Transition Assessment in Planning for Students with Most Significant Cognitive Disabilities

NSTTAC Institute
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Learning Targets

• I can identify one transition assessment option for students with most significant cognitive disabilities.

• I can determine one employment goal for a student with significant disabilities based on information from a transition assessment.

• I can identify jobs within a career pathway based on student skills and their supports.
Who

What

Why

When

Where

How
Who?

- **Who** are these students?
  - Most significant cognitive disabilities
  - Limited communication skills
  - Often limited mobility
  - Require direct supervision and assistance with life skills throughout their life span
  - Demonstrate unique strengths, skills, needs
Who?

- Who should be involved in the transition assessment?
  - Student
  - IEP Team
  - Family
  - Community
  - Support Services
What?

• **What** is transition?
  – Movement to post school environments
    • Employment
    • Post Secondary Training
    • Living arrangements
    • Community involvement
  – Transition includes:
    • Family involvement
    • Self-determination and student choice
    • Variety of support services
    • Person centered planning
Why?

• **Why** for students with significant cognitive disabilities?
  – IDEA, State Rule, etc.
  – To address student’s unique needs as early as possible
  – To prepare the student and family to know where the student is going and how to get there
  – To ensure a satisfying and purposeful life after school
When?

- “The eye is on the prize” from the beginning.
- Formal planning begins by high school or age 16
- Should be the focus of the IEP team when planning the student’s IEP
Where?

• Planning and training occur with involvement from
  – School
  – Home
  – Community
Reality Check

• What happens when......
  – The school door closes that last day
  – The bus pulls away on the last day of school

• The day after school.......
Transition Assessment

• Required--purposeful—meaningful
• Formal
• Informal
• Checklists
• Previous Information
• 8\textsuperscript{th} grade or prior
Transition Assessment and Students with Significant Disabilities: Developing a Comprehensive Planning Process

Dr. Mary E. Morningstar
mmorningstar@ku.edu
www.transitioncoalition.org

Division on Career Development and Transition Regional Conference
Mystic, CT
October 14, 2010

Transition Assessment Resources

- TransitionCoalition.org

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Share with others
I use the assessment
I don’t need the assessment |
Share with others
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Share with others
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| 4 Informal Assessments in Transition Planning: Clark, G.M., Patton, J.R., Moulton, R. Austin, TX: PRO-ED. Includes reproducible informal assessments [www.proedinc.com](http://www.proedinc.com) $35.00 | Obtain | Try with students
Share with others
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Students w/ Severe Disabilities and I-13

Indicator 13 brings unique challenges when working with students who have severe or low-incidence conditions. Click the links below to access resources that may help in meeting this challenge:

- PowerPoint (pdf, 596 KB);
- OK Workgroup Examples (pdf, 80 KB); and
- Transition Assessment for Youth w/ Severe and Multiple Disabilities.

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http://nstattac.org/content/students-w-severe-disabilities-and-i-13
Important Assessment Considerations

• Communication
  – Receptive and expressive
  – Augmentative communication
• Sensory needs
• Physical Mobility
• Medical and Health
Important Assessment Considerations

• What vision does the student and family have for the future?
• Relevant Life Skills
• Academic Skills
• Self Determination
• Preferences, Interests and Skills
  – Career
  – Leisure and Social
  – Special Interests
Communication

• We MUST define communication for student

• EVERYONE must
  – Understand
  – Acknowledge
  – Honor or respond when possible

• Communication is
  – Receptive and Expressive
Leisure and Social Skills

• Biggest predictor of success in post school living and placement
• How student can occupy self meaningfully during non-structured time
  – Quality of life
  – Meaningful
  – Self Satisfaction
  – Age appropriate
  – How perceived by others
Assessment
Continued

• You must have the proper assessments and information available at the Transition Plan Meeting to help the student’s Transition Team identify the resources that are needed to make the student’s goals happen!

• Students with significant cognitive disabilities may participate in non-verbal assessment, with information from interactions with teachers and family members.
Student Assessment

Student assessment can be addressed through:

- Choice making
- Communication Goals
  - Yes/no
- Consistent response to events
- Observational data of student in a variety of situations and environments
Assessment

- Choice making
- Symbol Choice
- Object/texture choices
- Data from observation of activities

Developed by Penni Singleton, Cherokee County Schools
Assessment

Jobs I do at home, school or in the community:

- water plants
- balloon store
- fill salt & pepper
- stamp info
- work jobs

- Volunteer Jobs
- Assisting with Chores
- Assisting with my own care
- Workjobs at school

Developed by Penni Singleton, Cherokee County Schools
Assessment

• Choice making through AAC
• Observation
• Information from family, teachers
  – Preferences/dislikes
  – Medical issues
  – Sensory issues
Assessment

Think outside the box!

How can the current preferences, experiences, and student skills be used in the workplace for paid, unpaid, or volunteer jobs?
Interviews and Observations

• Student observations
  – Document preferences, observed strengths

• Parent and caregiver interviews
  – What, where, how?
  – Potential activities and participation

• Community
  – How does student currently participate?
Analyze potential job/work activities

- Ecological Assessment
  - Task Analyses
  - Partial Participation—what part of the task can they perform or participate in
  - Job skills—what skills do they have that can be used as job skills in the part of the identified task?
Things to Consider in Identifying Potential Employment

• Potential for compensation
  – Could it begin as a volunteer activity?
• Linked to a daily living/leisure activity
• Relevant/functional
• Of interest to caregiver
Questions for Families/Caregivers

• What do you like to do outside the home that could include your young adult?
  – How could your child participate in a meaningful way?

• Is there some activity you will no longer be able to do when your child is at home full time?
  – How can your child participate in a meaningful way?
Merging family needs with student skills

- Identify family/caregiver activities
- Identify student skills
- How can those skills be used to participate in the environment of the family/caregiver activities?
- Identify tasks that are purposeful for the student and beneficial for the environment.
Win/Win/Win!

• Student benefits—a volunteer/employment activity using student skills.
• Parent benefits—is able to participate in activities by including their child in a meaningful way.
• Community benefits—student provides a beneficial service.

Community gains positive awareness.
Using Student Preferences/Reinforcers in Job Identification and Training

- Link to job performance and training
- Reinforcer can be extrinsic and contingent on a non-related behavior or task performance
- Reinforcer can be intrinsic in the activity—part of the job/activity
• Goal for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities:
  – Participate in productive work activities at the highest level of independence and ability
  – Be afforded opportunities to communicate with other persons, significant or unfamiliar, and if needed, using the most effective mode of AAC
  – Engage in social interactions with other persons to allow collaboration to accomplish the tasks.
Bridge Bill and Special Education

• Mandatory advisement for ALL students in grades 6-12
  – Federal legislation
  – State legislation
  – Agency policy

• Linking the IGP with IEP as part of the transition process
BRIDGE Implications for LEAs:

• Mandates 6-12 system of student advisement for ALL students through a systematic, comprehensive and developmental advisement process

• Mandates 6-8 educational and career planning to result in an individual graduation plan synonymous with the Pathway Program of Study prior to the end of the second semester of the 8th grade

• Mandates continued advisement 9-12
More specifically...

• A component of the Individual Graduation PLAN is: (2) Incorporate provisions of a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP), where applicable;
IEP Team Role

• The IEP Team will identify the **skills and supports** needed to reach each transition goal which will be linked to the IGP.

• The IEP Team will identify the **specially designed services and supports** necessary for the achievement of the IGP.
Career Pathways: Where do we fit?

• Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources
• Architecture & Construction
• Arts, Audio-Video Technology & Communications
• Business Management & Administration
• Education & Training
• Energy
• Finance
• Government & Public Administration
• Health Science
• Hospitality & Tourism
• Human Services
• Information Technology
• Law, Public Safety, Corrections & Security
• Manufacturing
• Marketing
• Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics
• Transportation, Distribution & Logistics
Thinking Outside the Box!
Getting Out of the Box

• What to do when you don’t want to stay home!
Out of the Box!

• Carl’s dad likes to go to the local building supply store. Carl eyepoints to match colors and objects. Carl will assist in making purchases for home projects and carrying objects for the shopper.
Out of the Box

• Carl’s skill of carrying objects can be used to assist another person and to assist his family in shopping trips.

• Career Pathway?
  – Hospitality
  – Marketing
Out of the Box

• Marky’s mom would like to go to the gym, but has nowhere to leave Marky.
• Marky likes music.
• Marky can activate music with an adaptive switch and an adapted tape player. Marky will play music for group activities, e.g. exercise classes, using his adaptive switch.
Out of the Box

• Marky will play music for group activities, e.g. exercise classes, using his adaptive switch.
• Marky can use his adapted switch to read books on tape to other children at the local library.
• Career pathway?
Out of the Box

• Jenna can use her message device to deliver single messages. She enjoys interaction from other people.

• Her family goes to a church that has a monthly bazaar for crafters and other wares.

• A family friend makes hand-crafted soaps that are sold through various vendors.
Out of the Box

• Jenna will market hand crafted soaps at the monthly bazaar with assistance from her dad.
• She will use her AAC device to tell potential customers about the soaps and prices.
• She will assist in collecting the money and placing the soaps in a bag.
• Jenna will earn a percentage of the profits from the sale of the soaps.
• (Jenna’s dad will enjoy socializing with his friends at the church bazaar!)
• Career Pathway?
You think out of the box!

• Choose a student in your district with a significant cognitive impairment
  – How would you informally assess the student?
  – Determine a post secondary goal
  – Identify a job within a career pathway that could be a potential post secondary option
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