

Bridging the Gap

Collaborative Strategies for Supporting Students with Disabilities from K-12 to Higher Education

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We ask you to join us in creating a culture that reflects...

Access and Inclusion

and

Civility and Respect

...this week and in all aspects of our organization.

Today's Session Will...

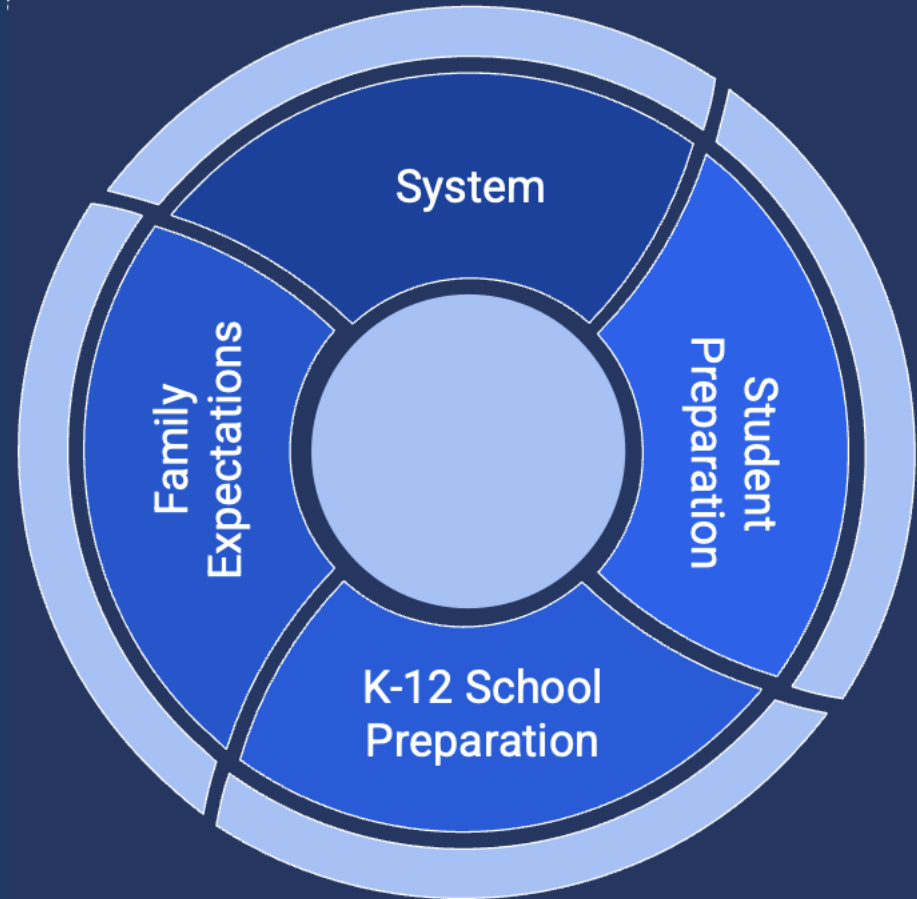
- K-12 General Trends and Unique Challenges for DSPs
- Preparing K-12 students with disabilities for college.
- Showcase Strategies
- Ideas to Build Community partnerships

Today's College Student

- More dual enrollment or early college programs
- “High School Safety Net”
 - Prerequisite academic or study skills
 - Unsure of the differences between high school and college.

**What kinds of things are
you all seeing from students
coming from K-12?**

Four Types of Transition Challenges



Student Challenges

- Unaware of the college expectations
 - Level of Independence
 - Assignments/due date reminders
 - In class vs outside of class preparations
 - Study skills
 - Note taking skills

Student Challenges (cont)

- Communicating
 - Professors
 - Checking emails daily
 - Asking for help/resources
- Accommodation Procedures
 - How to use
 - Renewals
 - Intakes
- Adult vs Student based Decisions

Family Expectations

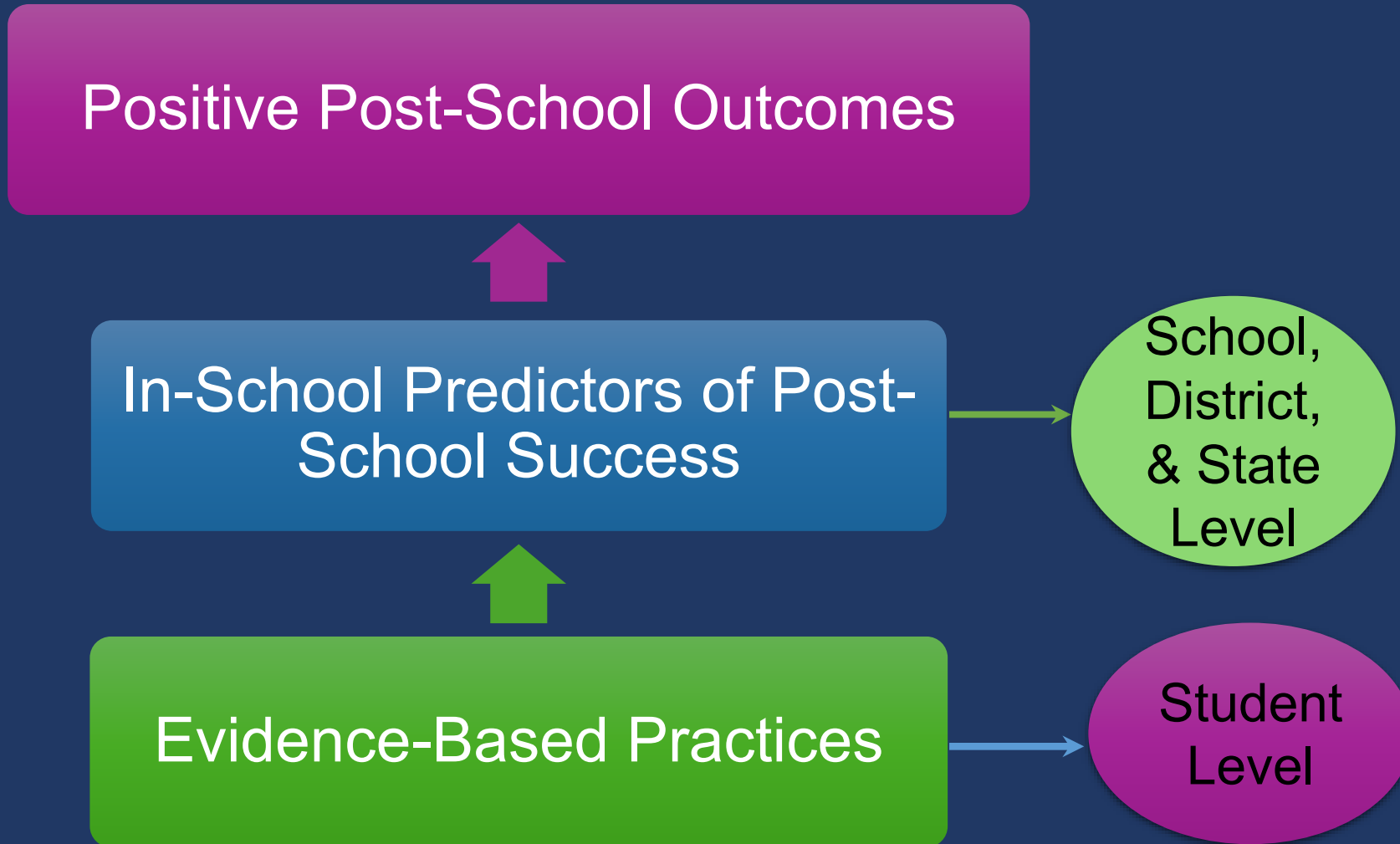
- Intensive support in K-12
 - 1:1 aides
 - parent advocacy
 - daily check-ins
 - Communication with Teachers
 - Modified Curriculum
- Communication with College
 - Access to Student Records
 - Decision Maker vs Support Role

Systemic Challenges for Dual Enrollment/Early College

- Timelines
- Registration
- Communication
- HS vs College Instructors
- IEP versus college accommodations
- Applicable Laws

K-12 Preparations

**EBPs &
Predictors
to Support
Post-
School
Success**



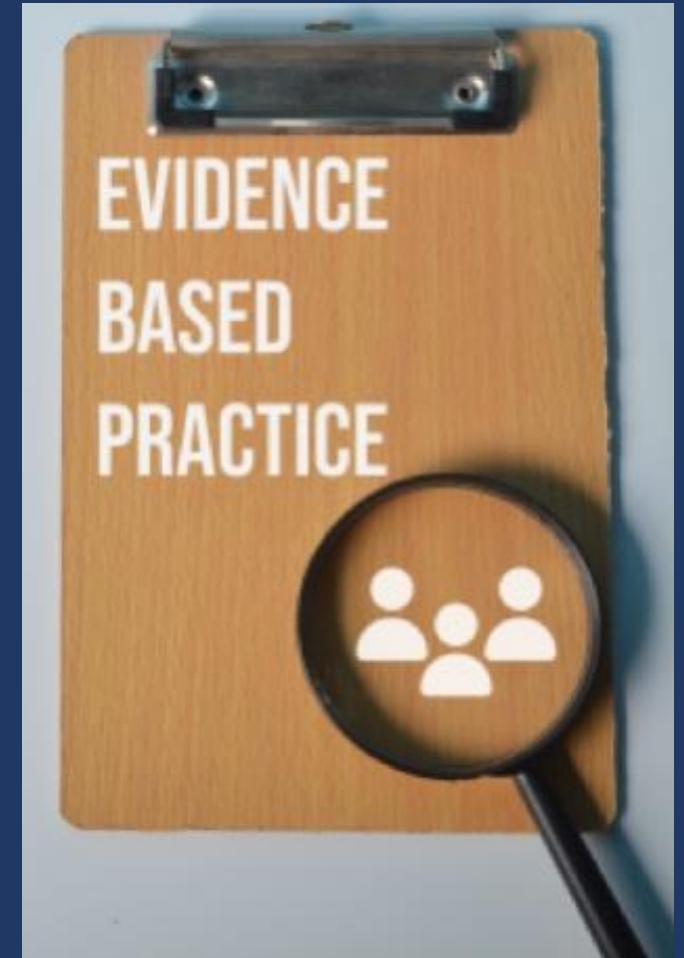
Predictors of Post-School Success

- Defined as an K-12 in-school experience, typically a program correlated with improved post-school outcomes.
 - e.g., a work-based learning experience

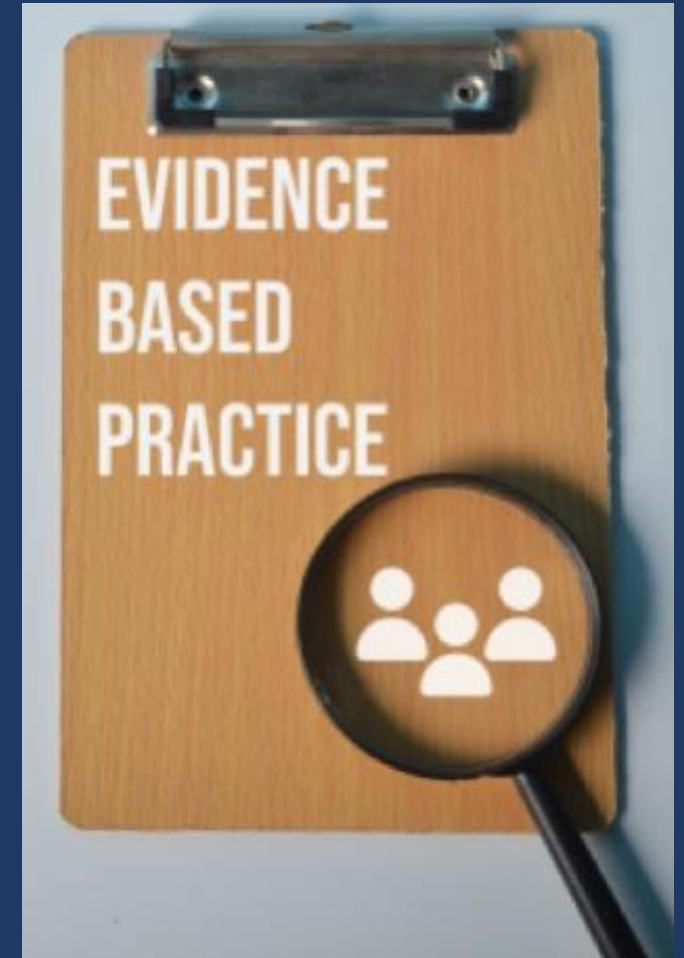


Do K-12 Care About EBPs and Predictors?

ESSA (2015), WIOA (2014), and IDEA (2004) each note the expectation of the use of scientific and/or research-based, and/or evidence-based and promising practices



- When school personnel use practices that research has shown to be effective, students perform better (Cook et al., 2008)
- School personnel need trustworthy resources that tell them what (transition) practices have the “best available evidence” or “best **level** of evidence”



Predictor Findings to Date

- 23 predictors
- Outcomes organized by relevant transition area
 - Education
 - Employment
 - Independent Living

Predictors by Outcome Area

Predictors/Outcomes	Education	Employment	Independent Living
• Career Awareness	X	X	
• Community Experiences		X	
• Exit Exam Requirements/High School Diploma Status		X	
• Goal-Setting	X	X	
• Inclusion in General Education	X	X	X
• Interagency Collaboration	X	X	
• Occupational Courses	X	X	
• Paid Employment/Work Experience	X	X	X
• Parent Expectations	X	X	X
• Parental Involvement		X	

Predictors by Outcome Area

Predictors/Outcomes	Education	Employment	Independent Living
• Program of Study		X	
• Self-Advocacy/Self-Determination	X	X	
• Self-Care/Independent Living	X	X	X
• Social Skills	X	X	
• Student Support	X	X	X
• Transition Program	X	X	
• Travel Skills		X	
• Career Technical Education	X	X	
• Work Study		X	
• Youth Autonomy/Decision-Making	X	X	

Suggestions and Recommendations

K-12 School Preparation

- Being Proactive in Collaboration
- Create events that bring high school students to your campus.
- Foster relationships with community agencies.
- Help parents understand expectations

Building Understanding

Youth Need to Understand

- What the plan is for their future
- Their disability, how it impacts them, and ways to explain it to people

Parents Need to Understand

- Entitlement vs. Eligibility
- Anyone can be a part of the IEP Team
- Life continues past graduation

Building Student and Family Understanding

Student

Family

- What supports they need in a given environment
- The importance of self-advocacy.
- How they choose to provide input and feedback is up to them.
- Eventually they will not be here anymore to support their child
- Any step forward is progress
- Plans change constantly

Creating Family Expectations

- Help parents adopt an adult ally mindset. Moving from the driver seat to the passenger seat or backseat
- Create a process for youth and their parents to align

Creating Family Expectations (cont)

- 1. The vision of the future**
- 2. Academic and Career**
- 3. Connecting to Resources**

An Adult Ally IS NOT...

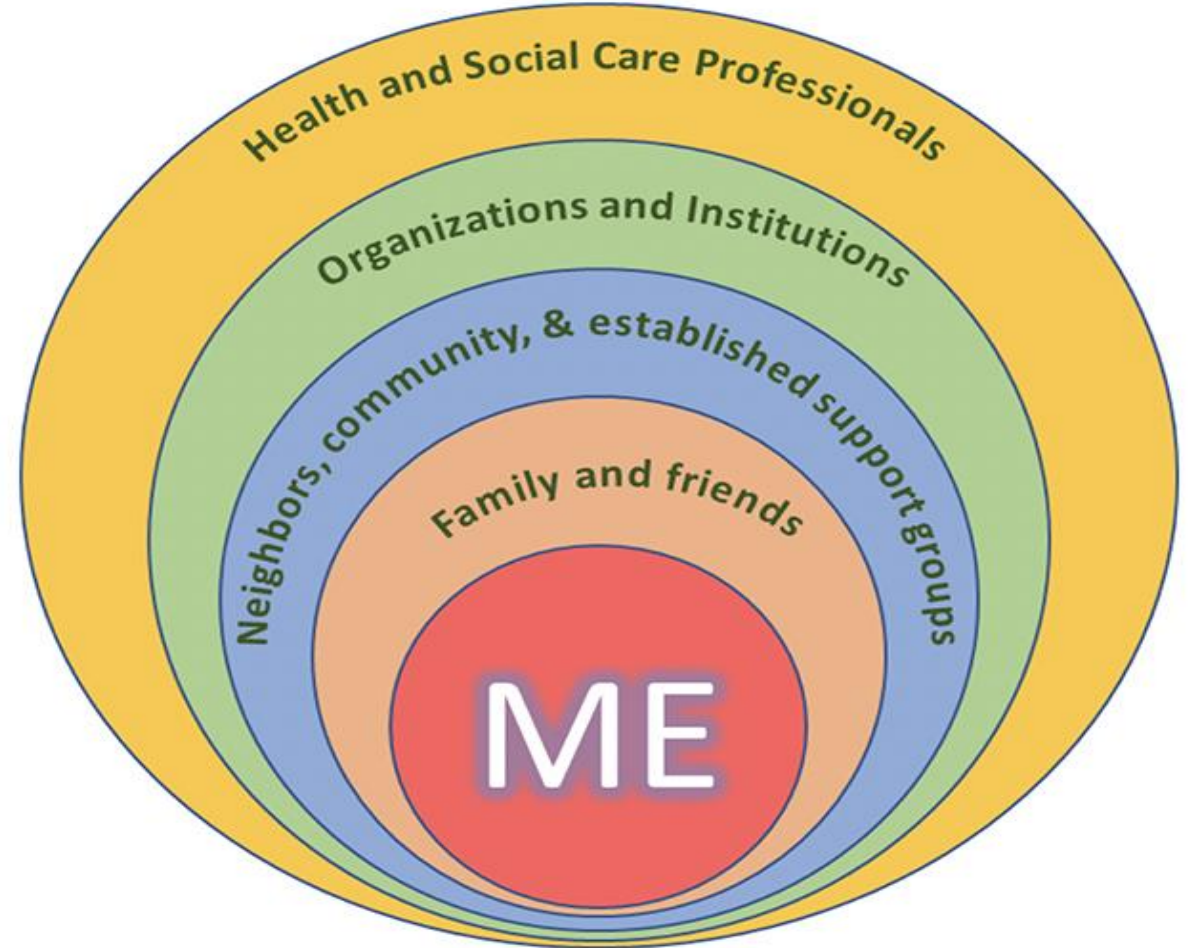
- In “charge” of the youth’s goals
- Someone who gives orders
- Someone who coddles the youth
- Overly involved **or** uninvolved
- Someone who belittles the youth perspective

An Adult Ally Is...

- Support the goals *of the youth*
- Coming from a place of trust
- Someone who believes in the youth
- Someone who knows the youth
- Someone who uses their unique knowledge set to guide the youth

The Vision for the Future

- Strength-based approach
- What is the:
 - Vision Statement
 - Existing Support System
 - Hopes, Dreams, and Fears
 - Needs and worries



Student Preparation

NTACT
THE COLLABORATIVE

**No Filter Part 1: The Nuts & Bolts of
Getting Ready for College with a
Disability**
Panel Presentation

November 14, 2024

NTACT
THE COLLABORATIVE

**No Filter Part 2: The Realities
of College Life**

Panel Presentation

December 12, 2024

Part 1: Getting Ready for College with Disabilities

Planning & Preparation

- Start early: Visit campuses, research disability services, and explore career interests.
- Know your rights: Accommodations must be requested in college. Self-advocacy is key.

Part 1: Getting Ready for College with Disabilities (cont.)

Key Differences

- College accommodations are not automatic—students must communicate needs.
- Greater independence is required to manage academics and supports.

More Part 1: Getting Ready for College with Disabilities

Strategies for Success

- Choose a college that fits both academics and accessibility needs.
- Be flexible—career goals can change over time.
- Use supports like vocational rehab, family, and campus resources.

Part 2: Realities of College Life for SWDs

Accommodations & Advocacy

- Must request and manage their own accommodations.
- Success requires clear, proactive communication with faculty.

Tools & Supports

- Assistive tech (e.g., screen readers, planners) can ease academic tasks.
- Use campus supports early—tutoring, counseling, disability services.

More Part 2: Realities of College Life for SWDs

Campus Life

- Plan for accessible housing, dining, and campus navigation.
 - Social inclusion improves through clubs and dorm events.
- Students

Independence & Growth

- Families shift to supportive guides.
- Flexibility and self-advocacy are essential for long-term success.

Who Can Help? Case Scenario Challenge

Exploring Partnerships for Students with Disabilities

Scenario 1: Transition & Employment

- Malik is a 19-year-old student with autism who recently aged out of high school services. He's starting a degree in digital media but struggles with job interviews and social interactions. He wants to find a part-time job but needs support.
- Who can help Malik gain employment skills, access job coaching, or find a part-time job that fits his needs?

Ideas for Scenario 1

Look for:

- Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR)
- Autism support providers
- Job coaching programs
- College career services with disability accommodations

Scenario 2: Housing & Stability

- Karina is a 24-year-old student with a psychiatric disability. She lost her housing after a hospitalization and is currently couch-surfing with friends. She's struggling to manage her classes and mental health appointments without stable housing.
- What agencies or organizations might help Karina find housing and mental health support?

Ideas for Scenario 2

Look for:

- County Mental Health/Behavioral Health Services
- Local housing authorities or rapid rehousing programs
- Community-based mental health agencies
- Disability-specific supported living programs

Scenario 3: Technology Access & Learning Support

- Jamal is a blind student studying criminal justice. He's skilled with a screen reader but is struggling to access course materials in a timely manner. He also wants help with transportation to class and local events.
- Which organizations or agencies could help Jamal access assistive tech and independent living skills?

Ideas for Scenario 3

Look for:

- Assistive Technology Centers
- Independent Living Centers (CILs)
- OVR for technology and mobility training
- Local paratransit or ADA transportation services

Scenario 4: Youth in Foster Care

- Tasha is a first-year student who was in foster care until she turned 18. She has a learning disability, no consistent support system, and is unsure how to access academic or financial resources for students with disabilities or foster care history.
- Which resources could support Tasha academically, financially, and emotionally?

Ideas for Scenario 4

Look for:

- Office of Children, Youth, and Families (OCYF) or foster care liaisons
- Disability Services Office + tutoring center
- Financial aid offices with knowledge of Chafee grants or ETV
- Community mentoring or support groups for youth formerly in care

Let's Share

Tell of any situations where collaboration with agencies have helped you support students.

Session Evaluation

tinyurl.com/AHEADFeedback

Your feedback helps shape
future programming.

Thank you for attending!

