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JOHN F. KENNEDY CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS
PROFESSIONAL LEARNING FOR TEACHING ARTISTS:
INCLUDING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES
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>> Hello and welcome. This is Lisa Damico. I'm the coordinator here at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. We have many first-time listeners with us today. Today's webinar is one in a series of monthly Webinars that we host on a variety of topics related to arts, education, and disability. We have two webinars scheduled for November and December. We have all of your email addresses and will contact you with the registration links. In November, we have a webinar on the State of Arts and Aging by Dr. Gay Hannah. And then in December from our very own office, we have Sonja Cendak presenting on Strategies for Supporting Visual Artists. We hope you can join the webinars. And now for today's webinar, we have Sharon Malley. I will turn it over to her now and let her get started with her presentation.

>> Thank you. Okay. Well, I want to welcome all of the attendees. I'm delighted to be here with you today. I'm going to be covering basic information on including students with disabilities in your teaching. And I'm going to be doing it rather quickly because there's a lot of information to cover in the first hour. I will be taking questions at the end of each segment -- there are a couple of segments. I will also leave time for questions at the end of each segment. Altogether, that will be three different times for questions during the presentation.

And I know that Lisa said that if you have questions, you can send them to her and that at the end of each segment, we can look at your questions.

This is the knowledge that you would need to fully include students with disabilities. And it's basically four different areas. The first is special education law. The next is characteristics of disabilities. Next are accommodations and modifications that you would use in your work. And last is universal design for learning.

Because we only have an hour, I'm going to be covering the first three today; we will be offering universal design for learning in a later webinar.

The important thing for you to know is that special education provides needed supports to students with disabilities so that they can be successful in learning and achieving.

There is a federal law that is required by all schools and the law indicates that all students must receive a free and appropriate public education. And that special education law is I.D.E.A. That is the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

Okay. And so there is a special education process. And that is required through IDEA.

All schools have structured and monitored levels of

support for students with disabilities. And this process involves identification for students as eligible for services under IDEA. It includes testing of students. Once the process is completed, the result is that students are identified as having a disability and it's not a diagnosis. It's identification. So it's an identification of a particular disability. And that indicates that the students are eligible for services.

Okay. So these are the services. As I said, the first is the identification process. Once a student is identified, an individual education plan, also called an IEP, is developed. That is reviewed and revised yearly and then students are re-evaluated for eligibility every three years. The reevaluation is very similar to the first evaluation. And let me just say that the evaluation involves a preliminary identification that may begin as a recommendation made by a teacher or a parent. And then a series of tests are completed by psychologists, social worker and special ed. teacher and others. The tests are norm referenced. Once the student is identified as having a disability, the student is considered eligible for services and we will develop an IEP for the student. It's regulated and scientific.

Once the student has been identified as needing an IEP, a plan is formed. It's made up of all of the various people that are providing services for the student. As you see here, you have the LEA. That stands for local education agency or authority. That's an individual at the school who oversees all of the IEPs and makes sure that everyone is following the law in carrying out the IEP. During the IEP meeting, the special education teacher is usually the monitor or the case manager. They assure that the other people are contributing to the IEP. There might be related services that would include occupational therapists and physical therapists.

There are general education teachers that might be teaching the student, the parents and then other people who the parents might request. All of them come together for the purpose of assuring that the student can be most successful in school.

What is the IEP? You see the first word up here. That's an acronym. That's the PLOP. That's the present level of performance. That is the summary of the student's abilities, and actually I'm saying summary, it's more than summary. It's a full description of what the student is currently doing. And what they are able to do, what their achievement levels are.

It's in all different areas. It's not just the academic areas like reading and math and cognitive abilities or cognitive areas, but things like organization, social skills,

and emotional issues and so on. The PLOP is a description that covers a number of categories. The purpose is to identify strengths and needs of the student. What the strengths are of the student in all of these areas and then what the needs are of the student.

The next is a transition plan. And that is for students over the age of 14 or over the age of 16 depending on the state you are in. It focuses on three areas. That is employment, independent living and education. The focus in these three areas is on what the student will be doing beyond high school. So once the student has graduated or aged out of high school, what will he or she be doing? Will he be going on to vocational training? Will he be attending college or will he be focusing on independent living skills? Those sorts of things.

The next is the goals and the goals reflect directly back to the transition plan and the PLOP. Whatever the needs are that are identified in the PLOP become the goals. The goals are clearly stated and they are measurable. Basically the goals are what all of the individuals on the team who are working with the student will be focusing on. So basically all of the student's teachers and any of the related services.

The accommodations are what the teacher and the related service people, the kinds of various assistance that the student will receive. And so, it can be in the form of assistive technology or various supports like the student will learn in a group or one-on-one.

The services, that's the last big piece of the IEP. The services are what the student needs in terms of special education or general education. And what type of related services, occupational therapy and physical therapy and so on and the hours of the week that they receive the services. The IEP might say something like: if the student is in school for 30 hours, then 20 hours of that time will be special education and 10 hours will be in general education. If they need that much special education, often the general education is the electives which includes music, art, P.E.

And so, with the IEP, if it's being fully implemented in the correct way, then the student will be successful. There's a continuum of services in special ed. And supports are provided to students in the least restrictive environment.

What that means is that -- it doesn't mean that all students must be served in a fully inclusive environment. What it means is that the student is served in the environment that enables he or she to be least restricted. So, for instance, if a student is in a school, a large high school, and the student has very significant disabilities and the student needs one-on-one to do everything in the school from A to Z from going

to the cafeteria to sitting in the cafeteria to everything in the classroom and the student's disability is so significant that the student is not really accessing the education in the classroom because of the number of students in the large classroom, et cetera. Then in a sense the environment is more restrictive. The student is not really having the opportunity to socialize with other students because he or she is sort of confined. When we say least restrictive environment, for this student, it would be maybe in a smaller school with students with similar disabilities and the student will be learning in the smaller environment. The student is able to get around without an assistant, able to learn without an assistant, and feels a lot more comfortable.

That's kind of an extreme example of the term least restrictive environment. So looking at the continuum of services, special education is offered in these ways. Either the special education teacher serves as a resource to a general ed. teacher. That means a special education teacher is not necessarily in the classroom, but may be just popping in or maybe pulling a student out occasionally, but is also actually providing services to the general ed. teacher through planning and meetings and consultation.

The next way is when the special ed. teacher and the general ed. teacher are co-teaching. They are working together in the classroom. And they will plan together and actually teach together. There will be students in the class who need special education services.

Another way is a special education teacher having a self-contained classroom and teaching a class in which the students have similar disabilities. The teacher will have a small class of five to ten students.

Okay. With all of these scenarios, there might be paraprofessional teachers and they might provide assistance in any of these class configurations.

And the last way, which is what I described when I was talking about least restrictive environment, is students would attend a specialized school serving students with similar disabilities.

So I'm at the end of this section, I'm wondering if anyone has any questions at this point?

So we have no questions --

>> No questions at this point.

>> Okay.

>> Oh, actually we do have a question that just came in. "Will we be able to access a PDF of this PowerPoint to pass on and will the information be available to download?"

>> Yes, we can send out a copy of the PowerPoint

presentation. There's a recording that's being made of the webinar that you will receive by email an hour after it ends with a link to that recording. It's only temporarily available through that link until someone at the Center does their own webinar. You can contact me and ask me about having a recording of that webinar.

>> A few other questions Sharon. This is from Lisa Dennett. "I'm curious; you didn't mention the scenario where a student might have some classes that are with a special ed teacher but then other classes that are with a general ed class (the old "mainstream" model) Those teachers tend to not interact with each other.

>> That is a good question, yes. Looking back at the continuum of services, I'm going to go back to the scenarios. I'm assuming you are talking about in middle school or high school.

>> Why don't -- I will unmute Lisa and let her talk to you right now. Lisa?

>> Hi, Lisa.

>> Hello. Can you hear me?

>> Yes. Yeah. Are you talking about middle school or high school? Right?

>> Yeah. Yes.

>> What I described is not on this slide at all.

>> Exactly. Yeah. And that is like -- it can be in any of these configurations. Basically that is when students are changing classes and so maybe they are in general education classes and go to a special education class for some of the day some of their classes. And then what should be happening is that, and this is basically the law, is that the special ed. teacher needs to be sharing and working with the general ed. teachers regarding the student's IEP. So the general ed. teacher should have the student's goals and they should be meeting occasionally, checking in on each other, et cetera. That is pretty much across the board.

>> Does the law state how often they have to meet?

>> I don't believe it does. However, what the law does state is that all teachers who are teaching the students need to have the goals -- have -- basically have access to the full IEP. Have the goals and accommodations and working on those goals and accommodations.

>> Thank you.

>> You're welcome. That was a good question. Thank you, Lisa (Dennett). And Lisa (Damico), anything else?

>> I have another question. This is from Elda. "Do Teaching Artists that work for nonprofits or other non-school district organizations have access to student IEPs? Can we

request that classroom teachers share them?"

>> That is a really good question, Elda. I am going to be covering that as we move along. Just to tell you now so you are not in suspense, basically the law is because you are not part of the IEP team and you are not an employee of the school that you don't have access to the IEP. However, there are questions that you can ask that will help you to know what to do in terms of working with students with disabilities. It has to do with the accommodations and the modifications. And so as I move forward in this, you will see. And if it's still not clear, you can ask me again and we will talk a little further about it.

>> Okay. Thank you.

>> Okay.

>> All right. That's it for the questions.

>> All right. We are moving into a little bit different area here. That is - what is disability? Take a look at these words and I know that you are going to have some reactions wrapped around some of these words. Actually, at different times in our history, each one of these words was an accepted word in our vocabulary. They are no longer. Except "handicapped" is still used. It's not preferred as much by the disability community as the term "disability". We are going to get rid of them and move on to the next slide.

Basically, disability as we all know is really a label. And it's on a continuum. I'm getting this information from the National Institute of Disability and Rehabilitation Research. This is a definition that I latched onto and embraced. I feel strongly about it. Even though through IDEA, we have these various labels for students and adults. It's really something that's a human condition that we are all, at any moment in our lives, either more or less disabled. Think about that.

Any given moment or given year as we move throughout our lives and any different time of day, we could have a disability. It depends on many factors, such as the physical environment and the social supports that we have, et cetera. Think of someone you might know who is in a wheelchair. He pretty much needs to use his wheelchair all of the time. This individual, however, takes public transportation every day to work. Because there are curb cuts and elevators and so on, he's able to get to his office with public transportation and his office is on the eighth floor of a building downtown.

He contributes fully to the work in his office. And he has employees working for him, et cetera. He has a really good social life. He enjoys friends, has a family, et cetera, and at the end of the day, he goes home. Basically, I'm

describing anybody's day. Just because he's in a wheelchair, he doesn't really have a disability. There's nothing disabling happening during the course of his day. That's something to think about in terms of when people are fully supported in the community, which can be transferred to when students are fully supported in schools, then they might not necessarily have a disability in the sense that I'm talking about. I hope that makes sense to everybody.

Okay. On that note, here are a number of disabilities. I have two slides. I'm going to show you and go back to the slide. I'm going to show slide 16 and go back to slide 15. These are the disabilities that are identified by IDEA. And a little later, I will show you a website where you can access the description of each one of these disabilities. I'm going to be going over some of them, not all of them because we would be here a long time.

So as you can see, there are quite a number of them. I want you to look at these for a minute. And then we will look at slide 16 and we have a poll. Lisa, can you implement that?

>> This is our first poll.

>> >> So I would encourage you all to select one of these three options and the question is of all of the categories of disabilities identified by IDEA, what do you think are the most prevalent in schools. Choice one - autism, emotional disturbance, multiple disabilities. Choice two - autism, learning disabilities and intellectual disabilities. Choice three - learning disabilities speech or language impairments intellectual disabilities.

>> I will go back to the previous screen. Oh, they can only see the poll. Okay.

>> You have five seconds more. 75% of you have all voted. All right. Here are the results.

>> We had 10% who chose autism and multiple disabilities. 46% chose the number two. And 44% chose learning disabilities, speech or language impairments and intellectual disabilities. Last two were close.

>> Okay. Here we go. It turns out that C is the correct answer. And to explain this slide, this is a breakdown of the percentages of students with disabilities -- this is taking the students who are identified as having a disability and breaking it down into percentages of different disabilities. And about 9% of the overall student body of students in the U.S. are identified as having a disability. So this is the breakdown of the 9%. As you can see, learning disabilities is around 44%. Speech and language is 19%. Intellectual disabilities 8%. I'm rounding. Emotional disturbance, 7%. Other health impairments 9% and other disabilities combined 10%.

Okay? Just to explain, other health impairments, that includes attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder, diabetes, epilepsy, heart conditions, etc. The other disabilities combined, that includes autism at 3.7%, deaf/blindness which is less than .1%, developmental delay, multiple disabilities, orthopedic impairments, traumatic brain injury and visual impairments. Those are all at 1% or much less. Okay?

That source is from the 30th Annual Report to Congress. You can access that on the U.S. Department of Ed. website. This is completed annually and takes a few years to crunch the numbers and get it up on their website.

>> We had a quick question. "Are there any statistics more recent than 2006? The prevalence of Autism has increased since then." and "Where does autism fit?"

>> There might be some unofficial numbers, but this is the official. As I said, it takes the government a while to get the report out. They are doing this every year. When you look at the full report, the document has a number of tables and statistical analysis. When you look at the numbers for intellectual disability and autism, you will see that intellectual disability is going down at pretty much the same rate that autism is going up. And not exactly, but it is close, so you know, one thing that we do know, those of us who have worked in the disability field for a long time, people with autism used to be identified as having intellectual disabilities. Now, there's much more of a clear identification. Yes, autism is increasing and I don't know what the percentage is in relation to this - this whole pie at this point.

And so, I'm sorry. Yeah, in the last six years. But it might not be as much as you think. It's just that it's -- it's just being focused on more because there are increases. But it's not like huge leaps. Was there another question as well?

>> It was "where does autism fit in?"

>> Okay. And it's in the other disabilities combined in the 10.3%.

It's about 4%.

>> And is autism considered an intellectual disability?

>> No. That's what I'm saying. At this point, there is a distinction. It used to come under that larger identification and now it is a separate identification. Basically what's happening is that more and more students who used to be identified as having an intellectual disability are being identified as having autism. That's why you see the percentage for intellectual disability slightly decreasing and autism slightly increasing. That's one factor. Not the only

reason. That's one factor.

>> All right. That's it for the questions for right now.

>> All right. What I'm going to do is talk about the disabilities - the identified disabilities that are the most prevalent. And also autism because I knew that we would have a lot of questions about autism. Even though it's not -- it still is not one of the most prevalent, and it's important to understand that. If you are in a school -- you know, with a mix of students from the district served by the school, there will be some students in the school with autism. It's not the huge percentage that the media seem to want us to believe.

Okay. The first is specific learning disabilities. And so what I'm going to do is just give you a little scenario. Meet Gerald. When he started first grade, his teacher began teaching students how to read. After many lessons, the teacher observed that he was struggling with identifying certain letters and matching them to sound. His mother was puzzled because he was bright and quick to learn new information. He was learning addition math facts, for instance, and as the school year progressed, however, he continued to have difficulty in combining letters to form words.

In second grade, Gerald continued to struggle with reading, and this was reflected in his writing as well. His mother gave permission to the school for evaluations, to determine what was causing his problems. From the tests, it was determined that he has a learning disability. He is now in the fifth grade and has made much progress through his special education plan. He works with a reading resource teacher daily and contributes to his monthly class newsletter. So that's Gerald's story.

So just to give you an overview of learning disabilities, I think it's important for you when you see that 44% of the students with disabilities have a learning disability, it's important to understand learning disabilities because if you are going to be working with students in a general education classroom, chances are, there will be a student in that class who has a learning disability.

And this is a general term for specific kinds of learning problems. And it most often affects these categories that you can see, reading, writing, listening and speaking and doing math. It can affect just one of the categories. It can affect more than one.

So, for instance, it can affect reading and writing. But a student can be really strong in math or vice versa. It can affect a student's ability to reason. However, the student is reading really well. So the interesting thing is the little

tidbit that actually one in every five people has a learning disability. It's not otherwise expected. This is a term that I like to use because you don't realize necessarily that an individual has a learning disability. Because there's not anything that would indicate that.

If you are working with a group of students in the classroom, an example of how you might have a clue would be if you pass out something for students to read and Johnny over here is kind of misbehaving and not looking at the page and he doesn't want to focus on it, et cetera.

You might want to consider that maybe Johnny can't read it. And that would be surprising because he seems social and smart - but maybe he can't read or has difficulty reading. These are some things to consider. Students with learning disabilities tend to be self-aware especially as they progress through school. And so there might be some behaviors or other characteristics that go along with the disability because they figured out ways to get around things or maybe sometimes manipulate a situation if the learning disability is not being addressed. That's something important to think about.

The next is speech or language impairments. And I have a short story about Cynthia. Meet Cynthia. She has started first grade and is excited to be with all of her new friends. She enjoys learning to read and bringing home beginning reading books from her school library. Once a day she meets with a speech language pathologist, because she also has a speech disorder. Her speech tends to be very slow, soft and slurred. The difficulties are caused by weak muscles in the tongue, mouth and jaw. She and the pathologist work to strengthen the muscles, often by reading her favorite books.

So, I've broken this down into two categories. And so basically the important thing to know about speech or language impairments is that it's either receptive or expressive language. Students who have difficulties with expressive language might be non-verbal or might have difficulties being understood. And students with difficulties with receptive language are not understanding of what has been said. This can influence the ability to read and write and communicate. It's important to know that speech or language impairments can be a characteristic of other disabilities. I mean, there can be an overlap. So a student with an intellectual disability might have a speech or language impairment.

Okay? The next is intellectual disabilities. This is Roy. He's looking forward to going to his new middle school next year. He's been preparing for the move for some time. His teacher took him on a walking field trip to meet the new school and teacher. He will be leaving the elementary school and knows

what to expect. Going for the visit made him feel better about the move because he was unsure what it would be like. While walking to the school, the teacher asked him to point out familiar signs and symbols such as the crosswalk signal for crossing the street. When he goes to his new school, he will learn practical skills that will help him with daily living as well as general education subjects, like science and social studies.

Okay. So intellectual disabilities. The old term that we no longer use is mental retardation. I'm sure that a lot of you are familiar with this disability. And it affects conceptual and social and practical skills, that need to be apparent before the student is age 18. These are examples, for instance, having difficulty telling time would be conceptual reasoning. Social skills, would be difficulties maybe understanding social nuances. And then practical skills, such as being able to carry out daily living skills, taking care of oneself, getting around the community, et cetera. That's intellectual disabilities. Down Syndrome is an intellectual disability. Most of us know people with Down Syndrome or have had interactions with people with Down Syndrome.

And so next is emotional disturbance. Meet William. He's in middle school and has always been a really good student. In the past year, he has had more and more difficulty concentrating. He brings home lots of books with the intention of doing all of his homework on time, but he just doesn't want to get started. Invariably, he falls asleep, even though he got a good night's sleep the night before. At school, he has trouble paying attention in class and doesn't want to participate when there are group activities. He has stopped attending his service club and, in fact, doesn't want to talk much with the friends he has made in the club. Because this has gone on for some time, his teachers and parents have decided that he will need an evaluation so he can receive specialized services to address his possible depression and educational needs.

All right. So for emotional disturbance, I think what's important to understand in terms of the work that you are doing is that when students are reluctant to participate or this is going on or that is going on, in terms of various behaviors, it is always good to take into consideration that there might be something underlying and it doesn't have anything to do with you or your lesson. There might any number of other factors in a student's life. It might be that the student is dealing with some emotional issues. Okay?

Some of the things that are manifested depend on the emotional disturbance. Inability to learn. Inappropriate behaviors or feelings. Unhappiness or depression and symptoms

or fears that are associated with personal school problems.

Okay? And so I'm covering -- I'm covering some of the big ones. I'm covering the disabilities that not only are prevalent, but that might be not so obvious. Okay? So now I'm going to talk about autism spectrum disorder. And here is Carrie's story. I have this one and I have one more and then if you have questions, then we will take questions because I know I'm covering a lot of information quickly.

Okay. So meet Carrie. She has settled into her routine at her elementary school using a picture schedule that is on her iPad. The pictures give her the sequence of events and various subjects for the day. It is important for her to have all of the events of the day on the schedule with no changes. She does not use many words to communicate, but when she needs something, she can point to a picture displayed on her iPad and verbally say the word. She prefers to sit away from other students when there are group activities, and sometimes likes to walk back and forth in the back of the room. Her favorite subject is art. She loves to draw colorful pictures of dogs and the art teacher thinks her drawings are awesome.

Okay. So autism spectrum disorder. First of all, important to know that it is identified early. It is evident before the age of 3 usually. Something very important to know and understand is that there are -- it's a spectrum. So there is a huge range of characteristics of autism. There's a broad range of differences across people with autism.

And so the things I've listed are things that cut across most people with autism. That is, it does significantly affect verbal or non-verbal interaction. A student might be non-verbal or the opposite would be that a student with autism is quite verbal, but there are social difficulties.

It can adversely affect educational performance. Students with autism might demonstrate repetitive activities. Repetitive -- can also be manifested in repetitive conversations or sort of themes that a student might like to talk about. There's a tendency to resistance to change. And that can be very extreme or not so extreme. It can be a student needing reassurances about what's going to happen the next day or a student needing a full picture schedule that describes everything that's going to happen all day of every day.

There can be unusual responses to sensory experiences. A student with autism might have difficulties with lighting or being in a crowd or too much noise and there's a tendency to not understand abstractions or generalize information. A student with autism will tend to not understand nuances or abstractions and really stick to the facts. Facts are really important.

And not be able to read other people's emotions. So

those are some of the characteristics of autism. And that's autism.

The next is twice exceptional. This was not on your list. But I wanted to point this out because this is -- it's not indicated in IDEA. We do have -- we do work with students who have a dual exceptionality. That is a student with a disability who is also gifted.

And I know if many of you have been working with students for some time, then you can certainly think of those students who you've worked with who do meet those characteristics.

Meet Amanda. She's in middle school. When she was in the early grades, she had difficulties with learning simple math facts and basic calculations. She continues to struggle with math, still not retaining math facts for the four basic operations and demonstrating difficulties with math reasoning. She performs very well in most of her other subjects, especially English. She is an excellent writer and had a short story accepted in a national children's magazine. Her scores on achievement tests indicate that she is highly gifted in written language. Just to add, basically she has a learning disability in math. Basically students can be twice exceptional.

So a couple of examples would be learning disability and giftedness or autism and giftedness. And this does hold true for the arts. As many of you might have experienced.

Okay. So here are some sources for all of the information about disabilities and the first one, which is NICHCY, has wonderful descriptions of each disability that is identified by IDEA. Any questions at this point?

>> Yes, Sharon. Are OCD and ODD emotional disturbances?

>> Yes. Oppositional defiance disorder and obsessive compulsive disorder. They come under emotional disturbance. If you go to the NICHCY website, I believe it will identify the different emotional disturbance categories that you might encounter with school age students.

>> Any questions?

>> We have a question from Deborah Stewart.

>> Okay.

>> Here you go, Deborah.

>> Hi, Deborah.

>> It will be good if you talk a little bit -- hi, can you hear me okay?

>> Yes. Uh-huh.

>> Oh, good. I thought it might be good to talk a little bit about the autism spectrum in a broader way. I have a grandson at the age of 14 was just diagnosed with mild

Asperger's. I think a problem with it as a term, the term cerebral palsy is a trash can term. There's such a broad range I think it's important for teaching artists to know that there aren't prescriptive answers for how to work with children and who have this as a diagnosed disability. Some of them like a lot of contact. Some of them are very communicative and look you right in the eye. Some of them can't bear to be touched. It's a huge range of ways that you can successfully interact with these kids. I want to sort of comment.

>> Thank you, Deborah. Yes, definitely. I like to say that if you've met a student with autism, you have met a student with autism. In other words, you did a much better way of conveying that. Every student with autism is unique. There are only a few descriptions that kind of cut across what the broad spectrum of autism is.

But I -- you know, I've worked with the full range myself. And so students with a significant disability with autism do need a lot of supports in terms of accommodations and modifications and so on in terms of teaching.

And students who are sort of on the other end, I just -- I don't like to use quantitative, but students who have autism who are not significantly affected can be in general education courses learning the general curriculum. They might have difficulties with abstractions. There's a broad range and thank you so much, Deborah.

>> Anyone else?

>> Yes, we have a question from Katherine O'Brien. What does a student do? Where does he or she go to be tested to get an official diagnosis of autism?

>> The diagnosis is -- the diagnosis occurs generally before students enter school. So it's -- it is done by a physician. That's not something that is performed at the school level.

>> Okay?

>> Anything else?

>> That's all of the questions I have at this point.

>> Okay.

>> Here is what I have done. We are into the last part. This should take probably about ten minutes. Because I'm trying to just sort of bring everything together in this sort amount of time and because it makes sense for you in terms of the work that you do. We've identified the challenges you would find across the disabilities. Here are eight challenges that you might - (I'm getting feedback)

>> Anyway, sorry. Here are challenges that kind of take into account the various disabilities. You don't have to think about the student has this disability or that disability.

What are the challenges that you might encounter in the classroom? Physical gross motor challenges, fine motor, hearing or visual impairments, communication challenges, reading challenges and nonreaders, sensory challenges and cognitive processing challenges. This covers the range of what I'm calling challenges or difficulties that students in your classroom might have.

Okay. So what's important for you to be able to do is use accommodations. Accommodation is actually something that the student can -- basically, it's a change that helps the student overcome or work around a disability, right? And it's -- it's usually particular to a student. It's like a particular student might need to use an assistive technology device, for instance, because he is unable to communicate using full sentences or so on. So the student might have verbal disabilities.

The example I have is if a student has difficulty writing, then that student could give the answer orally. So there are a number of different kinds of accommodations that you can do within the classroom.

And I will be talking about that more. And modifications are what you would do with your lesson plan or with your lessons that enable students who may not be able to do the lesson, like complete the lesson or the assignment, in the full way. So, for example, you might make an assignment less complex.

Okay? All right, so here is what -- this goes back to that early question from Elda I believe -- is what you can request from teachers. You cannot request - can I see the IEP? You can't say who are the students in the classroom who have disabilities?

What you can do, and hopefully you are in a meeting with teachers before you do your lesson or residency or whatever chunk of time that you are working with the students, what you can do is say, are there students who require modifications? And then you can follow up. If so, which students and what accommodations or modifications do you use? That starts the dialogue that teachers can then give you the information -- teachers can give you the information that you need in terms of what they are doing with particular students in the classroom.

Okay. Now, what this doesn't -- what I'm not covering right now is universal design for learning which is a full approach to fully include all students, okay? And, however, I believe that this gives you a foundation for then learning about universal design for learning because what this does is enable you to think about accommodations and modifications that you can do and embed them into your lessons

so that more and more students are included without having to think about particular disabilities that are in the classroom. But can you -- can you sort of target all of the challenges that you might encounter in the classroom? Okay?

So, for instance, for physical gross motor challenges, here are sample accommodations that might be appropriate if you are doing a various arts education. I have a number of accommodations that I have listed, I've broken it down by art form for the various challenges. I'm going to go through the eight challenges and give you some examples. But I have a much longer list which I will be happy to share when we share the power point. And as I said, it's broken down by art form.

Here are some -- I'm going to go over them quickly. For example, if you are doing a movement based activity - allow students to move in ways they are most able. Allow them to have breaks if stamina is a constraint and if students are in wheelchairs or scooters, allow them to work with a partner in ways that work best for them. Okay?

Okay. So fine motor challenges, provide wider or thicker writing tools if you are doing something in art or any kind of writing. Provide a modified mouse if that's what they are using. Also too, in terms of this one, the modified mouse, a lot of students receiving special education services -- who are using accommodations will already be using them and it's just a matter of making sure that you incorporate that into what you are doing.

Also, allow students to give verbal or gestural directions if they are not able to manipulate objects. If they have a fine motor challenge that is significant and they are unable to work with their hands, they can give directions to someone else. This way they can still be engaged in the activity.

Hearing impairments - using sign language or an interpreter. Providing all instructions in writing or on the border or handout. Minimize extraneous sounds in and outside of the classroom. Provide adequate lighting so that the students can read lips or sign language and non-verbal gestures. And allowing them to feel the pulse if you are doing music.

Visual impairments - provide directions and other written materials in braille or large print. So I mean, that's just in general that you would provide verbal directions and verbal descriptions of pictures - any directions you give in writing you should also give verbally and in pictures. Provide access to text to speech computer programs if that's what they are used to using and provide a tactile environment with a variety of supplies and manipulatives when doing art.

And communication challenges - provide visual cues.

Responses can be physically demonstrated written or drawn. Use students' preferred communication assistive technology of course and allow students to perform the action while another student narrates.

Reading challenges or nonreaders - provide verbal directions coupled with other directions. Provide concept maps, graphic organizers and pair students with students who can read when using scripts.

>> Sharon, could you provide examples of visual cues, please?

>> Okay. A visual cue is anything that is visually presented. So it could be a gesture. It could be something that you have someone do. It could be a picture or an object. Anything that the student can see visually.

Okay? Great. So sensory challenges would be to prepare students in advance using a picture or written schedule. This is what I talked about with students with autism that some students might need to know what they are going to be doing in advance. And they might need a picture or a written schedule. But it's not the case for all students with autism. Provide an area with reduced activity away from other students. Again, if needed. In other words, if you are doing a group activity, don't insist that all students have to be in the group if you can see that one student really needs to kind of self-isolate a bit. Provide step by step directions. Allow students to move around and take breaks as needed and minimize loud sounds and bright lights and chaotic group activity.

And then this is the last slide. Except for my little ending slide. Cognitive processing challenges. Simplify directions. Speak in short, concise sentences. Check for understanding through eye contact and ask to repeat your directions if needed. And then there's other accommodations that you can use that are listed for the reading, communication and sensory challenges.

Okay? So let me just say that that was a lot. And I just threw a lot of information out to you in terms of different kinds of accommodations. There's also ways that you can modify lessons which I have not gone in to. And, again, I think it's going to be important when we do the Universal Design for Learning webinar that will bring all of this together in a nice package.

I want to just in closing, because I'm just going through so much factual information that I just want you all of you to know, those of you who haven't had much experience working with students with disabilities, I have, and it's been my life's work and it has been incredibly fulfilling. Students with disabilities have taught me much more than I could ever

teach them. And so if you're new going into this, just plunge in wholeheartedly because you will be definitely rewarded. I just -- I have wonderful friends who I have acquired along my way in my teaching who happen to have disabilities. I feel like my life has been really rich from having all of these wonderful opportunities.

So that is not me (referring to picture in last slide). But I do enjoy doing visual art and sometimes I do end up looking like this. An older version of it. Okay. So Lisa, so we have any more questions?

>> We have a couple of polls that we didn't get to.

>> That's right.

>> If you all are ready to take a few polls, we will do that and then I have a question that's waiting and hopefully you will have more questions that you would like to ask Sharon.

>> Shall I answer the question first?

>> Would the school be responsible for providing tools like a modified mouse or should an artist be prepared to provide this? And is having an aid considered an accommodation?

>> In terms of the mouse or any tool like that, I should stress this a little bit more, this goes back to the IEP and all of the services that students receive who are in special education. The student will already have most if not all of those kinds of modifications. You're not expected to bring anything that technical. And that's -- you know, that's why I thought it was really important for you to have the overview in the beginning of what special ed. is because there should be a lot of things already in place. Basically for you, it's a matter of understanding what is there for the students.

When you have that dialogue with the teachers, what are the students using? And then you want to take advantage of that. And your second question had to do with an aid? That would be the paraprofessional? Is that correct?

>> Is having an aid considering an accommodation?

>> If a student -- it's tricky with the law. At one point, it was not to be written in the IEPs. I'm not sure of the federal law. I'm not sure if it's an official accommodation. Maybe someone else listening in might know the answer to that. If a student does have like a one-on-one assistance in the classroom, then that's a part of that student's plan or sort of services, I would say. I think each district handles it differently

>> Okay?

>> All right. That's all the questions that I have at this point. Should we launch a few polls and if you have questions, this will be a good time for you to type them up. Let's do our first poll. How about, wait a second --

>> Lisa?
>> Okay.
>> Let's do the poll that we were going to do last.
>> Which are the most prevalent challenges?
>> Yes.
>> And then the poll that we were supposed to do first because it's more of a general questioning.
>> Sure. Here we go. So which are the most prevalent challenges for which you will need to incorporate modifications? Physical/fine motor and physical/gross motor challenges. Or two, communication challenges and cognitive processing challenges or three hearing impairments and visual impairments.
>> Here are the results. Physical fine motor and gross moreover challenges 21%. Communication colleges and cognitive processing challenges received 70%. And hearing impairments and visual impairments received 9%.
>> Very good. It was B. And the reason being - this is good. This means that most of you have synthesized the information. The communication challenges and cognitive processing challenges reflect back to learning disabilities and the communication disabilities from the earlier slides that demonstrated the numbers of -- the percentage of students with the varying disabilities in schools.
So you're less likely to have a student with a hearing impairment or visual impairment or fine motor or gross motor challenge in your class. Okay?
Sharon, it looks like we are in 40-second countdown.
>> So I will thank you all for joining us today.
>> Did you have anything else to add?
Thank you so much. I could feel your energy even though I couldn't see anybody.
>> So thank you all for joining us. As I said earlier, you will receive an automatic email from the go-to webinar program asking you to complete a brief survey that will be helpful for us in determining future topics and what you liked about this presentation. If you have any questions or comments, please contact me, Lisa Damico. My email address is LVDamico@kennedy-center.org or you can give me a call at 202-416-8868. Thank you, good-bye.

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