



**National Center
on Deaf-Blindness**

2022 VIRTUAL



DB Summit

Putting it into Practice: Examples from the TA Network on Accessing the General Education Curriculum

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Agenda

- Welcome
- Katy Ring (Iowa)
 - Reflection
- Chevonne Sutter (Nevada)
 - Reflection
- Breakout Session 1
- Julie Maier and Kayla Coburn (California)
 - Reflection
- Juanita Rodriguez (Puerto Rico)
 - Reflection
- Breakout Session 2
- Closing and Next Steps

Objectives

- Participants will gain knowledge of high-quality practices on supporting students who are deaf-blind to access the GEC
- Participants will gain knowledge of resources to support students who are deaf-blind to access the GEC

Puerto Rico Deaf-Blind Project

- **Number of students with deaf-blindness served as of 2021 = 34**
- **TA is provided as per request from families, teachers, or other school personnel.**
 - **Marta Sanabria – Associate Director**
 - **Juanita Rodriguez – Coordinator**

Who Is Ryan? (1 of 2)

- 16 years old
- Youngest of two sons, born to Yvette and Moises
- He is in the 10th grade in a public school in the southern part of the Island (PR). Access the GEC, in addition to Adapted Physical Education.
- Eligible for special education services under deaf-blindness category.
- Originally, Ryan was placed in a classroom for students with multiple disabilities.

Who is Ryan? (2 of 2)

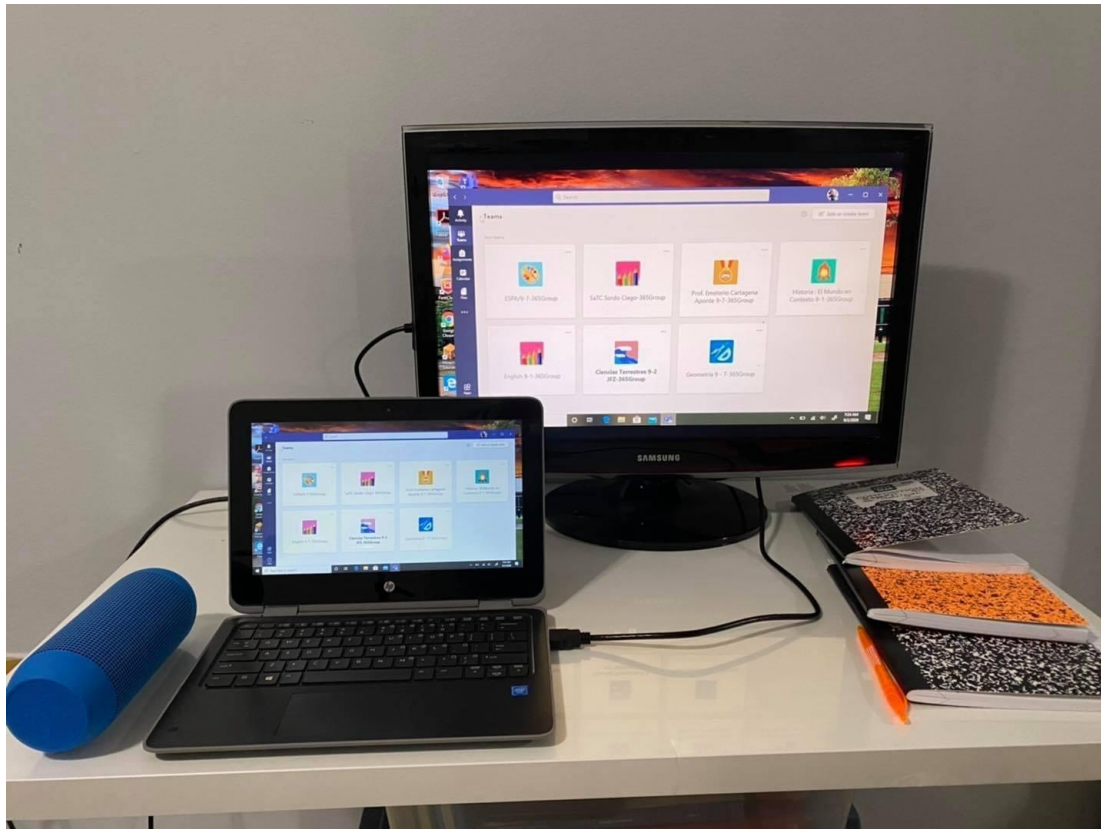
- He also received home schooling, prior to elementary school
- Elementary Placement: Special education classroom for D/B (one to one setting).
- Deaf-blindness is due to Kernicterus. As such, he has Cortical Visual Impairment, auditory neuropathy spectrum disorder (ANSD), severe cerebral palsy, dystonia.
- The dystonia impede physical movements, including articulatory muscles, preventing his speech.

This is Ryan in his room at home



A closer look at Ryan room.

It includes a laptop connected to a larger screen to fits his visual needs



Excerpts of IEP (1 of 4)

- **Comments on his health: Ryan suffers from reflux, severe constipation, and dystonia. He was recommended to use eye glasses and hearing aids, in accordance with specialists.**
- **He gets tired frequently, depending on the activity and the frequency.**

Excerpts of IEP (2 of 4)

- **Description of Ryan's functioning:**
- **Actual General Academic Level: Academic function is average if compared with other students of his same age; with assistive technology, modifications, and support.**
- **During academic year 2020-2021, the student will be included in Science, Mathematics and English. The content will be modified to fit his needs.**

(This information was translated from Spanish for the purpose of this presentation, as it was written in his IEP).

Excerpts of IEP (3 of 4)

- Ryan receives individualized instruction to meet his learning needs to access information.
- He communicates in gestures, weeping, smiles, and eye contact.
- He uses a Tobbi communicator.

(This information was translated from Spanish for the purpose of this presentation, as it was written in his IEP).

Excerpts of IEP (4 of 4)

Math: Numerals and operation

Goal 1:

Apply math concepts (represent, estimate, computer, relate numbers, and numeric systems)

Select and interpret units in formulas

Select and interpret the scale in a graphic

Technical Assistance Focus

- **Ryan needs assistance in communication. His mother collaborated in the identification of his preferred mode of communication.**
- **Teacher was instructed on the communication system used by the students (the two-hand system).**
- **He has to be able to communicate in a regular classroom to participate and interact with classmates.**

TA to Teachers

- **Revision of IEP to change his placement to a regular 7th grade (GEC) with the modifications and accommodations needed.**
- **TA to content area teachers on how to teach Ryan using his unique communication system.**
- **How to ask questions of Ryan?**
- **How to evaluate Ryan?**
- **TA: Orientation to Ryan's classmates to facilitate his interactions in the classrooms (Math, Science,..).
Ryan wants to have friends among classmates.**

TA to Teachers and Classmates (1 of 2)

- Ryan had been attending regular classes since the 7th grade, accessing the GEC with a teacher assistant, accommodations, and modifications recommended to fit his communication needs.
- Evaluations are modified to allow him to respond with Yes/No answers.
- Additionally, teachers use two alternatives (one for each hand) to request Ryan's participation in the class.

TA to Teachers and Classmates (2 of 2)

- Additional time to take tests.
- Additional time to answer questions in the classroom.
- TA is offered to teachers, other school personnel and classmates in accordance with Ryan's academic and social needs.

Ryan's Mother: Mrs. Yvette Cedeño

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6uM3C1bW56U>



Presuming Competence

“Presuming competence means to assume [that a person] has the capacity to think, learn, and understand—even if you don’t see any tangible evidence that such is the case. It’s assuming they are not inherently incapable; they just need the right supports and systems to help them succeed.”

<https://blog.theautismsite.greatergood.com/presume-competence/>

Reflection #4

Consider:

- **What did you hear that resonated with you?**
- **How do you/how might you speak with educational teams about presuming competence/the least dangerous assumption?**



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