Module I

Transition 101 – What We All Need to Know About Transition for Students with Visual Impairment

Welcome! The purpose of this module is to ensure that transition-aged students who are blind or have significant vision-related disabilities, their parents, and all other members of the transition team have a common understanding of the entire transition process and the roles of all involved.

# Overview of Post-Secondary Transition

Let’s start with a very broad overview of transition services for students with disabilities. Transition services are intended to prepare students with disabilities to move successfully from high school to adulthood.

Transition services involve a set of activities that are coordinated by a team. This team includes the student and the parents, teachers and other school staff, and may include others that we will talk about in more detail later.

Transition services are based on the student’s needs. They should take into account his or her preferences, interests, and goals for his or her life after high school. These goals may relate to college, vocational education, employment, independent living, and community participation.

Planning for transition must begin by the time the student reaches age 16 (but may start earlier, as we will discuss in a few moments)

* Transition services are developed to prepare students to move successfully from high school to adulthood.
* Transition services
* involve a set of activities that are coordinated by a team, which includes the student and the parents,
* must be based on the student’s needs and take into account his or her preferences and interests, and
* address the student’s goals for his or her life after high school, which may include:
  + Post-secondary education,
  + vocational education,
  + employment,
  + independent living,
  + and community participation goals.
* Planning for transition must begin by the time the student reaches age 16 (but may start earlier)

## Guiding Questions for Module 1

* What do we know about post-school outcomes for students with significant disabilities in Oregon?
* What are the legal requirements in providing transition services for students with disabilities in Oregon?
* What are the new transition requirements and opportunities for students with significant disabilities under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA)?
* Why is collaboration across agencies (Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, Commission for the Blind, etc.) so important if students with significant disabilities are to succeed?

# Question 1. What do we know about the post-school outcomes for students with significant disabilities in Oregon?

What do the data tell us about the post-high school outcomes for Oregon students with disabilities? One source of information is data from the Post School Outcomes Report. Every year, all states are required to annually report post-school education and employment outcomes for students aged 14 to 21 who have an Individualized Education Plan, or IEP, when leaving school.

## Post-Secondary Transition: Outcomes for Oregon Students

One way of evaluating transition outcomes is to look at data from the Oregon Post School Outcomes Report

Every year, all states are required to annually report post-school education and employment outcomes for students aged 14 to 21 who are on an IEP when leaving school.

## Post-Secondary Transition: Outcomes for Oregon Students

* In the most recent data, from 2016, follow-up interviews were completed with Oregon youth (or their family members) who left special education for the final time during the 2014-15 school year. Data were available for 64% of these youth.
* Based on the data, one year after they left school:
  + 24% of the students had enrolled in higher education
  + 5% were enrolled in some other postsecondary education or training
  + 35% were engaged in competitive employment
  + 9% were engaged in some other employment
  + 27% were not counted in any of the above outcome groups and are considered ‘not engaged’
  + \*This data is from the “2016 Post School Outcomes-Statewide Summary Report”, retrieved from: http://triwou.org/projects/tcn/topicslist/196/pso

## Post-Secondary Transition: Oregon Outcomes

* Over three years of data collection, between the 2012/13 and 2014/15 school years, Oregon has shown a steady increase in the percentage of special education students engaged in educational and employment outcomes, and the percent of students not engaged has dropped.\*
* Compared to the national rates of post-secondary engagement (e.g., post-secondary education, competitive employment, skills training), Oregon is lagging slightly behind (e.g., 73.2% vs. 85%) but is making positive strides year-over-year.
* Information on these and other Oregon transition data and resources can be found through:
  + The Oregon Department of Education (<http://www.oregon.gov/ode/)>
  + The Transition Community Network (<http://triwou.org/projects/tcn)>
  + Your local Educational Service District

\*This data is from the “2016 Post School Outcomes-Statewide Summary Report”, retrieved from: http://triwou.org/projects/tcn/topicslist/196/pso

## The Parents’ Role in the Transition Process

Parental involvement is critical to ensuring that transition services are appropriate and meet the needs of the student. In fact, greater parental involvement in the transition process is consistently associated with positive outcomes. Additionally, parents should be active participants in the IEP process. Parental expectations about the student’s education are also related to post-high school outcomes. High parental expectations are associated with increased likelihood of postsecondary employment and educational attainment. In summary, the more parents are involved throughout the transition process the more positive the outcomes for the student are likely to be.

* Greater parental involvement in the transition process is consistently associated with positive outcomes (Froiland, Peterson, & Davison, 2012).
* Active participation in the IEP process
  + Higher parental expectations of the student’s education result in higher educational attainment (Jeynes, 2007).
  + More specifically, high parent expectations are associated with increased likelihood of postsecondary employment and educational attainment (Doren, Gau, & Lindstrom, 2012)

# Question 2. What are the legal requirements in providing transition services for students with disabilities in Oregon?

Before we move on, take a quick quiz – there are no penalties for a wrong response, so simply choose what you think is the best answer.

## Think Spot: Legal Requirements in Oregon

For students with disabilities in Oregon, transition services are required to begin:

1. At age 14 or in the student’s 8th grade year
2. At age 16, as required by IDEA and federal regulations
3. At age 18, when the student reaches majority, so that the student can take responsibility for his or her own planning
4. Both ‘b’ and ‘c’ are correct

## The correct answer is B. Transition services planning should begin by age 16. This is required based on the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (or IDEA) and federal regulations. IDEA requires that transition planning begin with the IEP in effect on the student’s 16th birthday. Transition planning may, in some cases begin earlier, and IEP teams do have to notify students of their rights under IDEA within one year of their 18th birthday, but transition planning must begin at age 16.

## Oregon Administrative Regulations

* Here is the exact language from the Oregon Administrative Regulations on when transition planning is to begin for students with disabilities.

(1) Beginning not later than the first IEP to be in effect when the student is 16, or younger if determined appropriate by the IEP team, and updated annually thereafter [ORS 581.015.2200(2)].

## So What Does This Requirement Mean?

In short, it means that all transition services are required to begin at or by the age of 16. Mandated planning shall include a focus on the student’s course of study based on his or her goals, and it must be updated annually. Clearly, college is not the only option for students with disabilities – many choose to immediately enter the workforce and, pre-employment training services, a new focus of services, are an important component to the entire process.

* Transition planning must start at age 16.

Transition services at this age must focus on the student’s course of study (is the student planning to go to college and do we need to focus on a pre-college curriculum; or does the student want to go to work upon graduation?)

* We must update this statement of transition services annually.

These transition services can now include pre-employment training services (Pre-ETS), which we will discuss later in this module

## And at the age of 16…..

According to the Oregon Administrative Regulations, at the child’s 16 birthday, the IEP shall include: appropriate, measurable postsecondary goals based upon the age-appropriate transition assessments, related to training, education, employment, and, where appropriate, independent living skills; additionally, the transition services (including the course of study) needed to assist the student reaching these goals; and lastly, transition services for children with disabilities may be special education, if provided as specially designed instruction or related services, and if required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from special education.

* Oregon Administrative Regulations (italics added):

(2) By the child's 16th birthday, the IEP shall include:

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

The transition services (including the course of study) needed to assist the child in reaching these goals.

(3) Transition services for children with disabilities may be Special Education, if provided as specially designed instruction or related services, and if required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from Special Education.

## Let’s Break This Statement Apart….

* For the IEP in effect on the student’s 16th birthday, we must address

1. Appropriate, measurable post-secondary goals, and the
2. Transition services (including course of study) needed to reach those goals

Let’s Consider Each of These…  
First, Measurable Post-Secondary Goals

Post-Secondary Goals: reflect on what the student plans to be doing after completing school. Here are some examples….

* Juan will work 30 hours per week in a medical office doing clerical and filing responsibilities.
* Lauren will enroll in a local community college and will pursue coursework in early childcare.
* Richard will work at least 3 days per week as an auto mechanic assistant.

### Measurable Goals…

### Measurable means that the transition team can determine whether the student has actually achieved the goal.

### The goals in the IEP should also reflect either a meaningful employment or postsecondary education goal, and these postsecondary goals should not be trivial. Rather, measurable goals should be realistically achievable. They should be based on what the student truly wants to achieve in his or her life after high school.

* To say that the goals in the IEP are measurable means that we could tell at a glance whether the student has actually achieved the goal.
* The goals should reflect a meaningful employment or post-secondary education goal – post-secondary goals should never be trivial.
* Measurable goals should be realistically achievable, and what the student truly wants to achieve in his or her life after high school.

### Measurable Post-Secondary Goals – continued

Post-Secondary Goals Are Measurable – We Can Tell if the Student Has Achieved Them or Not – For Example:

* “Juan will work 30 hours per week in a medical office doing clerical and filing responsibilities” can be measured – we can verify fairly easily if Juan does achieve that goal upon graduation by verifying this with Juan and his employer.
* However, “Juan will give thought to a career in a medical office” is not measurable – and it is not a real outcome. While it is good for Juan to think of future careers, we could not really measure whether he achieved this or not, and the mere fact that he thought about a career is not enough to represent a meaningful outcome.

### Measurable Post-Secondary Goals – Across Life Domains

Post-secondary goals should be developed across the life areas that are relevant for the student. The goals should include: training, education, employment, and, where appropriate, independent living skills. The next slide will provide specific examples for each of these domains.

Post-Secondary goals should be developed in each life area needed for a student:

* training, education,
* employment, and, where appropriate,
* independent living skills.

### Examples of Measurable Post-Secondary Goals in Each Area or Domain

A reasonable goal for a student with regard to employment might be:

* Employment: Upon graduation, Sara will work as a library assistant at least 20 hours a week at her city’s Public Library.
* Education: Upon graduation, Luke will enroll in the area vocational school to pursue coursework to become an auto mechanics assistant.
* Independent Living: Upon graduation, Mike will have a shared apartment with his friend John, with weekly support from his case manager.

## … And Required Transition Services

* Similar to the post-secondary goals, transition services are also highly individualized specific to the needs of each student.
* Transition services may include:
  + Specially designed instruction (including instruction in community vocational training and integrated job sites; classroom instruction on job related skills)
  + Related services (e.g., occupational therapy services to determine the most effective ways to enhance a student’s ability to perform specific job tasks; speech/language services to ensure that the student has job and social communication options/choices on his augmentative communication system)
  + Assistive technology (e.g., printed pictorial or video-based job schedules; recorded audio tape of job steps)

# Question 3. What are the new transition requirements & opportunities for students with significant disabilities under WIOA?

## What is WIOA, and Why is it Important?

* WIOA is a federal law that was passed in 2014 that included increased efforts by schools and state vocational rehabilitation (VR) offices to support students with disabilities to transition from high school to college or competitive employment.
* WIOA has specific requirements to ensure that students with disabilities receive transition services emphasizing career planning and work experiences.
* WIOA mandated that monies from VR be designated to assist in providing pre-employment training services.

## The Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act – How Can Students Benefit?

To be eligible for Pre-Employment Transition Services under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA), students must first be found eligible for Vocational Rehabilitation Services.

1. True
2. False

## The correct answer is false. Students only need to be potentially eligible.

## WIOA… And Its Relationship to Students with the Most Significant Disabilities

WIOA is federal legislation (passed in 2014) that is designed to improve the nation’s public workforce development system and help Americans with significant barriers to employment, including individuals with disabilities, to access competitive and integrated jobs and careers.

WIOA: Focus on competitive integrated employment –

* Mandates: The Oregon Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) and Oregon Commission for the Blind to devote 15% of its federal match to pre-employment services for transition age youth (either served by an IEP or 504 plan).
* The benefit of mandated pre-employment services is that schools will aid in providing opportunities for work-based learning experiences (e.g., internships, short-term employment, fellowships).
* As a result of pre-employment services, students will have an increased likelihood of achieving community integration, independence, and competitive integrated employment.

## Pre-Employment Training Services (Pre-ETS)

* In collaboration with the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation or Commission for the Blind, schools can provide pre-employment training services (Pre-ETS) to students ages 14 and older, who are potentially eligible for VR services.
* Potentially eligible students have not yet applied for VR services, but they can still receive pre-employment training services if they have either a current Individualized Education Program (IEP) 504 Plan, or other documentation\*.
* Pre-employment services thus become an important part of transition planning and services, including addressing the transition needs of students 14 to 16 years of age.

## What Do Pre-Employment Services Include?

* Pre-employment training services include:
  + job exploration counseling;
  + work based learning experiences;
  + counseling on post-secondary opportunities;
  + workplace readiness training; and
  + training on self-advocacy.

## Question 4. Why is collaboration across agencies so important if students with significant disabilities are to succeed?

Agencies include Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, Commission for the Blind, etc.

## Collaboration

Recognizing that many individuals and agencies should be involved in the transition planning process is important.

* No single person or agency can meet the varied needs of every transitioning student.
* Transition planning requires the shared expertise of a wide range of service providers and skilled professionals.
* Therefore, interagency collaboration is a means to:
  + Coordinate appropriate services and supports
  + Identify and address gaps in services
  + Share resources to reduce overall costs
  + Ensure efficient and effective service delivery
  + Utilize the shared expertise to achieve successful outcomes

# Summary

To wrap this module up, it is important to go over some key take-aways.

* Transition services are an essential component of post-school success for students with disabilities.
* All students with disabilities who have an IEP are entitled to receive comprehensive transition planning services beginning no later than the student’s 16th birthday.
* Transition services should address education, employment, and independent living.
* WIOA improves the focus of transition services by mandating funds be allocated for pre-employment training services.
* Parents play a critical role in the transition team by ensuring that their child is receiving appropriate services.
* Please move on to Module 2, Preparing Students with Visual Impairments for Successful Transition to Employment.

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Bradley McDaniels, Research Assistant, University of Kentucky

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