The Fairfield County Transition Collaborative

Local Interagency Agreement
September 2012 – August 2014

I. Statement of Need

Local Education Agencies (LEAs)/school districts in Fairfield county, the Southeast Area Office of the Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission (ORSC), the Fairfield County Board of Developmental Disabilities (FCBDD), and other community agency partners are clarifying their relationship in order to establish a common understanding regarding their roles, policies, and procedures related to providing transition services and supports for students with disabilities transitioning from schools and entering adulthood.

In Fairfield County there are over 3192 students, age 3-21 with disabilities, of which approximately 1095 are post-secondary aged students with disabilities who are of working age. Federal and state regulations ensure that these students are given a free and appropriate education, thus entitling them to the necessary services and supports while in school. As these students transition from school and enter adulthood, a variety of services are also available to them from agencies such as the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) State Support Team Region 11, The Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission (ORSC), The Fairfield County Board of Developmental Disabilities (FCBDD), the Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services (ODJFS), the Social Security Administration (SSA), and the Southeastern Ohio Center for Independent Living (SOCIL) and local vendors/providers of direct services. Additional students may have a disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), have strived to mainstream into life as typical teenagers and are not receiving special education services yet will require assistance from community agencies upon exiting the school system. Services and eligibility requirements for those services vary from agency to agency, making it difficult for students and their families to make a smooth transition from school to adulthood.

To assist students, their parents, and the various stakeholders in Fairfield County in understanding their roles and responsibilities in relation to the provision of transition services, this Local Interagency Agreement constitutes a formal commitment from all local community partners that seek to improve communication, coordination and services for students with disabilities transitioning from school to adulthood.

II. MISSION

The purpose of this countywide interagency agreement is to improve the coordination of services for students with disabilities transitioning from public education to adulthood.
III. Authority and Scope

Transition services are mandated under IDEA Section 300.154(a) (B), under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended Section 101(a) (11) (D), and under the Ohio Department of Education’s State Operation Standards, 3301-51-07.

IV. Mandated Transition Services

IDEA (34 CFR 300.43)

(a) Transition services means a coordinated set of activities for a child with a disability that—

(1) Is designed to be within a results-oriented process, that is focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of the child with a disability to facilitate the student’s movement from school to post-school activities, including postsecondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing adult education, adult services, independent living, and community participation:

(2) Is based on the individual student’s needs, taking into account the student’s strengths, preferences, and interests; and includes--

(i) Instruction;

(ii) Related services;

(iii) Community experiences;

(iv) The development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives; and

(v) If appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and provision of a functional vocational evaluation.

(b) Transition services for children with disabilities may be special education, if provided as specially designed instruction, or a related service, if required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from special education (Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1401(34)).

Transition services: Effective September 24, 2012
Ohio extends the Federal requirements through SB 316, Section 3323.011:

(H) Beginning not later than the first IEP to be in effect when the student turns 14 years of age, and updated annually thereafter, a statement describing:

1. Appropriate measureable postsecondary goals based upon age appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, and independent living skills;

2. Appropriate measureable postsecondary goals based upon age appropriate transition assessments related to employment in a competitive environment in which workers are integrated regardless of disability;

3. The transition services including courses of study, needed to assist the student in reaching the goals described in divisions (H)(1) and (2) of this section.

The Rehabilitation Act further states that transition services must promote or facilitate the achievement of the employment outcome identified in the student’s Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE).

Operating Standards for Ohio Educational Agencies Serving Children with Disabilities: July 1, 2008, In process of revision

3301-51-07 (H)(2) Transition Services
(a) For each child with a disability, beginning at age fourteen (or younger, if determined appropriate by the IEP team), the IEP shall include a statement, updated annually, of the transition service needs of the child under the applicable components of the child’s IEP that focuses on the child’s courses of study (such as participation in advanced-placement courses or a vocational education program).

(b) Beginning not later than the first IEP to be in effect when the child turns sixteen, or younger if determined appropriate by the IEP team, and updated annually, therefore, the IEP must include:

(i) Appropriate, measureable, postsecondary goals based upon age appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment, and where appropriate, independent living skills; and

(ii) The transition services (including courses of study) needed to assist the child in reaching those goals.

**General Supervision and Monitoring Processes**

States have a responsibility under federal law, to establish a system of general supervision that monitors local education agencies’ (LEA) implementation of the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) of 2004* and Am. Sub. HB1. The Ohio Department of Education (ODE) fulfills this responsibility through its Office for Exceptional Children (OEC). OEC, in coordination with the Office for Early Learning and School Readiness (OEL&SR), has developed a Comprehensive Monitoring System for Continuous Improvement that includes three levels of reviewing LEAs’ implementation of IDEA. The Comprehensive Monitoring System is designed to ensure 100 percent compliance with the statutory requirements of the IDEA and *Ohio Operating Standards for Ohio Educational Agencies serving Children with Disabilities* and improve services and outcomes for student with disabilities.

Secondary Transition services are monitored through several methods under the General Supervision and Monitoring Process. The State Performance Plan (SPP) indicators measure rigorous targets for 20 indicators that the USDOE established for IDEA Part B (which address the needs of children with disabilities ages 3 through 21). Additionally, districts are monitored for special education compliance through the onsite monitoring of systems and services for students with disabilities.

**VI. Overview of Transition Services as documented in the Individualized Education Program (IEP)**

The transition process for students in Ohio begins by the age of 14, and continues until the student exits the school system. The process includes the following steps:

- A discussion about future planning needs that address student and family needs, preferences and interests for a vision of immediate and post secondary life plans. The student begins to identify his/her vision of what he/she would like to do as an adult in regards to education/training, employment ad independent living. Younger students develop a general statement while older students develop a more specific statement of their perceived future. These statements appear on the student’s IEP.
• Present levels of academic achievement and functional performance are identified. The student’s team members conduct formal and informal assessments that identify baseline information regarding the student’s performance at the time that the IEP is developed, and identify where the student is functioning in relationship to what the student plans to do after finishing high school. Team members also identify specific student strengths, weaknesses or challenges.

• Age appropriate transition assessments are used for developing the course of study and specific transition services that the student will receive. Assessment data forms the basis for defining goals and services to be included on the student’s IEP.

• The student, parents and IEP team members identify measurable post-secondary goals. Goals are based upon age appropriate transition assessments related to employment, education/training and where needed, independent living skills. Post-secondary goals should also be related to the student’s future planning statement and annual goals, and answer the question “What will the student do after high school?”

• The proposed course of study is determined and addresses the immediate post-school goals for the student. The proposed course of study reflects a direct relationship between the student’s educational experiences in high school and the student’s desired measurable post-secondary goals, and identifies the necessary coursework needed for the student to successfully reach the stated goals. The proposed course of study typically includes regular education courses, advanced placement courses, specially designed instruction, and community and employment experiences.

• Transition services and activities are then identified and reflect strategies and activities needed to assist the student in reaching the post-secondary goals. They may include instructional activities, community experiences, employment-related activities, adult living and post school activities, daily living activities and other related services, such as mental health counseling, speech/language, OT, PT, etc. Transition services must be a coordinated set of activities or strategies that may assist the student in achieving the desired measurable post-school goals. Students, family members, appropriate adult services agencies or programs and school personnel may be responsible for completing the activities listed on the student’s IEP, as are the timelines for delivery of these services.

• IEP teams review/revise these services and activities annually.

VII. 2012-2014 Goals


2. To collaborate as partners in developing and disseminating resources and implementing quality transition services.

3. To provide information on transition services to students and their parents so they will be able to participate fully in transition planning.

4. To provide clarification of roles and responsibilities of staff within school districts, ORSC, FCBDD, and other community agencies who provide services and supports regarding
students with disabilities, who have identified long term needs in employment, adult day service programs, and independent living.

VIII. 2012-2014 Special Projects

Based upon the results of a survey completed by staff members from participating stakeholders, the 2012-2014 Special Projects are:

1. To electronically disseminate information regarding Transition Task Force meeting agendas, power point presentations, and other resources that are disseminated at these meetings. The purpose for this dissemination effort is to create a mechanism for sharing information to staff members from each participating entity.
2. To collaboratively identify and/or develop age-appropriate assessments that will assist all stakeholder agencies in better serving the students. The Discovery Process will be presented as a best practice for obtaining information about a student’s interests, along with suggested accommodation and support strategies that will assist the student in transitioning into employment prior to graduating from high school.

IX. Participating Agency Commitments

- Identify key staff who will consistently participate on task force by attending meetings every other month and sharing information from the meeting with key staff members from your agency.
- Share and update demographic information needed for outreach activities.
- Respond promptly to requests for information/referrals from partner agencies.
- Participate in cross-training events that will assist students, families and agencies in understanding the roles and responsibilities of each participating agency.
- Identify key staff who will present information about your agency at Family Information Nights.
- School districts: convene a team of representatives from each participating agency to review various assessments for use for various grade levels. This team will develop a collaborative approach to assessing and sharing information from those assessments with appropriate stakeholders. Whenever possible, teachers can be involved with this process.
- Commit resources (in-kind and/or monetary) to be used for the completion of special projects and for the accomplishment of 2012-2014 goals.

X. Terms of Agreement

The terms of this inter agency agreement between all entities listed below shall begin on the date signatures and continue for two years at which time a new agreement will be written that identifies new goals and projects.
XI. Resolution of Conflicts

For the resolution of disputes arising over issues addressed in this agreement, all parties will utilize the appropriate steps and methods as described herein. Attempts will be made to resolve the issue at the lowest level of disagreement. Informal resolution will be the first step in dealing with any disagreements relative to this agreement. The materials presented will include: the regulation or requirement related to the dispute; the specific issue needing resolution; the prior steps taken to resolve the issue and any additional information that may be relevant to the dispute. Utilizing the information presented, a good faith effort will be made to reach a mutually satisfactory solution. Efforts must be made at each level for resolution in a timely manner.

XII. Signatures

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David Gaul, Superintendent; Amanda-Clearcreek School District

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Dale Dickson, Superintendent; Berne Union Local Schools

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Lynn Landis, Superintendent; Bloom-Carroll School District

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Dan Montgomery, Superintendent; Fairfield County Educational Service Center

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Jim Herd, Superintendent; Fairfield Union Local Schools

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Steve Wigton, Superintendent; Lancaster City Schools

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Paul Mathews, Superintendent; Liberty Union-Thurston Local Schools

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Rob Walker, Superintendent; Pickerington Local Schools

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Dale Dickson, Superintendent; Walnut Township Local Schools

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Bonnie Hopkins, Superintendent; Eastland-Fairfield Career & Technical Schools

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Bob Nicholson, Area Manager; Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission
John Pekar, Superintendent; Fairfield County Board of Developmental Disabilities

Rhonda Myers, Executive Director, Fairfield County Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health Board

Becky Edwards, Director; Fairfield County Family, Adult and Children’s First Council

Michael Orlando, Agency Director; Fairfield County Jobs and Family Services

Peter Gerds, District Manager; Lancaster Social Security Office

Pam Patula, Director; Southeastern Ohio Center for Independent Living Center

Rhonda Dickson, Assistant Superintendent ESCCO and State Support Team Region 11