Transition Assessment Overview and Best Practices

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Agenda

1. Laws and policies at the state and federal level
2. Current best and emerging practices
IDEA 2004

IDEA 2004 states that “Beginning not later than the first IEP to be in effect when the child turns 16*, or younger if determined appropriate by the IEP Team, and updated annually, thereafter, the IEP must include—

Appropriate measurable postsecondary goals based upon age appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment, and, where appropriate, independent living skills”

[§300.320 (b) (1)]

*Age 14 in Massachusetts
Definition

“...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. This process should begin in middle school and continue until the student graduates or exits high school.”

(Sitlington, et al., 2007)
“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)”

(Sitlington, et al., 2007)
Why?

To address:

• High dropout rate
• Criticism by employers that students are not prepared
• Systemic changes in nature of work
No Magic Formula

• No set number of informal and formal assessments
• BUT cannot “use any single measure or assessment as the sole criterion” (IDEA 2004)
• Depends on the student
• Depends on the information you need
When Selecting Instruments Appropriate for Your Student

• Consider:
  – Nature of their disability
  – Post-school ambitions
  – Community opportunities
  – Cultural and linguistic differences
  – Family influences on career development
Choosing the Right Assessment

• What information do you need?
  – About the student: strengths, skills, preferences, interests, challenges, disability-related needs
  – Domains/environments: social, vocational, community, educational
• What is the school, student or family concerned about?
• Don’t forget accommodations
  – Universal Design
  – Assistive Technology
Choosing the Right Assessment

1. Become familiar with different types of assessments and their characteristics

2. Select instruments that help the student to answer:
   – Who am I?
   – What do I want in life?
   – What are the main barriers to getting what I want in school and the community?

3. Select instruments appropriate for your students
   – Consider reading level, postschool ambitions

(NSTTAC, 2012)
Conducting Assessments – APIE

Assess:
• The student’s strengths, preferences and needs related to their postsecondary goals
• Use both formal and informal assessments

Plan:
• Interpret the results
• Incorporate into the TPF and IEP

Instruct:
Students learn the skills needed to reach the postsecondary goals

Evaluate:
Determine whether progress has been made toward achieving the transition activities and corresponding IEP goals

(Sitlington, et al, 1996)
Universal Design for Learning

Multiple means of

– representation – learners have various ways to acquire information

– expression – to demonstrate what they know

– engagement – focus on interest to challenge and motivate
Multiple Means of Assessment

FOR A FAIR SELECTION EVERYBODY HAS TO TAKE THE SAME EXAM: PLEASE CLIMB THAT TREE
Goals of Transition Assessment

• Make informed choices
• Take charge of the transition process
• Understand the skills needed for post-school environments
Types of Transition Assessments

Formal and Informal
Types of Formal Assessments

- Learning style inventories
- Academic achievement tests (Woodcock Johnson)
- Adaptive behavior scales (Vineland)
- Aptitude tests (Differential Aptitude Test)
- Interest inventories (Self-Directed Search [Forms E, R, and Explorer]
Types of Informal Assessments

- **Observation**: watching or listening to an individual’s behavior and recording relevant information

- **Interviews/Questionnaires**: structured or unstructured conversations through question-and-answer format

- **Environmental Analysis**: carefully examining the environment in which an activity normally occurs

- **Curriculum based assessments**: task-analysis, portfolio assessments, work sample analysis, criterion-referenced tests

(Test, Aspel, & Everson, 2006 - *Transition Methods for Youth with Disabilities*)
Types of Informal Transition Assessments

• Observing the student in various academic and work experiences
• Talking with the student about likes and dislikes
• Setting up experiences to allow the student to try something that may be of interest
• Often teacher-made
• Often does not result in a score
Examples of Transition Assessments for Education/Training, Employment, and Independent Living (list is not all-inclusive):

**Informal**
- Adaptive Behavior/Daily Living Skills Assessments
- Curriculum-Based Assessments
- Direct Observation
- Early Warning Systems Data
- Environmental/Situational Analysis
- Functional Academic Skills Inventory
- Functional Behavior Assessment
- Functional Vocational Evaluation
- General and Specific Aptitude Tests
- Interest Inventories
- Life Skills Inventory
- Personality or Preference Tests
- Person-Centered Planning
- Report Cards/Transcripts/Progress Reports
- Self-Determination Assessments
- Student/Family Interviews & Questionnaires
- Transition Planning Inventories

**Formal**
- Achievement Tests
- Adaptive Behavior/Daily Living Skills Assessments
- Career Maturity or Employability Tests
- Environmental/Situational Analysis
- Functional Academic Skills Inventory
- Functional Vocational Evaluation
- General and Specific Aptitude Tests
- Intelligence Tests
- Interest Inventories
- Life Skills Inventory
- MCAS
- Personality or Preference Tests
- Self-Determination Assessments
- Transition Planning Inventories
- Work-Related Temperament Scales
A Transition-Rich IEP

Transition Assessment & Present Level of Achievement

Measurable Postsecondary Goals

Designated Responsibility

Annual Goals

Annual Activities and Services, including Course of Study

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The First Step

• First step in the process of writing:
  – Measurable postsecondary goals / vision
  – Transition services
  – Annual IEP goals
Postsecondary Goal Questions

• Where is the student going to work or engage in productive activities after graduation?

• Where and how is the student going to continue to learn and/or develop skills after graduation?

• Where is the student going to live and how is he or she going to access adult services, participate in the community and have fun after graduation?
Postsecondary Vision Statements

• Paul wants to work as a veterinary technician with a veterinarian who works with horses. He plans to attend a community college and live in an apartment with 1 or 2 roommates.

• Clara wants to attend college and take art courses. She plans to work in an art-related career. She wants to commute to school and live at home with her family.

• Lee wants to work in his family’s restaurant. He has been working in the kitchen, but would like to move to the front of the house and be a host. He plans to take some business courses at a local community college to learn the necessary skills for this move.
Using Transition Assessment to Identify Appropriate Transition Services

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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*)
Transition Service Questions

• What experiences must the student participate in this academic year that are necessary for achieving the identified post-secondary goals?

• What services and specific instruction are essential this year for the student to develop skills and knowledge to attain their post-secondary goals?

• Do we know enough about this student’s vocational skills to identify an appropriate post-secondary employment goal or design activities to support the identified goal?
Aligning Annual IEP Goals
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.
### Annual IEP Goal Example

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Postsecondary Goal/Vision</th>
<th>Annual IEP Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Upon completion of school, I, Sarah, plan to participate in on-the-job training for telemarketing.</td>
<td>Using a grade-level social studies textbook, Sarah will orally read 100 wpm with no more than an average of 3 errors over 4 trials, by June 2012.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I, Thomas, plan to enroll in an emergency medical technical training program after high school.</td>
<td>Thomas will be able to solve word problems involving percentages and decimals with 100% accuracy, 9 out of 10 times, by December 2012.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After high school, I, Steve, plan to enroll in a culinary arts program.</td>
<td>Given a recipe, Steve will work with a peeler and knife to prepare a 5-ingredient salad independently over 3 consecutive opportunities, by January 2012.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Taken from: Transition Advisory, DESE (2012)

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A Roadmap for Transition

Transition Basics
Social and Community Life
Youth Development
Career Development
Education