

Needs of the Field

When stakeholders from an array of roles were asked “What is state of current practice around Secondary Transition?” they replied:

1. Vision for Cradle to College and Career

- All youth are involved in relevant and rigorous preparation activities that focus on 21st Century skills
- All youth have their unique needs met and have the opportunity to be productive citizens, have choice about their outcomes, and have full access to and are involved in the community
- All youth are engaged in meaningful school experiences that result in successful school and post school outcomes
- All youth are working and developing to their greatest potential within an integrated, seamless lifelong system of services
- Learning is personalized for all youth
- The system involves businesses/ Vocational Rehabilitation as part of the team/workforce with CCS providing training/education programs based on needs in the community and youth
- All children have the right to leave preK-12 system with a diploma/ credential meaningful to the individual.
- Professional development/training, including parents, is provided to keep people knowledgeable
- Strong interagency agreements/ and collaboration with informal support networks are present.
- New funding streams, with braided funding, within communities are available
- Student led/directed IEP meetings

2. Current practice

- There are pockets of excellence and passion worthy of replication
- There is a lack of a holistic approach to transition
- Disjointed practices with mixed success are commonplace
- Availability of services and resources are localized
- There is an emphasis on compliance rather than program improvement
- There is a lack of stakeholder involvement in the development and delivery of professional development
- Secondary transition focuses on forms and compliance
- There is a disconnect between the school and the community
- Low levels of outreach by different agencies regarding differing abilities; services are label-oriented
- There is often low relevance between the youth’s IEP (especially accommodations) and post school needs

- There is little time in the school schedule for collaboration around transition
- Often transition focuses on employment; with a lack of focus on other areas of transition
- IHE and Pre-K -12 are two different systems with different eligibility, cost, and focus. Not all students will be able to attend and a number of youth do not want to attend.
- The ability to meet and serve the needs of those with differing disabilities and abilities is not widespread
- Family engagement is critical but does not always occur

3. Identification of gaps in the field

- Information
 - Lack of knowledge of employer expectations
 - Pre-service education needs to adequately address transition
 - How to meet and serve needs of those with differing disabilities and abilities
 - How to raise minimal compliance to best practice for all youth
 - Lack of knowledge about students with mental health needs
 - Lack of common shared language across service providers
 - Coaching and mentoring are needed on data based practices
 - Increased understanding between education, business, community, vocational rehabilitation and others service providers' processes
 - Knowledge of what are the readiness skills
 - Regional coordination across agencies to help catch youth who might otherwise fall through gaps
 - Resurfacing of resources that already exist
 - Lack of knowledge of employer expectations
- Skills
 - Availability and use of technology
 - Teaching and practicing self-advocacy skills
 - Training for all stakeholders; need to find time and opportunities
 - How to address all areas of transition
 - Assessments that assist w/ planning
 - Strategies to support social skill development
 - Tools to assess students with significant and multiple disabilities and the professionals to conduct and interpret the assessments as well as universal screening
 - Ability to develop natural supports, intentionally developed-skill building
 - Common identifiers/confidentiality
 - Skills that business wants and skills that are required

4. What processes need to be in place to support acquisition of knowledge and skills?

- Encourage and support networks between and among programs
- Engage youth in community activities (Scouts, Big Brothers and Sisters, etc.)
- Support access to resources for all youth
- Be inclusive in our training and our materials
- Bring decision makers to the table early
- Deliver information across systems in accessible ways
- Attend to the needs of the community based on size, demographics, geographic location, access to services, etc.
- Encourage communities of practice among agencies; federal, state, local levels
- Support self-advocacy and self-determination; start early and be intentional
- Work to infuse transition into the curriculum at both the pre-service and in-service levels
- Encourage flexible support systems
- Focus on national core standards and personalized goals (CCSSO & National Governors' Association)
- Family involvement and empowerment
- Personal planning for all youth