



Think College Webinar Transcript  
**Planning for College Success Now: Recommendations for IEP Teams**  
Presented by Maria Paiewonsky  
January 18, 2023

MARIA PAIEWONSKY:

Hello everyone, this is Maria Paiewonsky. I'm from Think College at the Institute for Community Inclusion at UMass Boston. Welcome to the Think College Webinar Series. Today we are going to be talking About Planning For College Success Now Recommendations For IEP Teams. So, let's get started.

First of all, let me just review the agenda with you. I want to give you a little bit of background as to how we got to this spot where we can provide some recommendations that are really coming from the field and the practitioners that have been doing hard work to support students being successful at college. And what we've learned along the way on what we can do to make this an even better experience for young people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. I'm going to give you a little bit of our lessons learned, and then how that has led to us being able to provide some tips for preparing students with disabilities in the K 12 years, but particularly those middle school and high school years more that we can do to prepare them to be successful at college.

01:08

Also, I am going to share some resources that we have that have been shared with us from others as well as some that we have developed. Let's move on. Let me show you a little bit of our background now.

01:21

I'm going to talk to you about some of the work that we've done at the national level that's really informing our recommendations. And then I'll show you a little bit more of the work that I'm doing right here in Massachusetts and how Massachusetts is trying to better prepare students as well.

Many of you might know that Think College has been funded many times to have a National Coordinating Center in which part of that work is providing technical assistance to practitioners to parents to college personnel; people that really want students to do well at college, either how to get into college or how to be successful once they get into college. Part of what informs us about these tips is that we're on our third round of five year funding so we have been out there since 2010. We've heard from hundreds and hundreds, if not thousands of people, and we have learned a lot about what challenges students have, but also what makes it successful then for them to be a college so part of this work is you know, just here's this map that I'm showing you is the most current map we have of all the programs in the United States that are supporting students with intellectual and developmental disabilities in postsecondary ed settings. And so, we have a lot of opportunities to talk to people about how this is going and what people are doing to make this even a better experience for students.

3:05

Now I am here in Massachusetts where we have a statewide initiative and we're on our 16th year now supporting inclusive dual enrollment. We are working primarily with students who are still eligible for transition services that their IEP teams have said they're still eligible for. And they're going to include college in their transition services.

Just less than six months ago, the Massachusetts legislature made it possible for now to open the doors to all public institutes of higher ed and Massachusetts to open their doors to individuals over the age of 18 over the age of 21, those students with intellectual and developmental disabilities and autism who exited school and giving them an opportunity now to go to college. We're really excited about the incredible opportunities that we have in Massachusetts to enhance this experience. And at the same time, up until a few months ago, for these 15 years, we really have been working with this transition-age group. And we have learned a lot about how we can best support them to do well in college and also to be as prepared as possible to be as independent as possible. Let me just show you a little bit about what it means to be part of the inclusive concurrent enrollment in Massachusetts.

First of all, right now, as you can see from that map, we have 14 colleges, institutes of higher ed in Massachusetts that are partnering with local school districts, working with transition age youth who are going to include college in their transition services. They all have to write an RFP together jointly. The colleges and their school partners have to respond to an RFP every year and when they are doing that. They have to be able to say that they are providing opportunities for students to have career planning, that they are going to have employment experiences, that they are going to build their self-advocacy skills, and also really be able to explore their interests and preferences. When a student is participating in an inclusive dual enrollment initiative here in Massachusetts, it's understood that they are going to have inclusive college classes that support their goals, that they are going to have opportunities for social engagement with their peers and joining clubs, getting out in the fitness center, that they are going to have some kind of person centered planning to make sure that we are focusing in on what they want and what they're interested in exploring. That we are going to give them opportunities for paid work and internships and that they are going to have opportunities to build independent living and or independent travel. In fact, in Massachusetts, part of this initiative is that students are learning how to not use the school transportation that they might be entitled to, but instead learn early how to use public transportation because as we all know, transportation is no guarantee once they exit school, so we give them a chance to start learning how to use public transportation, alternative transportation even if they're entitled to school transportation.

06:53

Let me tell you about some lessons learned by looking at some of the settings that students are in at college.

First of all, let's take a look at a typical college campus. This actually is a college campus right here in Massachusetts. But this campus is like many other campuses. When a student is going to college, as you'll see right on the bottom right hand side. They're learning how to take public transportation. Immediately they arrive on the college campus, then they need to learn how to navigate around the campus. It's no longer one building, or even a few buildings but many buildings but they have to learn how to navigate. They are learning how to get to disability services and know what to do when they get to disability services offices. They might be using an adaptive computer lab to use technology to access their content of their classes. They might

be going to the student center, which is usually the most popular place for many students. This is where they get to see many more people on the campus, particularly their peers.

They might be going to an academic strategy center to get some support in better using strategies that will help them do well in your classes.

They are absolutely willing to use the dining center. Just looking at this setting, you can see there's a lot that they are expected to be able to do in navigating a campus. Let me show you a few suggestions now of things that we could do to prepare them for this kind of experience.

On the left hand side are some examples of college expectations in the settings, and then what we might be able to do in the secondary preparation area that would help them so first of all, getting to and from college. Well, what a lot of people now know is we need to work earlier to help students learn to travel independently. To school and to college and to work early. And often. Students should probably have an opportunity to try getting to school even one day a week using an alternative way of getting to school or coming home. A lot of people are helping students to use public transportation or to learn how to walk with someone to school.

What a lot of people do is to help students apply for ADA paratransit and then learn how to arrange their own drop offs and pickups.

This is something that would take a little bit of thinking and planning but it really has such a powerful benefit for students to be able to learn how to get to the college and leave the college on their own or with some support.

Another thing is with disability services.

One thing that we have really learned is that when a student goes to the disability services office, there are three questions that are probably going to be asked: What's your disability? How does that disability impact your learning? And what kinds of accommodations are you using?

Those questions are hard even for students who attend their own IPs. Sometimes they get really stuck on those questions. The more we can do to help students learn how to identify their own disability, and understand even if it means rehearsing with them, reviewing their IEP, how that disability impacted your success in classes? And what kinds of accommodations have been helpful now for many students? It might be that it was modified. I'm going to talk a little bit about how important it is for us to start helping students to lose to us accommodations.

But it's an important question that disability services counselors ask and it's a good idea to help students rehearse how to answer those questions.

And that another piece is the academic strategy center.

One suggestion is that college students are often, maybe, recommended to use the adaptive computer lab or to use academic strategies to be successful. That might be very novel for some students who are used to having most of their content modified. A suggestion is even if a student is entitled to modifications, if you were hoping to go to college or if you have a son or

daughter or a student who wants to go to college, anything that we can do to help students learn to use accommodations is going to benefit them greatly. It's going to be a slower and easier transition for them to learn how to use accommodations that will help them to access the content in their classes, and also how to prepare papers, how to work with others, and really sort of begin to access the content of their classes much easier. Another idea would be to think about how you might be able to build in some of these kinds of technologies into the IEP and get familiar with what those technologies and accommodations are that colleges offer and then build them into a student's especially at transition age students IEP to begin learning how to use those.

12:58

Okay, here's another setting, typical setting, right? The classroom at the college. There's a couple of expectations that you can just imagine students have when you go to college. First of all, you know how to follow a syllabus, know what's expected for each class, what readings you need to do when big assignments are due, even maybe when group projects or quizzes are going to be coming up. It's really important, and that's an important expectation that students know what a syllabus is and how to use it.

Another thing is taking notes and engaging in some way with either the technology you're using, or with a partner but that Note taking is an important piece of a college class. Another thing is being prepared for class, being ready to contribute to a conversation or to add an example if the instructor asks for it.

Or to comment on the readings that you had. And then the other thing is being able to work with classmates. These are just some simple but very common classroom expectations. Let's take a look now on what we might be able to do to help prepare students for these expectations.

Again, on the left hand side, here are some college expectations. And then on the right hand side, I'm making some suggestions on how we might be able to help students meet those expectations. First of all in college, it's expected that the student no one else, the coach, not a peer mentor, not a Disability Services Coordinator.

And not a transition person or teacher. No one except the student is supposed to be communicating with the instructor. It's an expectation that college students directly speak to their instructors when they have a question or they have to share some information.

At the secondary level, we know we have an opportunity to help students learn how to talk with their teachers directly.

Particularly students who are in a gen ed class. That's a great opportunity to talk to the teacher about the accommodations that you use or that are helpful for you in a class you might want they might have an opportunity to discuss the support that they need, or even learning how to communicate with them via email or text or in person, that they're going to be absent from a class that they're running late, or that they need to set up a meeting with their instructor. These are just simple things that students can learn how to do in high school, that are the expectation of them when they go to college.

Another thing that is a really important piece of following the syllabus. There's a lot of ways that we could help students to learn how to use it. Sometimes college syllabi are very dense. But let's just say that even in high school, if you're not using a syllabus, there's ways that you could just create a really nice simple syllabus even in plain language. And if you need pictures, any anything that would help you could use principles of universal design to create a simple syllabus, but help students learn that a syllabus is going to be the name of the class, the dates of the class, what the goals are, or the objectives are for the class and what they need to be ready to have done for each class that would really help students to then adjust to this expectation when they get to college. They know how to use a syllabus.

And then finally being prepared for class. There's a lot of students that are working with educational coaches that are learning that they could use something like a checklist to know how to prepare for a class.

They often are coaching them on how to read and take some notes. Anticipate what some of the topics might be for the class discussion.

Maybe using some kind of note cards to be prepared to answer a question in class or to bring up a question.

And then the other thing is learning how to use a learning management system. This is something that some students have said they really, I know that the pandemic helped a lot of us to learn how to use learning management systems because most universities are using something like Blackboard or playdough or some other learning management system. But even in the secondary setting, we could set up a very simple class using Schoology which is a free resource for many of us. In K-12. Using something like that would help students to acclimate to this kind of online expectation of this is where you're going to find your syllabus. This is where your instructor is probably making announcements. This is where you might be submitting your work. even if a student is in an in person class, more likely they are also using an online management system. And it's really important to be able to show students early what the learning management system is and how they can begin to use it.

It's also a place where they can learn how to communicate with their classmates but also their instructor or to ask questions. it's important to kind of figure out how you might be able to put a learning management system into their world. And maybe that's part of an IEP objective of learning. How to Adjust to using learning management system.

18:58

Now I want to take a moment to just highlight how important that academic reading is in college. I know I don't need to tell anybody that but what I mean by that is don't let go of opportunities to keep students going with reading skills. It is so important for them to have reading skills, especially any reading skills that are helping them to advance their reading is going to help them to be able to access more and more of the kinds of classes that they want.

And academic reading is really a part of almost every college class. I would say make sure that you're putting in some kind of evaluation of their reading in their IEPs and make sure it's in their three years of vows. Look for progress that's in the academic information and the achievements section. really important In those three year vows. Another place is in the summary of

performance as students are exiting school. See if you can make sure that there's something in there about reading, reading strategies that they're using.

I just can't say enough about how important it is to have some kind of reading.

Now I want to take a moment to just highlight how important that academic reading is in college. I know I don't need to tell anybody that but what I mean by that is don't let go of opportunities to keep students going with reading skills. It is so important for them to have reading skills, especially any reading skills that are helping them to advance their reading is going to help them to be able to access more and more of the kinds of classes that they want.

And academic reading is really a part of almost every college class. I would say make sure that you're putting in some kind of evaluation of their reading in their IEPs and make sure it's in their three years of vows. Look for progress that's in the academic information and the achievements section. Really important in those three year vows. Another place is in the summary of performance as students are exiting school. See if you can make sure that there's something in there about reading, reading strategies that they're using.

I just can't say enough about how important it is to have some kind of reading even if it's, you know, using some kind of technology so let's move on to that.

There's lots of technology that people are using to help students access text in college.

Some examples are Read Write Gold. Some people are using Khan Academy is a way of kind of breaking down information and re explaining it a lot of students with and without disabilities are using Grammarly that's that has been a great resource to help students to kind of recognize they're reading and writing, especially their writing and be able to do like a spell check immediately using Bookshare to access content on their textbooks in particular, there's also Dragon Dictation. These are the kinds of technologies that are recognized by many of us that are supporting students with disabilities and without disabilities. To improve their access to content in college and to make that college classroom experience as beneficial as possible to them. I would highly recommend these technologies

21:35

The final screenshot I will show you here before we move on to IEP connection is just college life. One thing that might surprise people that have not supported a student at college yet is the nervousness that some students have to actually schedule their own free time. It's funny to say scheduling their free time but that's exactly it. Unlike in high school, there isn't a regimented structure of what they are doing every day. College is about some independence, getting to your class, and what if you don't have lunch for another hour and 1/2? What will you do with that time?

A lot of students get stuck in the beginning on, "Tell me what I'm supposed to do." And you have to tell them to manage their own time and make their own choices about what to do with their free time.

The college expectation is you are using technology to manage your own schedule. Most people use a smart phone or a tablet. At the secondary level, how can we help students learn to use those skills to help manage, even if it is just one morning a week? Then turn it into two mornings per week where they manage their own schedule. That is to do with students in transition services, those 18 – 22-year-olds. But it doesn't mean even at the grade 9 – 12 or middle school that we cannot build in time for students to determine how they will manage some flexibility with their time. Because it is a really important skill when they are in college.

The more they do that, the more likely they will stay longer on the campus, which is of great benefit for students making friends, learning what resources are there, and other activities.

The other two things are campus engagement. Again, with free time, students are... The expectation is that you might use something like the fitness center or join a club. Sometimes that is hard for students who might not have had that opportunity before to choose for themselves what club or fitness activity they want to get involved in. The earlier we can help students to make those kinds of choices and determine what their own preferences are, the better. In school or in the community, looking at different ways of getting involved in fitness or sports activities, or clubs that are in either high school or in the community.

24:43

I know it seems like that should be the easy part, but it can be the hard part for some students, building opportunities to explore their own interests. All that said, I just want to point out before we move into the IEP connections that if you are familiar with the transition training and technical assistance Center, they have the predictors of success listed. This is research looking at the best teaching practices and curriculum practices for students with disabilities on what is helping them to be successful when they leave school.

They divide that into an evidence base, the most rigorous research that could be used, they identified those studies with the most rigor in them, and research... They can pretty much determine that these are also best practices. And then the promising predictors, which is not as much research in this area but seems to be leading towards that.

If you look at education, if you just look at what we were just talking about, there is lots of goal setting, which is really important. That is what person centered planning helps you with. Goal Setting is a good research-based activity. Another one is those work experiences. A good course of study, which I will show you in a minute. These are all things that are helping to help students. Social skills, which we were just talking about. Having a good transition program. In this case, women with college included in that. These are all things that research has shown us our good predictors of postschool success. These are things that we have learned through Think College, that these experiences, we know we could give them a better college experience if we made sure they were getting good solid preparation and high school and middle school.

26:51

ASHLEY LUCE:

We have a question about the previous slide. Is this assessment available to our students in high school? And a follow-up question, previously, have postsecondary programs considered expanding the number of students being admitted? Sometimes there are few students admitted into those programs you engage with.

MARIA PAIEWONSKY:

The predictors of success are right on the website. Even if you put it in Google with NTACTION, you will get this handout. Take a look at that. It has a little bit more description two. As for expanding the number of students, absolutely. That is definitely a goal of all of these initiatives, to be able to expand the number of students, and at the same time, make sure we are doing this inclusively, individually, so that students are getting their individual experiences in college. But absolutely, I think the goal is to expand it and also to understand that many students we are talking about may need some coaching.

When you talk about expanding the number of students, we also talk about numbers -- expanding the number of supports they can have on the campus to make sure they are getting appropriate, individualized supports. It is deftly something we are working on, but that is the goal. Thank you for bringing that up.

28:47

I am going to move on. Please feel free to keep asking questions. I will move onto connections to the IEPs. Let's go back to NTACTION, they have a wonderful tool. This Indicator 13 checklist. A lot of the specialists we work with say this is what we need. We need to understand if we are during transition. We know we are during transition if we can say we are following this checklist, and these are the activities that make up transition services.

I will walk us through these transition activities and how we can use those to help prepare students for college. I should say that I am talking about students that are going to call it, but maybe also they are still in school but are eligible for college based transition services. Meaning that their IEP teams have determined they are still eligible for transition services and their IEP's is -- IEP teams would like to include college in their transition services.

29:56

First of all, as we all know, one of the indicators is that students have measurable postsecondary goals that are updated annually. These goals specify students' plans for life after high school. A few things we know we can be doing is making sure they are collaborating together to facilitate some kind of person centered planning for students. As many in the field no, there is many different ways of interpreting what person centered planning is, but generally, it means the student is inviting people that they trust to help them think about their strengths and interests, and beginning to lay those out, what they like, what they do not like, and layout, based on all of that, which direction they want to head in, at least for now.

I say staff collaborating, because it helps to have the student's family and friends and neighbors, and maybe some people that know them well to be part of that planning process. Sometimes, we will have students that do not have any idea, and they have a hard time communicating what they are good at, what they would want, or even if they are good at it, it doesn't mean that is what they want to pursue.

Sometimes it is administering career interest services -- surveys, that is another way to trim down what clusters of things they might be interested in. Ultimately, what we are trying to get at is students have identified some interest or preferences for work, training or community living, and does help us then to get to the measurable postsecondary goal.

I have put a few examples here on this slide. I will review these three with you, because I will use these examples from the next couple of slides as we walk through. The first one is a young woman called Carmen who was in high school. She wants to take classes that will help her secure a graphic design or printing position at a print shop after leaving school in June 2023. A student with an idea of what she wants to do. She has a graphic design or printing job in her mind.

The next student is Joseph. He wants to go to college, but he also wants to live in a dorm, and he wants to get a job as an office assistant in a medical office after he leaves school in June 2024.

Finally, Dae. He is going to study history; he wants to live with roommates in an apartment and work in a museum. The reason I say that is if you are working with students and you have IEPs, you have students who all have different goals and different ways they want to go about it. Each one of the students in one way or another wants to go to college and is including college in their postsecondary life, but they have three different directions they are going in.

33:30

We are going to use these examples, they are based on real examples, to show you about transition assessment and writing goals. The first thing is, we have figured out what those postsecondary goals are for each of these students. Now we need to figure out what are the strengths and skills and the knowledge they need to pursue those goals? They have identified the big picture, what they want, and as an IEP team, now we need to figure out what we need to help them with. That is what the transition assessment is. Ideally, teams are working together to put together transition assessments.

In our transition specialist training program, one of the issues we have is that many people think the transition assessment is something that is three years of evaluation, and you only have to submit that every three years. The thing we try to remind people of is that transition assessments are ongoing. It should be helping you to update measurable persecutory goals every year. You will see in a minute how easy it is to have ongoing data to help students determine if they still have that goal, or if they want to change that goal, and what they still need to work on to pursue a goal.

Let's take Carmen, Joseph and Dae again. I have a table with three examples. Carmen wants to go to college and work at the print shop, Joseph wants to go to college, live in a dorm and once an office job. And Dae wants to go to college to study history, he wants an apartment and he is going to... Wait a minute, I have to remember now. He wants to work in a museum.

I will not read through all of these, but what I want to point out, let's look at Carmen for a second. Transition assessment does not necessarily have to be a commercial transition assessment tool. It does not need to be a tool. It actually can be data that you can collect that is actually really informing you. Some of these things I am showing you are actually informal transition assessments like, for instance, she wants to learn how to take the bus. What is it like using a school bus? What helpings if she uses a shared ride -- what happens if she uses a shared ride. What data can you collect using this? She wants to go to college; she will have to do some reading. Can you keep a document on the kind of accommodations she is using to complete reading assignments?

A formal assessment might help to figure out what her reading comprehension is. And her vocabulary. Grades and assignments from classes are also very useful, because that is providing you some good data. And in the last example, may be used the results of a social skills survey administered over five days at school to figure out the social skills and where you can provide some support as she is moving into college and work settings.

I will not go through all of these, but let's just say that with Joseph, who wants to live in a dorm, a good assessment tool might be working with an OT or independent living staff to figure out what his independent living assessment goals might be. With Dae who wants to live in an apartment, maybe he is a person who gets a job volunteering at a museum and she wants to get some data on what it is like for him to have that kind of job. How independent is he? Where does he need support?

All of this is to say there are lots of different ways of collecting the data that is very informative for IEP teams on what goals he can write. These are embedded into everyday teaching and your instruction.

That said, here is a list of formal and informal assessments that transition specialists and other team members have shared with me on the kinds of assessment tools that they are using. Some have mentioned person centered planning, reading comprehension evaluations, and career assessments. There are also things you can download like landmarks guide to assessing college readiness. Some use the work-based learning plan for information on how prepared a student is with the technical skills but also the soft skills of work. Maybe a learning style inventory and the self-determination skills, all of these are very typical assessment tools that IEP teams use in order to help prepare students for college.

39:10

The next thing in the Indicator 13 checklist is the transition services, and that means that transition services follow FAPE, and the least restrictive environment. And they are coordinated, results orientated and they account for student preferences and are age appropriate. In this case, I am just taking Carmen, the one who wants to go to college, working a print shop and traveling. She wants to learn how to travel on her own. I have broken up her education goal, graphic arts and may be in English class. Her employment is to work in a printshop, and independent living is learning to use public transportation.

The transition services piece of this is how is that team supporting her post-secondary goals? As you can see, the transition specialist is working across all three of these areas. Education, employment and independent living. Related services are helping her with her job site, and also her independent living goals of using transportation. In her case, she also has assistive technology on her team, and that goes across all those goals. The career and VOCs specialist are particularly focused on her work at the print shop, and then the general ed or college coordinator is primarily focused on her education, her goal to pursue graphic designer graphic arts in college.

This is just an example of transition services. How does an IEP makeup transition services?

This table that I have here is just what would be considered to be a secondary curriculum with results-oriented curriculum and instruction. Meaning how do we provide students with a good course of study that is really helping them to pursue their goals?

In this case, we are looking at a student in a secondary setting, in a high school setting, and you will see that they have their goals of maybe pursuing a high school diploma or not. Maybe they will not be able to get a high school diploma. But they are still accessing a general Ed curriculum which will really help when thinking about math and reading and getting academic support. And an elective. Let's look at Monday. An elective related to postsecondary vision. This is helping a student to kind of prepare for that postsecondary goal of going to college.

Another example, let me just see, on Thursday. Some off-site service learning might be helping Matt to pursue an interest by doing some kind of service learning. The main thing is that you can see they are getting academic support, they are getting skills in meeting with people, they are getting a well-rounded secondary education that is preparing them for those expectations that I talked about earlier in the session. The expectations of being a college student.

For those people that are helping students to move into transition services, that includes college. That is a lot of the work that I do. This is the focus that we have. Look what happens at 8 AM. In this case, we are trying to build in more opportunities for the student to use public transportation. In this case, I am talking about the Metro. Maybe they are still using a little bit of the shuttle to get to school, but in this case, they are using a shuttle from the Metro station, the code shuttle to the campus.

This person is going to college three days per week, and the other two days, Tuesday and Thursday, they are going to a job. What this team has done is help the student to build and, using public transportation, right from the start, they are learning to use that public transportation. The same if you look at the end of the day. They are using public transportation to get home or go to a job.

The rest of the day is built-in with taking classes. This is Carmen, she is taking a screen printing class, then at 10 o'clock, she is meeting with an academic tutor or a teacher aide. She is getting some free time, then she is going to lunch. Then, in her case, she is taking another class or writing class, and then she is going home.

On alternate days, she has a job working at the print shop. This is really what you are aiming for, the students, if you think about her postsecondary goals, and you think about transition assessment and what she needs to learn, this is what her transition services are looking like. This is what we are aiming for.

The annual goals is another Indicator 13 of transition services. This has a list of potential annual goals but Carmen would have. Maybe one would be completing two classes related to her interesting graphics and printing. Another would be her learning how to communicate with her teachers versus via email or text or in person to discuss her concerns. Another one would be learning how to navigate independently to her classes and other activities.

45:50

I want to stop here for a second and say there are a number of very good resources that we can offer on Think College that really address IEP goal development. The latest development is fresh off the press, a resource for goals and activities to prepare for postsecondary ed. Sheila gave you the link when she sent a reminder about today's presentation. That is the link you have to back a

particular resource. It is brand-new. It is simple, you can scan it and get some ideas based on your transition assessment on what you think the needs are for students.

You can find how you would write up an annual goal, so I highly recommend that. But I also want to say, we also have a colleague in the field, Alice Boyle. She wrote about a student evaluation tool. She was a transition specialist and moved into a college setting. She knew what IEP teams were looking for. She has a really nice tool that people can use in college based transition services to indicate the kinds of achievements that students are making at college. In this case, I don't just mean academic achievements. I mean those things we will be measuring in IEP goals, navigating around the campus, using accommodation, communicating with an instructor. That is a nice tool that you can also find in our resource library.

Deborah Hart, Molly Boyle, and Melissa Jones wrote a really nice foundational skills for the college and career learning plan. That is another nice tool that a lot of people like to use. I would suggest that tool as well. All of them are going to give IEP teams are going to give a good foundation for writing goals that would help prepare students for college. And I -- they also would give you an idea of maybe what transition assessments you want to use as well.

IEPs often have benchmarks. I am giving you three examples of some benchmarks here. Maybe if we have a goal about Carmen reading with a gallant -- guidance counselor, maybe a goal would be to advocate for one class of interest -- every quarter. If she has a question or is unsure of something, then in 4 to 5 targeted opportunities, she would initiate asking for some assistance.

Another targeted benchmark might be that she is independently navigating. The more we can help students navigate in school and in their community, the more successful they will be when they get to campus. Which for some of them seems like a huge difference between their small school.

Again, I cannot underestimate how important it is for students to learn to navigate. They take a lot of pride when they can navigate those campuses by themselves.

49:28

Ok, some additional resources I want to share with you: I have been very interested in this work looking at this framework for what college and career readiness is. What is really nice about this work is they are really trying to help, thinking about teachers and IEP teams and how they can embed with everything else that needs to be worried about, how do you embed some of these skills into everyday classes or activities with students?

I put this reference here because I think their framework, first of all, acknowledges what teachers and IEP members are looking at everyday to build opportunities for integrating these college and career readiness skills, so I am putting that out there. That article, I think, would be a good one. I put the reference there so you could find that. This is something I am hoping to embed into one of my own classes, because I think this is... It answers the question for those ninth and 10th graders, especially, who say they have other things they need to work on with students. There are nice suggestions on how to embed these things into the everyday secondary curriculum.

I also want to highlight that the college partnered with pacer, the national parent center. They put out this nice simple fact sheet after doing a big scan of 300 programs. What do we need to

do to better prepare students for college? They are particularly looking at IEP teams. If you are interested in this, it is also on our resource library. I think somebody would find -- some people would find this a nice easy plain language read and maybe the best tool to use. It also has parents in mind.

Hold on, it skipped one. I would be remiss if I did not talk about our own family resource page where we have some resources

For parents on how to prepare their sons or daughters for a college experience. Because as members of the IEP team, they may have their own unique settings to do this work in their own unique experiences and opportunities to support their son or daughter preparing for college. Some of them partnered with the rest of the IEP team, but some of them are your unique opportunities. I wanted to point that out as well as a great resource for families.

And that is it, for me. I have seven minutes. I don't know if anyone has any questions or comments? Are

IRINA CAIN:

One participant asked about the waiver options for college?

MARIA PAIEWONSKY:

Do you mean a waiver for getting administered -- admitted?

IRINA CAIN:

Waiver benefits available to students in states?

MARIA PAIEWONSKY:

I would rather have one of my colleagues answer that. There are a number of resources available. Some people have particular scholarships or waivers, but you have to look locally at your own college you are interested in. Sink College has some resources, I have a beautiful brief on all of the particular resources that can be made available to support someone going to college.

REBECCA LAZO:

This is Rebecca, another staff member, I put the email to our help desk in the chat. It is thinkcollegeta@gmail.com. If there are questions outside of the purview of Maria, feel free to send a question to that address and someone should be able to help you.

MARIA PAIEWONSKY:

Thank you, I appreciate that. Somebody asked the question about if there are classes that students have to take before they go to college. I don't exactly see it here. The students that we are talking about are not necessarily taking any kind of readiness... They are not having to do the benefit test anymore. They don't have to take those pre-readiness kinds of classes or those developmental courses, if that's the question you had. It used to be that way, but it isn't anymore as we are advancing our inclusive higher education practices and policies across the country.

This question is coming from Cory in Alabama, some schools are pushing back and want their students to stay in high school. This is definitely a challenge that I have seen as well. I also think

that kind of data that I was talking about, where you are collecting some of that data, even if you had to retrieve some of it, might help. I understand... I don't really understand why but I do know that there are schools that said that's cute, college. Go back to the school where it is cheaper. We can get more students and staff all together. The truth is that we need to show the benefits of these kinds of transition services that are on the college and any data that we can use, it would be beneficial. Even if it is not in your state, but if you can find it, you could reach out to me. I'm sure we could find some good data for you.

But that is something that we just started in Massachusetts. We are about to launch collecting this very data and hope it will address that too. Because we want many more schools to include college in their transition services.

Debbie is asking a question about whether a diploma is necessary to participate in college. It depends where you live. In Massachusetts and other places, where we have legislation that is supporting this inclusive higher education, a diploma is not necessary. Especially if you can start off during a dual enrollment. You would not necessarily find that challenge. But many many programs, at least in Massachusetts, do not require that.

Linda is saying (reads chat), right, Linda. We want to get them out there, joining their peers on the college campus. The more stories we can get out there, the better. For so many of the students we know about lingering in high school for another two or three years is just not really useful, right? If they are working and they are out in the community, that's great. But college gives them that extra intellectual challenge and campus activities. I agree with you.

Robin is asking a question, can a student attend college using funds... This might be a question about using IDEA funds to support college. The answer is yes. In Massachusetts, in particular, where we have been doing this for 16 years now, that is exactly what is happening. People are using those IDEA funds to support college experiences. Colleges part of transition services.