

Quality Indicators of Exemplary Transition Programs

The seven quality indicators described below were compiled from a variety of national sources as well as through interactions with families, young adults with disabilities, and service providers. For each of the areas, described below, there are implications regarding policy development and program implementation in your community. These quality indicators can be used as the basis for a reflective assessment of current transition services and processes provided in your community. It can also be used to develop an action plan to refine and enhance existing programs.

1. Transition Planning

- Planning begins early in a student's education experiences and continues through a student's lifespan.
- Individualized transition plan meetings use a person-centered approach in which the student's strengths, capabilities, interests, and preferences are the focus.
- Transition IEP outcomes and goals are based on student and family's vision for the future, and their choices, needs, and preferences, and not by what services are available.
- There is collaboration and coordination among all agencies involved in the planning process.
- There is a designated coordinator or facilitator of the transition planning process.
- Post-school outcomes are monitored for individual students to determine effectiveness of transition planning process.
- There is appropriate documentation of the planning process (e.g., transition IEP action planning forms, interagency linkages)

2. Interagency Collaboration

- Local interagency transition planning councils are formed in each community.
- Council membership includes all agencies/organizations needed for effective interagency collaboration.
- There is an equal distribution of administrators, direct service staff, and families and consumers on the council.
- Agencies share program resources and develop interagency agreements and policies
- Communication and information is shared among agencies.
- Accurate information exists and is available to students and families about community services
- Agencies develop written interagency memorandums of understanding to identify roles and responsibilities regarding information exchange, sharing of resources and service coordination.

3. Family Involvement

- Family members regularly attend all transition planning meetings.
- Family members are listened to and their ideas are respected.
- Family members are involved in all decisions that are made by the transition team.
- Accommodations are made to involve family members in the planning process (e.g., time and location of transition planning meeting are flexible)
- Family members and professionals reach consensus regarding student outcomes.
- Information is provided to families about transition in a variety of formats
- Methods and procedures to assist families to envision the future are in place.
- Professionals are trained in family-friendly practices

4. Student Involvement

- Students are taught decision-making skills from an early age and are provided with opportunities to make real-life, meaningful decisions so that they possess the skills necessary to make informed choices about their future
- Students attend all transition planning meetings and are active participants in the planning process.

- Student ideas are listened to and respected.
- Students are given opportunities to learn about and/or directly experience an array of community options (e.g., different community jobs)
- Students are provided with and supported in opportunities to make decisions, be a self-advocate.
- Students are actively involved in developing their own transition IEP and are supported to lead their IEP meeting.
- Parents are provided with information about the importance of their child's involvement in the transition planning process and in self-advocate

5. Curriculum and Instruction

- Appropriate academic instruction is provided to prepare students for functioning in their community, including attending post-secondary education.
- Appropriate vocational instruction is provided, including community-based vocational experiences, to prepare students for community employment.
- Appropriate instruction and opportunities to engage in independent living is provided to prepare students for functioning as young adults in the community.
- Appropriate social/interpersonal skills instruction and opportunities to establish social relationships with peers is provided.
- Appropriate leisure and recreational skills are opportunities to engage in inclusive recreational activities are provided.
- Curriculum content is functional and reflects all domains of adult life: vocational, life skills, social, academic
- Curriculum content areas are balanced- there is an emphasis in all domain areas
- Teaching takes place in natural environments including community setting
- Curriculum content leads to real life outcomes for the student

6. Inclusion in School

- Procedures exist for students to go into instructional programs that are tailored to their individual needs and interests and are not based on disability category or services
- Specific programs exist for facilitating the social inclusion of students with disabilities into regular school programs, activities, and extra-curricular activities
- Teachers in regular academic and vocational courses are provided with assistance from special education teachers to adapt their instruction and curriculum to meet the diverse needs of students
- Inclusion in secondary school programs lead to positive outcomes for all students

7. Adult Services and Community Involvement

- Services are available and accessible to all students exiting school in the area of: post secondary education, employment, living, leisure/social, health care, and transportation
- Services are person-centered and flexible to meet the needs of individuals, not programs.
- School-business linkages exist.
- A process is in place for agencies to determine the anticipated service needs of students in transition.
- Services and supports are available to facilitate formal and informal natural support networks and community connects for students with disabilities.

This fact sheet was developed by the Kansas Transition Systems Change Project and is produced by the Beach Center on Families and Disability, 3111 Haworth, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS 66045, 785-864-7600, Beach@dole.lsi.ukans.edu/[beach/beachhp.htm](http://beach.beachhp.htm). This is a publication funded by the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research of the U.S. Department of Education. Opinions contained in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the U.S. Department of Education. Permission to reproduce and distribute with credit to The Beach Center on Families and Disability.