



Myth-busting Deferment Webinar

Identifying and debunking the most common myths associated with the process to defer receipt of a standard diploma for students with disabilities.

This training was developed by the Project 10: Transition Education Network, a discretionary project funded by the Florida Department of Education, Division of Public Schools, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services (BEESS), through federal assistance under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA), Part B.

Regional Transition Representatives

Region 1: Tracy Dempsey

tracydempsey@usf.edu

Region 2: Leigh Ann Hale

hale37@usf.edu

Region 3: Kim Thorne

kthorne1@usf.edu

Region 4: Federico Valadez

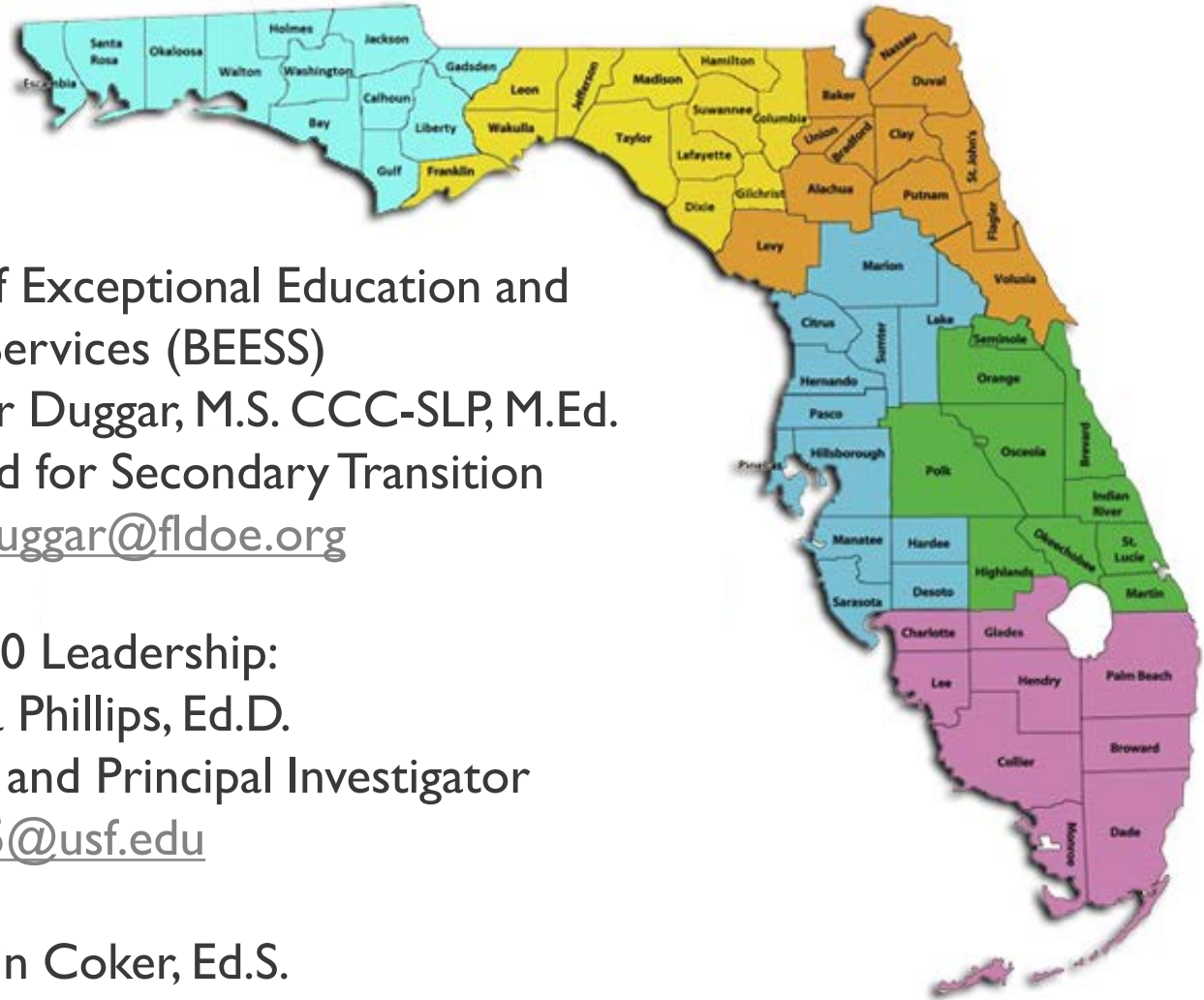
fvaladez@usf.edu

Region 5: Lisa Friedman-Chavez

Lfchavez@usf.edu

Region 6: Nicole Klees

enklee@usf.edu



Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services (BEES)

■ Jennifer Duggar, M.S. CCC-SLP, M.Ed.

State Lead for Secondary Transition

jennifer.duggar@fldoe.org

Project 10 Leadership:

■ Donna Phillips, Ed.D.

Director and Principal Investigator

dphillips5@usf.edu

■ Franklin Coker, Ed.S.

Assistant Director

fjcoker@usf.edu

Deferment Belief

MYTH!

All students with disabilities who have individual education plans are eligible to defer receipt of their standard diploma.

Deferment Facts

Section 1003.4282(9)(c), Florida Statutes (F.S.):

A student with a disability who meets the standard high school diploma requirements in this section may defer the receipt of a standard high school diploma if the student:

1. Has an individual education plan that prescribes special education, transition planning, transition services, or related services through age 21; and
2. ***Is enrolled*** in accelerated college credit instruction pursuant to s. 1007.27, F.S. industry certification courses that lead to college credit, an early college program, courses necessary to satisfy the Scholar designation requirements, or a structured work-study, internship, or pre-apprenticeship program.

Deferment Facts

"Is enrolled" for the purposes of deferment eligibility could be interpreted as either:

- A student is **expected** to successfully meet all entrance criteria for an eligible deferment program, including required program application deadlines, by the conclusion of the academic semester/year in which they meet graduation requirements, or
- A student **actively** enrolled in a deferment eligible program prior to the conclusion of the academic semester/year in which they meet graduation requirements and remain eligible to continue enrollment in that program at the start of the following semester/year.

Deferment Facts

A few important points related to deferment eligible programs:

- IEP amendments might be necessary prior to start of 18-22 program.
- Deferment program descriptions, including statutory references, can be found at <http://project10.info/DPage.php?ID=376>.
- A majority of students with disabilities who are eligible to defer do so into a structured work-study program.
- For structured work-study programs, a continuum of support is required to provide free and appropriate public education (FAPE) for all students with disabilities.

Deferment Belief

Deferment is only for students earning
a standard diploma via Access courses.

MYTH!

Deferment Facts

- Florida statute does not limit deferment eligibility to students who receive a standard diploma via Access courses.
- Students with disabilities who meet requirements to earn a standard diploma other than via Access courses may be eligible to defer based on meeting the criteria of the two prongs cited in s.1003.4282(9)(c), F.S.

Deferment Facts

- **All** students with disabilities (and their parent/s) are required to receive deferment process and eligibility information addressed at IEP meetings beginning prior to the student entering high school (or at age 14, whichever occurs first).
- Neither a specific standard diploma option nor an exceptional student education disability category determines eligibility to defer.

Deferment Belief

Deferment is not appropriate for
students with medical complexities
and/or with the most significant needs.

MYTH!

Deferment Facts

In addition to providing academic and employment readiness skills and experiences, structured work-study programs should also address:

- Pre-vocation skills
- Daily living skills
- Independent functioning

IEP teams should consider the following when planning for deferment for students with more significant needs:

- Measureable postsecondary goal attainment
- Medical and health needs/plans
- Agency linkages, supports and relevant community resources
- Expanded IEP team participants, as appropriate

Deferment Facts

- School districts should design and implement structured work-study programs that allow for flexibility in order to meet the range of student needs.
- Districts can offer more than one type of structure work-study, internship and/or pre-apprenticeship program.
 - Example: Project SEARCH and district-led work-study programs
 - Collaborate with community and state employment, education and transition partners (agencies, businesses, institutes of higher education, etc.)

Deferment Belief

Deferment is an opportunity to
complete graduation requirements for
a standard diploma.

MYTH!

Deferment Facts

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Deferment Facts

- Definition of “defer”: delay an action or proceeding. It implies a deliberate putting off until a later time. (Merriam-Webster.com)
- To defer receipt of a standard high school diploma means to delay the receipt of a standard high diploma by a student to a later time despite the student having earned the diploma at the present time.

Deferment Facts

For students who are significantly behind same age-peers in credits for a standard diploma:

- Deferral of a high school standard diploma can only occur for students who have met all requirements for a high school standard diploma.
- IEP teams may consider the need of transition courses, work-based learning experiences and other postsecondary planning activities to assist the student in earning a standard diploma.
- Students in 18-22 programs and students who have not deferred receipt of their standard diploma (and are still working towards a standard diploma) could be in the same settings, experiences and/or courses.

Deferment Belief

A student with disability may not
change program focus in deferment.

MYTH!

Deferment Facts

Deferral program changes can occur for a student. The following considerations should be made by an IEP team when a student requires a change in deferment program focus:

- Appropriate and complete documentation in the IEP
- Deferment program eligibility requirements
- Recent and relevant transition assessment data
- Present levels, measurable postsecondary goals and course of study
- Continued need for specialized instruction, related services, transition planning and/or transition services
- Outlining what successful program completion looks like

ALIGNMENT!

Deferment Facts

An IEP meeting should be convened to determine appropriate next steps if:

- Specific deferment program criteria changes,
- A student becomes ineligible for an enrolled program, and/or
- A particular deferral program(s) is/are no longer supported by a district.

It may be the case that another deferment program may be appropriate to address a student's needs as identified within their IEP.

Deferment Belief

MYTH!

Planning for deferment begins during
a student's Senior year.

The Deferral Timeline and Florida Legislation

By age 14 or prior to beginning high school (whichever occurs first)

s.1003.5716, F.S.

- A statement documenting discussion of deferment process

Prior to the year the student is expected to meet graduation requirements

s.1003.5716, F.S. & Rule 6A-109963, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.)

- A signed statement by parent or adult student indicating the deferral process is understood and the choice to defer or not to defer

By May 15 of the year the student meets graduation requirements

Rule 6A-1.09963, F.A.C.

- School districts inform parent/student that:
 - FAPE obligations end if diploma is not deferred
 - Deadline for diploma deferral or acceptance is May 15
 - Failure to attend graduation ceremony does not constitute a deferral

Deferment Facts

- A deferment relevant transition planning activity required for IEP teams is the provision of information beginning for a student by age 12 (or during 7th grade, whichever occurs first).
- Project 10 Resource: Transition Requirements Checklist
http://project10.info/Documents/Transition_Requirements_Checklist_w_Legislative_Updates_FINAL_12.14.23_1.pdf

Deferment Facts

- Additional transition planning factors relevant to deferment:
 - Self-determination and self-advocacy
 - Transfer of rights when a student reaches the age of majority
- While the eligibility and decision to defer receipt of a standard diploma occur in a student's Junior and Senior years, planning for deferment is a process that begins well before high school and parallels many elements of effective postsecondary transition planning.

Project 10 Deferment-Related Trainings and Publications

Trainings:

- ❑ Using Deferment and Extended Transition Programming (ages 18-22) to Support Postsecondary Readiness for Students with Disabilities (New)
- ❑ Deferment and Extended Transition Programming (ages 18-22): Information for Parents, Families and Community-Based Transition Stakeholders (New)
- ❑ Graduation Requirements (Updated)
- ❑ Writing Effective Transition IEPs (Updated)

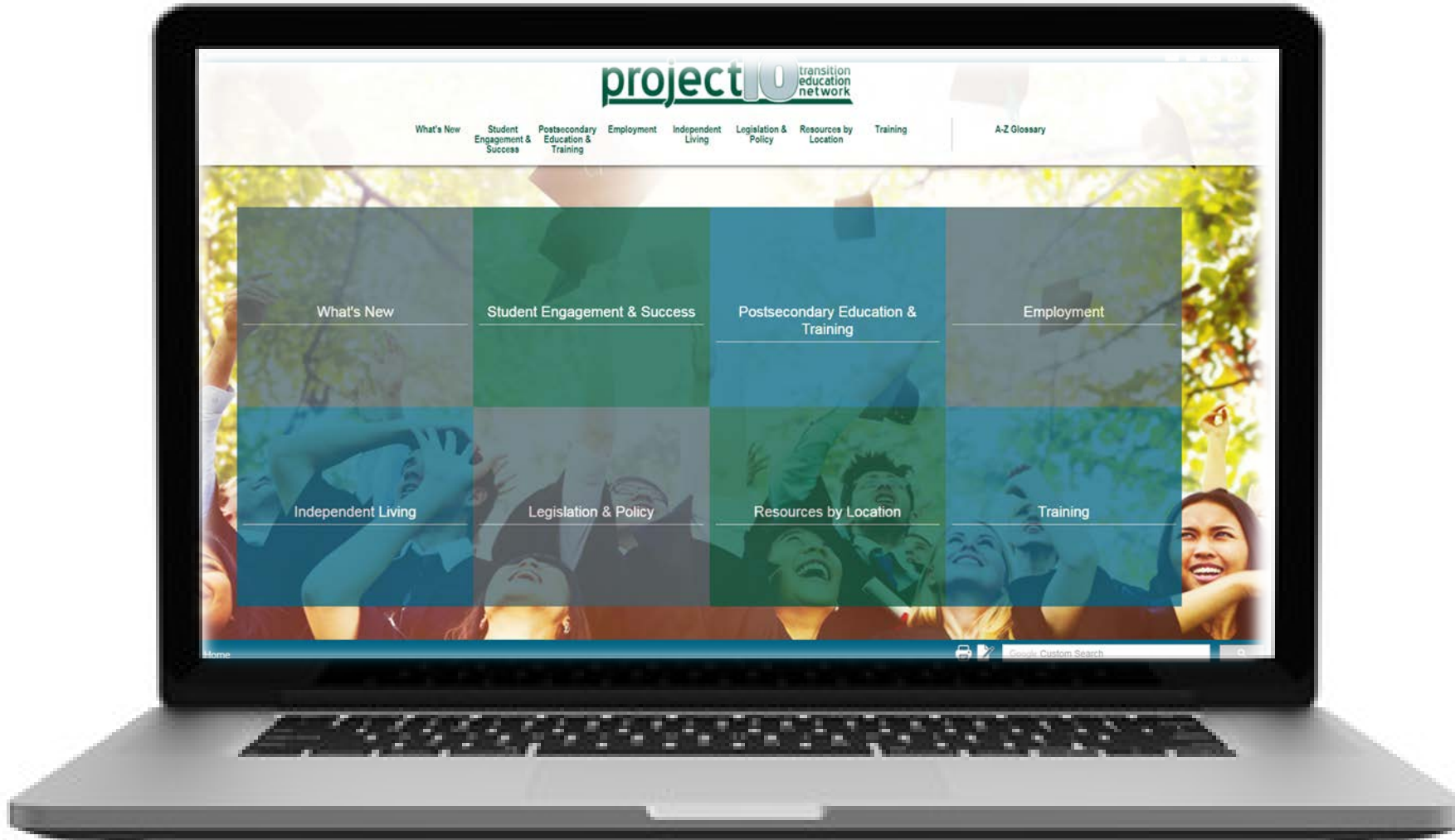
Publications:

- ❑ Secondary Transition Roadmap for Families
- ❑ Graduation Options Charts
- ❑ Transition Requirements Checklist

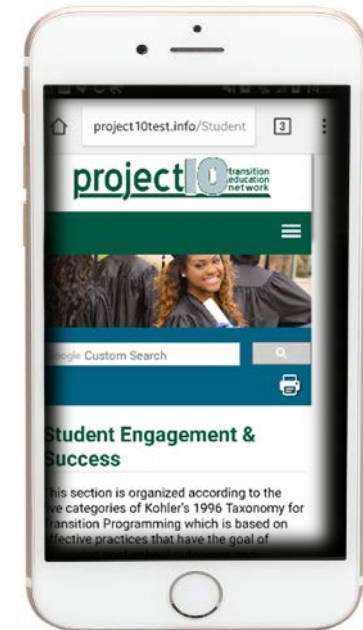
Trainings are listed on the Project 10 website, under “Training by Request”
<http://project10.info/DPage.php?ID=319>

Project 10 Website:

<http://project10.info/>



Mobile Friendly



New and Coming Attractions 2023-2024

- ❑ Project 10 Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/project10usfsp>)
- ❑ Project 10 Winter Institutes – Size-Alike
February 26-29, 2024 (Zoom)
- ❑ Statewide Transition Contact Meeting (BEES & Project 10)
April 9, 2024, Orlando, FL (Florida Hotel and Conference Center)
- ❑ VISIONS Conference
April 9-11, 2024, Orlando, FL (Florida Hotel and Conference Center)

Thank You



Thank you for your kind
attention!