

## **School District Training Building a Student-Centered Program for Students with Developmental Disabilities –Four Phase Program Patty Galbraith-Trainer**

School districts struggle to provide quality programs for students with developmental disabilities. Teachers typically are not trained in how to put together a structured program for this low-incidence population, and so instruction is often a random series of activities instead of predictable, systematic instruction based on IEP goals. I developed "Building a Student-Centered Program for Students with Developmental Disabilities" model, based on the work of Lou Brown and associates from the University of Wisconsin, to provide a framework for school teams (administrators, related service providers, school psychologists, teachers, paras) who work with these students from elementary grades through the age of 21. This model unites all of the team members together to work on common goals, using common language and structure to best meet the needs of these students.

Trainer, Patty Galbraith began teaching this model to school districts in Nebraska 9 years ago in a one day, NDE sponsored workshop entitled "Building A Student-Centered Program: Decision Making Tools to Help School Teams Build a Quality, Individualized Program for Students with Developmental Disabilities" Ms. Galbraith been concerned about the lack of follow through/ mastery of understanding for schools attending the training, "It is a great deal of information to absorb in one day". I have had the opportunity to provide long-term support, coaching and follow through with three schools within the ESU 10 region on this model. I began working with Ravenna in 2015, Central Valley in 2016 and Shelton in 2017. This has proven to be highly effective in meeting the educational needs of these students.

The training consists of four stages of implementation that I guide schools through in order for all of the staff to be proficient in the delivery of this model. One of the key components is that ESU 10 has designated a team member (Jamie Lewis) that I work closely with and mentor, so that as I phase out of the process, she can sustain the model and teach new staff people/other schools within ESU 10. After the initial training and planning session, I typically spend a day a month at the school. This might include observation with feedback, direct support of the teacher/staff, goal setting, as well as time spent with the designated mentor. I have found that it takes 2-3 years of coaching for full implementation and understanding of the model.

### **Phase 1: Understand**

-NDE training "Building a Student-Centered Program for Students with Developmental Disabilities"

-Model: Four cornerstone foundation pieces/four walls and how they interact

-Vocabulary:

- Non-school Instruction
- Age-appropriate
- Domains: Domestic, Community, Rec/Leisure, Vocational
- Embedded skills: Motor, Communication, Social, Functional Academics
- Pre-/and post-teaching
- Next environment/Teaching to the next environment
- Essential skills vs Negotiable skills
- Partial participation

-Differentiate between task and skill

-Staff roles: Related service providers, teacher, para educators

-Function of non-paid job training/labor laws

-Function of forms:

- Student Profile
- IEP at a Glance
- Task Analysis
- Parent Inventory
- Functional Academic Checklist
- Program Inventory
- Transition Planning Guide-Vocational
- IEP Priority Worksheet
- Community-Based Job Training Letter of Understanding
- Student Behavior Sheet
- Community Instruction Planning Sheet
- Productivity

-Data: various ways and need for collecting

-Question current activities: Is it age-appropriate? Functional? Which domain does it fit into?

-Program inventory: baseline of current programming

## **Phase 2: Prepare**

-NDE "Para 101" training

-Routinely scheduled para/teacher meetings

-Routinely scheduled related service/teacher meetings

-Communication with parents: program understanding

-Forms/training in how to use/consistency/timeline

-Physical classroom environment/materials (Age appropriate, domain areas)

-Establish staff communication center

## **Phase 3: Gather information**

Student: Team meeting on each student (not IEP meeting):

- Student IQ, age, services student qualifies for, time frame
- Current functional skill level: reading, writing, math, time...adaptations, teaching opportunities
- Motor, social, communication: current functional skill level...adaptions, teaching opportunities
- Behavioral needs assessment
- Community Instruction Needs form completed
- Level of student participation in IEP meeting

-Functional Academic Checklist

-Parent Inventory

-Transitional Planning Guide-Vocational (last semester of school for adult service provider)

-IEP Planning Form

## **Phase 4: Implement**

-Active student involvement in IEP

-IEP reflects goals in:

- domestic, vocational, community, and rec/leisure tasks
- motor, social, communication, and functional academic skills

-Task analysis written/documentation established for IEP goals

-IEP at a Glance completed/Student Profile shared with appropriate staff

- Selection of appropriate non-school instruction environments
- Completion of Community Instruction Planning Sheet
- Student's schedule determined by IEP needs and reflects:
  - predictable weekly flow of meaningful, systematic instruction
  - predictable staff to student assignments/groupings
- IEP Implementation Action Plan completed, with the Weekly Instructional Plan updated and shared weekly with related services for their input/with paras for instruction/administration for accountability
- Pre-and post-teaching as appropriate for each student reflected in Weekly Instructional Plan
- Parent involvement in instruction: lists, cleaning routines, games, etc.
- All tasks are age-appropriate, functional and fit within one of the four domains
- All embedded skills are taught within the four domains and in all environments
- Individual and class behavior plans in place
- All students are actively engaged at all times
- Students are grouped with peers
- All students are consistently given choices
- Consistent data collection
  - Student Profile
  - Parent input on non-school instruction sites

School & Community:

- Non-school instruction opportunities available within the 4 domains
- Inclusion opportunities within school and community

**What is needed in order for this to happen?**

- ✓ Full administrative support from ESU or district that would like to change their delivery system for students with developmental disabilities. This truly is a system's change and there must be support from the top down in order to make this successful.
- ✓ In order for the model to be sustainable after I phase out, the district/ESU must have a designated staff person who is passionate about this population, and who will be given release time from their typical work schedule so that I can mentor them.

**District Costs-** The trainer is made available to the districts at No Cost through the NDE Transition System Support Grant, on a first come first served basis.

To request a Building a Student-Centered Program for Students with Developmental Disabilities" support for school districts- workshop contact: **Nebraska Department of Education Special Education Transition Coordinator at 402-471-3147**