



## SUBCOMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION REPORT TO OREGON COMMISSION ON AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER

**Subcommittee: INTERAGENCY TRANSITION**

**Report Date: JUNE 2010**

**ISSUE:** *Families and individuals on the Autism Spectrum are entering the transition process without enough preparation or information to access services smoothly. Time and resources are spent investigating and explaining instead of assisting the student and providing services.*

### **RECOMMENDATION: #1 EARLY TRANSITION INFORMATION**

**Students with ASD and their families are informed early about transition processes, best practices and opportunities.**



**1A:** Children and families will be informed of Transition services beginning in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade year at a Team meeting. | Adopt the “*Transition Information Dissemination*” process for individuals with ASD which would occur at three key points:

- Initial notification about Transition during the student’s 5<sup>th</sup> grade year. Introduce information on transition services and options so the student and family have early awareness. No decisions need to be made at this point. A person centered futures discussion, sharing written information with the student and family, such as a brochure or handbook targeted to individuals with ASD, and introduction of a Transition Portfolio would occur.
- During 8th grade year. The goal is to make sure the transition into high school transition services is smooth and that the student, family, and school staff (or any other agencies involved) are all on the same page. Therefore a requirement to have a more in depth conversation around transition related activities, including: the confirmation of diploma path; person centered planning around future/post high interests and goals (add to the Transition Portfolio); and development of class schedule/class registration for Freshman year.
- In High School. The first year of high school is when the active transition planning should be starting, if not the actual process if one considers planning part of the “process”. This permits the student and family ability to better identify classes and supports needed to help attain the post high goals.

**1B:** Students will maintain a *Transition Portfolio* beginning in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade when s/he first hears and learns about transition and throughout the student’s remaining education. Each subsequent year, the student would add to the *Transition Portfolio*.

**1C:** An ASD transition information packet is given to a student with ASD and their family: A Transition Fact Sheet; Frequently Asked Questions document; and a one page document (or brochure) about the Transition PROCESS is given to families (and students) of ALL ASD students at each point of notification. The written documentation would include information that reflects required steps of the process and with specific focus on transition considerations, questions, etc for students with ASD. As a BEST PRACTICE the written information (publication) is annually updated and reviewed with students, parents and teachers to ensure relevance. This may occur at the Local / Statewide Interagency Transition Advisory for Individuals with ASD Committees, and/or via the Interagency Agreements.

**1D:** Primary/key coordinating agencies or stakeholders agree upon what information and resources to refer people seeking information about Transition for individuals with ASD and provide links on websites to the information, such as disseminating public information about the Transition Community Network Website.



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*ISSUE: Professionals do not have sufficient information or training regarding transition processes, best practices and opportunities to assist students with transitioning from school to adult life, particularly as they apply to youth with ASD.*

### **RECOMMENDATION: #2 TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**

**Professionals are informed and trained on transition processes, best practices and opportunities, specifically as they apply to youth with ASD.**



**2A:** Required and recommended trainings reflecting currently recognized best practices are available to professionals who are providing transition services to individuals with ASD.

**2B:** Educational credential or endorsement is available to Autism Transition Specialists. Pre-service training of future Special Education teachers and/or transition specialists contains content specific to individuals with ASD.

**2C:** Transition Specialists and Autism Specialists work collaboratively to improve the transition outcomes for youth with ASD.

**2D:** Case managers, personal agents, counselors and service providers receive training and information to increase their capacity to effectively support individuals across the Spectrum.

*ISSUE: There is limited ongoing collaboration and lack of coordinated communication between stakeholders which leaves gaps in the transition process. There is also a “sustainability” challenge to continue to advance best practices in this area.*

### **RECOMMENDATION: #3 STATEWIDE TRANSITION ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**A statewide central Interagency Transition Advisory Committee comprised of cooperating state agencies, key stakeholders, individuals with ASD, and families will monitor, recommend, and advise on standards for collaboration, performance expectations, student outcomes, and transition best practices.**



**3A:** The mission and goals of the Interagency Transition Advisory Committee for individuals with ASD include reviewing, recommending and advising on practical standards for collaboration with providers of services for transition age youth with ASD; performance expectations as outlined in the Interagency Agreement for Transition of individuals with ASD; outcomes of transition services for individuals with ASD; transition best practices, publications and tools for professionals and students with ASD and their families.

**3B:** The Interagency Transition Advisory Committee is a standalone committee and not housed under any particular agency.

**3C:** Statewide Committee may provide technical assistance to local transition advisory committees.

**3D:** Statewide Advisory Committee will seek some form of funding or in-kind resources to support the activities of the Local Advisory Committees that are formed.



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*ISSUE: At the local level, there is limited ongoing collaboration and lack of coordinated communication between stakeholders which leaves gaps in the transition process. There is also a “sustainability” challenge to continue to advance best practices in this area.*

### **RECOMMENDATION: #4 LOCAL TRANSITION ADVISORY COMMITTEES**

**A local Interagency Transition Advisory Committees for individuals with ASD is established within each County or Region and to the degree possible mirrors membership and responsibilities of the State Committee but operating the local level.**



**4A:** The Each local committee may review, recommend and advise on practical standards for collaboration with local providers of services and other local community stakeholders for transition age youth with ASD, optional transition best practices, additional publications and tools for professionals and students with ASD and their families beyond what is recommended or required statewide.

**4B:** Each local committee shall be responsible for developing an annual plan that specifies the local activities, goals and recommendations the committee will adopt for the fiscal year. The plan shall be submitted to the statewide advisory committee for review and to assist in informing the statewide committee about the local activities.

**4C:** Each local plan shall include how the local transition advisory committee will engage both publically funded and non-publically funded resources.

*ISSUE: There is a lack of common understanding of the roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders. As a result, there is duplication of efforts, inefficient use or limited resources and less successful outcomes for school leavers. The system creates barriers to successful outcomes.*

### **RECOMMENDATION: #5 INTERAGENCY AGREEMENTS**

**An explicit interagency agreement between Seniors and People with Disabilities, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, Oregon Department of Education, and Oregon Health Authority (and possibly Higher Education) establishes explicit standards for collaboration, communication, consistency, clear performance standards and expected outcomes.**



**5A:** The Interagency Agreement reflects a common agreement of mission, values, goals and outcomes for transitioning individuals with ASD.

**5B:** The Interagency Agreement includes explicit language about definition of transition, transition process and transition services in order to ensure common understanding and consistency with regard to application.

**5C:** The Interagency Agreement defines roles and responsibilities of the participating State agencies, including performance expectations of each agency and performance outcome.

**5D:** Agencies subject to the Interagency Agreement participate in local and statewide interagency transition advisory committees and other agreed upon ASD collaborative initiatives.



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*ISSUE: Oregon does not have any mutually agreed upon and or recommended best practices for Transition Specialists or Autism Specialists working with students with ASD.*

### **RECOMMENDATION: #6 BEST PRACTICES**

**Implementation of recommended processes and best practices in the education setting result in more seamless and successful transition outcomes for youth with ASD.**



**6A:** Oregon Department of Education and Local School Districts provide incentives and opportunities for students with ASD who want and need to participate in transition activities.

**6B:** The transition IEP format specifically includes the areas of transition identified in IDEA.

**6C:** The student maintains a *Transition/Exit Portfolio* beginning in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade when s/he first hears and learns about transition and throughout the student's remaining education. Each subsequent year, the student would add to the *Transition/Exit Portfolio*.

**6D:** The Summary of Performance format is expanded to reflect best practices.

**6E:** Each Student will have an Transition/Exit Portfolio that will specifically include information needed to facilitate entry into an adult eligibility system.

*ISSUE: Students with ASD are exiting school without academic and functional skills required to transition into adult life.*

### **RECOMMENDATION: #7 EXIT PACKAGE**

**Every student with ASD should have IEP goals and objectives that reflect the Preferences, Interests, Needs and Strengths (PINS) in the unique academic and functional skills required to effectively transition into adult life. For example: Social Competence/Social Cognition; Self determination/self advocacy; management of stereotyped patterns of behavior, etc. IEP models for ASD students are developed, reference IEP models developed for the Traumatic Brain Injury system.**



**7A:** The Student will have his/her needed supports identified in his/her IEP, including supports for medical/health, housing, and transportation.

**7B:** Students and families will leave with an Exit Package that facilitates entry into adult services, or other post-secondary programs including the most recent testing information, vocational evaluation, present level of performances, etc.



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**ISSUE:** *Oregon does not have a quality assurance process for activities applied within the ASD community to effectively evaluate outcomes, strategies, best practices and to provide continuous quality improvement for best practices, professional standards and awareness activities.*

<b>RECOMMENDATION: #8 QUALITY ASSURANCE</b>
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There would be meaningful quality assurance processes to evaluate the identified outcomes, evaluate the effectiveness of strategies, and provide continuous quality improvement for best practices, professional standards, and awareness activities.
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<b>8A:</b> Specific data would be identified to pull related to identified outcomes, reports provided and information analyzed.
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<b>8B:</b> A resource website and online ASD Transition Tool Box will be available modeled after a Traumatic Brain Injury website.
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<b>8C:</b> Stake holders set rigorous and measurable benchmarks to track over 5 year period.
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<b>8D:</b> Successful interagency collaboration results in improved post secondary outcomes for youth with ASD.
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