

Transition: Facing the challenges  
of achieving independence  
after completing a secondary  
education

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# Barriers to Graduation

- Failure to achieve a diploma.
- Unprepared for continuing education, employment, or independence.
- Lack of vocational resources available to students with disabilities to become employable and self empowered.
- Drop out rate disproportionate to students without disabilities.

# Costs associated with non completion of a secondary education

- Unemployment
- Underemployment
- Higher rates of incarceration
- Possible loss of monetary benefits
- Reliance on social service programs for food, clothing shelter, and health care.
- Costs will extend to the community when reliance for monetary support falls on the county tax base.

# An introduction to “Transition” services as defined as by the state education system

- Dropout prevention was a critical issue for State Education Agencies
- To address dropout prevention effectively, schools and states realize the need to assess the magnitude of the problem
- The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA 2004) enacted to address a consistent evaluation of dropout prevention.

# IDEA (2004) evaluation methods

- Now incumbent on states to track percentage of Students with Disabilities (SWD) who drop out compared to nondisabled peers who drop out.
- Under the law, states must identify improved dropout rate targets and oversee performance of each local educational agency (LEA) towards meeting this goal.
- The U.S. Office of Special Education Programs use data to evaluate state's performance in the area of dropout rates.

# Challenges facing IDEA (2004) methodology

- Definition of “dropping out” may vary from state to state
- Some special education students are excluded from dropout rate calculations
- Greatest challenge is the capacity of the state to use the data collected for alternate program planning for educational improvement.

# Need for Transition resources for SWD for career development

- Transition services are defined as “a coordinated set of activities” and implies collaboration between schools and diverse agencies
- Transition is a “results oriented process” and should result in improved life skills such as working, employment, post secondary education, community living and participation, and recreation and leisure activities.

# Effective Transition Planning should include:

- Students should develop self determination
- Students self evaluation is emphasized
- Post-school outcomes or goals should be consistent with the self evaluations
- Students should select educational experiences to fit the desired transition outcomes.



# Delivery of Transition Services

- Program should be based on student's interests, preferences, or skills while looking to the future
- Inclusion in general school programs is emphasized
- Community based programs are emphasized as learning environments
- Vocational linkages should be promoted as needed

# Targeted goals of the Transition program – See handout

- Needs should be assessed at age 14 to 16
- Students will develop their own goals
- Students will attain knowledge of their own abilities and interests
- Students will be able to realize their goals through information and referral, independent living skills, peer counseling, vocational and post secondary education opportunities.