Supporting the Transition Outcomes of Students with Complex Needs: Are We All Having the Same Conversation?

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9:15 AM – 10:30 AM

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The future is not something we enter. The future is something we create.

And creating that future requires us to make choices and decisions…

That all begins with a dream!

Leonard I. Sweet
Objectives

- *Participants will learn* evidence-/research-based practices for serving students with complex needs as required under federal regulations.
- *Participants will feel* empowered to enhance implementation of transition services for students with complex needs.
- *Participants will be able to* work with teams to provide transition experiences, incorporating person-centered planning, for students with complex needs.

Today’s Agenda

- Who are students and youth with the most complex needs?
- What are the desired outcomes of the individual with complex needs and his/her family/caregiver/guardian?
- What are the legal requirements for supporting the transition of students and youth with the most complex needs?
- Secondary Transition Planning
  - Assessment
  - Postsecondary Goals
  - Agency Involvement
  - Activities/Services/Measureable Annual Goals
- What are current effective practices to support the transition of students and youth with the most complex needs?
Who do you think are students and youth with the most complex needs?

Discuss with the person sitting next to you…………...

Who are students and youth with the most complex needs?

VR – Perspective
- Students with disabilities who may require:
  - Line of site supervision
  - Extra support for their physical and personal care
  - Communication support to fully participate
  - Individualized strategies for behavioral supports
  - Consideration of risk/safety issues
  - Contingencies for crisis management
  - Medication management supports
Who are students and youth with the most complex needs?

Education – Perspective

- Students with disabilities who require:
  - 1:1 assistance for all activities of daily living
  - Very limited physical and/or mental stamina
  - Limited communication response (1-2 second eye gaze for yes/no answers)
  - Daily required supports from a medically trained professional
  - 1:1 supports for social engagement activities

Students with Complex Needs

- Demonstrate diverse skills, strengths, limits, and support needs
- Multiple system impairments that impact the student, family, community participation, and severity of associated health conditions
- Two or more simultaneously occurring impairments
- Supports are usually pervasive and extensive in order to achieve community living, employment, and self-sufficiency.
What are 3 barriers that students with the most complex needs encounter when planning and pursuing postsecondary competitive integrated employment, adult living, or education?

Core Belief:
All people and their families have the right to live, love, work, play and pursue their life aspirations in their community.
What are the Desired Outcomes of the Individual with Complex Needs and His/Her Family Caregiver/Guardian?
What does independence look like?

Desired Outcomes...

Based upon findings of the PA Transition Discoveries Project
Thinking about your students

- What are critical outcomes for these students?
- What are your students’ hopes and dreams for their future?
- What are their parents’ hopes and dreams for their sons and daughters?
- Think about the transition to a supported adulthood
  - Supported employment
  - Supported living
  - Supported membership in the community
  - Supported self-determination

The Big Picture: Guiding Questions

- Ask yourself:
  - What is it that we are actually doing to support this student/youth?
  - Is it meaningful?
  - Will it really help the student to achieve his/her post-secondary goals and to enjoy a quality of life?
What are Your Desired Outcomes for the Individual with Complex Needs?

Legal Considerations

- IDEA
- The Rehabilitation Act, as amended by WIOA
  - WIOA Pre-Employment Transition Services
  - WIOA - Section 511
- Employment First
- Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) - Final Rule for Home and Community-Based Settings (HCBS)
Individuals with Disabilities Education Act IDEA 2004

Primary Purpose

To ensure that all children with disabilities have available to them a free appropriate public education that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment, and independent living H.R.1350 (IDEA 2004)
What is Secondary Transition?

“a coordinated set of activities for a child with a disability that is designed within a result-oriented process, that is focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of the child with a disability to facilitate the child’s movement from school to post-school activities, including post-secondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation.” (IDEA 2004)

IDEA §300.43

The Rehabilitation Act, as amended by WIOA
- Pre-Employment Transition Services
- Section 511
Pre-Employment Transition Services

- Pre-employment transition services (section 7(30) of the Act and §361.5(c)(42)) are provided to “students with disabilities” who are:
  - Eligible for VR services; or
  - Potentially eligible for VR services (i.e., all students with disabilities, including those who have not applied or been determined eligible for VR services).

- Pre-employment transition services include:
  - “Required” activities (section 113(b) of the Act and §361.48(a)(2));
  - “Authorized” activities (section 113(c) of the Act and §361.48(a)(3)); and
  - “Pre-employment transition coordination” activities (section 113(d) of the Act and §361.48(a)(4)).

Pre-Employment Transition Services

- An early start at job exploration that assists students with identifying career interests to be further explored through additional VR services, including transition services; and

- Provided in collaboration with state and local education agencies to students with disabilities who are eligible or potentially eligible for VR services; and

- Must be made available statewide to all students with disabilities who need those services, regardless of whether a student has applied for VR services; and
Pre-Employment Transition Services

◦ May begin once a student requests or is recommended for one or more pre-employment transition services, and documentation of the disability is provided to the VR agency; and

◦ Are the only activities that a state VR agency may pay for with the minimum 15% reserve funds under section 110(d)(1).

WIOA – Title V, Section 511
Limitations on Use of Sub-Minimum Wage

❑ Effective July 22, 2016.

❑ Intent – is that individuals with disabilities, especially youth with disabilities, must be afforded a full opportunity to prepare for, obtain, maintain, advance in, or reenter competitive integrated employment.

❑ Key Provisions

◦ Places limitations on employers who hold special wage certificates under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), especially when hiring youth 24 years of age or younger. (34 CFR Part 397)
WIOA – Title V, Section 511
Limitations on Use of Sub-Minimum Wage

Key Provisions

◦ Requires VR to provide students/youth with disabilities documentation demonstrating completion of certain requirements, prior to starting subminimum wage employment. (section 511(d) of the Act and §397.10, and section 511(a)(2) of the Act and §§397.20 and 397.30).

◦ Prohibits a school district from entering into a contract or making other arrangements with a subminimum wage employer for an individual who is age 24 or younger which the work is compensated at a subminimum wage. (Section 511(b)(2) of the Act and §397.31)

Employment First
Employment First

A national movement and an alignment of systems that focus on the concept that:

*Employment in the general workforce is the first and preferred outcome in the provision of publicly funded services for all working age citizens with disabilities, regardless of level of disability.*

*APSE Statement on Employment First*

There are 49 states with some type of effort focused on Employment First. At least 33 of these states have an official state policy, stating that employment in the community is the first and preferred service option for people with disabilities.

The State Employment Leadership Network (SELN) - [http://www.selnhub.org](http://www.selnhub.org)
SELN – Employment First Resource List

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In everyday language...

*We believe everyone that WANTS to work CAN work, if given the right supports in a setting that makes sense for the person.*

*And…because Employment First isn’t Employment ONLY….*

*When people aren’t working, they can be supported to spend time in integrated community settings engaging in activities of their choice.*
What if someone doesn’t have a job?

**Employment First is not Employment only**

If someone isn’t working, they should be supported to spend time in integrated community settings around other people without disabilities and people who are not paid staff.

New integrated community-based experiences lead to opportunities that get people closer to employment.

This will look different for everyone (not cookie-cutter programming, but instead, based on Person Centered Planning)

However, if the person is of working age, the expectation should remain: Employment

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Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS)

Final Rule for Home and Community-Based Settings (HCBS)
Final Rule for HCBS

- Amends the Medicaid regulations to provide requirements regarding person-centered plans of care, characteristics of settings that are home and community-based as well as settings that may not be home and community-based.

- These requirements reflect CMS' intent that individuals receiving services and supports through Medicaid Waivers receive services in settings which are integrated in and support full access to the greater community.

Goal and Scope of HCBS Rule

- To “ensure that individuals receiving services through HCBS programs have full access to the benefits of community living”

- To “further expand the opportunities for meaningful community integration in support of the goals of the ADA and the Supreme Court decision in Olmstead”
Community Participation Supports

The service should result in the person:

- Increasing potential for employment;
- Developing and sustaining a range of valued social roles and relationships;
- Building natural supports;
- Increasing independence; and
- Experiencing meaningful community participation and inclusion.

Community Participation Supports

- The purpose of the Community Participation Support service is to broaden the types of lifelong learning experiences available to individuals receiving services.

- The choice whether to participate in community activity, the amount and frequency remains with the individual.
Secondary Transition Planning

- Assessment
- Post-Secondary Goals
- Agency Involvement
- Activities/Services/Measurable Annual Goals

Student-Centered

StUDENT

Student’s Interests

Student’s Preferences

Student’s Strengths & Needs
How does it all work together?

TRANSITION SERVICES FLOW CHART

- Age-Appropriate Transition Assessments:
  - Needs
  - Strengths
  - Preferences
  - Interests

- Write Measurable Postsecondary Goals:
  - Education/Training
  - Employment
  - Independent Living, as appropriate

- Identify Transition Services:
  - Instruction
  - Related Services
  - Community Experiences
  - Employment, Adult Living & Daily Living Skills

- Write the Course of Study

- Coordinate Services with Adult Agencies

- Write the Annual IEP Goals


Effective Transition Planning:

- Identify Interests and Preferences:
  - **Interests**: a measure of opinions, attitudes, and preferences
  - **Preferences**: what the student values and likes

- Set Post-Secondary Goals:
  - **Post-Secondary Education and Training**
  - **Employment**
  - **Independent Living**

- Further Assess Abilities, Aptitudes, and Skills:
  - **Abilities**: talents or acquired skills
  - **Aptitudes**: characteristics that inform us of a student's learning strengths or proficiency in a particular area
Preference Indicators

- Child Preference Indicators
- Personal Preference Indicators
- Employment Support Indicators


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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preference Indicators</th>
<th>Communication Reinforcement</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Direction from a supervisor at the beginning</td>
<td>Combination of words and pictures used to understand and communicate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Frequent prompts to stay on task</td>
<td>Assistive devices used to communicate</td>
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<td>Intermittent prompts, low level of supervision</td>
<td>Interpreter services</td>
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<tr>
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**Attention to Task**
- Frequent prompts to stay on task
- Intermittent prompts, low level of supervision
- Intermittent prompts, high level of supervision

**Body Clock**
- Functions best morning
- Functions best in the afternoon
- Functions best in the evening

**Endurance**
- Frequent breaks
- Hourly breaks
- Breaks every 2-3 hours

**Quality Assurance**
- Low level of supervision of work quality and accuracy
- High level of supervision of work quality and accuracy

**Sequencing**
- Overall planning of assignment/duties and tasks
- Prompts to perform steps within task
- Prompts to proceed with next task

**Decision-Making/Problem-Solving**
- Help to identify options and impact of choice making
- Rules and structure to minimize decision-making

**Adapting to Change**
- A rigid routine is preferred (same people, same time, same task)
- A flexible routine, advance notice, and explanation

**Time Awareness**
- Functional understanding of time (may need cues)
- Cues must be provided
### Assistive Technology Protocol for Transition Planning

**Goals**

1. **After high school, Calvin will live and participate as he can at home, volunteer at his church weekly, and work with job coach in supported employment project.**

2. **Using customized computer applications (auditory reader and voice activation) Calvin will complete a video resume with 90% accuracy.**

3. **With the help of a full-time HTS/PCA, Jessie will volunteer 3 afternoons a week at a childcare program.**
Community-Based and Work-Based Learning Experiences in the Educational System

Three Key Components:

- School-based classroom instruction involving both academic and functional areas
- Engagement in structured activities
- Connected to student’s postsecondary goals

Essential Question
How can community and work-based transition activities be incorporated into the school day while balancing the needs of each student?

Community-Based and Work-Based Learning Experiences

- Start the conversations earlier about the possibility of employment in the community for a paycheck!
- Set expectations high
- Exposure Early:
  - Volunteering
  - Job shadowing
  - Service Learning/Internships
  - General Work Experience
  - Matched Work Experience
  - Customized Job Experience
- Consider:
  - Conditions for success
  - Potential contributions
  - Tasks person can do
  - How individual learns best
  - Support strategies to ensure success
  - Things to avoid
  - Natural supports
Questions to Consider

- How are experiences integrated in IEPs, IPEs, ISPs?
- Have we created and/or selected the most appropriate experiences?
- Are “next steps” clearly apparent to all stakeholders and the youth regarding work-based learning/assessment and transition implementation?
- Has the youth helped direct the experience?
- What difficulties does the student/youth with a disability experience?
- What accommodations are available to reduce or eliminate these issues?
- Once accommodations are in place evaluating the effectiveness of the accommodations and determine whether additional accommodations are needed?

Current Effective Practices to Support the Transition of Students and Youth with the Most Complex Needs
**Students with Significant or Complex Support Needs Best Practices**

- Services driven by what the student needs.
- Pre-ETS required activities may build over time – not one and done.
- Clear understanding and communication of student’s support needs.
- Multi-prong approach/collaboration/partnerships (internal & external)
- Braided funding identified/outlined in interagency agreements, IEP meetings, or person-centered planning meetings.
- Strong family engagement builds hope and expectations for competitive, integrated employment.

**Students with Significant or Complex Support Needs Best Practices**

- Connecting families with resources/experts (benefits planning).
- Strong employer engagement tied to career pathways with multiple on and off ramps.
- Video resumes showcase talent.
- Reallocate staff positions/hours (instructional aides or paras) from classroom to community
- Paid work experiences in competitive, integrated settings for real work performed.
Person-Centered/Directed Planning

- Especially helpful for students with significant needs
- Bringing people together to discuss the visions and goals of the students/youth
- Enhances quality of assessment and planning activities for both HS transition services and adult services
- Fosters working relationships between youth, families, and professionals
- Helps educators and agencies to coordinate services
- Helps ensure that services support student goals
- Helps identify & cultivate natural supports in the community.

LifeCourse Framework

www.supportstofamilies.org
www.lifecoursetools.org
Achieving Your “Good Life”

- **Daily Life and Employment**
  - (school/education, employment, volunteering, routines, life skills)

- **Healthy Living**
  - (medical, behavioral, nutrition, wellness, affordable care)

- **Community Living**
  - (housing, living options, home adaptations and modifications, community access, transportation)

- **Safety and Security**
  - (emergencies, well-being, legal rights & issues, guardianship options & alternatives)

- **Social and Spirituality**
  - (friends, relationships, leisure activities, personal networks, faith community)

- **Citizenship and Advocacy**
  - (valued roles, making choices, setting goals, responsibility, leadership, peer support)

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Trajectory towards Good Life

- **Friends, family, enough money, job I like, home, faith, vacations, health, choice, freedom**

- **Vision of What I Don't Want**

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Trajectory towards Life Outcomes

Trajectory towards things unwanted
Ben’s Life Trajectory

What Effective Practices Do You Use (or anticipate implementing) to Support the Transition of Students and Youth with the Most Complex Needs?
What next?

1. Identify interagency collaborations;
2. Identify who, in your state, is trained to do Person-Centered Planning;
3. Select transition assessments to use with your students;
4. Think about the whole student and how to provide experiences;
5. Consider how you are receiving and communicating information about your students; and
6. Begin the transition process early—don’t just wait till junior or senior year.

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