Self-Assessment and Professional Development Planning Tool For Special Educator Transition Skills and Knowledge

Transition competencies for special educators

There are six core transition competencies:

A1.1. Student-Focused Planning
Competency A1: Use information from a variety of transition assessments to inform student-centered transition and career development planning.
A1.2. Student-Focused Planning
Competency A2: Develop student-centered transition IEPs that ensure student voice in goals, processes, and outcomes.
B. Student Development
Competency B: Design student-centered curriculum, instruction, assessments, related activities, and accommodations that will facilitate the movement toward identified postsecondary goals.
C. Interagency Collaboration
Competency C: Collaborate with stakeholders to insure and increase effective transition services, activities, supports, and outcomes for individuals with disabilities and their families.
D. Family Involvement
Competency D: Actively involve all families with sensitivity and responsiveness to the family's cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic makeup throughout the transition decision-making and implementation process.
E. Program Structures
Competency E: Knowledge of program structures that use evidence-informed practices and research to establish effective programs and services.

How to use this tool

To assess your current skills and knowledge in the 31 key elements which make up the six core competencies:

1. Rate your knowledge or skill level for each of the 31 key elements on the following pages. Use these definitions:
   - 1 – I don't know anything about this.
   - 2 – I have some knowledge or skills here
   - 3 – I have significant knowledge or skills here, but want more.
   - 4 – I have enough knowledge and skills in this area.
2. Star the elements on which you want to focus.
3. Explore the Next Steps website resource links listed for your chosen elements.

Note: For general transition overviews, see nextsteps-nh.org/college-faculty/resources-learn-transition/#OnlineTrainings .

Self-rating key: 1 – I don't know anything about this.   Priority key: 1 - High
                  2 – I have some knowledge or skills here.   2 - Medium
                  3 – I have lots of knowledge or skills here, but want more.   3 - Low
                  4 – I have enough knowledge and skills in this area.

Student-Focused Planning

Competency A.1. Use information from a variety of transition assessments to inform student-centered transition and career development planning.

Elements	My knowledge or skill level	Resources to learn more	Priority Level
A1.1 Understand a variety of formal and informal transition assessments and procedures used to identify students strengths, preferences, interests, and needs critical to transition outcomes (postsecondary education, employment, independent living).		• Materials and recording of a webinar, Transition Assessment: Knowing the Options and How to Use Them • Transition assessment reference page • Age-appropriate transition assessment and Indicator 13	
A1.2 Conduct informal transition assessments and modify to meet individual student needs.		• My Next Move website • Interest inventories	
A1.3 Interpret transition assessment information so that the results are understood by students, families, and professionals.		• Communication processes reference page • Shared decision-making reference page • Cultural and linguistic sensitivity reference page	

Competency A.2. Develop student-centered transition IEPs that ensure student voice in goals, processes, and outcomes.

Elements	My knowledge or skill level	Resources to learn more	Priority level
A2.1 Write measurable postsecondary goals that reflect student interests and preferences.		• Measurable postsecondary goals and Indicator 13 • Interest and career goal identification reference page	
A2.2 Write measurable annual goals and objectives related to measurable postsecondary goals.		• Annual goals and Indicator 13 • Assistive technology reference page	
A2.3 Design transition services and course of study to achieve postsecondary goals and objectives.		• Transition services and Indicator 13 • Courses of study and Indicator 13	
A2.4 Align instructional activities and related activities with postsecondary goals and objectives.		• Academic skills reference page	
A2.5 Create a student-centered summary of performance that includes a plan for accommodations and modifications in postsecondary, educational, and training settings.		• Summary of Performance video	

Self-rating key: 1 – I don't know anything about this.   Priority key: 1 - High
                   2 – I have some knowledge or skills here.   2 - Medium
                   3 – I have lots of knowledge or skills here, but want more.   3 - Low
                   4 – I have enough knowledge and skills in this area.

Student Development

Competency B. Design student-centered curriculum, instruction, assessments, related activities, and accommodations that facilitate the movement toward identified post-secondary goals.			
Elements	**My knowledge or skill level**	**Resources to learn more**	**Priority level**
B1. Knowledge of a range of post-school options (i.e., employment, postsecondary education, and independent living) to inform student-centered transition and career development planning.		• Education options after high school • Awareness of postsecondary options reference page • Career and vocational skills reference page • College disability services	
B2. Knowledge of evidence-informed instruction, curricular resources, and practices (including Extended Learning Opportunities, ELOs) regarding transition to post-school settings.		• Beyond Classroom website • Academic skills reference page • Materials and recordings of three ELO workshops	
B3. Knowledge of augmentative and alternative communication systems and a variety of assistive technologies that support transition and career development for individuals with disabilities.		• Assistive technology reference page • Free and low-cost assistive technology	
B4. Knowledge of curricular resources and instructional activities that educators can use to connect general education course content to an individual's postsecondary goals.		• Course alignment reference page	
B5. Teach self-advocacy and self-determination skills to facilitate students' understanding of their strengths and challenges.		• Self-determination and self-advocacy reference page • Materials and recording of a webinar, Assessing and Teaching Self-Determination Skills to Students: What are the Options?	
B6. Articulate the importance and impact of a variety of work-based learning experiences including ELOs.		• Independent living skills reference page • Extracurricular activities reference page • Work-based learning	

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                  2 – I have some knowledge or skills here.   2 - Medium
                  3 – I have lots of knowledge or skills here, but want more.   3 - Low
                  4 – I have enough knowledge and skills in this area.

Collaboration

Competency C. Collaborate with stakeholders to insure and increase effective transition services, activities, supports, and outcomes for individuals with disabilities and their families.			
Elements	**My knowledge or skill level**	**Resources to learn more**	**Priority level**
C1. Knowledge of roles and responsibilities of educators, employers, and other service providers in the variety of settings related to postsecondary outcomes.		• Partnership roles and responsibilities reference page • Agreement Form templates	
C2. Understand strategies that facilitate collaboration among transition stakeholders.		• Interagency Collaboration Toolkit • Norms of Collaboration • Community-wide issues and evaluation reference page	
C3. Advocate for integrating transition content within general academic courses for an individual student.		• Communication processes	
C4. Knowledge of how to connect students to internal school resources (e.g., technical education, school counseling) and community resources (e.g., Vocational Rehabilitation, mental health).		• Agency Contact List Tool • Connecting to your community reference page • Voc Rehab's role in transition • College disability services	
C5. Knowledge of how to prepare the student, family, team and other related-agency members for the transition planning process.		• Self-determination and self-advocacy reference page • Cultural sensitivity reference page	
C6. Understand how to coordinate and facilitate transition planning during and after IEP meetings.		• Videos on the transition-driven IEP process	
C7. Understand the student/family referral process for postsecondary and community services.		• Accommodations in college • IEP supports and accommodations reference page	

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                    3 – I have lots of knowledge or skills here, but want more.   3 - Low
                    4 – I have enough knowledge and skills in this area.

Family Involvement

Competency D. Actively involve all families with sensitivity and responsiveness to the family's cultural, linguistic and socioeconomic makeup.

Elements	My knowledge or skill level	Resources to learn more	Priority level
D1. Understand the significance of family engagement throughout the postsecondary transition planning process and how it relates to increased student success.		• Tools for family involvement • Shared decision-making reference page • Materials and recording of a webinar, Promoting and Sustaining Family School Partnerships	
D2. Knowledge of the cultural and environmental milieu of the individual and the family on behavior and learning in the context of transition planning.		• Respecting diversity reference page • Cultural and linguistic sensitivity reference page	
D3. Understand the supports necessary for families to communicate effectively and work collaboratively with educational personnel.		• Tools for family engagement • Communication processes reference page • Materials and recording of a webinar, Engaging Students and Families in Transition Assessment and the Student-Led IEP Process	
D4. Identify information for families to understand transition related education services, information on IDEA, and potential support networks and services.		• Tools for family involvement • Transition law reference page • Connecting to resources reference page • Family transition training reference page • Self-determination and self-advocacy reference page	

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                   4 – I have enough knowledge and skills in this area.

Program Structures

Competency E. Knowledge of program structures that use evidence-informed practices and research to establish effective programs and services.			
Elements	**My knowledge or skill level**	**Resources to learn more**	**Priority level**
E1. Knowledge of career and technical instructional strategies, models, and curricula.		• [Career and vocational skills reference page, including CTE](#)	
E2. Knowledge of transition practices, programs, and services that produce successful post-school outcomes.		• [RENEW](#) • [Practices and procedures reference page](#) • [Program philosophy reference page](#)	
E3. Knowledge of transition laws and policies (e.g., IDEA, Rehabilitation Act, Fair Labor Standards Act).		• [Transition law reference page](#)	
E4. Knowledge of organizations and publications relevant to the field of secondary special education and transition.		• [Communities of Practice](#) • [Professional development reference page](#)	

Background on Preservice Transition Competencies

The *Transition Competencies for Preservice Special Education Programs* were developed in 2014 at Keene State College to enhance special education teacher candidate knowledge and skills about transition. There are six transition core competencies and 31 corresponding key elements. The standards are not required for state certification, but are intended to enhance curriculum efforts by providing a set of important transition skills and knowledge for beginning special educators. Find the competencies at nextsteps-nh.org/college-faculty/preservice-transition-competencies/.

Competencies and key elements are organized by Kohler's (1996) *Taxonomy for Transition Programming,* which is consistent with the Next Steps NH Project's *Framework for Transition-Focused Education*. Kohler's definitions of the areas are:

Student-Focused Planning: competencies support the development of practices that focus on using assessment information and facilitating students' self-determination to develop individual education programs based on students' post-school goals.

Student Development: competencies support the development of practices that emphasize life, employment, and occupational skill development through school-based and work-based learning experiences. Student assessment and accommodations provide a fundamental basis for student development resulting in successful transitions.

Collaboration: competencies support practices facilitate involvement of school personnel (e.g., counselors, general educators, special educators, administrators, coaches, nurses) community businesses, organizations, and agencies in all aspects of transition-focused education.

Family Involvement: competencies support practices that are associated with parent and family involvement in planning and delivering education and transition services. Family-focused training and family empowerment activities increase the ability of family members to work effectively with educators and other service providers.

Program Structures*:* competencies support features that relate to efficient and effective delivery of transition-focused education and services, including philosophy, planning, policy, evaluation, and human resource development. The structures and attributes of a school provide the framework for a transition perspective.

Please note that an update (2.0) of the Taxonomy was released this year. We will be updating the preservice competencies in the next year and will include Taxonomy 2.0 in our review.

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