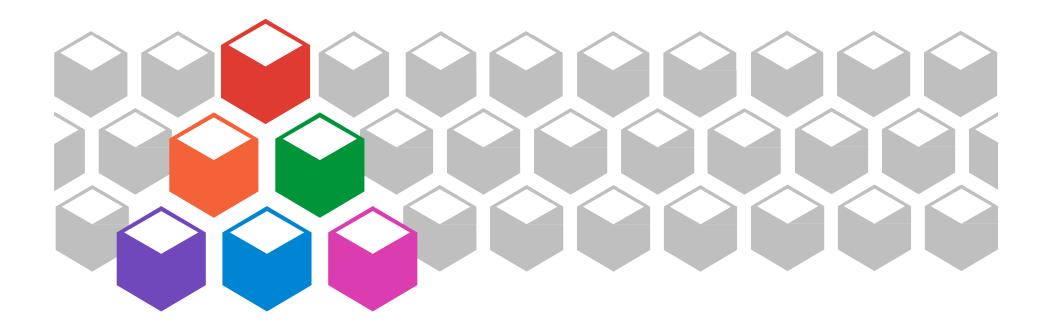
A Model for Planning, Organizing, and Evaluating Transition Education, Services, and Programs



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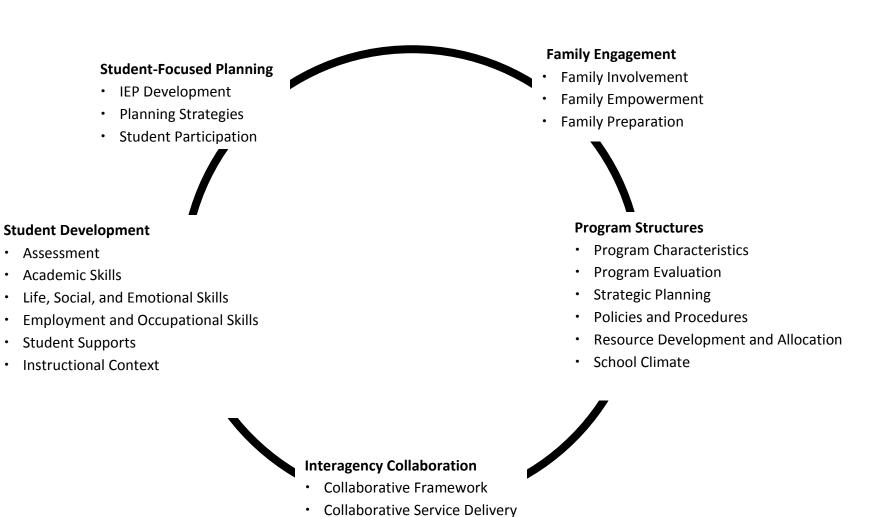
Kohler, P. D., Gothberg, J. E., Fowler, C., and Coyle, J. (2016). *Taxonomy for transition programming 2.0: A model for planning, organizing, and evaluating transition education, services, and programs.* Western Michigan University. Available at www.transitionta.org.

Additional resources are available at: www.transitionta.org and from the first author at Western Michigan University, 3530 Sangren Hall, Kalamazoo MI 49008-5259, (269) 387-6181.

Over the past three decades, transition practices research has demonstrated that post-school outcomes of students with disabilities improve when educators, families, students, and community members and organizations work together to implement a broad perspective of transition planning, more appropriately referred to as transition-focused education. In general, this concept represents the perspective that "transition planning" is the fundamental basis of education that guides development of students' educational programs – including strategies that keep them in school – rather than an "add-on" activity for students with disabilities when they turn age 14 or 16. The impact of transition-focused education is greatly enhanced when service systems and programs connect and support the implementation and application of such learning. The *Taxonomy for Transition Programming 2.0* (Kohler, Gothberg, Fowler, and Coyle, 2016) builds upon the earlier *Taxonomy for Transition Programming* (Kohler, 1996) and provides concrete practices—identified from effective programs and the research literature—for implementing transition-focused education.

As indicated in the references at the end of this document, the *Taxonomy 2.0* brings in the latest literature regarding predictors of post-school success, strategies to increase graduation and reduce dropout, school climate, and vocational rehabilitation services focused on fostering successful transition of youth with disabilities in college and careers. The model continues with five primary practice categories: Student-Focused Planning, Student Development, Interagency Collaboration, Family Engagement, and Program Structure. It includes additional practices in the areas of student supports and the instructional context within Student Development, as well as school climate in Program Structure. Within Family Engagement, a focus on cultural relevancy, empowerment, and family preparation are emphasized. Across categories, collaboration with service agencies, especially vocational rehabilitation, emphasize the importance of such connections prior to and during school and post-school transitions.

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STUDENT DEVELOPMENT

INTERAGENCY COLLABORATION

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM STRUCTURE

STUDENT-FOCUSED PLANNING

IEP Developm	nent		Planning Strategies		Student Participation
 Student interests and preferen 	ices are documented	•	Transition-focused planning begins no later than age	•	Planning team includes student and family
 Progress or attainment of goal 	s is reviewed annually		14		members
 Options identified for each out 	tcome area	•	Cultural and linguistic considerations embedded	•	Students are prepared to actively participate in the
 Postsecondary education or tra 	aining goals and		throughout the planning process		IEP development process and meeting
objectives specified		•	Planning team leader identified	•	Students evaluate their progress on previous IEP
 Occupational goals and object 	ives specified	•	IEP meeting time and preparation are adequate to		goals and objectives
 Community-related and reside 	ential goals and		conduct planning that engages relevant	•	Self-determination is facilitated within the planning
objectives specified (e.g., votir	ng, driving)		stakeholders		process
 Recreation and leisure goals ar 	nd objectives specified	•	Planning and meeting time and place support	•	Students express their interests, preferences, and
 Educational program correspond 	nds to specific goals,		student and family engagement		limits
including elective courses		•	Planning process is student-centered planning (e.g.,	•	Planning decisions are driven by students and their
 Pathway to diploma or other e 	xit document		applies person-center planning; MAPS, PATH, PFP)		families
identified and aligned with pos	stsecondary goals	•	Comprehensive age-appropriate transition	•	Accommodations are made for communication
 Goals are measurable 			assessments are used for transition planning (e.g.,		needs (e.g., interpreters)
 Personal needs are addressed 	in planning (e.g.,		achievement, intelligence, behavior, career,	•	Students evaluate their participation in the planning
financial, medical, guardianshi	p)		aptitude, skills, interests, preferences, readiness)		process and meeting
 Specific goals and objectives re 	esult from student	•	Referral to adult service provider(s) occurs prior to		
choices			student's exit from school		
 Planning process considers into 	egrated				
developmental and service set	tings with appropriate				
supports					
 Responsibility of participants of 	_				
 Evaluation of participant fulfill 	ment of				

responsibilities

STUDENT-FOCUSED PLANNING

INTERAGENCY COLLABORATION

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM STRUCTURE

STUDENT DEVELOPMENT

	Assessment		Academic Skills		Life, Social, and Emotional Skills
•	Formative assessment data drive academic	•	Courses and curricula prepare students for college	+	Self-determination skills development (e.g., goal
	instruction		and careers		setting, decision making, problem solving, self-
•	Career interest and aptitude assessments are used	•	Students understand by 9 th grade what constitutes		advocacy, etc.)
	to inform curricular and instructional decisions		college-ready curriculum	•	Independent living skills development (e.g.,
•	Accommodations on assessment or alternate	•	Academic skills development (e.g., decoding,		financial, first aid, safety, cooking, etc.)
	assessments are provided as needed		comprehension, computation, interpretation, etc.)	•	Interpersonal skills development
•	Assessment results are shared regularly with	•	Academic strategies development (e.g., learning	•	Leisure skills development
	students and used to assist in overcoming		strategies, study skills, and test-taking skills, etc.)	•	Transportation skills development
	deficiencies as they are identified	•	Academic behaviors development (e.g., going to	•	Classroom behavior development
•	Remediation and multiple testing opportunities		class, participation, organization, doing homework,	•	Social skills development
	offered for high stakes testing		studying, etc.)	•	Youth autonomy fostered and supported

Employment and Occupational Skills

Student Supports

Instructional Context

- Career planning is embedded in or aligned with core academic instruction
- Career and technical education is provided including entry level and advanced skill completion options
- Employment seeking skills development
- Occupation-specific skills development
- Soft skills development
- Employment skill development is provided in authentic settings including:
 - school-based enterprises
 - on-site structured work experiences
 - career academies
- Career awareness opportunities provided (e.g., industry tours, guest speakers, career fairs, etc.)
- Local businesses provide opportunities for workrelated experiences (e.g., simulated job interviews, job shadowing, internships, apprenticeships, workstudy, long-term employment, etc.)
- Graduation credit provided for work experiences
- Paid work experience provided prior to school exit
- Job placement services provided prior to school exit

- Related services are provided (e.g., OT, PT, speech therapy, transportation, assistive technology)
- Functional communication systems are provided as needed, including augmentative communication or assistive technology
- Identification and development of environmental adaptations, natural supports, and accommodations needed for success in school and community settings
- Academic support and enrichment provided to improve academic performance (e.g., test-taking skills, study skills, targeted subject area skills, etc.)
- Opportunities given for credit recovery and acceleration (e.g., after school, Saturday school, summer enrichment, etc.)
- Counseling services provided for college and career readiness
- Adult advocates help students establish attainable academic and behavioral goals with specific benchmarks
- Adults and peers build and support student's college and career aspirations
- Information given on postsecondary education supports
- Students supported to complete critical steps for college entry
- Students supported through partnerships established with community-based program providers (e.g., social services, welfare, mental health, law enforcement, etc.)

- Co-curricular activities are used to support student development (e.g., band, forensics, poetry slams, quiz bowl, writing competitions, yearbook, etc.)
- Extracurricular activities are used to support student development (e.g., clubs, Junior Achievement, Junior ROTC, school or intermural sports, student council, theater, etc.)
- Community activities are used to support student development (e.g., 4H, church groups, community festivals, community government, scouts, social activism, volunteering, etc.)
- Service learning used to engage students in their school and community by applying skills to solve real-world problems
- Education and services are provided in integrated and least restrictive environments with preference given to placement in the general education setting 80% or more of the time, as appropriate
- Education and instruction are provided in community-based settings
- Instruction is rigorous and relevant
- Instruction embeds Universal Design for Learning
- Student accomplishments are recognized and celebrated

STUDENT-FOCUSED PLANNING
STUDENT
DEVELOPMENT



FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

PROGRAM STRUCTURE

INTERAGENCY COLLABORATION

Collaborative Framework

- Interagency coordinating body that includes students, parents, educators, service providers, community agencies, postsecondary institutions, employers, and other relevant stakeholders
- Lead agency identified
- Designated transition contact person for each agency
- Formal interagency agreement(s)
- Roles and responsibilities clearly articulated
- Shared understanding of educational and agency policy and procedures
- Systems barriers to collaboration are minimized
- Established methods of communication among all service providers
- Data shared among agencies via established procedures (with appropriate release of information and confidentiality)
- Cross-agency professional development provided
- Interdisciplinary and interagency policy and procedures are evaluated annually

Collaborative Service Delivery

- School staff, VR counselors, and community service providers engage in planning meetings with students and families
- Coordinated requests for information (e.g., to parents, employers, agencies, etc.)
- Coordinated collection and use of assessment data for EDP, IEP, and IPE
- Collaborative funding and staffing of transition services (e.g., braided funding, blended staff, etc.)
- Collaborative consultation between special, general, career technical, and vocational educators
- Collaborative program planning and development, including employer involvement
- Collaborative delivery of transition-related services by school, VR, and other relevant stakeholders
- Student and family linked with appropriate provider to assist with financial planning, health care system navigating, adult disability or mental health services, and transportation

STUDENT-FOCUSED PLANNING

STUDENT DEVELOPMENT

INTERAGENCY COLLABORATION



PROGRAM STRUCTURE

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Family Involvement	Family Empowerment	Family Preparation
 Families' cultural background and intimate knowledge of and experience with their child informs the IEP Families provide information about their child either orally or in writing Families participate in the entire transition planning process including: student assessment evaluation of student's program IEP and other individual program planning meeting decision making Families participate in service delivery Families participate in natural support network as trainers, mentors, peer advocates, or community liaisons Families participate in program policy development Families concerns and needs are represented in 	 Transition information provided prior to student's age 14 Information provided in their ordinary language and shared in culturally responsive and respectful manner Structured method to identify family needs Pre-IEP planning activities specific to families Child care and respite care provided for transition-related meetings Supports provided for families to engage youth in community experiences Students and families linked with adult service providers during transition planning Students and families are assisted to apply for college 	 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
school governance Non-family member interpreters provided		

STUDENT-FOCUSED PLANNING

STUDENT DEVELOPMENT

INTERAGENCY COLLABORATION

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT



PROGRAM STRUCTURE

Program Characteristics		Program Evaluation		Strategic Planning		
(p m	ansitions are addressed across educational levels reschool - high school) and relevant systems (e.g., ental health, vocational rehabilitation)	 Evaluation is part of an ongoing cycle of program development and improvement Clear vision is established for system-wide 	•	Strategic planning - is conducted on a regular basis - includes multiple stakeholders from relevant		
	ogram options are flexible to meet individual udent needs	evaluation and data use Data-driven culture supported at all levels		education, agency, and community partners - is driven by evidenced-based and promising		
	ograms are outcome-oriented and reflect high epectations for all students	 Data systems are used to monitor and to assess progress toward graduation including: 		practices for transition education and services - uses needs assessments to provide the basis for		
→ Pr ge	rograms rely on a tiered philosophy, viewing eneral and special education as a unified system fering increasingly intensive support, as needed	- dropout risk - attendance - behavior		secondary-level education and post-school community programs and services - includes evaluation planning		
Pran	ograms reflect the community's cultural, linguistic, and ethnic diversity	- course completion - course performance	•	Strategic planning document is evaluated for technical soundness (measureable goals, sufficient		
ed	udents with diverse needs have access to all ducational opportunities (academic, college-prep, ork-based, extracurricular, etc.)	 social performance CTE enrollment and completion patterns office referrals, suspension, expulsion 		tasks, tangible outputs, anticipated outcomes, sound evaluation, etc.)		
→ Pa	raduation requirements are clearly defined arents are given graduation requirements and exit	- truancy - retentions				
• M	otions with future implications prior to 9 th grade ultiple pathways provided for satisfying standard aduation requirements	 support needs Student-level data are reviewed to identify students at risk of dropping out before key grade-level 				
→ Ev	very opportunity provided to students to receive a andard diploma until age 21	transitions Student withdrawal data are collected and reviewed Post-school data are collected and used for program				
		planningStudents and families participate in program evaluation				

Policies and Procedures

Resource Development and Allocation

School Climate

- Policies and procedures support the implementation of evidence-based and promising practices (EBPP) for transition
- Policies and procedures foster a positive school climate
- Academic and social performance are monitored
- Policies and procedures provide the structure and process for systemic and ongoing program improvement regarding transition education and services
- Policies and procedures are aligned with those of other providers as much as possible to address gaps and reduce duplication of transition services

- High quality staff in all instructional, supervisory, and support roles are recruited, hired, and retained
- Implementation of evidence-based and promising practices (EBPP) is supported and facilitated through professional development, coaching, and feedback systems
- Employee relations services are provided to ensure continuing quality of the workforce and the workplace (e.g., appointment status, benefits, and other transactions for all employees)
- Personnel development is provided for:
 - knowledge and skill development
 - culturally responsive planning with families
 - creating a welcoming school climate
- Multiple measures are used when building and implementing administrator and teacher evaluation performance index formulas

- School climate supports a sense of trust and fairness
- School has a clearly defined set of expectations, procedures for teaching expectations, and procedures for encouraging expected and schoolappropriate behavior
- Programs implemented to improve students' classroom behavior and social skills
- Students are provided a personalized learning environment and instructional process
- School climate is welcoming to students, families, staff, and other stakeholders
- School climate provides a safe and nurturing environment for students and adults to feel connected to the school (safe from physical or emotional harm, respect for diversity, fair and supportive practices)
- Environment is culturally responsive to students, families, staff, and other stakeholders
- Students' sense of engagement and belonging in school is monitored
- Staff and students interact outside the classroom
- Adult advocates are assigned to students identified as at risk of dropping out

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