Middle School Transition Planning Practices

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Why are Transition Practices Important for Middle School Students with Disabilities?

Students with disabilities experience higher unemployment, attend postsecondary environments less often, and engage less in their communities after graduating from high school compared to their peers without disabilities (Newman, Wagner, Knokey, Marder, Nagle, Shaver, & Schwarting, 2011). In middle school, young adolescents with disabilities are 50% more likely than their counterparts without disabilities to drop out of school (President's Commission on Excellence in Special Education, 2002). Researchers and policymakers at the federal level have been trying to address these disparities.

Researchers have identified predictors of post-school success for students with disabilities. These twentieth evidence-based, in-school predictors include career awareness, community experiences, exit exam requirements/high school diploma status, inclusion in general education, interagency collaboration, occupational courses, paid employment/work experience, parental involvement, program of study, self-advocacy/self-determination, self-independent living skills, social skills, student support, transition program, vocational education, work, parent expectations, youth autonomy/decision making, goal setting, and travel skills (Mazzotti et al., 2015). Knowledge of these predictors by staff in middle schools may help empirically improve students' post-school success.

At the federal level, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments (IDEA) of 2004 mandated a transition component be included in the Individual Education Program (IEP) for students with disabilities at no later than age 16. Each transition component must be based on students' transition strengths, needs, interests, and preferences. This legislation also requires students with disabilities to participate, at an appropriate individual level, in the IEP planning process. This requirement encourages educators to beginning preparing students with disabilities at an early age.

Successful transition is more complicated than just having a transition component in an IEP at the age of 16. It also includes continuity of special education services, coordination of interagency collaboration, and capacity of educators to teach students with disabilities using evidence-based transition practices. Early and ongoing transition planning for students with disabilities reduces alienation, improves attendance, and decreases student dropout

(Weidenthal & Kochhar-Bryant, 2007). This indicates the importance of promoting instruction in critical transition skills such as career awareness and exploration at an early age, giving students time to formulate realistic goals (Storms, O'Leary, & Williams, 2000). Yet, current transition practices often focus on students who are in high school (Cook, Wilczenski, & Vanderbrg, 2017; Griffin, Taylor, Urbano, & Hodapp, 2014; Hirano, & Rowe, 2015; Kelley, Bartholomew, & Test, 2011; Prater, Redman, Anderson, & Gibb, 2014; Zeedyk, Tipton, & Blacher, 2016). Beginning transition planning in middle school may complement efforts at the secondary level, potentially alleviating discontinuity of instruction in transition skills and services.

Therefore, the purpose of this Annotated Bibliography is to identify and summarize (a) what interventions have been used based on experimental studies about preparing students in middle school (ages 11-13) for transition to post-school environments and activities, (b) what else educators doing now based on descriptive and correlational studies, and (c) what might educators do base on discussion articles.

References

Cook, A. L., Wilczenski, F. L., & Laura, V. (2017). Inclusive concurrent enrollment: A promising postsecondary transition practice for building self-determination among students with intellectual disability. *Journal of the American Academy of Special Education Professionals*, 25-44.

Griffin, M. M., Taylor, J. L., Urbano, R. C., & Hodapp, R. M. (2014). Involvement in transition planning meetings among high school students with autism spectrum disorders. *The Journal of Special Education, 47*, 256-264. doi:10.1177/0022466913475668

Hirano, K., & Rowe, D. (2015). A conceptual model for parent involvement in secondary special education. *Journal of Disability Policy Studies, 27*, 43-53. doi:10.1177/1044207315583901

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Kelley, K. R., Bartholomew, A., & Test, D. W. (2011). Effects of the self-directed IEP delivered using computer-assisted instruction on student participation in educational planning meetings. *Remedial and Special Education, 34*, 67-77. doi:10.1177/0741932511415864

Prater, M., Redman, A., Anderson, D., & Gibb, G. (2014). Teaching adolescent students with learning disabilities to self-advocate for accommodations. *Intervention in School and Clinic, 49*, 298-305. doi:10.1177/1053451213513958

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Mazzotti, V. L., Rowe, D. A., Sinclair, J., Poppen, M., Woods, W., & Shearer, M. L. (2015). Predictors of post-school success: A systematic review of NLTS2 secondary analyses. *Career Development and Transition for Exceptional Individuals, 39*(4), 196-215. doi:10.1177/2165143415588047

Newman, L., Wagner, M., Knokey, A. M., Marder, C., Nagle, K., Shaver, D., … Schwarting, M. (2011). *The post-high school outcomes of young adults with disabilities up to 8 years after high school. A report from the National Longitudinal Transition Study–2 (NLTS2)* (NCSER 2011-3005). Menlo Park, CA: SRI International. Retrieved from http://www. nlts2.org/reports/2011_09_02/nlts2_report_2011_09_02_complete.pdf

Weidenthal, C., & Kochhar-Bryant, C. (2007). An investigation of transition practices for middle school youth. *Career Development for Exceptional Individual, 30*, 147-157.

Zeedyk, S. M., Tipton, L. A., & Blacher, J. (2016). Educational supports for high functioning youth with ASD: The postsecondary pathway to college. *Focus on Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities, 31*, 37-48. doi:10.1177/1088357614525435.

Executive Summary of Annotated Bibliography

This Annotated Bibliography described effective practices for transition instruction and planning at the middle school level. Articles were reported in these categories: (a) what interventions have been used, (b) what else are educators doing now, and (c) what might educators do. Based on this Annotated Bibliography, teachers will be able to illustrate what effective practices are available, how to implement the transition practices, and where to find practical resources.

What interventions have been used? (Based on experimental studies)

This section listed six interventions designed to enhance students' general class involvement, academic performance, self-determination skills, IEP writing skills, and IEP participation. The interventions include (a) Self-Determined Learning Model of Instruction (SDLMI), (b) self-regulated strategy development (SRSD) persuasive writing instruction, (c) IEP writing intervention, (d) GO 4 IT . . . NOW! strategy instruction, (e) the Self-Advocacy Strategy, (f) student-directed transition planning instruction, Whose Future Is It Anyway (WFA).

What else are educators doing now? (Based on descriptive and correlational studies)

Based on descriptive and correlational studies, this section addressed the perceptions of teachers about students in middle school. Also, this section identified factors that can influence students' transition skills, such as self-determination, self-efficacy, and addresses potential effective strategies for improving the skills.

What might educators do? (Based on discussion articles)

In this section, two discussion articles about middle school and transition were discussed. One article discussed how to use the Eight Guidelines to Adolescent Self-Advocacy to help students plan for their transition to future education and work as adults. The other addressed how to use the Self-Regulated Strategy Development Model (SRSD) of writing to teach middle and high school students with emotional/behavioral disabilities (EBD) to use persuasive writing as a tool to advocate for their wants and needs.

What interventions have been used?

Mechling, L.C. & Savidge, E.J. (2011). Using a personal digital assistant to increase completion of novel tasks and independent transitioning by students with autism spectrum disorder. Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders, *41*, 687-704. doi:10.1007/s10803-010-1088-6

- The purpose of this study was to evaluate the use of a Personal Digital Assistant (PDA) with multi-level prompts (i.e., picture, picture + auditory, and video) to increase completion of novel task boxes and transitioning within and between tasks.
- Participants included three middle school students with diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder (ASD).
- This study used a multiple probe design across three sets of novel structure work tasks and replicated with three students.
- The study was conducted in a self-contained, middle school classroom for students with low to moderate functioning ASD.
- Results indicated: (a) task completion was higher for two of the three students compared to baseline conditions using a picture-based task strip; (b) all students were able to complete a greater number of between task transitions using the PDA; (c) students performed within task transitions equally as well using both the PDA and the task strip; and (d) one student began toe self-fade use of more intrusive prompt levels (i.e., video prompting).

Martin, J. E., Dycke, J. L. V., Christensen, W. R., Greene, B. A., Gardner, J. E., & Lovett, D. (2006). Increasing student participation in IEP meetings: Establishing the Self-Directed IEP as an evidenced-based practice. *Exceptional Children, 72*, 299-316.

- The purpose of this study was to examine the effectiveness of the Self-Directed IEP to teach individualized education program (IEP) meeting skills through a randomized group experimental design.
- Participants were 764 IEP team members across 130 middle and high school transition IEP meetings. Eighty-five percent of the students age from 13 to 17, with 3.8% of the students being age 12.
- This study used a pre/posttest control and intervention design with random assignment of students to the control or intervention groups.
- The Self-Directed IEP intervention was a multimedia lesson package, which consisted of a video depicting a student modeling the 11 steps of the Self-Directed IEP process, a detailed teacher manual with scripted lessons, and a 27-page student workbook.
- In the control group, teachers were asked to conduct IEP meetings, using their typical teacher-directed methods (i.e., without providing students prompts during the IEP meetings and without meetings with the students prior to the IEP meetings).
- Results demonstrated that the Self-Directed IEP had a strong effect on increasing the percentage of time students talked, started, and led the meetings.
- Also, students engaged in significantly more IEP meeting leadership steps (e.g., introduce self, introduce team members, state purpose of meeting, etc.)

Agran, M., Wehmeyer, M. L., Cavin, M., & Palmer, S. (2008). Promoting student active classroom participation skills through instruction to promote self-regulated learning and self-determination. *Career Development for Exceptional Individuals*, *31*, 106–114.

- The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of the Self-Determined Learning Model of Instruction (SDLMI) on the involvement of three junior high school students with cognitive disabilities included in general education health class.
- Using a multiple-baseline across participants design, the SDLMI was used to teach students to set goals (related to active participation in health class), problem-solve how to reach the goal, and evaluate their own performance.
- Results indicated a functional relation between the SDLMI instruction and active classroom participation skills and all three students maintained their performance at higher than baseline levels.

Cavin, M., Wehmeyer, M., & Palmer, S. (2006). Participation of students with moderate to severe disabilities in the general education curriculum: The effects of the self-determined learning model of instruction. *Research & Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities*, *31*, 230–241. doi:10.1177/154079690603100303

- The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of the Self-Determined Learning Model of Instruction (SDLM) on the academic skill performance of three middle/junior high school students (7th and 8th graders) with moderate to severe intellectual disabilities.
- Using a multiple baseline across individuals design, the SDLMI was used to teach students to identify both a target academic skill (general education standards in physical science, geography, and life science) goal and a student-directed learning strategy.
- Results demonstrated a functional relation between the SDLMI and participants' ability use student-directed learning strategies (i.e., set a goal, self-monitor, self-instruct) to promote access to the general curriculum.

Cuenca-Carlino, Y., & Mustian, A. L. (2013). Self-regulated strategy development: Connecting persuasive writing to self-advocacy for students with emotional and behavioral disorders. *Behavioral Disorders*, *39*, 3–15. doi:10.1177/019874291303900102

- The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of self-regulated strategy development (SRSD) persuasive writing instruction, with embedded self-determination instruction, on the writing and self-determination skills of middle school students with emotional and behavioral disorders (EBD).
- Participants included nine middle school students (eight boys, one girl) in grades 6 – 8 identified as EBD and attending a nonpublic day school for students with severe behavioral and mental health needs.
- Teachers were trained to implement the SRSD writing intervention with embedded self-determination components.
- Results indicate a functional relation between the SRSD instruction and increased number of essay components and improved holistic essay quality for all students.
- In addition, students' self-determination perceptions and knowledge, as well as writing self-efficacy significantly increased as a result of the instruction.

Konrad, M., & Test, D. W. (2004). Teaching middle-school students with disabilities to use an IEP template. *Career Development for Exceptional Individuals, 27*, 101-124.

- This study conducted a multiple-baseline single-case design across IEP Template skills (i.e., Vision Statement/Strengths, Needs/Goals, and Services/Least Restrictive Environment) to determine the effects of an IEP writing intervention on the ability of 7 middle-school students with high-incidence disabilities to write draft of their own IEPs.
- The age of the 7 participants ranged from 12 to 14, who were identified with high-incidence disabilities (i.e., learning disability and educable mental disability). All the

participants received special services in a suburban middle school resource language arts class in the southeast United States.

- The independent variable was an instructional package for teaching students to complete IEP Templates (during the intervention phase). This instruction consisted of 18 instructional sessions and was divided into three phases: (a) Vision/Present Level, (b) Goals/Objectives, and (c) Services/ Accommodations.
- Dependent variables, students' ability to complete the IEP Template, were scored using a IEP Template Scoring Rubric to assess students' IEP Template completeness and accuracy.

- Results showed all students improved from baseline to intervention and the data demonstrated a functional relationship between the instructional program and students' abilities to complete an IEP Template for 6 or the 7 participants.
- The finding of this study showed students with disabilities can be taught to successfully participate in writing their IEPs by completing and IEP Template as a first draft.

Konrad, M., & Test, D. W. (2007). Effects of GO 4 IT…NOW! Strategy instruction on the written IEP goal articulation and paragraph-writing skills of middle school students. *Remedial and Special Education*, *28*, 277-291.

- The purpose of this study was to determine the effects of GO 4 IT . . . NOW! strategy instruction, delivered in a group instruction format, on students' (a) ability to write IEP goals and objectives and paragraph-writing skills.
- The participants of this study were 12 students (see Table 1) in four middle school resource classrooms. The majority of the students were identified with learning disabilities (LD; n = 7). However, three were identified with "other health impairments" (OHI), one with a behavioral–emotional disability (BED), and one with an "educable mental disability" (EMD). Only Zach, DJ, and Ariel had ever attended an IEP meeting.
- The authors conducted a single-case study with multiple probe across participants.
- Results indicated a functional relationship between GO 4 IT . . . NOW! strategy instruction and students' abilities to write potential IEP goals and the quality of students' IEP goal paragraphs.

Test, D. W., & Neale, M. (2004). Using the Self-Advocacy Strategy to increase middle graders' IEP participation. *Journal of Behavioral Education, 13*, 135-145.

- The authors conducted a single subject, multiple probe design across participants to investigate the effects of teaching middle grade students with disabilities to participate in their IEP meetings using The Self-Advocacy Strategy.

- Four students with high-incident disabilities (i.e., mildly mentally disabled, learning disable, and behavioral and emotional disable) in middle school (i.e., age 12-13) participated in this study. All instruction was conducted in a resource classroom.
- This study utilized The Self-Advocacy Strategy to teach students to be actively participate in their IEP meetings. This strategy consists of five steps. The first step is the "Inventory" in which students list their strengths, areas to improve or learn, education and transition goals, accommodations needed, and choice for learning. The remaining four steps focused on teaching the student to effectively communicate during their meeting. The strategy was taught in 10 lessons ranging from 20 to 45 min each session.
- The primary dependent variable was the quality of student contributions, which was measured by asking each student 10 questions related to his/her IEP. The secondary dependent variable was the student's score on The Arc's Self Determination Scale, which was a 72-item student self-rating scale that provides data on four essential characteristics of self-determination as well as an overall measure of self-determination.
- Results demonstrated a functional relationship between The Self-Advocacy Strategy and the quality of student's contributions. In addition, student's performance generalized to their actual IEP meeting.
- Study identified needs for future research on teaching students at younger ages to be active participants in their IEP meetings.

Lee, Y., Wehmeyer, M. L., Palmer, S. B., Williams-Diehm, K., Davies, D. K., & Stock, S. E. (2011). The effect of student-directed transition planning with a computer-based reading support program on the self-determination on student with disabilities. *The Journal of Special Education, 45*, 104-117. doi:10.1177/0022466909358916

- This study conducted a pre-and-post group design to investigate the impact of student-directed transition planning instruction, Whose Future Is It Anyway (WFA), with a computer-based reading support program (Rocket Reader) on the self-determination, self-efficacy and outcome expectancy, and transition planning knowledge of students with disabilities.
- Participants were 168 junior high and middle school students received special education services, who were identified as having reading difficulties by their teachers and through standardized reading test scores used in each school district.
- Participants were randomly assigned into a experimental group (n=86) and a control group (n=82). Both groups received the WFA, but only the experimental group received the Technology-based reading supports (i.e., Rocket Reader).

- The WFA is a student-directed transition planning process emphasizing students' preferences, needs, and interests pertaining to their transition from secondary education to adult life.
- Rocket Reader is a computer software program designed for students with disabilities that affect reading, which enabled students to access and utilize electronic materials in audio formats. Students in the experimental group could access the content delivered in the WFA curriculum independently or with teacher's supports.
- MANCOVA and ANOVA were used to analyze the data of this study.
- Results indicated all students significantly improved on their self-efficacy and outcome expectancy after participating in the WFA process.
- In addition, even though the impact of the Rocket Reader intervention was not significant, result showed students who received instruction with the process utilizing the Rocket Reader benefited more than their peers who did not, particularly in self-determination, self-regulation, and transition planning knowledge.

What else are educators doing now?

Chiang, H., Ni, X., & Lee, Y. (2017). Life skills training for middle and high school students with autism. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders, 47*, 1113-1121. doi:10.1007/s10803-017-3028-1

- The purpose of this study was to investigate the extent to which life skills training was offered to middle and high school students with autism.
- A secondary analysis of the National Longitudinal Training Study-2 (NLTS-2) data were used.
- A total of 8884 students with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) were included in this study.
- Results indicated: (a) the majority of the middle and high school students with ASD (77.4%) had been reported to receive life skills training; (b) Receipt of life skills training varied across students' characteristics (e.g., female group received more life skills trainings than male group); (c) the most common life skills training setting was special education classroom; and (d) the levels and frequencies of life skills in students with ASD changed as they grew older (e.g., life skills training was more likely to be offered to older students than younger students).

Martin, J. E., Marshall, L. H., & Sale, P. (2004). A 3-year study of middle, junior high, and high school IEP meetings. *Exceptional Children, 70*, 285-297.

- The purpose of this study was to determine if perceptions of IEP meetings differ by IEP team members' role, and if their perceptions changed when different team members, including the student attended the meetings.
- Using longitudinal survey, researchers tended to examine the IEP team members' role and IEP teams' perceptions changes.
- Results indicated that (a) partial fulfillment of their requirement can be seen cause 70% of the students in this study attended their IEP meetings. (b) meaningful student participation at their IEP meetings appears lacking. (c) Students knew the reasons for the meetings, knew what to do at the meetings, talked at the meetings, felt comfortable saying what they thought, talked about strengths and needs, understood what was said, and felt good about the meeting less than any other IEP meeting participants. (d) Special Education teacher reported talking more than all team members. Reported higher scores on all items and significantly higher scores on seven survey items. Reported significantly higher results in talking about student strengths, needs, and interests. Higher survey scores in knowing what to do at the meetings, talking at the meetings, helping to make decision, and knowing what to do next.

Lee, Y., Wehmeyer, M. L., Palmer, S. B., Williams-Diehm, K., Davies, D. K., & Stock, S. E. (2012). Examining individual and instruction-related predictors of the self-determination of students with disabilities: Multiple regression analyses. *Remedial and Special Education*, *33*, 150–161. doi:10.1177/0741932510392053

- The purpose of this study was to: (a) examine the contribution of individual and instructional factors to the self-determination of middle and junior high school students with disabilities; (b) examine the contribution of these same factors to transition knowledge and skills for this group.
- Factors of this study included (a) intraindividual (i.e., age, gender, and IQ group), (b) dispositional (i.e., self-efficacy and outcome expectancy for transition planning), (c) experiential and instructional (i.e., student-directed transition planning instruction, (d) computer-based reading support program), and (e) knowledge (i.e., understanding transition planning).
- Participants included 168 middle and junior high school students receiving special education services and identified by special educators as needing supports for reading.
- All participants in this study received instruction using a student self-regulated transition planning process titled Whose Future Is It Anyway (WFA). These participants were randomly assigned to two groups. One group (n=46) received instruction on the curriculum using a digital e-reader form delivered (i.e., Rocket Reader). The other group (n=82) received instruction using the hard copy versions of the curriculum.
- Data were collected through measuring the factors with the Arc's Self-Determination Scale and the student version of the AIR Self-Determination Scale.

- Data were analyzed by multiple regression analyses to investigate which variables best predicted students' self-determination. All analyses utilized the SPSS regression program.
- Results indicated that self-efficacy and outcome expectancy (AIR-S) were the best predictors of students' self-determination. Self-efficacy was the only predictor variable that significantly predicted high self-determination scores on both measures of self-determination.
- These findings pointed out that, by promoting student involvement educators can enhance self-determination, and by promoting self-determination educators can promote student involvement in their planning. Moreover, student self-determination contributes to a student's knowledge and skills about transition planning, which are critical to successful student involvement.
- The study concluded that a student's self-determination is best predicted by factors that can be affected by educators (i.e., student knowledge about transition, instruction, and self-efficacy and outcome expectations).
- To promote student self-determination, this study suggested implementing instruction to promote student involvement that address student self-efficacy.

Luft, P., & Huff, K. (2011). How prepared are transition-age deaf and hard of hearing students for adult living? Results of the transition competence battery. *American Annals of Deaf.* *155*. 569-579. doi:10.1353/aad.2011.0000

- The purpose of this study was to examine the transition strengths and needs of 53 middle and high school deaf and hard of hearing (DHH) students attending public schools by using a transition tool- Transition Competence Battery (TCB).
- Participants were 53 middle and high school students and their parents at Midwestern of the United States.
- Data of this study were collected through nationally represented survey data and analyzed using descriptive statistics.
- Results found that students who had substantial transition competence deficits. In addition, of the total of 6 transition competence battery subtests (i.e., job-seeking skills, work adjustment skills, job-related social and interpersonal skills, money management skills, health and home skills, and community awareness skills) none of the participants reached the recommended competence levels on more than 4 of the 6 subtests.
- Study suggested to utilize age-appropriate and results-oriented transition assessments to evaluate student outcomes.

Weidenthal, C., & Kochhar-Bryant, C. (2007). An investigation of transition practices for middle school youth. *Career Development for Exceptional Individuals, 30*, 147-157.

- The authors implemented a survey and a structured open-ended interview to: (a) understand the importance of local implementation policies and practices for young adolescents, and to (b) define special educators' practices associated with implementing transition services for students at ages 14 and 15 based on the requirement of IDEA 1997, specifically for students with learning disability (LD).

- Purposive sampling procedures were used to survey special education teachers who instructed 14- and 15-year-old students with learning disabilities, which included 20 ninth-grade resource room teachers, 20 middle school resource room teachers, and 17 middle school department chairs.

- The survey was adapted from the National Transition Survey (NTS) and the Early Adolescence Survey for Transition (EAST) was developed. The survey contained three components: Implementation of transition service needs, facilitated implementation, and possible barriers of implementation. Participants were asked to use Likert scale to rate each of the three components.

- The interview included 3 middle school special educators, who were selected through a stratified purposive sampling strategy for interviews. The interview questions were categorized by teachers' experiences, opinions, feelings, knowledge, sensory, and influence of teaching experience.

- Results indicated three most effective strategies for ensuring student participation at IEP meetings: (a) Inform the students in advance of their role during the meeting, (b) discuss the students' goals for their futures, and (c) promote self-determination skills throughout the curriculum.

- In addition, results identified three strategies to determining a student's transition needs and strengths and for establishing postsecondary goals: (a) Using interest inventories, (b) obtaining informal assessments, and (c) obtaining suggestions from the students and family.

- The NLTS2 revealed that eighth-grade special educators lacked information and knowledge about how to address transition planning for 14-years-old students with learning disabilities. The researchers found that 50% of students ages 14 and 15 received instruction in transition planning, compared to 76% of 17-and 18- year-olds.

- The study concluded that although middle school youth need to begin to think ahead about postschool outcomes, their focus should be on developing ways (e.g., self-determination skills) to ensure success in their current coursework and documenting transition planning efforts throughout middle and high school.

Benitez, D. T., Morningstar, M. E., Frey, B. B. (2009). A multistate survey of special education teachers' perceptions of their transition competencies. *Career Development for Exceptional Individuals, 32(*1),6-16. doi:10.1177/0885728808323945

- The purpose of this research was to examine a national sample of 577 middle and high school special education teachers' perceptions of their own transition competencies pertaining to levels of preparedness and satisfaction with training in transition, and the extent to which they deliver transition services to students.

- The Secondary Teachers Transition Survey (STTS) was developed for the survey, which consisted of two sections: (a) demographic information and (b) ratings of the levels of preparation, satisfaction, and frequency of engagement in transition service and delivery competencies.

- Participants were 557 middle and high school special education teachers from 31 states of the United States.
- ANOVAs was used for the data analysis.
- Results indicated teachers reported completing an average of one transition course at the undergraduate or graduate level. Almost one half of the total respondents had no transition courses at all.
- Also, teachers' background experience was positively and significantly correlated to level of preparedness. Teachers who had higher background experience composite scores across years of teaching, number of transition courses, and transition staff development hours rated their level of transition preparedness higher.
- Results identified that although teachers reported being only somewhat prepared in the field of transition and reported unsatisfied with transition training, they are still required to engage in delivering transition services, which potentially could mean that low-quality transition services are being provided.

Wagner, M., & Davis, M. (2006). How are we preparing students with emotional disturbances for the transition to young adulthood? Findings from the National Longitudinal Transition Study-2. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders, 14*(2), 86-98.

- The purpose of this study was to: (a) provide a national picture of the extent to which the five dimensions of best practices (i.e., to be person-centered, encompass all relevant transition domains, involve community-based experiences, involve community-based resources, and provide for service coordination) characterize the secondary school programs and transition planning processes of students with emotional disturbance (ED); (b) to describe findings for students with ED and compares them with findings for

students who receive special education services in all other disability categories, drawing on data from the National Longitudinal Transition Study–2 (NLTS2).
- Participants were ranged from ages 13 years through 16 years, who received special education services in seventh grade or above in the 2000–2001 school year.
- Results indicated students with ED exposure to best practices has improved since the 1980s, but still were not being widely implemented.

Williams-Diehm, K., Palmer, S., Lee, Y., & Schroer, H. (2010). Goal content analysis for middle and high school students with disabilities. *Career Development for Exceptional Individuals, 33*, **132-142.**

- The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between the goals identified within an evaluation for self-determination by 332 middle and high school teachers and students.
- Fifty percent (n = 166) of the student participants were middle school or junior high school students, and 50% (n = 166) were high school students. All student received special education services at their respective schools.
- Results indicated students with reported low ability levels at both the middle school and high school levels set a greater percentage of nonacademic goals compared with students with normal ability levels. Middle school students with lower ability levels specifically reported a greater percentage of long-term academic goals compared with all other groups.

What might educators do?

Battle, D. A., Dickens-Wright, L. L., & Murphy, S. C. (1989). How to empower adolescents: Guidelines for effective self-advocacy. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, *30(3),* **28-33.**

- The purpose of this article was to provide guidelines for creating collaborative partnerships among teachers, parents, and student to provide lifelong support for middle school students with learning disabilities and other learning difficulties.
- The Eight Guidelines to Adolescent Self-Advocacy include (a) place students at the center of communications, (b) set up a portfolio system, (c) practice a lot, (d) present portfolios to parents, (e) follow up on conference results, (f) update parents and students on progress, (g) encourage parents to volunteer, and (h) involve parents and students in planning.
- The authors suggest these eight guidelines may help students to plan for their transition to future education and work as adults.

Cuenca-Carlino, Y., Mustian, A. L., Allen, R. D., & Gilbert, J. (2016). I have a voice and can speak up for myself through writing! *Intervention in School and Clinic*, *51*, 220–228. doi:10.1177/1053451215589180

- The purpose of this article was to (a) identify the importance of supporting writing for students with emotional/behavioral disabilities (EBD) to increase their self-determination, and (b) to demonstrate how to use the Self-Regulated Strategy Development Model (SRSD) of writing to teach middle and high school students with emotional/behavioral disabilities (EBD) to use persuasive writing as a tool to advocate for their wants and needs.
- The article argued that when students learn to write in a structured and organized way, they have more time to reflect on what they need, and what they want to say or believe in.
- SRSD model involves teaching the writing process in six stages by using mnemonics to help students remember the writing genre to be learned. The SRSD stages of instruction include: (a) develop background knowledge, (b) discuss it, (c) develop background knowledge, (d) memorize it, (e) support, and (f) independent practice.
- In addition, the article suggested that students can use their IEPs and included transition plans as a basis for choosing for themselves, with support from their teachers, which areas they feel it necessary to self-advocate and to whom it makes sense to address their points of view.
- This article provided a guideline for educators to follow and to support their students with ED who are in middle and high school age.

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