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April 26, 2008

**Session Abstracts
&
Speaker Profiles**

Session # 1

▫ Planning for Student Centered Transitions

Patti McVay, Principal, PPS Transition Program

This session will include an overview of the Portland Public Schools' Community Transition Program, and offer ideas and resources for placing the student at the center of transition planning. The session will explore ways to actively involve every student in his or her transition plan. Appropriate for middle school years and beyond.

Patti McVay is the Principal of the Portland Public Schools' Community Transition Program and has worked in the school district for 4 years. Patti has had a variety of roles in her education career, including para-educator, teacher, Program Administrator and Director for the Outreach Center for Inclusive Education. She believes in building inclusive communities for all students and is working to build partnerships with PSU, Oregon Business Leadership Network, Incight and other community partners to enhance the lives of young adults with disabilities.

Corinne Thomas-Kersting is the program assistant for Portland Public Schools' Community Transition Program and has worked as a speech-language pathologist in the public schools for twenty-five years. She loves working with transition and appreciates being around young people as they explore their identities and prepare for good lives as adults.

Matt Perrault is a student who will be aging out of the Portland Public Schools' Community Transition Program this year. Matt graduated from Madison High School and has had a wealth of learning experiences in the transition program and is looking forward to continuing his studies at Portland Community College.

▫ Removing Barriers to Learning:

An overview of effective and inclusive instructional practice

Paula Stanovich, Ph.D, PSU

Dr. Stanovich will provide an overview of instructional strategies that support the effective inclusion of students with disabilities in general education classroom settings. A universal access approach will be featured. Discussion will also focus on adopting a problem-solving approach when parents and teachers partner to provide differentiated instruction in an inclusive classroom. Appropriate for school age years.

Dr. Stanovich is Professor of Special Education at Portland State University where she directs the Inclusive Elementary Educators Program. She has had extensive experience teaching students with significant and multiple disabilities, has conducted research into effective inclusive education, and has been an advocate of disability rights and inclusive education for over 30 years.

▫ Our Efforts Toward Greater Inclusion in High School for a Student with Cognitive Challenges

Lisa Lieberman, MSW-LCSW Specialist & Jordan Ackerson, Self-Advocate

Effective schools need to provide programs that reflect a microcosm of the larger society in which they exist, if students are to be prepared for a meaningful life beyond high school. A high school graduate with autism and his mother will outline concrete steps taken in moving from a primarily self-contained placement towards greater inclusion in the school as a whole. Suggestions will be offered that are applicable to a variety of students, incorporating self-advocacy and collaborative team efforts.

Jordan Ackerson is 19, has ASD and lives in Lake Oswego. A recent high school graduate, he participated in cross-country and track for four years. He attends Portland Community College part-time and sings in the PCC chamber choir. Jordan has presented at several national conferences. He loves public speaking and aspires to be a spokesperson about having autism and the importance of not

underestimating people with challenges. He is a member of an Oregon teen youth advisory group. Jordan has also been the subject of feature articles, has participated in radio interviews and a CNN story on autism.

Lisa Lieberman is a Lake Oswego counselor in private practice with 31 years of experience. An engaging national speaker, she skillfully and sensitively addresses issues related to “living with disability in the family.” Lisa has published numerous articles, and a book entitled “A Stranger Among Us,” a comprehensive guide to hiring one-to-one providers for children and young adults with disabilities. Current interests include: helping parents navigate the emotional journey when children have disabilities; and promoting self-determination and community inclusion for people with disabilities and their families. Most importantly, she and her husband Craig are blessed with a 19-year-old son, Jordan, who has autism.

▫ **Being an Active Part of an Individual Education Program (IEP)**

Michael Bailey, Ph.D and Author & Eleanor Bailey, Self-Advocate

Join Eleanor and Michael in a lively discussion of the importance of a student taking an active role in his or her IEP process. This session will include the perspectives of a student and a parent, and will offer practical tips and useful advice on ways to help the student's voice be heard in the setting of an IEP meeting.

Eleanor Bailey is twenty years old and will graduate from Grant High School this summer. Eleanor is currently an intern at the Northwest Down Syndrome Association and plans to work for a little while after high school and then attend community college. She is a member of Kids As Self Advocates, sponsored by Family Voices, and has spoken out on behalf of individuals with disabilities on many occasions. Her most recent speeches were at the OHSU Center for Health & Healing and in the Capitol Building in Olympia, Washington. She is an active self-advocate who likes to play basketball, swim, hang out with friends, read Helen Keller, and travel.

Michael T. Bailey is author of “Special Education: A Parent’s Guide for Children’s Success.” He is President Elect of the Board of Director’s of the National Disability Rights Network in Washington, DC. He is past president of the Oregon Advocacy Center, a member of ADAPT, and a speaker at many conferences and trainings. A former criminal defense lawyer he is currently working on a new book and teaching law and philosophy at the University of Phoenix.

▫ **Communication Break-Down:**

Exploring skills that support communication at home & in the pre-school setting

Dave Andrews, SLP, Supervisor, MECP & Jen Brandse, Parent, NWDSA Board, Chair of Reciprocal Learning Community (RLC)

This session will explore communication for children age birth to 5, at home and in inclusive settings, focusing on strategies parents and teachers can use to engage children in communication. Strategies discussed will include the “Hanen program”, visual communication, working with peers, and expressive language strategies.

Dave Andrews is a supervisor with the Multnomah Early Childhood Program (MECP). Prior to the supervision role, Dave worked in Early Intervention and Early Childhood Special Education as a speech language pathologist for 13 years with Portland Early Intervention Program and MECP.

Jen Brandse has been on the board of the Northwest Down Syndrome Association since 2004. She is the chair of the Reciprocal Learning Community and has been involved with the All Born “In” conference since its inception. She is a graduate of Partners in Policymaking class of 2004 and in 2005 and 2006, participated in SpecialQuest; the Hilton/Early Head Start training program. Jen is also the proud mom of Chloe, a precocious 5 year old who brings new meaning to the term ‘spirited child’.

Session #2

▫ Assistive Technology for Independence

Tom Keating, Ph.D and Director of Eugene Research Institute

This will be an all-ages session that will explore the use of technology to support independence.

Tom Keating is a Director and Senior Research Associate at Eugene Research Institute in Eugene, Oregon, where he has co-directed seven federally funded research projects with over three million dollars in funding.

He is currently Project Director of a three-year contract with the State of Oregon Department of Human Services to integrate assertive technology into affordable housing for seniors and people with disabilities. Keating's work over the past 10 years has focused on the overall role of assertive technology in the lives of transition-aged students and adults with disabilities, and on technical support and technology access issues.

His perspective in all of his work is strongly influenced by his role as primary care provider for a brother with autism.

▫ New Students New Questions:

Supporting the classroom teacher in an inclusive school

Norm Kunc, Axis Consultation and Training Ltd.

A workshop that describes what supports need to be in place in order for classroom teachers to be successful in an inclusive classroom.

Norm and Emma have spent the last 20 years working to ensure that people with disabilities are able to take their rightful place in schools, workplaces, and communities. Born with cerebral palsy, Norm is a well known disability rights advocate, though he prefers to think of himself as a storyteller using humor and narrative to initiate self-reflection and social change.

▫ Positive Behavior Supports:

Creating strategies for essential social and learning opportunities

Tim Andrews, Consultant, MECP & Jen Brandse, Parent, NWDSA Board, Chair of RLC

If behavior interferes with learning opportunities, it may be time to formulate a behavior management plan. This session will cover the elements involved in making a plan and the value of working as a team. With a focus on the first five years of development, we will look at the impact of relationships and environment on behavior, provide specific strategies for problem solving and find out how we can help set the stage for successful learning.

Tim Andrews received a master's degree in early childhood special education from Portland State University in 2000. He is the Early Childhood Positive Behavior Support Specialist for MECP. His roles include consulting with preschools in order to maintain children in community placements, working directly with families in their homes on routines and challenging behaviors, and providing trainings and in-services for teachers in Multnomah County.

Jen's bio is listed in Session #1

▫ **Lewis & Clark had Sacajawea:
Perspectives from a parent who found her way**

Roberta Dunn, Parent, FACT Coalition Director

Learning your child experiences disability is the beginning of a new journey, one we seldom feel prepared for. Roberta will share her perspectives, tips and tools for getting off to a great start. Areas covered will include perspectives on disability, developing a vision for your family, the importance of the parents' role and perspectives on what the future holds. This session is perfect for families with children school age and younger.

Roberta Dunn is the mother of three teenage sons and lives in Beaverton, Oregon with her boys and husband of twenty years. She has been a disability advocate since the birth of her twins fifteen years ago. One of the twins experiences Down syndrome. Roberta serves on the State Advisory Council on Special Education, is a Partners in Policymaking (PIP) graduate and is currently the PIP Program Director. She is also the Coalition Director of the Family Action Coalition Team (FACT), a group dedicated to empowering Oregon families experiencing disability by developing family leaders actively engaged in making sure that the perspective of families is heard and reflected in systems and policies that affect them.

Session #3

▫ Expand your Power to Build More Inclusive Communities

Steve Hanamura, President of Hanamura Consulting, Inc.

Sometimes the work of creating an inclusive community can feel isolating and formidable. This session will focus on building a community infrastructure to help participants expand their advocacy skills. We will discuss ways to build and maintain the strength to carry on through the long haul (personally and institutionally). Session participants will have an opportunity to work on real-life situations and receive coaching, feedback and encouragement from others, as well as create a lasting network to support each others' work beyond the day of the conference.

Steve is president of Hanamura Consulting, Inc. and has over 30 years experience in leadership development and leading diversity initiatives. He has authored two books, "In Search of Vision" (Global Insights, 2000) and "I Can See Clearly" (Renaissance Publishers, 2005), as well as several journal articles. He has served as past president for the Portland chapter of the American Society for Training and Development and was chair of the board for the Oregon Commission for the Blind from 1991-1997. Steve received his master's degree from the University of Oregon and his Bachelor's degree from Linfield College. Though he experiences blindness, he enjoys running and is an avid sports fan. He and his wife, Becky, live in Beaverton, OR and have three grown sons.

▫ Special Ed Testing: Making tests into tools not weapons

Susana Ramirez, Disability Advocate, Oregon Advocacy Center

Under the Individuals with Disability Education Act, all districts have the responsibility to test students in all suspected disabilities. Evaluations are the foundation to plan for the student's special education needs. This session will explore what constitutes an evaluation; the difference between a screening and an evaluation; procedures for evaluations when a student enters or exits special education, and re-evaluations once a student receives specially designed instruction. Lastly, there will be an interactive discussion with the participants about how to use evaluations as a tool to achieve appropriate goals and placement for the student.

Susana Ramirez is a special education advocate who has been advocating for the rights of children and adults with disabilities with the Oregon Advocacy Center for the last 7 years. Susana's advocacy started 24 years ago when her son with autism was born. Susana brings a skill set combining her personal experiences as an individual who emigrated from Mexico City, and as a mother advocating on behalf of her son, with her professional expertise in special education law and community organizing. Her work with the Latino community, which she considers one of her most rewarding endeavors, earned her a 2002 "Advocate of the Year" award presented by Governor Kitzhaber. She is a frequent speaker on the topic of civil rights and inclusion of individuals with different abilities in schools, employment and the communities in which they live.

▫ Writing IEP Goals that Drive Inclusion

Michael Bailey, Ph.D and Author

This dynamic session will present concrete strategies for creating strong, effective IEP goals. Special education advocacy is far more art than science. Nowhere is this more true than in writing the goals for the IEP. Learn to be a strong advocate for inclusion by creating an IEP with goals and services that can only be implemented in an inclusive placement.

Micheal's bio is listed in Session #1

▫ **The Joy of Early Literacy**

Ruth Falco, Ph.D, PSU & Jen Brandse, Parent, NWDSA Board, Chair of RLC

Explore how literacy ties into several areas of development and the different ways in which literacy takes place. We will discuss the best and most up-to-date research, and share concrete ideas that have worked in introducing literacy to children. We will emphasize pre-literacy and reading readiness to set the stage for success. This session will focus on children age birth to five.

Ruth Falco, Ph.D., Director, Research Center on Inclusive and Effective Educational Practices (RCIEP)
Department of Special Education and Counselor Education, Portland State University

Ruth received her doctoral degree in special education from the University of Oregon. Her experience prior to her doctoral degree included serving as a teacher, consultant and administrator for programs serving young children with disabilities and their families. She is currently a professor at Portland State University. Ruth's teaching and research address issues in early intervention and early childhood special education. Her work includes development of curriculum and instructional strategies for young children with significant and multiple disabilities, including children with autism. In addition, she has directed two interdisciplinary personnel preparation projects focusing on collaboration with families to support inclusion and self-determination for children with disabilities. Ruth's current research focuses on interdisciplinary personnel preparation, collaboration with families, and early Braille literacy for children who are blind.

Jen's bio is listed in Session #1

Session #4

▫ **Unlocking the Power of Parent-Teacher Partnerships: Tools and strategies for shared success**

Paula Stanovich, Ph.D, PSU & Angela Jarvis-Holland, parent, NWDSA Board, Chair of Education & Advocacy

Session leaders will present tools and strategies for teacher-parent teams who are interested in collaborating for inclusion. The idea of negotiating from principles rather than positions will be introduced. Participants will have an opportunity for discussion and reflection.

Paula's bio is listed in Session #1

Angela Jarvis-Holland has been on the Board of the NWDSA for seven years. She is the chair of Education & Advocacy and has a passion for a truly inclusive society. She co-founded the All Born "In" conference in 2006 and provides direction to countless parents and professionals in the community.

▫ **Accessible Literacy and the Use of Assistive Technology**

Shar Burgoyne, Oregon Technology Access Program

Come explore the many ways to make books and text into a format that is accessible for readers of all ages. Regardless of ability, there is a positive solution to get around any barrier that discourages reading.

Shar Burgoyne is the Assistive Technology Resource Specialist for the Oregon Technology Access Program. Shar brings more than 17 years of diverse experience and knowledge associated with Assistive Technology, from building your own basic switch to familiarity with the latest Augmentative Communication Devices. Her abilities include building, training and implementation, both in the classroom and in one-on-one settings.

▫ **Using Visual Tools for Success**

Joan Medlen, Parent, R.D., L.D. and Author

Learn creative ways to use visual tools to enhance communication at home, school, and out in the community. We will share samples and stories, and discuss a process of designing visual tools that are easy to understand and use. Bring your ideas so we can collaborate with each other.

Joan Guthrie Medlen is a registered dietitian and the author of *The Down Syndrome Nutrition Handbook: A Guide to Promoting Healthy Lifestyles* (2002, 2006), among other published works. She is the mother of two young men, one of whom has autism, Down syndrome, and celiac disease. As her son is non-verbal, he and his family use alternative means of communication on a daily basis. Joan has had the privilege of working with people with disabilities and their families across the country and around the world, presenting workshops on health, education and community living. She feels that her experiences with people with disabilities have made her a better dietitian and consultant than any other job experience could provide.

▫ **All Means All: Complex health needs and inclusion**

Becky Adelman, Oregon Family Voices

Becky Adelman along with Brandon Matz and Dee Tafolla, who are parents of children with special health care needs, will discuss strategies and plans for including all children in classrooms regardless of their health needs.

Becky Adelman has two children, both of whom are now young adults. Her younger child has a significant medical condition that requires extensive daily medications and protocols. She has worked with other families and professionals in her role as the state coordinator for Family Voices, and is the Family Involvement Network manager for the Oregon Center for Children and Youth with Special Health Needs at the Child Development and Rehabilitation Center at OHSU.

Brandon Matz is a Family Consultant with the Oregon Center for Children and Youth with Special Needs. He is also working toward a master's degree in public health through OHSU. Brandon is the father of a beautiful daughter named Hunter. Brandon is well versed on 504 plans and managing health concerns in school and community settings. He has been an avid community educator and a strong advocate for children with diabetes in his community in Lane County.

Dee Tafolla is a mom to two wonderful sons that have both attended schools in Salem, Oregon. Dee has extensive experience advocating for inclusion and full participation for her sons who experience mental health challenges. She has a long history of volunteering and providing supports to families in her community, including acting as a Family Liaison on the Marion County Community Connections team and serving on a variety of non-profit boards and groups.

▫ **Transition to Inclusive Kindergarten & Strategies for Success**

Ruth Falco, Ph.D, PSU, & a Parent Panel

Our parent panel will share their journeys through the first step of the public school process, and how they achieved the placements they thought best for their children. They will be available to answer questions, provide suggestions, and offer tips and tools that worked well for them.

Ruth's bio is listed in Session #1