

TOP 10 MISTAKES TO AVOID IN TRANSITION PLANNING

1

Goals are too broad

Goals don't include the specific steps a student needs to take to meet that goal.

Example: Bob will go to college when he graduates.

2

Goals are too specific

Goals focus on a minute detail which may not have an impact on what the student needs.

Example: Jannette will not wear blue clothing more than 3 days in a week.

3

Goals disregard student's actual functioning

Goals need to be challenging, but should also be relevant/realistic based on their current academic, physical, or cognitive challenges.

Example: Clark wants to be a brain surgeon but has a 3rd grade reading level at age 14 and would most likely not be able to pass the entrance exam. In this case, the team may want to further explore why Clark wants to be a brain surgeon and what the alternatives may be that still involve his interests.

4

Goals are focused solely on academics

Goals don't include post-secondary employment or independent living needs as appropriate. Academics should not be the only focus.

Example: Denise is 17 and has a goal of successfully answering 7 out of 10 Algebra questions correctly, but her mother dresses her daily. Denise may benefit from goals to address daily living skills in order to maximize independence after high school.



5

Goals disregard student's local job market

Goals don't consider the actual job market where the student lives or if they want to move or whether they can obtain a job with the training or degree they are seeking.

Example: Malcom wants to obtain an advanced degree in history, which is his hobby, but doesn't want to teach and doesn't want to leave his hometown. Labor market reviews show few jobs available for history majors.



6

Goals are not student-centered

Goals are based on choices and suggestions of others, not the student themselves.

Example: Dad wants Tonya to be a lawyer like he is but Tonya wants to be a vet. She feels pressured by dad but is uninterested in her coursework and classes leading her to drop out of college.



7

Goals are not based upon vocational evaluation

Evidence-based, functional vocational evaluation was not conducted or if it was, was not conducted by properly qualified or credentialed staff.

Example: Special Education teachers are often asked to conduct vocational assessments but are not provided training or guidance on how to administer the evaluations or interpret their findings. Some schools do have trained vocational evaluators.



8

Insufficient connection to adult services

Connection to adult service providers/agencies was either not provided or if it was, the parent was not educated as to what agencies provide, service limitations, and when to contact them.

Example: Martin did not get on the Medicaid Waiver waitlist until he was 18 but there is a 10-year waiting list. Had Martin's mom had this information sooner, he might receive waiver services sooner.

9

Lack of parent training

Parents typically receive little if any training focused on their child's life post-high school, including legal, financial, and educational status.

Example: Vanessa's parents did not know that adult services are not entitlements like Special Education but are based on eligibility criteria and financial contributions may be required.

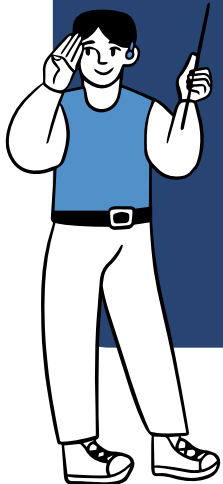
10

Not enough prep time

Schools and/or parents wait too long to start transition planning and so the student does not have the time needed to prepare for post high school success.

Example: The school did not invite vocational rehabilitation to Andre's IEP meeting until he was 18, missing out on some critical time for pre-employment or other transition services.

This fact sheet has been excerpted and adapted with permission from a presentation developed by Dr. James Williams, Chief Executive Officer, Bloom Consulting and Adjunct Professor of Special Education, Northwestern College-Iowa. Dr. Williams is a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor and an Advanced Certified Autism Specialist.



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