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TRANSITION SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH SEVERE DISABILITIES

by
Valerie A. Gardner

A Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the
Master of Arts Degree
of
The Graduate School
at
Rowan University
1999

Approved by _____ Professor
Date Approved 4/29/99

ABSTRACT

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Transition Services for Students with Severe Disabilities
1999
Dr. Jay Kuder
Master of Arts in Special Education

The purpose of this study was to examine transition services that schools provide students with severe disabilities and their parents prior and beyond the students' high school graduation. The researcher hypothesized that local educational agencies provide an adequate curriculum and instruction for transition from school to adult life, but once the students graduate, the funds and services diminish, therefore providing inadequate service to support transition planning. The research involved informal interviews and surveys with public and private schools and the parents of students with severe disabilities. A total of nine public and private schools, and four parents who had a young adult with severe disabilities were surveyed.

The results were analyzed by utilizing a statistical method of frequency counting. The results revealed that the majority of schools surveyed are providing adequate curriculum and instruction. The majority of parents reported that the schools taught their young adult the necessary life skills. Both survey results revealed that their needs to be an improvement in follow-up services.

Subsequently, the students' disability, when the students graduate, parental involvement, interagency collaboration, funding, and research, effects transition services.

MINI-ABSTRACT

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Prior to the age of twenty-one, what type of transition preparation do educational programs for severely disabled students offer, and what type of support do the students and parents receive beyond transition?

According to the results, local educational agencies are implementing transition services according to the mandates of Public Law 101-476, and the parents were pleased with the educational program and the transition services their young adults received prior to graduation. Follow-up services are inadequate with the majority schools surveyed, and the parents agreed.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This research review will focus on the transition of students with severe disabilities to the world of work. In 1984, transition was viewed by the federal government as an "an out-come oriented process leading to employment". Presently, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act mandates that a transition plan must be developed for special education students when they reach the age of fourteen. The transition plan should be a part of the students' Individual Educational Program, and the goals and objectives should reflect the students' transition needs. Through observation and experience, it appears that educational programs that teach students with severe disabilities are preparing their students adequately for life after school, but the funding and services beyond graduation appear to be limited for the students and their parents.

Experiencing transition planning for students with severe disabilities through Individual Transition Planning meetings, and from observation, it appears that transition for these students is becoming a difficult process. When teaching transition skills to students with severe disabilities in a public agency, it is always stressed to teach daily living skills from pre-school. The educational program for students with severe disabilities emphasizes domestic, recreational/leisure, personal maintenance/self-help, and vocational skills. These skills are taught from the ages of three to twenty-one. Although there are variables that affect a student's achievement, such as the teacher, the Child Study Team, and the parents, overall, it appears that severely disabled students are prepared appropriately for transition. The student's severity, their behavior,

the parents, and the funding will determine what happens to them beyond graduation.

Once the students graduate, it appears that the funding and the services diminish. Presently, state government services that in the past have provided adult training services for students with severe disabilities, are no longer available. These programs were beneficial to the students, their parents, and society, because these students had a vocational placement as an adult, regardless of their severity. With the down-sizing of state government and private programs, students with severe disabilities are being locked-out of many programs. The reason why this occurs is most students with severe disabilities require physical assistance with all of their daily needs, and cognitively, they are not able to keep up with the demands of work. The students who need minimal physical assistance, also have difficulties with being placed. So, what was once seen to parents as a salvation, now has become a disappointment. Disappointment occurs because of the lack of funding and services once the students reach the age of twenty-one, and the ability of private programs to choose the students they desire. Because of the down-sizing, the majority of students with severe disabilities are sitting at home awaiting services.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Prior to the age of twenty-one, what type of transition preparation do educational programs for severely disabled students offer, and what type of support do the students and parents receive beyond transition?

Research will be completed through a survey of transition services in public and private schools that teach students with severe disabilities, informal and semi-structured interviews with personnel, parents, and the Child Study Team, observation, and

document and literature review.

HYPOTHESIS

It is hypothesized that educational programs for students with severe disabilities have an adequate curriculum that prepares their students for transition. It is also hypothesized that following graduation, the funds and services diminish for the students and their parents, and are inadequate to support transition plans.

PURPOSE

Transition preparation was chosen because of the need to see if students with severe disabilities are being prepared appropriately for transition, and are the services available after transition.

From experience and from conversing with other educators and parents, it appears that transition of severely disabled students is of great concern. Educators are questioning themselves and others about whether or not the correct approach to transition is being implemented and if not, there should be a change in the way transition is viewed and implemented.

Presently, as a part of our agencies' educational program, the teachers perform parent interviews. From this process, the teacher converses with the parents about their concerns about their child. Two questions the parents appear to have difficulty answering are, "What type of activities does your child enjoy that might lead to some type of work when she/he is older" and, "Where do you foresee your child living in the future?" From observing the parents' facial expressions and their gestures, it appears that these are difficult and fearful questions for them to answer. The majority of parents

do not know what activities their child enjoys that may lead to some type of work. On the other hand, the majority of parents did express that they foresee their child living at home in the future. Most parents' responses change regarding future placement as their child gets older.

Currently, educators of students with severe disabilities are pondering whether or not they are teaching appropriate transition skills and if the students can generalize these skills. Parents are concerned about what happens to their child once the individual reaches the age of twenty-one. Parents of past graduates are expressing concerns about the difficulty they are experiencing with placing their child into an adult training program or supported employment. Is it because the students aren't prepared properly, or is it because the funding or services are not there? For an example, one public agency has twenty-three year olds, when the age limitation is twenty-one. These students are transported approximately one hour to one hour and a half, for approximately one hour of instruction, lunch and no related services. Is this what transitioning into adult services for severely disabled students is about? Are these adults meeting their full potential? That is why there is a need to research this topic.

Follow-up services are also an issue. Once the students graduates, who is responsible for providing the parents with knowledge about the adult services that are available, and who makes assurances that the students are coping and adjusting to life appropriately after high school?

Personally, as an educator, it makes a person wonder whether enough is being done to make transition a smooth and an appropriate process for students with severe disabilities and their parents. Hopefully, by examining this issue, the questions will be answered and

appropriate services will be provided to the students and their parents.

The subsequent chapters will focus on the varying aspects of transition of severely disabled students and their families. Surveys, document and literature review, and informal and semi-structured interviews will attempt to explain the many facets of transition.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Efforts to prepare students with disabilities for transition from school to adult life has a thirty year history, according to Halpern (1992). Until the passage of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act, Public Law 94-142, which led to the Individual with Disabilities Act, Public Law 101-476, transition of students with disabilities from school to adult life was not taken seriously. Presently, local educational agencies are mandated to supply students with the necessary means to effectively mainstream into society once they graduate from high school.

Researchers, professionals, paraprofessionals, and parents have different views about transition. When transition was viewed as an important and complex component of education of students with disabilities in 1984, the U.S. Office of Special education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) defined transition as an "outcome-oriented process encompassing a broad array of services and experiences that lead to employment" (Will,1984). Many researchers at that time, and since then, have viewed and defined transition in a variety of ways. But the overall sentiment is that when special education students transition, the students should be viewed holistically, not just for employment. One way to measure the success of transition programs is by examining the "quality of life" of individuals following transition.

Quality of Life and Transition

Quality of life involves many factors and is defined on an individual basis. What may be a quality of life for one, may not be a quality for another. Taylor and Bogdam (1990) define the quality of life as:

Quality of life is a matter of subjective experience. That is to say, the concept has no meaning apart from what a person feels and experiences. As a corollary to the first proposition, people may experience the same circumstances differently.

What enhances one person's quality of life may detract from another's.

Since quality of life appears to be an important aspect of transition for students with disabilities, in 1985, Halpern examined the quality of life of mentally challenged students that had transition from high school to adult life. He suggests that the domains he proposed have similarities to Maslow's "hierarchy of needs" (Maslow, 1970). Halpern's theory lead to three basic domains for classifying quality of life outcomes. They are: a) Physical and material well-being, b) Performance of a variety of adult roles, and c) A sense of personal fulfillment.

Physical and material well-being involves four outcomes: a) physical and mental health, b) food, clothing, and lodging, c) financial security, and d) safety from harm.

Performance of Adult Roles includes: a) mobility and community access, b) vocation, career, and employment, c) leisure and recreation, d) personal relationships and social networks, e) educational attainment, f) spiritual fulfillment, and g) citizenship.

Personal Fulfillment outcomes includes: a) happiness, b) satisfaction, and c) a sense of well-being.

Forty-one follow-up and follow-along studies of postschool outcomes of students with disabilities were reviewed by Halpern, to determine which domains that he had proposed, had been the utmost importance to colleagues in regard to the quality of life for special education students.

The results were that all studies contained information in reference to career and development. Three quarters of the research studies reported that financial security was studied. Educational attainment was studied by slightly half of the researchers, and close to half of the studies addressed personal relationships and social networks. According to Halpern, the most conspicuous exclusion from many of the studies was the personal fulfillment domain, in which numerous researchers have disputed that by omitting this particular domain, the other domains lose their significance. Many researchers have examined the quality of life theory of transitioning students with disabilities from high

school to adult life. Some examples include: Schalock and Keith (1990), who created a quality of life scale that was developed through informants' judgments about four domains: a) competence, b) independence, c) integration, and d) satisfaction. Heal, Harner, Novak, Amado, and Chadsey-Rusch (1993) developed a quality of life interview schedule that assists individuals who are mentally challenged, to express their satisfaction or dissatisfaction with three areas of their lives: a) home and the community, b) work, c) friends, and d) recreation. Cummin (1993), developed a comprehensive scale that included objective and subjective indicators in seven domains: a) material well-being, b) health, c) productivity, d) intimacy, e) safety, f) place in the community, and g) emotional well-being.

According to Heal, Khoju, and Rusch (1997), although numerous researchers have entered articles into professional literature based on the quality of life of students with disabilities, the most central empirical question in assessing the quality-of-life outcomes of adolescent rearing is "What features of a youth's background dispose him or her to a high quality of life?"

Parents' views on transition corresponds to the theories stated, because all parents want their children, with or without a disability, to have a quality of life before and after transitioning from high school to adult life.

According to Ferguson, Ferguson, & Jones, (1988), parents view transition in three ways: a) bureaucratic transitions, b) family life transitions, and c) status transitions. Qualitative research was conducted on fifteen families who had a child or children who were severely cognitively disabled. There were seventeen youth or young adults involved in the study. Interviews were based on parents' theory of transition of students with disabilities before and after Public Law 94-142. The results revealed that most of the parents in both generations agreed that once their child reached the age of twenty-one, transition was considered to consist of three distinct categories: (a) bureaucratic transition, (b) family life transition, and (c) status transition.

Bureaucratic transition displayed the most generational variation. Bureaucratic transition is the process in which agencies and professionals are involved with the family in changing from representatives of the special education system, to representatives of the adult service system. Family life transition involves any disruption or changes to the family's routine, such as a young adult moving from high school to adult services. Status transition is a process that occurs when a son or daughter's status changes from child to adult. For the majority of parents that were interviewed, bureaucratic transition and family life transition held much more significance than status transition. As for quality of life, Rose Tillman, a parent from the interview states:

I think if I could say anything that is broad {about parents}, it would be that they want a life for their kid where this person looks secure and happy. And that means a variety of things to people. I mean you can break that down a lot of ways... but basically what we're talking about is quality of life. And those things boil down to having a place to live. Having money, Having friends. And having a job to do that either earns them a living or is something to do everyday that has dignity and worth, instead of just sitting around. So it breaks down a lot of different ways, but I think the overall heading would be something trite like "a happy life."

Public Laws

In 1990, congress amended Public Law 94-142, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Public Law 101-476. This law mandates that transition plans be included in students' Individual Educational Plan (IEP) by the time the students reaches the age of 16. The IDEA, Section 602 (a), definition of transition is:

A coordinated set of activities for a student, designed within an outcome-oriented process, which promotes movement from school to post-school activities, including post-secondary education, vocational training, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent

living, or community participation. The coordinated set of activities shall be based upon the individual student's needs, taking into account the student's preferences and interests, and shall include instruction, community experiences, the development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives, and, when appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation (Education of the Handicapped Act Amendments of 1990, P.L. 101-476, Section 602 (a) [20 U.S.C. 1401 (a)]).

If a student is at risk of dropping out or has a severe disability, transition planning can begin at the age of 14. Since this research project is focusing on students who have severe cognitive disabilities, the introduction section is based on transition services pertaining to these individuals. Section 602(a)(2) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act states:

Although the statute does not mandate transition services for all students beginning at age 14 or younger, the provision of these services could have a significantly positive effect on the employment and independent living outcomes for many of these students in the future, especially for students who are likely to drop out.

Also, a quote from the Report of the House Committee on Education and Labor states:

Although this language leaves the final determination of when to initiate transition services for students under 16 to the IEP process, it nonetheless makes it clear that Congress expects consideration to be given to the need for transition services for some students by age 14 or younger. The Committee encourages this approach because of their concern that age 16 may be too late for many students, particularly those at risk of dropping out of school and those with the most severe disabilities. Even for those students who will stay in school until age 18, many will need more than two years of transitional services. Students with disabilities are now dropping out of school before age 16, feeling that the education system has little to offer them. Initiating services at a younger age will be critical (House Report 101-544, 10 (1990)).

Follow-up studies of reports of individuals who leave school reveal that the dropout rates for students who have a learning disability are 36%, 42%, and 56%, respectively (Adelman & Vogel, 1990; Edgar, 1987; Malcom, Polatajo, & Simmons, 1990).

When developing special education students' Individual Educational Plan (IEP) that includes an Individual Transition Plan (ITP), the IEP should include the following components: a) post-secondary outcomes, b) transition relevant goals and objectives, and c) responsibilities and timelines. Long-range planning, post-secondary outcomes, or long range goals should be defined for one or more of the following areas: a) post-secondary education that includes a vocational program, b) employment, and 3) independent living (community involvement, personal management, and residential arrangement). The determination of what transition services are needed is based on the participants that are involved in the IEP/ITP meeting, such as the student, the student's classroom teacher, a school representative, the parents, and the public agency, when transition services are being discussed. During the IEP/ITP meeting, the Individual with Disability Education Act mandates when suitable, there should be a statement of each public and/or private participating agency's responsibility prior to the students departure from the school setting. Prior to the age of 21, the local educational agency has the primary responsibility of providing transition services to special education students.

Several researchers have examined the IEP/ITP components to see if the plans were prepared and implemented properly. Stowitschek and Kelso (1989) theorize that the field of special education may be in jeopardy of making the same mistakes with the ITPs as were made with the IEPs. The potential problem areas include: a) relevance and quality, b) accountability, c) feasibility, and d) preparedness. Lawson and Everson (1993), conducted a study that consisted of a nationwide sample of transition statements of 61 deaf-blind students. The results revealed that the cause for including a statement of required transition services and IDEA's mandates were not understood by most of the individuals who were preparing students' IEPs. There was no comprehensive description

of action steps, which suggested little transdisciplinary involvement in transition planning. Also, the format of the transition planning documents had limited important information. Beattie, Grigal, Test, & Wood (1997), also conducted a study that consisted of 94 randomly selected students that were 18 and older. They evaluated each transition component of the IEP, by utilizing an altered version of the Statement of Transition Services Review Protocol. The instrument consisted of 25 questions that were divided into four sections: a) demographics, b) transition component format, c) compliance with IDEA's mandate, and d) reflection of best practices. Demographics information consisted of gender, category of disability, number of years the transition component had been in place, and graduation document to be earned. Transition format included information such as family input, expansion of goals, timelines, and follow-up. Compliance with IDEA's mandate included outcome areas in which goals were written. Outcome areas consisted of postsecondary education, independent living, and the people involved in the creation of the transition component. Reflection of best practices consisted of special education best practices, such as integrating students with and without disabilities, and evaluation procedures. The results indicated that the majority of transition components were considered to be in compliance with many of IDEA's mandates, but most were insufficient in many of the elements that reflect best practices in transition planning and special education. Distinct findings revealed: a) Vague statements of student outcomes and activities, responsible personnel, and timelines, b) Shortage of long-range planning and annual revision, and c) Lack of best practices, which includes opportunities for regular interaction with people without disabilities and modification of activities or materials.

Local Educational Agency and Transition

As stated previously, the local educational agency /school has the primary responsibility of preparing students with disabilities for transition from school life to adult life. These public agencies are mandated by the Individual with Disabilities Act to

provide transition services to students with disabilities until they reach the age of 21. Beyond graduation, it is the responsibility of the adult service agency. High school transition preparation should focus on post-school activities and a coordinated set of activities that are designed within an "outcome-oriented process". Postschool activities should consist of activities that are designed to facilitate movement of students with disabilities from public school to postschool. Postschool activities include: a) postsecondary education, b) vocational training, c) integrated employment (including supported employment), d) continuing and adult education, e) adult services, f) independent living, or g) community participation. A coordinated set of activities is defined as: To prepare students with disabilities for postschool activities, they must have a set of coordinated activities. These activities should include: a) instruction, b) community experiences, and c) developing employment and other post-school adult living objectives. A coordinated set of activities according to the Secretary of Education are:

"(1) the linkage between each of the component activities that comprise transition services, and (2) the interrelationship between the various agencies that are involved in the provision of transition services to a student" (U.S. Department of Education, 1992a, p.44644).

An outcome-oriented process is define as the results or the intended effect of the coordinated set of activities within transition services.

According to the New Jersey Partnership for Transition from School to Adult Life for Youth with Disabilities, the IDEA does not specify where transition services should be provided, but the definition of transition services in the Individual with Disability Education Act includes, that the coordinated set of activities that the IEP team develops to enhance the student's progress to postschool life, must consist of: a) instruction, b) community experiences, c) the development of employment and other post-school adult

living objectives, and d) if appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation [300.18(b)(2)].

Preparation of all students with disabilities should focus on the most essential skills that will serve them well in a variety of adult situations. These skills include: a) the ability to assess themselves in the level of their skills and abilities, including the needs associated with their ability, b) awareness of the accommodations they require because of their ability, c) knowledge of their civil rights to these accommodations through public laws, and d) self-advocacy skills that are required to express their needs in the workplace, educational institutions, and in the community. Students with severe disabilities are cognitively limited. That is why parents and child advocates are so important in their lives. Instruction for these individuals to express their needs and wants can be completed in a variety of ways. According to Reichle (1997), students with severe disabilities need some comprehensible form in which to express their preference. This can be done by the nodding of their head yes or no, other gestural movements in the context of the actual activity, vocal sounds, and/ or some type of augmentative communication device.

Preparing students with severe disabilities for transition can be a difficult task. Haring (1996) states:

Research should be a technology for problem solving. Certainly there are many problems that need to be solved in the development of effective environments and strategies that work for people with severe disabilities.

In the late 1970's, education services for cognitively severe students made a major shift from focusing on the usage of early childhood models, to focusing on life skill models that include prioritizing "age appropriateness". Curtain, Nieptupski, Hamre-Nietupski, and Shrikanth (1997), curriculum research suggests that instruction for individuals with severe disabilities should concentrate on life skill instruction, with an increasing emphasis on social skills.

Current research suggests a community-based curriculum is highly appropriate for students with severe disabilities. With this particular curriculum, students initially learn and practice a skill such as buying food in the classroom, and eventually practice the skill in the community or at home. This is important, because many cognitive severe students have difficulties with transferring what they have learned in the classroom to the actual world. Falvey (1989) states:

Community environments frequented by the student and by his or her family now and in the future should be the environments used to directly teach.

Most schools have been hesitant with utilizing this approach because of the difficulty in staffing, funding, transportation, liability issues such as, who is responsible for injury or property damage when students are involved in community training, safety of students and staff, access to the community, and administrative, teacher, and parental support. According to Falvey (1989), there are many ways to overcome this problem. Especially with the passage of IDEA's definition of "community experiences", that are listed in transition services.

In providing students with severe disabilities community-based experiences for employment training, the local educational agency has to comply with the Fair Labor Standards Act. The Fair Labor Standard Act (FLSA) ensures that all people are not exploited in the workplace. Community-based vocational education programs for students with disabilities fall under FLSA. This program was developed to provide structured educational activities to students with disabilities, that will lead to employment in their community. According to D'Amimico (1991), community-based vocational education has been demonstrated to be an extremely effective strategy for improving employment outcomes. Community-based vocational education is a systematic way to teach students with severe disabilities life skills, and has been viewed by researchers as being the primary methodology for preparing these students transition skills from school to adult life. The National Longitudinal Transition Study of Special

Education Students, Wager & Shaver (1989) pointed out that community vocational education programs have promise for improving outcomes for students with disabilities. The study also found that programs that are occupational oriented are significantly related to lower incidences of school drop outs, and the adolescents that are involved in community-base vocational education programs were substantially more likely to be employed after high school.

Components of the community-based vocation educational model consists of: a) vocational exploration, b) vocational assessment, c) vocational training, and d) cooperative vocational education. Although, over the past ten years these components were viewed as necessary requirements to effective instruction in the community, when teaching students with severe disabilities, the use of all of the components is not necessary.

Guidelines for assisting community-based vocational education instruction are important, so that everyone (students, parents, educators, employers, and employees), comprehends the intentions and the implementation of the model. These guidelines were developed by the Employment Standards Administration (Department of Labor), the Office of Vocational and Adult Education (Department of Education), and the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (Department of Education). The Statement of Principal is as follows:

The U.S. Department of Education and Labor are committed to the continued development and implementation of individual education programs, in accordance with Part B, that will facilitate the transition of students with disabilities from school to employment within their communities. This transition must take place under conditions that will not jeopardize the protections afforded by FLSA to program participants, employees, employers, or programs providing rehabilitation services to people with disabilities.

Where ALL of the following criteria are met, the U.S. Department of Labor will

NOT assert an employment relationship for purposes of the Fair Labor Standards Act.

1. Participants will be youth with physical and/or mental disabilities for whom competitive employment or above the minimum wage level is not immediately obtainable and who, because of their disability, will need intensive on-going support to perform in a work setting.
2. Participation will be for vocational exploration, assessment, or training in a community-based placement work site under the general supervision of public school personnel.
3. Community-based placements will be clearly defined components of individual education programs developed and designed for the benefit of each student. The statement of needed transition services established for the exploration, assessment, training, or cooperative vocational education components will be included in the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP).
4. Information contained in a student's IEP will not have to be made available; however, documentation as to the student's enrollment in the community-based placement program will be made available to the Department of Labor and Education. The student and parent or guardian of each student must be fully informed of the IEP and the community-based placement component and have indicated voluntary participation with the understanding that participation in such a component does not entitle the student-participant to wages.
5. The activities of the students at the community-based placement site do not result in an immediate advantage to the business. The Department of Labor will look at several factors.

(a) There has been no displacement of employees, vacant positions have not been filled, employees have not been relieved of assigned duties, and the students are not performing services that, although not ordinarily performed by employees, clearly are of benefit to the business.

(b) The students are under continued and direct supervision by either representatives of the school or by employees of the business.

(c) Such placements are made according to the requirements of the student's IEP not to meet the labor needs of the business.

(d) The periods of time spent by the students at any one site or in clearly distinguishable job classification are specifically limited by the IEP.

6. While the existence of an employment relationship will not be determined exclusively on the basis of the number of hours, as a general rule, each component will not exceed the following during any one school year:

Vocational exploration-5 hours per job experienced

Vocational assessment-90 hours per job experienced

Vocational training-120 per job experienced.

7. Students are not entitled to employment at the business at the conclusion of their IEP. However, once a student has become an employee, the student cannot be considered a trainee at that particular community-based placement unless in a clearly distinguishable occupation. (U.S. Department of Education, 1992).

Several studies examined Local Educational Agencies' transition preparation of students with disabilities. A study was completed by Conderman, Defur, & Katsiyannis (1998), through a survey that examined 49 state agencies about state-level implementation of transition services for students with disabilities. The transition coordinator or the transition system change contact person completed the survey. With the passage of the Individuals with disabilities Education Act, P.L. 101-476, funding was made available to states and localities to promote and improve systematic change of transition services, including the quality, access, and availability of service. Funding priority was focused on increased participation of parents and adolescents in the transition process, increased utilization of vocational sites and other community-based settings, and a renovation of interagency collaboration. The results revealed that: a)

Participation in Federal Initiatives- 44 states received special education change grants. Thirty received transition grants between 1991-1993, shortly after the passing of IDEA in 1990, and before the passage of the School to Work Opportunities Act of 1994. Twenty-nine states reported that they received a school-to-work grant, and 15 states received the grant in 1995. (b) Legislation and Policies- Seventeen states reported the passing of state legislation to address special education transition services. Mandates of legislation varied, but consisted of transition policies in the following areas: (1) student and family involvement =13 states, (2) the promotion of independent living skills = 12 states, (3) community-based work experience =11 states, (4) participation in regular vocational education =9 states, (5) participation in higher education = 9 states, (6) establishment of local community transition teams = 8 states, and (7) participation in special vocational education = 5 states. Twenty-six states reported state level policies and procedures that addressed transition services that exceeded relevant IDEA mandates. The most frequently noted were: (1) requirements regarding community-based work experience = 22 states, (2) student and family involvement = 20 states, and (3) establishing local community transition teams = 18 states. (c) State Incentives- Forty-three states indicated the availability of numerous incentives to increase adequate transition practices. Thirty-six identified specific incentives used. Areas that were emphasized included: (1) the establishment of local community transition teams = 29 states, (2) the expansion of student and family involvement = 28 states, (3) the implementation of community-based work experience = 25 states, and (4) the usage of general vocational education programs to meet the vocational requirements of students with disabilities = 28 states. The State was the most popular way of assisting localities in implementing effective transition programs with 38 states, conference sponsorship included 32 states, and stipends to professionals for skill development included 23 states. Additional incentives consisted of the funding of pilot programs, state assistance for vocational instructors, and state funding for supported employment. (d) Compliance Monitoring Procedures- Thirty-four

states reported the existence of local education agency monitoring procedures that were specified to comply with federal or state transition regulations. These procedures were developed by the state. Specific monitoring procedures were established to assess: (1) student and family involvement = 29 states, (2) vocational programs developed for students with disabilities = 19 states, (3) community-based work experiences = 16 states, and (4) accessibility to general vocational education by student with disabilities = 15 states. (e) Interagency Collaboration- Forty- two states indicted the existence of cooperative agreements in the implementation of transition services for students with disabilities. Eight states were in the process of establishing and implementing cooperative agreements. Agreements included: (1) agencies and institutions such as vocational rehabilitation = 41 states, (2) mental retardation services = 22 states, (3) mental health services = 20 states, (4) vocational education = 22 states, (5) job service agencies = 15 states, and (6) higher education = 14 states. There were additional agencies such as the department of labor, social services, children and families, and adult education. (f) Training and technical assistance- All of the states reported that they have provided training to local education agencies in developing and implementing transition services. Training in 30 states was on the volunteer basis, and mandated in 13 states. Training was targeted towards special education teachers in 47 states, administrators in 45 states, parents in 41 states, adult service agencies in 39 states, vocational personnel in 35 states, students in 24 states, and higher education personnel and/or employers in 21 states. Eighteen states provided the opportunity for statewide training to policymakers. Other participants were school counselors, rehabilitation personnel, and general education personnel. (g) Opportunities and Challenges- The majority of the participants in the study reported that transition service training is the most effective means in promoting the implementation of transition services. Thirty-seven states reported that the availability of workshops, cross-disciplinary training, and technical assistance that targets local needs, were the most effective means in influencing the implementation of

transition services. Twelve states found incentives such as grants and appropriate legislation mandates effective in the improvement of transition practice. Additional strategies included using special projects that focused on employment agencies and businesses. The most challenging to implement was according to 34 states, the coordination and training of specific personnel and expanded interagency collaboration. Nine-teen states reported overcoming funding limitation and distinct challenges to provide transition services in rural areas. According to Condermand, Defur, & Katsiyannis (1998), state education agencies across the United States have developed frameworks for a transition service system in response to new policies, procedures, mandates, and incentives, as the original policymakers intended. They believe that the results indicate a positive relationship between federal policy and state education incentives. However, the researchers question, "Are youths with disabilities experiencing greater success as young adults than they had prior to the incorporation of the transition requirements into IDEA?" According to recent research, efforts have revealed through documentation, favorable transition outcomes because of systemic change projects (U.S. Department of Education, 1995).

However, several researchers are reporting transition services in local education agencies as being inadequate, and are not meeting the needs of students with disabilities and their parents. According to Gallivan- Fenlon (1994), Many states have reported to adopt transition models that include: community-based vocational training during secondary school, the use of collaborative transition teams that involves all participating disciplines, consumers, and agencies, the development and implementation of individualized transition plans (ITPs) in the final years of high school, important degrees of family involvement, and the coordination and creation of existing and new services through formal interagency agreements that result in integrated community employment. Although this adoption has reportedly occurred, specific data on how these or other approaches are being implemented, or whether outcomes are successful for youth with

disabilities is lacking. The models explain how to implement transition programs, but does not reveal how they are realistically implemented or experienced by the young adults or service providers. Panzer, Pratt & Wilcox (1989), was reported to have conducted one of the first studies that examined transition from the perspectives of the participants. Utilizing a state-wide survey that consisted of parents, special educators, and adult service agencies, the results revealed: (a) transition information was not reaching the parents and they were not aware of what a transition plan was, even though schools and agencies reported that they delivered the information, (b) transition team participants were not satisfied with the extent of their participation in the planning process, (c) The parents had a very different perception about the extent of transition planning than the teachers, counselors, and the providers, and (d) there were great differences between what parents want for their children, and what they believe will be available for them. Gallivan-Fenlon (1994), completed a study that focused on learning how individuals understand the experiences, interactions, and events that encompass the transition process. The author interviewed 11 high school students that were classified with a moderate or severe disability. The secondary schools were chosen by who had the most effective transition services, that met at least two criterion of "best practices", which included community-based instruction for the students with disabilities, and a transition coordinator who had been assigned to facilitate the transition process to adult services for students who were graduating. Three non-profit adult agencies were included in the study. A day treatment program, a sheltered workshop, and supported employment. Seven employers of young adult participants were also interviewed. The businesses included three restaurants, a pharmacy, a small local bakery, a discount department store, and a plumbing warehouse. The results indicated three broad categories, consisting of eight major themes: (a) Differing Expectation and Aspiration consisted of: Young adults' aspirations and expectations included paid community employment and continuous opportunities to participate in community life, in a typical

young adult fashion. Some family, adult providers, and school personnel expectations were similar to the young adults, but most had restrictive insights of employment, community living, and community participation for the young adults. (b) "I like to go to work. I ain't gonna stay home and sleep": Typical aspirations for young adult life. This was the response when young adults were asked about their future. (c) "Each of the graduating students fits in one of those settings": Discrepant/limiting expectations for young adults and prevalent beliefs in the continuum of services model. (d) Transition Activities and Experiences: Common themes across programs and people who were involved the study were lack of family participation, lack of knowledge and collaboration among transition teams, and late transition planning. In regard to the curriculum and vocational training programs: "They've taught him...all the things he needs to do out in the community" : Views of special education curriculum. (e) " We're running out of time!" : Last minute transition planning. (f) "I know nothing about it. I'm about as green as anything" : Transition team members' lack of knowledge. (g) "It's mostly professionals sharing information and deciding what to do" : Low levels of family participation in the transition process.(h) Initial outcomes after the first 6 months following graduation consisted of, for five of the students, sitting at home, either receiving no services or waiting for another employment opportunity to be created by a particular adult agency after a previous job collapsed. Other outcomes included young adults being placed in a day treatment program, a sheltered workshop, and supported employment., and (i) "She needs to be out working, not sitting home watching TV": The dismal nature of most transition outcomes. The author notes that this study was completed before the passage of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (1990).

Adult Services

When students with severe disabilities reach the age of twenty-one, them, along with their families, transition into an "uncertain" phase in life, adult-life. It is a fearful experience to the students, as well as for the parents. Adult services have been questioned

in the past and the present by parents and professionals about the services students with disabilities receive once they graduate from high school. According to Seal (1985), For these parents graduation of a child from the public school system is a prospect whose risks often seem to overshadow the rewards.

In reviewing the New Jersey Partnership for Transition From School to Adult Life resource manual, it appears to be various programs and incentives that assist students with disabilities and their families with transition services once the students graduate from high school. Such programs and incentives include: (a) New Jersey Office of School to Work Initiative, (b) Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act of 1990, (c) New Jersey Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services, (d) Centers for Independent Living in New Jersey, (e) New Jersey Technology Assistive Resource Program, (f) New Jersey Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired, (g) New Jersey Division of Developmental Disabilities, (h) New Jersey Division of Mental Health Services, (i) New Jersey Division of Youth and Family Services, (j) Statewide Parent Advocacy Network, Inc., (k) New Jersey Protection and Advocacy, Inc., (l) County Office for the Disabled, (m) New Jersey Social Security Offices and Work Incentives Liaisons, and (n) New Jersey college Programs for Students with Learning Disabilities. Although all of these programs assist students with disabilities and their families, some are more involved than others. Specifically, the Division of Developmental Disabilities, and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services. The Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) assist individuals with developmental disabilities to work and live in their communities as independently as possible. The services that are available from DDD include: Advocacy, Case Management, Intake/Eligibility, Family Support, Respite, Specialized Equipment and Guardianship. Residential service programs consist of, but not limited to: Skill Development Homes, Family Care Homes, Group Homes, Supervised Apartments, Supportive Living and Independent Apartments. Vocational services include: Adult Training, Work activities,

Extended Employment at Sheltered Workshops, and Supported Employment. It is noted that these services are based upon the need and the availability of resources. The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services assist individuals with disabilities prepare, obtain, and keep their place of employment. Past and present research has concluded that these services are limited or not being available at all, because of funding. Parents of young adults with disabilities many times feel unsure as they work to assist their children live their own lives, but are faced with the reality of inadequate services to aid them to meet their families goals (Ferguson et al., 1988; Irvin, Thorin, & Singer, 1993). A study was conducted by Maxwell, Pogoloff, and Thomas (1995) of parents of children with cognitive disabilities who have graduated from high school. Fifteen students were discussed and 19 families were interviewed. The study focused on two questions: (a) "What is the meaning of students' transition from school to adult life for parents of children with cognitive disabilities?", and (b) "What are the needs of these parents during the transition period?" The students were classified as having mild, moderate, and severe cognitive disabilities. The results revealed that parents of children with disabilities had similar visions for their children as parents of children without disabilities. The children will grow up, move away, and develop lives of their own. The visions and common needs and issues are as follow: (1) Visions- Most parents reported that they would feel more comfortable if their child had friends, secured employment, leisure activities that are similar to the ones he/she participates in at home, a reliable transit system, and a safe place like home to live. (a) Residential vision- All but two families envisioned their child living away from home. (b) Social vision- Social relationships that result in happiness for their child, and interaction with non-family and non-paid individuals in their adult lives. (c) Free-time vision- This included filling free-time with a balance between work and leisure activities. (2) Getting to the Vision- Parents of children with disabilities rely on schools for helping them achieve their vision, their individual resource and efforts, and adult services, that play a crucial role in their vision of the future. (a) Comprehensive

school services- All but two felt that the system could have done more to help their child or them (parents). Most were pleased with what had been accomplished with their child. According to the authors, parental involvement in the transition process of their child's school program consisted of phone calls to agencies, getting on waiting lists, calling employers, fighting to make sure their young adult receive adequate number of work hours at graduation, and participation in IEP meetings. System defined restraints, such as the date of graduation, number of employment hours at graduation, and the amount of employment support services given, appear to dominate. Parents wanted this part of the process to be completed quickly and smoothly to ease their anxiety over their child receiving, keeping, and ensuring adult services. A lack of concern from school personnel about soon to be graduates was common with parents.

(b) Replacing comprehensiveness of school services- The authors noted, if the parents could have a wish , they would like to have the same type of school system that their child has presently, continued in the future (after graduation). (c) Barriers to transition- According to the authors, barriers that parents with children with disabilities face are waiting lists in adult services, especially in residential services, and social networks that are outside of the family. (d) Intersection of parent/child needs- All of the parents wanted their child to become more independent and less dependent on them. The respondents (the parents) reported that parental freedom can be achieved through residential alternatives, jobs, and friendships for their child. (e) Moving on is a difficult decision- According to the authors, parents must struggle with being in doubt about adult services, the harm that adult life can bring, and their own yearning to cling onto their child as they prepare for the vision of their child's adult life. Parents want their child to become an adult, however, they aren't prepared for that to happen.

According to research, adult services appear to be limited to students with disabilities, especially for students with severe disabilities. Once a student with disabilities graduates from high school, they enter adult life, and the funding is not the same. As stated

previously in the description of the Division of Developmental Disabilities, "Services are based upon need and the availability of resources." In other words, funding.

Adult service vocational programs that are offered to students with disabilities and their parents include: (a) Adult Training, (b) Work Activities, (c) Extended Employment at Sheltered Workshops, and Supported Employment. Residential services that are available to all individuals with disabilities include: (a) Skill Development Homes, (b) Family Care Homes, (c) Group Homes, (d) Supervised Apartments, and (e) Supportive Living and Independent Apartments.

According to Peterson (1995), human service agencies are limited in providing ongoing employment supports. Also, for supported employment to have a long-term effect, funding and policy issues must be addressed. Research has revealed that, for human service agencies, funding for job coaches and case management is a problem. To ease the funding issue, an increasing amount of people are engrossing in efforts to approach ongoing employment supports, and the relationship between natural supports and supports and assistance given by human service personnel. According to researchers, human service supports should provide assistance to others, in stimulating friendships, peers, coworkers, or social groups with individuals with disabilities. On-going employment approaches are in the early stage of development. These approaches include natural community supports and human service support systems. Natural supports in employment for individuals with disabilities are becoming the focus of attention, to try to help eliminate some of the problems facing human service agencies. Approaches include: (1) The Human Service Employment Models- This model consist of a (a) Job Coach and (b) Job Coach/Case Manager. Job coaches work with employers to assist in hiring, providing on- the- job training, fading, follow-up, retraining, and any support that is needed. The Job Coach/Case Manager- The job coach provides the assistance to the individual with disabilities, and the case manager is responsible for the follow-up. (2) The Employment-Based Natural Support Models: Employers and Co-Workers- Nisbet

and Hagner (1988), have suggested these ongoing employment support approaches in the work environment. These approaches are based on a variety of employer and co-worker supports. They theorize that support should include informal support in work settings, formal support in businesses that are available to all workers to consist of training and employee assistance programs, and external assistance by human service programs. The models are: (a) Mentoring in Employment- The job coach provides initial training. Once adequate performance is met, the co-worker assist as a mentor., (b) Training Consultant- This model consist of the co-worker or co-workers, providing intensive training and on-going support to the employee, with training and consultation by the human service agency personnel. Nisbet and Hagner (1988), recommends reimbursement from the human service agency, for the co-workers' time in training the employee., (c) Job Sharing- A person with disabilities shares their job with a person without disabilities., and (d) Attendant- Attendants provide on-the-job support for someone who has a disability. This person is paid by the person with disabilities. (3) Community-Based Natural Support Models- These models emphasize focusing on the total person in all of their aspects in life. The models include: (a) Community Employment Support- According to Gemmel and Peterson (1989), this model consist of job coaches that perform duties such as job matching, job training, fading, and retraining. An organized group of community advocates helps with job development, transportation, training related to employment, and provision of on-going follow-up and support. The advocate provides the initial level of monitoring and intervention. Human service assistance is available., (b) Circle of Friends- This group provides assistance to an individual with disabilities in monitoring, counseling, problem-solving, training, job development, and other roles., (c) Peer Support- This involves individuals with disabilities, assisting each other., and (d) Life Partner/Buddy- In this approach, individuals agree to provide ongoing life mentoring and assistance to an individual with disabilities.

Prior to developing state and federal mandates on transition services, or the implementation of an adult service model for students with severe disabilities, the quality of life theory should be examined. Presently, transition service public laws appear to address the issue of quality of life of students with severe disabilities. Ideally, local educational agencies are implementing the mandates correctly, and adult service agencies are providing the students and parents the necessary means of support they desire. The following chapter will focus on a research study that pertains to transition services for students with severe disabilities.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN

This research project is focused on students with severe disabilities and their families. This was an attempt to examine transition services with students with severe disabilities.

The research consisted of surveying public and private educational institutions on the transition services they provide for students with disabilities and their parents, and surveying the parents of students with severe disabilities experiences with the transition services they received prior to and beyond their young adult's graduation from high school. The schools were chosen through professional contacts with members of the Child Study Team from various school districts and through telephone contacts from the telephone directory. The parents were selected from past graduates of the school where the researcher currently teaches, through a respite employee, and a co-worker who has a young adult with disabilities.

A total of ten surveys were mailed to local school districts and private schools that educate students with disabilities. Out of the ten surveys that were mailed, nine schools responded. Seven public schools and two private schools. All of the schools were located in the southern region of New Jersey.

The parents' survey involved questioning the parents of students with severe disabilities that were in the process of graduating from a high school, graduated recently from a high school, or graduated from a high school several years ago. However, due to the hesitation of the school's administration where the researcher currently teaches, this research concept could not be implemented. Therefore, the sample is very minute. A total of two surveys were mailed to parents that had a young adult with a disability, the co-worker and the respite worker received their survey by hand, and the researcher conducted an informal interview per the parent's request. All of the surveys were returned. Subsequently, the researcher analyzed the surveys, and discovered two out of the six surveys were parents' of young adults who did not have severe disabilities.

Therefore, a total of four parents who had a young adult with severe disabilities were used in this research project. All of the four young adults with severe disabilities that were used in this research project reside at home with their parent(s), and all but one attend an adult training center. The young adult that doesn't attend an adult training center, has been on homebound instruction all of his years in school.

Before the distribution of surveys to local educational agencies, telephone calls were completed to contact the schools to see if they were interested in being a part of the research. A survey, a letter of confidentiality, and a self-addressed stamped envelope were mailed to local public school districts and private schools that teach students with disabilities. Before mailing the parents' surveys, informal interviews were completed through the telephone, to introduce the person who was conducting the research, an explanation of transition services and related terminology, and an assurance to parents that their child and their family information would be confidential.

The local education agencies' survey was derived from a resource manual entitled, What is Transition from School to Adult Life? A Resource Manual for Transition Services for Youth with Disabilities in New Jersey, that is produced by The New Jersey Partnership for Transition from School to Adult Life for Youth with Disabilities. The partnership consists of, The New Jersey Office of Special Education Programs, The New Jersey Office of School to Work Initiatives, The New Jersey Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services, The University Affiliated Program of New Jersey, and The Statewide Parent Advocacy Network. The title of the survey is, Transition Needs Assessment: Evaluating Your Secondary Education Program. The survey consists of seven major headings. They are: 1) Vocational Assessment/Evaluation, 2) Curriculum and Instruction, 3) Vocational Training, 4) Interagency Collaboration, 5) Parent/Guardian Involvement, 6) Follow-Up Procedures, and 7) Individual Transition Plans. Vocational Assessment/Evaluation consists of 5 questions, Curriculum and Instruction consists of 2 questions, Vocational Training consists of 6 questions, Interagency Collaboration

consists of 6 questions, Parent/Guardian consists of 5 questions, Follow-Up Procedures consists of 6 questions, and Individual Transition Plans consist of 9 questions. Each section contains a summary statement that contains three questions (See Appendix).

The parents' survey was developed by the researcher. The questions were derived from literature research on transition services and informal interviews with professionals and paraprofessionals that are in the field of transition and the parents of students with severe disabilities. The survey consisted of a brief summary about the research, a contact name and number if there were any inquiries about the survey, and a statement of gratitude for parent participation in the transition services research. There are ten open-ended and rating scale questions (See Appendix).

As with all qualitative research, validity is questionable. How reliable the instrument is, is based upon what the survey is utilized for, who is completing the survey, and truthfulness of the respondents and the researcher.

The survey results were analyzed by utilizing a statistical method of frequency counting. To protect the confidentiality of the local educational agencies, students, and parents, numbers were assigned to each individual survey.

The following chapter will discuss the results from this qualitative research on transition services with students with severe disabilities. The information was derived from informal interviews with professionals and paraprofessionals in the field of transition and a parent of a student with severe disabilities, and surveys that questioned local educational agencies about the transition services they provide students with disabilities and their parents, and the parents of students with severe disabilities experiences with transition services before and after their young adult's graduation from high school.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

As stated in the previous chapter, both surveys, the survey that questioned public and private local educational agencies about their transition services for students with disabilities, and the survey that questioned parents of students with severe disabilities about these services, were analyzed by utilizing a statistical method of frequency counting.

Participating schools were asked to describe their transition vocational assessment. The survey results revealed: Vocational Assessment- This included informal instruments, standardized tests, and situational assessment. From this subgroup of tests, student surveys, career interest inventories, and community-based vocational sites are used the most. Additional assessment that is used widely by local educational agencies is a behavioral/social summary about the student. The majority of schools also use an informal assessment procedure to determine student with disabilities' skills in the areas of domestic, recreation/leisure, and community living. Three of the schools are in the beginning, five schools are in progress, and one school program is fully developed, in the overall degree of program development in vocational assessment. Most of the schools surveyed found vocational assessment as being a moderate priority.

Participating schools were asked to describe their transition curriculum and instruction. The survey results revealed: Curriculum and Instruction- The largest number of school respondents reported that when teaching students with disabilities transition skills, their curriculum and instruction included career awareness, job seeking/keeping skills, independent living skills, organizational/problem solving skills, and development/learning strategies. No educational program is in the beginning stage of program development in curriculum and instruction with transition skills, five are in the progress, and four are fully developed. Curriculum and instruction was considered a low priority for the majority of schools.

Participating schools were asked to describe their transition vocational training. The survey results revealed: Vocational Training- All of the schools that responded are providing students with disabilities vocational training. The majority of schools begin vocational training at the age of fourteen, but one school reported that they begin vocational training at the age of six. The most utilized vocational training by the majority of local educational agency respondents is work study. The highest number of schools reported that the work-study coordinator or the classroom teacher, matches the students with the jobsites, and the teacher supervises the students on the jobsite. The most widely used community-based job training site reported by the majority of schools surveyed was food service. One school is in the beginning, six schools are in progress, and two schools have a fully developed program in vocational training. From a rating scale of 1-5, four out of nine schools viewed vocational training as being a moderate priority.

Participating schools were asked to describe their transition interagency collaboration. The survey results revealed: Interagency Collaboration- Five out of eight local educational agencies do not have written policies for making adult agency referrals. The majority of schools report that the adult agencies that students with disabilities are referred to the most are The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS), college support programs, The Association of Retarded Citizens (ARC), job service, job training programs, and recreation/leisure programs. According to the survey, the majority of schools report that they utilize the Child Study Team to initiate and provide follow-through services for agency referrals. The referral process for most local educational agencies begin between the ages of 14-21. The adult agency that is identified the most for attending Planning and Placement Meetings for students with disabilities is The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services. Six out of nine schools report that they participate on a local community interagency team. Four schools are in the

beginning, four schools are in progress, and one school has a fully developed program in interagency collaboration. The majority of schools find this to be a moderate priority.

Participating schools were asked to describe their parent/guardian involvement in transition. The survey results revealed: Parent/Guardian Involvement- The most widely used agency that provides information/training programs in the transition process for parents/guardians is The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS). Most of the schools reported that parent support groups are the most widely used source in providing information to parents. All of the schools reported that the information that is provided the most to parents that have a child with a disability is social security (SSI/SSDI). All of the schools reported that they use parent meetings to disseminate information about transition and other services. The Child Study Team is the source that the majority of schools use to conduct parent training and to deliver pertinent information. No school program is in the beginning stage of parent/guardian involvement, eight are in progress, and one school has a fully developed program. Eight out of nine schools reported that their school program need to develop strategies to increase parental involvement. The majority of local educational agencies find this to be a moderate priority.

Participating schools were asked to describe their transition follow-up procedures. The survey results revealed: Follow-up Procedures- According to the survey results, six out of nine school respondents do not provide follow-up services to their students with disabilities and their parents. The schools that provide follow-up services, utilize student questionnaires by telephone contact the most. The information that is collected the most by the majority of schools include: employment status, transportation used, contact with adult service agencies and providers, and other services, such as recreation/leisure and letters from DVRS and colleges. The majority of schools that provide follow-up services use a social worker to collect follow-up information, and the time frame utilized the most to collect follow-up information is a multiple year follow-up. If the follow-up

information that is collected consist of positive outcomes, schools will utilize this information to reinforce practices and/or address areas of needs within the curriculum and instruction. Five schools reported that they are in the beginning of development in follow-up procedures, four are in progress, and no schools reported that they have a fully developed program. Follow-up services were viewed as being a moderate priority to the majority of school respondents.

Participating schools were asked to describe their Individual Transition Plans. The survey results revealed: Individual Transition Plans- Most of the local educational agencies reported that they provide Individual Transition Plans (ITP's) according to Public Law 101-476. One of the private school respondents reported, that the section on ITP's was not applicable to approved private schools, because it is the responsibility of the sending school district, if the private school is considered a receiving school district. Therefore, they did not complete this section. The majority of school respondents report that the most widely used long term goal area is Employment/Postsecondary Training or Education. Most of the schools reported that their ITP's format includes sections in: Objectives/Activities to reach the long term goal, Persons/Agencies responsible for implementing activities, and Progress on activities (Evaluation, Monitoring). Five out of eight schools responded that the majority of ITP's activities are a shared responsibility among school personnel, such as vocational, guidance, social workers, psychologists, and regular educators. The objectives/activities that are included the most in the majority of schools' ITP's include: Career Exploration, Social Skill Development, and Agency involvement. The sequence of transition activities for students with disabilities for the majority of schools include: Information Gathering and Exploration =1, Active Participation and Experience=2, and Appropriate links and Placement with adult service agencies and providers and Employment and adult outcomes tied for third. Five out of seven schools reported that their activities are appropriate to the above sequential development and provision of transition related activities. Eight of the schools

responded that their students with disabilities' Individual Educational Plans (IEP's) and Individual Transition Plans (ITP's) support each other. Six out of eight schools responded that their ITP's are written prior to the Planning and Placement meeting. Seven out of eight schools provide their students with a formal Exiting Planning Meeting before the students exit from a secondary program. The majority of schools that provide an Exit Plan include a summary of the students' present status in the areas of Employment, Independent Living, and Community Participation, specifies the need for ongoing services/supports, defines the role/responsibilities and commitments of Adult Service Agencies and Providers, and provides the students with a lists of contacts, so they may easily access support services if needed. One school is in the beginning in ITP development, six are in progress, and one school has a fully developed program. Seven out of eight schools reported that their program needs to develop more comprehensive transition plans. The majority of schools responded that Individual Transition Plan development is a moderate priority (See Appendix).

The parents' survey results revealed that educational programs' curriculum and instruction with teaching transition skills to students with severe disabilities, emphasize life skills, such as self-help, social skills, and community-based instruction. Two out of four of the parents reported that the educational program their young adults were involved in was excellent, one parent reported that their young adult program was good, and one parent did not rate their young adult's educational program.

Two out of four parents reported that before their young adult graduated from high school, they received transition planning, and one parent reported that they received services from the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD). Most of the parents reported that the transition services they received before the graduation of their young adult were very good.

According to the parents' survey results, the majority of parents reported that the did not receive follow-up services, once their young adult graduated from high school. One

parent reported that they did receive services from DDD. All of the parent were asked to rate the follow-up services they had received after their young adult graduated from high school. None of the parents responded.

Currently, all but one of the young adults with severe disabilities are involved in an Adult Training Center, where they continue to receive instruction in life skills. Two out of the four parents surveyed reported that once their young adult graduated from high school, they were automatically enrolled in an Adult Training Center. One parent responded that it was a month before their young adult was involved in an adult program, and one parent's young adult remains home without services.

The majority of parents report that the transition services they received had no effect on their young adult's quality of life (See Table 1).

TABLE 1
PARENTS' SURVEY

Q1: Type of transition services your child received before graduation.

<u>Type</u>	<u>Sample</u>
Living skills	2
Self-help skills	2
Social skills	2
Community-based instruction	2
Homebound instruction	1
None	0

Q2: Rating of services

Rating Scale: 1= Excellent 2= Very Good 3= Good 4= Fair 5= Poor

<u>Rating</u>	<u>Sample</u>
1	2
2	0

3	1
4	0
5	0
No rating	1

Q3: Type of transition services the parent(s) received before graduation.

<u>Type</u>	<u>Sample</u>
Transition planning	3
Department of Disabilities (DDD)	1

Q4: Rating of services

<u>Rating</u>	<u>Sample</u>
1	0
2	2
3	1
4	0
5	0
No rating	1

Q5: Type of follow-up services you and/or your child received after graduation.

<u>Type</u>	<u>Sample</u>
DDD	1
None	2
No answer	1

Q6: Rating of services

Out of all of the respondents, no one rated follow-up services.

Q7: Type of adult services your young adult is involved in presently.

<u>Type</u>	<u>Sample</u>
Adult Training Center	3

Homebound	1
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Q8: The length of time to become involved in an adult program.

<u>Time</u>	<u>Sample</u>
Automatic	2
One month	1
No answer	1

Q9: Rating of services

<u>Rating</u>	<u>Sample</u>
1	1
2	2
3	0
4	0
5	0
No rating	1

Q10: Transition services effect in the improvement of your child's quality of life in:
job satisfaction, living arrangements, or recreation/social.

All of the parents responded that the transition services they received had little or no impact on their child's quality of life. Some parents felt it didn't apply. All of the parents that were surveyed young adult resides at home.

The following chapter will discuss the conclusion of this research on transition services with students with severe disabilities.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This research paper examined transition services with students who have severe disabilities. Surveys were completed by public and private schools that educate students with special needs and the parents of students with severe disabilities, to reveal whether or not local educational agencies (LEAs) are providing students with disabilities and their parents, the transition services they are entitled to according to Public Law 101-476. The researcher hypothesized that local educational agencies that educate students with disabilities have an adequate curriculum that prepares their students for transition from school to adult life, according to Public Law 101-476, but once the students graduate, the funds and services diminish for the students and their parents, therefore providing inadequate service to support transition planning.

The public and private schools' survey results revealed that schools are providing their students with disabilities and their parents appropriate transition services. According to the survey results, the majority of schools in the survey are implementing vocational assessment and training, providing curriculum and instruction that is focused on acquiring transition skills, involving parents by having parent meetings and other activities, have participating in interagency collaboration, and providing the students vocational skills at an appropriate age and an Individual Transition Plan, that supports the students' Individual Educational Plan. The area that is lacking by the majority of schools in the survey is follow-up services. According to the survey results, six out of the nine schools do not provide follow-up services.

The parents' survey results indicated that the parents were pleased with the curriculum and instruction and transition services their young adults received when they were in high school. Once their child graduated at the age of twenty-one, two out of four parents surveyed reported that their young adults were automatically placed into an Adult Training Center. One parent reported that it was a month before her young adult was

involved in an adult program, and one parent reported that her young adult remains at home without services. The majority of parents surveyed reported that their child nor did they, receive follow-up services from the high school their child graduated from.

Although the parents' survey results revealed that two out of the four young adults with severe disabilities were automatically involved in an adult program once they had graduated from high school, the parents of these young adults reported that their young adult graduated over ten years ago. At that time, local educational agencies were in the beginning phase of developing and implementing appropriate transition services to their students with disabilities and their parents. One parent reported that when their child graduated from the public educational program, she became aware of the limited placement of adult programs, because of her daughters' limited mental and physical capabilities. She also reported that now there are waiting lists for students with severe disabilities to become involved in an adult program, because presently, private businesses have accepted the responsibility of what used to be state operated adult training centers.

Currently, research that examine transition services with students with severe mental and physical disabilities is limited. Several studies (Curtain, Nieptuski, Hamre-Nieptupski, and Shrikanth 1997; Falvery 1989; Halpern 1985; Reichle 1997) suggest, when preparing students with severe mental and physical disabilities from school to adult life, the local educational agencies' curriculum and instruction should emphasize: a) the students' as well as the parents' quality of life, b) community-based instruction, c) life skill models that prioritize age appropriate activities, and d) the allowance of students' choices that are communicated in a variety of ways.

The research results indicated that the majority of schools are providing community-based instruction, and their curriculum and instruction emphasizes age appropriate activities. Student surveys are also implemented to provide students the opportunity to be involved in the transition process.

The parents that were surveyed reported that the transition services their young adults received, had little or no impact on their young adults' quality of life.

This research project is limited because of the sample size and time. The sample size was small, because of the reluctance of a local educational agency to allow the researcher to implement the research project to the parents of current and recent graduates, where the researcher currently teaches students with severe disabilities. The researcher also had a difficult time with gathering parents of past graduates.

In conclusion, the researcher was examining transition practices with students with severe disabilities. The researcher examined: Prior to the age of twenty-one, what type of transition preparation do educational programs for severely disabled students offer, and what type of support do the students and the parents receive beyond transition?

The results from the public and private schools' survey indicated that their educational programs offer transition services according to the mandates of Public Law 101-476. All of the schools that were surveyed are in the beginning, in progress, or are in the fully developed phase of developing and/or implementing transition services. The private and public schools' survey was derived from a resource manual entitled, What is Transition from School to Adult Life? A Manual for Transition Services for Youth with Disabilities in New Jersey.

The parents' survey results indicate that the local educational agencies' curriculum is offering their young adult with severe disabilities life skills and community-based instruction. From current research, teaching these skills are appropriate for students with severe disabilities' acquisition of transition skills. Presently, all but one of the four parents surveyed young adult is not involved in an adult program. This young adult remains at home without services.

According to the parents' and public and private schools' survey results, there needs to be an improvement in follow-up services. By improving transition follow-up services, the information that is received can be utilized to improve transition curriculum and

instruction, and it can provide the parents with the necessary skills that are required to adapt to the changes that occur, when students with disabilities transition from school to adult life.

Although there are studies that concentrate on transition services for students with disabilities, there are few that focus on students that have severe mental and physical disabilities.

Subsequently, the students' disability, the time at which the students graduate, parental involvement, interagency and staff collaboration, funding, and the willingness of local educational agencies to participate in research projects, play an enormous part in the deliverance of appropriate transition services with students with severe disabilities.

Hopefully, this research project will assist local educational agencies in delivering appropriate transition services to students with severe disabilities and their parents, and make the parents or anyone else aware of what transition services are, and the needs that are associated with implementing appropriate transition services.

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APPENDIX

Parents' Transition Services Survey

This survey is about questions that involve the transition services you and your child/young adult received before graduating from an educational program, and after graduation, adult services. If there are any questions, please ask for Valerie Gardner at (609)696- 6830. Thank you for your time and patience.

1. What type of transition services did your child receive before graduation? For an example, community-based vocational education, daily living skills, or other.

2. How would you rate these services? Please circle your answer.

1=Excellent 2=Very Good 3=Good 4=Fair 5=Poor

3. What type of transition services did you (the parent), receive before graduation? For an example, involvement in transition planning for your child/young adult, information about public and private agencies that can assist both you and your child/young adult with the transition process, or other.

4. How would you rate these services? Please circle your answer.

1=Excellent 2=Very Good 3=Good 4=Fair 5=Poor

5. What type of follow-up services did you and/ or your child receive after graduation? For an example, vocational counseling, job coaching, community living awareness, transportation, or other.

6. How would you rate these services?

1=**Excellent** 2=**Very Good** 3=**Good** 4=**Fair** 5=**Poor**

7. What type of adult services is your child/young adult involved in presently?

8. How long did it take for him/her to get involved/hired?

9. How would you rate these services? Please circle your answer.

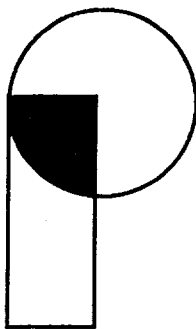
1=**Excellent** 2=**Very Good** 3=**Good** 4=**Fair** 5=**Poor**

10. Overall, have these transition services improved your child/young adult's quality of life in the following areas?

a. Job Satisfaction

b. Living Arrangements

c. Recreation/Social



**The New Jersey
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from School to Adult Life for Youth with Disabilities

• New Jersey Office of Special Education Programs • New Jersey Office of School to Work Initiatives •
• New Jersey Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services • The University Affiliated Program of New Jersey • Statewide Parent Advocacy Network •

Transition Needs Assessment: Evaluating Your Secondary Education Program

Please Note: The following Needs Assessment is to be used to evaluate your current transition program for students with disabilities. This self-assessment should be completed prior to developing and implementing any action plan. Completing this assessment will help you to determine areas of greatest need in your district.

With permission, this information has been adapted from the Connecticut Interagency Task Force in Collaboration with the Connecticut Department of Education, Bureau of Special Education and Pupil Services and the Connecticut Department of Human Resource, Bureau of Rehabilitation Services.

Transition Needs Assessment

Program _____

Team Members _____

I. Vocational Assessment/Evaluation

1. Identify the Vocational Assessment components utilized in your transition planning process

(Check all that apply)

A. Informal instruments

- ☐ Student surveys
☐ Parent surveys
☐ Teacher surveys
☐ Other _____

B. Standardized tests (Please list instruments)

- ☐ Career interest inventories _____
☐ Aptitude _____
☐ Achievement _____
☐ Intelligence _____
☐ Values/Maturity _____
☐ Work samples _____
☐ Other _____

C. Situational Assessment (Check all that apply)

- ☐ In-school work sites
☐ In-school vocational classes
☐ Community-based vocational sites
☐ Other _____

2. Do you utilize format/informal assessment procedures to determine students skills/needs in the following domains

Domestic (Circle one) yes no

If yes, specify procedures _____

Recreation/Leisure (Circle one) yes no

If yes, specify procedures _____

Community Living (Circle one) yes no

If yes, specify procedures _____

3. Identify additional assessment information utilized in your transition planning process (Check all that apply)
 - ☐ Medical information
 - ☐ Behavioral/Social Summary
 - ☐ Learning styles information
4. Specify individual(s) responsible for coordinating information to be utilized in transition program planning (Check all that apply)
 - ☐ Transition Coordinator
 - ☐ Guidance
 - ☐ Work-Study Coordinator
 - ☐ Administrator
 - ☐ Classroom teacher
 - ☐ Other _____
5. Do you send students for vocational evaluations at a Rehabilitation facility?
(Circle one) Often Sometimes Never

Summary Statement

1. How would you rate your programs overall degree of development in the component of **Vocational Assessment**
(Circle one) Beginning In Progress Fully Developed
2. Does your program need to develop comprehensive **Vocational Assessment** procedures for students? (Circle one) yes no
3. How would you rate your need for further program development in this area?
(Circle one) 1 2 3 4 5
Low Moderate High
Priority Priority Priority

II. Curriculum and Instruction

1. Identify skills training included in program curriculum (Check all that apply)
 - ☐ Career awareness
 - ☐ Job seeking/keeping skills
 - ☐ Independent living skills (money management, banking, budgeting, housing, etc.)
 - ☐ Personal living skills (hygiene, cooking, laundry, etc.)
 - ☐ Social skills development
 - ☐ Transportation training
 - ☐ Recreation/Leisure
 - ☐ Organizational/Problem solving skills development/Learning strategies
 - ☐ Self-Advocacy
2. Identify the instructional environment where these activities take place (Check all that apply)
 - ☐ Integrated within regular education classes (vocational, academic)
 - ☐ Self-contained classes
 - ☐ Community-based

Summary Statement

1. How would you rate your programs overall degree of development in the component of **Curriculum and Instruction**
 (Circle one) Beginning In Progress Fully Developed
2. Does your program need to increase/improve **Curriculum** offerings related to transitional planning? (Circle one) yes no
3. How would you rate your need for further program development in this area?
 (Circle one) 1 2 3 4 5
 Low Moderate High
 Priority Priority Priority

III. Vocational Training

1. Do students participate in vocational training activities?
(Circle one) yes no
2. At what age are these activities initiated? _____
3. What vocational training alternatives are utilized in your program?
(Check all that apply)
 - ☐ Simulated vocational training in classroom
 - ☐ In-school job sites
 - ☐ Career Internships in the community
 - ☐ Work-Study
 - ☐ Supported Employment Preparation
 - ☐ Enclaves
 - ☐ Work Crews
 - ☐ Individual Placements
 - ☐ Adult Service job training programs (ARC's, Easter Seals, etc.)
 - ☐ Other _____
4. Who develops job sites and matches students to the job?
(Check all that apply)
 - ☐ Transition Coordinator
 - ☐ Work-Study Coordinator
 - ☐ Classroom Teacher
 - ☐ Job Coach
 - ☐ Other _____
5. Who supervises students on the job site? _____
6. Identify community-based job training sites utilized in your program
(Check all that apply)
 - ☐ Food Service
 - ☐ Agriculture
 - ☐ Retail
 - ☐ Maintenance
 - ☐ Industry
 - ☐ Clerical
 - ☐ Hotel/Hospitality
 - ☐ Other _____

Summary Statement

1. How would you rate your programs overall degree of development in the component of **Vocational Training**
(Circle one) Beginning In Progress Fully Developed
2. Does your program need to increase/improve **Vocational** offerings related to transitional planning? (Circle one) yes no
3. How would you rate your need for further program development in this area?
(Circle one) 1 2 3 4 5

Low
Priority

Moderate
Priority

High
Priority

IV. Interagency Collaboration

1. Does your school district have written policies and procedures for making adult agency referrals? (Circle one) yes no
2. Identify the agencies your students with disabilities are referred to
(Check all that apply)
 - ☐ Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS)
 - ☐ Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD)
 - ☐ Division of Mental Health and Hospitals (DMHH)
 - ☐ Commission for the Blind (CB)
 - ☐ Division of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DDHH)
 - ☐ Other: (College support programs, ARC's, Job Service, Job training programs, recreation leisure programs, etc.) _____
3. Who initiates and follows-through on agency referrals? _____
4. At what age/grade is the referral process begun? _____
5. Identify adult agencies that attend PPT meeting and degree of attendance.

DVRS	Often	Sometimes	Never
DDD	Often	Sometimes	Never
DMHH	Often	Sometimes	Never
CB	Often	Sometimes	Never
DDHH	Often	Sometimes	Never

6. Does your school district participate in a local, community interagency planning team?
(Circle one) yes no

If yes, identify agencies represented on this team (Check all that apply)

- ☐ DVRS
☐ DDD
☐ DMHH
☐ CB
☐ Religious organizations
☐ Social Services agencies
☐ Other _____

Summary Statement

1. How would you rate your programs overall degree of development in the component of
Interagency Collaboration
(Circle one) Beginning In Progress Fully Developed
2. Does your program need to develop procedures for assessing adult service providers/
agencies? (Circle one) yes no
3. How would you rate your need for further program development in this area?
(Circle one) 1 2 3 4 5
Low Moderate High
Priority Priority Priority

V. Parent/Guardian Involvement

1. Identify the adult services agencies including in information/training programs for
parents/guardians (Check all that apply)
- ☐ Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS)
☐ Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD)
☐ Division of Mental Health and Hospitals (DMHH)
☐ Commission for the Blind (CB)
☐ Division of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DDHH)
☐ Other _____

2. Identify the resources included in information disseminated to parents/guardians:
(Check all that apply)
- ☐ Parent support groups (SPAN, ARC's, etc.)
 - ☐ Office of Protection and Advocacy (P&A)
 - ☐ Learning Resource Centers (LRCs)
 - ☐ Community resources
 - ☐ Group Homes
 - ☐ Other _____
3. Identify the topics included in information made available to parents/guardians
(Check all that apply)
- ☐ SSI, SSDI
 - ☐ Guardianship, wills
 - ☐ Self-advocacy
 - ☐ Other _____
4. Identify the means by which information is provided to parents/guardians: (Check all that apply)
- ☐ Open houses
 - ☐ Telephone contact
 - ☐ Topical meetings
 - ☐ Newsletters, brochures
 - ☐ Individual parent meetings
 - ☐ Community visits
 - ☐ PPT meetings
 - ☐ Training sessions
 - ☐ Other _____
5. Who conducts parent/guardian training and/or information dissemination?

Summary Statement

1. How would you rate your programs overall degree of development in the component of **Parent/Guardian Involvement**
(Circle one) Beginning In Progress Fully Developed
2. Does your program need to develop strategies to increase **Parental Involvement**?
(Circle one) yes no
3. How would you rate your need for further program development in this area?
(Circle one) 1 2 3 4 5
 Low Moderate High
 Priority Priority Priority

VI. Follow-Up Procedures

1. Do formal follow-up procedures exist for special education program graduates? (Circle one) yes no
2. Identify procedures utilized?
☐ student questionnaire - mailed
☐ student questionnaire - telephone contact
☐ parent questionnaire - mailed
☐ parent questionnaire - telephone contact
3. Identify information collected: (Check all that apply)
☐ Employment status (job placement, wages, benefits, etc.)
☐ Education, training status
☐ Community living arrangements
☐ Access to community opportunities
☐ Friends
☐ Transportation utilized
☐ Contact with adult service agencies and providers
☐ Need for additional assistance, information
☐ Other _____
4. Who collects this information? _____

5. When is the information collected? (Check one)

- ☐ Immediately following graduation
- ☐ Within three months
- ☐ Within one year
- ☐ Multiple year follow-up

6. How is this data utilized in program evaluation and planning? _____

Summary Statement

1. How would you rate your programs overall degree of development in the component of **Follow-Up Procedures**

(Circle one) Beginning In Progress Fully Developed

2. Does your program need to develop procedures for students graduating from special education? (Circle one) yes no

3. How would you rate your need for further program development in this area?

(Circle one)	1	2	3	4	5
	Low		Moderate		High
	Priority		Priority		Priority

VII. Individual Transition Plans (ITP's)

1. Does your ITP include long term goals in the following areas (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Employment/Postsecondary Training or Education
- ☐ Independent Living
- ☐ Community Participation

2. Does the format of your ITP include sections to list the following (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Objectives/Activities to reach the long term goal
- ☐ Persons/Agencies responsible for implementing activities
- ☐ Timelines
- ☐ Progress on activities (Evaluation, Monitoring)

3. Look at the "Person/Agency" section of your ITP. Is "Special Education" responsible for the majority of activities, or are they shared among other school personnel (vocational, guidance, social workers, psychologists, regular educators, etc.), families, students, and adult service agencies and providers?
- (Circle one) SE has majority shared
4. Which of the following components are included as objectives/activities on your students ITP (Check all that apply)
- ☐ Vocational Assessment
 - ☐ Career Exploration
 - ☐ Vocational Training (in-school)
 - ☐ Vocational Training (Community)
 - ☐ Job Seeking/Keeping Skills
 - ☐ Rehabilitation Engineering
 - ☐ Independent Living Skills
 - ☐ Personal Living Skills (Hygiene, Cooking, Laundry, etc.)
 - ☐ Social Skill Development
 - ☐ Self-Advocacy training
 - ☐ Recreation/Leisure
 - ☐ Participation of Adult Service Agencies
 - ☐ Transportation Training
 - ☐ Referral to Adult Service
 - ☐ Activities to include/increase student/family participation
 - ☐ Agencies (DVRs, DDD, DMHH, DDHH, CB)
 - ☐ Provision for follow-up after Graduation
 - ☐ Participation of Adult Service Providers (ARC's, Advocacy Groups, JTPA, Colleges Support Programs, etc.)

5. Review the activities on your ITP. Knowing the age of the students that these were developed for, can you categorize them in the following sequence of transition planning activities
(Check all that apply)
- ☐ Information Gathering and Exploration
 - ☐ Active Preparation and Experiences
 - ☐ Appropriate Links and Placement with Adult Service Agencies and Providers
 - ☐ Employment and Adult Outcomes

Using the above categories as an age-related sequence (14-21), are your activities appropriate to the sequential development and provision of transition related activities?
(Circle one) yes no

6. Does your ITP and IEP support each other? For example, if you listed "Participate in Career Exploration Activities" or "Increase Independent Living Skills" or "Provide for Recreation/Leisure Opportunities" on your ITP, can you look in your IEP for the specific goals and objectives to accomplish this activity?
(Circle one) yes no

7. Was your ITP written prior to the Planning and Placement Team, or was it developed as a group process, with parents, students and other relevant parties participating?

(Circle one) yes no

8. Do you hold a formal "Exit Planning" meeting prior to the student's exit from his/her secondary special education program?

(Circle one) yes no

9. Do you develop a written "Exit Plan" that
(Check all that apply)

- ☐ Summarizes the student's present status in the area of Employment, Independent Living and Community Participation
- ☐ Specifies the need for ongoing services/supports
- ☐ Defines the roles/responsibilities and commitments of Adult Service Agencies and Providers
- ☐ Provides the students with a list of contacts so they may easily access support services if needed

Summary Statement

1. How would you rate your programs overall degree of development in the component of **Individual Transition Plans**?
(Circle one) Beginning In Progress Fully Developed
2. Does your program need to develop more comprehensive **Transition Plans**?
(Circle one) yes no
3. How would you rate your need for further program development in this area?
(Circle one) 1 2 3 4 5
 Low Moderate High
 Priority Priority Priority