



Arkansas Transition Services Newsletter

June 2, 2014

SHARING INFORMATION, STRATEGIES, AND SUCCESSES TO HELP YOU IN TRANSITIONING YOUR STUDENTS!

Transition Driven Annual Reviews

Consider implementing strategies to get your students involved!

Would you want anyone to have more information about planning for your own future than what you have? Of course not! Why should they? You would expect to be a part of the planning in all stages, providing input, getting feedback, exploring options, setting goals and evaluating progress. So do we want our students with disabilities to expect less than that? Certainly not!

Student involvement in the transition plan process is important for many reasons. Of course it makes complete sense to involve the person for whom we are planning, but it also empowers the person. A student who has a say in the plan is better equipped to evaluate and provide feedback, to make realistic changes and to stay motivated and work at making the plan a reality. A Transition Driven Annual Review is a meeting that focuses on the goals of the student and what the student needs to do and courses the student needs to take to reach those goals. The student prepares for the meeting with the help of the teacher using resources from ATS and others. Using this approach can benefit everyone including the teachers, parents and students as it increases awareness of the student goals, abilities, preferences, strengths and needs. The benefits for the student outnumber the

benefits of all others, however. When a student participates in the planning and meeting it will help define strengths and needs related to education, employment and independent living skills—the future! It will help students understand how their disability might affect how they learn. They will learn how to express interests, likes, and dislikes in a supportive environment. It can also help students understand compromise; allows students to demonstrate and observe communication and negotiation skills; allows students to see supports available to help them reach their post school goals; helps students learn and practice self-determination skills; and can provide motivation to work to achieve goals that are being supported, something that is often not present. The list of benefits is extensive as it can have different benefits for different students, but student involvement is critical and we need to involve them NOW.

I challenge you to take the lead of an Arkansas special educator, Thelma Brandon, of Cleveland County School District. Ms. Brandon implemented the TDAR approach with great success. Just read her story on page 4!



Summer Events

Please contact your Transition Consultant to register

[Arkansas River Co-op Toolkit Training](#)
June 16; 8-4

[Dawson Co-op Toolkit Training](#)
June 16; 8:30-3

[South Central Co-op Toolkit Training](#)
June 17; 8:30-4

[South Central Co-op Writing Transition Plans Training](#)
June 18; 8:30-12

[South Central Co-op Transition Driven Annual Reviews Training](#)
June 18; 12-4

[Southwest Co-op Toolkit Training](#)
June 18; 8:30-3

[Arkansas River Co-op Writing Transition Plans Training](#)
June 19; 8:30-12

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Calendar on Page 2

NEW ATS Website!

Looking for new resources to assist in the transition process? Visit our [NEW website](#) and discover the supplementary tools we have added to benefit teachers and counselors, parents, students and agencies! We have been working with your input and information we've obtained from our work statewide to find the resources that will be most valuable to you.

We understand the importance of student involvement, and we strongly encourage their participation. In order to promote this, we have added interactive IEP forms that explain each section of each form in the transition plan to assist students in developing a better understanding of the transition plan. Check them out on the new [Students Tools](#) page!

Each tools and resources page includes new tools that can contribute to an easier transition process. For instance, we have added a new transition activities list to the Teachers/Counselors Tools page, a great help



in completing Form 401 in the transition plan. Check them out [here!](#)

Help educate parents about transition by sharing our website with them! You can also help them provide information that can assist the team in developing a meaningful transition plan by sharing [this link](#)--it's a great way to include them in the transition process!

Our new [Tools for Assessing](#) resource page has a lot of information that can help you make the assessment process a smooth one.

Developing an assessment timeline can really

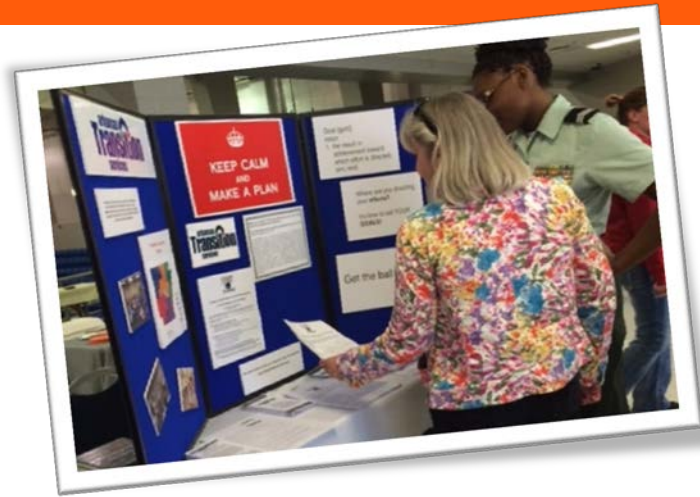
help get the assessment information you want in a timely manner—check out one of several timeline tools. We also have many assessments on our site, as well as tools for students with more severe disabilities.

We know the importance of helping agencies and students make a connection before they leave high school. Our [agency page](#) not only lists local transition resources around the state, but also provides tools you and agencies can both use to get the information and make the linkage needed for a successful transition.

Take some time and check out our site today!

June 2014

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11 College Bound AR	12 College Bound AR	13 College Bound AR
16 AR River Co-op Toolkit Training Dawson Co-op Toolkit Training	17 South Central Co-op Toolkit Training	18 South Central Co- op WTP & TDAR Training Southwest Co-op Toolkit Training	19 AR River Co-op WTP Training DeQueen HS Toolkit Training	20 Dawson Co-op ME! & Assessment Training North West Co-op Toolkit Training
23 Arch Ford Co-op Toolkit Training	24 Arch Ford Co-op Middle School AR River Co-op Toolkit Training	25 AITP Summer Connections Southeast Co-op WTP & TDAR Training	26 North Central Co-op Toolkit Training	27 Northwest Co-op WTP & TDAR Training



Summer Events Cont'd

Arkansas River Co-op Writing Transition Plans Training
June 19; 8:30-12

DeQueen High School Toolkit Training
June 19; 9-3:30

Northwest Co-op Toolkit Training
June 20; 8:30-4

Dawson Co-op ME! Training
June 20; 8:30-12

Dawson Co-op Transition Assessment Training
June 20; 1-4

Arch Ford Co-op Toolkit Training
June 23; 8:30-3:30

Arch Ford Co-op Considering Post-Secondary Options in Middle School Training
June 24; 8:30-11:30

Southeast Co-op Toolkit Training
June 24; 8:30-4

Southeast Co-op Writing Transition Plans Training
June 25; 8:30-12

Southeast Co-op Transition Driven Annual Reviews Training
June 25; 12-4

North Central Co-op Toolkit Training
June 26; 8:30-3:30

Northwest Co-op Writing Transition Plans Training
June 27; 8:30-12

Northwest Co-op Transition Driven Annual Reviews Training
June 27; 12-4

Summary of Performance

So you have a number of students graduating this year. Don't forget the Summary of Performance. IDEA states a comprehensive evaluation "shall not be required before the termination of a child's eligibility under this part due to graduation from secondary school with a regular diploma." It does call for a Summary of Performance – "a local education agency shall provide the child with a summary of the child's academic achievement and functional performance; which shall include recommendations on how to assist the child in meeting the child's postsecondary goals."

After the student leaves school, they will be under Section 504/ADA law which mandates equal access to "otherwise qualified" individuals with disabilities (civil rights statute). The student (adult now) must self-advocate and must self-identify with appropriate documentation. The IEP is not sufficient documentation to qualify for post-secondary accommodations and services.

When completing the SOP, it should be linked to the IEP process and the student should be active in the development! Because the SOP is meant to serve as a tool to help the student explain their disability,

their performance levels and their need for certain accommodations, it is critical that the student is involved in its completion and has a good understanding of the tool. The SOP must be completed during the final year of the student's high school education. It should be developed by someone who knows the student and should be reviewed and approved by the IEP team. One copy goes in the official file and one copy is given to the student. The student can then present the tool to the appropriate individual: the disability supports center at the post-secondary education agency, the vocational rehabilitation counselor, an employer, etc.

Arkansas Transition Services and the Special Education Unit recommend using the Nationally Ratified SOP Template. All five areas need to be completed, including the Student Input. Also, remember to give the student copies of all appropriate assessment data that document the student's disability or functional limitations.

If you have any questions, need help with the SOP, or are interested in tools related to the SOP, please remember to contact your area Transition Consultant.

Don't forget to register for our Transition Summit!

It will be October 22-23 at the Hot Springs Convention Center.

Registration is available [here](#). Reserve a room at the Embassy Suites [here](#).

**Live,
Learn,**

There is a registration fee of \$100.

**Play,
Plan!**

Please make sure you bring a team of 4 or more.

Transition Driven Annual Reviews

By: *Thelma Brandon*
Transition Teacher
Cleveland County School District

For many years I scheduled and conducted Annual Review Conferences in the month of May.

I was given a challenge by Cathy Coker, my former Transition Consultant, to be a part of the Transition Driven Annual Review (TDAR) process. I found this process to be a rewarding endeavor for me as well as for my students. Students were actively involved in their education and transition planning.

The implementation of the TDAR assisted students in the areas of Self-Determination, Self-Awareness and Self-Advocacy. Students were able to share the concepts taught through the "ME" curriculum at the Annual Review

Conference with parents, administrative personnel, and their general education teacher. This action served as a strong indicator to all constituents the importance of having students engage in the role of self-advocates in their education.

I found that the TDAR gave students an opportunity to articulate post-secondary goals, their disability and how it affects their educational performance, accommodations, rights and responsibilities and also it gave them an opportunity to express their interests, likes and dislikes, strengths, and needs in their educational program.

After receiving instructions for the TDAR, I explained to my students and parents that the Annual Review Conferences were going to be quite different than those in the past.

I told my students to visualize that they were in a car, they (student) would be

the driver, the parents, principal, and teachers would be the passengers and they would be giving out information about themselves as they drove throughout the conference.

My students were given an outlined step by step process for leading their conference by deciding who to invite, time and place, and how to present the data collected for the conference. We shared several weeks of mock practices following a TDAR template where students designed personal invitations and distributed to all attendees.

By implementing the TDAR process students understood how they fit in the "big" picture for their education. Upon ending the meeting one parent stated that "this was the best conference I attended in years because my son was able to tell me something about himself". Now that made me reflect on a quote by Elbert Hubbard - "The object of teaching a child is to enable him to get along without his teacher."

WE ARE CONDUCTING A SURVEY, AND YOUR RESPONSE WOULD BE APPRECIATED!

Please copy the following question in an email and send your response to jennifer.harte@arkansas.gov

WHAT WAS THE MOST HELPFUL ASSISTANCE YOU RECEIVED FROM YOUR TRANSITION CONSULTANT THIS YEAR?

Thank you for your participation!

FAREWELL!

We wish our friend and colleague, Monya Clifton, the best as she *transitions* to a new position: Assistant Special Education Supervisor at Lake Hamilton School District, July 1. Monya has been with us for five years and worked hard in her districts to make great accomplishments in working toward our mission of improving post-school outcomes for students with disabilities. We will miss you Monya and we wish you the best (we also know we will be serving you now)!

Stay tuned for an announcement of a new consultant for Dawson, Southwest and DeQueen Mena Coops.

WELCOME!

Jennifer Williams will join the ATS staff August 1, as the consultant serving Crowley's Ridge, North East and Great Rivers Coop areas! We welcome her and will share more about her in future newsletters!

