

Family Engagement Transition Program Tool/ Local

Benchmark 4.1 - Families are seen as essential transition team members and involved in the entire transition planning process in approaches that are responsive to their cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Reflection Questions –

- How is information regarding IEP and other school meetings communicated to families?
- How are families supported to attend transition planning meetings, school events, and community experiences?
- To what extent:
 - does families' cultural background and intimate knowledge of and experience with their child inform the IEP?
 - do families provide information about their child either orally or in writing?
 - do families participate in service delivery?
- How do families participate in the transition planning process:
 - student assessment?
 - evaluation of student's program?
 - IEP and other individual program planning meeting
 - decision making?
- How are families represented and supported in schools:
 - Non-family member interpreters?
 - natural support network as trainers, mentors, peer advocates, or community liaisons?
 - program policy development?
 - school governance?

Possible Indicators of Evidence –

- # of methods used to communicate information regarding IEP and other school meetings to families
- # of methods by which families are supported to attend transition planning meetings, school events, and community experiences
- % of IEPs informed with families' cultural background
- % of families that provide information about their child either orally or in writing
- % of families that participate in service delivery
- # of ways families participate in the transition planning process
- % of families that participate in the transition planning process
- # of ways families are represented and supported in schools
- % of families that are represented and supported in schools

Benchmark 4.2 - Family empowerment is promoted and supported through respect, choices, and other relevant strategies.

Reflective Questions –

- To what extent is transition information:
 - provided to families prior to their child turning age 14?
 - provided in their ordinary language and shared in a culturally responsive and respectful manner?
- How are family needs identified?
- What supports are provided to families?
- How are family decisions supported?

Possible Indicators of Evidence –

- # or % of families that receive transition information prior to student turning 14
- % of families agreeing that information was provided in their ordinary language and shared in a culturally responsive and respectful manner
- # or % of ways family needs are identified
- # of supports provided to families
- # or % of ways family decisions are supported

Benchmark 4.3 - Family preparation is provided to increase their knowledge and skills regarding transition education and services.

Reflective Questions –

- To what extent is family learning and preparation provided for:
 - transition-related planning process (e.g., IEP, ITP, IPE)?
 - empowerment strategies?
 - setting high expectation
 - promoting child's self-determination, with respect for cultural views and values?
 - advocacy?
 - natural supports?
 - agencies and services?
 - facilitating community experiences for youth with disabilities (e.g., safety, transportation, social skills, mobility)?
 - legal issues?
- How effective are preparation activities in increasing family knowledge and skills?
- Do families understand their legal rights (e.g., types of guardianship, special education, labor, privacy)?
- Are the topics and content of preparation for families consistent with those for professionals (e.g., special education compliance, vocational rehabilitation eligibility and

service delivery, evidence-based practices in academic, employment, and life-skills development)?

Possible Indicators of Evidence –

- # or % of families provided learning or preparation for:
 - transition-related planning process
 - empowerment strategies
 - setting high expectation
 - promoting child’s self-determination, with respect for cultural views and values
 - advocacy
 - natural supports
 - agencies and services
 - facilitating community experiences for youth with disabilities
 - legal issues
- % increase in family knowledge and skills after participation in preparation activities
- % of families that understand their legal rights
- % match of topics and content of preparation for families are consistent with those for professionals

Possible Measurable Goals for Family Engagement

- We will increase staff knowledge of practices to better engage culturally and linguistically diverse families in the transition planning process...
- We will increase dissemination methods to families of transition education and service provision information...
- We will increase information provided in multiple languages and dialects represented in the district...
- We will increase the level of family engagement across the district...
- We will increase family provided assessment information about their child...
- We will better engage families to participate in district transition planning effort ...
- We will develop a district family mentoring program...
- We will increase family participation in school events...
- We will increase family participation in school governance...

Possible Strategies for Family Engagement

- Provide professional development to staff in regards to involving culturally and linguistically diverse families
- Provide professional development to families in regards to:
 - transition-related planning process (e.g., IEP, ITP, IPE)
 - empowerment strategies
 - setting high expectation
 - promoting child's self-determination, with respect for cultural views and values
 - advocacy
 - natural supports
 - agencies and services
 - facilitating community experiences for youth with disabilities (e.g., safety, transportation, social skills, mobility)
 - legal issues
- Disseminate information packets about the state family involvement survey
- Disseminate education and rehabilitation information to families using multiple methods (electronic, hard copy, in-person, etc.)
- Implement a transition planning survey to families to better understand their involvement in the entire transition planning process and supports needed for that involvement including:
 - student assessment
 - evaluation of student's program
 - IEP and other individual program planning meeting
 - decision making
 - service delivery
- Send invitation to representative families to participate in district transition planning efforts:
 - policy development

- strategic planning
- interagency coordinating bodies
- Review policies or procedures to identify facilitators and or barriers to family engagement in transition planning and school improvement Provide professional development for families regarding transition issues (i.e., guardianship, postsecondary outcomes, employment) to increase knowledge and involvement in transition planning

Possible Outputs

- Family workshops and other professional development events agendas, handouts, evaluations, etc.
- Staff professional development agendas, handouts, pre/posttests, evaluations
- Information guide
- Revised notice
- Revised planning protocol
- Family engagement survey information packets
- Website, emails, hard copy information
- Transition planning survey

Possible Outcomes

- Increased family attendance at transition planning events
- Increased family provision of services
- Increased family representation in school improvement efforts
- Increased assessment information provided by families
- Increased family representation in transition planning
- Increased family knowledge of transition-related practices
- Increased preparation for family engagement in the transition planning process
- Increased family empowerment
- Increased family knowledge of assessment information regarding their students
- Increase in cultural reciprocity between staff and family

Possible Indicators/ Measures

- # of specific methods used to communicate information regarding IEP, IPE, and other transition-related meetings to families
- # of ways by which families are supported to attend transition planning meetings, school events, and community experiences
- % of families that participate in the transition planning process
- # or % of families that receive transition information prior to student turning 14
- # or % of ways family needs are identified
- # and kinds of supports provided to families
- Description of ways family decisions are supported

- # or % of families provided learning or preparation for: (a) transition-related planning process, (b) empowerment strategies, (c) setting high expectation, (d) promoting child's self-determination, with respect for cultural views and values, (e) advocacy, (f) natural supports, (g) agencies and services, (h) facilitating community experiences for youth with disabilities, (i) legal issues
- % increase in family knowledge and skills after participation in preparation activities
- % of families that understand their legal rights
- % match of preparation topics and content of preparation for families are consistent with those for professionals
- # or % of ways family decisions are supported
- % of families that provide information about their child either orally or in writing
- % of IEPs and IPEs informed with families' cultural background
- % of families agreeing that information was provided in their ordinary language and shared in a culturally responsive and respectful manner
- # of methods used to communicate information regarding IEP, IPE, and other transition meetings to families
- # of methods by which families are supported to attend transition planning meetings, school events, and community experiences
- % of families that participate in service delivery
- # of ways families are represented and supported in schools

Possible Data Sources

- SPP Indicator and family survey results
- Family transition planning survey
- Evaluation results from professional development events, meetings, and other events
- Assessment data
- Attendance records
- IEPs and IPEs
- Policy documents
- Artifacts

Other Hints/ Tips

Strategies to Improve Secondary Education and Transition Services

NTACT's online planning tools are designed to lead your team through an empowerment process in which you review your data, reflect on your performance, develop plans for program improvement, and assess your outcomes. This page provides detailed information for implementing NTACT's capacity building model at the local level. With this information you can develop substantive plans to improve secondary education and transition services for youth with disabilities.

Goals

A fundamental component of any good plan is the goals on which the plan is focused. The goals in your team planning tool provide the foundation for your CAPACITY BUILDING and program improvement activities. Goals must be succinctly articulated and aimed at ultimately producing a benefit for students. Good goals have the following characteristics:

- They are presented in action terms
- They are focused on outcomes rather than process
- They state what you intend to accomplish, not what you intend to "do".

Improvement Strategies

The NTACT model for extending transition research to practice within a state focuses on two important components: increasing local capacity and facilitating implementation of evidence-based practices. Aligned with typical state agency functions, the NTACT model includes activities in four primary, but integrated areas designed to foster increased capacity and facilitate implementation of evidence-based practices: data-based decision-making at state and local levels, professional development, technical assistance, and policy analysis and change.

For a district or high school, the focus switches from building capacity to making program improvements that include support for and implementation of evidence-based practices. NTACT identified four primary strategies that assist with implementation of evidence-based practices in the Taxonomy of Transition Programming:

- Develop and/or expand collaborations and partnerships
- Develop and/or revise curricula or materials
- Implement and/or change events
- Develop and/or change policies or procedures

In this section, we provide definitions, key characteristics, and reflective questions to help you identify the strategies to include in your improvement plan.

Develop and/or expand collaborations and partnerships

Definition

- Collaborations and partnerships are developed or expanded with businesses, families, service providers, and other educators. These key partnerships provide a mechanism through which you establish school and community teams, provide a context to assist students and their families, form alliances and other relationships through which to access resources, and cooperate to solve issues and remove barriers to student success.

Key Characteristics

- Collaborations and partnerships create learning opportunities for students, families, and other important audiences.
- Collaborations and partnerships support and influence programmatic changes to implement evidence-based practices and effective transition services.
- Data from a variety of educational and adult service systems are aligned to produce a comprehensive picture of education and service provision and their outcomes (e.g., rehabilitation, career and technical education, mental health).
- Results from state performance and compliance data are compiled and communicated to a variety of audiences through relevant and appropriate media.
- Results from referral databases, stakeholder-specific presentations, and events are compiled and communicated to a variety of audiences through relevant and appropriate media.

Reflective Questions

- What are the current collaborations and partnerships present in your context?
- Who is responsible for creating new connections?
- Who is responsible for drafting memoranda of understanding (MOUs)?
- What are the best formats and/or media for conveying information to your various audiences?
- How are results of other data sources (e.g., employment data from DOL, case closure data from DVR, service access data from DD/MH) compiled and shared with stakeholders to help guide program improvements?
- How are different stakeholders invited to student transition planning meetings and/or community transition team meetings?
- Who are the additional stakeholders needed to fill in the gaps evident in your current transition education and service programs?
- What types of data are collected to evaluate effectiveness of collaborations?

- How are these data analyzed and used to make improvements?

Develop and/or Revise Curricula or Materials

Definition

- Curricula and other transition-related materials are developed or revised to incorporate evidence-based practices, implement changes to programs or classes to improve transition planning and skill development, and to improve evaluation of practices and programs.

Key Characteristics

- Curricula and materials support implementation of evidence-based practices and transition education and services.
- Curricula and materials generate data and information to be used for assessing student achievement, strengths, and needs on which transition planning can be based.
- Curricula and materials generate data and information for making programmatic changes.
- Professional development and/or technical assistance is provided to support changes or implementation of curricula and/or materials.
- Data are collected and analyzed to evaluate outcomes and make improvements.
- Curricula and materials are sensitive to the different cultural and linguistic differences in your community.

Reflective Questions

- What curricula and/or materials are currently used to build students' academic and transition knowledge and skills?
- Are these materials supported with evidence of effectiveness with your specific student populations?
- Who creates or identifies the materials needed?
- What systems are in place to evaluate the effectiveness of the curricula?
- How are new materials or curricula chosen or developed?
- How are new materials or curricula rolled out for implementation?
- How are educators and other relevant stakeholders prepared to use new materials and or curricula?
- How are new materials and curricula screened to assure they are sensitive to cultural differences and avoid gender and/or disability bias?
- Are education, service, and other transition-related materials available in different languages to meet the needs of your community?

- Are data currently being collected regarding curricula effectiveness? If not, what kind of system will be created to facilitate the collection, use, and analysis of these data?

Implement and/or Change Events

Definition

- Events (e.g., transition fairs, parent nights, planning meetings) are implemented or changed to incorporate evidence-based practices, provide learning opportunities for different audiences, and create opportunities for data collection and analysis of their effectiveness.

Key Characteristics

- Events are created, conducted, and/or expanded to provide students and other stakeholders occasions to gather relevant information regarding education and employment opportunities and transition services.
- Data are collected from events to inform future events, and to identify additional needs
- Learning opportunities are provided through school-based and community-based events to gather assessment information, support IEP goals, foster information collection, and generalize learning outcomes to community settings.

Reflective Questions

- What events are currently happening in your school?
- Are these events effective? How do you know?
- How are event needs identified?
- Who is responsible for creating events?
- How is data collection set up?
- Who analyzes event data?
- How are opportunities to participate in transition-related events communicated to target audiences?
- Who provides the resources needed to conduct transition-related events?

Develop and/or Change Procedures or Policies

Definition

- Policies that influence implementation of evidence-based transition education and services are reviewed, changed, and/or developed to promote implementation at the local level.

**Key
Characteristics**

- A context for analysis of local policy regarding implementation of effective transition education and services is established (e.g., a local interagency transition coordinating council)
- Local policies within education and service systems facilitate implementation of effective transition education and services.
- Local policies across education and service systems facilitate implementation of effective transition education and services.
- A variety of policy instruments are used to facilitate and promote implementation of effective transition education and services:
 - Mandates
 - Inducements
 - Capacity Building
 - System change
- The impact of various policy instruments on implementation of effective transition education and services is evaluated and used to plan further improvements.

**Reflective
Questions**

- What structure is used to routinely identify and address policy issues?
- Do local policies across systems facilitate implementation of evidence- and research-based practices?
- Do agency policies exist that serve as barriers to implementation? Which policies are problematic?
- Do policies at the local level promote or inhibit collaborative service delivery? How?
- Are a variety of policy instruments used to facilitate and promote implementation of (a) student-focused planning practices, (b) practices that promote college and career readiness of students, (c) family engagement, and (d) interagency collaboration? Which policies?
 - Mandates
 - Inducements
 - Capacity Building
 - System change
- Have these policies produced the intended results or outcomes?