Effective Strategies for Student Success: Transition
Features

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It’s never too late in fiction or in life to revise.

Nacy Thayer
Transition Services means a coordinated set of activities for a student, designed within an outcome-oriented process, that promotes movement from school to post-school activities, including postsecondary education, vocational training, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation (34 CFR 300.18). Not only is the transition process a best practice for serving students, IDEA97 leaves no question as to the necessity for including transition services in the educational program for all students with disabilities.

Transition is more than just a legal requirement. It is a philosophy that movement to the next program in the students’ plan implies movement to a program that is less restrictive and provides more options than the previous program. Transition, rather than a set of rules, is a process which includes preparation, implementation and follow-up. Transition is a longitudinal plan with the goal of smooth, efficient movement from one program to the next. In essence, a transition plan provides a roadmap for the future for students with disabilities.

Transition planning, used effectively, can increase the number and type of options open to students with disabilities. By accurately assessing students’ interests, skills, and abilities early, students, parents, educators and other professionals can work together to make sure that all school experiences help move students toward successful adulthood.

Beyond simply meeting the mandates of the law, transition planning requires a change in how school personnel view students with disabilities and how they prepare those students for adulthood. Simply moving students forward within the school system does not provide the type of guidance and preparation necessary for transition to adult roles in the community. Clear and specific goals must be identified early.

This issue of the Utah Special Educator focuses on key transition points for students with disabilities, including transition from preschool to elementary, elementary to middle school, middle school to high school, and high school to post-secondary opportunities. The strategies and ideas found in this issue for implementing transition services not only comply with the mandate of the IDEA but are also appropriate practices for all students with disabilities. As you read and ponder the articles in this issue, we hope that you will find strategies that will enable you to meet the challenge of transition planning and create an appropriate roadmap for the future for the students with which you work.
Guest Editorial

Effective Transition Strategies for Students and Families

Ed O’Leary, Mountain Plains Regional Resource Center

Transition is an easy concept to understand. It is helping families and students successfully move to the next stage or step in life whether that be from pre-school to elementary, elementary to middle school, middle school to high school, and high school to adult life. While it is an easy concept to understand, it has clearly proven to be difficult for states and districts to implement. For instance, in the recent report on special education, Back to School on Civil Rights, by the National Council on Disability (January, 2000), it was reported that between 1994 and 1998, eighty-eight percent of all states were found out of compliance with the transition provisions. Williams and O’Leary (1999), in a study they conducted of state monitoring reports from 1993 through 1997, found similar results. Several questions immediately come to mind. If the concept is easy to understand, then why has it been difficult for districts and states to implement the transition provisions? And then, what strategies can districts put into place that will meet both the letter as well as the intent of the law?

Understanding Why

In response to the first question, why has it been difficult for districts and states to implement the transition provisions? There are numerous answers that can be given including difficulty with large systemic change, funding, training, and so forth. While not discounting those issues, I would propose that much of the difficulty in the implementation of the transition provisions directly relates to IEP teams’ lack of exactly “what” must be done as well as a clear understanding of “how” to do transition planning through the IEP process. This may appear simplified on the surface. However, when reviewing the findings from monitoring reports as well as recent work on improving the transition requirements in IEPs with local districts and IEP teams in Wyoming and Montana, it is clear that many educators and others do not have a clear understanding of what they must do to meet the transition provisions of IDEA.

Strategy One:
Focus On Meeting The Basic Requirements

Meeting the basic requirements is the foundation to helping students and families make a successful transition to the next step or to adult life. It is also the foundation for larger long lasting systemic changes and paves the way for implementation of best practices. It does not help that the language in the legislation is confusing (statements of transition service needs, statements of needed transition services, outcome oriented process, coordinated set of activities, etc.) and the distinction between what is required and best practices is cloudy. Because the language is confusing and there has not always been a clear distinction between what is required and best practices, much of what is being asked of educators and administrators has to be overwhelming. For instance, districts are required to invite every student 14 years of age and older to their IEP meeting. Students are not required to attend nor even participate. There is no requirement that students receive any type of self-advocacy or self-determination training (a best practice). Meeting the requirement is laying the foundation for best practices and begins by clearly inviting the student to the meeting where the student is considered an individually valued member of the team. Self-advocacy and self-determination training are then critical to the student’s active participation in the meeting. Self-advocacy and self-determination training may be of little value for IEP meetings if we do not invite the student to attend. In reviewing between 300-400 IEPs of students 14 years of age and older from several states, we found, on an average, that with 20 percent to 40 percent of the IEPs it was difficult to find any documentation of students being invited or even attending their IEP meeting. Inviting students to their IEP is not only meeting one of the requirements, it is critical if we expect students to learn how to advocate, problem solve, and be involved in decisions that affect all aspects of their life. Inviting and then including students is not only important when students reach age 14. We should also be looking at ways we can include them in their IEP meeting beginning at the elementary level. They should begin early by being involved in all IEP meetings and transitions whether that be from elementary to middle school, middle to school to high school or high school to adult life. The foundation for implementing best practices and providing students with experiences and skills needed for adult life begins by a thorough understanding of what is required and then focusing on meeting those basic foundation requirements.
Strategy Two:
Explain And Show Exactly
What Must Be Done

As was mentioned, the language is confusing, but then I believe that getting rid of the confusion means we must go beyond training where we just recite the law. I have been guilty of and have attended trainings where the only thing that is done is a recitation of the law. The trainer’s expectation is that the audience will, all of a sudden, gain great insight regarding what is meant by the transition-outcome oriented process, the statements of ..., a coordinated set of activities, and a course of study. Teachers, administrators, students, families, and the adult service system all need training that provides a clear explanation of not only what the law says, but more importantly, what it means and then specifically how to do it. This means training that provides concrete examples on how to write, develop, and implement “statements of transition service needs,” “statements of needed transition services,” “a coordinated set of activities,” “and courses of study” all within an outcome-oriented process. This type of clear and concrete information will be forthcoming in a publication titled The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1997. Transition Requirements: A Guide for States, Districts, Schools, Universities and Families. Copies will be made available to each State Department of Education by June 2000.

Strategy Three:
Communication And Collaboration
Within The Educational System

A great deal has been written about the importance of collaboration and communication in implementing transition services. Much of that discussion has to do with external collaboration and communication; that is, schools collaborating and communicating with adult service systems. An overlooked, or seldom talked about, issue is the importance of internal collaboration or school personnel communicating and collaborating internally within their own systems. The importance of internal collaboration and communication hits home when looking at what we must now do for every student 14 years of age and older. For every student 14 years of age and older, we must include within the IEP a statement of transition service needs that focuses on the student’s course of study and how the educational program can be planned to prepare the student for further education, employment, and independent living. In reviewing IEPs and visiting with staff from middle schools and high schools, it is evident that this requirement is posing difficulties. Part of the difficulty is a lack of understanding of the “what” and “why” of this requirement. The statement of transition service needs that focuses on a course of study is in essence the identification and specification of all courses the student can/will be involved in from 14 years of age on. It is an understanding by everyone that the courses the student is and will be taking directly relate to and prepares them for the next step post-school. The analogy I like to use is a freshman in college who must choose a course of study. Typically, a freshman meets with their advisor to develop a course of study for their college career. This type of planning includes the identification of and planning for all courses (required core classes, major/minor courses, and electives) for the coming years. While the plan for college courses is not cast in stone and can/should be updated every year with the advisor, the student knows, generally, “what” they will be taking as well as “when” (what year and sequence of the courses) and “how” the courses can prepare them and relate to what they want to pursue after college. That type of planning and decision making regarding a course of study is the same concept we are trying to implement for all students with disabilities beginning at 14 years of age and older. It is recognized that there are problems with students not knowing, at that age, what they want to do as well as the issue of students being realistic about future life choices. Those are issues not to be overlooked, but they are not the only issues. Much of the problem in implementing this statement for students 14 and 15 years of age has to do with a lack of internal communication and collaboration within the educational system. It is difficult, if not impossible, to design with the student a course of study if one is not aware of what courses are offered in the succeeding grades. Through discussions with middle and high school personnel we are finding that in a number of places there is little to no communication and collaboration between high school personnel and middle school and high school personnel do not know what courses are offered in the high school and high school personnel spend little time communicating with the middle school. It is clear if this requirement is to be of benefit to students by helping them choose and understand a course of study that will be meaningful and relevant there must be on-going internal communication and collaboration within the educational system. While it is most critical between middle school and high school, one should not overlook the opportunity this same type of discussion and planning can present for students and families moving from elementary to middle school.

Understandably, there will be fewer choices for elective courses at the middle school, but it is the concept of the student being involved in the discussion and decision making regarding even middle school options that will prepare them for the decisions they need to make in a few years.

These are only a few of the strategies that schools can begin to implement that will help improve transition services for youth with disabilities. We are continuing to learn about what works in fully implementing all of the transition requirements and improving the post-school lives of young people with disabilities. As the transition outcome improvement projects continue to be implemented in states throughout the Mountain Plains Region we will keep states posted on what is working and how they might improve what they and districts are doing for students and families.

References available upon request from the ULRC.
The Transition Planning “Alphabet”
Nan Gray, USOE Coordinator of Special Education/Transition Specialist

Just as the alphabet, with its letters and sounds, provides the basic framework for a child learning to read, the transition plan provides the basic framework for the educational life of a student with disabilities, ages 14-22. Yes, there are many activities of an incredible variety that must be juggled during the transition process. What we sometimes forget is that if the framework is utilized in the appropriate sequence, everything will make sense to everyone and the process becomes much more manageable.

The transition plan is more than a record of events for a student. The transition plan is a vision for the student’s future. It is not an “addendum” to the IEP; it is the IEP. Beginning formally at age fourteen the transition planning process comes first. The IEP and student’s schedule document the enactment of the plan.

Are there transition-related activities that have to happen before age fourteen? Absolutely! We know that students don’t pop onto the scene at age fourteen knowing their future goals. It takes work long before age fourteen for students to know their preferences, interests, and skills. For the purpose of this article, however, let’s look at transition planning, through the IEP process, from age fourteen onward.

The formal transition process begins with assessment. Where is the student right now in terms of skills, interests, and preferences? The next consideration is where this student is going. What are the student’s goals for the future? What is the vision? Where does the student want to end up? The IEP becomes the plan for how to get from “here” to “there”. The entire IEP should support the transition planning process. What an opportunity to have an IEP that makes sense! The IEP becomes a dynamic document rather than a necessary packet of papers to file in a drawer.

So, what are the steps to making this process come together? Ed O’Leary (see Ed O’Leary article this edition), one of our “Transition Conference 2000” presenters, has developed a flowchart for the sequence of events that helps make this happen. The sequence can become our “alphabet”.

Step “A”
Examine the student’s post-school goals—the “vision”. (Does this take work ahead of time? Yes!)

Step “B”
Look at the student’s present levels of educational performance. (What skills does this student have? Remember, you already have done assessments, formal and informal, as part of your homework.)

Step “C”
Develop a Statement of Transition Service Needs. (Do this every year, beginning at age fourteen, or younger if the IEP team determines that it’s appropriate. This statement focuses on the coursework and activities needed to prepare the student for his/her future goals.)

Step “D”
Develop a Statement of Needed Transition Services. (Do this every year, beginning at age sixteen or younger if appropriate. This is the long-range plan for adult life. It includes the areas of instruction, related services, community experiences, development of employment and other post-school living objectives and, if appropriate, the acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation. This is also where you identify the agency linkages that will be the bridges to adulthood. What makes sense to plan in these areas to enable the student to go from where he/she is today to his/her future goals?)

Step “E”
Develop Annual Goals. (Now plan the annual goals that will fit the process. What goals are important for the student to accomplish in the next year? Remember to write them in a way that can be measured.)

Step “F”
Develop Short-Term Objectives/Benchmarks. (Plan the steps necessary to reach each annual goal.)

Now you should have an IEP in which all parts are interrelated and focused, as opposed to an IEP with a transition plan attached. You should also have a plan that is comprehensive and thoughtful—one that makes sense.

In the transition planning process, the IEP is the map the student can follow toward the future. It identifies the roads, bridges, and mountain passes the student will need to travel to meet his/her future goals. Transition planning needs to drive IEP development. The IEP needs to reflect the transition planning. As a result students, parents, educators, and adult service professionals become involved in a meaningful process. All of this will happen if we remember our “A,B,C’s”.

Nan Gray, USOE Coordinator of Special Education/Transition Specialist
Changing the Way Business is Done in Utah: Division of Services for People with Disabilities
Self-Determination Initiatives

Denise Winslow, Director of Self-Determination Initiatives

With self-determination not only will the consumer(s) know how much money is available for supports; they will have a variety of options for spending that money. These options include programs established by providers; Utah has some of the best in the nation. Perhaps they want to spend their money for programs that provide services to a wide array of people, not just those with disabilities. Some people want to hire their own staff and run the program themselves, while others want a little bit of everything.

I often get tired of waiting for the bus, being the last to get a seat (I’m at the end of the route), and sitting quietly for 40 minutes till I get to my office. When I need a change of pace, my husband drives me to the Trax station. There I board a Trax train, and usually visit, because the seating promotes interaction. Then it’s a brisk, two-block walk to my office. Self-determination is about flexibility because people change. Why shouldn’t people with disabilities supports change as well?

So are your students ready for self-determination? Are families prepared for the responsibility and opportunities of a system that promotes self-determination? If you have students moving toward services from the Division, there are some questions to ask yourself:

Do your students and families have a plan for the future? Have they thought what they want supports to look like; what would be the best setting for those supports to be delivered?

What is already being done for the person? How can these important non-paid supports (natural supports) help supplement the new paid ones they are planning. Can they identify those natural supports? Remember there isn’t enough funding to give everyone, everything; so funding in the future will help supplement what is already in place in the person’s life.

What about financial planning? Has there been any discussion on financial planning that may help buy supports or create options? Having some money put away to pay for some options may make all the difference as a person leaves school and begins seeking Division services.

Are your students and their families prepared to be in the driver’s seat? They must be prepared to make decisions on whether they will ride the bus, buy their own car, or have family/friends help.

If you would like more information on the Self-Determination Initiatives contact the Division’s Family Council (toll free 1-877-352-2221) or Denise Winslow, Director of Self-Determination Initiatives (801-538-4211).
Feature Article

Tinker, Tailor, Seller, Sailor: Assisting Youth to Select Preferred Job Placements Using Video and CD ROM

Bob Morgan, David A. Ellerd, and Brent P. Gerity,
Department of Special Education and Rehabilitation Utah State University

How did you select your career? By talking to friends? By working with a teacher or vocational counselor? By systematically gathering information on available options? By comparing pros and cons? By trial and error?

How did you end up with your current job? By focusing your energies on what you knew you wanted? By random application? By chance?

How do youth with severe disabilities select careers? How do they get the jobs they want? If the processes that we used to establish our own employment seem inconsistent and confusing, the system must appear overwhelming to youth with disabilities. Some of us can hardly describe our own meandering career paths. In an age when self-determination and self-advocacy are essential, we can say to youth, “you must choose the job that you prefer” but we are hard-pressed to provide them the tools and procedures to make it happen.

Career choice is largely a matter of selecting from available information collected from various sources. The more we know, the more alternatives we have. For many of us, however, we spend our careers gathering the information from which to generate alternatives. Ironically, we have long since made our choice of employment. It can be a classic case of putting the cart before the horse.

Many high school transition programs are well-equipped to assist youth with job choices. They use career education curricula, competency assessment batteries, vocational assessments, questionnaires, job interest inventories, skill profiles matched to job analysis, and other procedures to assist youth with job selections. But what if a program’s resources are limited? What if a particular youth prefers none of the placement alternatives? What if the youth cannot read the fourth-grade material required in many of the vocational interest inventories? What if youth or family want to consider other options?

Now in its final year of development, a federally funded project at Utah State University is evaluating a reading-free, motion video job preference program. The program, called Youth Employment Selections (YES), is undergoing national field testing with youth who have mental retardation, autism, and other developmental disabilities. Districts are evaluating the program and factors such as improved job satisfaction, productivity, and longevity.

Procedures are established to be efficient and user friendly. An individual youth works with a facilitator (e.g., teacher, paraeducator, transition specialist) at a computer terminal using the CD ROM. The user makes selections by moving a mouse or by pointing to a touch screen. The youth first makes a series of selections about preferred work conditions (inside vs. outside work, heavy vs. light work, public vs. private work environments, etc.). Next, the youth scrutinizes 20 jobs that match preferred working conditions. Each job is presented in a 2-4 minute video.

The youth views 10 pairs of jobs that match the preferred working conditions. The system for pairing jobs is similar to behavior analysis research to identify stimulus preferences and reinforcers. The youth selects one of two jobs from each pairing. After viewing 20 jobs, the youth again views a new set of randomized pairings of the same jobs. The youth can “fast forward” through a job at any time. This selection process yields a “short list” of 5-10 highly preferred jobs and takes about 60-75 minutes in one or more sessions. An appendix in the Facilitator’s Manual provides additional information about each job, including typical salary ranges, benefits, education/training requirements, qualifications, liabilities, and pictures of critical job tasks. After identifying preferred jobs, the youth and facilitator can print out the list, go to other lists of jobs to make additional choices, and/or sample jobs identified by common tasks. Based on the consistency of selections and responses to basic questions about employment, the program also provides a “confidence index” which estimates the validity and reliability of the youth’s selections.

When fully developed, the YES program will consist of about 120 jobs. Many different jobs will be shown, including child care worker, personal care aide, dental hygienist, receptionist, manicurist, retail sales person, gardener, brick mason, carpenter, hotel housekeeper, welder, auto mechanic, medical records technician, pest control worker, electronics assembler, food preparation worker, machinist, and veterinary assistant, among many others. The job tasks were originally identified through job analyses from the Dictionary of Occupational Titles. Project staff called employees performing these jobs to verify their accuracy. The jobs shown in the YES program were selected based on data from a national survey of job placements and emerging markets for youth with disabilities. Additional jobs were selected based on input from a multi-state task force assembled by the U.S. Department of Labor.

High school programs may use the YES program to guide a youth’s job placements and transition planning. The assumption is that preferred job placements make the transition process more efficient than arranging job placements and discovering later that some were nonpreferred ones. Project staff are planning research on the program and factors such as improved job satisfaction, productivity, and longevity.

Available in the Fall of 2000, the YES program will have been used by several hundred youth. The technology will hopefully provide maximum information at youths’ fingertips and allow them to make more informed selections to guide their program and chart their careers. References available from the ULRC upon request.
R
eflecting back on the last ten years of transition takes us to mandates that have strengthened transition, to innovative ideas and approaches (some that have survived, some that we wish we’d never tried), to solid transition policies and growing practices. We owe the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act both of 1990 and 1997, projects such as the Systematic Transition of Utah’s Disabled Youth (STUDY), and many visionary people for the success of the transition model in Washington County School District. Based on our reputation for providing quality services and practices in the area of transition, in 1997 Washington County was nominated by a panel of national experts to participate in a study conducted by the University of Vermont and University of Illinois. The 1999 results of that study indicated that our transition program ranks among the top five model programs in the nation. Development of such a model for transition has required a decade of change and commitment. Policies, programs and best practices have emerged slowly. The components of our model now basically focus around the three “C’s” of transition; Compliance, Community and Curriculum.

The Compliance Component has provided us with direction as to how to implement the federally mandated requirements for transition. In addition to completely overhauling our existing IEP forms, we developed a Transition Teacher Manual which outlined the scope and sequence of transition from middle school through age 22. The intent of the manual is to provide resource information relevant to Nurturing Academic and Vocational Involvement through Guidance, Awareness, and Transitional Experiences, therefore helping our students NAVIGATE their lives on a meaningful course.

Assessment plays a key part in transition compliance, after all, our purpose is to meet the needs, interests and preferences of the student. The development of the IEP is not complete without assessment in all transition areas. We continue to work toward this goal by providing published formal assessments and encouraging the use of informal materials, interviewing, and observation strategies. We initially began incorporating detailed vocational assessment through grant funding from the Department of Workforce Services. Collaboration between special education, applied technology education and Workforce Services has allowed us to economically continue this most valuable service.

We think of compliance as being a rigid formality; however, in reality transition compliance has given us the opportunity to be more flexible in providing options to students in the Individual Educational Planning process. With the emphasis for transition planning by age 14, class scheduling now takes on a clearer purpose. Aiming for courses that relate to the student’s post secondary school goals helps to guide IEP teams in determining what elective and required courses are best for the individual. Other options such as community based instruction and extra curricular involvement has also been given greater consideration because of compliance.

The Community focus in Washington County has been our greatest asset in the transition model. An amazing outpouring of joint ownership continues to strengthen our program. Many have inquired as to why people are so willing to come together to create a seamless transition for our students. We attribute it to a shared philosophy. We all want self-sufficient productive adults in our community. We have come together for a cause, that of helping people with disabilities. No one person created a “program” it has always been a joint effort. We believe in a “bottom up” rather than a “top down” approach. Our Community Transition Council is comprised of an array of expert representatives from adult service agencies, college personnel, parents, educators and administrators. The approach of the committee varies each year. We attack new goals in a variety of methods from whole group to sub-committee work. This year there are several sub-committees working on the following projects: a post school survey to evaluate
Another way in which community is the crux of our transition model is our “Post-High School” program for 18-22 year old students. We do not meet in a classroom; all instruction is done in natural or community settings. We do have a small office on the campus at Dixie College. Students are encouraged to associate with age appropriate peers and attend classes on campus.

An Appropriate Curriculum is the avenue where transition all comes together for the individual student and also becomes relevant and exciting to the teachers. Teacher created curriculum refocus has centered on offering specific life skills courses, addressing functional curriculum in content area classes and job sampling courses. All of our high schools participate in partnerships with local businesses in providing students the opportunity of job sampling experiences. The course is two periods daily and the job rotations are on a three to four week schedule. With the addition of School-to-Careers, some schools are working cooperatively together in our shared vision while others are experiencing a bit of territorialism...

Portfolios are also used as a part of our transition model. Students develop skills in completing job applications, resumes, job seeking and keeping strategies, etc. Many teachers are using various curriculums involving decision making, problem solving and self-advocacy skills. Some schools still participate in students conducting their own IEP meetings, however, we are currently beginning a school by school approach targeting the revival and/or implementation of self-determination curriculum. We feel strongly that students who have the skills and knowledge needed to make decisions for themselves have a huge advantage for succeeding in leading an independent adult life long after the support of the school fades away.

After years of implementing transition, we still face many challenges in achieving a lasting systems change. Issues such as policies, procedures, continued use of already created materials, utilization of existing resources, etc., have to continually be readdressed due to the turnover of people both in special education and in community agencies. We also struggle with “gray area” students who may be better supported by staying within the public school system until the age of 22. Many parents wish to have their students receive a diploma at age 18, which terminates their educational services. The list of concerns cannot be complete without mentioning funding. Previously students in our Post-High program ages 18-22 were pretty much guaranteed long term funding upon exit. Now long waiting lists exist and phrases such as “order of selection” are heard. In spite of our challenges we truly feel transition is addressing the needs of our students and we are grateful for the decade of change.

“...In spite of our challenges we truly feel transition is addressing the needs of our students and we are grateful for the decade of change.”

The results of a recent study of South Valley School’s Alumni (Polychronis, 2000) support the need for community-based education for secondary and post-secondary education. An alarming statistic indicates 77% of the respondents participate in very little leisure activities outside of the home. Furthermore, 22% of the alumni were not working and 65% were working part-time. These results indicate the need for leisure activities and support previous research related to the need to train students in the actual environments in which they are expected to perform. If students are taught to access public transportation, vocational experiences, community education classes, and various businesses near their homes, they could choose meaningful activities to fill their day and have more successful post-school outcomes.

In summary, students should be taught in the environments in which they are expected to perform. Furthermore, curriculum should not be centered on traditional reading, writing, and math skills. By secondary educational settings, students should be taught functional academics such as grocery shopping, keeping a checking account, and time management skills. Finally, teaching opportunities should be selected to help students obtain their personal vocational, leisure, and daily-living goals.
More 90’s child than Neanderthal, the Uintah School District’s Community Employment Placement Program has been successfully bridging the transition gap between school and employment since 1990.

This transition program for 18-22 year-old students operates a small cleaning and grounds-keeping business, the Can Do Crew, in order to train employment skills on the job. Students are paid full minimum wage for every hour they work, and learn job skills in the process. They conduct and participate in staff meetings, track their own time on the job, fill out time sheets, and develop appropriate work-related social skills such as communication, doing the job correctly, completing tasks on time and taking responsibility for the work.

Along with involvement in community organizations like the Chamber of Commerce, this business approach has shown business leaders how well young adults with disabilities perform their work by actually doing work in the community; which has led to job placements.

The program got its start trying to find individual placements for students within the community. The community wasn’t ready to provide opportunities for young adults with disabilities so the program director created one. From that time the program has conducted training in blue-collar environments using the Can Do Crew. Last year, a grant from the Utah Governor’s Council for People with Disabilities provided needed money to add white-collar focused training to the program.

Blue-collar work often requires the same skills as white collar work such as communication, doing the job correctly, completing tasks on time, and taking responsibility for your own work, but the white-collar training is helping raise skills and employment opportunities to a new level.

The white-collar additions to the training program include keyboarding, document formatting, word processing, filing, and 10-key skills. Resume and portfolio development has also been added as part of the training. Further, Community Employment (CE) has begun approaching businesses in a new way. Continued pg.12
Instead of begging businesses to open their door to a young person with disabilities, the program asks businesses what criteria they have for their employees and in turn trains the young person to the specified standard. This makes employees more competitive, enhances skill levels, and develops networks by involving the employer.

CE accomplishes this by using a system developed by Center For Young Adult Studies, which involves inviting business leaders to a luncheon round-table where job criteria and responsibilities are discussed. From there CE staff visit round-table attendees at their own place of business to interview them for more specific information about their company. Armed with information from the business leaders themselves, CE staff adjusts training criteria to local needs.

In addition to providing vocational support for every trainee, the program offers a base for learning independent living skills, socialization and recreation. Every part of the CE experience for trainees has an employment focus. Independent living and personal development skills such as shopping and laundry can be tied into vocational goals such as purchasing office supplies or employment in a commercial laundry business. Trainees also regularly plan and participate in community activities. This participation helps them develop leadership skills and an invaluable network in the community.

“Everything we do relates to empowering students through employment,” said Nola Fortine, a crew supervisor who has been with Community Employment since just after its creation. Much of the empowerment comes as students realize they are being trained within a real business. Frequently for the first time in their lives, they are paid for their work, at full minimum wage. In some cases wages have been raised to $5.25 per hour. Minimum wage places trainees at the same pay level as their non-disabled peers. Thus confidence and self-esteem improve as trainees see themselves as the valued employees they are or can become.

As they meet local employment standards and training standards, trainees are then placed, as opportunities are available, into jobs within the community. Rural communities such as Vernal often face the challenge of high unemployment. As a result, several CE crew members have requested the opportunity to continue working with the program although they also have another job in the afternoon. Currently around 40 percent of the 21 trainees have other jobs in the community.

In order to continue to teach job skills and provide job development for individuals over the age of 22, the Uintah School District is a licensed provider for Vocational Rehabilitation and the Division of Services for People with Disabilities. While the majority of crew members are Uintah School District students, roughly 40% are over the age limit for providing special education services.

In 1998, the Community Employment Placement Program was named “Service Provider of the Year” by the Utah Governor’s Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities at the regional 1998 Golden Key Awards luncheon. Mark Thompson, Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor for the Vernal area said at that time, “They are establishing the foundation that will serve and enhance those with disabilities for many years to come. It is truly an honor to work with people who are so dedicated and caring.”

Much of the public recognition of the program is a direct result of effective trainers. Within the last three years, two of the three paraeducators assigned to CE have been awarded the Paraeducator of the Year award at the state-wide paraeducator conference.
Thinking back on high school graduation, what events in your life since then have shaped who you are today? If you had made some different choices or planned differently in high school what would the impact be on shaping who you are today? As students look forward now to making their transition plans [Federal Register 300.347(b)(1)(2)], the Next S.T.E.P. program can give them the tools they need to plan for the possibilities in their lives.

The Next S.T.E.P. program has been designed for high school students, but may be used with middle school students as well. Many middle and junior high schools have used the program effectively. The format is fun, fast, and teacher-friendly. Students have an opportunity to dig in and discover their strengths and weaknesses. Parents are expected to participate in an orientation meeting, fill out a “Transition Skills Inventory” on their student, and are informed of progress throughout the lessons.

The lessons are designed to be flexible and can be adapted as a curriculum for a transition or career class. The lessons can be taught in sections or augmented with other relevant information and activities to supplement the program. Schools have used the curriculum for classes such as English, Social Studies, Study Skills, etc. The lesson manual is well organized and each lesson is structured in the following format: list the goals to be accomplished, materials needed, teacher information about what outcomes are expected, teacher and student activities, review of previous concepts, video vignette and discussion, profile activity with options if appropriate, workbook pages, and a wrap-up. Each lesson contains activities that are easy to implement and the students look forward to them within the lesson format. The materials are further supplemented with a video, portions of which are designated for training, and “Extra Step” booklets are included on transition planning, student motivation, and working with parents and advocates.

The scope and sequence of the program is to get the students buying into the idea of transition planning. An instrument entitled “Transition Skills Inventory” (TSI) gives the students a chance for self-exploration and self-evaluation. The TSI looks at areas of transition in (1) personal life, (2) jobs, (3) education and training, and (4) living on your own. The TSI is completed once by the parent, the student and the teacher. The results of these three inventories are compared and the students can see a broader picture of their strengths and weaknesses. The students also learn how to develop goals and specific transition activities that will help accomplish those goals. Students learn to put a plan into place by writing a transition plan, organizing and conducting a transition planning meeting.

This program has been highly effective in teaching the students that they are responsible for their own actions, and gives them a framework to overcome difficulties as they gain ever-increasing responsibilities for the many decisions that affect their lives. They find that if they plan for the possibilities of life, they are more certain to achieve them.

“So many things are possible, just as long as you don’t know they are impossible.”

-Norton Juster

The Next S.T.E.P. program is available through PRO-ED, INC., 8700 Shoal Creek Boulevard, Austin, Texas 78757-6897.
Transition means change and too often change means stress. Families who have a child with a disability are constantly being asked to adapt their lives as their child grows and develops. The transition from an Early Intervention Program to a Preschool Program will mean several changes for families. The transition process can be smooth if the teams involved with both preschool and early intervention work together to prepare the family. Stress does not have to be the name of the game!

Early Intervention programs provide a family friendly climate through providing services in the child’s natural environment. Parents are actively involved in the care of their young child and the training provided by service coordinators enables them to enhance their child’s skills. Families view their service coordinator as a helpful part of their life. The outcome of the transition process is to have parents view preschool services, which have different criteria and agendas, as a place that can also fulfill the needs of the child and family. Although the transition process may be difficult for families, once transition is complete and their child is attending preschool, most parents are satisfied.

When transition steps begin early, families will be prepared for the changes that will take place as their child reaches their third birthday. Ski Hi Institute at Utah State University has developed specific guidelines for the transition process which are available for programs when training personnel. The process includes four transition steps for teams to follow.

### Step 1: Procedural Safeguards

The four primary safeguards that Early Intervention Part C and Preschool Part B must implement are:

- Prior Notice
- Parent Rights
- Parent Consent to Evaluate
- Release of Information

Each agency must collaborate on an Interagency Transition Agreement. This agreement outlines the responsible agency for each step of the transition process.
Step 2: Second Birthday Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) Meeting

Although preparing for preschool can begin anytime before the child turns 3 years old, the emphasis usually begins at the IFSP meeting, closest to the child’s second birthday. Two goals of the second birthday IFSP meeting are:

• To share information with the parents about the transition meeting.
• To assess child and family needs, and to develop IFSP outcomes related to transition. Transition outcomes should be based on individual needs including: parent’s need for information, child’s need to develop specific skills and what support is needed to participate in a preschool environment.

Step 3: Transition Meeting

Regulations require that the transition meeting is held at least 90 days before the child’s third birthday. This meeting can be held 120 days prior to the child’s third birthday for families that are dealing with complicated issues such as sensory deficits and/or health problems. The primary purposes of this meeting are:

• To revise and enhance the transition plan that was started at the second birthday IFSP meeting.
• Identify a continuum of preschool service delivery patterns.
• Ensure that eligible children receive a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) on or before their third birthday.

People required to attend this transition meeting include parents, Part C Early Intervention Service Coordinator, Part B Agency Representative. If the child has a sensory loss, a representative from both Part C and Part B Deaf or Blind must attend. When the transition meeting begins, the Service Coordinator starts by reviewing the child’s current levels of development, medical and other critical information. Part B Representative(s) will describe preschool programs including the continuum of services. At this point, a conversation regarding the least restrictive environment may be useful to the parents. An introduction to the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) process and a discussion of potential IEP team members is appropriate. Additional information may include transportation and extended school year issues. The transition team helps identify appropriate assessments, evaluations, and clinical records needed to determine the child’s eligibility and classification. At this meeting the team determines who will conduct and when it will be completed. Arrangements are made with the parents to visit possible preschool sites. Clarifying the roles and responsibilities of team members needed will ensure a positive transition into preschool for families.

Step 4: Individualized Education Plan

Typically there are three activities that occur at the IEP meeting.

• Eligibility and classification is determined
• The IEP document is generated.
• Placement is determined.

Both eligibility and placement may be determined outside of this meeting, if appropriate. Regardless of whether these activities happen at this meeting or not, they must occur in the order listed. The IEP meeting must be held on or before the child’s third birthday in order to guarantee a Free and Appropriate Public Education. Once the IEP is written, placement is then determined.

If both Early Intervention and Preschool Programs follow the appropriate steps in the transition process, families will have adequate knowledge and preparation time to help them choose among the available educational options and establish relationships with those who will be serving their child.
The Utah Parent Center was asked to interview some parents about successful transition experiences, and we think we’ve found two that illustrate transitions with successful outcomes.

**Interview # 1:**
**Early Intervention to Preschool and Preschool to Elementary School**

**UPC:** Tell us the story of your child’s transition. How did it happen?

**Parent:** When our son, who has autism, left Kids on the Move early intervention program, he was on a waiting list for the Children’s Behavior Therapy Unit (CBTU). Therefore, he was placed in a preschool program in Alpine School District. Soon it became apparent that he needed more structure, and entered CBTU. He had a very successful experience there. When it was time for him to enter Elementary School, the staff at CBTU handled the transition. The CBTU staff met with Alpine district and it was determined that Nathan should be placed in a regular education classroom. We met with the principal and talked with him about the type of teacher Nathan should have. We found a teacher who was willing to learn about autism. During the summer she prepared for Nathan to attend her class by receiving some training from CBTU. She also visited a kindergarten class for autistic children that was located in the district and visited some other special education classes. She worked with us to set up an IEP and a 504 plan for accommodations. Hats off to her for her dedication! The district also hired an aide for the class. Because of all the preparation, things went smoothly. The teacher was just right for Nathan. Things were very structured, but she was understanding when he had problems.

**UPC:** Who was involved in the transition process?

**Parent:** The director and staff at CBTU, the principal of the school, and the teacher. Also the special education teacher and the psychologist who visited all the classes and made recommendations on which class Nathan should attend. We (the parents) also visited classes and talked to teachers. We all came to the same conclusions about which class was best for Nathan. Nathan also attended the IEP, but he was pretending to be a dog most of the time. I’m not sure he was ready.

**UPC:** How did people talk to each other at the IEP meeting?

**Parent:** The people at the meeting were concerned about what we wanted. Some of their goals were not expecting as much of Nathan as we thought they should. We told them that he already knew how to do those things, and they increased expectations of the goals. We were treated with respect. It was key that we treated the school well. We told the school that we wanted to work with them and get along with them.

**UPC:** What was the time frame of the transition planning?

**Parent:** We started in April for the next fall to have everything in line. It helped us to get used to what we needed to do and gave the teacher time to prepare and observe other classes.

**UPC:** How did the transition process and the IEP relate to each other? Were they separate events?

**Parent:** The transition goals drove the IEP.

**UPC:** What were the most helpful things that happened in the transition process?

**Parent:** First of all, Kids on the Move prepared us for what was going to happen. They had the Utah Parent Center come and talk about IEP’s. They also went with us to the school. We knew our rights, and we reminded the school of
that. Second, the principal was willing to let us observe the regular education classes. He brought in the special education teacher and the psychologist to make recommendations, and we all came to the same conclusion. The next year we followed the same process when Nathan changed grades, and it worked out well again.

UPC: What could have been better?

Parent: During the first year at the school after three months the district took away the aide. Nathan totally regressed. We wrote a letter to the district and the principal also wrote a letter reminding them that we had a 504 plan that agreed that an aide was needed. An aide was brought back into the class, and things worked well again.

UPC: Any other comments?

Parent: This was a great learning experience. Parents need to know how to advocate for their child and how to work with the school. We appreciate the teacher who was very observant to realize when Nathan needed someone to reach into his world and pull him back out to interact with the environment. The teachers learned sign language before he became verbal. They could be teaching him and feel discouraged and think that he wasn’t getting anything, but then all of a sudden everything they had been teaching him would come forth on a test, and he knew it! We appreciate their great patience!

Interview #2:
Transition from High School

UPC: Could you describe for us your son’s transition story and the outcome you had?

Parent: The school personnel talked to *David and found out what he was interested in doing. He loved animals. During his Junior year, Vocational Rehabilitation got involved and found him a job doing dog grooming which he went to during the second half of the day. They taught him to ride the bus in order to go to the job. This continued during his senior year as he was looking toward graduation. The team did a good job with the IEP goals, and he met all the goals and was able to graduate when he was eighteen. The part time job wasn’t too challenging since he was only shampooing the dogs and trimming their toenails. Vocational Rehabilitation helped him get a job at Petsmart and advocated for a good salary for him. They also paid for his supplies, training, and a bus pass. He was living at home, but he took classes at the Independent Living Center to learn cooking and other skills to help him live independently. He was happy in the job for two years and recently went on a mission for his church. Things have worked out well there, and he has been able to do the things he needs to live away from home.

UPC: Who was involved in the transition planning?

Parent: David was very involved and I was involved also the special education teacher and the Murray School District transition specialist. Vocational Rehabilitation was involved as well as the Independent Living Center. David’s tracker also attended the IEP meetings.

UPC: How did people talk at the IEP meetings?

Parent: Everyone was treated like equal partners. We were very involved. David was treated with respect, and the team was very interested in his opinions. They treated him like they liked him. The aide, who was his tracker, liked him. She was thrilled when things worked out for him and she advocated for him to receive higher wages.

UPC: What was the time frame in planning David’s transition?

Parent: In ninth grade the team started thinking about working skills that he needed. They worked on interviewing skills and other job skills. Transition needs were the basis of the IEP planning.

UPC: What was the most helpful thing that happened during the transition process?

Parent: The school did a lot of contacting and setting up to arrange for every one to be at the meetings. They made it easy for me. It was a huge job, and I could not have done it at the time. Also, the way they worked Vocational Rehabilitation into the process.

UPC: Any further comments about how this was helpful?

Parent: If the school hadn’t worked with David, he would not have had a clue about how to get a job. And the fact that they went with him was really important. It was a lot more professional than having his mother taking him to apply for jobs. Also I really appreciate the way the school worked with us on his IEP goals so that he could graduate when he was 18.

Summary: These stories illustrate a transition process where the team had a vision for the transition goals before they started the IEP process. Because of this vision the IEP process was driven by the transition goals and the students strengths were used to work toward a successful outcome. Kudos to everyone involved in these two true stories!

*The names of the students have been changed to keep confidentiality.
This is the fourth installment in an ongoing dialogue concerning the Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery-Revised (WJR).

Secondary teachers; you have attended so many in-service presentations (including excellent training by the ULRC staff) on writing IEP goals and objectives, that you could teach the trainers a thing or two. You know the difference between a goal and a short-term objective, and routinely integrate benchmarks into your paperwork as well. You are confident in your skills and have elevated the IEP process to an art. Your IEP’s are professional, efficient and technically sound.

Brace yourselves. Your IEP’s are worthless to adult service providers! It may be important in school that Jim, Cheryl, Cheryl, Tracey, Davalle, Mary or even Jerry is able to cross the street with 85% accuracy, 85% of the time, but this is not useful information for post secondary specialists. Many special education students have survived public school due to a high level of educational support and accommodations that they will not be eligible to receive as adults. Underachieving students or “slow learners” who have been served in special education through team overrides will not qualify for post secondary services or accommodations as adults. Some students served by Section 504 in school will not qualify for 504 services as adults. Somewhere between graduation (or age 22) and transition to life after school, the rules change.

Young Adults and Adults with Disabilities are Not just tall children with learning problems.

Most teachers are familiar with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and fewer perhaps have a working knowledge of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The differences between IDEA and 504/ADA are many. A functional understanding of these differences is essential in assisting young adults with disabilities to transition from school to work or college. Without adequate assessment, assistance and careful preparation, many young adults struggle, become discouraged, fail, become chronically under-employed or unemployed, develop depression requiring treatment or medication, self-medicate or become involved with the adult justice system. The purpose of this article is to assist secondary school personnel in understanding the essential assessment and documentation requirements of Section 504 and ADA.

Learn The Rules And Language Of Section 504 And ADA

Under 504 and ADA, adult service providers adhere to slightly different guidelines, yet there are many commonalities. Consider these generalizations:

- Individuals must meet federal qualification criteria and must provide adequate documentation of their record of impairment at their expense.
- After a three-year “grace period” physicians, psychologists or psychiatrists (not teachers) must diagnose disabilities under 504 and ADA.
- Individuals must meet one or more disabling conditions as outlined in the Diagnosticians Service Manual IV (DSM IV).
- Individuals must provide documentation and implications of functional limitation(s) that “substantially limit one or more major life activities”.
- Individuals must be “qualified” (ADA) or “otherwise qualified” (504) to receive accommodations. They must be able to perform a function or job with or without reasonable accommodations.
- Requests for educational or vocational accommodations must be directly tied to “functional limitations”. In other words, accommodations may be provided only for those deficits that are significant enough to constitute a functional limitation, and are documented in the assessment report.
- Requests for accommodations must be “reasonable” to that agency, and may not constitute an “undue hardship” financially or programmatically.
- Schools and training programs are not required to substantially alter or weaken their entrance procedures or requirements.
- Schools and training programs are not required to substitute or waive subjects or classes for individuals with disabilities.
- Schools and training programs are not required to provide free assessments, technology or other assistive devices.
- Schools and training programs are not required to provide alternative assessments, grade differently or to alter existing programs.

Develop An Assessment Strategy For Young Adults In Advance Of Graduation

A best practice assessment strategy for a young adult with disabilities may be more in-depth than what is typically conducted in some school districts. The assessments may be common, but there is an additional requirement for written documentation and summary conclusions for adult services. A full scale IQ, or Broad Cognitive Ability score alone is not adequate to determine cognitive limitations that may affect individuals in educational and vocational settings, and the Discrepancy Estimator is not normed or used with adult populations. Preferred practice for post secondary services would be to administer a full battery of assessments that would yield intra-cognitive and achievement strengths, weaknesses and functional limitations. Relevant statistical documentation must be provided and interpreted in written form. Specific accommodations or strategies would then be recommended for identified functional limitations.

Your job would be to make the documentation report as clear as possible, while providing evidence of disability and need for accommodations. Be brief, provide evidence of functional limitations and suggest recommendations for those limitations. School personnel, particularly the school psychologist, and perhaps a special education teacher, or transition specialist may generate an adequate assessment report. When this is not practical or feasible, school personnel or parents may seek assessment support from an outside agency, such as the Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS). Some DRS counselors may prefer a new independent assessment, even when adequate school documentation of a disability is available.
Use The Woodcock-Johnson As A Standardized Transition Assessment Tool

The Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery-Revised (WJR) is an excellent assessment vehicle to identify cognitive and academic strengths, weaknesses and functional limitations for young adults and adults with disabilities. It is normed for populations through age 99, and provides extended grade norms through grade 16. Cognition is broken down into seven domains, which relate directly to school and job success. Identified strengths and weaknesses can be used to guide individuals in choosing appropriate occupations, training or educational programs. Strengths and weaknesses in these seven domains can also suggest the need for appropriate accommodations in educational or vocational placements.

Conduct a complete assessment. At a minimum administer Tests 1-14, which will yield Broad Cognitive Extended, intra-cognitive strengths, weaknesses and functional limitations, Reading Aptitude, Written Language Aptitude, and Mathematics Aptitude scores. Tests 20 and 21 will identify Oral Language (receptive and expressive) ability. Administer the Standard Achievement Battery (tests 22-27) at minimum to establish present level of educational performance and need for possible accommodations.

Begin The Transition Assessment Process Early And Emphasize Self-Advocacy

- Conduct a thorough cognitive and achievement assessment prior to the graduation date. Write a summary report, outlining the essential information (see figure 1).
- Inform students about their disabilities early, and teach them to explain their learning problems and need for accommodations.
- Teach students to advocate for themselves and negotiate for accommodations that are necessary and reasonable.
- Assist students in identifying appropriate programs, colleges or jobs that interest them, and to obtain the prerequisite skills as early as possible.
- Assist students in gaining volunteer or paid experience in jobs that interest them prior to graduation from high school.
- Inform parents or caregivers in the requirements for services under 504/ADA, and help them to prepare a plan of action and support.
- Involve adult service providers in the transition process for an individual between age 14 and graduation, particularly the second semester of their senior year.
- Assist young adults to visit college or program of choice, and arrange a meeting with Disabilities Resource Center counselor.
- Obtain information concerning documentation requirements and provide it in advance of graduation.

Standardized assessment can be a powerful diagnostic tool for the assessment team when used in conjunction with observation and other relevant data.

Outline adapted from the Learning Diagnostic Clinic, SLC Utah with permission.
As our students approach graduation, anxiety builds over where they are going to live, work and if they have the support to reach their goals? Will they be in a situation where they can continue to progress? Have the preferences of the students and the family been addressed? Have I, as their teacher, done everything I can to prepare them for adult living? Working through the individual needs of each student as they go through the process of transitioning from the educational system to adult services can become overwhelming.

There are activities that can be done to assist in a smooth transition. Listed below are some ideas on how to involve the student, the family, and the school as we plan for the adult years.

Parent Fieldtrips

There are some activities that are easier to complete as a group. Visiting adult service providers in small groups has been an activity that works well. Through the work of the USDB Transition Specialist, Melanie Wilding, some of our parents have participated in parent fieldtrips. These fieldtrips are scheduled two times a year to involve parents within city boundaries to visit adult service providers in their area. While visiting adult services, parents have found that having the support of other parents and the school has made them more comfortable, while becoming familiar with various services. Visiting adult services provide our parents an overview of their roles and responsibilities related to post school placements.

Folders For Adult Service Providers

Developing folders containing information on the various adult services in the area has been one of the class transition projects. The students started this project by writing letters to many employment, residential, and support providers requesting information on the programs they offer. As this information has been received, the information has been reviewed with the students to help them become aware of the options available to them after graduation. The information packets have been placed in folders to be taken home and shared with their families.

Monthly Transition Activities

The last Friday of every month is reserved for working with the school’s Transition Specialist to develop activities which require special scheduling and are not part of the daily school routine. These activities are designed to assist in the transition process and provide extra time and effort on areas that need special work. This also allows our Transition Specialist the opportunity to work with every student and become familiar with their needs as we work toward identifying services needed after graduation.

Vocational Portfolios

In general, a traditional resume does not effectively represent the majority of our students. We have found that through developing vocational portfolios, the students exit school with a written history of their vocational experiences and the successes they have achieved. When developing these portfolios, we have tried to represent the individual student through using a combination of large print, pictures, and Braille throughout their pages to indicate and utilize their primary medium for literacy. We have identified the following areas to be included in the student’s vocational portfolio:

- Personal Information
- Personal References
- Personal Interests
- Personal Achievements
- Volunteer Work / Service Projects
- Paid Employment
- Long Term Dreams
- Special Considerations
On Campus School Vocational Activities

Our vocational program includes an on campus store the students named, “The Memory Box”. This store includes many aspects of business which accommodate all students of all abilities.

Some examples of projects developed through the store include a Deli Lunch program, ordering and selling an array of school items including school clothing, servicing the school vending machines, and completing craft items which have extended into community craft boutiques. The students have also sold items at conventions and special occasions. We have recently received a request from the blind community of the northern region to sell items specific to the needs of those with visual impairments. We look forward to being a resource center for those in need of Braille paper, talking watches and alarm clocks, labeling materials etc.

Community Work Experience

Placing our students in many types of work environments provides them with experiences to base opinions of personal interests and preferences. This also allows teachers to observe them in situations with many different working conditions to determine where they might best succeed. Some ideas on how to provide these opportunities can be through volunteer work, service projects, job shadowing, vocational training sites and eventually paid employment with or without support.

“Placing our students in many types of work environments provides them with experiences to base opinions of personal interests and preferences.”
**Traveling the Road to Success:**

**Developing Entrepreneur Classes in Your School**

*Tammy H. Houston, Garfield County School District*

The Entrepreneur Class is very exciting in that it helps students develop work-based learning opportunities. We have found that it is so important to students to develop skills now, in order to be ready for entering the work force. The class is designed to help students connect their educational preparation with their future employment goals and choices. Listed below are the skills in which each student will have the opportunity to learn:

- Where and how to find a job
- How to fill out a job application correctly
- How to interview for a job
- How to make a resume
- How to meet Health Codes
- How to fill out a time sheet
- How to start a business, and
- How to run a business - Financial Department, Advertisement Department, Stock/Ordering Department, and Sales Department.

To begin an Entrepreneur Class in your school you need to do the following steps:

**Step 1 - Contact your District Office**

Visit with your Superintendent, Special Education Director, and the School-to-Careers Coordinator.

Discuss with them the purpose of developing an Entrepreneur Program in your school, how it will benefit the students’ educational growth, what it will take to start a program, and how money raised will be put back into the classroom. (e.g., we purchased computers and software last year with the money raised.)

**Step 2 - Inquire on availability of district grant money**

I requested a small grant in the amount of $150. from the Educational Foundation Committee in our district. (You may need to ask what grant programs are available in your district.) Once you have established support from your district and have located a small grant you can continue with the following steps.

**Step 3 - Introduce the idea of an Entrepreneur Class**

Explain what entrepreneur means and how it can be beneficial to students in helping them learn the steps to starting a business and working in a business setting.

**Step 4 - Job Application**

This fourth step is one of the most important steps that you will guide your students through. We must prepare our students for the proper methods of applying for a job. A great resource to use during this step of your program is your local Department of Workforce Services. They will come into your classroom and help explain the different steps that each student will
need to do as they prepare to apply
for a job. In this area some of the
main issues that need to be dis-
ussed are:

• Where and how do you find
a job
• How to request and fill out an
application correctly
• How to prepare a resume
• How to prepare yourself for an
interview (grooming, body
language, etc.); and
• How to receive a food handlers
permit/first aide training.

Step 5 - Steps to
Starting Business

Brainstorm ideas for the type of
businesses they would want to start
in their school such as candy store,
button business or candy mug busi-
ness.

Determine what items would
need to be purchased in order to
start their business?

Discuss where we get money to
purchase items needed to start?

I have the students first decide
what they need to get started. Once
they have established what they
need, they have to shop around to
find where they can get the best
deals. They must write up all items
needed and what the cost is going
to be to begin the enterprise. The
students must request financial
assistance or a small business loan
through the teacher. The money
they are requesting is the money
from Step 2.

Step 6 - Establish
Business Departments

Once the students have decided
on their business and have received
financial assistance, they must
decide what Departments they will
need in order to make the business
run smoothly.

• Finance Department -
  math students
• Advertisement Department -
  english students
• Ordering/Stock Department -
  computer students
• Sales/Delivery Department -
  all students

This is just one way to run your
departments. You may want to have
students determine in which depart-
ment they would like to work when
applying for a specific job.

Step 7 - Establish
Department Job
Descriptions

Sample: Financial Department
Responsibilities

• Count money for deposit
• Deposit money
• Track profit/loss of money
• Pay bills

It must be noted that all money
transactions must run through your
school accounts and not through
your local banks.

Now that you have your busi-
ness ready to open, it is important
that you explain to your students
that not all businesses are success-
ful. If the business proves to be
unsuccessful, it is ok. We will just
learn from our mistakes and try
again.

One last step we do to make this
program more realistic is having
students keep a time sheet. This can
be accomplished in a variety of
ways. Two ways that have been
successful in our district are the
following.

Students who work at our Sugar
Shack Candy Shop keep a time
sheet. At the end of the month they
turn in the time sheet and are paid
with play money that can be used in
our classroom mini store. The
teacher puts a certain amount of
money ($0.50-$1.00) away in that
students name each time the student
sells a particular item or works for a
period of time. At the end of that
student’s education the teacher
awards the student with an
Entrepreneur Scholarship, that can
be used at a college or vocational
school of their choice. ■
Q: Dear Dr. Ed:
I have heard that there are some different graduation options for students who have IEP’s. What are they and who decides when the student has graduated? Can he/she participate in the graduation ceremonies?

A: The IEP team must address graduation issues on an individual basis. The IEP is the vehicle for making changes to the graduation requirements to meet the unique education needs for students, as determined by the team.

A regular high school diploma is the only document that will discharge the school district’s obligation to provide FAPE until the student reaches the age of 22. A GED certificate does not meet the qualifications as being a regular high school diploma.

Students who have completed the requirements as outlined by the Utah State Board of Education and local school district will graduate and receive a regular high school diploma. The student will also graduate and receive a regular high school diploma if they have completed all of the requirements as amended on the student’s IEP.

If the student does not meet the requirements as outlined by the State Board of Education, local school district, and/or IEP document, but the IEP or transition plan documents the need for transition services by the school district, the student may be allowed to participate in the graduation ceremonies. However, the diploma shall not be issued until the student has successfully completed his/her program.

If graduation requirements as amended on the IEP are not completed due to factors that are a direct manifestation of the student’s disability, the student shall be allowed to participate in the graduation ceremonies, but is not eligible to receive a regular diploma until the amended requirements are met.

If the graduation requirements are not completed due to factors that are not a direct manifestation of the student’s disability, the student is not eligible to participate in the graduation ceremonies, or receive a regular high school diploma until the amended requirements are met.

If the requirements have not been completed before the student reaches age 22, the student may be issued a certificate of completion or certificate of progress, but not a diploma.

Remember-graduation with a regular high school diploma constitutes a change in placement, requiring written prior notice in accordance with Utah State Board of Education Special Education Rules. Parents and students must be notified of the student’s impending graduation with enough lead-time for due process procedures to be implemented, should they disagree with the school district’s intent to graduate the student.
Book Review

“Rules 2000” Sure to Be a Best Seller!

The Utah State Board of Education Special Education Rules will be available to the public in DRAFT form, by the time this newsletter is printed. Copies will be available for inspection and public comment, from USOE or the following School District Offices: Granite, Ogden, Provo and Washington School Districts. Public hearings will be conducted at the following times and locations:

- Thursday, March 30, 2000
  7:00 -9:00 p.m. Washington School District
- Wednesday, April 5, 2000
  6:00-8:00 p.m. Provo School District
- Thursday, April 6, 2000
  3:00-5:00 p.m. Granite Transition Services (Jones Center)
- Tuesday, April 11, 2000
  7:00-9:00 p.m. Ogden School District

An overview presentation of the draft Rules and the Federal Application under IDEA-B, will be conducted and will be followed by a period of public comment taken. In addition written public comments can be brought to the meetings, or can be sent to the USOE through April 30th. Comments should be mailed to: Dr. Mae Taylor; Director, SARS; Utah State Office of Education, 250 East 500 South, Salt Lake City, Utah 84111. Following the comment period and applicable changes, the Rules will be presented to the Utah State Board of Education for approval. Following approval, thousands of copies of the Rules will be printed for distribution to all Special Education Teachers and related servers, school principals and other leadership personnel, teachers, parents and universities. Final copies should be available by June 1st. Questions may be addressed to Brenda Broadbent or myself at the address listed, or to our phone numbers listed in this document. Beginning in the summer, the USOE special education staff will be available to conduct inservice training for schools or groups on the NEW Rules.

New Personnel

USOE is pleased to announce the employment of two new educational specialists:

Valerie Scherbinske is the new Preschool Special Education Specialist. She comes to us with a rich history of teaching experience in six different states, and takes the former position of Brenda Broadbent, who is now the State and Federal Compliance Specialist. Valerie was most recently a project specialist in the SIPC (Supporting Inclusion of Preschool Children) Project, of the USOE. She holds degrees from the University of Arizona, the University of Texas, and Minot State University. We welcome Valerie and are looking forward to benefiting from her creative skills and presentations.

Connie Tait is the new specialist for FACT (Families, Agencies, Communities, Together) and Alternative Middle Schools, in the At Risk Services Unit. She takes the former position of Patricia Bradley, who is now the Coordinator of the At Risk Services Unit. Dr. Tait comes to us from the University of Utah where she has been the Assistant Research Professor in the Department of Health Promotion and Education and was the Program Director for Project SAFE (Strengthening America’s Families and Environments), a Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP) federal research grant, implementing prevention interventions with children and their families. She hold degrees from Kent State University and Syracuse University, and has presented at numerous conferences and workshops. We look forward to her association with our fine staff.

More announcements regarding personnel positions filled will be included in next month’s update. ■
he Utah State Improvement Grant: Networks & Alliances for Learning (SIGNAL) project has an overall goal of improving the quality of general and special education services for students with disabilities. There are multiple Federal, state, district, and building level efforts proceeding ahead with various reform efforts in mind. Some are emphasizing reading and literacy or other academic goals, others behavioral and social goals. A few efforts have a “comprehensive” reform model. SIGNAL project priorities and resources are to assist all the educational partners involved in reform and improvement projects to align their efforts which will leverage results for all students. According to the Federal Office of Special Education (OSEP) monitoring of states in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), one of the strongest links to improving results is the requirement of a “statement of needed transition services for students with disabilities beginning no later than age 16.” Because of this link SIGNAL staff will work to ensure that transition needs are part of project activities and part of the larger reform picture.

Many educators have participated in Systematic Transition for Utah’s Disabled Youth (STUDY), a major statewide systems change transition project for five years. Guidelines, procedures, and strategies for effective transition were developed, disseminated, and implemented. The SIGNAL project is not proposing another set of materials, but instead will proceed over the next five years to bring educational partners together to extend effective transition strategies that have been developed through STUDY and more recent district and federal efforts. This approach has the advantage of building a base for ongoing change instead of just replacing one project approach for another.

Educators and service providers need tools, support and organizational structures for sustaining the change. Tools include robust curriculum designs and access to effective instructional methods that work for teaching transition. Teachers in every district need to have, and know how to use, assessment procedures that have national and state validation as well as functional assessment checklists for their students. Support is required on a state and district level to provide tools to teachers such as those developed by the STUDY project, those developed by other teachers, and those that are available commercially. These tools give teachers a base to work from instead of trying to create forms and checklists from scratch. Additionally, districts can support staff by sharing materials across teachers and sending staff to the statewide transition conference. Organizational structures that need to be in place to support transition include connections to the general education curriculum and assessment issues. Most of the talk about accountability at a state government level does not mention students with disabilities. The conversation about this issue is too one sided, coming almost entirely from the special education community. Without this alignment between goals of the general curriculum and transition for students, our outcomes will not be as effective as they need to be in the 21st century. The SIGNAL project staff will collaborate with the Utah State Office of Education, the Utah Learning Resource Center, and others to ensure continued dissemination of effective practices.
Danelle Keith has worked as a Project Specialist for Utah’s Project for Inclusion (UPI) for the past five years. Her responsibilities include being the primary facilitator for planning and conducting training for district, regional and state level Inclusion Network Support Teams. Danelle also provides training, technical assistance and support on inclusive school practices. She is involved in planning statewide and regional inclusion conferences sponsored by UPI as well as the annual Peer Power conference for high school students. As a former special education teacher in Davis County School District she brings first hand knowledge of how schools can operate inclusively both at the classroom and building level. She is an author, an accomplished presenter (not to mention an award-winning cook, her cheesecake is to die for) and an invaluable asset for our state. Danelle has a creative flair in her approach to working with students, teachers, parents, principals and administrators that results in practical, useful information and techniques in creating inclusive schools.

Cathi Allen taught for over 20 years in Davis County School District at preschool, elementary and secondary levels before moving to the University of Utah. She is a certified TRIBES trainer and conducts workshops statewide, regionally, nationally, and now internationally, on building community in schools and classrooms, as well as effective teaching strategies to include all students in active learning. Her experience and skills are a benefit to UPI’s efforts to promote inclusive educational practices throughout Utah.

For example, Keith began by presenting a fable called Who Is the Beast by Keith Baker for the younger students. As she read the story aloud, she displayed the colorful illustrations of jungle animals in the book and a translator recited the lines in Bambara, the children’s native language. The poetic and rhythmic lines stimulated the lively imagination of the boys and girls. They loved hearing them over and over again. Soon they realized they had ideas of their own to write about.

One little boy decided to explain why he was very tired of eating millet pudding day after day. Others wrote about the kono, a giant-sized puppet that often appears to invite Ouelessebougouans to dance during evening festivities. With peers and cross-age partners, the students chose topics and helped each other write several sentences. Their goal was to produce complete stories, add pictures, sew the pages together in book form, and share their publications with their schoolmates.

Continued pg. 28
A similar process was used for older children and youth who were learning to communicate in French. Teachers from outlying areas simply canceled school and rode bicycles for two or three hours to attend the demonstrations. During the second week, Keith and Allen did the traveling, making site visits to the classrooms of these teachers to watch them apply what they had learned. Some of these schools were located in settings where the sounds and sights of the jungle were undeniably real.

Keith and Allen showed the teachers how to use the real lives of their students to plan structured writing in which they could take personal ownership because they felt genuine interest in what they were writing about, something that rarely happened when they did rote assignments from textbooks. The opportunity to interact live, one-on-one, with each teacher made it possible to customize some demonstrations to fit the personality and needs of each teacher and class.

“Ouelessebougou spurred me to rethink my whole way of relating to basic needs in developing countries, and I learned a lot about myself,” declared Allen. “As educators throughout the world, we have a lot in common.” Even now, almost three months after she returned, Keith marvels at the eagerness of the teachers and students to learn. “Like we do,” she said, “they struggle to make education their top priority. We don’t have all the answers just because we’re Americans.”
Pam Robbins, a dynamic presenter and consultant, with vast experience and expertise in areas such as Instructional Strategies, Peer Collaboration, Coaching, Mentoring, Leadership Skills, and School Improvement, just to name a few, spent two days with the mentor academy in February. She shared many ideas and resources with mentors focusing on how to build collaborative relationships and increase mentoring skills. The following is taken from an article entitled “Mentoring” written by Pam Robbins. The article discusses the definition and benefits of mentoring, and steps in setting up a useful and meaningful mentoring program.

Definition: A mentor provides the newcomer with support, guidance, feedback, problem solving strategies, and a network of colleagues who share resources, insights, practices, and materials. The circle of support is a lifeline to an individual new to teaching, or new to the building, who may otherwise find themselves, in the words of one first year teacher, “tossed in tumultuous waters of uncertainty.”

Benefits: Mentors offer many forms of assistance. Sometimes mentors start off in the role of “gofer” (for resources, supplies, information). Soon, hopefully, they move on to becoming instructional colleagues, who may, for example, co-plan and co-teach a lesson with the newcomer. Mentors also serve as problem-solvers for instructional, curricular, or student-related dilemmas. They frequently act as models, inviting newcomers to observe the thinking involved in lesson development, delivery, and assessment; thus demonstrating the power of reflective practice. Mentors also observe and give feedback to newcomers and serve as “bridges” to other faculty members who may have valuable resources to share. At faculty meetings, the mentor may conduct activities such as curriculum mapping, conversations about student work, article reviews, or study groups to develop a more cohesive culture focused on student learning.

Method:
1) Convene a committee of teachers, support personnel, counselors, and administrators;
2) Clarify the role of mentor as one who supports and facilitates resource sharing, problem solving, and feedback, separate from the evaluation process;
3) Decide on the mentor’s role and responsibilities;
4) Agree on a structure for mentoring;
5) Clarify who mentors will serve;
6) Study options and decide when mentors will find the time for mentoring;
7) Design a responsive selection process that reflects the vision for mentoring and the mentor’s responsibilities;
8) Generate a framework for training. Decide which trainings both mentor and mentee will attend together and which each will attend separately;
9) Discuss and agree on standards for performance and accountability procedures for the mentor, and;
10) Develop a process to assess the mentoring program.

Our current mentor tracks have found this information to be useful they return to their setting in the districts. We look forward to highlighting additional strategies and techniques from expert trainers around the nation as we meet with them at our monthly Utah Mentor Teacher Academy.
W
henever we move from one city to another, we will visit, check out a place to live, spend time looking for a job and generally give ourselves a couple of month’s leeway for adjustment. So it’s somewhat amazing how little we prepare our children for major transitions in their lives.

Never before has early education reached as many children as it does today. Children entering kindergarten have vastly different experiences. Children entering kindergarten may have had attended full or half day childcare for one or more years. This group experience may have followed years of home based care with parent, relative, or other care giver. As a result kindergarten programs are diverse in purpose, structure, and schedule.

As more and more children enter the kindergarten classes with a variety of experiences, they will also be entering at different developmental levels. We should accept all children at their own developmental level. Preparing children for transition to kindergarten does not mean “getting them ready” by focusing on academic skills, drilling on rules, or retaining them in preschool an extra year. School is a place for opportunity to grow and develop from whatever starting point the child brings to a new setting.

Effective transition practices are based on the realization that transition is a process that takes time, preparation, teamwork, and planning. Positive outcomes for children and their families can be achieved when transition efforts focus on four critical areas:

- Child Preparation
- Ongoing communication and coordination
- Parental involvement
- Continuity of learning, care, and services

For this article I will focus on the child preparation and parental involvement components of transition. The following tips include suggestions for preschool, kindergarten teachers, and administrators to help plan and implement smooth transitions for children.

**Child Preparation**

**Tips for Preschool Staff in Planning Transition Activities**

- Schedule field trips to the new school. These visits can include tour of the building, classroom, and playground. Provide opportunities to participate in activities in the kindergarten classroom and eating lunch in the cafeteria.

- Read books about changes and moves. Open the dramatic play area in a kindergarten classroom, create a puppet show or scrapbook with pictures of the new school. Encourage children to ask questions.

- Find out what are the rules for the kindergarten classroom then create games to play with the children to familiarize them with the new procedures. Avoid drilling them about the rules.

- Invite a kindergarten child or older sibling to visit the preschool and share experiences about his/her school.

**Tips for Kindergarten Staff in Planning Transition Activities**

- Invite parents to visit the school with their children.

- Hold Back to School Night in August so parents and children can visit the classroom.

- Send a personal letter or postcard to welcome new students.

- Plan to phase in groups of children during the first week of school in order to provide individual attention to each child.
Involving Parents In The Transition

A joint effort by school and home is needed to affect smooth transition. This means that continuity is important for parents as well as children. Studies indicate that such involvement contributes to the success of the educational program. Parents need encouragement to continue to be involved in the educational program and help their children feel competent as they move to kindergarten.

Tips for Preschool Staff to Involve Parents

• Provide parents with information about the school: address, name of principal, teachers’ names, telephone number, and dates for registration.

• Encourage parents to attend kindergarten “round-up”. Invite school personnel, including teachers, principals, to attend a parent meeting and discuss the kindergarten program.

• Discuss the transfer of records with parents and provide release of information forms to be signed by the parents.

• Create a story book of the new school for parents to read to their children.

• Introduce parents to other parents of children who will attend the new program.

• Discuss change in services for parents that may not be available in public school. For example, some preschools, especially Head Start programs, may help parents with health appointments and transportation. This may not be available in the new program.

Tips for Kindergarten Staff to Involve Parents

• Invite the new parents to a general orientation about the new school.

• Encourage the parents to volunteer in the kindergarten classroom prior to when the new school year begins.

• Send notes to parents prior to school beginning. This letter could include a description of the first day, a description of activities planned for the first weeks, suggestions for apparel, bus schedules, etc.

• Introduce new parents to parents of children already in kindergarten. The PTA may be helpful in establishing a “buddy system” between the “old” and “new” parents.

When early childhood educators take the time to help facilitate transition, there are benefits for children, parents, and teachers.

The benefits for children who have experienced positive transition activities are continuity with earlier educational experiences, increased motivation and openness to new experiences, enhanced self-confidence, and greater sense of trust.

For parents the benefits are improved self-confidence in their own ability to communicate with educational staff, a sense of pride and commitment in their on going involvement in the educational needs of their children and a greater knowledge and appreciation of early childhood programs and staff.

The benefits of transition activities for teachers are increased knowledge of the children, increased parental involvement, more resources and larger network of professional support, increased awareness of the preschool or kindergarten programs in the community.

I hope that these tips are helpful and are certainly not exhaustive, I’m sure there are many more transition tips that other schools are using. Good luck in the transition process, by focusing on the important aspects of transition, early educators build a more continuous educational experience for young children and their families.
One of the most oft-repeated questions I am asked by parents of students with disabilities is, “What will happen to my son once he leaves high school?” Also, I hear this one frequently, “How will he take care of himself in the future?” The panic in their voices rises as they contemplate their child’s eventual transition from public school into the adult world. Although parents will always have concerns for their children, their fears can be assuaged through education, preparation and planning. Fortunately there are ways and means to assist families in designing programs that will provide their adolescents and young adults with choices and resources. With the IDEA’97 (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) amendment comes specific language regarding the significance of transition planning as part of the IEP process. IDEA’97 requires that every eligible student have a statement of transition service needs, focusing on the courses of study in his or her IEP, no later than age 14. Additionally, when the student turns 16, service needs begin to focus on interagency responsibilities and linkages which must be included in the student’s IEP. Some of the agencies which become involved with families at this point are Vocational Rehabilitation, Independent Living, Division of Services for People with Disabilities, postsecondary disability resource centers, etc. As the planning process begins, the student’s preferences and interests need to be considered because she is at the center of the plan and, depending on the nature and severity of her disability, she is a member of the IEP team.

When families begin to plan different strategies to help their student transition from the public school into the adult world, they should consider several questions designed to orient the student to his/her dreams and visions of the future. We suggest parents review the following with their child:

• What are your greatest dreams?
• What are your greatest fears?
• What things might stop you from reaching your dreams?
• How can service providers and schools help you reach your goals?
• How can your family and friends help you reach your goals?

Reviewing these answers will provide help in deciding what direction to take in setting up the transition IEP.

The areas requiring preparation, planning and education in order for the student to become a successful part of her community are many. The student will need to develop various self-management skills to make this transition. In the book, Developing Transition Plans, three main categories of goals are considered for developing a program which will enable a young adult to experience success in the world beyond public school. The remainder of this article will focus on two of these categories.

Career And Economic Self-Sufficiency

Four goals fall under this category:

• Employment
• Vocational education and training
• Postsecondary education
• An assessment of financial and income needs

These issues will need to be addressed within the transition plan but parents should also take the opportunity to do some research in the community to learn about part-time jobs available or volunteer work that will provide training and experience. Parents can assist the school team with the IEP goals by visiting the disability resource programs that are available at postsecondary schools and in technical programs. These centers are set up specifically to serve the student with disabilities by providing an array of training and job skills opportunities. Learning about them in advance will enable parents to share information with the IEP team as they begin to organize a formal transition plan.

Community Integration And Participation

What types of learning must take place to assure that the young adult will be able to become a part of the community and to live as independently as possible? Four areas must be looked at:

• Transportation and mobility
• Independent living
• Social relationships
• Recreation/leisure

After establishing what skills the student presently has in these areas, goals can be developed to help the student build on his or her strengths. One of the most valuable resources available in the state of Utah to families and professionals involving life skills training is the Utah Independent Living Center. This program is set up at five different sites throughout the Salt Lake Valley. The UILC provides not only resource materials but also classes and
Dr. Seuss wrote a poem about self-determination entitled, *On Going Places.*

*The more that you read,*
*the more things you will know.*

*The more that you learn,*
*the more places you'll go.*

*Think left and think right*
*and think low and think high.*

*Oh, the THINKS you can think up*
*if only you try!*

counseling in independent living issues. Before the student is ready to graduate, an independent living counselor should be invited to the transition IEP meeting to explain the program and offer suggestions in this area.

This article has only addressed some of the highpoints involved in planning for a student’s future. At the Utah Parent Center we also encourage parents to begin teaching a child self-determination skills as soon as possible. This can begin with something as simple as giving a choice between two boxes of cereal for breakfast. Given choices on a daily basis, a child will gradually learn the art of decision making.

When the student becomes aware that he is in charge, he can begin to shape his own destiny. This awareness can build his confidence as he is better prepared to solve problems and take control and responsibility for his life. The student will also learn about the challenges that arise when faced with the consequences resulting from choices and decisions. If the student has a solid support system composed of family, educators, service providers and community members, he/she will develop coping skills to endure the more difficult consequences. Overall, this is self-determination. Wilner Cusic, in his book, *Planning for the Transition from School to Adult Life,* refers to it as a “life-long process and a combination of skills, attitudes, and environment”.

We recognize that many educators traditionally use the summer months to develop new lessons for their students. We hope that teachers who work with students with disabilities will take advantage of the availability of these Incentive Awards to encourage them in their efforts to develop exciting new adaptive art lesson plans, curriculum, or projects to meet the needs of their students.

To apply for an Educator Incentive Award, teachers submit a one-page application form with a short written proposal. Teachers receiving an award will be required to document their work and provide evidence of how they shared their newly developed art lesson plans, curriculum, or project with other educators. One copy of the adapted art lesson plans, such as lesson plans, curriculum, or details of the art project developed, will be given to Art Access/VSA Arts of Utah to place in the Teacher Resource Library at Art Access. These lesson plans are available to other special educators and artists.

To assist you in thinking of what you may want to propose to work on for an award, here are the 1999 Educator Incentive Award Recipients and a synopsis of their projects:

**Patricia MacMahon,** Cache County School District; Native American Legends and Sand Paintings unit designed to introduce 1st & 2nd grade students with communication disorders to a task that would emphasize vocabulary, written language skills, sequencing and creation of original stories and art focusing on Native American heritage.

**Larry Witherspoon,** Alpine School District; High School Life Skills Unit of students with severe/profound intellectual disabilities partnered with the school’s drama department to assemble simple plays and stage background items. Mr. Witherspoon also took his students to a professional play in Salt Lake City.

**Michelle Williams,** Wayne School District; The writing and reasoning skills of her Language Arts resource class were enhanced with hands on learning using clay. Creating a raku bowl helped these middle school students to understand the difference between specific directions and general directions. The students made a pinch pot bowl then wrote a report with specific directions of how to make the bowl and included a drawing of their pot. The students displayed their artwork for the entire student body to view. The recognition from the school helps to create tolerance of different learning styles.

**Linda Van Wagenen & Mary Zimmerman,** Salt Lake School District; This project plans to encourage students with a wide variety of mild to moderate disabilities and needs, to appreciate visual art by using current children’s literature and teaching them illustrator’s art techniques. These children, grades K-6, need to be encouraged to experience books on different levels and glean many details from the pictures they observe.

If you are interested in receiving an application for the 2000 Educator Incentive Awards, or checking out the above lesson plans, please contact Art Access/VSA Arts of Utah at (801)328-0703. **Completed applications must be postmarked by Monday, May 1, 2000.**
23rd Annual
Intervention Procedures Conference
for At-Risk Children and Youth

June 19-23, 2000

Department of Special Education and Rehabilitation,
Utah State University, Logan, UT

Schedule for Keynote:

Monday    Dr. Hill Walker, University of Oregon
          Advances in school safety and youth violence prevention
Tuesday   Dr. Timothy Heron, Ohio State University
          Educational leadership and best practices demands in the 21st century
Wednesday Dr. David Wacker, University of Iowa
          Functional behavioral assessments and proactive interventions
Thursday  Dr. Susan Taylor-Green, Principal, Fern Ridge Middle School, Elmira OR
          The High Five Program: Schoolwide Positive Behavior Management
Friday    Dr. Roger Soder, University of Washington
          Character education

In addition to the keynote presenters, additional breakout sessions will feature a variety of presentations highlighting practical and effective intervention approaches for at-risk students. In addition, poster sessions and roundtable discussions with leaders in the field will highlight promising practices developed by students, school personnel, and university faculty from Utah, the region, and nationally. If you are interested in presenting a poster, contact Stephanie Peck at USU’s Department of Special Education and Rehabilitation (435-797-3217 or speck@cc.usu.edu).

Housing Information:

• Dormitory housing ($15/person/night or $25/person/night/single occupancy) Call 435-797-0277 to make arrangements
• For list of motels/lodging accommodations in Logan, call 1-800-538-2663 or 435-797-9801

Conference Registration:

• Fee: $285. (est) for the entire week (includes Conference materials, daily refreshment/snack breaks, and canyon cookout and entertainment on Wednesday.
• One- and two-day registration packages are also available
• Limited number of stipends are available for Utah educators and are available on a first-come first-serve basis. Stipends will be awarded on May 5, 2000.
• Registration forms for all conference attendees must be received by June 2, 2000

For Conference information, forms, schedules, housing, stipends, contact Cam McClure, Program Administrator, USU (435-797-0425 or CamiM@ext.usu.edu)
Utah State Office of Education
State Special Education Rules and Federal Application

Public Hearings

The Utah State Office of Education will conduct four public hearings on the proposed revisions to the State Board of Education, Special Education Rules and federal application for IDEA, Part B Funds. Revisions are necessary in order to comply with new Federal regulations for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Federal special education law.

Times and locations for public hearings are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Contact Person</th>
<th>Phone #</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, March 30</td>
<td>7:00 - 9:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Washington School District Board Room 189 West Tabernacle St. George, Utah 84770</td>
<td>Brad Ferguson</td>
<td>435-673-3553 ext. 202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, April 5</td>
<td>6:00 - 8:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Provo School District Board Rooms 1 &amp; 2 280 West 940 South Provo, Utah 84604</td>
<td>Ted Kelly</td>
<td>801-373-6301</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, April 6</td>
<td>3:00 - 5:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Granite Transition Services (Jones Center) - Heritage Room 328 East 3605 South Salt Lake City, Utah 84115</td>
<td>Jeff Rydalch</td>
<td>801-268-8526</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, April 11</td>
<td>7:00 - 9:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Ogden District Office Board Room 1950 Monroe Boulevard Ogden, Utah 84401</td>
<td>Mozelle Prestridge</td>
<td>801-625-8742</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Approximately one hour will be devoted to description of the federal application and the proposed Rules revisions, with the remainder of the time designated for receiving public comment, either oral or written. Copies of the draft Rules and a summary of substantive changes, are available from the contact person listed on the above schedule, or by contacting Dr. Mae Taylor, Director, SARS, phone 538-7711 or Brenda Broadbent, State and Federal Compliance Specialist, phone 538-7708, USOE, 250 East 500 South, Salt Lake City, Utah 84111. Written comments will be accepted through April 30, 2000, at the above USOE address.
New Frontiers for Families

BLAZING NEW TRAILS
A Conference for Parents and Teachers of Children with Disabilities

8:30 - 4:00 • April 14, 2000
Kanab High School - 59 E. Red Shadow Lane • Kanab, UT
Registration - $10.00 • Dinner Provided (Stipends are available for first 100 registrations)

Information & Sessions:
Wraparound
Self-Determination
Medical Planning & Medication Management
Learning Disabilities
Advocating for your Child
Success in the Classroom
Behavior Planning
Transition
Housing Information
Parent/Teacher Communication

Meet Service Providers:
Division of Services for People with Disabilities
Iron Park
Southwest Mental Health
Parent Center Early Intervention
Children's Mental Health
Special Olympics
Vocational Rehabilitation
Camp Kostopulos
Children with Special Health Care Needs
Danville Independent Living Center
Disability
Law Center
Association Advocating for Persons with Retardation (ARC)

CALL or Email NOW To Register: Julie Brown - 435-644-2461
Tracy Johnson - 435-679-8824 or moetracy@color-county.net or Fax: 435-679-8905
REMEMBER 1st 100 to register can receive a stipend to pay registration fee

Announcing the Sixth Annual Utah Paraeducator Conference

November 3-4, 2000 • Provo Marriott Hotel, Provo Utah
101 West 100 North

On-site Registration will begin at 3:00 p.m. on Friday, November 3rd and 7:30 a.m. on Saturday, November 4th

Two pre-sessions will be held Friday evening from 4:30-6:00 p.m.
• Melissa Genaux “Autism”
• Tom Jackson “Instructional Strategies”

Registration Fee: • Paraeducators $25.00
Paraeducator/teacher Team $35.00

If you have any questions, contact Marilyn Likins 801-273-1843 or Carol Harrington 801-625-8898.

Put on your calendar now!
Utah’s Statewide Inclusion Conference:

Because We Can Change The World!

When: November 9-10, 2000
Where: Snowbird, Utah

For more information checkout our web site: http://www.usoe.k12.ut.us/sars/Upi/index.htm
Or call Phyllis Meyer or Loydene Hurbbard Berg at the Utah State Office of Education 801-538-7906.
The Utah Special Educator is a symbol of the leadership of Dr. R. Elwood Pace Whose vision made the Consortium, the ULRC and this journal possible.

Call For Articles

The 1999-2000 issues of Utah Special Educator will focus on providing ongoing information for educators to implement IDEA 1997 as well as a monthly series of articles entitled “Educator Idea Exchange.”

“Educator Idea Exchange” Articles
Articles for this section of each issue do not need to focus on the monthly IDEA 1997 topical focus. Educators are encouraged to submit articles describing programs, practices, interventions or strategies that have been successfully implemented in their school or classroom that improve the education of students with disabilities. Articles submitted for “Educator Idea Exchange” should include descriptions of: (1) the program, practice, intervention or strategy; (2) how it can be implemented by others; (3) its impact on teachers and the education of students with disabilities; and (4) reference for others to obtain additional information.

Guidelines for Articles
The following information provides guidelines for submitting an article to the Utah Special Educator.

1. Consider the publication’s audience. Approximately 5,000 copies of the Utah Special Educator are distributed to all special education personnel and principals throughout the State of Utah as well as several hundred to out-of-state educators. Articles that contain successful strategies, practical information and specific accomplishments are encouraged.

2. Articles should be 650 to 900 words long. Narrow your focus and be concise.

3. Avoid jargon, abbreviations and specialized terms. For example, spell out Council for Exceptional Children the first time it is used and reference it with the abbreviation/acronym (CEC) in the remainder of the article. This enables the reader to have a common understanding of terms.

4. Be sure to reference your article when necessary to give credit to other sources.

5. Include a title that entices the reader to pursue your information.

6. Articles must be written and double spaced. If you prefer, send a diskette as well as a hard copy of the article. Computer disks will not be returned. Articles may be submitted on e-mail to: cherylh@ms.provo.k12.ut.us

7. A photograph of yourself may be included to accompany your article. Photographs of classroom scenes are also accepted. If photographs include students and other adults, please obtain their permission to have the photograph published. Photographs will be returned only at the writers request when the article is submitted.

8. All articles may not meet the needs of a specific issue. Writers of submitted articles will receive notification of acceptance of their article for publication.

Article Due Dates

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<tr>
<th>Month</th>
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<td>April</td>
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The Utah Special Educator publishes announcements that are of interest to our readers by special education oriented organizations and educational institutions within the State of Utah. Limit items to one half page in length. Contact Cheryl Hostetter, Editor, Utah Special Educator, 2290 E. 4500 S., #220, Salt Lake City, Utah 84117, (801) 272-3431 or (800) 662-6624 in Utah. Announcements must be received by the following dates for publication:

May Topic: Social Skills Strategies
April 12th–May Issue Articles Due
## Utah CSPD Consortium Calendar*2000

### April 2000
- **5-8** National CEC Conference, Vancouver, B.C. Contact Peggy Milligan (801) 264-7400.
- **15** First Annual Southern Utah Autism Conference, Southern Utah University, Cedar City, Utah. Contact SUU Head Start (435) 586-8745 or (435) 586-2720.
- **28-29** Family Links Conference for Families of People with Disabilities. Jordan High School, Sandy, Utah. Contact Utah Parent Center (801) 272-1051 or (800) 468-1160.

### May 2000
- **5** CSPD Consortium. Salt Lake Airport Hilton, Salt Lake City.
- **11-12** Utah Mentor Academy at the Provo Marriott, Provo, UT. Contact ULRC (801) 272-3431 or (800) 662-6624.
- **11-12** Troubled Youth, Snowbird, UT. Contact Patricia Bradley 538-7817.

### June 2000
- **19-23** 23rd Annual Interventions Procedures Conference, Utah State University, Logan, Utah. Contact Cam McClure (435) 797-0425 or CamiM@ex.usu.edu.
- **23-24** Alternate Assessment Forum, DoubleTree Hotel, 255 S West Temple, Salt Lake City, Utah. Contact Jennifer Davis at MPRRC, (435) 752-0238 x 10.

### September 2000
- **20-22** Initial Mentor Training, Snowbird Center. Contact ULRC (801) 272-3431 or (800) 662-6624.
- **28-29** Statewide Preschool Conference. Provo Marriott Hotel, Provo, UT. Contact Brenda Broadbent. 801-538-7708.

### October 2000
- **11-13** BEST/CCBD Conference at the Provo Marriott, Provo, Utah. Contact Natalie Allen (801) 538-7571.
- **26-27** Mentor Training, Cavanaugh’s Olympus Hotel. Contact ULRC (801) 272-3431 or (800) 662-6624.

### November 2000
- **3-4** Annual LD Conference at Park City Marriott. Contact Dale Sheld (801) 538-7707.
- **16-17** Mentor Training, Cavanaugh’s Olympus Hotel. Contact ULRC (801) 272-3431 or (800) 662-6624.

*This information is provided as a service. We believe it to be accurate, but it is important to confirm with the contact listed. To obtain additional information and to supply important upcoming dates, please contact us at the number below. Current information is also available at the ULRC web site www.ulrc.org*

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**The hardest years in life are those between ten and seventy.**

_Helen Hayes_
SERVICE DIRECTORY

Utah State Office of Education

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Taylor, Jocelyn Specialist, OHI, TBI, Autism.........................................................................................538-7726 jtaylor@usoe.k12.ut.us

Statewide Projects

Behavioral and Educational Strategies for Teachers (BEST)
USOE, 250 East 5th South, Salt Lake City, Utah 84111
Natalie Allen, Specialist, Preschool BEST..................................................538-7571
nallen@usoe.k12.ut.us

Supporting Inclusion for Preschool Children (SIPC)
USOE, 250 East 5th South, Salt Lake City, Utah 84111
Peggi Baker, Specialist........................................538-7846
pbaker@usoe.k12.ut.us

Utah Learning Resource Center
2290 East 4500 South, #220, Salt Lake City, Utah 84117
Jerry Christensen, Team Leader........................................272-3431
jerryc@provo.k12.ut.us

Utah Project for Inclusion (UPI)
USOE, 250 East 5th South, Salt Lake City, Utah 84111
Danielle Keith, Specialist........................................538-7716
dkeith@usoe.k12.ut.us
Loydene Hubbard-Berg................................................538-7567
lhberg@usoe.k12.ut.us

Utah Project for Children with Dual Sensory Impairments (CDSI)
Utah School for Deaf and Blind, 742 Harrison Blvd.,
Ogden, Utah 84404
Darla Fowers, Project Coordinator........................................629-4700
bsogd1.dfowers@email.state.ut.us

Utah State Improvement Grant (SIG) & CSPD
2290 East 4500 South, #265, Salt Lake City, Utah 84117
Bruce Schroeder, Project Director........................................538-7580
bschroed@usoe.k12.ut.us

Utah Parent Center
2290 East 4500 South, #110, Salt Lake City, Utah 84117
Helen Post, Director........................................272-1051
upc@inconnect.com
Utah Federation CEC
Invites you to join Special Education's premiere professional organization

The Council for Exceptional Children

Enjoy the professional development benefits of:
• Joining disability-specific subdivisions
• Receiving newsletters and teacher-friendly journals
• Purchasing current books and other publications on teaching the exceptional child
• Attending statewide and national conferences

For more information contact:
Peggy Milligan
Utah Federation Membership Chairperson
Days: 801-264-7400

Visit the Utah Learning Resource Center Home Page
www.ulrc.org
See the updated monthly ULRC staff development presentation

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED