

**An Examination of Transition Planning Documents Using  
Kohler's Model for Successful Transition Planning with  
Classified Special Education Students**

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of the requirements for the degree of**

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# DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS REGARDING TRANSITION

## Table of Contents

### Chapter I: Purpose of this Study

Introduction

Problem Statement

Research Questions

Significance of the Study

Pertinent Terminology

Limitations

### Chapter II: Literature Review

Background on Special Education Law

Transitional Planning Process in New York State

Review of Related Literature

### Chapter III: Methodology

### Chapter IV:

### Chapter V:

### References:

### Appendix:

A: IDEA Regulations

B: Transition Planning Level 1 Assessments

C: Public Law 89-313

## **DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS REGARDING TRANSITION**

**D: Public Law 94-142**

**E: Public Law 107-110**

**F: Public Law 108-446**

**G: Glossary**

**H: Focus Group Questions**

## **Chapter 1**

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to determine if the Kohler model is being utilized to effectively implement and comply with New York State Standards for Transition Planning requirements. The researcher will explore if the schools Transition Planning process includes coherence and compliance with the Kohler model. In addition the researcher will identifying evidence where disconnects in the process may have occurred. This study will involve research and review of archival Transition Planning documents currently utilized in special education programs. The researcher will use these archival documents to identify patterns, themes and discrepancies of the Kohler model as a framework for determining successful Transition Planning.

### **Introduction**

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 1990) is a federal Special Education legislation that provides the provision of free and appropriate public education services to students with disabilities. The Individuals with Disabilities Act, along with New York state laws and regulations, has required school districts to

## DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS REGARDING TRANSITION

provide Transition Planning and services to New York State's approximately 140,000 secondary students with disabilities who are between the ages of 15 and 21. In 2004, the phrase *further education* and the emphasis on *effective transition services* was added.

Transition services means a coordinated set of activities for a child with a disability that (1) is designed to be results oriented, in terms of improving the academic and functional achievement of the individual and facilitating the child's movement from school to post-school activities; (2) is based on the child's needs; and (3) includes the development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives (Appendix A, IDEA, 2004).

In New York State, transition services are required to be part of a student's Individualized Education Plan (I.E.P.) that goes into effect at age 12 years as a career assessment known as a Level One Assessment (Appendix B).

### **Problem Statement**

Commonly faced issues for students nearing graduation include pursuing vocational training or academic education, getting a job, and

## DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS REGARDING TRANSITION

living independently. In the case with students with disabilities, the choices may be more complex and require a great deal of planning. Special Education students are graduating high school with documentation on the completion of Transition Planning, however student outcomes have not been effectively evaluated. Stakeholders' perceptions of the evaluation of student outcomes often fail to meet the goals of written post secondary Transition Planning in terms of successfully transitioning students into society. Is Transition Planning with classified special education students being implemented in accordance with the Kohler model for successful Transition Planning?

### **Research Questions**

The research questions to be addressed by this study are listed below:

- Is the Transition Planning process being implemented as directed in accordance with federal mandates of IDEA?
- Is the facility based implementation of Transition Planning as in developing post graduate options with special needs secondary students in accordance with Kohler's model for successful Transition Planning?

## DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS REGARDING TRANSITION

- How and to what extent is the Transition Planning being implemented as directed by the students' Individual Education Plan?

### **Significance of the Study**

The significance of the following collaborative study is to explore how the system put forth by IDEA regarding Transition Planning services functions as an effective cohesive unit to promote postgraduate employment.

This parallel study will be an analysis of the Transition Planning process at two different high school Special Class academic programs in Suffolk County, New York. Throughout this study the researchers will display mutual chapters 1, 2 and 3 which will reflect their mutual interest in the successful delivery of Transition Planning for special needs students. In Chapter 4, the researchers will be presenting their individual collective data and results from their particular school of study.

### **Pertinent Terminology**

The following terms are provided to ensure uniformity and comprehension of the language used throughout the study. The researchers developed all definitions not accompanied by a citation.

## DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS REGARDING TRANSITION

- Transition Planning- The formalized way to assure that students with disabilities are prepared while still in high school for post- school learning, independent living and employment success.
- Individualized Education Plan (IEP)- An educational team generated document in effect for the school year that the student turns 5 and is updated annually.
- Supported Employment- Support services for persons with substantial disabilities designed to assist integration in competitive employment.
- Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (VESID)- Service providers role is to assist the student with disabilities to obtain an employment outcome in the most integrated employment setting consistent with the individual's unique employment factors including: strengths, resources, priorities, abilities, capabilities, career interests and informed choice.  
([www.vesid.nysed.gov](http://www.vesid.nysed.gov))
- Regents & Local Diplomas\*\* - In order for a student to obtain a local diploma, he/she must earn 22 credits and



## DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS REGARDING TRANSITION

pass all Regents or RCT state exams. Credits are earned in each class by passing with a minimal grade of 65 (for Regents credit) and a 55 (for Local credit). This diploma will enable a student to go to any 2 or 4 year college that will accept him.

- IEP Diploma\*\* - This Diploma is not based on credits. Instead, it is earned by achieving the goals that the teacher, student, and family have put together in the student's Individualized Plan. These goals are based on a student's individual needs such as improving reading skills and/or obtaining job skills. This Diploma is not accepted at any 4 year colleges and only a few 2 year colleges. A student may receive an IEP Diploma after 4 years of high school or the student may elect to stay until he/she reaches the age of 21. Should the student obtain an IEP Diploma prior to age 21, the student may return to school to work toward a Regents or Local diploma.

*\*\* Positive and Negative Factors Regarding of New York State High School Diploma Options can be found in Appendix H.*

## DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS REGARDING TRANSITION

- Disabilities\*- New York State recognizes the following specific disabilities as eligible for Transition Services:

Autism & Asperser's Syndrome  
Deaf-Blindness  
Deafness  
Emotional Disturbance  
Hearing Impairment  
Learning Disabilities  
Mental Retardation  
Multiple Disabilities  
Orthopedic Impairment  
Other Health Impairment  
Speech or Language Impairment  
Traumatic Brain Injury  
Visual Impairments including Blindness

\*Definitions of the preceding terms can be found in Appendix G.  
*(Excerpts from section 200.1 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education)*

### **Limitations**

Each researcher will be limited to the Special Class population of a single specific school district. For purposes of this study, the subjects will be limited to individuals who are classified as Emotionally Disturbed, Learning Disabled or Other Health Impaired.

**Chapter 2****LITERATURE REVIEW****BACKGROUND ON SPECIAL EDUCATION LAW**

Under the U.S. Constitution, education is not a fundamental right of the citizens of the United States. The 10<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution provides that “powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States.” As a result, each state bears the responsibility to provide appropriate education for students.

In 1954, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in the case of *Brown v. Board of Education* that separate educational facilities for racial minority children were “inherently unequal.” As a result of this ruling, states could not limit access to particular schools based on race. Parents of children with disabilities filed lawsuits using the identical argument.

The first federal law addressing children with disabilities was enacted in 1965 as Public Law 89-313 (Appendix C) which established grant programs for state –run schools and institutions for children

## DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS REGARDING TRANSITION

with disabilities.

Finally, in 1975 Public Law 94-142 (Appendix D) required that schools provide access to a free and appropriate public education that is provided in the least restrictive environment. In 1990, the first public law that referred to IDEA mandated transition services for all students with disabilities. In addition, autism and traumatic brain injury were added as disability conditions.

In 2001, Public Law 107-110 (Appendix E), more commonly known as the No Child Left Behind Act, was enacted. In 2004, Public Law 108-446 (Appendix F) became known as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act which was an amendment and reauthorization of IDEA.

### **Transition Planning Process in New York State**

#### **Transition Services:**

Transition services are activities that prepare students with disabilities to move from school to post-school life. The activities must be based on the student's needs, preferences and interests, and need to include activities in the following areas:

- Instruction

## DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS REGARDING TRANSITION

- Related Services
- Community Experiences
- Development of Employment Skills
- Acquisition of Daily Living Skills

Federal IDEA law requires the district Committee on Special Education (CSE) to coordinate Transition Planning and provide transition services through the Individualized Education Plan (IEP). In addition, it is imperative that schools have the active participation of students, families and community agencies in order to make the transition process effective and meaningful for individual students.

Each year the Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (VESID) monitors approximately 116 school districts, and publicly reports on the percentage of youth in the state who are aged 12 and above who have an IEP that includes coordinated, measurable, annual IEP goals and transition services that enable them to meet their post-secondary goals. Results from 2008 indicate that only 46% of youths have IEP transition plans that are designed to help them achieve their post-secondary goals with full compliance with state and federal requirements. While improvement has been made over previous years, the target goal is full 100%

## DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS REGARDING TRANSITION

compliance.

Potsdam Institute for Applied Research (PIAR), located at the State of New York College at Potsdam, has been involved in locating and interviewing a sample of students from each school district one year after their graduation. They found that in their sample of students from the class of 2005, 17% were enrolled in post-secondary schools, 29% were competitively employed and 46% had done both. The New York State Education Department has stated these results are an overestimation of actual post-secondary outcomes for all students with disabilities (Cort, 2008).

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

The transition from high school to future endeavors is a difficult time for many adolescents. It is a time of concern, confusion and excitement as students and their families attempt to coordinate future goals. Options may include college, vocational options with or without family involvement and / or enlisting in military service. In the case of students with special needs, the same issues are present but exacerbated by the limitations of the student. Prior to IDEA legislation, options for these students were severely limited. Since Transition Planning was mandated in IDEA, the implementation of

## DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS REGARDING TRANSITION

the policy has been reviewed. Halpern (1993) evaluated transition outcomes with a quality of life conceptual framework. According to Halpern, the term “quality of life” is not used overtly in federal legislation; however the multifaceted concepts of a variety of life goals for transition outcomes are clearly implied.

From 1989 to 1993, the U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education Programs funded a series of model- demonstration projects to promote self-determination for youth with disabilities (Ward & Kohler, 1996). Self-determination has been identified as a critical component of the transition process for students with disabilities (Halloram, 1993; Wehman, 1993). This project was implemented as a result of numerous reviews which indicated that students with disabilities were graduating with substandard post-graduation outcomes (Chafsey-Rusch, Rusch & O'Reilly, 1991). Other researchers concluded that people with disabilities need increased choice and more control over decisions that impact their lives (Gagne, 1994; Kennedy, 1996). Hasazi, Furney & Destafano (1999), in researching the IDEA mandates, found factors impeding the successful implementation. Although the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) has required each school to provide every

## DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS REGARDING TRANSITION

special needs student a statement of mandated transition services since 1990, the extent to which states have implemented the transition services requirements vary greatly (Williams, 2001).

Concern over compliance of IDEA mandates was reported by Powers et al., (2005) who found in many cases either the Transition Planning practices were not addressed or were inadequate. Career planning and self-determination enhancement were not incorporated in most plans, and the study indicated that students frequently were solely responsible for attempting to meet their transition goals.

Transition components of individualized education plans have been reviewed by Grigal, et al. (1997) and indicate varying levels of compliance and success.

Difficulty in Transition Planning is not limited to programs in the United States. A study of schools in England in which in-depth interviews were conducted in addition to parental questionnaires revealed that many students leave school without any Transition Planning. In fact, for those who did receive Transition Planning, students had little if any involvement in the process. In addition, parental involvement was significantly lacking (Ward, Mallett, et al., 2003).



## DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS REGARDING TRANSITION

In a study that looked at the transition process from high school to post-secondary education for students with learning disabilities, (Janiga & Costenbader, 2002), little satisfaction with transition services was expressed. It was reported that preparation for self-advocacy is the greatest weakness of transition services, although positive feedback was conveyed with schools' provision of updated evaluations for students prior to enrollment in college. When student involvement is incorporated, success in Transition Planning is greatly increased as reported by Powers, et al. (2001). Coaching youths in student-directed planning skills was implemented using peer-based mentorship, parent support and in-service education for school transition staff. Results showed significant increases in student involvement in Transition Planning activities, empowerment, transition awareness and the level of participation in Transition Planning meetings (Powers, et al. 2001).

An alternative method was presented by Nelson (2005) where in order to enhance positive outcomes; a training model using personal futures and person-centered planning were seen as the *"keys to a successful planning"* (p.76). By increasing self-determination, active choice making for students, teachers and other stakeholders in the

## DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS REGARDING TRANSITION

planning process can help define and advocate for an individual with severe disabilities based on the individual's preferences. Popkewitz (2004) questions the standards which students are classified and the environment that dictates where teachers and students are accountable for interpretation and administration.

Devlieger & Trach (1999) evaluated the role mediation plays in student outcomes for persons with disabilities. Relationships between the social networking of family members, schools, employers, as well as friends appear to have an impact on post-secondary employment. Researchers have identified the necessary aspects of transition when the process includes school supervised work experiences and functionally oriented curricula in which specific occupational skills, employability skills, and academic skills are systematically connected for students (Phelps & Hanley-Maxwell, 1997). Utilizing an attitudinal measure of best practices and transition policy compliance McMahan & Baer (2001) found that the strongest predictor of policy compliance, and best practice was the existence of a school-based transition team.

An additional area of concern is perception of secondary special education teacher's competencies of Transition Planning (Knott &

## DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS REGARDING TRANSITION

Asselin, 1999). Their findings report that teachers have significant gaps in knowledge and involvement in Transition Planning and service delivery activities. The need for educators to dedicate time and effort to the success of Transition Planning is a result of many factors. For example, quality of life issues are emphasized as an outcome for adults with disabilities (Gagne, 1994; Kennedy, 1996). Additionally, the effect of attitudes and abilities as it relates to autonomy may correlate to involvement in educational planning and decision making (darn Reusen & Bos, 1994; Wehmeyer & Ward, 1995). It can also be said that students who leave school as self-determined young people should achieve more positive adult outcomes (Wehmeyer & Schwartz, 1997).

When special needs students are transitioning into a workplace environment, Black (1995) reports that typical expectations that non-special needs students comprehend need to be addressed in the school curriculum. An awareness of these often unstated rules and expectations include the following areas: dependability, honesty, employee-supervisor relations, employee-coworker relations, organization and initiative, adaptability, aptitude, and self-esteem.

During the implementation of Transition Planning, each student

## DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS REGARDING TRANSITION

may be influenced by a number of individuals who may be factors in a student's positive experience. From family, teachers, counselors, job coaches and employers each individual brings their own preconceived attitudes and expectations of what constitutes a successful outcome. Wagner, Newman and Cameto (1993) researched the issue of "What makes a difference?" in influences on post-school outcomes of youth with disabilities. A follow-up study also reviewed "changes over time in the secondary school experiences of students with disabilities," and presents a framework suggesting influential factors (Wagner et al., 2004).

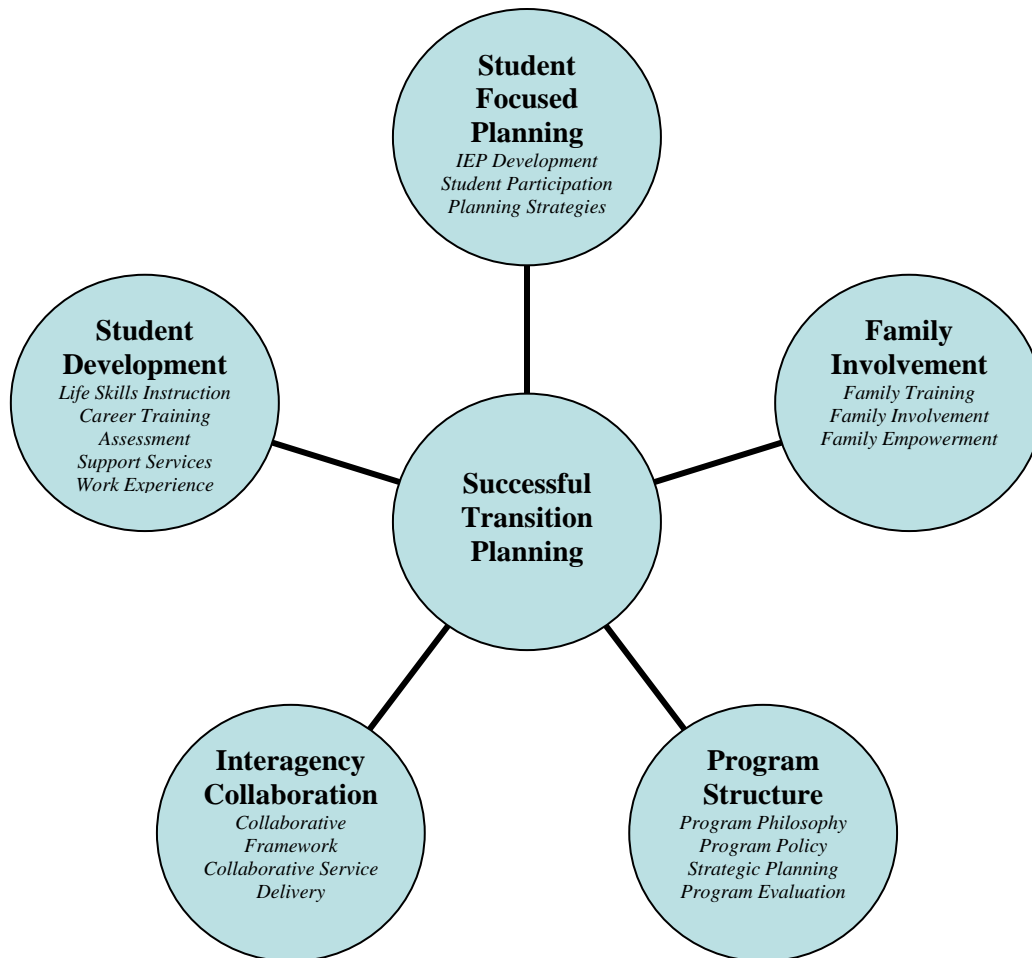
Researchers (Martin; Kohler, 1999) presented a course to be taught at the university level to have educational students comprehend the need of transitioning students from school to adult life. A major component of the curriculum is to stress the need of self-determination. Kohler (1993) identified outcomes of post-secondary education programs serving students with special needs. A conceptual framework was developed and determined the significance of transition outcomes in meeting the needs of students.

Kohler & Field (2003) expresses the need to improve Transition Planning in five areas: student –focused planning, student

## DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS REGARDING TRANSITION

development, integrity collaboration, family involvement, and program structures. Figure 2.1 displays Kohler's conceptual model for the Taxonomy of Transitional Planning. (Kohler, et al.1993)

**Figure 2.1**



Success has also been reported in programs that accentuate five specific areas: student focus planning, student development,

## DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS REGARDING TRANSITION

interagency collaboration, family involvement and program structures (Kohler & Field, 2003).

It has been reported that the best practices in facilitating transition from school to work or post-secondary education for secondary students with disabilities include vocational training, parent involvement, interagency collaboration, service delivery, social skills training, paid work experience, and individual Transition Planning (Kohler, 1993).

Popkewitz has stated the need for constant questioning to order, classify and divide what is seen and what is felt as meaningful academic participation (2007).

As seen in Popkewitz's (1998) book, *Struggling for the Soul: The Politics of Schooling and the Construction of the Teacher*, he discusses the need to understand how different discourses of pedagogy come together to generate principles for participation and action. Following this construct it is imperative for stakeholders to participate actively in the Transition Planning process. For successful Transition Planning to occur it is essential that universal approach be applied as "one identifies social progress as tied to an evolutionary conception of change" (Popkewitz, 1997).

## DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS REGARDING TRANSITION

Popkewitz (1982), offers a model that can be applied to the knowledge, work and role of authority in the varied perceptions that may be applied in implementing successful undertaking of a process that involves a whole school approach. Popkewitz identifies three distinctive forms of schooling: technical, constructive and illusory. A Technical school design relies heavily on the management procedures and specific objectives. According to Popkewitz (1982), “curriculum design in these schools isolates skills from purposes and, in the process, narrows the apparent goals of teaching” (p. 65). In a constructive school model, work practices, perceptions of knowledge and universal definitions give clarity and vision to the academic institution. “Problematic, aesthetic and integrated knowledge were emphasized, and to the discourse of instruction in which interpersonal skill and control were stressed” (Popkewitz, 1982, p. 95). Within an illusory framework a facade is created by the artificial design of the schools. Popkewitz (1982) states, “the emphasis on community pathology, pedagogy as therapy, and ritual gives these schools meaning different from those of the technical and constructive schools” (p. 122).

## DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS REGARDING TRANSITION

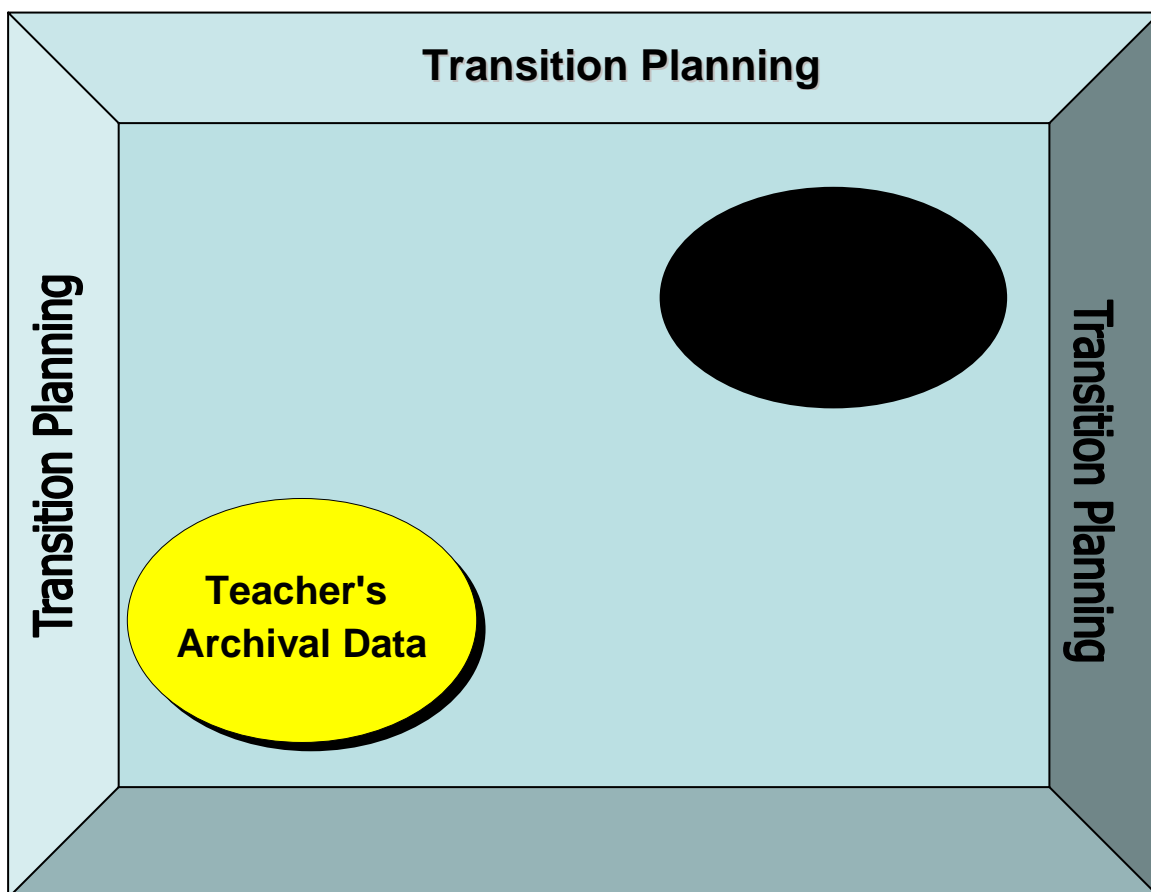
Perceptions and experiences of female at risk students and school culture has been applied using the Popkewitz model (Taylor-Dunlop, Norton, 1997). For purposes of this study the Popkewitz framework will be implemented as construct in determining the perception of effective Transition Planning in a secondary special class setting.

The chart below is an illustrative representation of how a student interacts with factors that promote the Transition Planning Services concept. With Transition Planning as the construct, the student is affected by four significant stakeholders, all of whom play a collaborative role in the outcome of the program. By taking an in-depth look into student interaction with stakeholders, the researchers will explore this collective construct. The present researchers will attempt to evaluate the attitudinal perspective of those stakeholders in Transition Planning utilizing a qualitative research approach and to investigate issues that may be in need of modification or alteration.

### **Figure 2.2: Data Source Visual Model**



## DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS REGARDING TRANSITION



**Chapter III****METHODOLOGY****Research Method**

The methodology of this study will include the procedures used to collect and analyze archival Transition Planning documents from two high schools on Long Island, New York. Through, archival study, information collected will be used to determine if the Kohler model is being utilized to effectively implement and comply with New York State standards for Transition Planning requirements. The researcher will explore if the schools' Transition Planning process includes coherence and compliance with the Kohler model. In addition, the researchers will identify evidence where disconnects in the process may have occurred. This study will involve research and review of Transition Planning documents currently utilized in special education programs. The researchers will use archival documents to identify patterns, themes and discrepancies of the Kohler model as a framework for determining successful Transition Planning.

**Setting**

According to the 2009 United States Census Bureau Report, the population of Suffolk County is estimated to be 1,518,475 people out

## DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS REGARDING TRANSITION

of a population of almost nineteen and a half million total New Yorkers. Approximately 84% of residents in Suffolk County are white, 7% are black, 3% are Asian and 13% are Hispanic or Latino. The percentages in the census data may not equal 100% due to the fact that some participants may have chosen more than one race. Average household size is estimated to be 3.09 in 2009. It was reported that of the population 25 years of age or older 89% of those who responded are considered “high school graduate or higher” status. The Suffolk County 2009 Census failed to provide a percentage of those with disabilities. In Suffolk County the median household income was reported in 2009 as \$84,530, reporting only 5% of Suffolk County residents were living below the poverty level (U.S Census Bureau: State and County Quick Facts 2009). This data is illustrated in the table below:

**Figure 3.1: Census Data**

	<b>Suffolk</b>	<b>New York</b>
<b>Population</b>	1,518,475	19,490,297
<b>White</b>	84.0%	73.4%
<b>Black</b>	7.2%	17.3%

## DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS REGARDING TRANSITION

<b>Asian</b>	3.4%	6.8%
<b>Hispanic/Latino</b>	13.2%	16.7%
<b>Median HH Inc</b>	\$84,530	\$53,448
<b>Below Poverty</b>	5.4%	13.8%

In Suffolk County, according to the School District Almanac (Hughes, 2010), the percent of free and reduced lunch in 2008 was 15.3%. The percent of enrollment in public schools in 2008 was 72.9% White, 9.1% Black, 14.5% Hispanic and 3.0% other. The percent of dropouts in Suffolk County according to the Almanac in 2008 was 1.5%.

The percent of pupils with disabilities who receive IEP diplomas has significantly increased over the last four years from 4.0% in 2005 to 7.0% in 2008, an 82% increase (Hughes, 2010).

The setting for this archival study will be two high schools in Suffolk County, Long Island, New York that provide special education services for students who meet the criteria for the federal IDEA guidelines for students with handicapping conditions. In accordance with their Individual Educational Plan (IEP), the subjects of this study are presently placed in special class settings. To maintain

## DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS REGARDING TRANSITION

confidentiality, schools will be referred to as School 1 and School 2. Researcher 1 will be reviewing archival transition documents from School 1 and Researcher 2 will be reviewing archival documents from School 2.

Both of the schools are day programs for high school students grades nine through twelve that concentrate on offering the basic subjects needed for graduation. School 1 is a public high school that services both general education and classified students. School 2 is considered a public separate high school that only services classified special education students. In School 1 and School 2, special education students may remain in the program until age 21 to meet the requirements for a high school diploma.

### **Subjects**

The researchers will use archival documents to identify patterns, themes and discrepancies in the application of the Kohler model as a framework for determining successful Transition Planning. Transition Planning data collection forms will serve as archival documents. These documents will pertain to students, teacher, parents and guidance counselors involved in the Transition

## DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS REGARDING TRANSITION

Planning process. A random sample of available archival documents will be selected from School 1 and School 2.

### **Data Collection**

Using methods of archival research, this inquiry will examine if Transition Planning with classified special education students is being implemented in accordance with the Kohler model for successful Transition Planning. All archival document questions will be separated according to Kohler's five components for successful Transition Planning (Appendix I).

All copies of archival documents will be acquired from the respective educational institutions. The archival documents will be stored in a locked file cabinet that is accessible to only the researcher. In order to maintain anonymity and privacy, the archival documents will have all identifying information removed prior to review. All copies of archival documents will be disposed of upon the conclusion of the study.

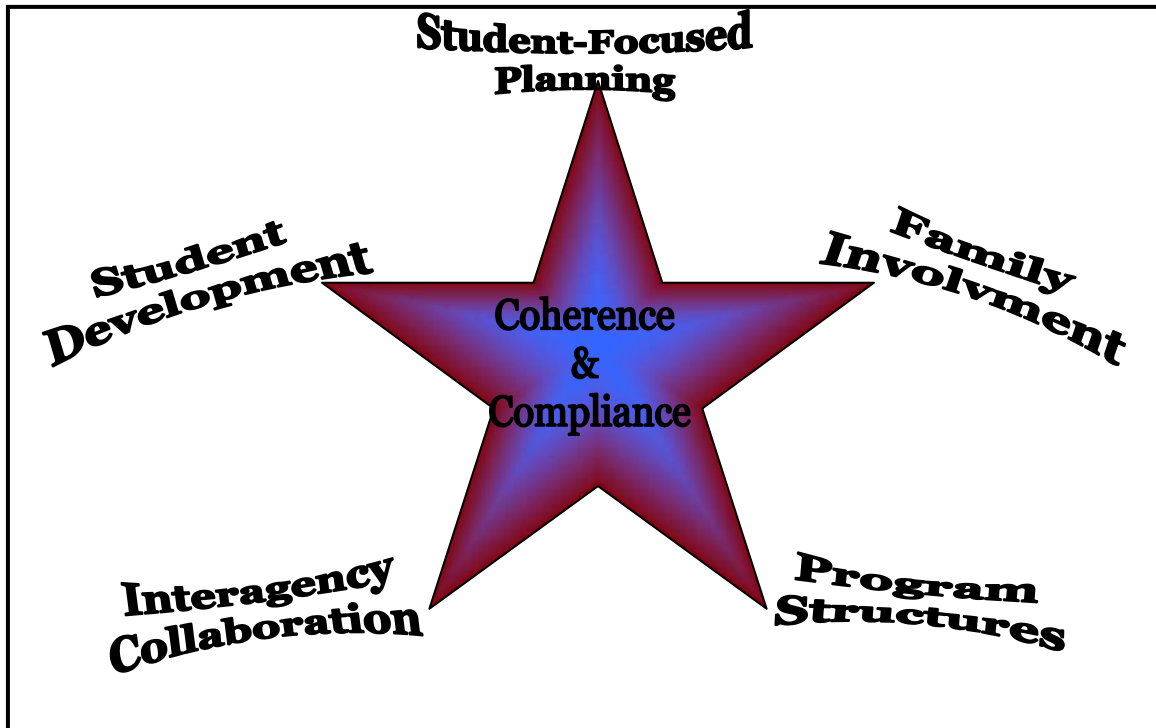
### **Conceptual Framework**

For the purposes of this study, the researchers will be using Kohler's concepts of Transition-Focused Education to drive data analysis. Kohler's five components for Transition Planning are

## DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS REGARDING TRANSITION

identified as student-focused planning, family involvement, program structure, student development and interagency collaboration. These components are depicted in the visual model below.

**Figure 3.2: Kohler Framework for Transition Programming**



In investigating the above, each researcher will extensively look at the archival documents and how they address the research questions. Through this archival study we intend to study Kohler's model for successful Transition Planning and how it pertains to the effectiveness as well as the intrinsic value of the program.

### **Research Questions**

## DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS REGARDING TRANSITION

The research questions to be addressed by this study are listed below:

- Is the Transition Planning process being implemented as directed in accordance with federal mandates of IDEA?
- Is the facility-based implementation of Transition Planning in developing post-graduate options with special needs secondary students in accordance with Kohler's model for successful Transition Planning?
- How and to what extent is the Transition Planning being implemented as directed by the students' Individual Education Plan?

### **Significance of the Study**

The significance of the following collaborative archival study is to explore how the system put forth by IDEA regarding Transition Planning services functions as an effective cohesive unit to promote post-graduate employment.

This parallel archival study will be an analysis of the Transition Planning process as it relates to Kohler's model at two different high school special education academic programs in Suffolk County, New York.



## DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS REGARDING TRANSITION

### **Limitations**

Each researcher will be limited to archival documents of Special Education teachers and the special class population of a single specific school. For the purposes of this archival study, the subjects will be limited to individuals who are classified as Emotionally Disturbed, Learning Disabled or Other Health Impaired.

### **Summary**

Throughout this study, the researchers will display communal Chapters I, II and III which will reflect their reciprocal interest in the successful delivery of Kohler's model of Transition Planning for special needs students. In Chapter IV the researchers will be presenting their individual collective data and results from their particular school of study. Chapter V will discuss a strategic plan that can promote coherence and compliance with successful Transition Planning.

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## DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS REGARDING TRANSITION

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## APPENDIX A

### IDEA Secondary Transition Regulations

#### ***IDEA Regulations*** **SECONDARY TRANSITION**

The reauthorized *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)* was signed into law on Dec. 3, 2004, by President George W. Bush. The provisions of the act became effective on July 1, 2005, with the exception of some of the elements pertaining to the definition of a “highly qualified teacher” that took effect upon the signing of the act. The final regulations were published on Aug. 14, 2006. This is one in a series of documents, prepared by the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) in the U.S. Department of Education that covers a variety of high-interest topics and brings together the regulatory requirements related to those topics to support constituents in preparing to implement the new regulations.<sup>1</sup> This document addresses significant changes from preexisting regulations to the final regulatory requirements regarding secondary transition.

#### **IDEA Regulations**

##### **1. Add “further education” of children with disabilities to the IDEA’s purposes.**

The purposes of IDEA include ensuring that all children with disabilities have available to them a free appropriate public education (FAPE) that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment and independent living. [34 CFR 300.1(a)] [20 U.S.C. 1400(d)(1)(A)]

##### **2. Refer to a “child” instead of a “student.”**

The definition of “transition services” is changed to refer to a “child,” rather than a “student,” with a disability. [34 CFR 300.43] [20 U.S.C. 1401(34)]

## DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS REGARDING TRANSITION

### **3. Change the definition of “transition services.”**

The term “transition services” means a coordinated set of activities for a child with a

disability that:

- Is designed to be within a results-oriented process, that is focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of the child with a disability to facilitate the child’s movement from school to post-school activities, including postsecondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment); continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation;
- Is based on the individual child’s needs, taking into account the child’s strengths, preferences, and interests; and
- Includes instruction, related services, community experiences, the development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives, and, if appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation.

[34 CFR 300.43 (a)] [20 U.S.C. 1401(34)]

### **4. Require changes to performance goals and indicators.**

The State has established goals for the performance of children with disabilities in the State that ... address graduation rates and dropout rates, as well as such other factors as the State may determine.

[34 CFR 300.157(a)(3)] [20 U.S.C. 1412(a)(15)(A)(iii)]

### **5. Establish an exception to requirements for evaluation before a change in eligibility.**

The evaluation described in §300.305(e)(1) [see 20 U.S.C. 1414(c)(5)(B)(i)] is not required before the termination of a child's eligibility under Part B due to graduation from secondary school with a regular diploma, or due to exceeding the age eligibility for FAPE under State law.

[34 CFR 300.305(e)(2)] [20 U.S.C. 1414(c)(5)(B)(i)]

For a child whose eligibility under Part B terminates under circumstances described above, the LEA shall provide the child with a summary of the child’s academic achievement and functional performance, which shall include recommendations on how to assist the child in meeting the child’s postsecondary goals.

[34 CFR 300.305(e)(3)] [20 U.S.C. 1414(c)(5)(B)(ii)]

### **6. Change the secondary transition requirements in the IEP.**

## DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS REGARDING TRANSITION

Beginning not later than the first IEP to be in effect when the child turns 16, or younger if determined appropriate by the IEP Team, and updated annually thereafter, the IEP must include:

- Appropriate measurable postsecondary goals based upon age-appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment and, where appropriate, independent living skills;
- The transition services (including courses of study) needed to assist the child in reaching those goals; and
- Beginning not later than one year before the child reaches the age of majority under State law, a statement that the child has been informed of the child's rights under Part B, if any, that will transfer to the child on reaching the age of majority under §300.520 [see 20 U.S.C. 1415(m)].

[34 CFR 300.320(b) and (c)] [20 U.S.C. 1414 (d)(1)(A)(i)(VIII)]

7. Add requirement to invite child to IEP Team meeting when purpose includes

“consideration of postsecondary goals.”

The LEA must invite a child with a disability to attend the child's IEP Team meeting if a purpose of the meeting will be the consideration of the postsecondary goals for the child and the transition services needed to assist the child in reaching those goals under §300.320(b).

[34 CFR 300.321(b)] [20 U.S.C. 1414(d)(1)(B)]

8. Add development and implementation of transition programs to list of permissible uses of State-level funds under Part B.

States may use funds reserved under §300.704(b)(1) for the development and implementation of transition programs, including coordination of services with agencies involved in supporting the transition of students with disabilities to postsecondary activities.

[34 CFR 300.704(b)(4)(vi)] [20 U.S.C. 1411(e)(2)(C)(vi)]

9. Delete requirement that an LEA take other steps if an invited agency does not attend an IEP meeting during which transition services will be discussed.

## DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS REGARDING TRANSITION

If a purpose of a child's IEP Team meeting will be the consideration of postsecondary goals for the child and the transition services needed to assist the child in reaching those goals, the LEA, to the extent appropriate, and with consent, must invite a representative of any participating agency that is likely to be responsible for providing or paying for transition services to attend the child's IEP Team meeting. However, if the participating agency does not attend the meeting, the LEA is no longer required to take other steps to obtain participation of an agency in the planning of any transition services.

[34 CFR 300.321(b)(1) and (3)] [20 U.S.C. 1414(d)(1)]

**10. Add requirement for consent prior to inviting a representative of any participating agency likely to be responsible for providing or paying for transition services to attend a child's IEP Team meeting.**

To the extent appropriate, with the consent of the parents or a child who has reached the age of majority, in implementing the requirements of §300.321(b)(1), the public agency must invite a representative of any participating agency that is likely to be responsible for providing or paying for transition services.

[34 CFR 300.321(b)(3)]

**APPENDIX B****Archival Transition Level 1 Assessment**

## **APPENDIX C**

### **Public Law 89-313**

P.L. 89-313,

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act Amendments of 1965.

Authorized grants to state institutions and state operated schools devoted to the education of children with disabilities. It was the first Federal grant program specifically targeted for children and youth with disabilities.

## **APPENDIX D**

### **Public Law 94-142**

#### **The Education for the Handicapped Act (EHA) (P.L. 94-142)**

The Education for all Handicapped Children Acts is more commonly known as the EHA; it had as its purpose:

- To guarantee a Free and Appropriate Public Education (**FAPE**) for all children with disabilities, ages 5-21
- Special Education and related services must be free, provided by the public agency at no cost to the parents
- Appropriate education is the provision of regular and special education and related services designed to meet students' individual educational needs.
- To develop an Individualized Education Program (**IEP**) for each child eligible for special education and related services; plan is based on multi-disciplinary assessment and includes a

## DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS REGARDING TRANSITION

statement of specific special education and related services to be provided to the child

- To the maximum extent appropriate, all children and youth with disabilities will be educated in the least restrictive education (**LRE**) environment
- Parents have the right to participate in every decision related to the identification, evaluation, and placement of their child.

Parents must give consent for any initial evaluation, assessment or placement decision. **Due process** procedures assure parents rights to appeal.



## **APPENDIX E**

### **Public Law 107-110**

#### **Section 4: Transition**

(a) MULTI-YEAR AWARDS- Except as otherwise provided in this Act, the recipient of a multi-year award under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as that Act was in effect prior to the date of enactment of this Act, shall continue to receive funds in accordance with the terms of that award, except that no additional funds may be awarded after September 30, 2002.

(b) PLANNING AND TRANSITION- Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a recipient of funds under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as that Act was in effect prior to the date of enactment of this Act, may use funds available to the recipient under that predecessor authority to carry out necessary and reasonable planning and transition activities in order to ensure an orderly implementation of programs authorized by this Act, and the amendments made by this Act.

**DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS REGARDING TRANSITION**

**(c) ORDERLY TRANSITION-** The Secretary shall take such steps as are necessary to provide for the orderly transition to, and implementation of, programs authorized by this Act, and by the amendments made by this Act, from programs authorized by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as that Act was in effect prior to the date of enactment of this Act.

## **APPENDIX F**

### **Public Law 108-446**

#### **“PART D—NATIONAL ACTIVITIES TO IMPROVE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES**

##### **“SEC. 650. FINDINGS.**

“Congress finds the following:

“(1) The Federal Government has an ongoing obligation to support activities that contribute to positive results for children with disabilities, enabling those children to lead productive and independent adult lives.

“(2) Systemic change benefiting all students, including children with disabilities, requires the involvement of States, local educational agencies, parents, individuals with disabilities and their families, teachers and other service providers, and other interested individuals and organizations to develop and implement comprehensive strategies that improve educational results for children with disabilities.

## DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS REGARDING TRANSITION

“(3) State educational agencies, in partnership with local educational agencies, parents of children with disabilities, and other individuals and organizations, are in the best position to improve education for children with disabilities and to address their special needs.

“(4) An effective educational system serving students with disabilities should—

“(A) maintain high academic achievement standards and clear performance goals for children with disabilities, consistent with the standards and expectations for all students in the educational system, and provide for appropriate and effective strategies and methods to ensure that all children with disabilities have the opportunity to achieve those standards and goals;

“(B) clearly define, in objective, measurable terms, the school and post-school results that children with disabilities are expected to achieve; and

“(C) promote transition services and coordinate State and local education, social, health, mental health, and other services, in addressing the full range of student needs, particularly the needs of children with disabilities who need significant levels of support to participate and learn in school and the community.

## DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS REGARDING TRANSITION

“(5) The availability of an adequate number of qualified personnel is critical—

“(A) to serve effectively children with disabilities;

“(B) to assume leadership positions in administration and direct services;

“(C) to provide teacher training; and

“(D) to conduct high quality research to improve special education.

“(6) High quality, comprehensive professional development programs are essential to ensure that the persons responsible for the education or transition of children with disabilities possess the skills and knowledge necessary to address the educational and related needs of those children.

“(7) Models of professional development should be scientifically based and reflect successful practices, including strategies for recruiting, preparing, and retaining personnel.

“(8) Continued support is essential for the development and maintenance of a coordinated and high quality program of research to inform successful teaching practices and model curricula for educating children with disabilities.

## DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS REGARDING TRANSITION

“(9) Training, technical assistance, support, and dissemination activities are necessary to ensure that parts B and C are fully implemented and achieve high quality early intervention, educational, and transitional results for children with disabilities and their families.

“(10) Parents, teachers, administrators, and related services personnel need technical assistance and information in a timely, coordinated, and accessible manner in order to improve early intervention, educational, and transitional services and results at the State and local levels for children with disabilities and their families.

“(11) Parent training and information activities assist parents of a child with a disability in dealing with the multiple pressures of parenting such a child and are of particular importance in—

“(A) playing a vital role in creating and preserving constructive relationships between parents of children with disabilities and schools by facilitating open communication between the parents and schools; encouraging dispute resolution at the earliest possible point in time; and discouraging the escalation of an adversarial process between the parents and schools;

## DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS REGARDING TRANSITION

“(B) ensuring the involvement of parents in planning and decision-making with respect to early intervention, educational, and transitional services;

“(C) achieving high quality early intervention, educational, and transitional results for children with disabilities;

“(D) providing such parents information on their rights, protections, and responsibilities under this title to ensure improved early intervention, educational, and transitional results for children with disabilities;

“(E) assisting such parents in the development of skills to participate effectively in the education and development of their children and in the transitions described in section 673(b)(6);

“(F) supporting the roles of such parents as participants within partnerships seeking to improve early intervention, educational, and transitional services and results for children with disabilities and their families; and

“(G) supporting such parents who may have limited access to services and supports, due to economic, cultural, or linguistic barriers.

## DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS REGARDING TRANSITION

“(12) Support is needed to improve technological resources and integrate technology, including universally designed technologies, into the lives of children with disabilities, parents of children with disabilities, school personnel, and others through curricula, services, and assistive technologies.



## APPENDIX G

### ***Glossary***

**Autism:** a developmental disability significantly affecting verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction, generally evident before age three, that adversely affects a child's educational performance. Other characteristics often associated with autism are engagement in repetitive activities and stereotyped movements, resistance to environmental change or change in daily routines, and unusual responses to sensory experiences.

**Deaf-Blindness:** concomitant hearing and visual impairments, the combination of which causes such severe communication and other developmental and educational needs that they cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for children with deafness or children with blindness.

## DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS REGARDING TRANSITION

**Deafness:** a hearing impairment that is so severe that the child is impaired in processing linguistic information through hearing, with or without amplification that adversely affects a child's educational performance.

**Emotional Disturbance:** a condition exhibiting one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree that adversely affects a child's educational performance:

- An inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors.
- An inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers.
- Inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances.
- A general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression.
- A tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems.
- Emotional disturbance includes schizophrenia.

(The term does not apply to children who are socially maladjusted.)

## DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS REGARDING TRANSITION

**Hearing impairment:** an impairment in hearing, whether permanent or fluctuating, that adversely affects a child's educational performance but that is not included under the definition of deafness in this section.

**Mental retardation:** significantly sub-average general intellectual functioning, existing concurrently with deficits in adaptive behavior and manifested during the developmental period, that adversely affects a child's educational performance.

**Multiple disabilities:** concomitant impairments (such as mental retardation-blindness or mental retardation-orthopedic impairment), the combination of which causes such severe educational needs that they cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for one of the impairments. Multiple disabilities does not include deaf-blindness.

**Orthopedic impairment:** a severe orthopedic impairment that adversely affects a child's educational performance. The term includes impairments caused by a congenital anomaly, impairments caused by disease (e.g., poliomyelitis, bone tuberculosis), and

## DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS REGARDING TRANSITION

impairments from other causes (e.g., cerebral palsy, amputations, and fractures or burns that cause contractures).

**Other health impairment:** having limited strength, vitality, or alertness, including a heightened alertness to environmental stimuli, that results in limited alertness with respect to the educational environment, that--

- Is due to chronic or acute health problems such as asthma, attention deficit disorder or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, diabetes, epilepsy, a heart condition, hemophilia, lead poisoning, leukemia, nephritis, rheumatic fever, sickle cell anemia, and Tourette syndrome; and
- Adversely affects a child's educational performance.

**Special Class:** a special class program shall serve students who have similar educational needs in accordance with their individualized education programs. Special class programs shall offer instruction in the core curriculum content standards unless the IEP specifies an alternative curriculum due to the nature or severity of the student's disability. The regular education curriculum and the instructional strategies may be modified based on the student's IEP.

## DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS REGARDING TRANSITION

**Specific Learning Disability:**

## DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS REGARDING TRANSITION

child's educational performance. Traumatic brain injury applies to open or closed head injuries resulting in impairments in one or more areas, such as cognition; language; memory; attention; reasoning; abstract thinking; judgment; problem-solving; sensory, perceptual, and motor abilities; psychosocial behavior; physical functions; information processing; and speech. Traumatic brain injury does not apply to brain injuries that are congenital or degenerative, or to brain injuries induced by birth trauma.

**Visual Impairment:** including blindness means an impairment in vision that, even with correction, adversely affects a child's educational performance. The term includes both partial sight and blindness.

## DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS REGARDING TRANSITION

**APPENDIX H**

**Positive and Negative Factors Regarding of New York State  
High School Diploma Options**

<b>Local / Regents Diploma</b>	
<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>
A Diploma signifies that the student has earned the required 22 credits and passed all New York State Exams.	Students with disabilities, even with adequate school support, might be unable to pass certain required subjects or state exams.
This diploma enables students to be eligible to attend any 2 or 4 year college that will accept him/her.	The courses and exams are difficult to pass. After several attempts of trying and not succeeding, a student may become frustrated and dropout. Students can age out of school before they complete all of their requirements.
Recognized by the military	No guarantee of graduation

<b>IEP Certificate</b>	
<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>
Can be accomplished in 4 years or longer	This diploma is NOT a regular, NYS Diploma; no credits are being earned
Can attend some 2 year colleges	Many 2 year colleges will not

## DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS REGARDING TRANSITION

and/or may be accepted as a Non-diploma candidate.	accept an IEP Diploma. The military does not recognize an IEP Diploma. No 4 year college will accept an IEP Diploma.
A good alternative for a student if they are unable to achieve credits or if wants to gain experience in a trade or job while in school.	

**APPENDIX I**



## DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS REGARDING TRANSITION

**Archival Questionnaire Sample**

<b>SFP</b>	<b>Always</b>	<b>Frequently</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Never</b>	<b>Not Sure</b>
Does every student have an Individualized Education Program that reflects his/her interests, needs and abilities?					
Is the student's vision for his/her future clearly communicated to school staff and parents?					
Do staff development activities reflect student centered transition planning?					
Do we promote the active involvement of all of our students in planning and implementing the transition components of their IEP?					
Are all of our students Continuously challenged to participate in the transition planning process?					
Do we assign independent projects to students that build upon student needs, preferences and interests and motivate them to learn more about specific topics?					
Do we use interest centers or interest groups to make learning accessible and appropriately challenging for all learners?					
Do we use flexible grouping of students to adjust to different learning styles and interests of diverse students?					

## DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS REGARDING TRANSITION

<b>FI</b>	<b>Always</b>	<b>Frequently</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Never</b>	<b>Not Sure</b>
Are parents involved in their child's transition planning process?					
Do we provide information to students and parents about the transition planning process that respects cultural diversity and is available in a variety of formats?					
Do we seek the input and the insights of students and parents about individual student needs, preferences and interests when developing post-school outcomes?					
Do we develop transition focused activities that parents can use at home to support the student's school and post-school outcomes?					
Do we make parents feel welcome in school?					
Do we consider parents' work schedules and family commitments when scheduling planning meetings?					

<b>PS</b>	<b>Always</b>	<b>Frequently</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Never</b>	<b>Not Sure</b>
Are adult service agencies involved in the transition planning process, if appropriate?					
Are sufficient resources allocated to					

## DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS REGARDING TRANSITION

support effective transition practices?					
Do we use student data to guide continuous program improvement?					
Are teachers, students and parents provided information, materials and training about effective transition practices and their role in the implementation of transition programs and services?					
Are community resources accessed in the provision of staff development activities?					
Do we seek ways to ensure that the maximum amount of time during the school day is devoted to teaching and learning that supports the student's post-school outcomes?					
Do we provide instruction that is community based?					
Do we provide professional development activities for teachers that help them work with parents and students to become more involved in the students' transition planning process?					
Do we develop community based activities that are aligned to instruction?					
Have we considered ways of involving community members to help meet the transition program and service needs of diverse learners?					

## DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS REGARDING TRANSITION

Are we using post-school indicator data to improve and revise our instructional program and transition planning process?					
Do we use the results of the transition quality indicator self-assessment to guide development of our school improvement and staff development plans?					
Do our plans set clear priorities and high expectations for student outcomes for all students and devote resources to meet those priorities?					
Do we clearly articulate and communicate district expectations for transition programs and services?					
Do we have procedures and strategies in place to develop and maintain interagency agreements?					

<b>IC</b>	<b>Always</b>	<b>Frequently</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Never</b>	<b>Not Sure</b>
Are community members directly involved with program planning, development and implementation of transition programs and services?					
Do we target discretionary grants and funds to expand transition programs and services in the school and community?					

## DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS REGARDING TRANSITION

Do we use school/ community partnerships to provide supportive assistance to all students?					
Have we secured input and involvement of all stakeholders in developing our process for transition planning?					
Is there a designated transitions contact person for all service providers?					
Is there a collaborative consultation between special and vocational educators?					

<b>SD</b>	<b>Always</b>	<b>Frequently</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Never</b>	<b>Not Sure</b>
Are staff development activities on-going and related to the students' acquisition of skills to be able to live, learn and earn within the community?					
Does curriculum provide students with opportunities to make informed choices and become an effective self-advocate?					
Are our instructional activities designed to connect student learning to real life experiences?					
Are all students provided challenging work experiences that enable them to strive to reach their identified post-school outcomes?					
Do we use a variety of learning experiences (i.e., community as well as classroom) to					

## DIFFERENCES IN PERCEPTIONS REGARDING TRANSITION

help students strengthen their academic, career, and life skills?					
Do we recognize the diversity of students' experiences and the different learning styles in our teaching and learning strategies?					
Do we seek volunteers as tutors and mentors to help all students achieve successful post-school outcomes?					

In your opinion how would you describe the effectiveness of your facilities transition planning process as it relates to student outcomes?

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Are there any issues or areas of importance that you feel should have been included in this survey?

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