Your Complete Guide to Transition Planning and Services

by

Mary E. Morningstar, Ph.D.
University of Kansas
Lawrence

and

Beth Clavenna-Deane, Ph.D.
Keystone Learning Services
Ozawkie, Kansas

with invited contributors

PAUL H. BROOKES PUBLISHING CO.®

Baltimore • London • Sydney

Excerpted from Your Complete Guide to Transition Planning and Services by Mary E. Morningstar, Ph.D. & Beth Clavenna-Deane, Ph.D.
Brookes Publishing Co. | www.brookespublishing.com | 1-800-638-3775
©2018 | All rights reserved

Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.
Post Office Box 10624
Baltimore, Maryland 21285-0624
USA

www.brookespublishing.com

Copyright © 2018 by Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co., Inc.
All rights reserved.

"Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co." is a registered trademark of
Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co., Inc.

Typeset by Progressive Publishing Services, York, Pennsylvania.
Manufactured in the United States of America by
Sheridan Books, Chelsea, Michigan.

All examples in this book are composites. Any similarity to actual individuals or circumstances is coincidental, and no implications should be inferred.

Purchasers of *Your Complete Guide to Transition Planning and Services* are granted permission to download, print, and photocopy the blank forms for professional or educational purposes. The forms may not be reproduced to generate revenue for any program or individual. *Unauthorized use beyond this privilege is prosecutable under federal law.* You will see the copyright protection notice at the bottom of each photocopiable page.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Morningstar, Mary E., author.
Title: Your complete guide to transition planning and services / Mary E. Morningstar, University of Kansas Lawrence, and Beth Clavenna-Deane, Ph.D., Keystone Learning Services; with invited contributors.
Description: 1 | Baltimore : Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co., [2017] | Includes bibliographical references and index.
Identifiers: LCCN 2017017695 | ISBN 9781598573114 (paperback)
Subjects: LCSH: Children with disabilities—Education (Secondary)—United States. | Students with disabilities—Services for—United States. | High school students—Counseling of—United States. | School-to-work transition—United States. | BISAC: EDUCATION / Special Education / General. | EDUCATION / Special Education / Social Disabilities.
Classification: LCC LC4031 .M649 2017 | DDC 371.9—dc23
LC record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2017017695

British Library Cataloguing in Publication data are available from the British Library.

2021 2020 2019 2018 2017

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Excerpted from Your Complete Guide to Transition Planning and Services by Mary E. Morningstar, Ph.D. & Beth Clavenna-Deane, Ph.D.
Brookes Publishing Co. | www.brookespublishing.com | 1-800-638-3775
©2018 | All rights reserved

Contents

About the Forms ix

About the Authors x

About the Contributors xi

1. I'm Responsible for Transition Planning . . . Now What Do I Do? 1
Getting Started: Learning the Basics of Transition Planning and Services 2
Key School Personnel: The Secondary Special Educator and Transition Coordinator 3
Making It Happen: Implementing Effective Transition Programs and Services 6
Transition Assessment 7
Transition Planning 8
Family Involvement 8
Student Involvement 8
Transition-Focused Curriculum and Instruction 9
Interagency Collaboration and Community Services 11
Systems-Level Infrastructure 11
What You Can Do Right Now: Putting Ideas Into Action 12
Chapter Appendix 1: Skills and Knowledge Checklist for the Transition Specialist 13

2. Transition Planning From Compliance to Quality 21
Getting Started: Understanding the IDEA Requirements for Transition 21
When Transition Planning Starts 22
Who Is Involved in Transition Planning 23
Writing Transition Individualized Education Programs 27
Interagency Collaboration 36
The Age of Majority and Transfer of Rights 36
The Summary of Performance 37
Making It Happen: Creating Quality Transition Planning Approaches 38
Understand that Transition Is a Process 38
Keep the Student Actively Involved in the Process 40
What You Can Do Right Now: Putting Ideas Into Action 40
Online Resources 43

3. Student-Directed Planning and Involvement 45
Getting Started: Defining Self-Determination and the Student's Role in Transition Planning 46
Making It Happen: Supporting Student Self-Determination 48
Selecting Self-Determination Curricula 50
Assessing Self-Determination 52
Data Collection and Evaluating Student Progress 54
What You Can Do Right Now: Putting Ideas Into Action 54

Excerpted from Your Complete Guide to Transition Planning and Services by Mary E. Morningstar, Ph.D. & Beth Clavenna-Deane, Ph.D.
Brookes Publishing Co. | www.brookespublishing.com | 1-800-638-3775
©2018 | All rights reserved

Online Resources 60
Chapter 3 Appendix: Self-Determination Forms for Students and Families 61

4. Family Involvement: Engaging Families During Transition 67
Getting Started: Why Are Families So Important? 68
When Are Families Involved in Schools? 68
Understanding the Family Systems Framework 69
Making It Happen: Supporting Families During Transition 77
Create Welcoming Places 77
Increase Family Involvement 78
Understand Cultural Reciprocity to Develop Partnerships With All Families 83
What You Can Do Right Now: Putting Ideas Into Action 84
Online Resources 89

5. Transition Assessment: The Cornerstone of Transition Planning 91
Getting Started: Defining Transition Assessment 92
A Comprehensive Process 92
Individualized Education Programs and Transition Assessment 93
Making It Happen: Implementing a Student-Centered Transition Process 93
Types and Approaches to Transition Assessment 94
Implementing the Transition Assessment Process 98
Building a Transition Assessment Toolkit 100
What You Can Do Right Now: Putting Ideas Into Action 105
Online Resources 109

6. School Engagement: Keeping All Students in School with Megan Heidrich **..... 111**
Getting Started: Understanding Student Engagement 112
The Consequences of Dropping Out 112
Defining Student Engagement 113
Making It Happen: Strategies to Promote Student Engagement 116
Consider "The ABCs of Disengagement" 117
Create Multi-tiered Systems of Support 117
Use Data to Keep Students on Track 120
Use Proven Interventions 124
What You Can Do Right Now: Putting Ideas Into Action 131

7. Inclusion in General Education: Strategies for Embedding Transition Into Academic Content with Ryan Kellems **..... 135**
Getting Started: Understand That Access to the General Education Curriculum Is Critical to Transition Outcomes 136
Learn the Role of the General Education Teacher in the Transition Individualized Education Program Meeting 136
Understand the Common Core and Other State Standards 137
Making It Happen: Embedding Transition Skills Within Core Academic Content 138
Provide Access to the General Education Curriculum 140
Provide Instructional Supports for Learning: Accommodations and Modifications 141
Access the What, How, and Why of Learning Through Universal Design for Learning 142
Use Assistive Technology to Support Learning and Transition 144
What You Can Do Right Now: Putting Ideas Into Action 145

Excerpted from Your Complete Guide to Transition Planning and Services by Mary E. Morningstar, Ph.D. & Beth Clavenna-Deane, Ph.D.
Brookes Publishing Co. | www.brookespublishing.com | 1-800-638-3775
©2018 | All rights reserved

8. Preparing for Employment and Career Development 147
Getting Started: Planning for Careers 148
Effective Career Development: An Evidence-Based Practice for All Students 148
The Stages of Career Development 150
Making It Happen: Buiilding a Quality Career-Development Program 151
Coordinate a District-Wide Career Development Team 152
Build Programs Aligned With the Components of Career Development 152
Meet the Requirements of a Work-Based Learning Program 161
What You Can Do Right Now: Putting Ideas Into Action 162
Online Resources 164
Chapter 8 Appendix: Helpful Forms for Your Career-Development Program 165

9. Preparing for Postsecondary Education 169
Getting Started: How Does High School Compare With Postsecondary Education? 171
Shifts in the Law and Access to Services 171
Shifts in Responsibilities 172
Developing Self-Advocacy and Self-Management 173
Making It Happen: Preparing Students for Postsecondary Education 175
Overview of Prerequisites 175
Postsecondary Survival Skills 177
What You Can Do Right Now: Putting Ideas Into Action 184

10. Preparing for Independent Living and Inclusion in the Community with Dawn Rowe and Ryan Kellems **..... 185**
Getting Started: Why Should Community Living Be Considered an Important Postsecondary Outcome? 185
Making It Happen: Preparing Youth for Community Living 188
Teach Self-Determination Skills 190
Teach Independent Living Skills 191
Teach Social Skills 193
Support Participation in Community Experiences 194
What You Can Do Right Now: Putting Ideas Into Action 198
Online Resources 199
Chapter 10 Appendix: Ecological Inventory and Task Analysis Forms 200

11. Preparing for Interpersonal Engagement 203
Getting Started: Interpersonal Engagement and the Impact on Student Success 204
Understanding Multiple Levels of Secondary School Engagement 204
Effective Practices for Teaching Interpersonal Skills 205
Making It Happen: Increasing Interpersonal Engagement 206
Creating Positive School Climates 206
Identifying Students Requiring Targeted Social Interventions 207
Effective Interventions and Strategies for Improving Interpersonal Engagement 210
What You Can Do Right Now: Putting Ideas Into Action 220
Online Resources 221

Excerpted from Your Complete Guide to Transition Planning and Services by Mary E. Morningstar, Ph.D. & Beth Clavenna-Deane, Ph.D.
Brookes Publishing Co. | www.brookespublishing.com | 1-800-638-3775
©2018 | All rights reserved

12. Working With Outside Agencies: Implementing Practices to Promote Interagency Collaboration with Monica L. Simonsen **223**
Getting Started: Understanding Interagency Collaboration 224
Interagency Collaboration and Federal Law 226
Stages Leading to Interagency Collaboration 226
Making It Happen: Building a Collaborative Approach to Transition Planning 229
Strategies for Supporting Youth and Families 229
School-Level Changes 233
Bridging to the Community 235
Community and Systems Change 238
What You Can Do Right Now: Putting Ideas Into Action 241

References 242

Index 256

Excerpted from Your Complete Guide to Transition Planning and Services by Mary E. Morningstar, Ph.D. & Beth Clavenna-Deane, Ph.D.
Brookes Publishing Co. | www.brookespublishing.com | 1-800-638-3775
©2018 | All rights reserved

About the Authors

Mary E. Morningstar, Ph.D., University of Kansas, Department of Special Education, 1122 W. Campus Road, Lawrence, Kansas 66045

Dr. Mary E. Morningstar is an associate professor in the Department of Special Education at the University of Kansas (KU), Codirector of the National Assistance Center on Transition, and Director of the Transition Coalition, which offers online, hybrid, and in-person professional development and resources for secondary special educators and transition practitioners. Her research agenda includes evaluating how secondary teacher quality and professional development have an impact on transition practices and student outcomes, transition planning with culturally diverse families, and facilitating interagency collaboration for improved outcomes. Dr. Morningstar coordinates the online transition master's program and the teacher education program for teachers of students with significant disabilities, working to transform special education coursework to support inclusive practices in schools and the community. She is the principal investigator for the fully inclusive KU-Transition to Postsecondary Education program that supports Kansas University students with intellectual disabilities.

Beth Clavenna-Deane, Ph.D., Keystone Learning Services, 500 E. Sunflower Boulevard, Ozawkie, Kansas 66070

Dr. Beth Clavenna-Deane has worked with secondary students with disabilities for over 25 years; she began her career as a secondary special education teacher before spending almost 10 years as a transition coordinator. She has provided special education services to students with varying levels of disability ranging from mild to significant. Over the past decade, Dr. Clavenna-Deane has focused her expertise and research on autism, behavior, and social-emotional learning, and on the impact of related characteristics and skills upon the transition to adulthood. She currently provides technical assistance and training to multiple Kansas school districts on making universal, targeted, and intensive supports available for all students needing assistance through the Kansas MTSS framework.

Excerpted from Your Complete Guide to Transition Planning and Services by Mary E. Morningstar, Ph.D. & Beth Clavenna-Deane, Ph.D.
Brookes Publishing Co. | www.brookespublishing.com | 1-800-638-3775
©2018 | All rights reserved

1

I'm Responsible for Transition Planning . . . Now What Do I Do?

Michael, a newly hired transition coordinator in a medium-sized suburban school district, is excited yet overwhelmed. Having worked for several years as a special educator in one of the district's two high schools, he has the background, passion, and drive for supporting youth with special needs, and he is familiar with transition services and requirements. Two years ago, Michael completed his master's degree in special education and took a course in his program focused on transition education and services. He applied what he learned from this class and started facilitating a more student-directed planning approach to transition, using an evidence-based curriculum he had learned about to support his students. He also helped some of his graduating students prepare to attend postsecondary educational settings, sharing information about postsecondary disability services with students and families. Yet the transition coordinator role is new to him. The school district created the transition coordinator position after examining the past 3 years of data associated with the transition requirements, in which the district was found to need improvement. Michael is now expected to coordinate transition services for two high schools and support all secondary special educators and students age 16 and older who are involved in transition planning and services.

The transition-related activities Michael implemented as a special educator were helpful to his students, but he cannot possibly work directly with all the students across the two high schools. He will need to shift his focus to coordinating transition planning and services for the district, and sharing information and resources with secondary teachers. In addition, he will need to start collaborating with community agencies to ensure seamless transitions to adulthood for students exiting school. His new responsibility is great, but he is unsure where to begin. What first steps should Michael take to improve transition planning and services in his district?

Whether you are a transition coordinator (also called transition specialist, facilitator, and administrator) like Michael, or a secondary special educator preparing your students for life after school, this book will support you in embracing and navigating your challenging role in supporting all students to succeed, achieve, and realize a successful future. This important work, though rewarding, may sometimes give us pause, especially if new responsibilities are thrust upon us when we have had little preparation or training. Like Michael, we too may find ourselves asking, "*Now* what do I do?" This book can be helpful

Excerpted from Your Complete Guide to Transition Planning and Services by Mary E. Morningstar, Ph.D. & Beth Clavenna-Deane, Ph.D.
Brookes Publishing Co. | www.brookespublishing.com | 1-800-638-3775
©2018 | All rights reserved

in answering this question and getting you "unstuck" when your role in helping students transition to adulthood seems overwhelming or when you need concrete solutions for next steps. It will provide you with a set of skills, tips, strategies, and evidence-based interventions to support your students in achieving positive post-school outcomes.

Michael's situation is very common among transition coordinators, who are often promoted from within a district and may have little training in coordinating transition services. In addition, many special educators (maybe even yourself) have had little formal training other than perhaps a single introductory course in transition planning, with most special educators learning about transition on the job (Morningstar & Benitez, 2013). That's why this chapter starts with the basics, helping you understand the importance of transition planning in the lives of students with disabilities and explaining the roles of various professionals in implementing a quality transition program.

GETTING STARTED: Learning the Basics of Transition Planning and Services

For the past 25 years, transition planning and services have been required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA; PL 108-446). This legislation has been a strong impetus for professionals to develop a coordinated approach to facilitate their students' transition from school to postsecondary settings, including integrated employment, postsecondary education and training, and independent living. This chapter, as well as the rest of this book, will describe specialized skills, activities, and tasks required of professionals like Michael, and provide strategies for tackling daily responsibilities. However, if you are a secondary special educator, the resources and information in this book are equally relevant to your role during transition. Not every school district has created a transition coordinator role, and this may mean that as a special educator you will be responsible for ensuring that your students' transition is coordinated.

Special education teachers are responsible for planning and providing transition services for the students on their caseload. Despite these requirements, students with disabilities continue to be less prepared for adulthood than their peers without disabilities (Newman, Wagner, Cameto, & Knokey, 2009). Over the years, secondary special education teachers have reported being unprepared to plan and deliver transition services (Li, Bassett, & Hutchinson, 2009; Wolfe, Boone, & Blanchett, 1998). Studies have revealed that special education teachers who lack specific transition competencies are less likely to implement effective transition services (Benitez, Morningstar, & Frey, 2009). Consequently, teachers who are unprepared to plan and deliver transition services may be contributing to poor outcomes for students with disabilities.

Preparing for transition planning can be a formidable task for special educators, who must juggle a multitude of shifting priorities and responsibilities. Many secondary special educators have reported increased pressure to support students with disabilities to fully access the general education curriculum to meet high-stakes testing requirements. In addition, they may be experiencing challenges associated with meeting the compliance requirements of the individualized education program (IEP), as well as increased data-based decision making and other administrative tasks. Yet despite these competing tasks, it is still crucial for special educators to support their students in achieving successful post-school outcomes. If you are a special educator, this book provides ideas and strategies so you can embed transition practices into your daily work and meet some of these challenges. To begin, let's start by examining the role of the special education teacher versus the transition coordinator.

Excerpted from Your Complete Guide to Transition Planning and Services by Mary E. Morningstar, Ph.D. & Beth Clavenna-Deane, Ph.D.
Brookes Publishing Co. | www.brookespublishing.com | 1-800-638-3775
©2018 | All rights reserved

Key School Personnel: The Secondary Special Educator and Transition Coordinator

Two types of school personnel are most often involved with transition planning and services: 1) secondary special education teachers engaged in IEP transition planning and instruction, and 2) transition coordinators who ensure a coordinated set of activities as specified in the transition requirements of the IDEA. The IDEA has determined that all special educators who are serving students with disabilities are responsible for transition planning, but this is typically at the student level (i.e., the students on each special educator's caseload). What we know is that the most effective programs have designated personnel (i.e., transition coordinators) who coordinate all in-school services and supports affecting students, families, and teachers, as well as coordinate with outside agencies involved in transition (Morningstar & Benitez, 2013). Figure 1.1 is helpful in understanding the differences between the two primary professionals involved in transition. Depending on your role, you can use the checklist provided in the figure to review your transition responsibilities. What are you currently doing, and what might you add to your daily practice?

The Role of the Secondary Special Educator Secondary special educators are responsible for individual student skill development and planning activities rather than program development or service coordination. In fact, identifying secondary special educators who work in classrooms for most of their day as transition "coordinators" misrepresents the complexity of the transition process. In working with individual students, special educators teach specific skills using evidence-based practices related to transition outcomes (e.g., self-determination, interpersonal engagement, learning processes, core academics, career development and preparation). They also help identify and provide accommodations students will need in school and in the community (Blalock, Kleinhammer-Tramill, Morningstar, & Wehmeyer, 2003).

In most middle and high school settings, secondary special educators provide necessary curricula and instruction addressing students' academic and functional IEP goals. As IEP case managers, teachers are also required to ensure that students receive transition planning and appropriate transition services beginning in middle school and extending throughout the student's high school career. For these reasons, we know that secondary special education teachers are most comfortable with transition competencies related to planning and developing transition IEPs. However, a wider range of knowledge and skills is needed to create transition programs for students with disabilities that lead to improved postsecondary outcomes. In fact, preparing qualified school personnel is recognized as one of the critical factors in improving the outcomes of students with disabilities (Blalock et al., 2003; Kohler & Greene, 2004). However, this knowledge and these skills extend well beyond what many teachers receive as far as training and professional development, as was the case for Michael, the new transition coordinator (Anderson et al., 2003; Hu, 2001).

The Role of the Transition Coordinator The position of transition coordinator emerged with the inclusion of transition planning and services in the IDEA. This specialized position focuses primarily on coordinating transition services rather than providing direct services to students (Morningstar & Clavenna-Deane, 2014). Transition coordinators ensure that teachers are informed of current transition-related information and methods for facilitating transition planning (e.g., identifying students' post-school interests, preferences, strengths, needs). In this respect, transition coordinators often provide important professional development to teachers throughout a high school(s) or district(s). Furthermore, transition coordinators work as liaisons between students, parents, administrators,

Excerpted from Your Complete Guide to Transition Planning and Services by Mary E. Morningstar, Ph.D. & Beth Clavenna-Deane, Ph.D.
Brookes Publishing Co. | www.brookespublishing.com | 1-800-638-3775
©2018 | All rights reserved

Special Educator/Transition Coordinator Checklist

Think about the transition-related activities you engage in on an ongoing basis. Depending on your role, check off which activities you are doing and think about what practices you might start implementing.

Secondary special educators	✓	Transition coordinator/Transition specialist	✓
Prepare individualized education programs (IEP)s during transition planning.		Train teachers to develop compliant and high quality transition IEPs and monitor IEPs to ensure compliance.	
Support students by teaching skills needed to fully participate in their transition planning.		Support teachers to know about and use evidence-based strategies for student involvement in IEPs.	
Collaborate with families about upcoming transition planning meetings and gather input ahead of time.		Provide resources and materials to teachers to help them engage with their families before, during, and after transition planning meetings.	
Teach students with disabilities the skills they need to be successful post-high school, focusing on integrated employment, postsecondary education and training, and adult roles and responsibilities.		Share information, resources, and training with school staff related to student engagement and effective strategies to ensure post-school success.	
Collaborate with general education teachers to ensure students have access to general education curriculum and context.		Collaborate with all school staff to provide resources and training related to improving access to general education and meeting the transition needs of students.	
Ensure students understand their support needs and help them identify the accommodations they need to be successful.		Provide information, training, and resources to school personnel, families, and students about post-school accommodations and services.	
Collect data and progress monitor to ensure students are achieving identified skills, IEP goals, and objectives to facilitate movement toward post-school success.		Collect and monitor post-school outcomes data to evaluate student outcomes and make improvements to services.	
Advocate for individual students and families when needed related to transition skills, experiences, and opportunities.		Advocate for improvements to transition services with school and district administrators; take on a leadership role with community agencies providing programs and services needed by students.	
Provide information and resources to families and students about outside agencies and services and share information about family and student trainings.		Provide information, resources, and training events about outside agencies to school staff and case managers to share with families and students.	
Support families and students with the referral process to be eligible for community agencies and receive needed adult supports.		Collaborate regularly with outside community agencies and other critical transition stakeholders to ensure seamless transitions to adult services.	
Participate in professional development associated with transition planning and services.		Develop, coordinate, and provide professional development for school staff related to evidence-based practices.	

Figure 1.1. Which role do you play? Transition coordinator versus special educator checklist.

Your Complete Guide to Transition Planning and Services by Mary E. Morningstar and Beth Clavenna-Deane.
Copyright © 2018 by Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co., Inc. All rights reserved.

Excerpted from Your Complete Guide to Transition Planning and Services by Mary E. Morningstar, Ph.D. & Beth Clavenna-Deane, Ph.D.
Brookes Publishing Co. | www.brookespublishing.com | 1-800-638-3775
©2018 | All rights reserved

and staff to connect postsecondary goals with the curriculum decisions that drive course content. According to Blalock and colleagues (2003), transition coordinators support

1. Student development by developing and coordinating career preparation programs
2. Student planning by assisting to identify postsecondary options, coordinating with community agencies and services, and monitoring the IEP transition services
3. Interagency collaboration by encouraging collaboration with community services and developing information and training about community resources
4. Program evaluation by evaluating school and student transition-related data, and facilitating strategic planning for transition program improvements

Transition coordinators are expected to possess certain knowledge and skills as reflected in the *Council for Exceptional Children's Advanced Specialty Set: Special Education Transition Specialist* (Council for Exceptional Children [CEC], 2015.) There are seven advanced preparation standards for a transition coordinator (i.e., transition specialist), each with an associated set of knowledge and skills:

1. Assessment: Transition specialists use valid and reliable assessment procedures to evaluate students' interests, strengths, and preferences for development of postsecondary goals and transition services, and monitor the effectiveness of transition practices and programs. They are familiar with both formal and informal assessments, and can use the results of transition assessments to develop measurable postsecondary goals and supports.
2. Curricular content knowledge: Transition specialists know about evidence-based instruction and curricula that are instrumental in developing and improving transition programs, supports, and services. They continuously cultivate and expand their expertise on teaching strategies, instructional methods, curricula, and assistive technologies that allow students with special needs to access academic and transition-related content. This often includes sharing curricular resources related to self-determination, career awareness, postsecondary education, and community participation.
3. Programs, services, and outcomes: Transition specialists advocate for, develop, evaluate, and help improve general and special education programs, supports, and services for students with special needs. They must support and coordinate services across classrooms, schools, and district-level systems. This means knowing about available community- and school-based transition services; understanding the skills needed for success in employment and other postsecondary settings; and promoting transition strategies, models, and curricula.
4. Research and inquiry: Transition specialists conduct and evaluate research and collect data on effective transition practices. They keep abreast of the transition practices that result in positive post-school outcomes and emerging evidence-based models of transition programs and services. They are often responsible for ensuring compliance with federal and state transition regulations.
5. Leadership and policy: Transition specialists assume leadership in overseeing transition programs. They are responsible for upholding professional and ethical expectations; advocating for policies and practices that improve transition planning, services,

Excerpted from Your Complete Guide to Transition Planning and Services by Mary E. Morningstar, Ph.D. & Beth Clavenna-Deane, Ph.D.
Brookes Publishing Co. | www.brookespublishing.com | 1-800-638-3775
©2018 | All rights reserved

and outcomes; and promoting a collaborative and collegial work environment. They need to be knowledgeable about current and upcoming transition policies and laws affecting teachers and students.

6. Professional and ethical practice: Transition specialists display professionalism, respect, and ethical behavior, with the goal of supporting the success of their colleagues and the students they serve. They continually engage in lifelong learning and professional development, keeping informed of important organizations in the field of transition and the latest publications and research. They are knowledgeable about their roles and responsibilities, as well as the responsibilities of other key stakeholders in the transition process
7. Collaboration: Transition specialists collaborate with a variety of school professionals, as well as community agency staff to coordinate and provide transition services and supports to students and families. They are knowledgeable about teamwork, conflict resolution, and the communication strategies and skills needed for working with a variety of stakeholders, including educators, employers, and families. They often lead community-wide transition teams and coordinate out-of-school experiences, such as work-based learning.

The standards can be used to develop a job description for what transition coordinators can and should do, and some districts use them in this way. The impact of transition coordinators extends beyond the scope of the classroom, as they are instrumental in improving transition planning and services for students and families while in school, and also ensuring appropriate supports are in place when students exit special education. Transition coordinators must be knowledgeable about transition assessment, planning, and evaluation, as well as curricular and instructional practices that affect post-school environments (see the Chapter 1 Appendix for a checklist closely adapted from the CEC Advanced Specialty Set and associated skills). Transition coordinators play a critical and meaningful role in promoting successful post-school outcomes for youth with disabilities. Their knowledge and skills focus on systems coordination, and they are instrumental in ensuring that secondary special educators are providing effective transition planning.



MAKING IT HAPPEN: Implementing Effective Transition Programs and Services

Effective transition programs can be designed to address a wide range of transition services for students with disabilities. Because of the complexity of transition, no one professional can sufficiently provide the variety of needed services and supports. Your role in transition may focus on elements of the bigger process, depending on whether you are a secondary special educator, transition coordinator, educational or adult agency professional, or transition stakeholder (e.g., family members). Understanding all the critical features of high-quality transition programs may seem daunting. To break down what makes a transition program effective, let's describe an approach to identifying quality indicators of transition programs and clarify who is best suited to coordinate and implement each critical component. A recently validated measure of transition programs, the *Quality Indicators of Exemplary Transition Programs Needs Assessment-2* QI-2 (Morningstar, Lee, Lattin, & Murray, 2015), looks at seven indicators of a quality transition program and the associated actions school professionals should take to ensure progress toward quality transition practices. Figure 1.2 illustrates the seven indicators.

Excerpted from Your Complete Guide to Transition Planning and Services by Mary E. Morningstar, Ph.D. & Beth Clavenna-Deane, Ph.D.
Brookes Publishing Co. | www.brookespublishing.com | 1-800-638-3775
©2018 | All rights reserved

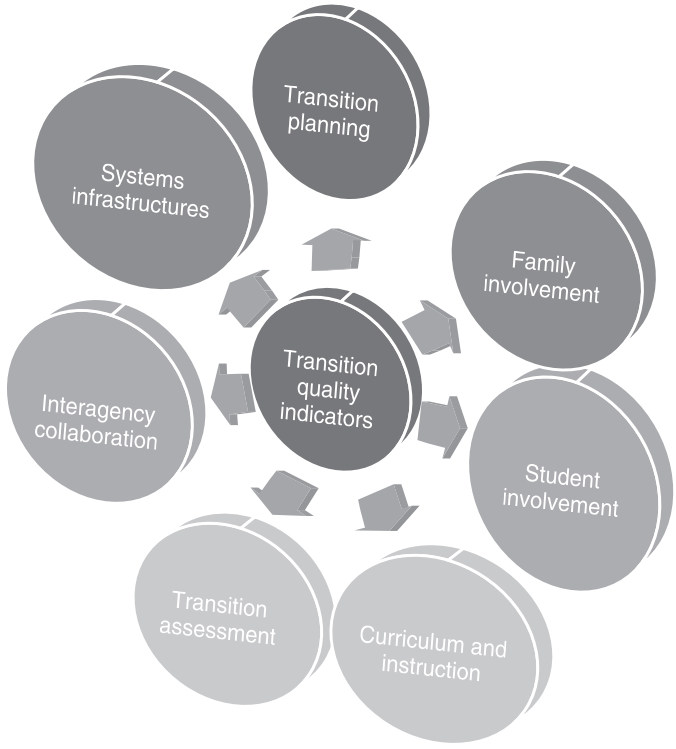


Figure 1.2. Quality indicators of effective transition programs. (From Morningstar, M. E., Lee, H., Lattin, D. L., & Murray, A. K. *Career Development and Transition for Exceptional Individuals* [Vol 39, Issue 4] pp. 227–236. Copyright © 2016 by SAGE Publications, Inc. Reprinted by permission of SAGE Publications, Inc.)

Few existing program evaluation measures sufficiently or comprehensively address the IDEA transition regulations, emerging evidence-based practices research, and predictors of post-school success (Test, Fowler et al., 2009; Test, Mazzotti et al., 2009). In addition, critical contextual issues such as cultural diversity, assistive technology, and statewide accountability measures, while not yet established as predictive of transition outcomes, are essential to consider when developing quality secondary transition programs. The seven indicators of quality transition programs, to be discussed individually in this chapter, take these factors into account and provide a framework for understanding how well-run transition programs operate.

Transition Assessment

Assessment is a first step to transition planning and involves identifying the student's strengths, preferences, interests, and specific transition needs in order to prepare for a successful future. Note that transition assessment should be ongoing throughout the school year, not just completed once, as the student's interests and vision for the future may change over time. The results of the transition assessment should directly inform the development of the student's postsecondary goals and should be communicated and discussed with the student and family (Morningstar et al., 2015). For more on transition assessment, see Chapter 5.

Excerpted from Your Complete Guide to Transition Planning and Services by Mary E. Morningstar, Ph.D. & Beth Clavenna-Deane, Ph.D.
Brookes Publishing Co. | www.brookespublishing.com | 1-800-638-3775
©2018 | All rights reserved

Transition Planning

Transition planning is at the center of a high-quality transition program and focuses on identifying measurable postsecondary goals for youth with disabilities based on a student's interests, strengths, and preferences, as well as aligning services to facilitate students meeting their goals. Transition planning is in line with the IDEA transition requirements, which mandate that annual IEP goals be aligned with anticipated outcomes that address academics and transition needs (2004). The measurable postsecondary goals identified during transition planning must target education/training, employment, and when appropriate, independent living. In addition, effective transition planning is student- and family-centered, acknowledging the diversity of families and taking the student's culture into account. By putting students and families at the center of planning, transition becomes individualized, comprehensive, and collaborative (Bui & Turnbull, 2003; Keyes & Owens-Johnson, 2003; Michaels & Ferrara, 2005). For the most part, secondary special educators implement the transition planning process with individual students. However, transition coordinators play a role in ensuring that first, transition planning meets the requirements of the IDEA, and second, that educators have the resources and strategies needed to ensure quality student-centered planning approaches.

Family Involvement

Family members play a critical role throughout a student's life (Geenen, Powers, & Lopez-Vasquez, 2005; Hetherington et al., 2010; Morningstar, Turnbull, & Turnbull, 1995). Teachers and transition coordinators should jointly promote family involvement in the transition process. For example, transition coordinators should take the lead on developing family-friendly transition information and resources, and share these with teachers, who can then directly distribute to families. Teaching parents about the major concepts associated with transition planning has been shown to be an effective practice (Boone, 1992), and transition coordinators should guide educators and professionals (e.g., teachers, social workers, related service providers) on providing support and information to families. The National Technical Assistance Center on Transition (NTACT, 2015) suggests practices for parent-professional collaboration, including 1) creating a family mentoring program, 2) developing a survey to ask families how they would like to be involved, and 3) working with culturally specific community organizations that already have established relationships with families. Because of the system-wide scope of these strategies, transition coordinators, in conjunction with teachers, take the lead. Transition coordinators identify approaches such as family- and student-centered IEP meetings and then train teachers to use these strategies during transition planning (Cho & Gannotti, 2005; Geenen et al., 2005).

Student Involvement

Students with higher levels of self-determination are more likely to be engaged in employment and independent living after graduation (Morningstar et al., 2010; Wehmeyer & Schwartz, 1997). Therefore, quality transition programs must use practices that teach students skills in decision making, goal setting, problem solving, and self-advocacy. Curricula that help teach and enhance self-determination skills are many and varied, including 1) curricula teaching academic, social, and job-specific skills (Moore, Cartledge, &

Excerpted from Your Complete Guide to Transition Planning and Services by Mary E. Morningstar, Ph.D. & Beth Clavenna-Deane, Ph.D.
Brookes Publishing Co. | www.brookespublishing.com | 1-800-638-3775
©2018 | All rights reserved

Heckaman, 1995; Wolgemuth, Cobb, & Dugan, 2007); 2) curricula teaching self-monitoring for functional life skills (Bullock & Mahon, 1992; Todd & Reid, 2006); and 3) the *Self-Determined Learning Model of Instruction* (Wehmeyer et al., 2012). These curricula help students acquire the skills they need to be as independent, active, and involved as possible in the transition process.

To further support student involvement, opportunities for making real-life choices should be provided to students while in school (Brewer, 2006) and at home (Morningstar, 2006). Teaching students to direct their own IEP meetings using evidence-based curricula is an indicator of quality. Transition coordinators and teachers can share in identifying and implementing evidence-based curricula such as the *Self-Directed IEP* (Martin, Marshall, Maxson, & Jerman, 1996), the *Self-Advocacy Strategy* (Van Reusen, Bos, Schumaker, & Deshler, 1994), and *Whose Future Is It Anyway?* (Wehmeyer et al., 2004), all of which are further described in Chapter 3. Transition coordinators might take the lead on identifying the curricula best suited to their district, and then teachers implement these curricula directly with students. Oftentimes, transition coordinators assist with or teach a class in which these skills are taught.

Transition-Focused Curriculum and Instruction

Specific transition-related knowledge and skills are established predictors leading to successful adult roles (Test, Mazzotti et al., 2009). Research has shown that students who are included in general education academic courses were more likely to be engaged in postsecondary education, employment, and independent living (Baer et al., 2003). To ensure that students are included in the general education curriculum, quality programs incorporate effective instructional methods when teaching academics. This primarily is the responsibility of the secondary special educator—to collaborate with general education teachers to ensure students with disabilities are fully supported with appropriate accommodations and modifications.

Balancing academics and transition-specific content has also been recognized as an indicator of quality. It is important that content essential to adult independence (e.g., career development, independent living skills) is taught and incorporated in the classroom, and this is often the responsibility of transition coordinators, who share ideas with secondary educators on how to make transition a part of the learning process and academic instruction. We know that enrollment in occupational and vocational coursework and work-based learning experiences are strong predictors of employment (Carter, Cushing, & Kennedy, 2009; Migliore, Mank, Grossi, & Rogan, 2007). Transition coordinators are the leaders in developing, implementing, and evaluating career development and employment approaches taught in school- and work-based settings (Walker & Bartholomew, 2012). In addition, developing social and interpersonal skills should likewise be included in comprehensive transition programs. This area of transition is most appropriate for secondary educators to lead through both direct instruction, as well as embedding the training and practice of critical social skills across academic content. Teaching adult roles and responsibilities (e.g., independent living) is also an important aspect of transition, and secondary teachers typically lead such efforts. Direct skill instruction is the purview of teachers, whereas transition coordinators influence quality by developing essential programs and ensuring that teachers have up-to-date knowledge and resources.

Excerpted from Your Complete Guide to Transition Planning and Services by Mary E. Morningstar, Ph.D. & Beth Clavenna-Deane, Ph.D.
Brookes Publishing Co. | www.brookespublishing.com | 1-800-638-3775
©2018 | All rights reserved

TIP FOR TRANSITION: **Use a College and Career Readiness Framework**

While college and career ready (CCR) initiatives (U.S. Department of Education, 2010) have been instrumental in reforming educational practices, have you thought about what you should consider to prepare your students to be college and career ready? Researchers now suggest college and career readiness goes well beyond core academics, such as those identified in state academic standards. It is equally important to teach students nonacademic skills to ensure students develop the attitudes and behaviors that lead to improved academic knowledge and skills (Conley, 2010; Farrington et al., 2012). Morningstar and colleagues (2015) have developed a helpful framework of six domains that should be considered by special educators to ensure students with disabilities are college and career ready. You can use this list to plan for how to provide opportunities to increase your students' college and career readiness:

1. Academic Engagement
    - Acquiring cognitive and content knowledge (core academics, career and technical education content)
    - Understanding critical knowledge structures (facts, linking ideas, organizing concepts)
    - Performing essential academic behaviors (attendance, productivity, work habits, class participation, adaptability, and flexibility)
2. Mindsets
    - Developing a sense of belonging (trusting relationships, extracurricular engagement)
    - Ensuring growth mindsets (opportunities to practice, learning from mistakes)
    - Taking ownership for learning (advocating, self-awareness, self-efficacy, self-regulation, goal setting)
    - Persevering through challenges (persistence, effort, motivation, seeing value in work, grit)
3. Learning Processes
    - Using skills to access academic content (test-taking skills, note-taking skills, time management, organizational skills, technology, metacognition)
    - Engaging in learning (group/team engagement, listening and speaking skills)
4. Critical Thinking
    - Problem solving
    - Researching
    - Interpreting
    - Communicating
    - Working toward precision and accuracy
5. Interpersonal Engagement
    - Developing skills within self (responsibility, adaptability)
    - Learning to engage with others (asserting self, accountability, leadership, collaboration)
    - Understanding others (social awareness, empathy, respect for diversity)
6. Transition Competencies
    - Early planning for adulthood
    - Understanding career cultures

Excerpted from Your Complete Guide to Transition Planning and Services by Mary E. Morningstar, Ph.D. & Beth Clavenna-Deane, Ph.D.
Brookes Publishing Co. | www.brookespublishing.com | 1-800-638-3775
©2018 | All rights reserved

- Understanding college cultures
- Developing adult roles and responsibilities

Morningstar, M.E., Lombardi, A., Fowler, C.H., & Test, D.W. *Career Development and Transition for Exceptional Individuals.* DOI:https://doi.org/10.1177/2165143415589926. Copyright © 2015 by SAGE Publications, Inc. Reprinted by permission of SAGE Publications, Inc.

Interagency Collaboration and Community Services

Interagency collaboration is a critical indicator of post-school success (Kohler, 1996; Test, Mazzotti et al., 2009). School-business partnerships are recognized as an essential factor in student career development (Carter, Cushing, & Kennedy, 2009). Access to community agencies leads to stronger postsecondary education and employment outcomes (Bullis, Davis, Bull, & Johnson, 1995). Therefore, establishing a process for communicating and coordinating with outside agencies is a critical responsibility of transition coordinators. This includes establishing procedures for referring students to agencies prior to exiting school, discussing anticipated service needs of students, and developing interagency agreements related to information exchanged, resources shared, and services coordinated. Quality programs provide parents and students with accurate and timely resources about services, which can be a shared responsibility of both educators and transition coordinators.

Systems-Level Infrastructure

Supporting effective delivery of transition planning and services requires systems-level thinking (Kohler & Rusch, 1996). As you might expect, school districts that hire professionals responsible for coordinating transition programs and services significantly enhance the effectiveness of transition programs (Morningstar & Clavenna-Deane, 2014). Program infrastructures must be in place to maintain support for effective transition programs and policies (Stodden & Leake, 1994). Typically, transition coordinators, along with other school and community officials, lead infrastructure efforts. These efforts address emerging issues such as inclusive education, dropout prevention, and supporting culturally diverse families and students. Evaluating the impact of transition programs on students' learning also requires systems-level infrastructure. Transition coordinators and other central office administration should be managing data systems for academic outcomes, as well as behavioral, nonacademic, and transition competencies. It is important to collect data to monitor whether transition programs result in positive outcomes so they can be modified if needed.

There is much to think about when deciding where to concentrate your focus for transition improvements. When you do identify an area that you believe needs improvement, whether it be to improve the skills and behaviors of your student or to strengthen school and transition programs, you should turn first to the research related to effective transition practices. The National Technical Assistance Center on Transition (NTACT, 2015) has carefully identified a range of evidence-based practices for transition. Table 1.1 clarifies the difference between evidence-based practices, research-based practices, promising practices, and unestablished practices as classified by the NTACT.

Excerpted from Your Complete Guide to Transition Planning and Services by Mary E. Morningstar, Ph.D. & Beth Clavenna-Deane, Ph.D.
Brookes Publishing Co. | www.brookespublishing.com | 1-800-638-3775
©2018 | All rights reserved

Table 1.1. Distinguishing evidence-based transition practices

Evidence-based practices	Research-based practices	Promising practices	Unestablished practices
Based on group experimental, single-case, and correlational research that • Used rigorous research designs. • Demonstrated a strong record of success for improving outcomes. • Have undergone a systematic review process. • Adhered to quality indicators related to specific research design.	Based on group experimental, single-case, and correlational research that • Used rigorous research designs. • Demonstrated a sufficient record of success for improving outcomes. • May or may not have undergone a systematic review process. • May or may not adhere to quality indicators related to specific research design.	Based on group experimental, single-case, correlational, or qualitative research that • Demonstrated limited success for improving outcomes. • May or may not have undergone a systematic review process. • May or may not adhere to quality indicators related to specific research design.	Based on anecdotal evidence or professional judgment that • Could include evidence from rigorous research studies which demonstrate negative effects.

From the National Technical Assistance Center on Transition (NTACT) (2015). *Effective practices and predictors*. Retrieved from www.transitionta.org/effectivepractices.



WHAT YOU CAN DO RIGHT NOW: Putting Ideas Into Action

Now that you have an overview of some of the basic skills and competencies needed for working with secondary students, coordinating transition services, and the essential characteristics of a quality transition program, it's time to apply that knowledge to your own work with transitioning youth. As you look through the CEC advanced preparation standards for qualified, well-prepared transition coordinators found in the Chapter 1 Appendix, jot down what you already know about transition, which skills you are proficient in, and which skills you need to further develop. The checklist can be a helpful first step in evaluating your skills and knowledge in implementing transition programs. You can consider your own skill level and evaluate your school or district transition program using the seven quality indicators of transition programs. You might also consider accessing the full QI-2 survey online through the Transition Coalition web site (www.transitioncoalition.org) to share with colleagues in your school or district to complete.

Regardless of your role in the transition process (e.g., secondary educator, transition coordinator), an informal assessment of what you know about transition, as well as what you still need to learn, can be an important first step in professional development and improvement. It can also serve as a springboard for how to use this book. As you evaluate your own skills and program quality, you can jump to the chapters in this book that are most likely to support you in implementing new strategies, as well as enhancing existing programs. Armed with the guidance from this book and its plethora of resources, you will be well equipped to launch into this exciting and important endeavor of helping students transition into adulthood.

Excerpted from Your Complete Guide to Transition Planning and Services by Mary E. Morningstar, Ph.D. & Beth Clavenna-Deane, Ph.D.
Brookes Publishing Co. | www.brookespublishing.com | 1-800-638-3775
©2018 | All rights reserved