

# Blueprints for Success:

## Prioritizing the Transition Plan and Understanding Community Supports

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# What we will be covering:

- The “why” of transition planning
- The elements of strong and student-driven transition planning
- Examples of less-formal transition assessments and activities
- How to make transition planning the focus of the IEP through Person-Centered Planning
- Case studies / examples
- Leveraging community supports to increase success

**Consider the following question, and discuss with the person(s) next to you:**

**What are the three most important things you would like to see your students accomplish / achieve as adults?**

***In other words:***

*Let's say you run into one of your former students in 15 years.*

*What would you hope to hear them share about their life?*

# “5 Why” Activity

1. Under “**primary statement,**” write down your response to “*What are the three most important things you would like to see your students accomplish / achieve as adults?*”

1. In each of the following 5 boxes, answer the question “Why?” to the previous statement that was made. (Simple sentences phrases are fine)

## Primary Statement

Pizza is superior to wings

## Why?

It tastes better

## Why?

They have more options for a flavor profile and more diverse options

## Why?

They can have a wide range of toppings / sauces / cheeses / dough types

## Why?

Because the dough itself is like a canvas, and also probably because most cultural cuisine has some general combination of dough, sauce, veggies, meat

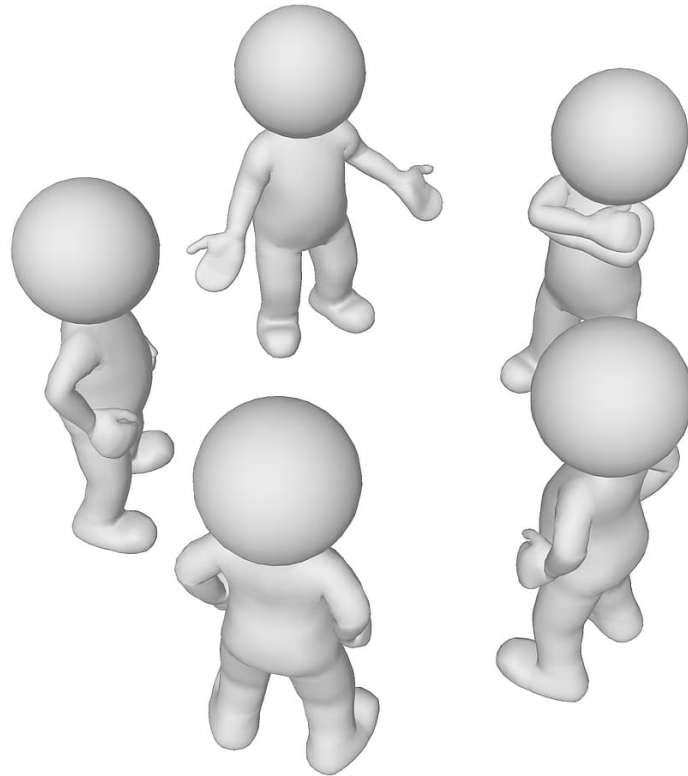
## Why?

Throughout history, cultures have looked for cost-effective, nutritionally dense foods that are easy to make in a variety of ways

## Concluding Statement

Pizza is superior to wings because it tastes better, as a result of diverse options for toppings and ingredients. It is also cost effective, and is a food that transcends most cultures. As a result, there is a great chance that more people will be satisfied with pizza as opposed to wings.

# “5 Why” Activity Share-out



# What does IDEA say regarding transition?

- “A *coordinated* set of *activities*”
- “A results-oriented *process*”
- “*Student needs, preferences, interests*”
- “*Instruction, related services, community experiences, employment* and other *adult living* objectives”

# Transition Planning = Mission Statements Put to Practice

*“The mission of the Clarence Central School District is to produce **independent, lifelong learners** who are **responsible, contributing members of a diverse society.**”*

- Mission statements define the most important goals of the educational system
- The goals outlined in most mission statements are directly focused on what we hope for our students *after* high school (aka “transition”)
- The transition plan is the part of the IEP that most directly correlates with the goals of public education

**Therefore, the transition plan is the most relevant part of the IEP for a secondary student**

# What should be considered? What should be prioritized?

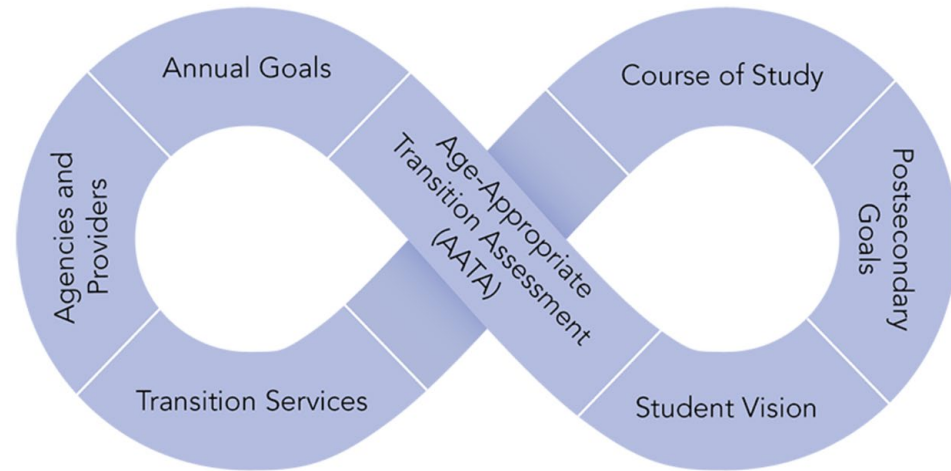
**Student Vision / Voice**

**Age-Appropriate Transition  
Assessments**

**Transition Services / Activities**

**Postsecondary Goals**

**Agencies and Providers**



Graphic from OCALI

<https://www.ocali.org/project/transition-planning-and-the-iep/page/elements-in-iep-transition-planning>



# Student Voice

## Transition Services / Activities

### Goals

- **Relationships** are the key
- **Social-Emotional skills** are often the largest indicators of success in adulthood
  - showing up on time, kindness, ability to complete required tasks, ability to accept support, etc.
- Always **assume competence**, focus on **strengths**, and find activities that develop **self-efficacy**
- K-12 school is a clearly defined period of time, but a person's life is not
  - Therefore, assume that **growth and progress are possible**
- **Relevant, frequent, and diverse transition assessments and activities** allow for more accurate and appropriate transition planning and goal setting
  - These provide meaningful data, and **meaningful data** helps to set **meaningful and appropriate goals**
- Goals should be **strengths-focused**, rather than deficit focused

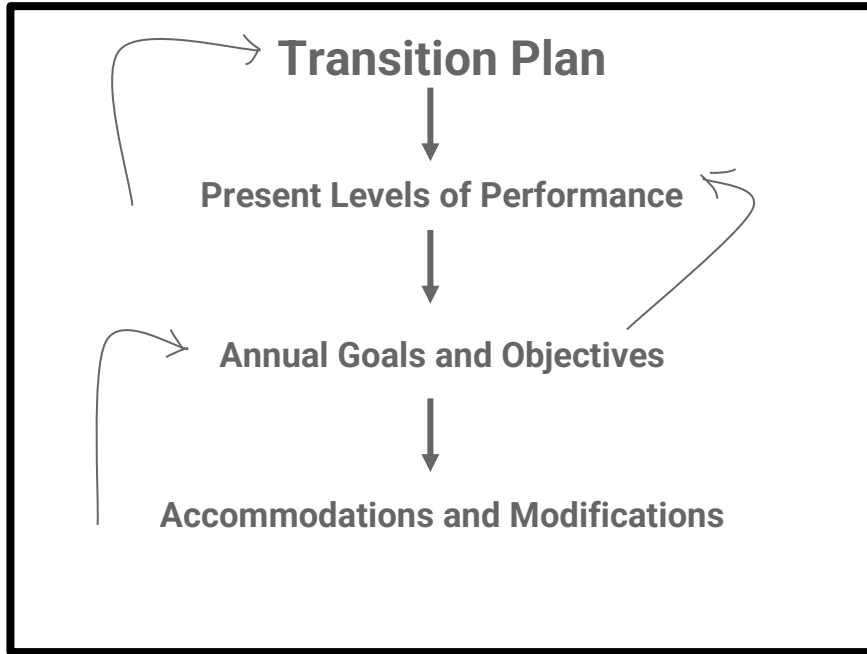
# An Example of Gold Standard for Transition Planning



## Fairfax County Schools (Virginia)

- “Transition” is the first section of all high school IEPs
- Dedicated “Employment and Transition Representatives” (ETRs) for each high school

# IEP Writing with Transition as the Focus



The transition plan is the “why” of educational programming

- Each section of the IEP should be able to be clearly connect back to what is written in the transition plan

In other words, if you are reading the annual goals/objectives, you should be able to draw a direct line to something in the PLOPs, and connect that back to the transition plan

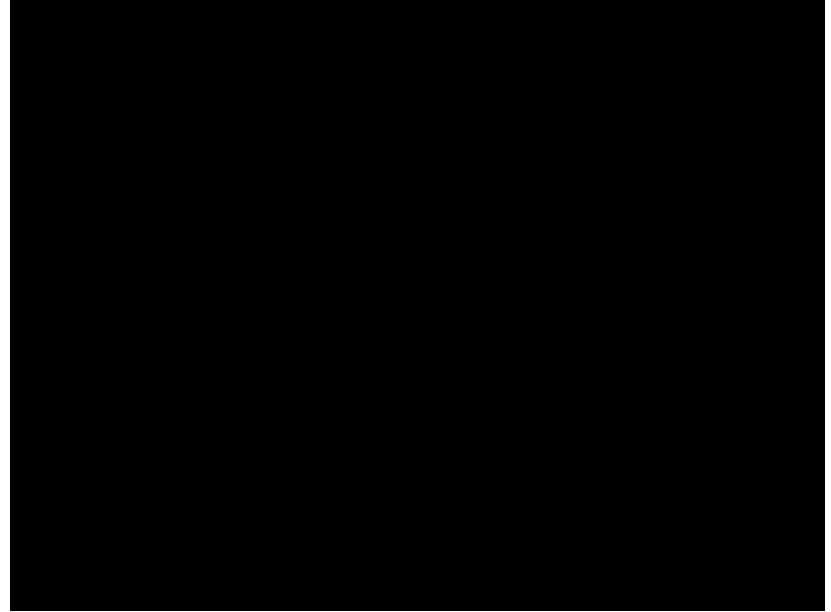
# Informal Transition Assessments

- [Developing Personal Priorities Survey](#)
- [General Self-Efficacy Scale](#)
- [Employability Skills Survey](#)
- [Self-Awareness Survey](#)  
(Basic)
- [Self-Motivation Questionnaire](#)
- [Self-Care Assessment](#)
- [Early Work Experiences Survey](#)
- [Managing Your Money Survey](#)
- [UCanGo2 Career Interest Survey](#)
- [What Do You Know About Yourself and Your Disability Survey?](#)
- [Planning for the Community Survey](#)
- [Community Knowledge Survey](#)
- [Social Skills / Social Awareness Questionnaire](#)

# Person-Centered Planning Meetings

- **PCP meetings (ideally, held quarterly) are ways to:**
  - hold all parties accountable for transition plan
  - provide relevant data and language/structure to implement in future annual IEP / transition plan
- **Focused on elevating student engagement and voice, especially with regard to planning**
- **Strengths focused, solution-driven conversations**
- **The objective is to highlight areas of pride and growth for student, and identify 1-2 tangible action steps in an area that the student is motivated to work toward accomplishing**
  - Should also include what supports are needed, and responsible parties
    - [PCP Meeting Log / Notes](#)
    - [PCP Meeting Expectations](#)
    - [PCP Example](#)

# THE IMPACT OF RELATIONSHIPS WITH TRANSITION PLANS



# Case Study 1

## James (9th grade, 15:1:1 program, IQ 105)

- James has Autism, which impacts his ability sometimes to navigate social situations, and sometimes struggles with big transitions / changes
- James has expressed a desire to live independently (or with roommates) by his mid-20s
- He currently works at Wegmans (stock and carts), and says that he enjoys it there and would like to work there as an adult, but maybe with more responsibilities
- James does not really enjoy school and has not expressed interest in going to college
- James has expressed fear of driving and is not sure if he wants to get a driver's license
- He does not currently have a personal bank account
- He has a good social network of a few close friends from school, who like to go bowling, and go out to eat, but it is often supervised by their parents

### **SOME THINGS TO CONSIDER:**

Where would be appropriate areas for James to live based on his goals, abilities and needs, and social interests?

What is James' experience with public transportation?

Does James currently have independent living responsibilities at home?

What exposure / training has James had with other possible responsibilities at Wegmans?

# Case Study 2

## Ryan (11th grade, 8:1:1 behavioral program, LD in math, 108 IQ)

- Ryan has ADHD, ODD, and bi-polar disorder
  - Does take medication
  - Not currently receiving mental health treatment/therapy
- Has no work experience, but is interested in cars and cooking
- Ryan has expressed interest in going to college, but has also frequently said he hates school.
- Ryan has been hospitalized for mental health related needs in the past.
- Ryan is currently taking driver's education
- Ryan does attend a church group 1x per week, but said he doesn't have any friends he sees outside of school/group
- Ryan said he would like to live independently someday, but is okay living with mom for a while

### Some questions to consider:

What would be 3-4 appropriate transition activities to focus on for this year?

What community agencies / resources would be appropriate for Ryan to connect with?

What other information would be needed to support Ryan in transition planning?

What could be done to increase Ryan's employability and skills?



# Leveraging Community Partnerships

Schools are frequently asked to be anything and everything for students and families. However, utilizing and developing creative community partnerships can be a crucial element of strong transition planning:

- Mental health counselors and agencies
- Advocacy organizations (such as Parent Network WNY, ARC WNY, GLYS, etc.)
- Chambers of Commerce
- Nature Centers
- Youth Bureaus
- Community Centers
- Coffee Shops / Restaurants
- Grocery Stores
- Public libraries
- Local restaurants
- Parks and recreation departments
- Community Health Centers (like CHCB)
- NFTA

# Local Community Resources

## Advocacy Organizations and Care Coordination

- [Parent Network WNY](#)
- [Mental Health Advocates WNY](#)
- [GLYS WNY](#)
- [ARC of Erie Co.](#)
- [Person-Centered Services](#)
- [ComPeer](#)

## Mental Health

- [Horizon Health Services](#)
- [Nicole Hassler](#)
- [Patty McAllister](#)
- [Lana Orange](#)

## General Health

- [Community Health Center Buffalo](#)

## Recreation / Enrichment

- [Arts Access Pass](#)
- [Theatre of Youth](#)
- [Reinstein Woods](#)
- [Knox Farm](#)
- [Buffalo Parks](#)
- [Clarence Rail Trails](#)
- [Buffalo / Erie Library System](#)

## Basic Needs / Transportation

- [Wheels for Workers](#)
- [FeedMoreWNY](#)
- [NFTA](#)
- [Double Up Food Bucks](#)

# Takeaways:

- 1) The Transition Plan *is* the purpose of the IEP, and of education
- 2) The process can be made more student-focused, relevant, and data-driven through:
  - a) Diverse (even if informal) transition assessments
  - b) Quarterly Person-Centered Planning meetings
  - c) Intentionally prioritizing the Transition Plan during IEP meetings
- 3) Community partnerships and knowledge of community resources can make transition planning both meaningful and extend beyond the school

# QUESTIONS?

