

# **POST SECONDARY TRANSITION PLANNING AND SPECIAL EDUCATION**

*Opportunity and Equity*

**John Spinney  
Post Secondary Transition Specialist  
Vermont Agency of Education**

# *The Transition Concept*

- The concept of transition for high school students with disabilities is simple and generally has three major components:
- 1. *Coach* every student, along with his or her family, to think about goals for life after high school and to develop a long-range plan to get there.
- 2. *Design* a high school experience to ensure that the student gains the skills and competencies needed to achieve his or her desired post-school goals.
- 3. *Identify* and *link* students and families to any needed post-school services, supports or programs before the student exits the school system.

# *Preparation*

- The student's high school program should thoroughly prepare him or her for achieving his or her desired post-school goals.
- The Individualized Education Program, IEP, is the legal document reflecting the commitment made by the educational agency to provide a free appropriate public education designed to meet the unique needs of the student with a disability.
- The IEP should reflect the services and supports needed to assist the student in gaining the skills, experiences and connections to make the student's post-school goals a reality.

# ***Why is early transition planning important?***

- Transition from special education services and its entitlements to an eligibility system is complicated.
- For students with severe disabilities and complex needs it will take time to put post-school services and supports in place.
- Some students will likely be using the services of many agencies and time will be needed to figure out who can do what and who will pay for what services.

# ***Which students need transition planning and why?***

- A process designed to plan for life after graduation, through identifying dreams, goals, instructional needs and supports is beneficial for all students regardless of the extent or type of disability. IDEA requires that transition planning be included in the IEP, for every student receiving special education services, beginning no later than the age of 16 or earlier when appropriate.

# ***An effective transition planning***

## ***process:***

- Provides awareness to students, families, educators, community and adult service providers about what each system and person does as well as facilitate communication among them.
- Develops a planning process that identifies a clear path for students to follow from school to adult living.
- Refocuses the school curriculum to include applied academics, career development and daily living skills.
- Utilizes assessment information across agencies, reducing duplication and streamlining the referral and eligibility determination process.
- Effectively coordinates services between the school and other agencies leading to a successful transition.

# ***The IEP and Post Secondary Transition planning***

- The first IEP in effect after the student turns 16 must have a post-secondary transition plan in the IEP.
- There are 8 key elements of a post-secondary transition plan in the IEP.

# ***8 Elements of a Post-Secondary Transition Plan (Indicator 13)***

- 1) Evidence student was invited to IEP
- 2) Evidence of coordination with other agencies, e.g., VR
- 3) Age-appropriate transition assessment
- 4) Measurable postsecondary goals
- 5) Corresponding annual IEP goals
- 6) Measurable postsecondary goals updated annually
- 7) Transition services
- 8) Course of study

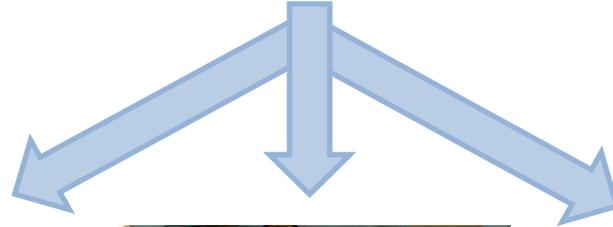
# ***Transition Assessment defined***

- “...ongoing process of collecting data on the individual’s needs, preferences, and interests as they relate to the demands of current and future working, educational, living, and personal and social environments. Assessment data serve as the common thread in the transition process and form the basis for defining goals and services to be included in the Individualized Education Program (IEP)”

(The Division on Career Development and Transition of the Council for Exceptional Children)

# *Transition Assessment*

Should Address Three Areas



Employment



Education/  
Training



Independent  
Living

# *Example Transition Assessments*

- Sources: (1) Classroom observation notes monthly August 2005 – April 2006; (2) Community Based Instruction (community and work activities) task analysis checks August 2005 – April 2006”, (3) *Transition Planning Inventory*, student, home, and school forms, April 2006; (4) *Making Action Plans [MAPS]* (Forest & Lusthaus, 1990), complete May, 2005

# ***Post-Secondary Goals***

- Measurable = Countable
- Identifies an outcome, not a process
- One goal for each adult outcome area
- Adult Outcome Areas
  - Education or Training (required)
  - Employment (required)
  - Independent Living (when appropriate)

# ***Corresponding Annual IEP Goals***

- ❖ For each post-secondary goal, there must be an annual goal or goals included in the IEP that will help the student make progress towards the stated post-secondary goals.

# *Lissette*

## **Postsecondary Independent Living Goal:**

- Upon completion of high school, Lissette will utilize public transportation, including the public bus and uptown trolley with time limited supports provided through Vocational Rehabilitation.

## **Annual IEP Goal:**

- Given a bus schedule adapted with pictures, Lissette will select the correct time and stop for five scenarios of activities presented to her with 95% or better accuracy by December of the current school year.

# ***Transition Services***

- Should focus on academic and functional achievement to facilitate movement from school to post-school life
- For each postsecondary goal, transition services can include:
  - Instruction
  - Related Services
  - Community Experience
  - Development of Employment and Post-School Objectives
  - Acquisition of Daily Living Skills
  - (if appropriate)
  - Functional Vocational Evaluation (if appropriate)

# Lissette

- Results of performance on state mandated assessments taken during high school indicate Lissette is performing below average in math, reading, and written expression
- Results of an *adaptive behavior checklist* indicate she has acquired many age-appropriate behaviors necessary for her to live independently and to function safely and appropriately in daily life; however, she continues to need support in this area.
- Community Based Instruction: task analysis checks indicate ability to work independently

## Education/training:

- Instruction on Community Safety skills
- Travel instruction
- Math instruction - money usage, telling time
- Literacy instruction related to sight word identification
- Instruction related to community safety at the YMCA

## Employment:

- Purchase a monthly bus pass
- Safety skills in the community
- Learning to use the pull cord to identify her upcoming stop

# *Courses of Study*



- A multi-year description of coursework to achieve the student's desired post-school goals from the student's current to anticipated exit year

(Storms, O'Leary, & Williams, 2000)

# *Course of Study*

- Is a course of study identified?
- Is the student's course of study preparing them for their postsecondary goals?

# Example and Non-Example Course of Study

## EXAMPLES

- Math II
- English IV (Physical Science)
- Adapted PE/ Health (2 credits)
- Career/ Technical (1 credit)
- Social Studies (government and civics)
- Applied Math
- Home Economics (2 credits)
- Career/ Technical (3 credits)

These are the courses that Diana will complete from her current year in high school through graduation. They are directly related to her Postsecondary education and employment goals.

## NON-EXAMPLES

- A box is checked on the IEP indicating that the student is completing the “standard coursework” for graduation.
- \*Plan is minimally acceptable if it includes only the student’s current year courses related to postsecondary goals.

# ***Summary of Performance (SoP)***

Upon graduation, the LEA must write a summary of the student's academic achievement & functional performance. Included here are recommendations on how to assist the student in meeting their post secondary goals.

This is a SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE (SoP)

Think of it as a

- “Passport”
- “Resume”
- “Exit Visa”

# ***Multi Year Plan / Alternative Credit Accrual Plan (ACAP)***

When appropriate, a Multi Year Plan, approved by the superintendent or designee, should be developed for students earning credits in an “alternative way” from their non-disabled peers.

For example:

A student may take “life skills math” vs. algebra.  
A student may take Tae Kwon Do vs. P.E.

# ***Guiding questions for IEP teams***

- Where is the student going vocationally (competitive or supported employment, volunteer work)?
- Will the student need post-secondary education or training?
- Where will the student live and what support will be needed?
- What will the student's transportation needs be?
- How will the student maintain his or her social life?
- What type of leisure activities will the student participate in?
- How will the student meet his or her need for medical care including health insurance?
- What community agencies can help and how will they be accessed?

•Resources? Visit Vermont's Transition Learning Community

<http://tlcworkshops.pbworks.com>

John Spinney

Post Secondary Transition Specialist

Vermont Agency of Education

[john.spinney@state.vt.us](mailto:john.spinney@state.vt.us)