



COLORADO

Department of Education

2023 Transition Leadership Institute

Speaker: Tish Watson, Assistant Director of Special Education
Co-Presenters: Donna Johnson, Transition Coordinator and Bob Barrows

Session Title: Who Gets Into 18-21 Transition Services, How Do You Decide and When Do They Exit?



Tish Watson is an Assistant Director of Special Education at Fountain Fort Carson School District 8. She has served in this role for six years. Prior to this role she worked in District 8 as a Speech Language Pathologist in settings ranging from pre-school through transition age. In her current role she supports administrators and staff who are responsible for implementation of transition programming and services at the middle and high school levels. She also supports the Launch Program, which is the transition age program in District 8.



Donna Johnson has worked as a transition teacher and transition coordinator for Eagle County School District. She created the C.L.I.M.B. (Community, Life Skills, Independence, Meaningful Employment and Belonging) transition programming model for young adults with disabilities that are between the ages of 18 - 21 years of age. She has a passion for providing transition services that promote best post-school life outcomes. She has worked in the field for 14 years and provides community based transition programming that has resulted in high employment rates, community membership and independence. C.L.I.M.B. 18-21 is a model site in Colorado.



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Bob Barrows is a retired Special Education Director and High School Principal who has served as a Special Education Transition Consultant for Mesa County District 51 for the past two years. Bob has served as Special Education Director in Jeffco from 2006-2015, and Executive Director for SPED in Academy District 20 from 2015-2019. After one year of retirement, Bob returned as a Special Education Coordinator for High Schools in Mesa County. In 2021, Bob was awarded the Child Advocate of the Year by The Arc of Mesa County. Currently, Bob is immersed in the Sequencing of Services and Interagency Collaboration and in his words "creating a symbiotic path to adulthood" for the 18-21 population. As a

transition consultant, Bob has also served various school districts on the Western Slope for CDE in the spring semester 2023. Bob is excited to continue consulting for CDE in the 2023-2024 school year in sharing best practices, forming vibrant inter-agency teams, and ensuring successful adult outcomes for all students with disabilities. Bob cherishes golf games with his wife Dawn Marie and usually brings his therapy dog, Norman, to professional learning sessions that he conducts.