

Transition Planning and Pathways for Students Transitioning to Post-Secondary: The Importance of Planning with the End in Mind (Transcript)

Presented by: Ryan Machete

[SLIDE: Transition Planning and Pathways for Students Transitioning to Post-Secondary].

Speaker: Ryan Machete

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[Moderator]: Hello everyone, we're going to get started now. Welcome to LD@school's first of four webinars for 2014 - 2015! My name is Cindy Perras and as LD@school's Educational Consultant, I will be moderating today's webinar.

[SLIDE: Image logo LD@school.

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[SLIDE: Image that says 'Welcome we're glad you're here!'].

[Moderator]: The LD@school team is very pleased to welcome our guest speaker, Ryan Machete, who will be speaking to us this afternoon about Transition Planning and Pathways for Students Transitioning to Post-Secondary: The Importance of Planning with the End in Mind.

Just to let everyone know, all webinar participants except for the presenter have now been muted for the remainder of the presentation; once Ryan Machete has finished his presentation, we will be opening up the floor for questions. Over the course of the presentation, if you would like to ask any of the LD@school team a question, you may enter your text in the bottom box of the control panel and choose to send it to the staff from the dropdown menu underneath.

[SLIDE: What we will be sending you:

1. *PowerPoint slides*
2. *Webinar Evaluation Survey*
3. *Webinar Recording*

[Moderator]: After the webinar, we will be sending out presentation slides, as well as a link to a survey to provide us with feedback on the webinar. In approximately three weeks, the webinar recording will be available and we will send out a link to all participants.

[SLIDE: Welcome!]

Speaker: Ryan Machete, Transition Facilitator for PDSB

Image of Ryan Machete and Peel District School Board logo]

[Moderator]: That takes care of all housekeeping, so let's get started.

On behalf of the LD@school team, it is my pleasure to introduce our presenter, Ryan Machete. Ryan is the ABA Transitions Facilitator for the Peel District School Board (PDSB). Currently, Ryan works with students receiving special education supports and services at both the elementary and secondary levels, including students with learning disabilities. His role is to ensure that by connecting schools and families with community partners and resources, each secondary-age student successfully transitions into adulthood in any of the pathways, including post-secondary, employment, and community.

Previously, Ryan worked as a Job Developer with the Coalition for Persons with Disabilities, coordinating the Work Readiness Program and the Student Transition Program, in partnership with the Peel District School Board.

And now, I will turn the presentation over to Ryan.

[SLIDE: Transition Planning and Pathways for Students Transitioning to Post-Secondary. The Importance of Planning with the End in Mind. Ryan Machete, Transitions Facilitator for PDSB.]

[Presenter]: Thanks Cindy.

Thanks for having me to do the webinar. I am very excited to be able to talk about transitions for students going to post-secondary. Just to re-introduce myself; my name is Ryan Machete; I am the transition facilitator for the Peel district school board and I work with all students in special education ranging from Kindergarten all the way up until they're 21 and ensuring essentially that no student sits on the couch for ten years after they leave us. And so my previous experiences as a Child Developer for Person with Disabilities has really helped me sort of see what happens when a transition has gone really well for students and when a transition has needed a little bit more work and so, it sort of carried me with a bit of sense of urgency when I'm working with students as I know potentially what could happen if we don't put in a proper supports for that student as they transition into adulthood. A lot of the

presentation I will be giving today is based on over the past year or so. There's been kind of, roughly about a hundred and seventy transition meetings and consulted on over 2,020 transition plans. And, then, this year will be an additional probably 55 transitioning so far as of this morning in the transition meetings that has taken place. So, that's where a lot of this information comes, sort of like real transition meetings that are involved with parents, students, community partners, teaching staff and advocates in the community that work with students outside of their home as well. So, that's where all of this information is coming from, and it's important to really sort of think about what the end game is for that student planning with the end in mind is extremely crucial. And, so, what we try to establish with a lot of our students who are transitioning is to ask where are they going, what is a very focused point on that particular student, and making sure that we individualize for that student, making sure that they understand the profile of that student. And then we do sort of gap analysis, where they or what skills they need to focus on in order to get to that point where they're successfully transitioning and then what skills we really need to focus on. And, then if we build in milestones, then we build in you know, timelines used to have a focused approach, and know who is responsible then that creates a much more fulsome transition into adulthood regardless of the pathway, regardless of the person's disability or the person's dedication within school. So that's more or less of what we are going to be talking about today. In specifically for the person with learning disabilities that are going to be transitioning in post-secondary. And also how everything ties into that.

[SLIDE: Setting the Context

Text on slide: Where is the student going after they graduate? If we don't know where a student is going after they graduate, then what are we preparing them for?]

So, to set the context of what it is we are going to talk about. When I go in to meet with the school and I meet with the student for the, you know, possibility the first time or meeting with school staff is that when I start the whole transition processes, the question that I really like to ask is 'Where is the student going after they graduate?'. It seems like a very simple question, but you'd be surprised. And, so, what that does by starting that conversation about where a student is going is it really gives a focus to the conversation, it really starts to give a central point to the conversation when we talk about transitions, and then the reason being is that, and I put it back to the school and I said 'Well, if we don't know where the students is going, then what are we preparing for?'. And so, for neuro typical students that are going into, they're in the academic or applied stream, we know where are they going, we know that either they're going to college or they're going to university or we know that what it is we exactly need to prepare the students for because, it's all very much laid out in their timetable and their curriculum, we know all of these things. So sometimes, because transitions for students with learning disabilities and students in the special education, the road to adulthood, the road to transitioning into either post-secondary or employment is not necessarily linear. It tends to sort of deviate from the typical path that you would experience. So again it's really sort of focusing in on exactly where that student is going. Are they going to post-secondary? Which program? What school? Because that has a huge difference too on whether a student is going to be able to access the appropriate amount of supports they're getting.

Not every school is the same. Not every program is the same. Not every course is the same. It's all very much different. And, so when we start to talk about transition planning and where is this going that incorporates the transition plan. And, so what I found, and what I continue to find is that the IEP and the transition plan is really the central hub to transition planning. It's where we come back to. So whatever might change within the scope of what that person's plan is, or something changes within the school for programming or something changes for their course or something just changes, then we bring it back to the transition planning team. Where does this fit into the transition plan and how is going to create a fulsome transition for the student into adulthood and what do we need to change in order to support that?. So by doing this backward planning, by doing exactly where the student's going ahead of time, and we start this very early on, we really start to think about the what the eligibility criteria is for that particular pathway, for that particular course. Every path for a student has it's own depending on the eligibility. Whether be a day program, whether be employments, supports employment, career employment, college or university. It all has a minimum that the students need to be in. So we try, to make sure that they aware of what's expected, where are they, where are the gaps, where are the challenges, how do we the program the IEP in the transition planning and what sort of drives that? And it brings us back to that third party focal point when we're talking about how to transition for that student. So the importance of setting those milestones is that it always gives us the next step, so when we talk about actions, we always talk about next steps, the milestone and making sure that we set realistic expectations of what the next step is. That really helps move the whole process along. It gives us a really sort of focused approach.

[SLIDE: Policy/Program Memorandum No. 156 (PPM 156)

Text on slide: PPM 156 – Supporting Transitions for Students with Special Education Needs.

A transition plan must be developed for all students who have an IEP, whether or not they have been identified as exceptional by an Identification, Placement, and Review Committee (IPRC), including those identified as exceptional solely on the basis of giftedness. The transition plan is developed as part of the IEP. All transition plans must be developed in consultation with the parent(s), the student (as appropriate), the postsecondary institution (where appropriate), and relevant community agencies and/or partners, as necessary.]

So how do we do that?

PPM 156, which is the transition plan for all the students with an IEP. It's for any student, so any student from kindergarten through 21 that has an IEP is required to have a transition plan, and PPM 156 is what drives that. So just to read from the slide itself: 'a transition planning must be developed for all students who have an IEP, whether or not they have been identified as exceptional by an IPRC, including those identified as exceptional solely on the basis of giftedness. The transition plan is developed as part of the IEP. All transition plans must be developed in consultation with the parent(s), the student, the post-secondary institution, and relevant community agencies and/or partners, as necessary'.

So, it's a multi-pronged approach to making sure that all supports are put in place and what we need to make sure is that student is moving through and as the move out is that whatever stage their moving towards is that we layer on all of that support, we layer support as they move forward and we try to build in a lot of safety nets. We try to make sure that we have plan B's, we try to make sure we have plan C's, and we try to make sure that everything that we're trying to achieve for that student is layered in support as they move through. And, so by having their family there and by having the community partner at the table, by making sure that the right staff are at the table. I was at a meeting yesterday in school where we had the student, parents, a teacher—sorry, we had a teacher, teaching assistant the Spec. Ed. head, and we had a community partner also at the table with us. , And the community partner when they came in were shocked that we had as many people as we did for the student, but saw very quickly the importance of having everyone at the table discussing what this transition for the student is going to look like. You know, really saw that is gave a more fulsome approach to the whole idea of transitioning for the student. So we were really able to come away from that meeting and with clear set goals and knowing what's everyone's role and responsibility is working towards transitioning the student and exactly what the pathway was, what supports are going to be put in place and who is going to be responsible for what. And, so the tradition plan was being updated as we were going through this process. And, so the tradition plan was where we brought everything together to make sure that all this hard work is documented. So when we get into transition plans a little bit later in this presentation is that the schools already, typically do transition plans. It's just something that we do, we've always sort of done it, but this is a way to make sure that we're documenting all the great things that we do, and so it's a way to make sure that we showcase all of the things that we've done for the student but it also gives us something to come back to and make sure that we're on track and we're not missing anything.

[SLIDE: Policy/Program Memorandum No. 8 (PPM 8)]

Text on slide: PPM 8 – Identification of and Program Planning for Students with Learning Disabilities.

This memorandum sets out requirements for school boards for the identification of and program planning for students who have learning disabilities. The determining factor for the provision of special education programs and/or services is not any specific diagnosed or undiagnosed medical condition, but rather the needs of individual students based on the individual assessment of strengths and needs.

The requirements set out in this memorandum will take effect January 2, 2015.]

So PPM, or Policy/Program Memorandum number 8, is specifically for the Identification of and Program Planning for Students with Learning Disabilities. So it's very specific just for persons with learning disabilities—or students with learning disabilities. So this memorandum sets out requirements for school boards for the identification of and program planning for students with learning disabilities. The determining factor for the provision of special education programs and/or services is not any specific diagnosed or undiagnosed medical condition, but rather the needs of individual students based on the individual assessment of strengths and needs. And, so I think that what PPM 8, other than the fact that it points out specifically that it's for a person with learning disabilities, is that I really like the line where it says “the individual assessment of strengths and needs”. It really takes into account that students,

regardless of their designation or regardless of their diagnoses, regardless of a label that a student has been given. So they're all individual. They all have their own strengths, they all have their own needs and they all have their own challenges, because there's a—in ABA, when we talk about a profile of a student, what that means is that it's very rich, it's very deep as far as what it is that drives the student to be successful, and some of the things that are potentially challenging for the students. If we really focus on the fact that this is an individual and this individual has a lot of great things going for them but also has some challenges, what that looks like, and how different parts of the student's profile of school can really impact how it is that they transition through and out of school, and it impacts pathways, and it impacts the necessary supports that have to happen whether they staying with autism. Once you've met one person with autism, then you've met one person with autism, and that's very true. And, it's also very true with a lot of students with various different designations and disabilities.

So it's very important to keep in mind. So what PPM 8 does is it really tries to inform us what is it specifically for, a person with learning disabilities. So very much like for those of us that are working with students with math disabilities is that the integrated transition protocol is specific to persons with developmental disabilities between the ages of fourteen and twenty-one. And, so it's very specific to that group. So, again, within that group, we have a lot of individual students that have their own strengths and needs and all of the wonderful things that bring together their profile.

[SLIDE: Transition Pathways

Text on slide:

- *Post-Secondary*
 - *Ongoing Learning*
- *Community Life*
- *Employment*
 - *Supportive*
 - *Competitive*
 - *Apprenticeship (OYAP)*
 - *Work Readiness Programs*
 - *Youth Employment Fund]*

So pathways— what do pathways look like? So in general, there are three pathways, more or less, I mean we can talk about volunteering, we can talk about apprenticeships as additional pathways, but the three main pathways are: employment, community living or community life, and employment. So, these pathways typically lead towards employment most of the time. So community, programming, it could be different things. It could mean building in functional independence; it could mean that they have some volunteering or employment phased in.

Post-secondary or ongoing learning, education outside of secondary school can mean lots of different things, but in typical sense of post-secondary education as far as college and university. But even that is a little bit different too. Now there is programming available for students that are just graduating with

an OSSC or a certificate has opposed to a full diploma, and so that's where a change in the landscape of the post-secondary education as well and what that looks like. And, then we have unemployment, which is not very black and white as far as that looks like, and supportive employment, apprenticeship, work readiness programs, plus the youth employment fund. How does that impact students that have graduated from secondary? These are all different pathways and all very different as well, so, when you look at, sort of, the hierarchy of employment, and you look at the hierarchy of pathways that you would typically look at-- day programs, we look at supported employment model, minimum wage, [Inaudible], honorarium to pay for transportation and they get all supports put in place that they would require. And then there's more of a training environment, and work readiness programs where they're spending time in a workshop where they would be spending time about eight to twelve weeks generally, in a workshop where it's focusing on the soft skills towards employment. And then they go out into a job placement support within the organization, and then you look at competitive employment, which is typically how most of us got our jobs. , that's what that means, so making more than minimum wage. Apprenticeships. Every pathway has many different paths within it, and so when you really sort of explain in the transition meetings that every pathway really has many avenues to achieve success in that pathway, then it really opens up the conversations and you can have a more fulsome conversation and explain what it is exactly that this student's is going to be doing with this pathway. I think a lot of times students feel that they are on their own to try and find jobs and that's actually not even close to being the case, and so we are trying to explain to them that because you picked employment as your pathway, it doesn't initially mean that you are on your own. So it's again, trying to sort of build in what all those different bridges are reachable by one of these pathways.

[SLIDE: Unemployment Statistics for Persons with Disabilities

A table is shown that was created from Statistics Canada, Participation and Activity Limitation Survey 2006.

The data in the table is as follows:

For youth with disabilities, the labour force participation rate is 34.1% for males and 47.1% for females. For youth without disabilities, the labour force participation rate is 50.5% for males and 13.8% for females. For youth with disabilities, the unemployment rate is 26.9% for males and 16.8% for females. For youth without disabilities, the unemployment rate is 13.8% for males and 18.0% for females.]

So sort of explaining, because when you go to post-secondary education, you go to college or university, you go on with your education and eventually you want to get a job. So when we look at the unemployment statistics for a person with disabilities, it's very high and, so, I've got some stats that I pulled from the last survey that I could find, which was in 2006. There might be one updated but I don't know. So, for this age fifteen to nineteen is what the cross section was for youth with disabilities and youth without disabilities. And so, we're looking at a difference between the numbers for males and the numbers for females. And so as you can see, the numbers themselves speak volumes as to the high unemployment rate for youth with disabilities. What does that mean? I don't think that it means, well I

know that it doesn't mean that these students or these youths can't find employment. It's just means that maybe they're not looking in the right area. And I think that one of the things that I really try to impress upon people when I meet with them, when we talk about employment and the pathways, is that only 10% jobs are posted. And so, I think that that creates a little bit of confusion-- 'what you mean only 10% of jobs are posted?'. I think that what that means is that a lot of companies are small and they don't have the budget to place advertisements, and it's a lot of word of mouth. A lot of people find jobs through this hidden job markets which is talking to people you know, talking to people you meet on the bus. It could be anything. These jobs are usually found by, you know the old saying 'it's not what you know, it's who you know'. It's a saying for a reason. It's actually kind of true. So you have 90% of the population of job seekers applying for 10% of the job. It doesn't really create much of an environment to promote success, so I think that when we're talking with our students about transitioning to employment, and eventually when they do leave post-secondary, they will be looking for employment, is that we really want them to understand that there a hidden job market and don't put all of your emphasis on trying to access that 10% that you see on various job posting sites. You're limiting your success extremely in some cases and there's some people that are—it's not very uncommon for HR managers and recruiters to be receiving about 300 applications for this one job. So to optimize success, we want to make sure that they are looking in job market and I always laugh when students say "Oh, I have already applied everywhere". Really, you've applied everywhere? So in Mississauga, there are over 12,000 employers that are on the Mississauga business registry, are you sure you have applied everywhere because cause I am pretty sure you would be a lot more tired right now if you actually did apply everywhere. It's having those real conversations with some of our students and explain 'maybe, you need change your tactic a little bit'.

[SLIDE: By the Numbers]

On this slide, there is a chart describing the participation levels, graduation and dropout rates by December 2005, by type of institution from Statistics Canada with associated numbers. This chart contains the heading 'attended post-secondary education (965,000)', which branches off to three sections with accompanying statistics for each branch:

- *Attended university (482,000). Of that, 69% graduated, 15% are continuing, and 16% dropped out.*
- *Attended college/CEGEP (505,000). Of that, 67% graduated, 8% are continuing, and 25% dropped out.*
- *Attend other post-secondary institutions (311,000). Of that, 64% graduated, 13% are continuing, and 22% dropped out]*

So more stats on—this for neuro-typical mainstream students that going through the all the process. They've gone through either academic or applied courses, they're going into postsecondary. These give us some numbers on the dropout rates or graduation rates as well of some student. So you can see the numbers there: graduated 69%, 67%, 64%. Pretty average drop out. And 16%, 20% and 5%, and so on.

So, it gives you a little bit of an idea of the success rate of a lot of neurotypical or mainstream students have.

[SLIDE: Stats on Students with LDs

Text on slide:

- *Drop out of high school two to three times as often as do their non-disabled peers (Young & Browning, 2005).*
- *Enroll in post-secondary programs at one-tenth the rate of the general population (Stodden, Jones, & Chang, 2002; Wagner et al., 2005; Young & Browning, 2005).*
- *The postsecondary graduation rate of students with LDs is as low as 3.6%, compared to their non-disabled peers at 62.1% (Murray et al., 2000)*
- *Effects of the Learning Opportunities Task Force (LOTF) Programs on Postsecondary Students with Learning Disabilities (Allyson G. Harrison , Queen's University , Shaljan Areepattamannil, National Institute of Education, Nanyang Technological University, John Freeman, Queen's University).]*

Now, we look at our dropout rates for students with learning disabilities.

They are very high, and alarmingly so. And so, this was based a report done by Queens and it says the drop out the rate for student with learning disabilities are about two to three times higher. The drop outs of high school, sorry, about 2 or 3 times more often. They don't enroll as often in a lot of post-secondary programs. And then the post-graduation rate of students is as low as 3.6% compared to 62.1% of their non-disabled peers. So it's very high and I think that it's important to understand that it's not because they cannot do the work, it's not that they can't do it, it's just that they are not accessing the right amount of support. And so, I think it speaks volumes of the fact that, we need to prepare students a lot better for postsecondary education, and not in a sense that we're going through the curriculum or we're preparing their curriculum base. I think it's more about accessing supports, and understanding what supports are available at the post-secondary level. We do a lot for students, we do have a lot of supports for students at the secondary level and I think those different— the services are much different at the post-secondary level and do we know enough about them to really prepare the student for what it is that they are going to be accessing when they go to post-secondary.

[SLIDE: Student Services

Text on slide:

- *What does that look like?*
- *Is it one size fits all?*
- *Who takes care of the arrangements?*
- *What kind of accommodations can I expect?*
- *What do they need from me?*

- *What if I have an undiagnosed learning disability?]*

So students services at the post-secondary level, they are expected, or sorry I should say the students are expected to actually seek out these services. They won't actually seek out the students. I mean, in schools they know that but I think that there is an opportunity, a lot of times, for us to actually help our students mimic what it would be in post-secondary. I think that if we really, sort of, try to build in that capacity for students to ask for those supports, and to fade some of that support for students, to try to build in that ability to self-advocate, and to disclose and to try to get some of those supports back that have been slowly faded away, then I think that gives them an opportunity to practice that in secondary. And so, it's—we talk a lot about self-advocacy and it's one of the main goals in our transition plans, you know, build self-advocacy, and I think that we really need to take a look at what that actually means and how do we do that. I think that by scaling back a lot of that support slowly pursued at an earlier age, and then have that student, if they require it, ask for it, and how do they disclose, do they understand their profile, do they understand their abilities and their skill level, do they understand what challenges they have and how to accommodate that. Then I think that that really builds in natural advocacy for that student, is they will know how to ask for that support. They will know what area they will really need to have helped on. And I think that if we really start to fade that support, but encourage them to understand their profile, and understand how it is that they are—the challenges and the accommodation that they have as students. I think that's when we really start to look at what advocacy will be like for that student in post-secondary. They will know that they need to ask for this or ask for that. So I think that if we do manage at a secondary level, I think that it gives the students much better opportunities to practice on getting that level of support.

[SLIDE: Student Services Continued...

There is a screenshot of the Queen's University disability services website.

Text on slide: Example: Queen's University Disability Services Website]

So, student services. I have met with a lot of students that don't really know what student services is. I think they might have some sort of an idea. Some of the questions that have come up are printed on the slide here, so you know: What does that look like? Is it one size fits all? Who takes care of the arrangements? What kind of accommodations can I get? Does the designation that I have on IEP matter? If I don't have this designation, will they offer this service? It's actually, it really doesn't have much to do with designations [Inaudible], it doesn't really have much to do with much other than the student really has to advocate for what it is that they want. They have to actually ask for it. They—you know, researching and planning is key when it comes to student services. Not every institution offers the same level of support. One of the most important things I can really say that has assisted in a very successful transition for post-secondary is that if we actually go and meet face-to-face with student services ahead of time. We had a very successful transition for a student to post-secondary at UTM, which consisted of us meeting twice ahead of time with student services, and this particular student

needed a fair amount of support, but was able to get into University, they just needed some accommodations put in place. So we really worked closely with the university to make sure that all of what it is that have been done at the secondary level could be replicated at the post-secondary level. And, so once we ironed out all of the details, they were very accommodating, very easy to work with, but if we had just sort of sent the student off on their own, it's like 'Good luck, I hope it goes well. Here's the number you need to contact.'

That face-to-face meeting is extremely crucial to make sure that they understand the needs of the student. The student needs to be able to explain what it is they need and that information is documented properly in the IEP because the post-secondary institutions really want to see what that looks like on paper and how they can reverse or replicate that. So it's a multi-faceted approach to actually getting that.

[SLIDE: Easy as 1..2..3.....

There is a screenshot of the Queen's University disability services website.

Text on slide: Having an IEP with clearly defined accommodations and barriers is important to student services at the post-secondary level]

So this is an example of a website from Queen's. And again, I'm just using Queen's just because they wrote the report that I was using earlier. It's not to promote Queen's or anything. It's just that this is just an example of a website and how easy it actually is to see what's available. So it's got, you know, registration, it's got accommodations, examples of accommodations, student frequently asked questions. You know, it's very very brief, but it gives a very good idea to a student an example of what they could be looking for when they're looking for student services. And, so every university and college obviously has their own, layout for exactly what that is and what that exactly looks like. But again, just to give you an idea that that is, essentially what a student services page could look like.

So just to take it one step further, when you actually go into the registration, it's just got three easy steps: this is what you need, this is how you book an appointment, and it actually recommends in here that you would book an appointment with disability services. And I think that the fact that they've emphasized that, it really sort of, it really makes you want to make sure you have that appointment booked with student services to have that face-to-face meeting. And, so having an IEP with clearly defined accommodations and barriers is important to student services at the post-secondary level, and that's absolutely true that, you know, again, sort of like the transition plan itself as well, is that we get all these really great things but if you don't have it documented it's hard to sort of carry that forward into the transition into adulthood for our students. And so, when a student is going to university or going into college, they really need that additional support, it's important that we have it documented and exactly what that looks like. Teachers at a post-secondary level will understand the language used at a secondary level by the teachers that were implementing the accommodations for that student in secondary as well.

[SLIDE: Individual Pathway Planning (IPP)]

Text on slide:

- *Every student from grade 7 to Grade 12 is required to have one*
- *What does it look like?*
- *www.myblueprint.ca (as an example of what PDSB is using, not as an endorsement)*
- *Career Cruising (Ministry Licensed Web Application) -
http://osapac.ca/ccpalo/?dlr_record=career_cruising_2012-3*
- *Third Party Focal Point]*

So every student from grade seven to twelve is going to be doing an individualized pathway planner. And so, you know, what does that look like? The idea of the individualized pathway planning is that we really start to take a look at earlier on in grade seven, what are some of my options when I'm going to be transitioning? What are some of those things, or what are some of the pathways, whether it be employment or post-secondary; what does that sort of look like? And it really gives students a really sort of clear understanding of what that could potentially look like. And, as long as the students actually use it to its full potential, I think that sometimes they use it for course selection and then that's pretty much it. The PDSB uses myblueprint.ca. It's a great tool. You know, obviously not an endorsement, just saying that that's just what we use, so I know it and I know it pretty well actually. And so, what the really nice thing about it is, is that it gives you an opportunity to have a really realistic conversation with students and, so there are some students that, you know, may be in locally developed courses or are going to be getting their OSSD, but they want to move on to university and they're going to be a doctor as well. You know, instead of saying, instead of the school saying, well actually, you know what, you're not going to be able to do that or we don't think that that's going to be a possibility, is that we can really sort of support them in their ideas, and what is it they want to do but we use my blueprint as a way to sort of have a realistic conversation. So if they fill out their entire IPP and it comes back and says well these are all of your options that are available to you; it's this pathway and it's this pathway and here's all the different courses that are available to you at the post-secondary level. Here are all of the different occupations that came up that matched your profile. Then it really gives us an opportunity to sort of sit down and have this really realistic approach to the transition planning because now it's realistic. Now we're saying, well you know what, it's not us saying that this more of a realistic approach or a realistic pathway; it's actually my blueprint saying that, or it's your IPP saying it.

So that's one of the many reasons why I like to do it but I think that one of the most important things about the IPP is that it really gives us an opportunity to work alongside the transition plan. It really gives us a way to sort of validate what it is that we're doing with the transition plan. And one of the things that helps us with planning with the end in mind and, then, sort of chaining backwards, establishing milestones, making sure we're on the right path is that we can actually see what potential employers we could be looking for as you go through your IPP. It will actually give you up-to-date job postings that are

available, and so one of the recommendations I always give is, look at who you're actually going to be potentially working for if you know what your plan is and then make the call and ask them where you should be going, ask them what college they recommend, ask them what university they recommend, ask them, you know. Make sure you have all of the information before you start making these major financial decisions that can last a few years as well.

I think back to when I was a job developer and I've told this story many many times when I'm in transition meetings, especially when I'm with students that are looking for post-secondary. When I was a job developer, I used to work with a client of mine who was deaf and she wanted to be a pharmaceutical technician. And so found a school that offered American Sign Language. It was a university in the States. It was a four year course, so a pharmaceutical technician course, got a degree, stayed on for another three years to do co-op, came back up to Canada in Mississauga and was ready to find a job. Her file was mine so I was working with her to do job development and find her a job as a pharm tech and I thought this would be the easiest thing in the world. My gig was great. We got four years of university, got a degree, you've got all the requirements that they're asking for, you know, piece of cake, no problem. So, applied, applied, applied, you know many many many times. And, maybe after about the twelfth application that we applied for jobs that were posted, again, you know, only accessing ten percent of the job market, but in this case, we didn't really have much of a choice given the job that she was applying for and so, didn't hear anything back. We were starting to get a little bit frustrated. So I started to call the HR managers and started asking what's going on, what's happening, why are we not getting a call back? You know, is there something that we're not doing right and so, the HR manager, and every single HR manager I called was extremely accommodating and took the time to talk to me; it was no problem at all and they went through all the resumes that came in. It just happened that a few had like 300 applications, but they eventually found the resume that came in from my client and they said, well, you know what we've done is, the shortlist is that we only took resumes that had a post-secondary education from Centennial College. I'm not promoting Centennial, I'm just saying that that's who it was, that this particular case was, and so they said, well we only hire from this institution, and I said, okay, only that institution? And the reason that they explained was, the industry leaders wrote the Curriculum for that particular institution, and, so, they knew that they were going to be recruiting, that they wanted to go through this particular instruction because they helped write the curriculum. And so it makes sense. And so they would only hire from that particular institution. So, I called a few other companies and I started getting similar answers and so, not all of them were Centennial, some were different programs but, what happened was that, it became very evident that, a degree or a diploma was not a degree or a diploma from every single school, it's very different. So I always talk to students and say wherever it is that you want to go, whatever job it is you want to do, call employers, you know, if you're comfortable, or send an e-mail, or I'll do it, or find some way that you're comfortable with and ask questions and ask the specific questions: when you're hiring entry level staff, where do you do you hire from, what are your qualifications? A job posting does not give you all the information that you need, it actually gives you a very small percentage of the amount of information that you need to apply for a job, so I always recommend call the employer, find out exactly what it is they're looking for, find all the little details that aren't printed in the posting and, then that gives you an idea of where exactly you should be putting your money and your time. And so, if this had been done ahead of time, it would

have saved my client seven years, well five years; it was a two year course and thousands of dollars. And, so, then we had to go through the whole process of starting over again. So I know what that looks like, when they transition, and I try to instill that in the students that I work with to say do the forward planning, make sure that you have that end in mind, and that you have the facts before you start putting a lot of planning into your post-secondary education.

[SLIDE: PPM 156 and Transition Plans

Text on slide:

- *What does a Transition Plan look like?*
- *Who is involved?*
- *Who is responsible for the actions?*
- *What do I do with it now?]*

PPM 156 and Transition Plans: What does a Transition Plan look like? Who is involved? Responsibility for actions? What do I do with it now?

So the transition is the last page on the IEP. You know, who's involved again I sort of talked about it earlier: so the parents, the student, the school, community partners, anyone that's going to sort of be carrying the baton as it were in the relay race of the student's life. Who's going to carry that support forward for the student when they leave secondary and move into life. So that's who needs to be at the table and, then what do you do with the transition plan.

[SLIDE: Transition Plan for Students with an IEP

There is a screenshot of an example of an individual transition plan]

So this is an example of, a very rough example of what a transition plan looks like. And so it's the areas that we want to pay particular attention to are the goals, the actions, the persons responsible and the timelines. And so, this is essentially how it's sort of laid out: we have our goals. Usually, typically one or two goals is a good starting point for a lot of students. And actions, each goal might have two or three actions that are attached to that one goal. You know, who's responsible, timelines, the persons responsible, and I'll get into it a little bit later too, is that because the school owns the IEP, the school is really ultimately responsible for the transition plan. Now we do assign some responsibility obviously to the student and we assign some responsibility to the parents but again, because we are the ones that have access to it, and we are the ones making changes, and we are the ones driving this IEP and driving the transition plan, so that as a school, we really need to make sure that we're not putting things on other people aren't expecting them to do everything. We need to have a level of responsibility attached to the transition plan itself.

[SLIDE: Examples of Transition Goals and Actions

Text on slide:

GOAL (What):

- *To support Student with transitions from elementary to secondary school.*
- *To Support Student with Transition to Post-Secondary Education.*

ACTIONS (How):

- *Develop understanding of learning profile (strengths/needs) with student.*
- *Incorporate the student voice in the Individual Pathway Plan (IPP) Into the transition planning process.*
- *Link family with community agencies/resources - Learning Disabilities Association of Peel.]*

So the example of some goals and actions. The way I try to explain when I'm talking about a transition plan to staff, and to parents and to students and to anyone in a transition meeting is that the goal is the "what", the goal is the what are we doing. You know, the what is to support students with transitions from elementary to secondary school. That's a "what".

Another one would be to support students transitioning to post-secondary education and, that's a what. And then the action is the "how". How are we going to do that? How are we going to then support that student to achieve this particular goal. So in this case, we're going to look at developing and understanding the learning profile; their strengths, their needs We're going to incorporate the student voice in the IPP. We're going to link family with community agencies and supports. So, we're making sure that whatever it is that we're trying to achieve is then detailed with the "how". Sometimes, it can get kind of confusing for schools and that what's a goal and what's an action and I think that the best way to really sort of explain that is that, you really want it in terms of what and how. So that's my recommendation on when you're laying out the full transition plan is that you really sort of look at those two areas and that's what we mean by that. So at the Peel District School Board we have a very lengthy exemplar of different examples of transition plans for each designation of student, and so, we really get into the understanding of what that what is and what that how is, for each student of each designation. So I recommend that you really sort of understand your student and understand their profile as you get into their goals and get into their actions.

[SLIDE: Examples Continued

Text on slide:

- *Persons Responsible:*

- *Student, Teacher (classroom, guidance, special education, etc.), Parents, Community Agency...*
- *Timeline (Specific):*
 - *November 25, 2014*
 - *End of Second Semester*
 - *March 2015*
 - *Ongoing]*

So then just to take another look at the other parts of the transition plan is persons responsible and then timelines. And so, like I was saying, the persons responsible is that we want to make sure that we put the responsibility on the people that are actually going to achieve these goals, but we also want to take a look at who's ultimately responsible, and who's ultimately responsible again is to make sure that the school is assisting as we move on with these transitions plans. And so when we look at timelines again, it's building in those milestones. You don't want to be specific, you don't want to say ongoing for everything that's why I kind of put the asterisk beside the ongoing because if you put ongoing for everything, well that doesn't really actually give us a timeline, it just basically says we're professionally working on it, but now there's no real sort of sense of urgency to getting that done so again, if you're going to put in goals and actions, persons responsible, make sure that when you put in the timeline that it's a specific timeline that will keep you on track of when it is that you need to have those goals completed.

[SLIDE: Transition Planning Resources]

Screenshot of two Ontario Ministry resource: Growing Together (2013 – 2018) and Transition Planning: A Resource Guide (2002).

Text on slide:

Implementing Ongoing Transition Plans for the IEP: A Student-Driven Approach to IDEA Mandates – Pat McPartland (American Publication).

So when we look at different resources that are available, there's many different resources that are available for transition planning. There's the Implementing Ongoing Transition Plans for the IEP, which is an American publication, but the thing I like about this is that it actually gives you a flowchart essentially of if student A is here, then this is what they would need in order to get to this destination, and it really sort of lays it out year to year for a student and that's one of the things that I really like about it.

Transitioning Planning: A Resource Guide is a Ministry delivered tool on the web and the nice thing about it, is that, it's not a paper copy, so it can't get stolen from someone's office and then never returned, which happens all the time, or it can't get left at the school or be damaged, but it's on the web it's easy to go through, it's a very user-friendly guide. Growing Together is a PDF that it's done through

MCYS and, so another excellent guide, it gives some great statistics if you have that kind of brain to be able to process all of those stats, but again it's a really great guide; it gives a fulsome idea of what transitioning looks like for students as they transition.

[SLIDE: Transition Planning Resources Continued

Text on slide:

- *Educator Support Guide for Transition Planning (Learning for All Project)*
- *Students, Parents, Community Partners. Start the conversation!*
- *Transitions and Pathways from Elementary to Secondary School: A Review of Selected Literature (Prepared by the Hospital for Sick Children for the Ontario Ministry of Education)*
- *Planning "Secondary to Post-Secondary" Transitions for Students with Special Education Needs: A Guide for Parent/Guardian(s) and Educators (Produced by the Simcoe County District School Board)]*

And so, to me the resources that I find the most helpful when we're doing transition planning is the students, it's the parents, it the community partners starting the conversation. It's hard to take what's been written in a book and then duplicate that for a student who is completely unique and has their own set of environmental issues and has some challenges that can't really be defined by their designation as a learning disability per se or any other type of disability. When you start to have a conversation, when you start to involve people in the transition planning and we start to involve all the people that are a part of the student's day, when we look at, there's really sort of three parts to a student's day, there's school, there's home, there's community and if a student is having to readjust every time they go to a new part of their day, it makes things very difficult for them when they try to learn skills and when they try to transition effectively into adulthood, and so if we really bring all parts of their day and all the people that are involved with them on a regular basis and we make sure that we're all moving in the same direction then that really creates an environment for the student to generalize all the skills that have been taught, and it gives all people involved an opportunity to learn, well maybe this really works well at home and maybe we can replicate that in school and then vice versa. I mean you really start to have this really fulsome conversation that gets everyone motivated to make sure that we're doing what we need to do to transition the student effectively out of secondary. So again, resources are an absolute critical tool to transition planning and it's a great way to get a starting point but, again that conversation and that meeting and the way to pull all of this information we need from the people that are involved is going to really drive a successful transition.

[SLIDE: Transition Advisory Committee (TAC)

Text on slide:

- *Peel has an existing TAC for Students with Developmental Disabilities*
- *Work very closely with community partners and schools*
- *Representation from Public and Catholic School Boards*
- *Working group*
- *Would this be beneficial to the learning disabilities community?]*

So one of the things that we have is a Transition Advisory Committee that already existed for students with developmental disabilities and we're a committee that helps students with developmental disabilities transition into adulthood and so we've got a lot of representation from different community partners that work with students with developmental disabilities, we've got both school boards. We're very involved, we do a lot with planning groups to try to make sure that any of the challenges and issues that are based in the developmental disability community are addressed and that we're advocating and we really have our finger on the pulse of what's available because we have the involvement of all of the key people in organisations that sit at our table that address a lot of these issues. So I guess my question to the learning disability community is that, would a TAC or something along those lines be beneficial to discuss the specific issues that are prevalent in the learning disability community and would something like this be of benefit to involve the school boards and different organizations. So I mean, again, I am putting that out to the community as a whole to say would a model like this be beneficial in transition planning for students with learning disabilities as they move into adulthood, specifically post-secondary education and/or employment. So I'll leave that with the group to, you know, have a discussion and see if you really sort of think if that would be beneficial for your community.

[SLIDE: Transition Advisory Committee Members

Text on slide:

- *Erin Oak Kids*
- *Peel District School Board*
- *Dufferin Peel Catholic District School Board*
- *Kerry's Place*
- *Community Care Access Centre*
- *Developmental Services Ontario*
- *Peel Crisis Capacity Network*
- *Community Living*
- *Children Development Resource Centre Peel*
- *Ontario Government*
- *Plus many more...]*

So again, just some of the members that are part of our TAC for students with developmental disabilities, we've got: Erin Oak, the Peel District School Board, the Catholic board. We've got Kerry's Place. These are all sort of, it's a cross section of a very large list of participants. We've got almost fifty participants in the committee that have various roles. Some get the minutes, some actually attend. We have a very good representations from or we try to have representation from every aspect of a student's life that could be affected by their disability, and how do we get them to the next stage of their life, and it's covered by the support of all of these community agencies. So that's why the committee has been so successful over the years.

[SLIDE: Service Coordination

Text on slide:

- *Community Living, Kerry's Place, and Erin Oak Kids*
- *What does it do?*
- *Kids Pathways Peel*
- *Would a model like this work for the LD community?]*

So service coordination, not to get too far into service coordination, but there is a service coordination model offered through community living, Kerry's Place, and Erin Oak Kids, and what they do is, they are the person who has their finger on the pulse of what's happening in the community. They're the ones that will help families navigate things like respite, they'll help them navigate things like program funding, will attend transition meetings. That is role of the service coordination. They're sort of like a liaison for the family and the student in the community because navigating a lot of supports that are available through government and through various agencies can get very confusing and so, their role is extremely important, and making sure that all of those steps are put in place and that they then can carry on with the student after a student would transition from secondary, they then take that role of support on past when the student's out of school and work with the family. So they're who we handle over all their support to, so again, would something like that work well in the learning disability community with something like that, somebody who is responsible for that transition, that fulsome transition in the LD community? Would that be something that would work well specifically for that diagnosis. So I'll leave that up to the group to discuss.

[SLIDE: Questions?]

Text on slide: What can we do to ensure that a student's skills, challenges, accommodations, and interests are being captured at every stage of a student's transition to post-secondary life?]

So that is the end of the presentation and, what I want everyone to take away from this is what can we really do to ensure that a student's skills, challenges, accommodations, and interests are being captured at every stage of a student's transition to post-secondary life and how do we make sure that all the supports are put in place to have a smooth transition into whatever that pathway might be. So, how can we really strive to do a better job and to reinforce the things that we're doing really well, and how do we make sure that all of these best practices that have been put in place, and everyone's doing a great job, how do we get to that out to the community as a whole and to make sure that we have the same transition successes in all levels. So that's my question to you and I'll take any questions that might be available.

[SLIDE: image of the words 'Q&A time']

[Moderator]: Thank you so much Ryan for presenting on such an interesting and important topic. If anyone has any questions, please click the raise hand button on your control panel to be unmuted to ask

a live question to Ryan or type your question into the chat box on your dashboard and I will read your question to Ryan.

Okay, so our first question for Ryan: 'Are recent psycho-education evaluations necessary?'

[Presenter]: In what sense?

[Moderator]: I believe the question is referring to "Are psychoeducational assessments necessary for acceptance to a post-secondary institution?"

[Presenter]: When it comes to supports for post-secondary institutions, is it's important to have updated accommodations that have been put in place and updated profile of the student to make sure that up-to-date supports have been put in place for that student. A lot of that would come from the IEP. The post-secondary institution doesn't necessarily care about the designation of the student, they don't really care about the diagnosis per se, it's more about the profile of the student, how they can best support the student. If a student's been accepted into university or accepted into college, it's that they're already in. So anything that they would need to be accommodated is usually taken care of by that meeting with student services. It's usually taken care of by any information that's put in the IEP. An updated psychoeducational assessment is really best disseminated by another psychologist. So at student services, as long as you're explaining what's in it and explaining some of the accommodations of what the student really needs, then that's the most important thing.

[Moderator]: That's great. Thank you very much, Ryan.

We now have a live question from Lynda Slater. Lynda, you are unmuted so please go ahead and ask your question.

Okay Lynda, not sure what has happened there so we'll go onto the next question. This one is from Karen. And Karen you are unmuted now so please go ahead.

Well we're not quite sure what has happened with Lynda and Karen but we do have another written question. This question is from Tom: 'What post-secondary programs are available for students who are in locally developed streams?'

[Presenter]: Okay, so if a student is going to be graduating with an OSSC or a certificate program, is that what you're asking? So what that would be is there's programs called CICE or *Community Integration through Cooperative Education*. These courses are offered at several colleges in the area and what they focus on is the college experience. They'll do co-op placements on campus, they'll do co-op placements out in the community. They'll really focus on those functional independent skills that will help a person become successful in adulthood. It's not a diploma course in a traditional sense. There is a curriculum. There's a very – it's a classroom setting that is very mainstream. It's got classrooms, a classroom of maybe 20, 30 participants and they really get into what it is that the person needs in order to be successful long-term in their adulthood and building in some employment into that as well. Those are the CICE programs. There's also another program offered through George Brown College, I'm just speaking of what's in the GTA, there's a program at George Brown which is a vocational program. It's

strictly employment-based, 1 year I believe, and there's a vocational plus part of that where a person can go through the vocational program and then have access to other college programs offered through George Brown if they're able to meet the requirements of that. Centennial offers a great program, which is food processing and packaging, and so what that does is they've partnered with a company called Cordbrook out in the east end and Cordbrook vets all of the participants that are applying into the program. Cordbrook would filter the participants through the program at Centennial. Centennial houses the program and teaches the program, but what has happened is that they partner with community, or sorry, employers in the community that help write the curriculum for that particular program so at graduation, Cordbrook would come in and work with the graduates and then place them into direct employment because they are now employment ready. So it's a direct line of access to employment. So any of our students who are interested in working in the food industry, not necessarily in a restaurant per se, but in sort of the industrial sense is that we find that that's a really great program to put them in. It's a direct line to employment. So those are some of the programs that are available specifically for students who do not have a diploma from secondary.

[Moderator]: Okay, that's great. Very comprehensive response, Ryan. We have another question here. It actually starts off with a comment, and then there's a question from Lorianne. 'It's wonderful that your board has a position like yours, Ryan to provide support and direction. How do you think transitions can be supported in boards without someone in your dedicated job?'

[Presenter]: Well, thank you. In the Peel District School Board, there's 25,000 students in special education, identified and unidentified, so I mean for me to get out to every single one of those students is impossible, so I try to do my best to build capacity with a lot of the schools. I think that for school boards who don't necessarily have a dedicated person for that particular role is that PPM156 and the integrated transition plan protocol are mandatory for all school boards in Ontario. And so, that is what should be driving the schools to transition more for our students. And I think that as long as school boards have started to build that capacity to work with community partners and really learn from their community partners that are going to be a huge part of our student voice when they leave us is that they can actually really teach a lot to the schools on how to build in successful transition planning because that's where they're going when they leave us, so you know, at the beginning when I said 'if they don't know where they're going then what can we prepare them for?' I think that if we really get to talk to the people and get to really know the people that know exactly where they're going when they leave, they can help us prepare our students a lot better. So I think that it's asking a lot of questions, it's insuring that we know where the student is going, and then we have to sort of see what the barriers are or the challenges that a student might face as they're transitioning through and then building in whatever supports they need. Not necessarily what's in the school or just what's in the school, but also within the community and what's also bringing everyone together to have that conversation. So the schools, you know, a lot of the time they are doing these things, they just don't realize they're doing it. So, get to know what are the going, get to know the supports that are out there and then that will drive the transition for these students.

[Moderator]: Okay, wonderful. Thank you, Ryan. We're going to give Lynda another try here. Lynda, you are now unmuted if you'd like to ask Ryan a question.

Okay, so Lynda in this case if you wouldn't mind typing out your question for Ryan and we can come back to you that way.

So we do have another question from Evangeline, 'Ryan, can you be more specific about the methods you would use to teach self-advocacy? This seems to be a crucial skill'.

[Presenter]: Sure. So I think that when we're talking about teaching students specifically on how to self-advocate, I think that they need to have a full understanding of what it is exactly what is being applied to them at the school level. So I think that a lot of students kind of go through their day to day and say the support they receive is kind of given. It's something that was set up sometimes even without their understanding of what's actually being put in place. And so I think that the first thing to do is to fully explain to the student the exact level of support that they're getting. 'This is why you have a teaching assistant. This is what your teaching assistant is working with you on, this is the modifications that are done in your classroom and the reason being is because of X.' And I think that as long as the student starts to really understand their learning profile, and starts to understand the level of support and the details of each support put in for them is that as you start to scale back some of that support, they'll notice that it's not there anymore and you want to start to teach the students to start asking for that support again and to start teaching that student to either develop strategies or to accommodate themselves or to actually ask for that support back. And so, I think that building in a natural advocacy in a student is by drawing some of that support away and then making sure that they have the ability to understand that it's missing and to ask for it, and then to ask for help. And I think that that, if it's done at an earlier age, I think that that will then build the capacity in the student to start asking for it as they get older and move into the older grades and then move into post-secondary education. And so, if we just constantly presenting the accommodation and then presenting with all the support without sort of an understanding by the student of why they're getting it, then I think that if we do that we take away the ability of student to actually ask for that support and for the student to actually understand this is why they are getting that support. And self-advocacy means many, many different things. And I think that if you can sort of generalize for a student, you know 'Remember when you asked for that' or 'Do you remember when this happened and you, you know stepped in and you, you know requested this?'. I think that if we point out real life examples of when they've already done that, then we can say 'This is what you need to do here and see where you feel comfortable in, you know, asking for that support in that particular area'. And for them to understand at post-secondary, 'This is what it's going to look like for you', then they can start to look at how to generalize those questions and generalize those requests.

[Moderator]: Great. Thank you, Ryan. I'd also like to make mention of the fact that the LD@school website has many excellent resources on self-advocacy and how to develop self-advocacy in students.

We've, we have an overwhelming number of questions which is absolutely wonderful to see. And I'd like to thank Mary Anne for sending in a very comprehensive comment that addresses a number of questions we've received about the need for the psychoeducational assessment. So Mary Anne says 'As a representative from a university disability office, I can confirm that yes, most institutions require an updated psychoeducational assessment for students with a diagnosed learning disability. We prefer that the assessment be no more than 3 years old. It is best for each student to make contact with the

disability office at the post-secondary institution they're considering to find out the specific requirements. An assessment is not required to be admitted into university, but it is required to be considered for academic accommodations once they are admitted'. And again, thank you very much Mary Anne for providing that update and clarification.

Okay, Lynda thank you very much for submitting your question in writing. 'Ryan, how do you think we as a university disability service can best get information to staff in secondary schools? I think because we have everything online now there are perhaps fewer mailings of hands-on materials to you.'

[Presenter]: I think, well there's lots of secondary schools to make contact with and I realize that going in and speaking to everyone individually is not possible, but I think that possibly arranging more tours for teachers to actually sort of see what students services actually looks like. There's a lot of teachers that I work with that have never been to student services. They don't know what it looks like; they don't know – they know on paper what it is. But I think that they sort of need that real-life experience of what that is and what it can offer for students. I think that if it's possible to make more of a personal connection with the school boards, to have that support for the teachers to be able to really have to explain because they know, because they've seen it, because they've experienced it, then I think that they can better give that information better to the students. So I mean, you know the teachers can go online and they can look and they can pass that information along, but what I've found a lot of times in transition planning is that when we just sort of send information, and we expect people to understand it and execute on it, a lot of times it doesn't get done because everyone has a different learning style. And even, you know, neurotypical teachers can sometimes have difficulties understanding what it is that they're looking for. So I think really that sort of, that connection, that personal connection to the schools and the school boards and knowing that they can call someone and knowing that they've seen it and they've experienced it, I think that that's really an important piece to getting a much better transition into university.

[Moderator]: Okay. Thank you very kindly, Ryan. We have time, I believe, for a couple more questions and all of the questions that have been posed by our participants will be answered by various LD@school staff.

So Ryan, how do you feel the role of the educational assistant or teaching assistant fits into this transition process? How do you see EAs' role in supporting transitions in the future?

[Presenter]: I see it as being one of the most important roles to be honest with you. I know that educational assistants and teaching assistants, because they work so closely with students is that they can really, they really have that up close and personal approach with those students and they can actually drive a lot of the things we want. We sit in meetings and we come up with plans and we come up with goals and actions, and we have all of these great things that we think are going to work, but then the people that work closest to the student, you know, everyday are really the ones that are going to be able to make sure that we're enhancing those skills that have been targeted for those students. So I think that the employment—or sorry, the educational assistants and the teaching assistants and *[inaudible]* and every other acronym that we have for teaching assistants and educational assistants is

that they're the ones that are on the front lines that are able to execute on a lot of these goals and actions we have for students to build things like advocacy and to ensure that a lot of the goals and actions that we put in the plan are actually being executed. So I think that I try to get EAs out to transition meetings as often as possible, I try to have their input on the table when we're coming up with goals and actions because they're able to contribute a level of understanding about the student's ability and certain challenges and accommodations that, you know, sometimes teachers don't necessarily have the full picture, that the community partner might not have, or the parents might not have, so the EA's contribution to the transition plan is absolutely crucial.

[Moderator]: Wonderful. Thank you very much, Ryan.

Okay, so our last question is from Patricia. 'Referencing the new PPM 8 guidelines regarding the identification of students with learning disabilities, what provisions are being made by post-secondary institutions to accommodate students who are not identified as having a learning disability but on non-exceptional IEPs at the secondary level?'

[Presenter]: That is an excellent question.

[laughter]

[Moderator]: I thought that you would like that one!

[Presenter]: Thank you for saving that one for last! I *[laughter]* – that's an excellent question, I – it's the profile of the student and the learning profile of the student I think is going to be really sort of what drives any accommodations that might be put in place for a student. So if a student accesses student services and tries to get support for any sort of challenge that they might have at the post-secondary level, you know, PPM—oh sorry, PPM 8 really drives the IEP. Now at a post-secondary level I'm not 100% sure how much that really influences what the supports are in post-secondary, so I would love to turn this over to the experts at the post-secondary to see if they have maybe something to add. We had a very comprehensive comment earlier, about that would be psychoeducational assessments, so I mean if there's a way to possibly connect with the people that are on the ground as it were at the university level to have some insight into that question, I'd love to sort of love to hear what the answer would be to that to be honest with you.

[Moderator]: Okay, okay that's great. And Ryan, just as a follow-up to your response there, I'd like to thank Lynda for sending in this additional comment that 'individuals can check the documentation guidelines at the specific post-secondary institutions they're considering'.

[Presenter]: Great, yeah. Thanks, Lynda.

[Moderator]: And 'additionally it will show which areas of disability can be accommodated and what those accommodations would look like.'

[SLIDE: Other Questions?]

Text on slide: Email info@LDatschool.ca

Okay, that's all the time we have for today, so we're going to end our question and answer session at this time. If you have any additional questions, please email us at info@ldatschool.ca and we will ensure all of your questions get answered. And as I indicated we have many excellent questions here that I think all of the participants would appreciate receiving responses to. Also please email us if you have any success stories or best-practices related to post-secondary transition planning that your school and/or your school district would like to share.

[SLIDE: Sign up to receive LD@school's bi-weekly newsletter!]

Image on the slide of three boxes from LD@school's homepage with an arrow pointing to the purple sign-up box for the LD@school newsletter.]

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[SLIDE: image of the word 'thank you!' as well as the LD@school logo and website address www.LDatSchool.ca.]

And on behalf of the LD@school team, I would once again like to thank Ryan Machete for his presentation and thank you to all of our participants for joining us! Please remember that we will be sending out presentation slides, as well as a short survey following today's webinar. The feedback we receive through this survey provides us with important information for producing future webinars. Also remember that we will be sending out a link to this recorded webinar in approximately two weeks. Thank you again for participating in this LD@school webinar and have a wonderful day!