



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:

Competency	Taxonomy Area
1. Use information from a variety of transition assessments to inform student-centered transition and career planning.	Student-Focused Planning
2. Develop student-centered IEPs that are transition-focused and include student voice.	Student-Focused Planning
3. Design student-centered curriculum, instruction, activities, and accommodations to facilitate students' preparation for and movement toward their postsecondary goals.	Student Development
4. Collaborate with stakeholders on effective transition services, activities, and supports in order to produce successful post-school outcomes for students with disabilities and their families.	Interagency Collaboration
5. Actively involve families throughout the transition decision-making and implementation process, with sensitivity and responsiveness to culture, language, and socioeconomic background.	Family Engagement
6. Demonstrate knowledge of transition laws, policies, evidence-based practices, and program structures.	Program Structures

How to use this tool

Assess your current skills and knowledge in the 31 key elements that make up the six core competencies:

- On the following pages, rate your knowledge or skill level for each key element. Use these definitions:
 - 1 – I don't know anything about this.
 - 2 – I have some knowledge or skills.
 - 3 – I have significant knowledge or skills, but want more.
 - 4 – I have enough knowledge and skills in this area.
- Set a personal priority level for each one (high, medium, or low).
- Explore the Next Steps website resource links listed for your high priority elements.

Note: For a general understanding of transition, see the [Transition 101 section](#).

For easy online access to all the Resources links in this document, use the [Resources to Fill Your Gaps accordion guide](#) (lower part of the webpage).

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Priority key: H – High
 M – Medium
 L – Low

Competency 1: Use information from a variety of transition assessments to inform student-centered transition and career planning. (Student-Focused Planning)			
Elements	My knowledge or skill level	Resources to learn more	Priority Level
1.1 Describe a variety of formal and informal age-appropriate transition assessments used to identify students strengths, preferences, interests, and needs critical to transition planning.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Materials and recording of a webinar, Transition Assessment: Know the Options and How to Use Them • Transition assessment reference page • Age-appropriate transition assessment and Indicator 13 	
1.2 Conduct transition assessments, understanding strengths and limitations of each, and adapt to individual student needs.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My Next Move website • Interest inventories • Transition assessment reference page 	
1.3 Engage students in the transition assessment process so that data gathering is done in collaboration with the student.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-determination and self-advocacy reference page • Collaborative planning reference page 	
1.4 Communicate the results of transition assessment information so they are understood by students, families, and professionals.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication strategies reference page • Cultural and linguistic sensitivity reference page 	

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Competency 2: Develop student-centered IEPs that are transition-focused and include student voice. (Student-Focused Planning)			
Key Elements	My knowledge or skill level	Resources to learn more	Priority level
2.1 Demonstrate knowledge of how to incorporate state and federal transition requirements into an IEP.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition IEP training and reference tool 	
2.2 Write measurable postsecondary goals that reflect student voice and are based on age-appropriate transition assessments.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measurable postsecondary goals and Indicator 13 • Interest and career goal identification reference page 	
2.3 Design transition services (i.e., coordinated set of activities and course of study) to reasonably enable a student to meet his or her measurable postsecondary goals.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition services and Indicator 13 • Courses of study and Indicator 13 • Academic skills reference page • Independent living skills reference page 	
2.4 Write measurable annual goals and objectives related to a student's transition needs.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual goals and Indicator 13 • Assistive technology reference page • Independent living skills reference page 	
2.5 Demonstrate knowledge and use of strategies to empower students to have a voice in their IEP meetings.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ed O'Leary video: Engaging students in writing their postsecondary goals • Collaborative planning reference page • Self-determination and self-advocacy reference page • Student participation reference page • High School is a Big Thing flyer 	

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Competency 3: Design student-centered curriculum, instruction, activities, and accommodations to facilitate students' preparation for and movement toward their postsecondary goals. (Student Development)			
Elements	My knowledge or skill level	Resources to learn more	Priority level
3.1 Demonstrate knowledge and use of self-determination and self-advocacy strategies and curricula.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-determination and self-advocacy reference page • Materials and recording of a webinar, Teaching Self-Determination Skills to Students with Disabilities 	
3.2 Explain how to prepare students to participate in a range of post-school options including postsecondary education and training, employment, independent living, and community engagement.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education options after high school toolkit • Career and vocational skills reference page • College disability services 	
3.3 Demonstrate knowledge and use of evidence-based transition instruction, curricular resources, and practices.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition 101 • Academic skills reference page • Materials and recordings of three ELO workshops • Self-determination and self-advocacy reference page 	
3.4 Demonstrate knowledge and use of work-based learning experiences including Extended Learning Opportunities (ELOs)*. <i>*In New Hampshire, ELOs are rigorous credit-bearing learning experiences that take place outside a classroom.</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work-based learning page • Extended Learning Opportunities page • Beyond Classroom website • Independent living skills reference page • Extracurricular activities reference page 	
3.5 Demonstrate knowledge and use of assistive technologies to support a student's transition to postsecondary education and training, employment, independent living, and community engagement.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assistive technology reference page 	
3.6 Demonstrate knowledge and use of curricular resources and instructional activities that educators can use to support transition planning in general education settings.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course alignment reference page 	

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Competency 4: Collaborate with stakeholders on effective transition services, activities, and supports in order to produce successful post-school outcomes for students with disabilities and their families. (Interagency Collaboration)			
Elements	My knowledge or skill level	Resources to learn more	Priority level
4.1 Describe the range of transition resources available in the school and the community.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agency Contact List tool • Connecting to your community reference page • Voc Rehab's role in transition • College disability services 	
4.2 Describe the roles and responsibilities of educators, employers, and other service providers in a variety of settings related to transition planning and programming.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership roles and responsibilities reference page • Agreement Form templates 	
4.3 Demonstrate knowledge of strategies used to prepare meeting participants and facilitate transition planning before, during and after IEP meetings.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-determination and self-advocacy reference page • Cultural and linguistic sensitivity reference page • Videos on the transition-driven IEP process 	
4.4 Demonstrate knowledge of strategies that facilitate collaboration among transition stakeholders.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interagency Collaboration toolkit • Norms of Collaboration summary • Community-wide issues and evaluation reference page 	
4.5 Describe the processes for students to engage with postsecondary education and community services.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education Options After High School toolkit. See especially College Accommodations and Documentation 	
4.6 Describe ways to collaborate with general education teachers to integrate transition concepts into academic courses and activities.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication strategies 	
4.7 Demonstrate professional ethics in collaborating with students, families, school personnel, community, and agency personnel.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drive change in your professional practice • Communication strategies 	

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Competency 5: Actively involve families throughout the transition decision-making and implementation process, with sensitivity and responsiveness to culture, language, and socioeconomic background. (Family Engagement)			
Elements	My knowledge or skill level	Resources to learn more	Priority level
5.1 Explain the significance of family engagement throughout the transition planning process and the connection to increased student success.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family Engagement toolkit • Collaborative planning reference page • Materials and recording of a webinar, Promote Family School Partnerships 	
5.2 Identify family cultural and environmental factors that might impact transition planning.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respecting diversity reference page • Cultural and linguistic sensitivity reference page 	
5.3 Provide supports necessary for families to communicate effectively and work collaboratively with school and agency personnel.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family Engagement toolkit • Communication strategies reference page • Materials and recording of a webinar, Engage Students and Families in Transition Assessment and the Student-Led IEP 	
5.4 Identify resources to help families understand transition-related education services, IDEA, and potential support networks and services.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family Engagement Toolkit • 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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Competency 6: Demonstrate knowledge of transition laws, policies, evidence-based practices, and program structures. (Program Structures)			
Elements	My knowledge or skill level	Resources to learn more	Priority level
6.1 Identify evidenced-based transition practices, programs, and services that produce successful post-school outcomes.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RENEW • Practices and procedures reference page • Data-driven leadership reference page 	
6.2 Summarize major elements of transition-related laws and policies (e.g., IDEA, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Americans with Disabilities Act, and Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act).		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition law reference page 	
6.3 Explain the importance and identify elements of a student-centered Summary of Performance (SOP).		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary of Performance video 	
6.4 Describe a range of secondary program options that support a student's transition interests and needs (e.g., Career and Technical Education (CTE), online courses, dual high school/college credits, Upward Bound, etc.).		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career and vocational skills reference page 	
6.5 Identify organizations, resources, and publications relevant to transition planning and programming.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition communities of practice • Transition 101 	

Background on Preservice Transition Competencies

The first version of the Next Steps NH Transition Competencies for Preservice Special Education Programs was developed in 2014 and piloted in preservice special education certification programs at Keene State College and Plymouth State University. The competencies and elements were extensively reviewed and revised in 2018.

The framework includes a set of six transition competencies and 31 corresponding elements. The competencies and elements identify areas of knowledge or skill determined to be important by New Hampshire transition experts from the field, including college and university faculty. 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/.

The competencies and elements were developed in the context of established transition program improvement areas from the original Taxonomy for Transition Programming (Kohler, 1996; Kohler & Field, 2003) and later updated to reflect the revised Taxonomy 2.0 (Kohler, Gothberg, Fowler, & Coyle, 2016).

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 transition

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 Engagement: 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.

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