



Report on Transition to Lexington SEPAC & LPS 2012



LexSEPAC Transition Subcommittee

October 11, 2012

What is “Transition”?

- ▶ “Life is full of transitions, and one of the more remarkable ones occurs when we get ready to leave high school and go out in the world as young adults. When the student has a disability, it’s especially helpful to plan ahead for that transition. In fact, IDEA requires it.”
 - ▶ [NICHCY, National Dissemination Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities](#)



Why is transition a problem?

- ▶ U.S. unemployment rate for people with disabilities (PWD) > 12% vs. typically developing people (TD) @ 7.6%
 - Cramer, A., IBM Corporation
- ▶ PWD 70-80% higher unemployment than TD; Only 20% able to find and retain postsecondary employment
 - Imperato, A., Office of Senator Tom Harkin
- ▶ When transition planning fails, otherwise employable PWD are faced with a lifetime of guaranteed poverty
 - O'Brien, D., Social Security Administration
- ▶ When transition planning succeeds, the chances of a good quality of life for PWD increases, as proven by evidence-based practices and predictors of postsecondary success
 - NSTTAC, 2009



What have we heard from families?

- ▶ *He has been accepted to the first of six schools he applied to, though he is unable to live independently.*
- ▶ *He needs someone to help him understand what is expected in having a job and help him gain confidence that he is ready.*
- ▶ *Good in some areas; worrisome gaps, especially at risk for being taken advantage of in money management, legal, other fiscal.*
- ▶ *Some of these independent living skills are emerging, but my child needs much more opportunity to practice them in the community.*
- ▶ *Not sure what we will find, what we can afford, what my child will end up being eligible for.*
- ▶ *Help!*



Lexington SEPAC's response

Set up a Transition Subcommittee of the SEPAC to understand how Lexington students on IEPs & their families experience transition and advise the LPS School Committee & LPS Administration on the findings through a report that includes:

- ▶ Federal and State Legislation & Case Law on Transition
- ▶ Evidence-based and Best Practices for Transition
- ▶ Transition Needs Assessment Survey



Needs Assessment Survey Purpose

The transition needs assessment survey identified:

1. how parents perceive transition assessment, planning and goal setting for their transition age child,
2. how they perceive their own family involvement in the transition process,
3. what current student needs they have identified for their child, and
4. what recommendations can be made to respond to parent feedback





Legislation

Federal, State & Case Law

Legislation - Federal

- ▶ Federal legislation (IDEA) emphasizes that special education should prepare students for further education, employment, and independent living
- ▶ Requires transition services - a coordinated set of activities that:
 - ▶ is results-oriented
 - ▶ takes into account a child's strengths, preferences, and interests
 - ▶ includes instruction, related services, community experiences, development of post-school objectives, and, where appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills
- ▶ IEPs for transition-aged youth must include:
 - ▶ measurable postsecondary goals based on age-appropriate assessments
 - ▶ transition services needed to assist child in reaching those goals
- ▶ Students who have a 504 plan but do not have an IEP are not eligible for transition services



Legislation - State

- ▶ Massachusetts requires transition planning and services for students to begin at age 14, or sooner if determined appropriate by the IEP team
- ▶ Students on IEPs are entitled to transition services until they graduate from high school or turn 22 years old, whichever comes first
- ▶ Schools, with the consent of parents, are required to determine if a student will continue to need certain services after graduation or turning 22
- ▶ MA DESE has recently published new guidance on transition planning and is developing regulations for a new “transition specialist” position



Local case law

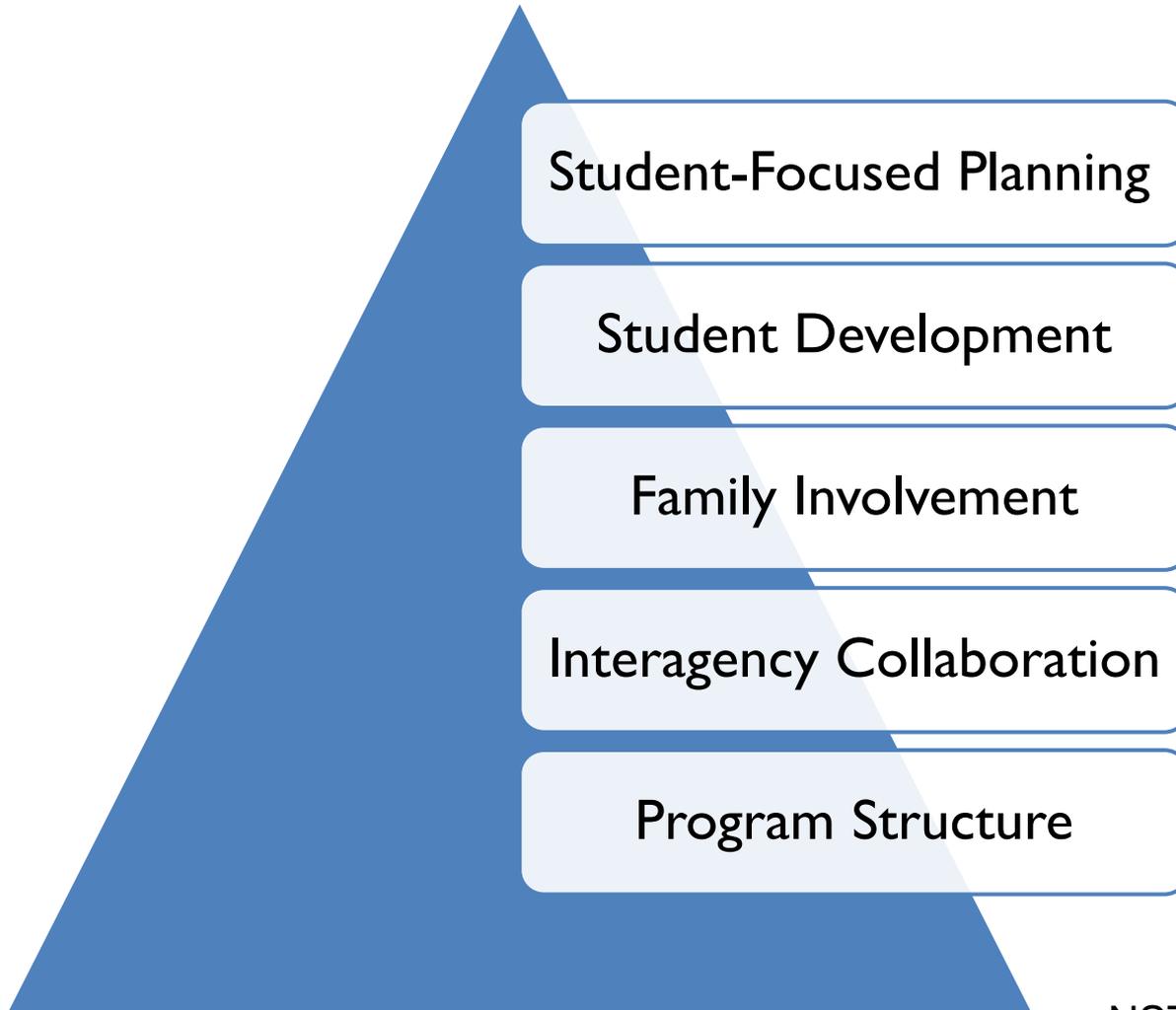
- ▶ There are a growing number of administrative hearing decisions and court cases that interpret federal and state transition requirements
- ▶ Our report summarizes several recent transition-related cases in Massachusetts
 - ▶ Dracut: 2009 BSEA decision, 2010 US District Court Appeal
 - ▶ Marlborough: 2009 BSEA decision, 2010 US District Court Appeal
 - ▶ King Phillip 2012, ABCD 2010, Quabbin 2005: BSEA Decisions
- ▶ While the cases support students' rights to transition services, they also highlight the complexity of this issue and the importance of process and documentation
- ▶ The Disability Law Center's Transition Services Online Manual contains a summary of many other cases



Best Practice for Transition

Taxonomy for Transition Programming, Evidence-based Practices, & Predictors of Post-Secondary Success

Best Practice: Taxonomy for Transition Programming



NSTTAC, 2009



Best Practice:

33 Evidence-Based Practices

1. Involving students in the IEP process
2. Using the *Self-Advocacy Strategy* (to prepare students to participate in transition meetings)
3. Using the *Self-Directed IEP*
4. Self-determination skills
5. Self-advocacy skills
6. Social skills
7. Job specific employment skills
8. Employment skills using CAI
9. Employment skills using CBI
10. Self-management for employment
11. Completing a job application
12. Job-related social communication skills
13. Functional life skills
14. Life skills using CAI
15. Life skills using CBI
16. Self-management for life skills
17. Personal health skills
18. Self-care skills
19. Safety skills
20. Leisure skills
21. Home maintenance
22. Grocery shopping skills
23. Cooking & food prep skills
24. Functional reading skills
25. Functional math skills
26. Banking skills
27. Purchasing skills
28. Purchasing using the “one more than” strategy
29. Restaurant purchasing skills
30. Training parents about transition issues
31. Providing community-based instruction
32. Extending services beyond secondary school
33. Using Check and Connect

NSTTAC, 2009



Best Practice:

16 Predictors of Post Secondary Success

1. Inclusion in general education
2. Paid work experience
3. Vocational education
4. Self-care/independent living skills
5. Transition program
6. Work study
7. Self-advocacy/self-determination
8. Social skills
9. Parental involvement
10. Career awareness
11. Student support
12. Interagency collaboration
13. Occupational courses
14. Program of study
15. Community experiences
16. Exit exam requirements/high school diploma status

NSTTAC, 2009



Needs Assessment Results

Student Profiles, TPF/IEP Process,
Family Involvement & Student Needs

Survey Results: Student Profile

- ▶ Students only between 14 to 19 = 38; > age 19 = 0
- ▶ 14-17 year olds = 31, 82%
- ▶ Special ed > 7 years = 22, 58%
- ▶ Disability:
 - ▶ ASDs (15, 39%), SLDs (8, 21%), neurological (6, 16%)
- ▶ Level of need moderate to high = 27, 64%
- ▶ In-district school = 29, 76%
- ▶ Lexington High School = 20, 53%
- ▶ Expected to graduate
 - ▶ Age 18 (n=23, 61%), 19 (n=7, 19%) or 22 (n=5, 14%)
- ▶ White = 31 (82%)
- ▶ Speak English at home = 38 (100%)

▶ N=38



Results:

TPF/IEP Process

- ▶ Invited to IEP/transition team meetings = 74%
- ▶ Age 14-16 w/o TPF = 12 (44%)
- ▶ Age 17 w/o TPF = 0%
- ▶ No completed annual TPF since age 14 = 22 (52%)
- ▶ No annual parent/child contributions annually to TPF prep since age 14 = 24 (59%)
- ▶ Lack of :
 - ▶ measurable **post secondary goals** based on age appropriate transition assessments,
 - ▶ **transition services** to meet post secondary goals;
 - ▶ annual **goals** related to transition service needs. (n=15-19, 47-63%)

*Self-determination and self-advocacy are predictors of postsecondary success;
Student participation and contribution are critical* (NSTTAC, 2009)



National findings

TPF/IEP Process

National Longitudinal Transition Study (NLTS2)

- ▶ Invited to IEP/transition meetings = 95%
- ▶ Participation in meeting:
 - ▶ very little or not at all = 26%
 - ▶ provided some input = 61%
 - ▶ taking a leadership role = 13%
- ▶ Disclosure in college or job
 - ▶ did not understand could have asked for disability services and accommodations; later said would have been helpful



Results:

Family Involvement in Transition -

- ▶ **School's efforts to partner with parents**
 - ▶ Lack info re: support org's (25, 66%)
 - ▶ Lack transition assessments (18, 47%)
 - ▶ Lack transition-related concerns documented in the IEP and TPF (19, 50%)
- ▶ **Teachers and administrators**
 - ▶ Do not seek their input (20, 53%)
 - ▶ Do not show engage concerns for transition to adult services (18, 47%)
- ▶ **School location**
 - ▶ Lack parent training about transition (21, 55%);
 - ▶ Lack info re: information agencies (18, 47%);
 - ▶ Lack help to play active role in transition (20, 52%);
 - ▶ Lack regular communication on transition goals (22, 58%).



National findings: Family Involvement in Transition

▶ NLTS2:

- ▶ Students most closely associated with active or leadership participation in their transition planning meetings had:
 - ▶ Parents with high expectations and involvement at home and at school,
 - ▶ Expected child to continue to postsecondary education
- ▶ Wanted to be more involved in decisions about the student's IEP or transition plan (29%)
- ▶ Wanted to be less involved (1%)

▶ NSTTAC:

- ▶ Parent involvement strong predictor of postsecondary success
-



Results:

Student Needs: Education & Work

- ▶ 69% postsecondary education (n=30)
- ▶ 60% full-time competitive employment (n=21) & 26% part-time employment (n=9)
- ▶ Lack of employment courses of study & corresponding goals
- ▶ Desire to work on both education and employment goals
- ▶ Need help with:
 - ▶ Assessing career & vocational interests (29, 78%)
 - ▶ Finding a job (20, 60%)
 - ▶ Developing pre-employment behaviors (11, 34%)
 - ▶ Identifying appropriate adult agencies (9, 29%),
 - ▶ Referral to an adult service provider (8, 26%)



National findings

Student needs: Ed & employment

- ▶ Education and employment are not mutually exclusive:
- ▶ NSTTAC
 - ▶ Paid work top predictor of postsecondary success
 - ▶ Employment highly effective as part of transition
- ▶ NLTS2
 - ▶ Many students completed postsecondary ed but difficulty finding a job if no prior paid work experience.
 - ▶ 91% of students who had worked steadily since high school had a far greater likelihood of being employed as adults.



Results:

Student Needs: Independent Living Skills

- ▶ Parents saw their transition age child living at home (15, 48%) or in an apartment or dorm (13, 42%)
 - ▶ The top five areas needing assistance are: household management (26, 81%), money management (21, 77%), self advocacy (18, 69%), personal relationships (17, 65%) and social skills (17, 65%).
 - ▶ Concerns about the future include exploitation (19, 61%), money management (18, 58%), lack of readiness for community living (18, 58%), loneliness (18, 58%) and self-advocacy (16, 51%).
 - ▶ *Top three current priority areas for parents: postsecondary education, independent living, and community participation.*
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Recommendation

Policy, Practice, Programming & Transition Domains

Recommendation:

LPS/SEPAC Joint Transition Task Force

- ▶ Transition Task Force of LPS administrators and transition-related staff working in partnership with the Lexington SEPAC Transition Subcommittee to address transition policy, practice, and programming for students with IEPs attending Lexington Public Schools
 - ▶ Review 7 key areas related to transition
 - ▶ Develop & implement decisive action plan based on findings
 - ▶ Will lead to greater cohesion and consistency in planning and delivering transition services



1. Transition Coordinator

- ▶ Pending DESE regulations due out in late 2012
- ▶ Review what current practices already exist in LPS
- ▶ Determine the need for a district's transition coordinator:
 - ▶ Oversee the overall transition program,
 - ▶ Act as expert on best practice for transition age students,
 - ▶ Supervise transition counselors and related staff, and
 - ▶ Act as the transition resource for students and parents.
- ▶ **Benefit:**
 - ▶ Position the district as a leader in the state and address many of the issues presented in this report



2. Evidence-Based Practices & Predictors of Post-Secondary Success

- ▶ Review work of NSTTAC

- ▶ Taxonomy for Transition Programming
- ▶ 33 evidence-based practices (education, employment & IL)
- ▶ 16 predictors of postsecondary success.

□ NSTTAC, 2009

- ▶ Compare to LPS and consider the following:

- ▶ Design classroom and community programs around evidence-based practices
- ▶ Develop IEP goals and objectives based on EB'd practices
- ▶ Offer transition services and supports using predictors
- ▶ Learn how transitioning students are fulfilling community service & obtaining paid employment
- ▶ Follow up with MA DESE Indicator 14 Checklist for Post-School Outcomes to understand short-term post-secondary outcomes and make adjustments to reach this goal



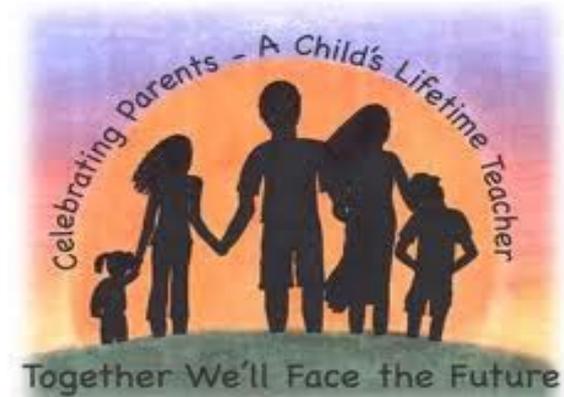
3. Education & Training about Transition Planning and Services

- ▶ Review MA DESE transition technical advisory & current district practices
- ▶ Review the need for staff training on transition
- ▶ Work collaboratively with SEPAC to provide transition education to families
- ▶ Reviewing education for all partners will increase the likelihood that students will be active, effective participants in their transition process



4. Promotion of Family Involvement

- ▶ Family involvement strengthens secondary and postsecondary outcomes for students
- ▶ Consider the following to assist parents & students in their roles and to promote carryover:
 - ▶ View parent and child as "active partners," not as recipients of services
 - ▶ Offer parent training with the LexSEPAC about the IEP/TPF process
 - ▶ Give credibility to vision statements written jointly by students and their parents
 - ▶ Ensure that general IEP vision statement matches the TPF vision
 - ▶ Keep channels of communication open with families



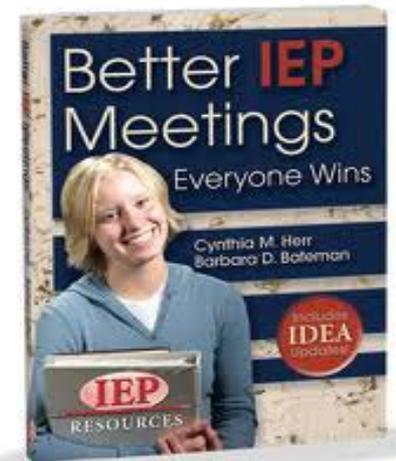
5. Cultivation of Community Partnerships

- ▶ Community is a key part of person-centered planning for transition
- ▶ Work a predictor of post-school success (e.g., internships, externships, paid & volunteering)
- ▶ Review community opportunities to reach out to local partners while students still in high school
 - ▶ important formative experiences to build expertise
 - ▶ Education: local 2-year community colleges, 4-year colleges and/or universities
 - ▶ Employment: local businesses, agencies, and volunteer organizations
 - ▶ Independent living, adult service “688” agencies
- ▶ Link education and skills to job market
 - ▶ knowing what and where the jobs are, creating a competitive pipeline, and setting up public/private partnerships
- ▶ “Not wasting a person” (Ann Cramer, IBM)



6. Review Transition Processes

- ▶ Parent concerns: poor execution of completion of TPFs and transition goals in IEPs; planning started too late, age too close to graduation.
 - ▶ Time is an increasing priority & limited resource during transition years
 - ▶ Efficient, timely and effective transition processes crucial
- ▶ Look at existing transition processes and suggestions based on parent input with an eye toward streamlining and efficiency
- ▶ Work collaboratively on an action plan
- ▶ Monitor the timeliness of IEP resolution



7. Review Transition Practice by Domain

Review the extent to which transition age students on IEPs are assisted with the following:

Education/Training

- ▶ Advice on college application process for college-bound students on IEPs early in their high school experience
- ▶ Counseling on ways to obtain accommodations in college

Employment

- ▶ Engaging community organizations re: part-time employment, internships, or volunteer work/community service
- ▶ Helping students identify and obtain part-time work in the community

Independent Living Skills

- ▶ Prioritizing learning in self-determination & self-advocacy
 - ▶ Providing direct instruction in social skills using Social Thinking, and other best practices
 - ▶ Using the Summary of Performance as a living document to teach self-determination
 - ▶ Teaching independent living skills including travel training, money management, and accessing community services, along with other needs highlighted in the survey
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THANK YOU FOR LISTENING!

Questions? Thoughts?

The full report and our slides will be downloadable at the LexSEPAC web site: <http://www.lexsepac.org/>