



Transition from School to Adult Life Position Statement

The Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities supports the position that people with disabilities have the right to live in and be an integral part of their communities, to be employed, to be independent and to make informed choices about their lives. Each student with disabilities, as all youth, must be given opportunities to achieve academic success, to cultivate personal interests and preferences, to explore and pursue career options that are both relevant and meaningful, and to participate in job training, job placement and community experiences as part of the transition from school to adult life. Transition planning should help a student move from school to adult life and must address key life areas related to work, recreation and leisure, home living, community participation, and opportunities to learn after high school. This can include a range of post-school options, such as but not limited to attending higher education, technical schools, or pursuing national service vocations. The individual services provided ultimately depend on the student's needs and interests.

A comprehensive array of timely services, coordinated among and between all adult service agencies and the school district, is imperative to maximize choices and opportunities for students with disabilities to achieve independence and be contributing and respected members of their communities. The transition planning process should be a thoughtful, student-centered, student-led process that takes into account the individual's unique values, preferences, abilities and challenges. In addition, it should include training in self-determination, self-advocacy and individual rights. Transition planning should help a student access services and supports beyond school by providing information about and the opportunity to apply for community-based long-term services and supports through Medicaid waiver and non-waiver services, Social Security Disability Benefits, income, affordable housing options in the community, Vocational Rehabilitation Services, and available transportation options alternatives.

Whole communities, including families, schools, businesses, employers, health care providers, public service agencies, and other stakeholders, must work together to identify, locate, and share resources to assist in promoting successful post-school outcomes. Students and families should be trained to actively and effectively participate in transition planning. Students should have the opportunity to identify and self-select the participants in their transition planning processes. Successful transition planning is facilitated when each student and his or her parents have the information, knowledge, skills, and access to supporting services that will enable them to fully participate in the process of that plannings the student's future. That information, knowledge, skills, and access should be coordinated through the student's independent school district. If a student is not affiliated with an independent school district, the transition planning process should be coordinated by a single other agency, entity, or individual having responsibility for such planning and chosen by the student or family.

The Council values the diversity and unique contributions of each citizen of the state. The current Fragmentation of the various service delivery systems often results in the provision of inadequate, untimely and/or inappropriate services and costly duplicative efforts. Coordination among young adults

Comment [DADS1]: Suggest inserting somewhere that school district staff should have some basic training on benefits planning.

(Continued)

and their families, school districts, outside agencies, and others on information sharing, flexible scheduling, and implementation timelines is critical ~~to the success of transition planning~~.

Comment [DADS2]: Not clear what this sentence is means. Is it saying that all involved parties should share information and be flexible when scheduling planning meetings?

The ultimate measure of successful transition planning is to increase the numbers of young adults engaged in stable employment after completing secondary and/or post-secondary education experiences. It is the Council's position that providing effective transition planning and services for young adults with disabilities benefits each community and the entire state. People with disabilities who are employed enrich the diversity of our communities, rely less on publicly-funded services, and contribute to the overall well being of the community's economic base.

Comment [DADS3]: This seems like an appropriate ending for the "Employment Position Statement"; suggest a broader ending for this Transition Statement.

Reviewed ~~August 7, 2009~~ [July 26, 2012](#)

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