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## S1 E5: Supporting Students with Significant Needs in Online Environments

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## **Lisa Dieker**

Welcome to practical access. I am Lisa Dieker,

## **Rebecca Hines**

And I'm Rebecca Hines. And yes, we are going a little stir crazy ourselves. Only a few episodes in. Lisa, today I was talking to a colleague who was trying to scramble and decide how they were going to deliver there on my instruction that everybody's working on, and she has a significant number of kids who are really high need kids. And we were talking about distributing learning via probably things like Zoom, like a lot of people are, cool or other methods. And she was mentioning, already predicting this idea that well, we need, you know, not everybody's on the same level. We're going to, you know, teach kids all on different levels, even if the same grade. And it really got me back to my roots of thinking about different, little bit differently. So I advised her, you know what, have your best speaker give their best lesson and then have breakout groups to go back and discuss. And that's I think, where we can do some real differentiation. But it's time, I think, to go ahead and give all the kids access to our very best content, and then let's think about differentiation a little bit differently in this case. I think that that's one of the things that's an opportunity here because no one knows what kids are going to gain no matter what methods were use. Access, access, access.

## **Lisa Dieker**

Absolutely. Yeah, it's funny, cause I had almost the same question from a family member. Two teachers, 25 kids, many don't communicate, worried about families, having those kids at home, completely respect that's a huge challenge we need to be aware of. But she has two teachers and six adults, and two of those adults are one on one. And so I was asking, I said, well, I would go back to our podcast on co teaching and be really clear that those adults that are one on one, I know exactly what they're supposed to be doing with those kids online. You know? What's those IEP goals? What are they working on? Is a basic communication? Is it do they know the accessibility features that are available? I think it's time to double down, as you would say on those accessibility features and make sure that we understand those and again is that training we need to give to our paraprofessionals? I think absolutely priority because many of them are to be the ones to do that fine tuning. You know, the teacher does the big picture, but they're hanging off that kid at a smaller level. And again, I think the last thing I would just mention there was just is this whole comment you made about process. You know, those kids need structure, and so making sure we lead with structure and lead with common faces and lead with accessibility, I think, is the best thing we could be doing right now to get started.

## **Rebecca Hines**

Absolutely. If I'm a paraprofessional right now, I'm listening to you whatever is being broadcast and I'm writing down a few key words, I am trying to use those words with the person that I'm teaching. And even if this is someone who has very significant needs, I'm still going to help support him or her get as much of that standards-based education as possible. And, as a family member of someone with significant needs, I can tell you, my nephew would not necessarily be able to tell you anything that he learned from a lecture, but remotely, he's also not going to be able to do much else to interact with you either. So why not give him access and then see if we can get him to free recall even a key word for him

That would be a success.

**Lisa Dieker**

Yeah, you know, when that I love is this app called aft Decks Me. It's a simple little app that you could actually put onto the device. And it will tell you if the student is smiling, frowning, joy, happy. And looking at kids emotions might be a great simple tool to add, again talking with parents to do that so that they know. But it actually tracks your facial muscles. That would be a great skill for students to practice. If you feel happy. Are you smiling? I'm thinking of our my friends with on the spectrum, you know, when they're happy? One of them said, Look, I can't make that app show you that I'm happy. Can we put that on teachers? Right? Well, let's not do that or on us. I think we're sitting here going, you know, if I have to look at a computer screen one more time with a good looking face on it so. I think families are going to feel the same way. Yeah, you had some other ideas.

**Rebecca Hines**

I just encourage everybody to continue looking for very specified tools to meet very specific needs. A new example is Ira. I don't know, Lisa, if you're familiar, but it's ah, it's a great place or person and it costs, were blind I think that they are offering some promotions right now, so it's a chance to try tools like that. I would be looking at some very disability specific tools and, um, trying to find out who's offering special promotions so that my child or my student could access something he or she may not usually have access to.

**Lisa Dieker**

So tell me how my world works and how you use it in the home.

**Rebecca Hines**

Well, in the in the home it's used, essentially is a video guide where a real person's on the other end, seeing for you essentially, and so they think that they are looking at how they could do this, even with somebody looking at your computer screen for you and talking you through it and describing what they're seeing for you. Because not everything is going to be accessible for somebody who is blind or visually impaired right now, right? Just making that accessible in a very fast paced contemporary on this spot way,

**Lisa Dieker**

Yes. You wear glasses as a little camera. I think it's going to look On Star. You call in, and that human then can see what you're saying. Yeah, that would be a great tool. Especially like if you're going to use a lot of graphs like my niece teaches biology. So if she's going to be putting up biology images, the kid might not be able to access, that's a quick way to get access to. And do you remember? If you are putting up images, try to make sure you do use that all text in power point so that kids who can't see or can't learn to traditional visual. It's good for everybody. It's not just for the kid of disability. We always said that turn on all technology. Well, my last go to you is this website and it's called Making Learning Accessible For All. And I like it because it's got really basic tools they can use in Google, which many schools use, and on your Chromebook. So and also you can share. And I think that's what we're really, really promoting right now is this is uncharted territory for the whole world. So if you find something

that's working for your kiddo, share it because what they've done out here is share different tools and descriptions that people have said our good are ready to use. And there's about 35 listed. Let's make that 350 listed. You know, if you find something as simple as you know, having the kid have a stress ball, whether on the computer makes them pay more attention and they smile more. Let's make sure people learn those really basic things from each other and share one less little resource I'll share. It's called Tack Packer, and you're welcome to go out and Google Tack Packer. My name is Lisa the last name Dieker, blame my husband, D I E K E R. If you Google that you'll find a website with about 520 bookmark sites, and I've tried to add a whole bunch on this outbreak in how to teach online and that site that I just mentioned his bookmark out there.

**Rebecca Hines**

I think with so many resources is right now, it's going to feel overwhelmed. So going to a trusted source, of course, is the key. And I would say, Make yourself an expert in only a couple of those.

**Lisa Dieker**

It's a Panera Pick Two

**Rebecca Hines**

Bring two things because if everybody brings two, then we've got plenty.

**Lisa Dieker**

Right, right and your kids don't need to learn 800 platforms. They just need to go to that work, for you will work for them.