



arkansas Transition services

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RESOURCES

New Additions to Our Website! www.arkansastransition.com

We've added some new resources for teachers/counselors, parents and students to our website:

For teachers –

- Summary of Performance packet – to facilitate an efficient, effective transition process that promotes interagency collaboration for students with disabilities who are graduating from school-age educational services
- SOP (Spanish Version)
- Practical money skills lessons – customizable lesson plans for important financial lessons
- New Events on our Calendar:
 - Easterseals Lunch & Learn opportunity links – join these one hour Zoom sessions to learn about different topics

For students & parents –

- AR Disability Resource Professionals Contact List – a list of Arkansas colleges' disability support services contacts

For teachers, students & parents –

- 18 & Life to Go – a legal handbook for young Arkansans

For parents –

- Parent Questionnaire for transition planning – to assist in making educational plans with focus on child's post-school goals

For teachers & parents –

- Financial Literacy tools:
 - The City University of New York Financial Literacy Quiz – take this quiz to build your financial skills!
 - First Financial Credit Union Financial Literacy Quiz – take this quiz to determine what you know and what you don't know about personal finance.
 - Economics Arkansas (including the stock market game) – classroom resources for downloading free of charge
 - Guardianship Ethical Standards – ethical principles within the National Guardianship Association's Standards of Practice

Be sure to visit

www.arkansastransition.com and check them out!

Arkansas Transition Services Newsletter

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Changes to Arkansas Law for Obtaining a Driver's License

by Carrie Tuttle

Some significant changes occurred in Arkansas law as it relates to students obtaining their Driver's Permit/License. Let's look at the three Acts that could impact your students:

Act 617: reverses the requirement for students under 18 to show proof that they had at least a C average during the previous semester. In other words, school letters are no longer required to take the permit exam. Act 617 also allows the passing score on the written permit exam to be valid for 24 months.

Act 596: extends the time teens have to trade in their intermediate driver's licenses to 30 days past their 18th birthdays -- as long they've been free of serious accidents and have not been convicted of serious traffic violations in the past 12 months.

Act 961: states that the parents or guardians of teens under 18 years old are no longer required to appear in person to sign the minors' driver's license applications. The parent or guardians can complete the form below and have it notarized. The form is good for 30 days from the date on the form for the purposes of applying for the minors' driver's license.

Please see the below resources to help in guiding your students in this process:

Arkansas State Police Driver's Testing 1-2-3 Checklist

https://static.ark.org/eeuploads/asp/drivers_1-2-3_checklist_121317.pdf

Arkansas State Police Financial Responsibility Acceptance Form

<https://static.ark.org/eeuploads/asp/ASP33.pdf>



DCDT International Conference - Little Rock, AR ~ October 21-23, 2020

by Paul Johnston

Have you ever gotten to attend an International conference? You will have a chance in the fall of 2020!!

The Council of Exceptional Children's (CEC) subdivision, the Division of Career Development and Transition (DCDT) will be having their International Conference at the Little Rock Marriott, October 21st through 23rd, 2020.

This three day conference provides a host of information and networking opportunities for those interested in improving lives of individuals with disabilities. The mission of DCDT is to promote national and international efforts to improve the quality of and access to career/vocational and transition services, increase the participation of education in career development and transition goals, and influence policies affecting career development and transition for persons with disabilities.

If you are not already a member, now would be a good time to consider joining CEC and having DCDT as your subdivision. If you are already a CEC member, consider adding DCDT as your subdivision.

As a member you will receive a quarterly publication, Career Development and Transition for Exceptional Individuals (CDTEI). The official journal of DCDT, CDTEI, focuses on secondary education, transition, and career development of persons with documented disabilities and/or special needs.

So, save the date, October 21-23, 2020!!

Transition Planning Timelines

by Karen Randolph

As you know, students with an IEP must have a transition plan in place by the age of 16. This however does not mean we wait until the month before the student turns 16 to write a plan. In order to have meaningful plans, best practice would have us communicating with parents and students at the elementary, middle/junior and high school levels. Here are some actions we can discuss with parents and students to prepare them for the transition process.

During the students elementary years we guide parents to discuss with their child their future desired outcomes. Encourage students to attend and participate in their IEP meeting. Select curriculum that develops self-determination skills and ensures access to the general curriculum, as well as the development of functional skills, such as communication, self-care, mobility, and independent living skills related to student's needs.

When the student enters the middle/junior high school years we have the parent and student start to identify their post-school goals. At this point, we discuss the HS diploma and or college or technical college requirements depending on the child's post-school goals. The IEP team may need to consider at the eighth grade level if the student will start the transition process. If so, what transition assessments are appropriate for this student? What courses will be needed for college or technical school?

At high school, it is very important by the age of 16 or before entering their 9th grade year to identify these courses the student will need to meet their post-school goals. Discuss whether the student will receive work experience and how this will look. Create and document activities that will assist the student in reaching their post-school outcomes in all areas.

For a student to have a smooth transition from high school to adult life, we must determine appropriate agencies and then receive permission from the parent or student who has reached the age of majority to attend these meetings. Between the student's 16th and 17th birthdate we must inform the student and their parent/guardian of the transfer of rights. A Summary of Performance but also be completed and given to the student before they leave high school. This document gives a snapshot of the student's present levels, post-school outcomes, and accommodation/modification/AT to assist them in a smooth transition from high school to adult life.

These timelines assist the IEP team in writing meaningful transition plans for our students! For suggestions on transition assessment timelines, check out some of the tools on our website: <http://www.arkansastransition.com/index.php/component/content/article?id=61>

Student Transition Portfolio Manual

by Lisa Washington

Arkansas Transition Services is committed to providing technical assistance to the State of Arkansas and its school districts associated with serving and supporting students with their transition to adulthood, as well as community based organizations and youth service professionals focused on helping youth prepare for and succeed in postsecondary education and employment and (if needed) supports in successfully navigating through the community. A Student Transition Portfolio Manual has been designed to organize a set of documents which supports career exploration/readiness, and development in preparation for post-secondary life. It includes important information that is intended to be as relevant and open to as many possible ways for the student and his/her transition support team members to better assist on varying levels, such as school settings, community and workplace environments. In building the portfolio, the outcomes will be a more seamless transition from middle school/junior high to high school; from high school to post-secondary; and finally from post-secondary to chosen work-place environment and/or other community settings all through their life-span . The manual is accessible (with student permission) via electronically through LiveBinder or a traditional three-ring binder.

The Student Transition Portfolio Manual also helps guide in the development of the transition plan as it contains information such as assessments, worksheets, web links, and video links to help your student explore careers, self-advocacy skills, transition goals and services, learning strategies, activities, and setting goals. The best part of creating a portfolio is it is individualized and can be used for any student with any exceptionality. It is tailored according to that individual student's preference and can be sustained by that student as time and maturity changes his/her interests and goals and career choices change.

Culturally Responsive Teaching

by Lisa Washington

Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) is not just a teacher's "bag-o-tricks," but more of the pedagogical approach with which the teacher connects with the class or the culture of the class. It is an effective tool to help dependent learners develop the cognitive skills for higher order thinking. In her book, *Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain*, Zaretta Hammond defines CRT as...

"An educator's ability to recognize students' cultural display of learning and meaning making and respond positively and constructively with teaching moves that use cultural knowledge as a scaffold to connect what the student knows to new concepts and content in order to promote effective information processing. All the while, the educator understands the importance of being in relationship and having a social-emotional connection to the student in order to create a safe space for learning."

Learning to implement CRT has been compared to patting your head and rubbing your stomach at the same time. This feels very awkward in the beginning because your hands have to perform two different movements in unison. The trick is to get each movement

going independently, synchronizing their independent movements into one rhythmic motion. The Ready for Rigor framework works along the same premise as it lays out four separate areas that /create some of those "soft skills/transferrable skills/employability skills" that occur naturally across curriculum. The social, emotional and cognitive skills and conditions that allow students to be more actively engaged and take ownership of their learning process and sets the stage for a life-long system of learning.

NACT (the National Technical Assistance Center on Transition) hosted a webinar and outlined three core principles of application surrounding culturally responsive practices which are as follows:

- (1) Building positive relationships with students – being committed to recognizing and celebrating students' cultural backgrounds and understanding their lived experiences;
- (2) Enhancing parent/family collaboration and communication – being committed to partnering with families and;
- (3) Creating safe and inclusive environments with high

expectations – being committed to establishing caring/brave spaces.

Culturally responsive teaching is an approach that is student-focused. It not only identifies the differences between each student, but also their preferences, interests, needs, and strengths (PINS) to foster their present level of academic achievement and functional performance, as well as meaningful engagement in the classroom.

Resources:

https://www.transitionta.org/sites/default/files/news/QG_CLDYouth_2017_Final.pdf

<https://www.pacer.org/cultural-diversity/research-literature.asp>

https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/E_D592020.pdf

<https://www.teachaway.com/blog/5-steps-becoming-culturally-responsive-teacher>

<http://community.cec.sped.org/dc dt/home>

<https://www.teachforamerica.org/stories/how-to-engage-culturally-relevant-pedagogy>

<https://education.cu-portland.edu/blog/leaders-link/culturally-responsive-teaching-strategies/>

What Does the Future Have in Store for Our Students?

by Bonnie Boaz

Have you ever wished you had a crystal ball so you could see what the future has in store for you, your family member, or even your students? Wouldn't it be so wonderful to be able to see that future and know that it will turn out the way you planned?! Predicting the future can be quite challenging for all of us, but thinking ahead about our futures is what helps frame our actions and guides us to certain milestones.

What if you knew the specific areas you needed to focus and put more effort forth to greatly increase your chances of getting where you want to be? What if you knew of a specific strategy to implement or method to practice that would lead to a positive outcome for you? The Predictor Implementation School/District Self-Assessment (PISA) is a tool that provides those areas, strategies, and practices and allows you to assess the use of them within your classroom, school building, or district.

The PISA provides a list of predictors of positive post-school outcomes categories based on high quality correlational research that includes students with disabilities. It includes operational definitions and characteristics of the predictors that were taken from experts in the field. A team, or even an individual teacher, can review these predictors and their definitions and characteristics to determine if they are evident or not within their schools, districts, or classrooms. Some teams or individuals will choose to look at them in clusters. Two examples of clustering could be **Career Development**: Career Awareness, Occupational Courses, Paid Employment/Work Experiences, Work Study, and Vocational Education; or **Collaborative Systems**: Interagency Collaboration, Parental Involvement, Transition Program, Student Support. Each of these are defined and given

characteristics that allow the user to determine if they exist within their program or class.

Why would you want to determine if you are implementing predictors in your program? Take a look at the paragraph above again—these are the very things that research has shown will more than likely lead to positive post-school outcomes for students with disabilities. Isn't that what our work is all about? When we have experts telling us the very things that will more than likely lead to better outcomes, why wouldn't we want to assess our use of the predictors?!!

Arkansas Transition Services has been working on school districts using the PISA for the last year. This year it is a part of our group's goals. Like you, we want to see more students reaching their goals after high school and obtaining positive outcomes. We know that is happening now because of the hard work the dedicated and passionate teachers in Arkansas are doing. We also know that we can do better. Looking at Indicator 14 (post-school outcomes) data shows that we have work to do! We want to see more students going to college or post-secondary training if that's what is appropriate and within their goals. We want to see more students working competitively in the community. We want to see more student living their dream.

This PISA planning guide can be used to build a plan to implement select predictors within a school once an area(s) of the PISA is completed. Teams can complete an action plan by following the following steps:

1. Determine any additional key individuals that should be involved in planning that may influence change in the school or district/community program

Continued on next page

2. Develop an action plan composed of action steps that address all proposed changes.

- Steps for remedying the problem should have a direct link to the data analysis.
- Any action listed must be specific, observable, and measurable.
- Sufficient detail is needed to determine when the action has been implemented

3. Review the completed action plan

4. Follow through

5. Evaluate the team's efforts

Of course these steps take time, as does completing the PISA itself. That's how Arkansas Transition Services can assist you! If assessing the implementation of predictors of positive post-school outcomes sounds like a good idea to you, call us and we'll meet with you and guide you through the process, even helping you determine the most important areas for you to assess. We also have an online tool we created to make it even easier, not to mention we can help guide you to some evidence-based practices that support these predictors. Don't miss an opportunity to assess your program and build a plan to include the very things that will help you reach goals for yourself, your students, and their families! Join the many other districts who are already improving what they do for brighter futures for our students!

Keeping You in the Know... Intense Work!

by Bonnie Boaz

As most of you know we have been an "Intensive State" with the National Technical Assistance Center on Transition (NTACT) since March 2016. We applied to be an intensive state because our work with them in the past proved to be quite beneficial, setting us on the path to look deeper into our practices, develop strong plans, measure what we do, and to have access to experts in the field around the country who have provided us so much more than we ever imagined. Everything we learn we pass on in some way to the school districts in Arkansas in hopes of making a real difference in the lives of students with disabilities. Many of you have met our two awesome leaders, Valerie Mazzotti and Jacque Hyatt, and have heard them share their expertise in a variety of areas.

The original ending date of our work with NTACT was December 31, 2019. We are delighted to have received word that the date has been extended and we will now be working with NTACT through September 30, 2020! What does this mean for Arkansas? It means the intensive technical assistance NTACT has provided will continue to fade as was originally planned as we work hard to sustain what we have built. NTACT will continue to support Arkansas in on-going evaluation activities throughout the extension. They will continue to provide support with initiatives such as CIRCLES too! They may not visit Arkansas as frequently as they have been able to in the past, but they will still be here to support our efforts in improving outcomes for students with disabilities.

Our work with NTACT has been some of the most rewarding work in which we have been involved in our careers. The beauty of it is, our work won't end! NTACT has done and continues to do an amazing job of helping states build capacity to sustain work that affects the most important thing—the future of our students with disabilities. We are proud to be an intensive state and hope we have more opportunities to work with these experts in the future!

Have an idea for an article or a great story about a student, staff member, agency, or program in your school or district that you would like to share?

Let us know so we can include it in the next edition! Email: jennifer.bibel@arkansas.gov