Facilitating Positive Postschool Outcomes for Individuals with Disabilities from Rural and Impoverished Areas

How Can Teachers Overcome the Obstacles

By Mindy Lingo, Matt Reynolds, & Malarie Deardorff
Learning Objectives

1. Define poverty and disabilities
2. Discuss how they intersect
3. Learn how to support students who have a disability and are in poverty
4. Collaborate with each other
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Poverty

According the U.S. Department of Education:

“The word “poverty” is used to describe many different life situations... Each of these life experiences shape expectations, knowledge, confidence, and opportunities for gaining an education”.

(U.S. Department of Education, n.d., p. 3)
Poverty

Generational poverty can be described by the following:

- Family has never owned land
- Never knew anyone who benefited from education
- Never knew anyone who moved up or was respected in a job
- Highly mobile
- High family illiteracy
- Focus remains on making it through the day (not planning for future)

(US Department of Education, n.d)
Poverty

Working-class poverty can be described by the following:

• Working, but rarely have money for any extras
• Most do not own property
• Live paycheck to paycheck
• Few have health care
• Focus on making it two weeks or through the month
• Poverty seen as personal deficiency

(US Department of Education, n.d)
Poverty

Immigrant poverty can be described by the following

• Have little or no resources
• Face language and culture barriers
• Seem to have a stronger sense of self and often do better than those born into poverty in America
• Poverty is viewed as a system problem

(US Department of Education, n.d)
Poverty

Situational poverty can be described by the following:

• Surrounded by people who are educated or able to earn a living wage
• Attends school regularly and has health care
• Has crisis (health, divorce, etc.) and income drops
• Generally is able to make it back to middle-class
• Has not internalized the poverty as a personal problem
• Does not recognize advantages of growing up middle-class
• Can be a harsh judge of those in poverty

(US Department of Education, n.d)
Poverty & Disability

Both poverty and disability affect people from different backgrounds, races, and age. As educators, you WILL sometime in your career have students either from poverty or with a disability or MAYBE both.
Important Statistics all Educators Should Know

National Center for Education Statistics reports in 2016:

- 13.7% of all Americans lived in poverty, 19.1% of children under the age 18 lived in poverty
- Regional Poverty Rates: Midwest 15.0%, West 13.5%, South 12.8%, & Northeast 12.1%

(US Department of Education, 2018)
Important Statistics all Educators Should Know

National Center for Education Statistics reports in 2015-2016:

- There are over 50 million school age children in the United States.
- 6.6 million school age children receive services under IDEA
- A possible 1.2 million of these children live in poverty

(US Department of Education, 2018)
Adult Outcomes

- People with disabilities face unemployment and poverty more than those without. As compared to working age peers without disabilities they are:
  - Half as likely to have employment
  - Twice as likely to live in poverty compared to working age peers without disabilities

(Houtenville, Bruckner, & Lauer, 2014)
Adult Outcomes

- Disabilitystatistics.org in 2016 reports 26.6% of adults with disabilities ages 21-64 live in poverty (Erickson, Lee, & von Schrader, 2017).

- In 2017, the threshold for poverty was raised to $24,858 for a family of two parents and two children compared to $22,113 in 2010 (US Census Bureau, 2017).
Impacts on Schooling

- Students with disabilities living in poverty experience lower rates of graduation, postsecondary enrollment, and parental involvement in transition planning as compared to their typical counterparts (Newman, Wagner, Cameto, & Knokey, 2009; Trainor, 2008).

- Students living in poverty from diverse cultural backgrounds have higher special education referral rates (Skiba, Poloni-Staudinger, Simmons, Renae Feggs-Azziz, & Chung, 2005).
Family Challenges

- Mothers of a child with a disability give up paid work or a job with prestige to support their child.
- Parents of children with disabilities tend to have lower income levels compared to their peers.

(Cidav, Marcus, & Mandell, 2012)
Family Challenges

- Financial burdens, like out of pocket medical services and equipment, and dietary care affect families of children with disabilities (Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, 2015; Parish, Rose, & Swaine, 2010; Song, 2017).

- People with disabilities are more likely to deal with food insecurity and participate in SNAP (Bruckner & Nord, 2016).
Let’s Share

How else does poverty and disability impact your school?

What outcomes are you seeing with your students?

Are there other pressures put on a family because of these contexts?
What Can Educational Stakeholders Do to Help?

- Teach Self-Determination (Washington, Hughes, & Cosgriff, 2012)
- Professional Development (PD)--"Educate and Demonstrate" (Trainor, 2008)
- Involve Families (Bettinger, Long, Oreopoulos, & Sanbonmatus, 2009)
- Collaborate with outside Agencies (Rusch, Hughes, Agran, Martin, & Johnson, 2009)
Teach Self-Determination to Students
Teach Self-Determination

- Set up classrooms to provide stimulating environments
- Provide opportunities to make choices and problem solve
- Allow students to decide instruction
- Above suggestions are less likely to happen in a low-income school, so be active in encouraging other educators to teach self-determination

(Washington et al., 2012)
Teach Self-Determination

- Student Led IEPs
- Choice Maker Curriculum
- ME! Lessons for Teaching Self-Awareness and Self-Advocacy
- Tying the Knot
- Transition Bell Ringers
- Whose Future is it Anyway?
- SDLMI

NOTE: All Can Be Downloaded Free of Charge From: zarrow.ou.edu and/or https://beachcenter.lsi.ku.edu/beach-self-determination
Let’s Share

How do you provide stimulating environments to your students?

How can students decide instruction?

What other resources do you use for Self-Determination?
Professional Development Training
Professional Development

PD Focusing on Students with Disabilities and From Poverty. Include:

● Community Resources
● Invite Experts in the Field to Educate Professionals

(Washington et al., 2012)
Professional Development

Professional development should go beyond providing information--it should **EDUCATE** and **DEMONSTRATE**

Example: Training on Transition Assessments

- Fill out transition assessment with participants
- Troubleshoot and allow participants to ask questions
- Show how to use results to build transition service plans
Professional Development Continued

Professional developments on transition education materials

- Run lessons with participants and have them practice with each other.
- Role play and provide participants with the chance to teach lessons to group.
Let’s Share

What professional development session have you attended that have helped you?

What topics do you want to see for professional development?

How have you demonstrated materials to parents?
Increasing Family Involvement
Increasing Family Involvement

Family involvement is a key component to students’ success (Test et al., 2009).

Build family involvement through:

- Family nights-bingo, resource fair, movie & picnic
- Early, positive, and ongoing communication (Class Dojo, communication folders)
- Parent Universities
- Meet the DRS counselor night
- Career fairs
Increasing Family Involvement

Encourage parent involvement:

- With work-related skills and behaviors through all grades (both in school and home)
- Documenting progress in those skills and behaviors
- Set joint goals
- Possible employment resources and opportunities

(Wehman et al., 2015)
Increasing Family Involvement

- Be aware of the family’s culture and beliefs for life after school and respect their goals for the child (Trainor, 2008).
  - Ask students and parents about their beliefs.
  - Do your own research on the cultures of your students, do not always expect them to inform you of their practices.
- Provide a comfortable environment for IEP/Transition Planning meetings with open ongoing communication for parents (Landmark, Roberts, & Zhang, 2013).
Increasing Family Involvement

- Foster a good relationships with parents through the school year.
- Provide education and training for parents to aid in navigating the transition planning process.
- Educational leaders need to establish expectations of active family involvement and reward those who attend until norm is grounded.

(Landmark et al., 2013)
Increasing Family Involvement

Transition planning should also include training families on how to apply for postsecondary education, including navigating Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

(Bettinger et al., 2009)
Increasing Family Involvement

● Go beyond showing parents how to fill out other forms to help their students attend college programs

● EDUCATE and DEMONSTRATE
  ○ Use College View together to help locate College Programs to fit interests, financials, preferences, and location.
  ○ Apply for College
  ○ Apply for Scholarships
  ○ Research other funding sources (grants, DRS, Tribal Funds)
  ○ Explore housing options
Increasing Family Involvement

- Explain a variety of postsecondary education options
  - Technical Schools
  - Apprenticeships
  - Think College
  - Two or Four Year colleges
Increasing Family Involvement

Educators need to place a focus on how to access community resources through demonstrations and examples, not just provide the contact information to families and expect them to know what to do with the information.

- Have “how to” trainings on applying for resources
- Invite community resources representative to talk with families
- Send “how to” brochures but also include details on accessing resources
- Make tutorial videos for parents to watch

(Trainor, 2008)
Let’s Share

How have you helped parents to be more involved?

What have you found that helps you support families with a different culture than yours?

Do you know of any more postsecondary options?
Extending Interagency Collaboration
Interagency Collaboration

School staff need to help students a) identify postschool placement, b) transition to this placement, and c) coordinate supports for the placement (Rusch et al., 2009).

Example: USAO: Catelyn Perry Disabilities Resource Coordinator & Cathy Perri Neill-Wint Center for Neurodiversity (Autism) Zoom meeting scheduled for 2-25-2019 9:30 am
Interagency Collaboration

Paid employment during high school should be mandatory for students with disabilities.

- Locate local employers willing to hire students
  - DRS may be able to pay wages*
- On-campus jobs or within district
  - Students can be paid through DRS if partnerships is established between school and DRS.
  - Laundry, car detailing, teacher’s aids, coffee shop

(Rusch et al., 2009)
Interagency Collaboration

Educators need to provide linkage to outside support agencies prior to graduation from high school.

- Make families aware as early as possible
- Create a handout of outside support agencies with descriptions of each
- Hold a parent information night (invite outside agencies to attend)
- Send information home other than just IEP meetings
- Make multiple attempts to get information to parents

(Trainor, 2008)
Interagency Collaboration

Use a multitiered approach to target students at risk of dropping out.

- MTSS- Multi-tiered Systems of Support
- RTI- Response to Intervention
- PBIS- Positive Behavior Interventions & Support
- Include *College and Career Readiness* as a focus on tiered system
Let’s Share

What other agencies or businesses do you work with to support students?

Have you checked into WIOA?

How much time is there between sending home information and events?

How many “contacts” do you try before the event happens?
Participants Recommendations

As experienced educators, do you have anything you would like to share with us which has been successful for you in improving the outcomes for students with disabilities and affected by poverty?
Questions
Zarrow Center for Learning Enrichment

Mission
The Zarrow Center for Learning Enrichment facilitates successful secondary and postsecondary educational, vocational and personal outcomes for students and adults with disabilities. ZC faculty, staff, and students do this through self-determination oriented evaluation, research, development, transition education instruction, and dissemination of best educational and support practices. The ZC also prepares undergraduate and graduate students to assume leadership roles in schools, universities, and support organizations.

Vision
The Zarrow Center facilitates student-directed educational, employment and adult living outcomes for individuals with disabilities, fosters innovative self-determination oriented instruction and transition education practices, and prepares educational leaders.

History
Generous gifts from the Anne and Henry Zarrow Foundation and the Maxine and Jack Zarrow Family Foundation, which the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education matched, endowed the Zarrow Center for Learning Enrichment. In the fall semester of 2000, Dr. James Martin became the first Zarrow Chair and serves as the Zarrow Center Director. OU President David Boren gave the Zarrow Center dedication address on May 1, 2001.

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References


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