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***Transition Service(s): Low Support Students,  
Exploratory Framework***

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**Mische Mellor, May 7th 2021, MSW Candidate**

# Problem-Framing

## Guiding Question:

***Do high school students with developmental disabilities who are receiving special education services who are considered low support, are given the same level of transitions supports compared to high support students?***



# IRB Approval

This project did not require IRB approval.

- Data collection is for internal use
- Anonymous surveys protected privacy and confidentiality of students
- Survey intention is to improve service(s)
- Interviews where informal and focused on larger themes/patterns
- Capstone intended for educational purposes and not for outside study



# Framing: Low Supports

- Hard to distinguish from students without disabilities
- Invisible from the outside
- Often displays a combination of academic, cognitive, behavioral and social problems
- Can meet same academic expectations as students without disabilities when highly structured interventions are in place
- Can range from limited to high in effecting daily activities

<https://invisibledisabilities.org/what-is-an-invisible-disability/>

**LEND Competency 3: Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes; Competency 5: Research and Critical Thinking**



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# Scholarly Articles

## Reviewed:

Cavendish, W., Connor, D. J., Olander, L., & Hallaran, A. (2020). Preparing for their Future: Perspectives of High School Students with Learning Disabilities about Transition Planning. *Exceptionality*, 28(5), 349–361. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09362835.2019.1625777>

Dangoisse, F., Clercq, M. D., Meenen, F. V., Chartier, L., & Nils, F. (2020). When Disability Becomes Ability to Navigate the Transition to Higher Education: A Comparison of Students With and Without Disabilities. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, 35(4), 513–528. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08856257.2019.1708642>

Khayat zadeh-Mahani, A., Wittevrongel, K., & Nicholas, D. B. (2020). Prioritizing Barriers and Solutions to Improve Employment for Persons with Developmental Disabilities. *Disability And Rehabilitation*, 42(19), 2696–2706. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09638288.2019.1570356>

Mazher, W. (2020). Do Schools Promote Good Coping Skills for Students with Learning Disabilities? A Review of Research from a Self-Determination Perspective. *Clearing House*, 93(6), 306–317. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00098655.2020.1824175>

Williams, S. C., Militello, M., & Majewski, D. (2020). Sorting Out Important Elements for Successful College Transition and Completion for Students With Learning Differences. *Preventing School Failure*, 64(4), 326–338. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1045988X.2020.1776671>

## LEND Competency 5: Research and Critical Thinking

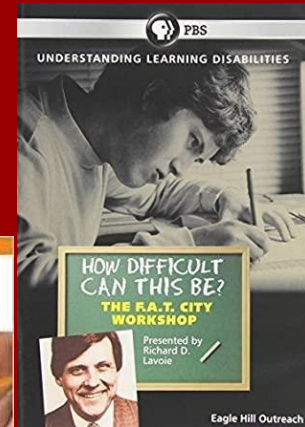
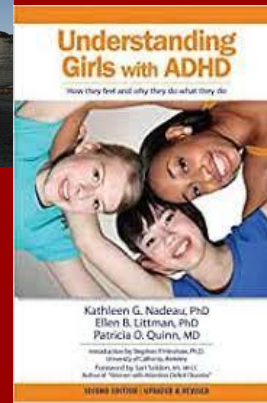
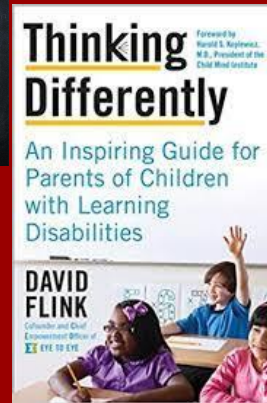
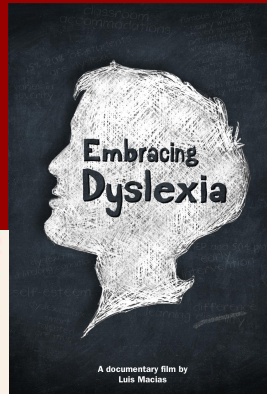
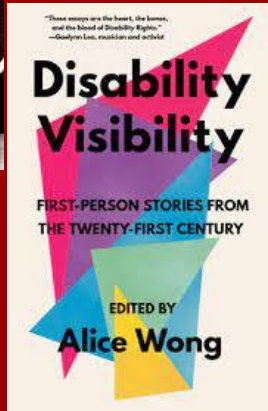


# Main Points

- “Promoting better education (building employability and job skills into education) in highschool to enable smooth transition to post-secondary or employment” (Khayatzadeh-Mahani, Wittevrongel, Nicholas, 2020).
- “meaningful Individualized Education Program and Transition Plan involvement” (Cavendish, Connor, Olander, Hallaran, 2020).
- Career and college preparation.



# Research



**LEND Competency 1: Family-Centered/Culturally Competent Practice; Competency 5: Research and Critical Thinking**



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# Interviews

**Social Worker, LCSW, Albuquerque Charter High School**

**Special Education Teacher, Humanities Instructor,  
Albuquerque Charter High School**

**Social Worker, LCSW, APS High School**

**Social Worker, MSW, Accommodation Specialist, Albuquerque  
University**

**LEND Competency 2: Interdisciplinary Practice; Competency 4: Leadership; Competency 5: Critical Thinking**



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# Main Points

- Advocacy/self efficacy skill development
- Unprepared to meet the high demands of classroom expectations
- Undiagnosed students are left in liminality
- APS pathway transition program is insufficient for low support students
- Transition specialist have very large caseloads
- IEP transition planning is ilminited and not prioritized
- Contracted transition specialist have little to no contact with students



# Product

- 1. Anonymous Survey: Identify three areas of interest by students**
  - College Transition Support(s)
  - Social Skills
  - Employment
- 2. Presentation for students on one area of interest**
- 3. Transition Support Materials**
  - Resources for Educators & Family Members

**LEND Competency 1: Family-Centered/Culturally Competent Practice; Competency 2: Interdisciplinary Practice; Competency 4: Leadership; Competency 5: Critical Thinking**



# Survey

Page Logic ▾ More Actions ▾

As you think about graduating from [redacted], what areas do you need the most support? Please rate your top 3 choices.

🔗 PAGE TITLE

1. Employment 📄 0

[input type="text"]

2. Collage/Higher Education 📄 0

[input type="text"]

3. Tutoring 📄 0

[input type="text"]

4. Transportation 📄 0

[input type="text"]

5. What Are My Legal Rights: Americans With Disabilities ACT 📄 0

[input type="text"]

6. Social & Community skills 📄 0

[input type="text"]

7. Self-Advocacy 📄 0

[input type="text"]

8. Leadership Skills 📄 0

[input type="text"]

9. Independence skills 📄 0

[input type="text"]

🔗 NEW QUESTION ▾

or Copy and paste questions

**LEND Competency 1:  
Family-Centered/Culturally Competent  
Practice; Competency 2:  
Interdisciplinary Practice;  
Competency 4: Leadership;  
Competency 5: Critical Thinking**



# Presentation

- Open discussions with students
  - Where are they thinking of going to college?
  - How are the dual enrollment experiences?
- Laying out experiences
  - weaving in others experiences with first year of collage
  - weaving in my own experience as a neurodivergent
- navigating Accommodations
  - resources
  - self reflections/discussion around self-advocacy
  - Do you feel prepared to voice your needs?
    - what tools do you have already or might need to get there.

**LEND Competency 1: Family-Centered/Culturally Competent Practice; Competency 2: Interdisciplinary Practice; Competency 4: Leadership; Competency 5: Critical Thinking**



# Resource Materials

## Americans With Disability Act

- Knowing their rights as families/students**
- Knowing their rights as employees in the workplace**
- What to expect in a college classroom setting**

## Resources for both UNM & CNM

**LEND Competency 1: Family-Centered/Culturally Competent Practice; Competency 2: Interdisciplinary Practice; Competency 4: Leadership; Competency 5: Critical Thinking**



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# Dissemination

*Where is the process now?*

- **In the final steps with completing student presentation**  
**-projected presentation mid-May**
- **Gathering materials for Educator/Family Resource Guide**



# Growth

**What was my role in this capstone project?**



**What did I learn from this capstone project?**



**LEND Competency 4: Leadership**

# References (Scholarly Research)

- Cavendish, W., Connor, D. J., Olander, L., & Hallaran, A. (2020). Preparing for their Future: Perspectives of High School Students with Learning Disabilities about Transition Planning. *Exceptionality*, 28(5), 349–361. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09362835.2019.1625777>
- Dangoisse, F., Clercq, M. D., Meenen, F. V., Chartier, L., & Nils, F. (2020). When Disability Becomes Ability to Navigate the Transition to Higher Education: A Comparison of Students With and Without Disabilities. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, 35(4), 513–528. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08856257.2019.1708642>
- Khayatzadeh-Mahani, A., Wittevrongel, K., & Nicholas, D. B. (2020). Prioritizing Barriers and Solutions to Improve Employment for Persons with Developmental Disabilities. *Disability And Rehabilitation*, 42(19), 2696–2706. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09638288.2019.1570356>
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- Williams, S. C., Militello, M., & Majewski, D. (2020). Sorting Out Important Elements for Successful College Transition and Completion for Students With Learning Differences. *Preventing School Failure*, 64(4), 326–338. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1045988X.2020.1776671>

**LEND Competency 3: Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes; Competency 5: Research and Critical Thinking**





# References (Books & Media)

- Flink, D. (2014). *Thinking Differently: An Inspiring Guide for Parents of Children with Learning Disabilities* (p. 320). William Marrow Paperbacks.
- Habib, D. (Producer & Director). (2012). *Who Cares About Kelsey?* [Motion picture].  
USA: Institute on Disability at the University of New Hampshire.
- Lavoie, R. (Director). (1989). *How Difficult Can This Be?: The F.A.T. City Workshop* [Motion picture]. USA: Public Broadcasting Service (PBS).
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- Wong, A. (Ed.). (2020). *Disability Visibility: First-Person Stories from the Twenty-First Century*. Vintage Books.

**LEND Competency 1: Family-Centered/Culturally Competent Practice; Competency Research and Critical Thinking**



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# References (Disability Related Policy)

- About Us: Mission*. (n.d.). State of New Mexico Governor's Commission on Disability. <http://gcd.state.nm.us/mission/>  
*Annual New Mexico State of the Workforce Report*. (2020, July). New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions.  
<https://www.dws.state.nm.us/en-us/Researchers/Publications/Reports-Special-Analysis>
- Dolgoff, R., & Feldstein, D. (2009). *Understanding Social Welfare: A Search for Social Justice* (8th ed., pp. 133–159). Pearson Education, Inc.
- Employment and Labor Force Status*. (n.d.). United States Census Bureau.  
<https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=Employment%20and%20Labor%20Force%20Status&tid=ACSSST1Y2015.S2301&hidePreview=false>
- Rall, J., Reed, J., & Essex, A. (2016, December 15). *Employing People with Disabilities: Disability Employment State Statute and Legislation Scan*. National Conference of State Legislatures.<https://www.ncsl.org/research/labor-and-employment/employing-people-with-disabilities.aspx>
- S.1809 - Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000*. (1999, October 27). Congress.Gov; Sen. Jeffords.  
<https://www.congress.gov/bill/106th-congress/senate-bill/1809>
- United States Department of Justice Civil Rights Division*. (n.d.). The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and Revised ADA Regulations Implementing Title 2 and Title 3. [https://www.ada.gov/2010\\_regs.htm](https://www.ada.gov/2010_regs.htm)

**LEND Competency 5: Research & Critical Thinking; Competency 6: Policy & Advocacy**



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**THANK YOU!!**

**Debra Sugar, Capstone Mentor**

**Nicole Tenny, Emotional Support & Family-Centered Perspective**

**Marcy Hintz, Partners for Employment**

**Alyx Medlock, Resource Support**

**Sandra Heimerl, Resource Support**

**Jeanne Favret, CDD Librarian**

**LEND Faculty & Fellow Trainees**

**LEND *NEW* Competency 7: Gratitude & Party Time**



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