PAUL WEHMAN

The Brookes Transition to Adulthood Series

ESSENTIALS OF Transition Planning

SECOND EDITION

Essentials of Transition Planning

Second Edition

by

Paul Wehman, Ph.D.
Virginia Commonwealth University
Richmond

with invited contributors

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Series Preface

The Brookes Transition to Adulthood Series was developed for the purpose of meeting the critical educational needs of students with disabilities who will be moving from school to adulthood. It is no longer acceptable to simply equip a student with a set of isolated life skills that may or may not be relevant to his or her adult life. Nor is it sufficient to treat the student as if he or she will remain unchanged throughout life. As we allow for growth and change in real-life environments, so must we allow for growth and change in the individuals who will operate within the environments. Today, transition must concern itself with the whole life pattern of each student as it relates to his or her future. Integrating the two constructs of self and the real adult world for one student at a time, however, is not always straightforward. It requires skills and knowledge. It requires a well-thought-out, well-orchestrated team effort. It takes individualization, ingenuity, perseverance, and more.

The results of these first-rate efforts can be seen when they culminate in a student with a disability who exits school prepared to move to his or her life beyond the classroom. Unfortunately, though, this does not always happen because transition has become a splintered concept, too weighted down by process and removed from building on the student's aspirations and desires for "a good life." It does not have to be this way, however.

This book series is designed to help the teachers, transition specialists, rehabilitation counselors, community service providers, administrators, policy makers, other professionals, and families who are looking for useful information on a daily basis by translating the evidence-based transition research into practice. Each volume addresses specific objectives that are related to the all-important and overarching goal of helping students meet the demands of school and society and gain a greater understanding of themselves so that they are equipped for success in the adult world.

About the Author

Paul Wehman, Ph.D., M.S., B.B.A., Professor, Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation; Director, Rehabilitation Research and Training Center, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond

Paul Wehman holds his primary position as Professor in Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU), with a joint position in the Department of Rehabilitation Counseling and the School of Education's Department of Counseling and Special Education. Dr. Wehman serves as Director of the VCU Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Employment and Director of the VCU Autism Center for Excellence.

Dr. Wehman's background is highly interdisciplinary. He is internationally known for his pioneering work in the beginning of supported employment in 1980, a rehabilitation intervention strategy that has facilitated competitive employment for millions of people with severe neurodevelopmental disabilities, autism spectrum disorder, brain injury, mental illness, physical disabilities, and spinal cord injury in countries all over the world. Dr. Wehman has been funded extensively and has been Principal Investigator on research using more than $68 million from multiple federal and state agencies and private foundations.

Dr. Wehman was honored as the recipient of the 2018 VCU School of Medicine Distinguished Scholarship Award at the Faculty Convocation on August 22, 2018. In 2014, Dr. Wehman was named the recipient of the Princeton Lecture Series Fellowship through Eden Autism Services. Other honors include the Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. Foundation International Award in Mental Retardation in 1990, the VCU School of Medicine Research Recognition Award in 2007, the Distinguished Service Award from VCU in 2001, and the Distinguished Service Award from the President's Committee on Employment for Persons with Disabilities in October 1992. Dr. Wehman was recognized as one of the 50 most influential special educators of the millennium by a national survey coordinated by the *Remedial and Special Education* journal (December 2000).

As a nationally recognized expert in transition from school to work and supported employment, Dr. Wehman's career is dedicated to the employment of people with physical and intellectual disabilities. On a daily basis, he works with people with disabilities, policy makers, and professionals related to disability and is active in mentoring undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral students.

He has researched, written, instructed, and presented extensively on every aspect of vocational rehabilitation. He has published more than 200 articles and 115 book chapters and has authored or edited 43 books. In addition to his writing and scholarship, Dr. Wehman is the founding editor of the *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*.

Preface

Millions of youth receive transition and special education services, but as these individuals reach the ages of 18–21, there is not usually a well-crafted plan in place to gain access to the community, independent living, a real job, and other aspects of entering adulthood, such as financial literacy, travel, and social relationships. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014 (PL 113-128) offers hope that there will be earlier transition interventions for students with disabilities. Yet, the reasons for the lack of carefully designed planning to help students with disabilities make this bridge to adulthood are threefold. First, most school districts really do not know how or have the time to gather all of the necessary participants together and engage in the planning. Second, in the cases in which this critical planning does occur, the resources to implement the plan are lacking. Third, educators do not know how to provide work-based learning, college and career readiness training, and employment before graduation. The latter outcome is a key predictor of adult success.

There is good news, however. After nearly three decades, we know how to help solve this problem. Thanks to available research and examples showing how these plans can work and are working, we know how to build the bridge to help students leave school and successfully enter into communities. What this book does is to pull together in a logical sequence the steps involved in making transitions a reality, from their beginnings in schools into the community and workplace. In this second edition, we bring in many new studies and research to help teachers.

Chapter 1 provides a brief overview of law and policy related to transition planning, followed by a discussion of why transition planning is required. This includes a detailed description of the WIOA.

Transition planning must be considered at two different levels: individual and community. Although these two levels must intersect for the end result to be effective, each requires different thought processes and planning in order to be effectively implemented. Chapter 2 examines each. Areas that can affect the quality of the transition individualized education program (IEP) are also reviewed, including supports, self-determination, and inclusion.

Chapter 3 provides information on how to develop a transition curriculum. Ways to promote student involvement and identify critical academic and functional skills needed for the future are also included. In addition, access to the general curriculum and community-based options are examined.

Chapter 4 shifts emphasis from the foundations of transition that were addressed in the first three chapters to programmatic implementation. This chapter focuses on the elements of a transition IEP, including assessment practices that guide program development as well as ongoing monitoring of student progress toward reaching goals. The roles of professionals who serve on the team are explored, along with ways to promote family involvement and engage those students with more significant support needs.

Transition is an outcome-oriented process that is individually driven by the student's vision of an adult life. The postschool goals drive the transition planning process, and the annual IEP provides the mechanism to take action and outlines the specific steps to get there. Chapter 5 offers a practical, step-by-step process. It begins by examining where to start and concludes with writing the transition IEP. Information on how to obtain support from community agencies and resources is also provided.

Once a plan is developed, it must be implemented. Chapter 6 focuses on who needs to do what to make a transition plan a reality. This chapter emphasizes the importance of involving adult service professionals and taking the steps necessary to make sure the student and family drive the process.

Chapter 7 looks at student vocational training options in business and postsecondary education settings. Next, vocational support service delivery models are reviewed. This is followed by information on ways to support students who choose to pursue higher education. One up-and-coming vocational service for young adults with disabilities is customized employment. Chapter 8 provides an in-depth look at this process that marries the strengths and needs of both the job seeker and the employer.

Youth with disabilities who reach age 22 or complete their secondary level program no longer have legal rights to the variety of services covered by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) of 2004 (PL 108-446). Chapter 9 takes a look at transition service coordination from an individual and systemic perspective. It examines case management and service coordination. This chapter examines some of the barriers that may be faced, along with some recommendations on how to effectively work with a highly bureaucratic and fragmented service delivery system.

In closing, this is a comprehensive yet practical book on transition planning that will be of interest to a wide range of audiences. From school personnel—such as special education teachers, transition specialists, and administrators—to adult service providers—such as one-stop career center staff, vocational rehabilitation counselors, and case managers—this book is for anyone involved with transition services, which may also include family members, advocates, and policy makers. In essence, this book will be useful to anyone who is interested in improving and enhancing the transition to adulthood for youth with disabilities.

REFERENCES

Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) of 2004, PL 108-446, 20 U.S.C. §§ 1400 *et seq.*
Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) of 2014, PL 113-128, Stat. 1634.

Acknowledgments

It has been a pleasure to do the second edition of *Essentials of Transition Planning*, and we are most appreciative of the willingness and support of Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co. taking on this project. It has been 9 years since the first edition was published and, in that time, quite a lot of new information on transition planning has been published.

This book could not have been updated and completed so professionally without the contributions from so many of the authors who were willing to participate again, as well as newer people, some just beginning in the field.

We want to thank and publicly acknowledge Catherine Anderson, Judy Averill, Valerie Brooke, DiAnne B. Davidsen, Elizabeth Evans Getzel, Ellie C. Hartman, Jennifer McDonough, Richard Parent-Johnson, Wendy S. Parent-Johnson, Cindy Pitonyak, Grant Revell, and Holly Whittenburg. Each of these people brought different research, teaching experiences, and/or personal and work experiences to help shape the quality of these chapters. Some of the previous material remains because it is still pertinent and timely.

There are two people who specifically need to be singled out for their unique assistance in keeping this project on time and all of the many details in order. First, Josh Taylor, one of our autism spectrum disorder experts at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU), not only pitched in to help complete some of the chapters and make sure they were fully updated with newer references, but also he provided high-quality work that was done quickly. Second, we would be extremely remiss to not thank Ms. Hannah Seward, who is completing her doctoral degree in Education Research, Assessment, and Evaluation at VCU. Hannah really took over most of the critically important administrative aspects of this second edition. She looked at material with us to help determine the importance of different changes that authors made in their contributions. She kept the editing schedule on a careful time line and worked closely with our excellent editors, Jolynn Gower and Tess Hoffman.

In closing, we hope this book will be of value to students in training; professors in rehabilitation, special education, and psychology; researchers; and advocacy organizations. We hope that this book will be seen as an important guide to developing and implementing transition planning for all individuals across their life span.

1

Introduction to Transition Planning

PAUL WEHMAN, VALERIE BROOKE, AND JOSHUA TAYLOR

ELISHA

Elisha is a 19-year-old student with autism spectrum disorder. She is a talented artist who enjoys drawing anime artwork and has even designed a few of her own original characters. She participated for all 4 years of high school in the animation club, where she met several of her friends, but in other environments, she is quiet and rarely speaks to other students or adults. Last year, after participating in graduation with her peers, she enrolled in the career and technical education (CTE) program in her school district, where she is eligible to continue receiving services until her 22nd birthday. At her orientation to the CTE program, she met Mr. Wilcox, her vocational teacher, as well as Ms. Baines from the state vocational rehabilitation (VR) agency. Ms. Baines coordinates pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS) in her area and talked to her and Mr. Wilcox about some work-based learning experiences that might be of interest in addition to her classes. Ms. Baines and Mr. Wilcox explained that although the CTE program had a central building, most of the time they would be out in the community, and Ms. Baines would contract with a community rehabilitation program (CRP) so they could secure the services of an employment specialist.

Ms. Baines secured the services of a local CRP so an employment specialist could set up a series of work-based learning experiences to learn more about Elisha's strengths and interests, which might help direct her career search. Before going to a jobsite, Ms. Baines invited Elisha on a trip to her office from the CTE program, taking the public bus system and stopping by a convenience store and a game store that specialized in Japanese anime. In that short time in the community, Ms. Baines determined that Elisha had little experience with public transportation and was reserved in the convenience store setting. She became very excited, however, in the game store and immediately chatted with two of the store clerks that she knew and introduced them to Ms. Baines. Although this informal observation was not in a vocational setting, the experience provided crucial information for planning some of Elisha's Pre-ETS and transition programming by identifying some of the strengths and interests that she could capitalize on to assist her in finding a potential career path.

Several work-based learning experiences were set up using information from the informal observation as well as interviews with Elisha's family and previous teachers. The first experience took place at a warehouse for a national vitamin company that was within walking distance of the CTE program. As a result of the work experience, both Elisha and her employment specialist learned a great deal about work preferences and learning style. Over the 6-week work experience, Elisha learned to load, pack, wrap, and label customer orders with minimal assistance. She not only enjoyed working

alongside her co-workers, but she also liked the independent nature of her job. Elisha also reported that she did not like the loud environment where people had to yell at each other to be heard.

Mr. Wilcox and the employment specialist set up the next work-based learning experience at a small office building on the same bus line as the CTE program building. On the way there, the employment specialist provided Elisha with a visual support showing the steps of purchasing bus fare, reading the map, and riding to a destination—providing some instruction in completing each part. Upon arriving at the office, the employment specialist not only taught Elisha many of the job tasks required, but also organized a casual lunch with a couple younger employees from the office who shared some similar interests. The three of them chatted throughout lunch, and over the next couple days, Elisha was more comfortable approaching them to ask questions and get help, rather than relying on her employment specialist. Near the end of the second week of the work-based learning experience, a supervisor who was seeking to fill a position with part-time hours approached the employment specialist and Elisha to encourage her to apply for a job opening and said that he would put in a good word for her.

The employment specialist and Mr. Wilcox discussed the job opportunity with Elisha and her mother and explained why they felt it might be a good job match. They further explained that because Ms. Baines had already enrolled Elisha in VR, she could continue to receive job coaching from the employment specialist that she already knew. Elisha's parents talked that evening and agreed that they wanted their daughter to pursue the opportunity. When asked about working there, Elisha talked about how much she liked the two co-workers she had gone to lunch with on her first day and how nice the office was. This information, paired with other observations from the employment specialist, indicated that office work was a consistent vocational theme, and this particular office appeared to be a good job match. Elisha interviewed with the manager the following day and was ultimately offered the job.

After about 6 weeks, the employment specialist was able to fade her presence from the job site. Today, Elisha works 20 hours per week and earns $15.00 per hour. She works longer shifts on the weekends and has learned how to independently ride the public bus from her home to work. The employment specialist provides long-term follow-up services, visiting the office at least twice a month to see how Elisha is doing. Additional training and on-the-job supports are provided as needed to help Elisha continue to expand her job duties and working hours.

What really surprised everyone was how Elisha's independence and confidence grew each day she worked at the office. Elisha's parents were not expecting the intangibles that she got from being employed. For example, she made two new friends and learned to ride the bus. Elisha opened a bank account and is learning how to use an automatic teller machine to deposit and retrieve funds. Elisha has also started building relationships with her managers, co-workers, and a few clients who regularly come to the office, a few of whom say they look forward to coming in to see Elisha.

Elisha's is a success story. The planning and process that went into these outcomes should not be minimized. These activities could never be replicated in just a classroom situation. There is little doubt that without the federal law setting the stage for these services, trained personnel, advocates, and Elisha herself having a clear road map from school to competitive integrated employment, she could have easily ended up like thousands of young people with disabilities in this country who are sitting at home with few friends, no job, and no excitement about having a whole life.

THE IMPORTANCE OF TRANSITION

Transition refers to a change from one phase to another. When we talk about transition in the context of this book, we are specifically talking about the period of time when adolescents prepare to exit school and enter the adult world. This is a time when young people develop

greater self-determination and choice and begin to consider big decisions about where to live, what to do for work, how to meet people and maintain social networks of friends, and how to set and achieve goals in their lives. For any individual, this stage of life is complex and can be tumultuous. For individuals with disabilities, it also includes a huge shift in the way that services and supports are provided, from the school-based system in which educational staff actively seek out and administer supports to an adult system in which services are provided by several different agencies that each may have differing eligibility requirements, processes, and restrictions. Nevertheless, transition is not only about this changing service model, but it is also about promoting self-determination and choice, encouraging big goals for the future, and inspiring a path to get there—the same as other teenagers their age.

In discussing transition planning, it is important to acknowledge that current outcomes for many young adults with disabilities after graduation are poor in many areas. Among students with intellectual and developmental disabilities, rates of competitive integrated employment (CIE) are less than 10% (Hiersteiner, Bershadsky, Bonardi, & Butterworth, 2016), with many continuing to be sent to segregated work settings earning less than minimum wage (Winsor et al., 2017). This unemployment and underemployment lead to a lifetime of poverty and dependence on state and federal subsidies for many individuals with disabilities.

There is hope for improving these dismal outcomes, however (Wehman et al., 2018). First, we know more than ever about what activities and experiences predict positive outcomes in employment, postsecondary education, and independent living (Mazzotti, Rowe, Sinclair, Poppen, Woods, & Shearer, 2016). These predictors offer concrete guidelines for individualized education program (IEP) teams to consider in preparing students for success. Meanwhile, other research focused exclusively on promoting CIE for individuals with disabilities has identified several important factors that can improve outcomes, including employment experience prior to exiting school (Wehman et al., 2015), self-determination skills (Shogren, Wehmeyer, Palmer, Rifenbark, & Little, 2013), well-coordinated interagency collaboration (Sung, Sánchez, Kuo, Wang, & Leahy, 2015), and higher parental expectations for CIE (Carter, Austin, & Trainor, 2012). Many of these studies and their implications for practice are discussed later in this chapter and throughout this book.

Furthermore, legislation such as the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014 (PL 113-128) offers greater opportunity to gain access to these activities that we know work for students, bringing schools and community agencies together to improve services. More than ever, there are great possibilities for creative, person-centered approaches to transition planning.

This book provides a guide for helping young people with disabilities live meaningful lives by engaging fully in all areas of adult life through effective transition planning. It discusses why transition planning is important, what the legal and legislative mandates around transition outcomes are, and how interagency collaboration fits into the transition planning process. It touches on individualized transition planning and specific how-tos for writing and implementing transition IEPs. Post–high school options are discussed in depth, including work, independent living, and postsecondary education, as well as quality indicators for success and funding opportunities to sustain these practices.

TRANSITION IN POLICY AND LEGISLATION

Because transition programming involves supporting students as they progress from the education system to employment and adulthood, policy governing transition also reflects these two spheres. The two main legislative acts establishing transition practice are the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) of 2004 (PL 108-446) and WIOA.

IDEA is the central legislative foundation of special education K–12 policy and sets specific guidelines for how transition planning fits into students' educational careers. Due in part to the persistence of poor employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities (Hiersteiner et al., 2016), WIOA was passed to reauthorize the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (PL 105-220) and Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (PL 93-112) and make a stronger commitment to CIE as the preferred outcome for all adults and youth with disabilities, shifting away from sheltered workshops and other segregated work settings. In order to accomplish this goal, state VR providers are now required to spend 15% of their total budget on Pre-ETS for school-age students with disabilities.

Individuals With Disabilities Education Act

IDEA 2004 ensures that all children with disabilities have a free appropriate public education (FAPE) that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment, and independent living (34 C.F.R. 300.1[a] and 20 U.S.C. 1400[d][1][A]). Changes to IDEA in 1997 (PL 105-17) and 2004 strengthened the transition process for students with disabilities. IDEA 2004 mandates that IEP teams ensure students meet graduation requirements that relate to their postsecondary goals in education, employment, and independent living. These three areas form the pillars of transition planning and goal setting for all students. Research shows that effective transition programming leads to better postsecondary outcomes for students with disabilities (Mazzotti et al., 2016).

IDEA definitions of FAPE have been further refined through due process litigation in recent years with the Supreme Court ruling on *Endrew v. Douglas County* (2017). The Supreme Court ruled that the school district had violated the student's right to FAPE in the Endrew case because it did not provide sufficient services to ensure adequate progress, and his IEP did not include goals specific to supporting the student's interfering behavior. In this case, the courts emphasized the imperative nature of addressing students' educational programs to make progress toward success–not only academically but also in other areas that affect learning.

In order to accomplish these goals, IEP and transition teams often must include related services providers that can recommend and provide additional specialized instruction beyond that of the special educator. Depending on students' strengths, goals, and needs, different related services providers may be needed to support the student. Including related services in IEP and transition planning ensures the services that a student needs to succeed are coordinated such that each professional provides an integrated support, service, or instruction that collectively contributes to achieving the goals set by the transition team. Related services are now paired with required transition services, suggesting that policy makers want transition IEP teams to consider the supports that students may need to benefit from available transition services.

Related services include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Physical and occupational therapy
- Speech and language therapy
- Orientation and mobility services
- Counseling and psychological services
- Social work services

- Recreation, including therapeutic recreation
- Rehabilitation services and counseling
- Transportation

The addition of related services for transition in IDEA 1997 mandated special education and related services providers to examine whether supports should be provided that enable a student to have access to a more integrated work, education, or independent living environment; to demonstrate higher skills and abilities; or to accomplish objectives leading toward his or her transition goals. Some of the many revisions to IDEA in 2004 include references to the transition-age student, a definition of *transition services,* age requirements, mention of IEP content (including postsecondary goals), and the new summary of performance.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

In addition to IDEA transition requirements, WIOA established transition guidelines for interagency collaboration related to transition-age students and preparation for adulthood. WIOA is largely focused on employment, but it also includes important considerations for the preparation of individuals with disabilities for successful careers through transition programming and participation in postsecondary education and training. WIOA provides funding as well as mandates for VR agency involvement in several areas of Pre-ETS related to promoting CIE for youth. WIOA, Pre-ETS, and CIE are discussed later in this chapter, along with suggestions for how practitioners can take advantage of these exciting policy changes to increase opportunities for their students.

Transition Services

According to IDEA 2004 (Sec. 200.43[a]),

> [The term] *transition services* means a coordinated set of activities for a child with a disability that
>
> 1) Is designed to be within a results-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 postschool activities, including postsecondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment [SE]), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, and community participation;
> 2) Is based on the individual child's needs, taking into account the child's strengths, preferences, and interests; and includes instruction, related services, community experiences, the development of employment and other postschool adult living objectives, and, if appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation.

Individualized Education Program Content and Postsecondary Goals

According to IDEA 2004 (Sec. 300.320 [b]), the IEP for any student ages 16 years or older must include a statement of "1) Appropriate measurable postsecondary goals based upon age-appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment, and, where appropriate, independent living skills; and 2) The transition services (including courses of study) needed to help the student reach those goals." Transition goals and services share many commonalities with IEP goals and services in that they focus on progressing the individual from where he or she is now to a future target. Transition services, such as IEP services, are

made up of the instructional approaches and educational experiences necessary to develop the skills and abilities outlined in respective goals. This alignment between goals and services is what ensures that students have needed support to achieve their goals. Yet, transition goals and services differ from their IEP counterparts in a few fundamental ways. Although IEP goals are typically set to be achieved 1 year from their creation, transition goals are longer in scope and provide a target for what the student will accomplish as a young adult after graduation. Also, although IEP goals can cover a broad range of academic, social, behavioral, and adaptive areas, transition goals are typically structured around the vision for a student in the areas of employment, postsecondary education and training, and independent living. Although these three domains are included for each student, the goals themselves also vary greatly and should be individualized to the same extent as IEP goals. Both of these processes depend on meaningful, quality assessment. Transition assessment is an ongoing, coordinated process that begins in middle school and helps students with disabilities identify and plan for postsecondary goals and adult roles. Each student's measurable postsecondary goals are based on data gleaned from transition and vocational evaluation assessments.

QUALITY OUTCOMES: HOW DO WE GET THERE?

It is important for students to have a viable transition plan that reflects their and their families' needs, wishes, and desires. Transition IEPs that are aligned with these values help the students move into adulthood, enabling them to gain access to accommodations and supports, increase social competence, engage in postsecondary education, and achieve employment. Through this process, students gain better self-awareness, develop self-determination skills, and learn how to self-advocate—all key skills that will be crucial in many areas of adult life. Transition planning can seem like a daunting task for an educator, however, given the variety of students and their goals for transition as well as the complexity of achieving postsecondary goals in multiple domains of adult life. How can practitioners best utilize the limited time available to prepare students to achieve their future goals? Fortunately, although practitioners should also individualize programming based on students' goals, strengths, and needs, research has also revealed several experiences that have been shown to predict more successful outcomes for students with disabilities.

Transition planning should also ensure quality outcomes. Each transition IEP must plan for certain topic areas, including personal finance, self-determination, independent living, transportation, postsecondary education, and work (see Chapter 4 for specific domains). As previously mentioned, transition is focused broadly on creating high quality of life with opportunity and inclusion for youth with disabilities. Transition outcomes typically narrow this focus into three key domains—employment, postsecondary education (including training), and independent living. Although individual goals within these domains are person specific, previous research has been conducted to identify effective practices that predict generally positive postsecondary outcomes such as improved employment rates with higher wages and more hours, increased enrollment in postsecondary education, and more integrated living arrangements in the community (Haber et al., 2016; Rowe et al., 2015). Many of these predictors have been identified through analysis of the National Longitudinal Transition Study (NLTS-2), which examined many areas of students' experience in school, at home, and in the community before and after their completion of high school (Mazzotti, Test, & Mustian, 2014). Mazzotti et al. (2016) conducted a review of NLTS-2 research and compiled several key predictors of positive postsecondary outcomes. Their findings draw from previous research to articulate clear guidelines that teachers and practitioners should strongly consider in preparing students. Some of the main findings from this review are included in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1. Research-based predictors of postsecondary success

Predictor	Education	Work	Independent living	Examples of implementation
Inclusion in general education	X	X	X	Access to rigorous academic instruction alongside typically developing peers with differentiation provided as needed
Occupational courses	X	X		Instruction focused on the outlook of potential careers along with skills, competencies, and job responsibilities required
Paid employment/work experience	X	X		Summer or part-time jobs, paid internships, or other opportunities to earn a paycheck for community integrated work
Vocational education	X	X		Career and technical education classes through school or other community agency
Youth autonomy and decision making	X	X	X	Providing instruction, support, and practice opportunities for students in self-awareness, decision making, and speaking on their own behalf
Transition program	X	X	X	Following the recommendations outlined in this textbook to create a comprehensive, individualized transition plan to support a student's goals in education and living
Work study		X		Paid internship and work experiences provided in a variety of career clusters in exchange for school credit
Self-care/independent living			X	Instruction in skills such as personal finance, budgeting, cooking, hygiene, sexuality and relationships, and transportation training

Adapted from National Technical Assistance Center on Transition. (2016). *Evidence-based practices and predictors in secondary transition: What we know and what we still need to know* (pp. 9–10). Charlotte, NC: Author.

Although transition planning should not be limited to these activities, these research-based predictors do offer an important guide and framework for general preparation. Students should be engaging in as many of these activities as possible because research has shown them to lead to better outcomes.

Engaging and empowering families as key members of transition teams is discussed later in the chapter, but it is important to note that families have a strong link to better postschool outcomes. Carter et al. (2012) studied transition outcomes for students with more significant disabilities and discovered a strong predictive link between parents holding high expectations for their child's outcomes and eventual success. In fact, students whose parents indicated they thought they would later support themselves through a paid job are five times as likely to achieve employment (Carter et al., 2012).

In another study of transition-aged English learners with disabilities, Trainor et al. (2019) found that not only did parental expectations of engagement in postsecondary education predict students' eventual enrollment but also they pointed to a lack of knowledge about potential education options, financial aid, and career counseling as key barriers. In other words, not only is fostering high parental expectations identified as a promising practice in and of itself (National Technical Assistance Center on Transition, 2019), but also equipping parents with knowledge about activities, interagency collaboration, and options for the future can strengthen the result of other best practices. Teaching and supporting students to advocate for themselves, however, is perhaps even more important than empowering parents and families to advocate throughout the transition process for their children.

Self-Determination and Self-Advocacy Skills

Self-determination skills are necessary for transition planning to succeed. Research has shown that self-determination is a critical component for success in many areas of postsecondary life (e.g., Shogren & Ward, 2018; Test, Fowler, & Kohler, 2013). Shogren et al. (2013), in a

randomized control group design study, found that students who exited high school with higher levels of self-determination went on to achieve better outcomes in employment and community access. In addition to employment and community living, self-determination skills play a large role in postsecondary education settings (Getzel, 2014). On college campuses, self-determination is needed to advocate for accommodations (often requiring self-disclosure of disability), coordinate with disability services offices, and manage needed supports (Getzel & Thoma, 2008).

Students with disabilities need to learn the skills to advocate on their own behalf. To be effective self-advocates, students have to learn how to advocate and what to advocate for. Students have ample opportunities to learn and practice self-advocacy skills within the context of the education planning process. Students' perspectives have too often been lost because they have not had the opportunities or the skills to express them within IEP, transition, or general education planning meetings. A first step toward enabling students to express their wants and needs during these meetings is to educate students about their rights and responsibilities under IDEA, their civil rights under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 (PL 101-336), or, more generally, rights available to all citizens.

Access to Accommodations and Supports

The ability to use accommodations and supports helps bridge the gap between youth and adult services. Accommodations may be taken for granted in the school setting where they should be coordinated by the case managers to be seamlessly delivered by each of the student's teachers and service providers. Adults are afforded no such provision, however, and must disclose their disability in order to receive those critical accommodations in postsecondary education or employment settings. Of those students who receive IEP services in high school, less than one third received accommodations in college and postsecondary education settings, and even less (26%) chose to disclose their disability to their employer in order to secure job accommodations (Newman et al., 2011). Newman, Madaus, and Javitz (2016) found that only 24% of students with disabilities received accommodations in postsecondary education settings, compared with 98% of those who received them in high school. Unfortunately, accommodations are too often overlooked in transition planning and not sufficiently documented. This is troubling, given how critical accommodations and supports are to many students. This lack of needed accommodations and supports may provide an insight into the dismal employment and enrollment rates of people with disabilities.

On the other side of the equation, there are resources to support businesses who are hiring and advancing youth with disabilities. The Job Accommodation Network (JAN) is one such resource. They have developed an online tool specifically designed to help businesses recruit, hire, and retain applicants. Although JAN has an entire site of products, the Workplace Accommodation Toolkit contains examples of accommodation policies and processes from companies known for being inclusive, a suite of accommodation forms, scenario-based video training featuring the interactive accommodation process, and a number of best and emerging practices for creating inclusive workplaces. The Toolkit can be found at https://askjan.org/toolkit/index.cfm and is listed in the resources in Table 1.5.

Social Competence and College and Career Readiness

Another reason for planning transition is to promote greater social competence and social networking. For people with disabilities, social competence is critical for job tenure, friendships, and general self-esteem. In fact, as the economy shifts to become more specialized and

employers place greater emphasis on employability and soft skills, individuals whose disabilities affect social competence may be at risk for discrimination (Lindsay et al., 2014). Getting along with others, developing interpersonal connections, and establishing social networks in the community are among the most important features of a successful life in and outside of the workplace. More than ever, youth need instruction in topics as diverse as digital citizenship, relationships and sexuality, handling criticism, managing a professional reputation, and many others. Unfortunately, many young people with disabilities do not receive instruction in these areas or opportunities to practice and develop these competencies.

Social inclusion and networking in a community have a strong effect on employment, integration, and general quality of life (Simplican, Leader, Kosciulek, & Leahy, 2015). An individual's social network is made up of family members, neighbors, friends, employers, and social groups to which the person belongs. A person's social network is a tremendous asset in transition planning as it represents the natural supports and capital an individual has at her or his disposal. Social networks are not static–they can be expanded by meeting new people and joining social groups and leisure activities. Individuals in a social network can provide direct and indirect leads for employment. Chapter 2 explores in more depth how to incorporate transition planning inclusively into a student's community.

Career advancement is heavily dependent on having the skills and capacity to learn how to demonstrate different talents in a variety of settings. College can help with this. Morningstar, Lombardi, Fowler, and Test (2017) studied competencies needed to prepare students for college and career and recommended a focus on social inclusion as well as soft skills such as teamwork, problem solving, and professionalism. In a Delphi study of experts' opinions of knowledge, skills, and experiences, skills needed for social interaction emerged as a significant factor for students with more significant disabilities (Morningstar, Zagona, Uyanik, Xie, & Mahal, 2017). Test, Smith, and Carter (2014) framed relationships as one of three pillars needed to equip youth with skills needed for adulthood, along with rigorous academics and relevant skills instruction.

Competitive Integrated Employment

As previously mentioned in this chapter, studies have reported that individuals with disabilities participate less in the work force than individuals without disabilities. Thereby, young adults with disabilities in the early years of their careers are more likely to be unemployed, underemployed, or living below the line of poverty compared with young adults without disabilities (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2015; Lindstrom, Kahn, & Lindsey, 2013; Wehman et al., 2015). Despite the efforts that have been made over the past decades, the employment outcomes of individuals with developmental disabilities have not shown much progress (Siperstein, Parker, & Drascher, 2013).

The passage of WIOA has brought new excitement to millions of people with disabilities, their families, and their advocates, giving hope that these grim employment statistics will at long last improve. WIOA promises to ensure that transition from secondary education and/or postsecondary education to CIE is the primary goal for youth in transition, including youth with significant disabilities. WIOA modified the long-standing definition of SE to include a definition of customized employment (CE) for the first time. This new definition ensures that an SE outcome is clearly distinguished by CIE; is based on an individualized determination of the person's strengths, abilities, and desires; and is designed to meet the specific interest of the individual and employer (U.S. Department of Labor, 2015; Wehman et al., 2016). The process known as CE has been defined by the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Disability and Employment Policy to be a flexible process designed to meet the

needs of the job candidate with a disability and the employer and can take such forms as task reassignment, job carving, and job sharing, leading to a new or modified job description (Inge, Graham, Brooks-Lane, Wehman, & Griffin, 2018). Another important feature of WIOA was a mandate for the Rehabilitation Services Administration to analyze policies and practices and make VR services available to all students with disabilities, beginning at age 14 through 21 years of age. WIOA makes clear that these Pre-ETS are not meant to replace the transition services that are discussed in this book and mandated under IDEA, but rather create a new set of VR services by dedicating 15% of their federal funding. Pre-ETS services are intended to be open to all students, most of whom are not VR clients but are likely eligible for agency services. The specific service categories that are funded under Pre-ETS include 1) job exploration and counseling, 2) workplace readiness training, 3) counseling on postsecondary enrollment, 4) instruction in self-advocacy, and 5) work-based learning experiences. Table 1.2 gives a brief description of each of these five services as well as possible desired outcomes/goals. This mandate has already led to considerable national progress in developing innovative strategies to expand services across the five required Pre-ETS service categories (National Council on Disability, 2017). As implementation expands nationwide and VR capacity is extended, young people with disabilities will have greater access to competitive integrated

Table 1.2. Required pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS)

Pre-ETS activity and description of service	Desired outcomes
Job exploration and counseling	
Develop an understanding that all individuals can work. Assist students to expand life experiences and learn how those experiences can translate to career possibilities.	• Develop identify of self as a future job seeker • Self-evaluate current skill level of proficiency of work-related tasks • Acquire information on career clusters and decide which best fits strengths, preferences, and conditions for personal career success
Workplace readiness training	
Instruction is focused on career development and self-awareness by integrating academic learning with real-life experiences.	• Gain workplace readiness that promotes preparation for employment • Develop employability traits that will be important for competitive integrated employment (CIE) • Get personal work exposure to gain fuller understanding of a particular job/career.
Counseling on postsecondary/training	
Instruction supports the student gaining information and knowledge necessary to select transition/postsecondary experiences that will lead to a career path.	• Be able to define the difference between high school and college • Increase self-awareness to take responsibility for planning and learning • Identify difference between 2- and 4-year colleges and entrance requirements • Gain information on college support services for success
Instruction in self-advocacy	
Instruction includes information on individual rights and developing an understanding on what to advocate for and how to do it effectively.	• Learn to become self-aware and how to make contributions • Learn effective communication (verbal and nonverbal) • Gain problem-solving skills • Acquire information on how to set goals based on postschool employment goals
Work-based learning experiences	
Participate in a set of CIE experiences to gain necessary transferable skills for postsecondary and/or competitive employment.	• Develop a greater understanding of CIE and employer demands for communications and teamwork • Identify a clear understanding of personal strengths, interests, and preferences that are vital to CIE • Get exposure to possible community career options

employment opportunities and ultimately careers of choice. How this implementation of WIOA affects programs and services for students with disabilities will vary from community to community and state to state based on economic demands, local infrastructure and resources, and the needs of communities. School and VR agencies at the state level and within local communities are working to create innovative approaches to providing Pre-ETS to improve CIE outcomes for students. Because the specifics of Pre-ETS will necessarily vary, transition practitioners should seek out more information about services, programs, and initiatives available to help students in their area. Reviewing information and resources provided by state and local VR providers is a good starting point. Contacting local VR offices and meeting counselors can not only provide insight into available programs, but it also may lead to collaboration that could provide even more opportunities for students in the future.

In addition to focusing on these five critical areas of transition planning for school-age youth, WIOA-mandated Pre-ETS also require expanded interagency collaboration. Although this collaboration is focused on local education agencies (LEA) and state VR agencies responsible for coordinating these services for all students with disabilities, it also includes other community organizations such as work force development boards, one-stop centers, community rehabilitation providers, centers for independent living, and employers (Workforce Innovation Technical Assistance Center, 2019). Although not every student will direct coordination with every potential organization, each of these partners has specific areas of expertise and responsibility, which may be the key for providing a pathway to successful adult outcomes for many students. Some organizations can provide access to funding and services, whereas others can provide learning opportunities and instruction in vocational, self-advocacy, or community-based functional learning skills. Effective transition professionals should be familiar with services provided by each organization, know local points of contact, and consult and collaborate to create innovative and effective transition plans for students beyond graduation.

THE TRANSITION PLANNING TEAM

A transition planning team may consist of any of the following individuals: the student, family members, general and special education teachers, the school principal or administrative designees, occupational therapists, speech-language pathologists, school psychologists, VR counselors, community agency representatives, and other related school or adult service providers. The key to selecting the right transition planning team members is aligning a student's goals and needs with services needed to achieve those goals, and the expertise of team members to provide those services–either presently or in the future. As previously mentioned, parental engagement and empowerment is key to a successful transition, and high parental expectations are a strong predictor of postschool success (Carter et al., 2012; Trainor et al., 2019). Parents often have unique insight into their child, can affect their child's values and decisions (e.g., career, college, residence), and–as a key member of their child's social network–have a strong role in supporting their child throughout the transition process and into adulthood. Not only do parents need to be engaged in this process, but also they need access to information about options that are available. For example, since 2010, many students enrolled in college through Transition and Postsecondary Program for Students with Intellectual Disabilities (TPSID), a model demonstration project implemented at institutions across the country; graduates of these programs have achieved positive employment outcomes (Grigal, Papay, Smith, Hart, & Verbeck, 2019). Most parents of students who may be eligible for opportunities such as TPSID may not realize these options exist. Therefore, educating parents and raising expectations is critical to promoting student success beyond graduation.

Student involvement is also essential to effective transition. Students should be invited and encouraged to participate in transition-related meetings. Student participation in the IEP and transition process is critical to developing relevant self-determination skills and preparing students to self-advocate after exiting school. Chapter 2 explores a continuum of approaches for promoting student participation in the IEP process.

Each team member has a role to play in setting a student up for success and making sure that necessary support is provided along the way. The roles and responsibilities of the various participants in the transition IEP process are outlined in Table 1.3 (deFur, 2005) and discussed in greater depth in Chapter 6.

As previously mentioned, coordinating with team members and interagency collaboration are crucial to the success of students not only in the short term, but also in continuing to receive necessary support into adulthood. Since the passage of WIOA, the Pre-ETS mandate offers an opportunity for school transition staff to think outside the box to combine resources, ideas, and innovative practices with their colleagues in VR agencies and other community organizations.

THE PLANNING PROCESS

Promoting a seamless transition to adulthood is the objective of transition planning in high school. For students to make as seamless a transition to community living as possible, they should spend increasing amounts of time in the community each school year. This community focus should begin in younger grades, either through direct community-based instruction or partnership with parents and families to implement goals beyond the classroom. By age 20, the student making the transition should be settled into the living arrangement, employment position, and community activities that he or she is expected to gain access to at age 22. This goal can be accomplished by systematically including the student in community life early in the educational process (Thoma & Wehman, 2010).

The transition planning process is ongoing and can be thought of as a series of phases. The three major phases are planning and development, implementation and collaboration, and outcome evaluation. Chapter 4 describes in more detail how the planning process can be individualized to each student's needs. Table 1.4 shows the transition planning time line, beginning in elementary and middle school years and continuing through a student's graduation and exiting from school.

As highlighted in Table 1.4, the transition process represented a systematic progression of building skills and experiences from early on in a student's educational career through graduation. Key concepts such as self-determination, self-advocacy, and social skills can and should be incorporated into educational programming as needed as early as elementary or preschool grades. Likewise, career exploration and work-based skill instruction should begin long before graduation. Incorporation of the benchmarks included in Table 1.4 for each age will ensure that students stay on track to receive programming needed to set them up for future success.

Planning and Implementation

Planning begins with establishing a transition team that is responsible for carrying out all three phases of transition. The initial task is to develop long-range goals in employment, education, and independent living, giving priority to the interests and preferences of the student and his or her family. Once goals have been established, comprehensive assessments of the student's needs in all goal areas should be conducted in order to determine the student's present level of performance in these areas. School and community professionals and agencies that may be involved in the transition process should be identified.

Table 1.3. Roles and responsibilities of individualized education program (IEP) transition team members

Team member	Required	Role/responsibility
Student	Yes	Identify personal strengths and interests. Set personal goals; share preferences for employment, adult living, and postsecondary education/training. Assist in identifying transition strategies and activities; provide feedback.
Parent(s)	Yes	Share child's strengths, preferences, supports, and long-term vision for employment, postsecondary training, and adult living options. Provide information on family supports. Participate in implementing plan; provide feedback.
Special educator	Yes	Prior to the meeting: Collect student interest information and prepare the student to be an active IEP participant; coordinate or oversee coordination of the meeting. At the meeting: Provide present level of performance information beyond that which the student and family share, facilitate participation of those present, and record discussion and final decisions on the IEP. After the meeting: Provide follow-up to team members, monitor implementation of the transition and related services, and report progress toward annual transition goals and objectives/benchmarks.
General educator (vocational educator is recommended)	Yes	Contribute to observations of the student's participation in the general curriculum and identify ways in which the student can gain access to it. Provide instruction.
Administrator or designee	Yes	Identify the supports and services available within the school or school district. Make arrangements for supports and services that are not currently available.
Adult services: • State vocational rehabilitation • Pre-employment transition services counselor • Employment service provider • Case management • Independent living counselor	Yes	Participate in the planning process and identify the services and supports available now and in the future through the adult service agency represented. Provide linkages to other adult services and community supports as appropriate. Share funding information for transition services offered by the agency.
Related services: • Psychologist • Speech-language pathologist • Occupational therapist • Physical therapist • Assistive technology specialist • School nurse • Employment specialist	Yes	Assess the student when appropriate and communicate assessment data results. Share observations of the student's strengths and needs. Participate in the transition planning process, identifying options for developing transition-related skills. Identify the supports needed based on direct student observation and interactions. Collaborate, advise, and support team efforts and goals.
Transition coordinator	No	Coordinate interagency linkages and cooperative activities to promote the development of a continuum of transition services within the school division and community. Provide information on recommended practices and effective services related to transition. Develop systemic procedures to improve transition curricula, programs, and services for all students. Follow up on the student and service providers. Collaborate with employers and other community representatives to develop work-based learning opportunities and work experience options. Provide the student with updated information regarding options within the school division and the community.
Guidance counselor	No	Provide the team with information regarding course of study options, career assessment options, scheduling and class placement options, and counseling support available through the guidance office (including career counseling, truancy and behavior challenges, and personal development supports). Provide direct services, consultation, and coordination services within the school setting.

Adapted by permission from P. Wehman, P. J. McLaughlin, and T. Wehman (Eds.), 2005, *Intellectual and developmental disabilities: Towards full community inclusion* (3rd ed.) (pp. 138–140). PRO-ED.
In *Essentials of Transition Planning, Second Edition*, by Paul Wehman
(2020, Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co., Inc.)

Table 1.4. Transition planning time line

Age milestone	Transition planning educational activities
Before the age of 14 years	• Promote academic skills and identify academic strengths • Provide instruction on age-appropriate functional community and life skills • Encourage involvement in age-appropriate recreational and leisure skills/activities • Support the development of unique interests • Ensure functional communication is in place • Explore the use of assistive technology, when appropriate • Promote student independence and self-determination skills, such as decision making, problem solving, and self-advocacy • Encourage meaningful participation in part or all of individualized education program (IEP) meetings • Discuss implications of curriculum and testing on diploma eligibility in IEP meetings
Ages 14–15 years	• IEP team meets to create transition goals and begin discussion of life after school • Ensure student participation as a member of the IEP team • Teach self-advocacy and structure opportunities to use and practice skills • Clearly identify the type of diploma (if so, what kind) or certificate that student is working toward • Continue practicing functional skills—working toward independence • Find opportunities for community involvement • Include a counselor from the state Department of Vocational Rehabilitation and identify pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS) that are of interest to the student and match IEP goals
Ages 15–17 years	• Pre-ETS services should have been initiated and are now expanded • Seek volunteer and/or paid work experiences and summer employment • Reevaluation needed from school psychologist for those seeking certain services requiring eligibility or planning to attend college • Apply for Social Security benefits in student's name (application should be submitted prior to student turning 18) • Continue practicing social and functional skills during the school day, at home, and even more in the community • If planning to attend college, then visit campuses and meet with disability services offices to learn about accommodation and support differences between K–12 and college • Encourage independence and reduce prompting whenever possible • Promote financial literacy (review credit cards, debt, and taxes) • Make a plan for getting a driver's license or start travel training • Promote instruction on relationships, sexuality, and methods to stay safe
Ages 18–21 years	• Obtain state identification or driver's license • Register to vote • Submit application to state vocational rehabilitation (VR) services (application should be submitted during the student's final year in school) • Notify the student about which rights will transfer to him or her when he or she turns 18; if a student does not have the capacity to make decisions, then the legal process of guardianship should begin • After VR eligibility is established, select employment service provider • Create employment plan with VR and employment provider that is based on interests and strengths • Prepare for interviews and complete applications for employment or colleges/training programs • Practice self-disclosure of disability for employment purposes • Teach responsibility and self-advocacy for health care (taking medications, talking with a doctor, making and keeping appointments) • Encourage independence when practicing social and functional skills

When the student has completed all of the assessments, hold an IEP planning meeting that includes all team members. The purpose of this meeting is to develop functional and measurable goals and objectives. For employment goals, it is important to clearly state in the body of the IEP what type of work experience the student will have and how many hours per week he or she will be working at the job. In all areas of transition planning and instruction, specify the natural environments to be used. To the greatest extent possible, transition skills should be taught in the environments in which students will be expected to use them as independent adults. This means that work experience should be gained in competitive, integrated settings through part-time or summer work where possible. Likewise, community living skills such as travel training, grocery shopping, and leisure activities should be practiced in the real settings in a student's community.

Implementing the transition IEP is the responsibility of all team members. Throughout the implementation phase, progress toward transition goals should be measured daily, weekly, or biweekly. By monitoring progress at these short time intervals, team members will obtain the information necessary to adjust instructional programs to ensure that the rate of student progress is sufficient to meet the annual goals. Changes to transition goals may include increasing or decreasing the level of support given to the student, especially in the area of employment (e.g., SE, additional coaching at the current place of employment). Transition goals and objectives should also be adjusted to meet the changing community living goals of the student and his or her family.

Ongoing Evaluation

Evaluation should be conducted on an ongoing basis using data collection focused on progress toward transition goals. Daily, weekly, or biweekly progress data should be used to inform instructional programming, modify goals, and establish new goals. Evaluation measures should track progress toward desired outcomes while ensuring that promising transition practices are incorporated. How quickly and effectively a program adjusts to the needs of a student is an indication of the quality of the program. See Figure 1.1 for a checklist outlining steps needed for supporting transition planning and Chapters 4, 5, and 6 for more detail on individual transition planning.

PLANNING COMPONENTS

A smooth transition from school to adulthood requires sound school programs and services in which useful learning takes place in alignment with comprehensive transition IEP planning and with consideration of an array of employment, community, and residential choices for students and their families. Some guiding questions to consider when starting, organizing, implementing, and following up from transition planning meeting are provided in the checklist in Figure 1.1.

In addition to these logistical and collaborative considerations, teachers should consider the individual circumstances of the student as they relate to transition planning. Figure 1.2 provides a list of important questions for teachers to consider when conducting transition planning for an individual student.

Taking into account what research has shown to be promising practices for transition planning, it is important for practitioners to consider several research-based predictors of success. Figure 1.3 provides a consideration checklist to make sure transition best practices are incorporated into planning.

Finally, transition does not end at graduation. Rather it represents the complete pathway from school to adulthood for an individual. Figure 1.4 provides a final checklist of programs, options, and other considerations needed after graduation that should be considered during transition planning.

CONCLUSION

Transition planning focuses on an important but complex phase in a young person's life in which expectations, supports, and the entire social ecology around an individual will change. As a result, this makes transition planning and implementation quite complex, but it also provides a focus on skills and experiences that will directly affect a positive trajectory in one or more areas of life for students. Fortunately, these efforts are aided by recent research revealing important predictors of success and legislation that promotes CIE and steps needed

Checklist for Supporting Transition Planning and Review

Instructions: Read over and refer to this checklist of important considerations and factors that will need to be addressed in the transition planning and review processes. Space is provided to fill in names, if needed.

Starting the Transition Process

- ❑ Who will tell the student about the transition planning process and work out with the student whom to involve in the process?
- ❑ Who will tell the parents or caregivers about the process, discuss how the parents can support the student, and ask whom the parents would like to involve in the process?
- ❑ Who will organize dates for transition plan meetings and review for the year?
- ❑ Who will inform and invite other professionals with at least 3 months' advance notice?

Organizing and Planning the Meeting

- ❑ How will students participate in, contribute to, and/or lead their IEP and transition meetings?
- ❑ Which agencies will be invited to participate in the meeting in order to coordinate present and future services?
- ❑ Who will chair the meeting?
- ❑ How and when will the student and family be introduced to the questions to assist him or her with thinking about the visions for the future or life after secondary school, and how will he or she be supported to find the answers?
- ❑ How will the meeting be made a relaxed, person-centered, and positive experience for the student and the family (e.g., in terms of layout, refreshments, venue, music, timing)?
- ❑ Has someone organized supplies (e.g., flipchart, pens) and designated a notetaker?
- ❑ How will families get to and from meetings? Will they need help?

Follow-Up on the Transition Meeting

- ❑ Have the student and family agreed that colleges or other support agencies can see the transition plan?
- ❑ Who will ensure that all people involved in the plan or review have been given copies of the documents?
- ❑ Who will ensure that all necessary agencies are sent a copy of the plan or review?
- ❑ Who will follow up and make sure that people are taking the actions agreed to in the plan?
- ❑ Who will contact agencies that were not able to attend the meeting to inform them of the agreed-on actions?
- ❑ Have dates been agreed on for subsequent reviews over the coming year?

Figure 1.1. Checklist for Supporting Transition Planning and Review.

Checklist of Important Questions for a Teacher to Consider

Instructions: Check the items that indicate sound school programs and services in which transition planning can flourish.

	Yes	No	Notes
1. Does the student have opportunities to access the general curriculum and learn side by side with students who do not have a disability?			
2. Does the student have ongoing access to information about the process of transitioning to postsecondary education, including the documentation requirements of various 2- and 4-year colleges and universities?			
3. Does career/vocational planning begin at the elementary level and continue smoothly and logically across grade levels? Are teachers from all grade levels involved in program development?			
4. Is a functional vocational curriculum in place that reflects skills required in local employment sites for instruction on job skills, completing work in a timely manner or reaching production standards, and interpersonal skills?			
5. Are collaborative efforts with postsecondary education disability support services in place to ensure a smooth transition to 2- or 4-year college settings?			
6. Do special and general educators, including career/technical educators, work together to provide services and collaborative teaching?			
7. Do the student's desired postsecondary goals identify meaningful jobs and appropriate training strategies that are implemented before the student graduates?			
8. Is there parental involvement in career planning?			
9. Have agencies and individuals been identified before the student graduates to provide follow-up training on the job?			
10. Is there administrator and program supervisor support for community-based instruction, coordination of services with community agencies, and staff and resource allocation to permit job placement and training?			
11. Has the student participated in pre-employment transition services provided in conjunction with vocational rehabilitation services?			
12. Has the transition planning team considered and incorporating the predictors of postsecondary success listed in Table 1.1?			

Figure 1.2. Checklist of Important Questions for a Teacher to Consider.

Transition Planning Checklist

Instructions: When planning, a teacher should consider the following questions:

	Yes	No	Notes
1. Have the student and his or her family provided input into, made choices about, and participated in identifying postsecondary education, employment, community living, and other postschool options?			
2. Has there been participation from well-informed parents and guardians?			
3. Has a plan been developed for the student that includes annual goals and the steps necessary to attain the goals?			
4. Does the plan specify who is responsible for each aspect of the transition process, including referral to appropriate agencies, job placement, on-the-job training, and job follow-up?			
5. Have there been coordinated efforts on the part of all appropriate agencies, including vocational rehabilitation counselors, community rehabilitation providers, developmental disabilities service providers, disability support personnel at 2- and 4-year colleges/universities, and postschool vocational education programs?			
6. Is the plan user-friendly; that is, is it easy for the student and parents to understand and take ownership of?			
7. Has the student participated in work experience prior to graduation in a part-time or summer job, paid internship, or other work opportunity?			

Figure 1.3. Transition Planning Checklist.

What a Student Will Need Post–High School Checklist

1. What skills will the student need to access support services on college and university campuses?

2. Will the student have regular competitive integrated employment opportunities?

   Yes_____ No_____

3. Will competitive integrated employment programs offer ongoing employment supports?

   Yes_____ No_____

4. Has the team planned for accessing available and reliable transportation options to support transition goal areas, providing instruction and travel training as needed?

   Yes_____ No_____

5. Will residential alternatives, such as supported living, group homes, and in-home companions, be available in the community?

   Yes_____ No_____

6. Will various leisure activities, such as a cycling club, ballroom dancing, and YMCA membership, be available, and will the student be encouraged to check out these recreational options?

   Yes_____ No_____

Figure 1.4. What a Student Will Need Post–High School Checklist.

Table 1.5. Online resources for transition planning

Resource	Web address
Center on Transition Innovations	https://centerontransition.org
Virginia Commonwealth University Work Support	https://vcurrtc.org
National Technical Assistance Center on Transition (NTACT)	https://transitionta.org
Job Accommodation Network (JAN)	https://askjan.org; see also the JAN Workplace Accommodation Toolkit at https://askjan.org/toolkit/index.cfm
Workforce Innovation Technical Assistance Center (WINTAC)	http://www.wintac.org
Guideposts for Success by National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability (NCWD)	http://www.ncwd-youth.info/publications/guideposts
Vocational Rehabilitation Youth Technical Assistance Center (Y-TAC)	https://y-tac.org

to achieve it–through required transition programming and interagency collaboration. This chapter has provided an overview and background of that transition process, previewed topics that are explored more in depth in later chapters of this book, and provided examples of how to address these components in real-life situations. Consult the online resources listed in Table 1.5 for further exploration of strategies used for transition planning.

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