

Recommendations to Improve the Young Adult Transition Planning Process in Ramsey County

A presentation to SEAC
from the Ramsey County Citizens Advisory Council
on Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities

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Recognizing Gaps in Transition Planning

- Transition planning impacts the critical services of preparing students and families for:
 - building a life that is meaningful and productive
 - life, education, and employment choices post-high school
 - meaningful social connections in new and different settings

- Federal and State legislation mandate “transition” as a curriculum requirement for all students 14 years or older with special education needs

Key Elements of the Process...

Transition Plan includes:

- An evaluation and development of an individualized education plan (IEP)
- Prior to grade 9, the IEP focuses on functional and educational needs and what services the school will provide to help meet those needs.
- Beginning in 9th grade, the IEP changes to long-range planning.
- Successful transition planning includes:
 - the student and family members
 - general and special education staff
 - and many community partners / agencies

Information Sources

Over the past two years, the IDD committee received information on youth transition services and the transition planning process from these key stakeholders:

- Ramsey County staff representing Adult Services Division - Disability Services
- Minnesota Department of Education - Special Education division
- ARC Greater Twin Cities Transition Vision Project
- St. Paul Public Schools - Special Education Liaison, Principal of Bridgeview School
- Ramsey County Support for Emancipation and Living Functionally (SELF) program - Children and Family Services Division
- Parents and Committee Members

Key Learnings...Gaps

1. A lack of information for young adults and parents regarding:
 - what choices are available; who makes those choices and when; who is responsible to carry out those decisions
 - critical decisions and timelines
 - potential challenges upon leaving the school system
2. Lack of consistency in the delivery of information and in offering services

Key Learnings...Gaps

3. Funding for state and county level resources, for public schools and transition programs sorely lacking
 - impacts the quality and level of service for all stakeholders
4. Gaps in the understanding by teachers, social workers, other staff regarding:
 - who begins the conversation: family or caseworker or teacher
 - clearly defined roles and responsibilities for each stakeholder
 - clear guidelines about the process and decision-making

Committee Recommendations....

1. Create an interdisciplinary transition council (for example, school personnel, county social workers, vocational rehab services and others) with these goals in mind:
 - Address gaps identified by this council to improve transition planning
 - Clarify roles and responsibilities of all parties involved in process
 - Develop a transition-focused 'Know Your Transition Rights' toolkit for families
 - Develop performance measures to track outcomes in process efficiency and effectiveness
 - Receive feedback from persons involved in the transition process and engage in quality improvement based on outcomes and feedback
 - Identify timelines, decision points, and implications of decisions

Committee Recommendations, contd.

2. Host “Transition Awareness” community conversations including:
 - opportunity to share “Know Your Transition Rights” toolkit
 - providing transition planning information to community resources such as ARC, Autism Society of MN, Down Syndrome Association of MN, MOFAS, PACER etc.
 - introducing transition to younger students and families
3. Make information available in languages spoken by culturally diverse students and families
 - Information in native language could be written or orally translated - some family members may not be able to read in their own language

Thank you...

- Successful transition planning has many benefits to students, parents, case managers, post high school employers and educators...and to Ramsey County
 - All stakeholders have a vested interest in every student's future in Ramsey County
 - Every student with special education needs deserves successful transition planning as they become our future workforce, creators, decision-makers, and tax payers
 - It is worth our time and effort to do it well

Questions?

Presented by:

Members of the Citizens Advisory Council

on

Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities.

Members include representation from: Family members, parents, community members and provider agencies

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