

Age-Appropriate Transition Assessment

AGE-APPROPRIATE TRANSITION ASSESSMENT

PURPOSE

Transition assessments are an essential element of the transition planning process. Transition assessment is an ongoing process and will help the student explore and identify their preferences, interests, needs and strengths. These assessments will be reflected in the summary of student's present level of academic achievement and functional performance and used as a basis in defining goals and services to be included in the IEP. Transition assessments can be formal or informal assessments. This section will provide information regarding transition assessment description and definition, best practice, and resources.

DESCRIPTION/DEFINITION

"Transition assessment is an ongoing process of collecting information on the student strengths, needs, preferences and interests as they relate to the demands of current and future living, learning, and working environments. This process begins at age 14 or earlier and will continue until the student graduates or exits high school. Information from this process is used to drive the IEP and transition planning process and to help develop the Summary of Performance (SoP) document detailing the student's academic and functional performance and postsecondary goals." (Adapted from article: (2007); *Access for success: A practitioner's handbook on transition assessment* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press. P. 2-3)

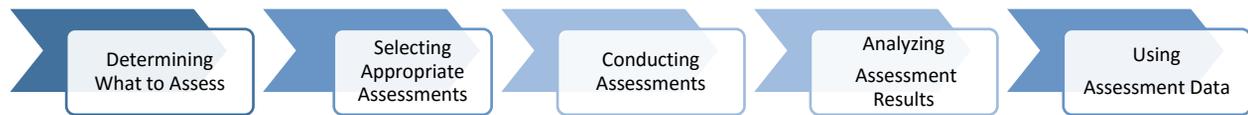
Beginning with the first individualized education program (IEP) to be in effect when a child turns 16, or younger if determined appropriate by the IEP Team, and updated annually thereafter, the IEP must include: (1) appropriate measurable postsecondary goals based on age appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment, and where appropriate, independent living skills; and (2) the transition services, including courses of study, needed to assist the child in reaching those goals. Federal law requires "appropriate measurable postsecondary goals based upon age- appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment, and, where appropriate, independent living skills".

HOW TO ASSESS TRANSITION SKILLS

In the article, *Assessing Transition Skills of the 21st Century*, (Rowe, D.A., Mazzotti, V.L., Hirano, K., Alverson, C.Y.; (2015), *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 47(6), 301-309.) (found under Resources for this section) teachers and student are encouraged to utilize a 5-step process of transition assessment. This process will take into consideration the many skills to be assessed to present a wide-ranging representation of the student's abilities and needs.

This process will provide a base for Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals and transition services along with guidance in instructional decision making.

This process is characterized by the following five components:



Source: **Assessing Transition Skills in the 21st Century**
Rowe, D.A.;Mazzotti, V, L.;Hirano, K., Alverson, C.Y; *Teaching Exceptional Children*; Jul/Aug 2015; 47(6); ProQuest Social Sciences Premium Collection pg. 301

PREDICTOR

Student Skills

Updated for dissemination by the National Technical Assistance Center on Transition (2015; 2019)

Community Experiences: Conduct transition assessments with students and families to determine appropriate community environments for current and future activities.

Self-Determination/Self-Advocacy: Conduct age-appropriate transition assessments in order for students to learn about themselves, set goals, solve problems use information, make decisions, and to identify long-range goals.”

Career Awareness: Provide systematic, age-appropriate student assessment of career awareness (e.g. interest inventories, aptitude tests) for students to learn about their preferences and aptitudes for various types of careers. (NTACT 2019)

Paid Employment/Work Experience: Use age-appropriate assessments to ensure jobs are based on student’ strengths, preferences, interests, and needs.

Parent Involvement: Share transition assessment results with parents so that parents can use the information to provide training for their child in the home and the community and identify natural supports.

Student Support: Ensure teachers and other service personnel provide ongoing transition assessment to assist in planning for needed supports and resources in school and beyond.

Transition Program: Use multiple strength-based assessments across multiple domains at different points in time to assist student and IEP teams in postschool planning.

PLAAFP

PRESENT LEVEL OF ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT FUNCTIONAL PERFORMANCE (PLAAFP)

The PLAAFP component of the IEP serves as foundation from which content for the other elements of the IEP are drawn. In essence, the PLAAFP summarizes a student’s current level of functioning about academic and functional performance skills. Within Oregon, the PLAAFP must contain:

- Overall, Strengths, Interests, Preferences and Needs of the Student (PINS)
- Input from parent(s) in the areas of academic achievement and functional performance, including concerns for enhancing the education of their child
- Present level of academic achievement, including the most recent performance on state or districtwide assessments
- Present level of functional performance, including the results of initial or most recent formal or informal assessments and observations

PREFERENCES – INTERESTS – NEEDS - STRENGTHS (PINS)

For students of transition age, transition assessments serve as basis for gathering ongoing data on each student’s preferences, interests, needs and strengths as they relate to the student’s vision of future education/training, employment, and independent living. Educational personnel should gather enough (and ongoing) information to plan other components of the IEP. For example, the following matrix could be completed for the student to help gather needed information for transition planning:

	Education	Training	Employment	Independent Living (if needed)
Preferences				
Interests				
Needs				
Strengths				

Please see the section on Transition Assessments to help determine what transition assessment(s) could potentially be used to help fill in the matrix as well as when these assessments would be most beneficial. This information can then be summarized for input into this section of the PLAAFP as well plan for postsecondary goals annual goals, and other needed services.

Until a student with an IEP exits the school system, IEP teams should continue to collect data that captures the student's preferences, interests, needs, preferences and strengths to ensure a student's transition plan continues to accurately reflect his/her goals for postsecondary life and provides transition services that are aligned with supporting the student in achieving these goals.

PARENT INPUT

Parent input and concerns are an important part of the IEP process and should be considered when developing the student's IEP. Parents are the experts on their child as they have a deep understanding of their child's strengths, passions, and personality. Parent input can be shared prior to or at the IEP meeting. However, a great way to gather parent input prior to the student's IEP meeting would be sending a parent questionnaire for transition planning along with a letter explaining why they are receiving the form. Examples of such forms can be found on the TTAN website. FACT Oregon also has information on gathering parent input into the transition process.

PRESENT LEVEL OF ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

The Present Level of Academic Achievement should include at least these three components:

1. The student's current level of performance in each academic area for which there are concerns. Information from both informal and formal assessments can help determine the student's current strengths, difficulties, and instructional needs in each area of concern.
2. Assessment information should be documented in this section including baseline data for annual goals that will be written in the IEP.
3. A statement of how the student's academic needs impact his or her ability to participate and make progress in the general education curriculum. For a transition student, it is also helpful to provide a description of the degree of match between the student's current academic skills and the student's post-school goals, as this helps describe the impact of the disability and provides information regarding comprehensive transition planning.

PRESENT LEVEL OF FUNCTIONAL PERFORMANCE

This section must describe the student's current strengths and areas of need related to student's functional performance. Functional performance is defined as the ability to apply academic skills in a variety of ways and in a variety of settings. Functional performance is also observed in how the student engages in the routine activities of everyday life, including communication, mobility, behavior skills, social skills, and daily living skills. Relevant assessment data as well as relevant observation data should be documented in this section of the PLAAFP. The section must also include a statement of how the student's functional needs impact his or her ability to participate and make progress in the general education curriculum. Once again, for students of transition age, this statement should include a description of the student's current functional skill development as it relates to his or her post-school goals. Identified mismatches can be used as potential content for transition planning.