The following will be a list of the questions and answers that were asked of the teacher.

The teacher's name is Tammy, and she has a moderate to severe credential. She currently teaches 13 plus transition students, but as of now they are all 18 to 21. She has taught for 11 years, but within those years she has taught k-3rd and 6th, 7th, and 8th grades as well. She commented that this age group is by far her favorite. 1. What is the composition of students in your classroom? She currently has seven students with mental retardation, and intellectual disability, two with a specific learning disability, and one with cerebral palsy.

2.

Were you involved in the IEP meeting that discussed and planned the placement of the current students into your classroom? The teacher answered yes to the question, but “ the main function of the transition IEP team is to determine what transition services are needed to prepare the youth or young adult for life after completing high school,”(Folsom-Meek, Wearing, ; Bock, 2007, p41). 3. Besides obtaining your special education credential, what other types of training did you receive in preparation for the students included into your classroom?

She relayed to me that she has had ABA training, discreet trial training, transition training, and she has went to autism conferences that offer information for teaching as well. 4. What continual support do you receive in meeting the needs of the students in your classroom? How often? The staff members that are directly in her class everyday have a meeting on Mondays to discuss activities, or updates on anything that they need to communicate about the students.

She explained that every Wednesday she meets with the program specialist, and the school psychologist to discuss ideas on behalf of the students. 5. What is the collaboration between you and all the related service individuals who provide support to the students in your classroom? The teacher said that they discuss vocation sites that the students are assigned to, any skills that their IEP reveals that they are to be working on, and staffing for upcoming jobs for the students to participate in. 6. How are you monitoring the progress of the students in your classroom?

The teacher expressed that all of her students know the goals that they are working on and towards, and they have a list that they check off to monitor their own progress, but she does take work samples from the students.

The students are the ones that score themselves on rubrics, and they are making themselves accountable and independent by doing these things daily. 7. What is the atmosphere on this campus in relation to including your students with disabilities into the general education classrooms?

The teacher explained that her students are adults, and they do not go into general education classrooms, nor do they have a need to, but that part of being here every day, is considered their job. The interaction the students do have outside of the classroom, but still on campus, is limited to students who want to participate in helping with the recycle program, those who work with the custodian, and in the cafeteria. The teacher went on to say that participation in these areas is based on interest, and skill level. 8.

What difficulties do you face when developing lesson plans and curriculum for students in your classroom? The teacher relayed that when developing

lesson plans it is difficult to come up with different lesson plans based on differing ability levels, but that is when she will ask help from her colleagues, as well as look on the internet for ideas. Additionally, she does not have any high tech devices for the students such as IPADs, so that her students can use Apps, because her students are very capable of benefitting from those, she expressed. . What have been the successes you have seen in the classroom in terms of the following: a. Students with disabilities accessing the curriculum with success The students have had success with mainstream 180, and taking low prep courses at Riverside food program and obtaining a food handlers license are two of the most successes she has seen.

The teacher goes on to say that she has adults, and her main goal to get them comfortable in the community, although they work on basic Math, Language, and money skills for a couple of hours a day. b.

Students with disabilities making gains in learning The students have many gains in learning in the areas of three community programs that they participate in such as; freedom to go, RTA system, and Dial-a-Ride. The students are well verse in independently reading and using the bus schedule, and navigating it all by themselves. The teacher takes her students out into the community every day, and “ transition services are post-school activities designed to move the student with a disability from school to community participation,” (Folsom-Meek, et al.

, 2005, p. 90). c. Students with disabilities collaborating with peers during class and on the playground The students will correct each other if the answer is wrong in discussion, or if they are not using the correct tone. The term that they have learned and use daily is, ‘ be professional’. The students
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will go to the teacher when they have seen an injustice done, and the teacher will call a conference so that the student can communicate and talk out the situation for a solution.

d. Students with disabilities participating in the lecture, group projects, etc.

The students participated in Black History Month, where they portrayed someone from the past to represent, and they did very well with that. A couple of the students decided to do a power presentation, and she said it was wonderful. 10.

Transitions are typically difficult for individuals with disabilities. How have you addressed this area of need and what current difficulties do you still have? The teacher expressed that in order to help the students with transitioning; they help the students create a portfolio to take with them to outings, or jobs.

The portfolio contains their resume, contact phone numbers, their adult service provider (ASP), and a summary of performance for supports that are needed to help them be successful. The students have unrealistic goals sometimes, and the teacher must find the skills that they are good at, but will have an interest in, and help them to achieve what is realistic for the future. Furthermore, “ In creating a transition plan to college or to the work force, schools need to give students with special needs a summary of accomplishments and needs for transition, in addition to their general report card,”(Eckes & Ochoa, 2005, p.

). The teacher said that it is absolutely pertinent for the student to be at their IEP meeting, because this helps in tracing a path for them to follow in with <https://assignbuster.com/transitioning-students-in-special-education/>

their goals. The students will volunteer at places, research online, and work with kids to fully decide what they want to pursue. I found that working with this age group has fewer behaviors. The students clearly know what they are supposed to do, and they do it.

They track their own progress, and I saw no apparent behavior issues.

I believe that the independence that they are given help to relieve some pressure that they are still under authority, and “ transitions, by nature, are difficult and require time for adjustment and efforts to minimize the impact of the problems that will inevitably be confronted,” (Eckes & Ochoa, 2005, p. 7). The students are adults, and they want respect, and they in turn, give the respect, especially when they feel that they are heard. I went home pondering the experience, and I think that I would not mind working with this age group; whereas before I had no knowledge of how it worked, and had a fear of the unknown.

I understand the details of transition better, and “ the transition service process requires a shift from school to community-based instruction,” (Folsom-Meek, 2007, p.

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