

Reflections and Recommendations

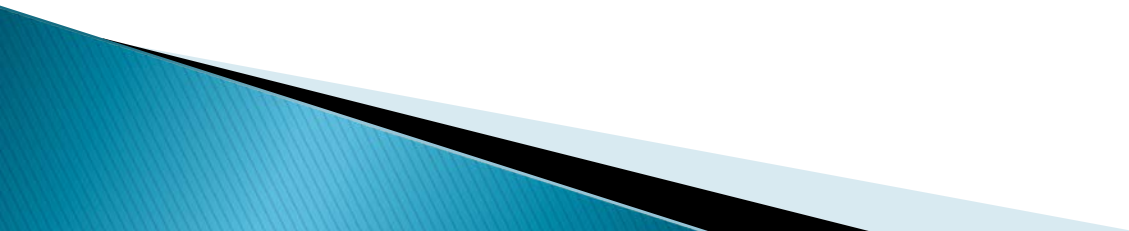
Importance of College and Career Readiness for
Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities

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Importance of College and Career Readiness (CCR)




Key Message to Take Away

- ▶ Before asking why anything, including CCR, is important for students with significant cognitive disabilities (SCD), ask why it is important for ANY student
 - ▶ THE ANSWER IS THE SAME.
 - ▶ Parents want all their children to have an education that leads to self-determination and a career for financial independence and fulfillment
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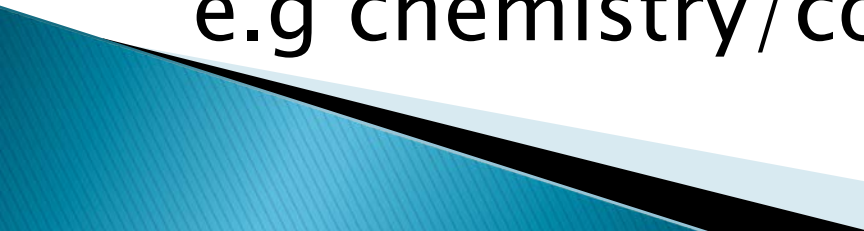
COLLEGE and Career Readiness

- ▶ www.thinkcollege.net lists 206 programs, but as many as 450 programs nationally– and growing (Hart & Grigal, 2010)
- ▶ Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 addresses some of these programs, providing for technical assistance and federal financial aid

College and CAREER Readiness

- ▶ Ultimate goals for all students (after college or directly from HS) are self determination and career readiness.
 - ▶ Students with SCD are leaving school without the skills they need
 - ▶ This presentation focuses on self-determination and career skills that can be learned through academics
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College and CAREER Readiness

- ▶ Academic achievement must not be sacrificed to provide career skills—they are entwined
 - ▶ The key is prioritized academic content using appropriate supports and services
 - ▶ Functional skills can be learned through general education curriculum e.g chemistry/cooking
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What FUNCTIONAL skills did you learn?

- ▶ Communication competence
- ▶ Social skills to work well in small groups
- ▶ Independent work behaviors
- ▶ Problem Solving
- ▶ Reading/writing/math for information
- ▶ Assistance seeking behaviors


All needed for self-determination and career readiness



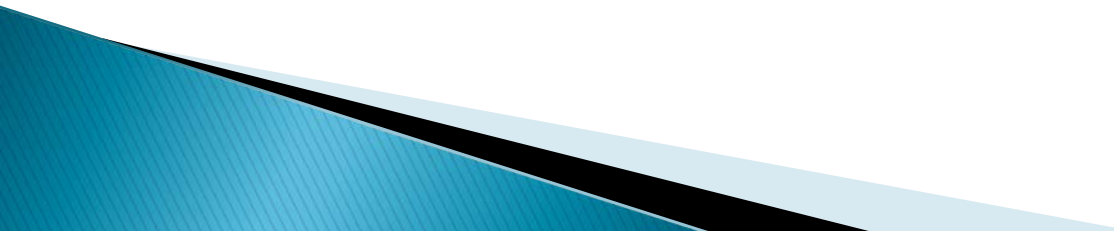
Questions for prioritizing skills and content

- ▶ Do students of the same age do this?
 - ▶ Is this skill REALLY necessary for independent life? Is there a workaround?
 - ▶ Is there a point in teaching students with SCD academic content they may never use?
 - ▶ What content is needed to build on for later grades
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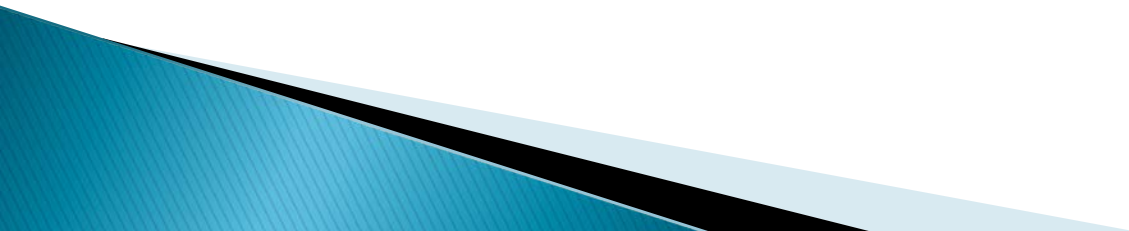
Remember

- ▶ Other students don't directly use all the academics nor do they learn every functional skill they need
 - ▶ The learning process itself results in benefits, most notably critical thinking and problem solving
 - ▶ The least dangerous assumption is founded on the idea that exposing students to learning is not harmful; however keeping them from it is
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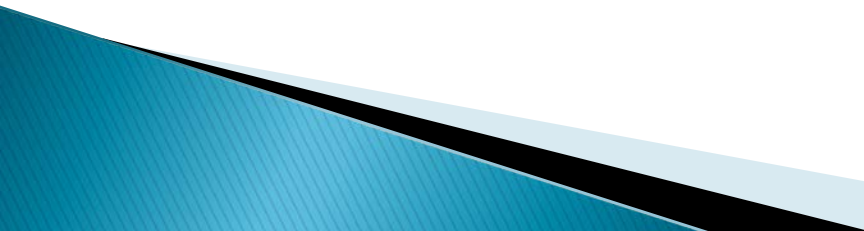
New Alternate Assessments

- ▶ Encourage your state to use rigorous assessments strongly aligned to college and career ready content standards
 - ▶ NCSC and DLM are developing these types of assessments and working on the issue of prioritizing skills and content
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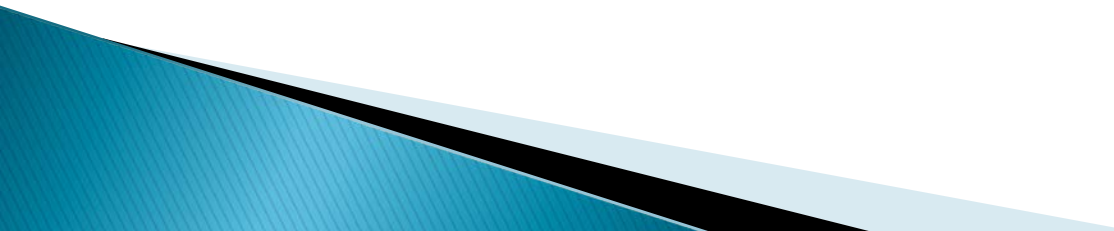
Systems Change to Support College and Career Readiness



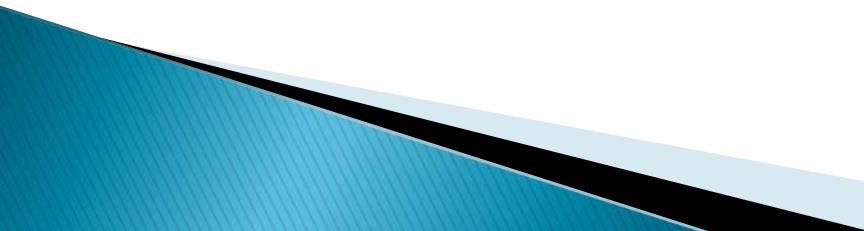
Define College and Career Readiness for ALL

- ▶ Consider how the measures and broad strategies relate to ALL students
 - ▶ For example, some states define college readiness as —a level of preparation a first-time student needs in order to succeed in a **credit-bearing** course at a postsecondary institution.”
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Inclusion for Improved Outcomes

- ▶ Look at LRE by disability category, LRE applies to job training as well as classroom activities
 - ▶ Encourage teacher preparation programs where general and special education overlap
 - ▶ Include inclusion skills in credentials
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Access to General Education Curriculum

- ▶ Implement UDL for curriculum, materials, professional development, technology and assessments
www.udlcenter.org
 - ▶ Allow students taking an alternate assessment the opportunity to earn a regular diploma
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Transition

- ▶ Start transition planning at age 14
 - ▶ Require adult service agency to attend IEP meetings
 - ▶ Transition specialists need: credentials; knowledge re students with SCD, customized employment and job development; a focus on skills, interests and dignity of students
 - ▶ Encourage paid employment before leaving HS (including summer employment)
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Acknowledgements

- ▶ Information in slides 5–9,12 came from the NAAC publication “What Does ‘College and Career Ready’ mean for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities?”
 - ▶ The systems change recommendations in slides 13–15 came from the Collaboration to Promote Self Determinations paper “All Kids Count”
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