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The Perceptions of Educators on Transition Planning & the Postsecondary Transition Readiness Outcomes of Students with Disabilities

Marisa Duarte

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THE PERCEPTIONS OF EDUCATORS ON TRANSITION PLANNING AND THE
POSTSECONDARY TRANSITION READINESS OUTCOMES OF STUDENTS
WITH DISABILITIES

A Dissertation
Presented to
The Faculty of the School of Leadership and Professional Studies
Western Kentucky University
Bowling Green, Kentucky

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education

By
Marisa Duarte

March 2022
DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. For it is He who sustained me throughout this journey. Through the trials of life, you gave me hope. I honor you with my written work.

This dissertation is in honor of my mom, the late Alma Jones Dowell who instilled in me a love for others. I am humbled by her work ethic and her dedication to serving others. I extend my gratitude to my children. First, to my daughter LaTassha, thank you for encouraging me when this journey seemed unending. You knew when I needed to recharge and made sure that I did just that. Next, to my son, Mathias, thank you for checking in on my progress and gifting me with your smile. You seemed to call or come at just the right times. To my granddaughter, Elena, it is because of you that I persevered to the finish line. Your joy rejuvenated my spirit and gave me strength to continue writing, revising, and editing. I would also like to extend my gratitude to my sister Joyce who reminded me that I could do this and for your support, prayers, and love throughout the process. To my friend and P.E.O. sister Cathy Palmer, thank you for the offers to get away and the constant encouragement to continue forward. To my remaining family members and friends, I am grateful for your continued support, your words of encouragement, your prayers, and unconditional love. I am complete.
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES .............................................................................................................................. viii

ABSTRACT ......................................................................................................................................... ix

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION ............................................................................................................. 1

Statement of the Problem .................................................................................................................. 4

Purpose of the Study .......................................................................................................................... 5

Research Questions .......................................................................................................................... 6

Theoretical Rationale ......................................................................................................................... 7

Definition of Key Terms ................................................................................................................... 8

Conclusion .......................................................................................................................................... 10

CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE ................................................................................. 11

Introduction ........................................................................................................................................ 11

Special Education ............................................................................................................................. 12

History of Policy ................................................................................................................................ 13

Smiths-Hughes Act of 1917 ............................................................................................................... 14

Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ............................................................................................................... 14

Americans with Disabilities Act ....................................................................................................... 15

Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act 2004 ....................................................... 16

Individual Education Program ......................................................................................................... 17

Transition Planning for Students with Disabilities .......................................................................... 18

Kentucky Career Center .................................................................................................................... 23

Transition for Youth with Disabilities ............................................................................................... 26

Employment ...................................................................................................................................... 27
Institutes of Higher Education ................................................................. 29
Summary .......................................................................................................... 31

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY .................................................................. 33
Introduction ...................................................................................................... 33
Research Questions ....................................................................................... 34
Research Design ............................................................................................ 35
  Setting ........................................................................................................... 36
  Participants .................................................................................................. 37
  Instruments .................................................................................................. 38
  Secondary Education Transition Questionnaire ......................................... 39
  District State Report Cards .......................................................................... 41
Procedures ....................................................................................................... 41
Data Management and Analysis ................................................................. 42
Limitations ...................................................................................................... 42
Summary ........................................................................................................ 42

CHAPTER IV: RESULTS ............................................................................. 44
Introduction .................................................................................................... 44
Scale of Reliability ......................................................................................... 44
Demographics ............................................................................................... 45
  Research Question 1 Transition Planning Results ........................................ 48
  Research Question 2 Work Related Practices Results ................................ 49
  Research Question 3 Community Participation Results ............................ 51
  Research Question 4 Assessment Practices Results .................................... 54
Research Question 5 Educational Practices During Planning Results ............................55
Research Question 6 Parent/Guardian Involvement Results ........................................58
Research Question 7 Barriers to Implementation of Regulations Results ....................59
Research Question 8 Transition Readiness Results .......................................................61
Summary ..........................................................................................................................63

CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION ...............................................................................................64

Introduction ......................................................................................................................64
Summary of Findings ........................................................................................................65
Interpretation of Findings .................................................................................................67
  Transition Planning .......................................................................................................67
  Work Practices .............................................................................................................68
  Community Participation .............................................................................................68
  Assessment Practices ....................................................................................................69
  Educators’ Practices .....................................................................................................70
  Parent/Guardian Involvement .......................................................................................71
  Barriers to Implementation of Regulations ..................................................................72
  Prepared for Transition Readiness ...............................................................................73
Implication for Policy .......................................................................................................74
Implication of Practice ....................................................................................................75
Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research .............................................78
  Limitations ...................................................................................................................78
  Recommendations for Future Research ....................................................................79
Conclusion .......................................................................................................................80
REFERENCES...........................................................................................................................................82

APPENDIX A: SECONDARY EDUCATION TRANSITION QUESTIONNAIRE (SETQ)
........................................................................................................................................................................95

APPENDIX B: INFORMED CONSENT ...........................................................................................................108

APPENDIX C: IRB APPROVAL..................................................................................................................110

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Reliability of SETQ Scales ..................................................................................................................45
Table 2. Demographics of Participants ............................................................................................................47
Table 3. Transition Planning ..........................................................................................................................49
Table 4. Work-Related Practices ..................................................................................................................51
Table 5. Community Participation ..................................................................................................................53
Table 6. Assessment Practices .......................................................................................................................55
Table 7. Educators’ Practices During Planning ..............................................................................................57
Table 8. Parental Involvement .......................................................................................................................59
Table 9. Barriers to Implementation of Regulations .....................................................................................60
Table 10. Transition Readiness ....................................................................................................................62
THE PERCEPTIONS OF EDUCATORS AND THE POSTSECONDARY TRANSITION READINESS OUTCOMES OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Marisa Duarte            March 2022            118 Pages

Directed by: Nicholas Brake, Antony Norman, Gary Houchens, and Kimberlee Everson

Educational Leadership Doctoral Program            Western Kentucky University

Abstract

The purpose of this quantitative descriptive research was to gain the perspective of educators on transition planning for students with disabilities in two public school districts in the state of Kentucky. The Individual Disabilities Education Act and Workforce Innovation Opportunities Act are laws requiring students with disabilities to be transition ready upon their graduation from high school. A sample of 12 educators, representing two Kentucky districts, who participate in transitioning students with disabilities, completed The Secondary Educator Transition Questionnaire survey. Data from the districts’ state report cards indicated students with disabilities were not transition ready in comparison with students without disabilities. The educators’ perception of the planning that was occurring did not reflect the exit outcomes of students with disabilities. The key findings of the study were that educators agreed that some aspects of transition planning were taking place. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Acts and Workforce Innovation Opportunities Act laws have clearly defined the process of transition planning. By increasing adherence to those laws in the overall transition planning process, students with disabilities have a better opportunity of postsecondary success.
CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

One central purpose of education is to expose students to a variety of rich topics and to prepare them for life after high school graduation (American Institutes for Research, 2013). All students should be given the opportunity to learn how to become productive members of the global society in which they live through rich and engaging instruction (Parrish, 2019). However, students with disabilities (SWD), are often inundated with challenges when faced with transitioning from high school to the workforce or college (UDSF, 2020).

One of the biggest barriers to transition is students neglecting to disclose their disability (UDSF, 2020). Reasons for the non-disclosure may be lack of knowing services exist or how to take advantage of them, not wanting to be viewed negatively by faculty due to the disability, not wanting to be viewed as unmotivated or having an advantage, and having a lack of understanding of the significance of accommodations and their benefits (UDSF, 2020). The barrier of not disclosing disabilities affects the accommodations or modifications received. Some common accommodations are extended time, auxiliary aids, preferential seating, and presentations (USDF, 2020) all of which assist in a successful outcome. A final barrier is the ability to self-advocate through the development of a growth mindset (USDF, 2020). Students with disabilities, when given the opportunity, can overcome challenges and build independent skills leading to higher self-confidence and self-worth (USDF, 2020) making their transition outcome more desirable.
The reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 2017) helped clarify the purpose of educating SWD and included regulations regarding the preparation of students for further education, employment, and independent living. In addition to the previous inclusion, with the 2015 reauthorization of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), IDEA emphasizes the need for improving educational results for SWD through equal opportunity and economic self-sufficiency. Part B of the statute defines transition services as “a coordinated set of events which simplifies the student’s movement from secondary to postsecondary activities” (IDEA, §300.43, 2017). Additionally, it denotes that, to ensure students are prepared, activities should include vocational education, postsecondary education, integrated employment, independent living, or community participation (IDEA, 2017). Furthermore, transition services should be based on the needs of individual students and should consider their interests, preferences, and strengths (IDEA, 2017). Transition services may be delivered through instruction, related services, and community experiences (IDEA, 2017).

Research from the U.S. Department of Labor and Statistics strongly indicates that SWD continue to fall short in the area of transition because of the lack of preparation needed to transition successfully into adult life (Mazzotti & Rowe, 2015; Wong, 2016). Wong (2016) revealed a barrier to employment for those with disabilities is the lack of transition training. Despite mandates in the federal law and students receiving a summary of performance that includes their strengths, skills, and needs as they graduate, a solid transition plan remains a challenge of IDEA (Samuels, 2009). Furthermore, approximately only two-thirds of SWD across the nation graduate with a regular high school diploma, with many SWD dropping out of high school altogether (Wong, 2016).
In comparison to others in all disability categories, those students with intellectual disabilities have an even smaller employment rate, are less prepared for work, and have a lower level of earned education (Wong, 2016). Those most likely to be referred for special education services are minorities, males, and members of lower socioeconomic backgrounds (Edgar, 1988). In 2014, a Justice Department investigation found that many disabled adults worked in a sheltered workshop for $2.21 an hour on average and others worked in a commercial greenhouse for free due to the work being deemed as “therapeutic” (Wong, 2016).

Keys to transition success are early employment opportunities, family involvement, and supportive community employers (Wong, 2016). Evidence-based practices are required by IDEA to be in effect for transition programs and to be comprehensive in nature (Mazzotti & Rowe, 2015; Prince et al., 2013). Additionally, transition programs should contain instruction on self-determination skills, social skills, career instruction and experiences (Prince et al., 2013). The Individual Education Program (IEP) team, special education teachers, Directors of Special Education (DoSE), and other stakeholders can do much in preparing students for postsecondary success (Hamblet, 2014). Hamblet (2014) argued that a strategic transition program should begin for SWD in middle school and continue throughout high school to ensure students have the necessary skills, documentation, and strategies to be successful once they exit high school. The Kentucky Multi-tiered System of Supports (KYMTSS) promotes a systems approach to use resources to increase student outcomes (kymtss.org).
Statement of the Problem

Research strongly indicates that SWD continue to graduate secondary school underprepared to transition into a career or postsecondary education (Lipscomb et al., 2017; Shogren & Wittenburg, 2019). All districts in the Commonwealth of Kentucky are responsible for interpreting and meeting the regulations set forth by the IDEA. The amendment of 2004 added that students exiting school be transition ready. Transition services are shared responsibilities between schools and the Vocational Rehabilitation agency (U.S. Department of Education [U.S. ED], Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services [OSERS], 2017). Services and supports of IDEA are provided by schools to ensure SWD are prepared for college and careers (OSERS, 2017). In addition to interpreting and meeting regulations set forth by IDEA, each district must interpret and meet policies mandated by ESSA. Therefore, it is possible that many different transition services coexist to ensure successful transition of all SWD. Through examination of current transition practices by survey and extrapolation of data from student outcomes of school districts in a region of Kentucky, deeper insight into common practices may be gleaned and areas to be strengthened may be determined.

In 2017, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) denoted the employment population quotients were far lower for persons with a disability ranging across all age groups. Higher unemployment rates exist for SWD in comparison to their non-disabled peers across all scholastic achievement groups. Moreover, one in five persons employed with a disability were more likely to be self-employed and 32% of employees with a disability work in part-time positions (BLS, 2017; Career Development and Transition, n.d.). In
2017, the unemployment rate for persons with a disability was 9.2% in comparison to 4.2% of those without disabilities (BLS, 2017).

The Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) revised the provisions of Transition Readiness under the 2019 accountability model. High School Transition Readiness includes students meeting certain criteria for graduation requirements and providing options to meet those requirements through academic readiness or career readiness by various measures. It is the intent of the KDE that all students be well-rounded and transition-ready, prepared with knowledge, skills, and essential dispositions to succeed in the next educational setting or career pathway (KDE, 2018). This is defined as students being able to succeed in entry level postsecondary courses without remediation or to enter the workforce with the knowledge and technical skills needed for employment in a career field (KDE, 2018). SWD continue to lag in transition readiness as indicated in the 2017-18 Assessment and Accountability Results (KDE, 2018) with only 24.5% meeting the requirements of being transition ready.

**Purpose and Significance of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to identify how the practices of educators from two Kentucky school districts, converge and diverge regarding transition planning currently being used to prepare SWD to transition to life after high school. The process of preparation is mandated by the IDEA (2017), which requires that, beginning at age 14 and up, transition must be included in the student’s IEP. This law is in place to ensure SWD who receive special education services are adequately prepared for the transition of life beyond high school.
Thus, this researcher identified similarities and differences across two Kentucky districts in regard to transition planning, work-related practices, community participation, assessment practices, parental involvement, educator practices and effectiveness, and the implementation of IDEA transition regulations. The findings of this study may contribute to the body of knowledge regarding educators’ perceptions of transition of SWD. Understanding the barriers encountered by these two districts can potentially offer a lens through which other school districts may examine and evaluate their current transition practices. Data from this study may aid special educators in better understanding how their perceptions influence the transition of SWD.

**Research Questions**

The guiding research questions for this study were:

1. To what extent do educators in the two regional districts use transition planning? To what extent does transition planning vary by high school?

2. To what extent do students with special needs participate in work-related practices in the two regional districts? To what extent does participation vary by high school?

3. To what extent do students with special needs participate in community participation (related practices) in the two regional districts? To what extent does participation vary by high school?

4. To what extent do students with special needs participate in assessment practices in the two regional districts? To what extent does participation vary by high school?

5. To what extent do all school staff participate in the development and implementation of the IEP in the two regional districts? To what extent does participation vary by high school?
6. What is the extent of parent/guardian involvement in the two regional districts? To what extent does participation vary by high school?

7. To what extent does staff implement IDEA transition regulations in the two regional districts? To what extent does implementation vary by high school?

8. How prepared for transition readiness are students with disabilities in comparison to students without disabilities?

**Theoretical Rationale**

SWD who will be graduating high school and entering the workforce or postsecondary education must be equipped with the necessary skills to enhance their opportunity to gain meaningful employment earning a living wage, advance their careers, and ensure independent living (Mazzotti et al., 2014; Test et al., 2009; Transition Guide, 2020; Wehman et al., 2015). According to the Council for Exceptional Children (Career Development and Transition, n.d.), as these students transition from secondary education, they are faced with numerous challenges. These challenges are: a lack of self-determination and self-advocacy skills, limited access to general education curriculum, favorable high school exit requirements, access to postsecondary education and employment, informed parental participation, collaboration among stakeholders and available qualified workforce that address transition of SWD who may be at-risk for becoming a high school dropout (National Center on Secondary Education and Transition, 2004). While the national graduation rate has increased in recent years, SWD continue to drop out of high school at approximately twice the rate of their peers without disabilities (Career Development and Transition, n.d.). Only 30% of SWD who left
public school pursued postsecondary education in comparison to 41% of their peers without disabilities (Career Development and Transition, n.d.).

**Definition of Key Terms**

*Admissions and Release Committee*: ARCs are defined by 707 KAR 1:002, Section 1 (1) as a group of individuals “responsible for developing, reviewing, or revising an individual education program (IEP) for a child with a disability.”

*Every Student Succeeds Act 2015* (ESSA, 2015, PL 114-95): A civil rights law formerly known as the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA, 1965) and the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001. The provisions of ESSA help ensure the success of students and schools. Additionally, this law upholds critical protections for disadvantaged and high-needs students. ESSA requires all students be taught to a high academic standard that will prepare them for college and career success. The vital information of statewide assessments that measures students’ progress towards the standards must be provided to all stakeholders. Further, ESSA supports and grows local innovations, which include evidence-based and place-based interventions, expanding high quality preschool, and maintaining accountability and action to effect positive change in low-performing schools. This act requires that the Admission and Release Committee (ARC) ensures SWD have access to the general education curriculum to the greatest extent possible.

*Guidance Document for Individual Education Program Development* (IEP Guidance Document): The IEP Guidance Document provides instructions and examples for developing IEPs for ARC members, including chairpersons, teachers, related service providers, and parents/guardians. The document is used in conjunction with the
following: federal and state statutes and regulations, including IDEA, Kentucky Revised Statues (KRS) Title XIII Education, Kentucky Administrative Regulations (KARs), Compliance Record Review Document, and local district policies and procedures.

*Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004* (IDEA, 2004, PL 108-446: Formerly known as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1997 (IDEA, 1997). IDEA is a law, or statue, granting authorization of formula grants to states and discretionary grants to state education agencies, institutions of higher education, and other non-profit organizations. This statute has four parts. Part A refers to the general provisions of the law and includes the purpose of IDEA. Part B includes the provisions for free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. This part concerns special education and related services for school aged children and youth ages three through twenty-one. Next, Part C provides early intervention services for infants and toddlers from birth through age two. Lastly, Part D reflects the grants to support state personnel development, technical assistance, technology, and parent/guardian training and information centers.

*Individual Education Program* (IEP): A written program for a student with a disability who is eligible to receive special education and related services under IDEA.

*Kentucky Taxonomy for Transition Programming* (KTTP): KTTP is an applied framework of secondary education practices associated with improving post-school transition for youths with disabilities.

*Transition Readiness*: High school students must earn a high school diploma and meet one type of readiness (i.e. academic or career) whereas English Learners are also
expected to demonstrate English language proficiency (reclassification) before leaving high school.

**Conclusion**

SWD graduation rates have slowly increased, but these students lack the skills necessary to gain employment or remain employed. For SWD, the ARC is composed of individuals who are responsible for ensuring a solid transition plan and not simply meeting compliance. Teachers of special education who serve as case managers of students must be more vigilant in preparing students for successful transition after high school.

Ensuring students have access to courses that lead to certificates, dual credit, or Advanced Placement as well as instruction in social and emotional learning, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills is necessary to increasing postsecondary success. SWD should be given the opportunity to exercise student agency as they navigate their schooling. To increase the success of SWD, it is necessary to review the policies in place that continue to hinder this population from achieving their post school goals.

In Chapter II, a literature review of the laws related to Transition services for SWD will be reviewed in more detail. Additionally, there will be a review of policy history, the Transition Individual Education Plan, and the transition planning process. An overview of various stakeholders involved with the planning process and their role in the success of SWD will be discussed.
CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

Students with disabilities continue to graduate high school underprepared to compete in today’s competitive workforce (Lipscomb et al., 2017; Shogren & Wittenburg, 2019). Since the reauthorization of IDEA (2017) and the most recent amendment of ESSA (2015), the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR), and the KDE continue to make transition to adult life for SWD a priority. The CEC supports transition planning and programs through curriculum, instructional strategies, and research. As the state of the workforce changes with many baby boomers retiring, students must be prepared to take over these positions as they become available (Lengnick-Hall et al., 2008). This will require having skills beyond secondary education. Many schools are electing to include additional training within their high school curriculum to assist in the preparation of students to ensure they exit ready to enter the workforce. According to the Life Skills and Transition with Life Center Education (LCE, n.d.), the most successful programs for SWD are those that implement a comprehensive approach consisting of assessments, curriculum, employment resources, and planning. Yet despite these efforts, many SWD continue to have difficulty gaining adequate employment and remaining employed (U.S. Department of Labor, 2018). A survey conducted by the American Community Survey (ACS) estimates the population in the U. S. in 2016 of people with disabilities was 12.8% (Kraus et al., 2018).

According to the 2017 Disability Statistics Annual Report (Kraus et al., 2018) the number of individuals with disabilities in the US between 18-64 years old is over half of
this population (51%), while around 41% are 65 and older, and youth and children (ages 5-17) with disabilities represent about 7% of the population in this age range (Kraus et al., 2018). For people ages 18-64 without disabilities in 2016, the employment rate was nearly 77% while for those with disabilities the rate was near 36% (Kraus et al., 2018). This nearly 40% employment gap is compelling, especially when considering that the median earnings of those with disabilities is approximately $10,000, or about one third of the income of the general population. This trend has increased in enormity since 2013. Employment trends of persons with disabilities versus persons without in Kentucky are comparable to national averages (Kraus et al., 2018).

**Special Education**

In 1975, SWD were permitted to enter the doors of public education due to public law 94-142, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (IDEA, 2004). This law, known today as the IDEA, was a landmark ruling to ensure free appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE) to all SWD. Resulting from this law, individuals with disabilities can develop their talents, share their gifts, and have an active role within their communities (IDEA, 2004). Through amendments of IDEA, emphasis has been placed on access to the general curriculum, early interventions, transition planning, and accountability of achievement (IDEA, 2004).

There are six guiding principles that make up IDEA, (a) FAPE, (b) appropriate evaluation, (c) IEP, (d) LRE, (e) parent/guardian and student participation, and (f) procedural safeguards (2004). FAPE warrants that special education and its related services meet the distinctive necessities of SWD by preparing them for further education, employment, and independent living. Schools are required by IDEA to conduct the
appropriate evaluation to determine if a student has a disability and if the student is found to have a disability, an IEP is written to address the specially designed instruction to be put in place for the student (IDEA, 2004). Under IDEA (2004), a student is guaranteed to be placed in the LRE allowing access to the general education classroom to the maximum extent possible. Any parent/guardian of a student with a disability has the right to participate in any decision about student placement and, when appropriate, the student must be involved in the process (IDEA, 2004). IDEA safeguards the protective rights of both SWD and their parent/guardian for information related to placement and transition planning (2004). For stakeholders—states, localities, educational service agencies, and federal agencies—IDEA assists in the provision of the education of all SWD. Additionally, states receive assistance with the implementation of early intervention services for families of infants and toddlers with disabilities. To improve educational results for SWD, IDEA guarantees that educators and parents/guardians have the appropriate tools by supporting system improvement activities. IDEA also assesses the effectiveness of efforts to educate SWD (IDEA, 2004). The Office of Civil Rights (OCR) does not enforce IDEA but enforces the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504 of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, and Title II rights of IDEA eligible SWD (USDE, 2011).

**History of Policy**

Policy became the driving force of vocational guidance in the early 1900s (Herr, 2013). Policy that focused on specific national needs provided resources, transitions, activism, and goals for vocational guidance practitioners and scholars (Herr, 2013). Experts in vocational guidance assisted members of Congress in the implementation of
policies as they were approved (Herr, 2013). The Smiths-Hughes Act of 1917, also known as the National Vocational Education Act of 1917, was the first national act that introduced vocation education into public schools. From this act, legislation that addressed vocation guidance, vocation education, workforce education, employment counseling, and career guidance continued to increase (Herr, 2013). Key vocation legislation includes the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act of 1984, the School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1994, and the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (Herr, 2013).

**Smiths-Hughes Act of 1917**

The Smiths-Hughes Act was adopted in 1917 as one of the first federal grant in aid programs to states that promoted vocational education in the areas of agriculture and industry trades and home economics (Britannica, n.d.). Some researchers attribute class and race inequalities to this act due to the varying secondary curricula across the nation (Britannica, n.d.). Some educators perceived vocational education as an opportunity to cultivate active learning of children (Britannica, n.d.). The federal grant was intended to promote vocational education on a fund-matching basis to states and to establish how the funding was to be used (Britannica, n.d.).

**Rehabilitation Act of 1973**

The Rehabilitation Act (1973) was a replacement for the Vocational Act (1917). Included in the Rehabilitation Act is a continuum of services consisting of pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS), transition services, job placement, supported employment, and other vocational rehabilitation services that allows students and youth with disabilities the opportunity to gain meaningful employment. The provision of these
transition services is the responsibility of both schools and the vocational rehabilitation agency (The Rehabilitation Act, 2015). Section 504 under the Rehabilitation Act is a federal law that protects the rights of individuals with disabilities who are in programs and activities that receive federal funding from the U.S. ED. Section 504 provides: No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States . . . shall, solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance. (The Rehabilitation Act, 2015)

Drawing on the collaboration of schools and the vocational rehabilitation agency as responsible parties for transition services, students may receive the supports that are necessary.

Students who qualify for services regardless of disability under Section 504 must receive FAPE by the school district in which the student resides. Within Section 504, FAPE is consistent with regular or special education and related services that meet the student’s individual educational needs in comparison to the needs of nondisabled peers (The Rehabilitation Act, 2015). Through the revision of the Rehabilitation Act, funding to states for vocational rehabilitation services has been extended and revised with a focal point being individuals with the most severe disabilities.

**Americans with Disabilities Act**

Under the Office of Civil Rights, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) provides civil rights protection to those with disabilities. The ADA grants equal opportunity to employment, transportation, and accommodations for individuals with disabilities (U.S. ED, n.d.). Within Title II of the ADA of 1990, protection against
discrimination was extended to state and local government services, programs, and activities to include public schools. The ADA defines *qualified individual with a disability* as:

An individual with a disability who, with or without reasonable modifications to rules, policies, or practices, the removal of architectural, communication, or transportation barriers, or the provision of auxiliary aids and services, meets the essential eligibility requirements for the receipt of services or the participation in programs or activities provided by a public entity. (United States Department of Justice, 2010, p. 5616)

Within the law, ADA provides civil rights and leverages opportunities for those with disabilities and allows them to have equal access.

**Individual with Disabilities Education Improvement Act 2004**

The reauthorization of IDEA aligned the Act with NCLB. Core components of IDEA consisted of definitions of core academic subjects, Limited English Proficient students, Highly Qualified teachers, and scientifically based research (IDEA Regulations: Alignment with NCLB Act, n.d.). Additionally, within the reauthorization was a change in the definition of “transition services” to mean a coordinated set of activities for a child with a disability that is results-oriented. The new definition reflected the movement from school to post-school transition such as continuing and adult education, vocational education, postsecondary education, supported employment, community participation, and independent living (IDEA, 2004). While considering a child’s strengths, preferences, and interests, schools must also ensure the child receives instruction in transition, has related services provided, and receives community experiences (IDEA, 2004). Additionally, the child must have employment and post-school adult living objectives
and, when appropriate, attainment of daily living skills and a functional vocational evaluation (IDEA, 2004).

**Individual Education Program**

The IEP is a written program designed for SWD who are eligible to receive special education and related services under the IDEA (Guidance Document, 2019). The IEP includes a student’s strengths and needs, measurable annual goals, specially designed instruction, related services, and supplementary aids and services required to address educational needs of the student (Guidance Document, 2019), as well as information as to who will provide the services. IDEA requires that the present level of performance includes a statement of how the child’s disability will adversely affect classroom performance (IDEA, 2004). Beginning with the reauthorization of IDEA, the U.S. ED added the requirement of transition to students' IEPs, to focus on post-school transition such as employment or postsecondary education (Flannery et al., 2015). With the addition of the transition component to the IEP, a decrease in post-school transition may be reduced (Flannery & Hellemn, 2014; Flannery et al., 2015; Geenen & Powers, 2006; Landmark & Zhang, 2012). With the development of strong IEPs for students age 16 and older, a clear understanding of the requirements, appropriate measurable postsecondary goals (PSG), transition services, and a course of study (COS) must be included (Flannery & Hellemn, 2014).

Aligning students’ IEP and COS with their future goals often boosts their motivation and direction throughout their high school years, increasing their short-term academic performance (Flannery et al., 2015). Kentucky reshaped its IEP when IDEA reauthorized at the federal level (Guidance Document, 2019). The Kentucky Program of
Studies served as a guide from 1998 through 2010 to the ARC in the development of an IEP. In 2010, Kentucky adopted state standards, which were updated in 2015 to the Kentucky Academic Standards (KAS), for which access to the general curriculum is the focal point (Guidance Document, 2019). Beginning in the 8th grade or at the age of 14 (whichever is first), The Kentucky Guidance Document (2019) indicates SWD are to be included in the process of transition planning and a planned COS should be developed. Subsequently, by age 16, the focus also includes transition services that assist in reaching postsecondary goals and transition services to prepare for life after high school. For transition needs, the areas included are instruction; related services; community experience; development of employment; post-school adult living objectives; when appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills; and provision of a functional vocational evaluation (Guidance Document, 2019).

**Transition Planning for Students with Disabilities**

IDEA mandates that transition planning occurs for SWD beginning at the age of 14 and no later than age 16 (IDEA, 2017). It is with transition planning that postsecondary goals are developed. Throughout the IEP process, transition planning is intended to be student-centered and student-driven (IDEA, 2017). Students are invited to attend their meetings and participate in the transition process. Transition services as defined are a “coordinated set of activities that are updated annually” (Guidance Document, 2019, p. 47). Measurable postsecondary goals that align to a student’s COS must be included in a student’s IEP regardless of the skill level related to education, employment, and training (Office of Special Education Programs, 2007). The IEP team, which includes the special educator, general educator, parent/guardian, student, local
educational agency (LEA), and outside agencies who will be providing support for the goals, are responsible for identifying the needed transition services. When transition planning for each SWD for postsecondary outcomes, the team must determine the needs, strengths, preferences, and interests of the student (Eggert & Minutelli, 2011; Trainor et al., 2016). Often, transition planning includes planning, assessment, and instruction (Trainor et al., 2016). When considering assessing SWD, it is necessary to include a triangulation of data that may increase the successful transition of this population (Test et al, 2009; Trainor et al., 2016). The triangulation of data for assessment may include progress reports, present levels of performance, multidisciplinary reports, observations, and a vocational interest inventory. In addition, the areas of independent living, recreation and leisure, and health may be a part of the transition assessment when necessary (Kortering & Braziel, 2008).

In the first and second National Longitudinal Transition Studies (NLTS and NLTS2) there was an indication that in 2003, school dropouts decreased by 17% in SWD versus in 1987 (Trainor et al., 2016). Additionally, researchers agreed that through transition grounded in evidence-based practices, special-education transition research-based specific strategies, transition clarity, and compliance with the legal requirements of the IEP components, SWD will have better outcomes (Flannery et al., 2013; Landmark & Zhang, 2012; Trainor et al., 2016). Not only should these components be of high quality but also, they should align with postsecondary goals (Flannery & Hellemn, 2015). Through the mandating and monitoring of specific transition practices, a more positive postsecondary outcome is expected (Landmark & Zhang, 2012). When planning for transition of students with special needs, LEAs should provide continuous professional
development to educators that stresses compliance of the law (Landmark & Zhang, 2012) and best transition planning practices. Continuing to write measurable postsecondary transition goals that state what the student will be able to do upon completion of high school and how mastery will be obtained, needs to remain a focus during the development of IEPs (Landmark & Zhang, 2012).

Educators needing to incorporate transition services into the IEP must comprehend the development and the correlation between the pertinent components (Flannery & Hellemn, 2015). Conventional times may not always be conducive when trying to involve all stakeholders in the planning process and therefore various meeting locations and times should be considered to include all stakeholders in the planning process (Geenen et al., 2003; Landmark & Zhang, 2012;). Adapted from Kohler’s (1996) Taxonomy for Transition Program, the Kentucky Taxonomy for Transition Programming (2017) was developed as a model for planning, organizing, and evaluating transition education, services, and programs. Utilization of a transition taxonomy can be applied as a framework to analyze the characteristics of SWD transition plans and services (Trainor et al., 2016).

Kohler’s (1996) theoretical framework for transition planning and the database of empirical evidence of the NLTS2 each exhibit elements linked to effective transition planning (Trainor et al., 2016). Through partnership with the local chamber of commerce and other employer networks, high school transition specialists may gain access to a broader range of employment and increase the number of potential community employers who may be willing to provide job opportunities, resources, and relationships to SWD (Carter et al., 2009; Trainor et al., 2012). From this partnership, students may glean skills
that lead to career development through activities, advocacy of member businesses to hire youth with disabilities, and an increased support network (Carter et al., 2009). Since youth can make short and long-term contributions to the local workforce and economy, researchers imply that through increasing employers’ awareness, value is gained by supporting early work experiences for youth with disabilities (Carter et al., 2009).

In the Commonwealth of Kentucky, educators working with SWD on transitions utilize the IEP Guidance Document to assist in writing transition goals, which are updated annually (Guidance Document, 2019). Through the Kentucky Guidance Document (2019), the addendum gives insight to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), resources to educators, and the ARC. Within the addendum, it states that WIOA mandates that State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies disburse at least 15% of their federal match dollars on pre-employment transition services for youth with disabilities who are transition age (Guidance Document, 2019). The Guidance Document (2019) details the collaboration between the Kentucky Office of Vocational Rehabilitation and the schools in the provision regarding providing Pre-ETS to students ages 14 to 21 who are potentially eligible for services through Vocational Rehabilitation. To receive Pre-ETS, one must meet the following eligibility criteria for the Commonwealth of Kentucky: in high school; between 14-21 years old; and eligible to receive special education or related services under IDEA or have a disability under Section 504 of the ADA. Furthermore, credentials such as an IEP, 504 plan, medical documents, review of school records, a declaration from school staff, case notes detailing counselor observation, or a letter authenticating that the student is a receiver of Social Security benefits triggers eligibility for Pre-ETS services (Guidance Document, 2019).
Some students with Intellectual Disabilities (ID) who leave high school with either a diploma or a certificate of attendance may benefit from attending a comprehensive transition and postsecondary (CTP) program (Student Aid, 2018). Financial aid is offered to ID students who are enrolled or accepted for enrollment at an institute of higher education (a college or career school) that is a participant in federal student aid. These students must maintain satisfactory academic progress and meet the requirements for basic federal student aid eligibility (Student Aid, 2018). According to Student Aid (2018), a CTP program may be offered by a college or career school that has been approved by the U.S. ED. These institutes must provide support to students who have ID and desire to prepare for gainful employment through further education of independent living, career, and academics. Additionally, CTP programs must offer academic advising and structured curriculum. Students with ID are required to participate for a minimum of half the program with non-disabled peers, in credit bearing courses, courses for audit, non-degree courses, internships, or work-based learning. Several states around the country offer the CTP program (Student Aid, 2018).

The role of the family in the development of students' career development is essential for a successful transition of SWD from secondary education into the workforce (Morningstar et al., 2012). Lindstrom et al. (2007) discussed the role of family influence on the educational transition on SWD, asserting that students of lower socioeconomic status who had to make monetary contributions to the family household caused their postsecondary outcome to differ from that of their parents. The Kentucky Post School Outcomes Center (KYPSO, 2018) indicated that during the 2017 Youth One Year Out (YOYO) follow up report, a substantial number of youth respondents cited severity of
disability as a reason for not working. This may suggest both parents/guardians and students lack the knowledge of employment opportunities, resources, and supports for accommodations needed for significant contribution in the community and workforce (Transition Guide, 2020). Thus, during the secondary education level, parents/guardians and youth must be encouraged to learn strategies to support transition to employment after graduation or school completion (Transition Guide, 2020). Additionally, the YOYO 2017 indicated only 16% of the youth interviewed had contacted the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, signifying the need for further communication and education about the services offered through OVR (KYPSO, 2018).

**Kentucky Career Center**

The youth program Workforce Investment Act of 1998 was replaced by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Funding is provided to Kentucky’s 10 local workforce development areas (LWDAs) defined by WIOA (Youth, n.d.). The funding is provided by the Department of Workforce Investment Office of Employment and Training. Youth who need to overcome barriers to transition to either postsecondary education, training, or employment upon completion of high school, may be eligible to participate in one of the WIOA programs, which operate year-round (Youth, n.d.). The Kentucky Career Center provides opportunities for youth to receive tutoring, study skills training, instruction, and evidence-based dropout prevention recovery strategies that lead to the completion of secondary education whether that be a high school diploma, certificate of attendance, or General Education Development also known as the General Equivalency Diploma (GED) (Youth, n.d.). Youth may gain work experience, either paid or unpaid, which has an academic and occupational component as a part of the work
experience. The experiences may vary from on-the-job training, internships, job shadowing, pre-apprenticeships, and summer employment, to employment available throughout the school year (Youth, n.d.). Preparing youth may additionally consist of occupational skill training, leadership development, supportive services, adult mentoring, comprehensive guidance and counseling, entrepreneurial skills training, services that provide information about the local industry such as career awareness, career counseling and career exploration, and activities related to transition to postsecondary education and training (Youth, n.d.).

The youth must meet the eligibility criteria for either in-school or out-of-school services. Those youth who are in school must be between the ages of 14 and 21 and have low socioeconomic status. Youth must also have one or more of the following classifications: basic skills deficient; English Learner; offender; homeless; runaway; in foster care; pregnant or parenting; have a disability; or a youth who needs further assistance completing an educational program to gain or hold employment (Youth, n.d.). Those youth who are out of school may have one or more of the following classifications: high school dropout; school age youth who has not attended for the current calendar year; recipient of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent; or low-income status. Additionally, youth must also have either a deficiency in basic skills, be an English Learner, an offender, homeless, runaway, in foster care, pregnant or parenting, have a disability, or need further assistance completing an educational program to gain or hold employment (Youth, n.d.).

Factors related to postsecondary transition have been identified in the WIOA (2014). The Title IV of WIOA stipulates that 15% of each state’s annual budget for VR
services must be delegated for transition services for potentially eligible students and youth between the ages of 16-24 years of age (Kentucky IEP Guidance Document, 2019; Luecking et al., 2018; U.S. ED, 2017). Moreover, WIOA has inaugurated a new kind of VR support for the provision of Pre-ETS, which can be applied to services prior to students exiting school (Luecking et al., 2018). The Pre-ETS has five central components: Career Exploration Counseling, Counseling on Postsecondary, Instruction in Self- Advocacy, Workplace Readiness Training, and Work-Based Learning Experiences (Guidance Document 2019; U.S. ED, 2020). Early case initiation with Vocational Rehabilitation may have a positive impact on vocational services for students transitioning, as consistent with the new WIOA regulations (U.S. ED, 2020). By using employment-related services, VR counselors often experience more success in case closures of students due to these services being part of the WIOA description of Pre-ETS services (Luecking et al., 2018).

Although a guarantee of WIOA is the interagency coordination and collaboration of Vocational Rehabilitation agencies and its constituents who are involved in transition, it is likely that VR counselors will increase their role in participation of interagency teams as they implement the regulations and improve services related to transition for SWD (Luecking et al., 2018). Sanon (2007) argued because of the overlap in transition services between VR agencies and LEAs, an interagency agreement of financial responsibility is necessary. Furthermore, students who do not receive services immediately are placed on an order of selection waiting list. Students who receive transition services often have a smoother transition from school to adult life (U.S. ED, 2020). The NLTS2 reported that only 13% of VR counselors were participants of IEP
meetings while other participants (i.e., postsecondary, advocates, and consultants) had only a 3% participation rate (Sanon, 2007).

**Transitions for Youth with Disabilities**

Transition from school to work is a critical time for youth, but it can be easier with appropriate career preparation and parental knowledge (Sankardas & Rajanahally, 2015). Youth with disabilities face barriers to transition due to the lack of obtaining strong marketable skills instruction in secondary school (Gilson et al., 2017; Sankardas & Rajanahally, 2015). During school, SWD may benefit from having a mentor while also receiving encouragement from counselors and teachers (KYPSO, 2017). For parents to effectively assist in eliminating barriers, they need sufficient knowledge of resources regarding accommodations, providing support, and understanding how integrating their child into the community supports becoming a productive member of society (KYPSO, 2018). Additionally, it is critical that employers, because of fear, do not perceive SWD as being incapable of completing assigned tasks (Sankardas & Rajanahally, 2015).

Some employers have mixed emotions when considering employing individuals with a disability (Sankardas & Rajanahally, 2015). Other employers are more willing and prepared than their counterparts to employ individuals with disabilities than those who allow fear to deter their decision due to lack of knowledge about persons with disabilities, their accommodations, and how others may react (Sankardas & Rajanahally, 2015). Geenen et al. (2003) proffered SWD have more difficulties than others transitioning from high school, which may be due to reliance on external factors. The researchers further stated that although many agencies are available to provide support for SWD, access and navigation of the assistance is often deficient due to students’ and families’ lack of
personal contact with the agencies. Some of the most daunting barriers to employment for SWD are disrespect, disregard, or ignorance related to a student’s disability and family culture (Geenen et al., 2003). This barrier can occur both in an individuals’ interaction with professionals and system-wide institutionally based inequities and discrimination (Geenen et al., 2003).

Families of minority SWD often feel misunderstood and unsupported (Geenen et al., 2003). Additionally, this can lead to students of color being labeled as less than capable and teachers failing to put forth the effort needed to assist the students in becoming successful (Geenen et al., 2003). Having multiple barriers consisting of disability and cultural differences may present a formidable obstacle (Geenen et al., 2003). In Geenen et al.’s (2003) parental survey, there was a concurrence that school meeting times and locations need to be more accommodating due to transportation issues and scheduling conflicts. Geenen et al. reported other barriers that cause parents to “give up” are language and unfamiliarity with the way systems work (2003). Adding to the many barriers are those that are contextual, such as single parenthood, violence in the home, or drug abuse (Geenen et al., 2003). A deeper examination of contextual barriers is needed since they contribute to the hindrance of postsecondary transition of SWD (Banks, 2014).

Employment

For many young adults with disabilities, limited employment opportunities and a lack of financial stability are a reality (Lindstrom et al., 2011). It is essential that career development, although complex, nonlinear, and chaotic, occur over time for individuals with disabilities (Lindstrom et al., 2011). According to Lindstrom et al. (2007) and
Lindstrom et al. (2011), youth who experience early entry into the workforce throughout high school and who are expected to contribute to the family are employed at a higher rate. These researchers also found that while early work experiences along with caring for other family members created hardships, students did mature and learn marginal career development. Some skills the adolescents learned as they assumed duties within the family were time management, responsibility, and work ethic. Moreover, when considering the family unit, career development and employment were influenced in both positive and negative ways (Lindstrom et al., 2007). Thus, while some families struggled to make ends meet, other students used it as motivation to be different than their parents by seeking better employment opportunities.

According to the TASH National Agenda (2018), employment for those with intellectual and developmental disabilities is a connector to the community and leads to independence, fosters a sense of self-worth, and provides opportunities for social growth. However, despite the considerable research and best practices in SWD and employment, some members of the business community and public have yet to accept that those with limitations have skills and can contribute to the workplace (Carter et al., 2016). According to the National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth, SWD, while in school or on the job, must be given opportunities to learn and practice employment skills (as cited in Gilson et al., 2017). When considering the success of transition into employment for youth with disabilities, the development of skills is a crucial factor (Sankardas & Rajanahally, 2015).

Secondary transition educators may provide opportunities for employment for SWD through the development of a partnership with the local Chamber of Commerce
and other local employer networks (Carter et al., 2009). This partnership may provide career development through a variety of activities that assist in the preparation to enter the workforce (Carter et al., 2009). Summer work experience may also contribute to retaining vocational, social, and functional skills (Carter et al., 2010). Additionally, SWD who are employed during the summer may gain additional opportunities to further develop employment, self-determination, social and recreational skills, in addition to creating meaningful relationships within the community (Carter et al., 2010). To create an increased likelihood of success on the job and expand career opportunities, SWD must be equipped with essential skills (Carter et al., 2010). Scholars (Carter et al., 2010) argued social skills and self-determination skills may have an influence on youth regarding finding and maintaining employment. External factors to demographics and skill sets are also likely to shape the employment experiences of youth (Carter et al., 2010).

**Institutes of Higher Education**

SWD who plan to enter higher education must be informed of their rights and know what to expect from the institute in regard to services (USDE, 2011). The Office of Civil Rights (OCR) in the U.S. ED (2011) is responsible for the enforcement of Section 504 and Title II of the ADA. Students must have a concrete understanding of the difference in services received in secondary school versus postsecondary (USDE, 2011). For students who seek to continue their education, postsecondary schools are not required to deliver FAPE like secondary schools, but only academic accommodations that ensure there is no discrimination based on disability (USDE, 2011). Although it is not required
for students to disclose their disability to the school of higher education, it is often to their advantage to do so (USDE, 2011).

According to OCR (USDE, 2011), a postsecondary school can allow for adjustments that provide equal access. Accommodations that may be utilized are priority registration, reduction in course load, course substitution, and/or providing a note taker, recording devices, a sign language interpreter, screen reading for the computer, voice recognition software, extended time for test-taking, and any other adaptive software or hardware (USDE, 2011). Those students who enroll in postsecondary education are responsible for informing the institution of their disability and completing the necessary documentation to receive services. Unlike being in a K-12 school where an IEP follows students as they transition from one school to the next, students moving on to postsecondary schools are responsible for providing the documentation of the disability and the need for academic adjustments (USDE, 2011). While showing the IEP or 504 Plan to the institute of higher education may aid in the types of accommodations received, additional documentation by a professional showing sufficiency of the disability may be required (USDE, 2011). In a study conducted by the National Center for Educational Statistics for the 2008-09 school year, Raue and Lewis (2011) found 44% of institutions accepted an IEP and 40% accepted the 504 Plan as stand-alone verification, while 80% accepted a comprehensive evaluation from a vocational rehabilitation agency.

Until the passage of the Higher Education Act of 1965, when need-based financial assistance to the public was created under Title IV, many students graduating high school did not have the means to afford higher education (Brook, 2010). When the
reauthorization of the Higher Education Act of 1965 became the Higher Education Opportunity Act, provisions gave access to postsecondary education for students with ID (Lee, 2009). Although this Act provides financial means for SWD to attend higher education institutions, many students with ID have reported being misunderstood, having to work harder than non-disabled peers, and needing to seek out strategies for success in education (Denhart, 2008). Additionally, Denhart (2008) found many students were reluctant to ask for accommodations once they entered college.

**Summary**

A plethora of research exists in support of adequate and appropriate transitions of SWD. Successful transitional outcomes often occur when there is a well-developed transition plan that involves stakeholders, education, and training that aligns with students’ goals. Transition experiences gained early through job shadowing, internship, work-based learning experiences, summer employment, mentorships, apprenticeships, and paid employment can contribute to the success of SWD who enter into the workforce or who seek to engage in a career of choice after graduating high school (Transition Guide, 2020).

The IEP is the driving force for a successful postsecondary transition for SWD provided that appropriate transitional planning has occurred. With the federal regulation IDEA mandating that transition planning begin for SWD at the age of 14 and no later than age 16 (2017), more SWD should have positive post-school outcomes. It is during the transition planning process that postsecondary goals are developed with the intent to prepare students to reach desired goals. It is necessary that throughout the IEP process, transition planning is student-centered and student-driven (IDEA, 2017). Students should
take an active role in their transition planning by leading the meetings and fully participating in the transition planning process (IDEA, 2017). In Chapter III, the methodology of the study will be discussed in detail.
CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Students with disabilities continue to have lackluster outcomes with employment and postsecondary enrollment in comparison to students without disabilities (Wagner et al., 2006). The outcomes include lower graduation rates, lower expectations, lower higher education enrollment, lower employment attainment, and lack of community involvement (KYPSO, 2020). As such, this researcher analyzed an educator survey of two school districts in a Kentucky region to determine the perceptions of educators who have direct involvement with student transition.

The purpose of this study was to better understand the perceptions of transition practices of educators in two Kentucky regional districts who serve SWD and to compare the perceptions of educators. These districts were chosen based on their reported demographics on the state report card. To evaluate the perceptions, a selection of high school educators from two districts were invited to complete an online survey. The use of a survey in this study was to gain a better understanding of the opinions, behaviors, or characteristics (Slavin, 2007) of educators who work with SWD during transition from postsecondary education.

Further examination of SWD outcomes within the two districts was conducted through a review of each district’s state report card as reported by the districts. The purpose of this quantitative descriptive study was to provide empirical data identifying the perceptions of some Kentucky educators who work with transitioning SWD from secondary school.
Research Questions

This researcher examined the perceptions of school personnel in relation to post secondary transitions of SWD and student outcomes. The guiding research questions for this study were:

1. To what extent do educators in the two regional districts use transition planning? To what extent does transition planning vary by high school?

2. To what extent do students with special needs participate in work-related practices in the two regional districts? To what extent does work-related practices vary by high school?

3. To what extent do students with special needs participate in related practices in the two regional districts? To what extent does community participation (related practices) vary by high school?

4. To what extent do students with special needs participate in assessment practices (Transition Portfolios, Participant Record Review, Transition Assessment, Career/Vocational Assessment, and Standardized Assessment) in the two regional districts? To what extent does assessment practices vary by high school?

5. To what extent do all school staff participate in the IEP in the two regional districts? To what extent does all staff participation in the IEP vary by high school?

6. What is the extent of parent/guardian involvement in the two regional districts? To what extent does parental involvement vary by high school?

7. To what extent does the staff implement IDEA transition regulations in the two regional districts? To what extent does staff implementation of IDEA transition regulations vary by high school?
8. How prepared for transition readiness are SWD in comparison to students without disabilities?

**Research Design**

Quantitative research is defined as “explaining phenomena by collecting numerical data (Aliaga & Gunderson, 2000) that are analyzed using mathematically based methods (in particular statistics)” (Munjis, 2011, p. 1). To study the perceptions of educators as they relate to the transition of SWD, this researcher utilized a quantitative descriptive inquiry approach through the collection of data from a survey. Through the design of this study, the researcher sought to analyze differences in the perceptions of teachers regarding transition practices in two Kentucky school districts. The research data were collected through an online survey distributed to educators in two school districts in a specific region of Kentucky. The survey was a Likert scale that allowed for the collection of quantifiable data on what educators perceive is or is not taking place during transition. The instrument also allowed educators to indicate obstacles or barriers that hinder successful secondary transition of students. The researcher conducted a survey that examined the perceptions of educators on planning the transition of SWD. The coding on the 5-point Likert scale was to aggregate the responses to determine the level of agreement based upon the original Likert scale. The coding was done to minimize social bias that may have occurred during the administration of the survey (Vigil Colet et al., 2020).

**Setting**

The research was conducted in two districts in a region of Kentucky. Educators in these districts who worked at the secondary school level and worked with SWD during
their transition were asked to complete the survey. District A provided a continuum of services to a range of SWD. Within District A, there was representation from three of the four high schools. The student enrollment for the district was 14,986, with 2,500 employees, over 50 spoken languages, and 35 nationalities (KDE, School Report Card). There were 56.8% who received free and reduced lunch within this district. High school one had an enrollment of 1,251 students, a graduation rate of 96% and 26.0% of the students were considered college ready. In high school two, the enrollment was 1,231, the graduation rate 98%, and the college readiness rate 24.3% (KDE, School Report Card). Within high school three, the enrollment was 885 students, the graduation rate 92%, and 14.2% were college ready. Lastly, in high school four, there were 852 students enrolled, a graduation rate of 97% and 23.3% were college ready (KDE, School Report Card).

During the 2016-2017 school year, District A had a total of 1,827 students in Special Education (KDE, School Report Card).

District B serves a number of SWD and contains three high schools of which two of the three are represented in the results. The total district enrollment was 14,095 and 59.8% received free and reduced lunch. High school one had an enrollment of 1,811 students, a graduation rate of 95% and 14.1% of the population was college ready (KDE, School Report Card). High school two had an enrollment of 921 students with a graduation rate of 93% and a 14.8% rating of college readiness (KDE, School Report Card). The third high school in District B had an enrollment of 1,559 students, a graduation rate of 93%, and 12.2% of the population was college ready. The total number of employees, spoken languages, and nationalities for District B was unknown by the
researcher at the time of the study (KDE, School Report Card). District B had a total of approximately 2,250 students in Special Education KDE, School Report Card).

Participants

This study was designed to examine the perceptions of secondary educators in two regional Kentucky districts regarding transition of SWD. The targeted survey participants from District A were solicited from the group of special educators that was provided by the Director of Special Education, who may work directly or indirectly with SWD as they transition from secondary education. The survey was emailed to 30 educators; four educators responded. In District B, participants were solicited through the district’s Human Resource liaison, therefore the total number who received the invitation to participate is unknown, and a total of eight educators completed the survey. Those who were invited to participate were involved in the transition of SWD from postsecondary education. Those who work with the transition of students hold various titles that consist of special education teachers, general education teachers, and instructional assistants.

Participation in this study was solely voluntary. Due to the small sample size from District A (4 participants), and the small sample size from District B (8 participants), a descriptive analysis was conducted using STATA 17.0. The survey may have been given to educators who have different responsibilities, but all had a shared goal of ensuring students experience successful postsecondary transition.
Instruments

An adapted version of the Special Education Transition Questionnaire (SETQ), developed by Dr. Amy MacKenzie (2014), was utilized for data collection. The original SETQ survey, based on the initial feedback from MacKenzie, experienced five revisions. To determine content validity and relevance, a team of four experts in special education reviewed and edited the items. Each of the team members was certified in special education, had a master’s degree in Education and had more than five years’ experience providing services to SWD in high school. Upon feedback from the experts, the instrument was condensed and grouped by variables. MacKenzie conducted a pilot study of 19 high school special educators (5 male and 14 female) who were knowledgeable of transition planning to check the validity of the instrument. The final SETQ survey (Appendix A) is an instrument that allows for the collection of quantifiable data on educators’ perceptions of what is or is not occurring in practice. In addition to questions on perceptions, the instrument includes questions on challenges or barriers to transition for SWD.

In this study, the SETQ was utilized to collect general information about the educators and contained questions related to transitional practices being used in their district. The general demographic information questions included but were not limited to inquiries regarding gender, ethnicity, education, position in the district, level of education, number of years in the field of special education, and certifications. The participants were asked to select the number within the Likert scale that best described their preference.
The survey contained questions related to practices within the district that prepare students for transitioning. Additionally, through the survey, the researcher collected data on strategies being used that provide success for students who have experienced successful transition.

The SETQ had Cronbach alphas and correlations calculated on the total subscales to ensure the scale’s reliability. The seven subscales identified by MacKenzie (2014) indicated a Cronbach’s alpha coefficient that all subscales had high reliabilities and were above .90. For this study, Cronbach’s alpha was reanalyzed to ensure survey items remained reliable for this group of participants.

Secondary Education Transition Questionnaire (SETQ)

The data in this study offered descriptive information regarding transition practices in a region in the Commonwealth of Kentucky. In addressing transition practices, the items on the questionnaire were grouped into seven categories and had an alignment of the category items with the research questions. Work practices related to transition (items 1-6) had six subcategories that consisted of job-related social skills; job seeking skills; job sampling (coop or volunteer placements); paid work experiences (prior to graduation); specify desired job (obtain paid or volunteer employment with supports as needed); and visit potential employers or recreation locations. Transition as it relates to community participation (items 7-13) had seven subcategories that consisted of skills for living environment; acquire identification card; identify community support services and programs; use local transportation (not family); assume responsibility for healthcare needs; practice independent living skills (budgeting etc.); and identify options for living arrangements.
Transition as it relates to assessment practices (items 14-18) had five subcategories that consisted of having a transition portfolio; participation in record review (IEP, report card, and documents related to current skills); transition assessment; career/vocational assessment; and participation in standardized assessment. Educator practices during transition planning (items 19-28) had ten subcategories that consisted of schedules/facilitates transition meetings; progress monitoring of transition goals; documents transition planning on IEP; maintains record of team members and assessments; provides opportunities to foster work and independent living skills; conducts or arranges assessment; trained in transition planning; involved in training to implement transition programs; would participate in transition planning voluntarily; and transition planning was part of teacher preparation classes. Parental involvement in transition practices (items 29-34) had six subcategories that consisted of involvement in transition planning; sharing of knowledge of their child’s interest, strengths, and needs; participates in the selection of appropriate goals and objectives for the IEP; are familiar with resources available for adults with special needs; attend the IEP meeting; and have received training in transition planning. Implementation of transition regulations (items 35-39) had five subcategories that consisted of lack of teacher training in transition planning; lack of student involvement in transition planning; lack of parental/guardian involvement in transition planning; lack of administrative support in transition planning; and lack of resources. There were optional questions (items 40-55) that were related to courses taught, number of years taught, education level, and demographics of participants. The participants completed the SETQ using a 5-point Likert-type scale,
specifying their level of strongly disagree (1) or strongly agree (5) on a symmetric scale for a series of statements.

**District State Report Cards**

The researcher used information from each of the districts state report card to compare how students with disabilities were prepared for transition to students without disabilities. This information is reported by the school districts and is available for public view. For the 2018-2019 school year, students could either be academic ready meaning students meet benchmarks on the American College Test (ACT) test, or they could be career ready by passing the Kentucky Occupational Skills Standard Assessment (KOSSA) exam in a specific area of study, or students could meet both transition readiness expectations.

**Procedures**

An Internal Review Board (IRB) (Appendix B) and Informed Consent Form (Appendix C) were filed with Western Kentucky University. Permission was granted from the districts’ superintendents to conduct the study and distribute the questionnaire regarding transition for SWD. A total of 30 educators in District A were invited to complete the online survey. An unspecified number of educators were asked to complete the survey in District B. In District A, a personalized email was sent to educators alerting them to the forthcoming invitation to participate in the study. One week later, the educators received an email inviting them to participate. Two weeks after the original email was sent, a reminder email was sent to the participants. A final email to potential participants was sent out three weeks from the original email. In District B, the
personalized email was sent to the Human Resource Department who sent it to building administrators for distribution. Follow up emails followed the same procedure.

Educators from a total of seven high schools from two districts in a region of Kentucky had the opportunity to participate in this study from four high schools in District A, and three high schools in District B. In addition to survey responses, an analysis of District A’s and District B’s Transition Readiness was conducted using data from the 2018-2019 school report cards.

**Data Management and Analysis**

Descriptive statistics were used to capture the nature of the response distribution on the demographic variables and the SETQ. A summary statistic was performed for each research question. Due to the insufficient responses from the districts, a Kruskal-Wallis analysis was not run. Cronbach’s alpha was conducted to determine item consistency of the survey across the seven rating subscales.

**Limitations**

This researcher examined transition practices of educators of students with special needs as SWD transition from secondary high school in a region in the Commonwealth of Kentucky. Limitations existed based on the small representation of the sample size. Although relying on self-reporting data and perception, this, in and of itself, presented a limitation. The number of survey responses were beyond the control of the researcher as the survey was voluntary. The study was not indicative of all urban or rural schools within the region in the Commonwealth of Kentucky.
Summary

In Chapter III, the researcher provided a detailed overview of the methodology used in this study. IDEA (2004) mandates the planning of transition for all SWD. However, the limit of empirical evidence to support strategies of best practice perpetuated the need for this research. A descriptive analysis was used to ensure the researcher analyzed the collection of data to determine transition strategies that support the postsecondary success of SWD. The participants' perceptions aided in identifying how they perceive transition within each of the districts represented. It is the aim of the researcher to promote further research on how to best meet the transition needs of SWD. In Chapter IV, the research results will be examined.
CHAPTER IV: RESULTS

Introduction

The purpose of this quantitative study was to examine the perception of transition practices of educators in two regional Kentucky school districts in preparation of SWD for postsecondary life and to explore the outcomes as reported on the two districts’ report cards. The research questions addressed the perception of the educators regarding planning, assessment, parental involvement, teacher involvement in transition, implementation of regulations, and outcomes reported on the districts report cards. The researcher sought to identify barriers to the execution of transition policies. Participants were composed of 12 educators in two school districts in Kentucky. The SETQ was used to gauge transition practices within the two school districts. The district report cards were used to compare transition readiness among students with and without disabilities. District A reported a total of 1,060 students who graduated, and District B reported a total of 983 students who graduated.

The researcher combined the strongly agree and the agree results from the survey and included the percentage of likelihood that the practice was occurring in the districts in the table of each question. The Likert scale was recoded to \( 1 = -2, 2 = -1, 3 = 0, 4 = 1, \) and \( 5 = 2 \). This was performed to better capture which practices in transition planning respondents agreed or disagreed were being completed by the districts. In this chapter, the researcher provides an overview of how data were collected and recorded.

Scale Reliability

To ensure the scale was reliable, a Cronbach alpha was conducted on each section of the SETQ and an overall total alpha was conducted for the modifications of the
instrument. Table 1 illustrates Cronbach’s alphas on the seven sections that represented transition planning and the result was a good to acceptable score of internal consistency with reliabilities that ranged from .75 to .86. The seven sections overall total Cronbach’s alpha was .92.

Table 1

*Reliability of SETQ Scales*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>α</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work Practice</td>
<td>.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Practices</td>
<td>.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment Practices</td>
<td>.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educators Practices</td>
<td>.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental Involvement</td>
<td>.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementation of Regulations</td>
<td>.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reliability SETQ Scales Total</td>
<td>.92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Demographics**

The researcher was provided email addresses for Special Educators in District A. Participation in the study was voluntary. For District B, the researcher was unaware of the number of potential participants due to the survey being routed through the human resource department. The total overall responses for both districts yielded a total of 12 participants, of which, four participants were from District A, representing three high schools, and eight participants were from District B, representing two high schools. The SETQ survey was completed by five males and seven females. There were 10
participants who identified as White, one as African American, and one unspecified. Of
the participants, 10 had a master’s degree, one had a Doctorate and one was unspecified.
The survey was available to any certified or non-certified district employee who worked
in any capacity of transition of students with disabilities. Of those who participated, six
were Special Education teachers, two Instructional Assistants, one English as a Second
Language Teacher, one Social Studies Teacher, one classroom teacher unspecified, and
one who did not identify a school position. The demographics revealed nine of the twelve
participants had been in education 10 years or less while the remaining three had 20 years
or more in the field of education.

Although the expectation was for all staff (i.e., general education teachers,
employment specialists, instructional assistants, special education consultants, transition
coordinators, special education department chairs) who were involved with transition of
SWD to have the opportunity to participate, what actually occurred was special education
teachers were the majority of my respondents. Thus, as I make inferences regarding what
I learned from my survey results, I gained insight in what special educators perceived but
did not have enough representative respondents to gauge the perception of the other types
of staffs.
## Demographics of Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Years in Education</th>
<th>Ed Level</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Certification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Masters</td>
<td>SPED</td>
<td>SPED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Unspecified</td>
<td>SPED</td>
<td>SPED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Unspecified</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Masters</td>
<td>SPED</td>
<td>SPED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Masters</td>
<td>SPED</td>
<td>SPED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Masters</td>
<td>SPED</td>
<td>SPED, ENG, Soc. St.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Doctorate</td>
<td>ESL</td>
<td>SPED, Sec. GE, ENG, SC, ESL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Masters</td>
<td>Unspecified</td>
<td>Unspecified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Masters</td>
<td>Soc St</td>
<td>Soc. St.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>African American</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Masters</td>
<td>Inst. Asst.</td>
<td>Non-certified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Masters</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>ENG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Masters</td>
<td>Inst. Asst.</td>
<td>Non-certified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>Masters</td>
<td>SPED</td>
<td>SPED</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. A total of 12 participants volunteered to complete the survey. SPED is Special Education specific area of concentration. ESL is English as a Second Language specific area of concentration. The individual with a Doctorate has multiple areas of concentration: Special Education, Secondary General Education with a focus in English, Science, and English as a Second Language.

### Research Question 1-Transition Planning Results
Transition planning encompasses the overall practice of preparing students for exit from postsecondary. Question one considered the extent to which educators in the two regional districts used transition planning and the extent to which transition planning varied by high school. Due to the lack of representation from each of the high schools within each of the districts, only the first part of the question was answered. Due to the nature of the wording of the survey, results indicated the extent to which participants agree with transition planning practices being done. The question did not ask specifically if the participant was the one who was engaging in the practice, only whether it was being done.

As Table 3 illustrates, the overall means of Work Practices was .18 and the overall standard deviation was 1.09 with 58% who strongly agree and agree. Under the area of Community Participation, the mean was .29 and the standard deviation was .87 with 50% who strongly agreed and agreed. The percent of strongly agree and agree with Assessment Practices was 78% and there was a mean of 1.18 and a standard deviation of 0.81. The area of Educators Practices During Planning had 83% who strongly agreed and agreed with an overall mean of .68 and a standard deviation of 1.12. For the area of Parental Involvement, results indicated 67% who strongly agreed or agreed with a mean of 0.86 overall and a standard deviation of 0.83. With the Implementation of Regulations, 67% strongly agreed or agreed and had a mean of 0.48 and a standard deviation of 0.87.
Table 3

Means, Standard Deviation, Minimum and Maximum of Transition Planning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
<th>% Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work Practices Grand Total</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Participation Grand Total</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment Practices Grand Total</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educators Practices During Planning Grand Total</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental Involvement Grand Total</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementation of Regulations Grand Total</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: N=12. Percentage represents the likelihood of this practice.

**Research Question 2-Work-Related Practices Results**

The second research question considered the extent to which educators in the two regional districts used work-related practices and the extent to which work-related practices varied by high school. There were not significant responses from either of the high schools to answer the second part of the question and therefore, only the first part of the questions was answered. Within the area of Work-Related Practices, Job-Related
Social Skills had a mean of .83 and a standard deviation of .94 (Table 4). There was 67% of educators who strongly agreed or agreed that this practice was common for their district. For Job Seeking Skills, the mean was .58 and the standard deviation was 1.24 with 58% who strongly agreed or agreed. Under Job Sampling, the mean was .33 and the standard deviation was .98 with 50% strongly agreeing or agreeing that this was being practiced. Paid Work Experience had a mean of -0.33 and a standard deviation of .98 with 17% who strongly agreed and agreed. An overall Work-Related Practices mean was .18 and the standard deviation was 1.09 with 58% who strongly agreed or agreed that this is being practiced.
Table 4

*Means, Standard Deviation, Minimum and Maximum of Work-Related Practices*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
<th>% Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Job-related Social Skills</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Seeking Skills</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>1.24</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Sampling (Coop or volunteer placements)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paid Work Experiences (prior to graduation)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>-0.33</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specify Desired Job (obtain paid or volunteer employment with supports as needed)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>-0.50</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit Potential Employers or Recreation Locations</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Practice Totals</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. N=12. Percentage represents the likelihood of this practice.*

**Research Question-3 Community Participation Results**

Research question three considered the extent to which students with special needs engaged in community participation in the two regional districts and the extent to which community participation varied by high school. There were not significant responses from the high schools to answer the second part of the question and therefore, only the first part of the questions was answered. For the area of Community Participation under Skills for Living Environment, there was a mean of .42 and a standard
deviation of 1.00 with 42% who strongly agreed and agreed (Table 5). Acquire Identification Card had a mean of .08 and a standard deviation of 1.08 with 33% who strongly agreed and agreed. With Identify Community Support Services and Programs, the mean was 0.25 and the standard deviation was .87 with 50% who strongly agreed and agreed. For Use Local Transportation, the mean was -.08 and the standard deviation was .67 with a 17% who strongly agreed and agreed. Assume Responsibility of Healthcare Needs yielded a mean of 0.00 and a standard deviation of .74 with a 25% who strongly agreed and agreed. In Practice Independent Living Skills and Identify Options for Living Arrangements, the mean was .67 and the standard deviation was .89 with a 58% who strongly agreed and agreed. The overall Community Participation mean was .29 and the overall standard deviation was .87 with a 50% who strongly agreed and agreed.
Table 5

*Means, Standard Deviation, Minimum and Maximum of Community Participation*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
<th>% Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Skills for Living Environment</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquire Identification Card</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify Community Support Services &amp; Programs</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use Local Transportation (not family)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>-0.08</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assume Responsibility for Healthcare Needs</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice Independent Living Skills</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify Options for Living Arrangements</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Participation Totals</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Note. N=12. Percentage represents the likelihood of this practice.

Research Question- 4 Assessment Practices Results

In research question four, participants considered the extent to which students with special needs participated in assessment practices in the two regional districts and the extent to which assessment practices varied by high school. With the limited responses and lack of representation from all high schools in each district, only part one of the question was answered. For the statement have transition portfolio, the mean was 1.17, the standard deviation was .83, and 75% who strongly agreed and agreed. The statement Participation in the Record Review had a mean of 1.25, a standard deviation of .97, and 83% who strongly agreed and agreed. With Statement Transition Assessment, the mean was 1.33, the standard deviation was .78, and 83% who strongly agreed and agreed. Career/Vocational Assessment and Participate in Standardized Assessments yielded a mean of 1.08, a standard deviation of .79, and 75% who strongly agreed and agreed. The overall mean for Assessment Practices was 1.18, the over standard deviation was .81, and 78% strongly agreed and agreed (table 6).
Table 6

Means, Standard Deviation, Minimum and Maximum of Assessment Practices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
<th>% Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Have Transition Portfolio</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in Record Review (IEP, report card, documents related to current skills)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>0.97</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transition Assessment</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career/Vocational Assessment</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participate in Standardized Assessments</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment Practices Totals</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. N=12. Percentage represents the likelihood of this practice.

Research Question- 5 Educational Practices During Planning Results

The fifth research question considered the extent to which school staff participated in the IEP in the two regional districts and the extent to which staff participation in the IEP varied by high school. Due to the lack of representation from each of the high schools within each of the districts, only the first part of the question was answered. Schedules/Facilitates Transition Meetings had a mean of 1.42, a standard deviation of .51, and a 100% who strongly agreed or agreed. For Progress Monitoring of Transition Goals, the mean was 1.00, the standard deviation 1.04, and an 83% who strongly agreed and agreed. With Documents Transition Planning on IEP, the mean was 1.17, the standard deviation was .83, and 92% who strongly agreed and agreed. Under Maintains Record of Team Members and Assessments, the mean was 1.17, the standard deviation was 0.81, and 92% who strongly agreed and agreed.
deviation was .83 and 92% who strongly agreed and agreed. Provides Opportunities to Foster Work and Independent Living Skills had a mean of .33, a standard deviation of .65 and 65% who strongly agreed and agreed. For Conducts or Arranges Assessment, the mean was .92, the standard deviation was 1.08, and 75% who strongly agreed and agreed. Trained in Transition Planning had a mean of .17, a standard deviation of 1.19, and 50% who strongly agreed and agreed. For Involved in Training to Implement Transition Programs, the mean was .08, the standard deviation was 1.16, and 42% who strongly agreed and agreed. For Would Participate in Transition Planning Voluntarily the mean was .75, the standard deviation .87, and a 67% who strongly agreed and agreed. Under Transition Planning Was Part of My Teacher Preparation Classes the mean was -.25, the standard deviation was 1.60, and a 33% who strongly agreed and agreed. The overall mean for this area was .68 and the standard deviation was 1.12 with an 83% who strongly agreed and agreed (Table 7).
### Table 7

**Means, Standard Deviation, Minimum and Maximum of Educators Practices During Planning**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
<th>% Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Schedules/Facilitates Transition Meetings</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1.42</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progress Monitoring of Transition Goals</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Documents Transition Planning on IEP</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintains Record of Team Members and Assessments</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provides Opportunities to foster Work and Independent Living Skills</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conducts or Arranges Assessment</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trained in Transition Planning</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involved in Training to Implement Transition Programs</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would Participate in Transition Planning Voluntarily</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transition Planning was part of my teacher preparation classes</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>-0.25</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educators Practices During Planning Totals</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. N=12. Percentage represents the likelihood of this practice.
Research Question-6 Parent/Guardian Involvement Results

Question six considered the extent of parent/guardian involvement in the two regional districts and the extent to which it varied by high school. With the limited responses and lack of representation from all high schools in each district, only part one of the question was answered. For Involved in Transition planning, the mean was 1.25, the standard deviation was 0.62, and 92% who strongly agreed and agree. Under Share Their Knowledge of Their Child’s Interests, Strengths, and Needs, the mean was 1.08, the standard deviation was 0.67, and 83% who strongly agreed and agreed. Participate in the Selection of Appropriate Goals and Objectives for the IEP yielded a mean of 1.17, a standard deviation of 0.72, and 83% who strongly agreed and agreed. For Considering Familiarity with Resources Available for Adults with Special Needs, the mean was 0.42, the standard deviation was 0.67 and 33% who strongly agreed and agreed. For Attend the IEP Meeting, the mean was 1.33, the standard deviation was 0.65, and 92% who strongly agreed and agreed. Under Received Training for Transition Planning the mean was -0.08, standard deviation was .67, and 17% who strongly agreed and agreed. The overall mean for Parent/Guardian Involvement was .86 and the standard deviation was .83 with a 67% who strongly agreed and agreed (Table 8).
Table 8

*MMeans, Standard Deviation, Minimum and Maximum of Parental Involvement*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
<th>% Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Involved in Transition Planning</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share Their Knowledge of Their Child's Interests, Strengths, and Needs</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participate in the Selection of Appropriate Goals and Objectives for the IEP</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are Familiar with Resources Available for Adults with Special Needs</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend the IEP Meeting</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have Received Training in Transition Planning</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent/Guardian Involvement Totals</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. N=12. Percentage represents the likelihood of this practice.

**Research Question-7 Barriers to Implementation of Regulations Results**

The seventh research question considered the extent to which staff implemented IDEA transition regulations in the two regional districts and the extent to which it varied by high school. There were not significant responses from each of the high schools within the districts to answer the second part of the question and therefore only the first part of the questions was answered. Under Lack of Teacher Training in Transition Planning, the mean was 0.75, standard deviation was 0.87, and 67% who strongly agreed and agreed. For Lack of Student Involvement in Transition Planning, the mean was 0.42, the standard
deviation was 0.90, and 50% who strongly agreed and agreed. The Lack of Parent/Guardian Involvement in Transition Planning yielded a mean of 0.58, a standard deviation of 0.79, and 58% who strongly agreed and agreed. For the Lack of Administration Support in Transition Planning, the mean was 0.25, the standard deviation was 0.97, and 42% who strongly agreed and agreed. Lack of Resources had a mean of 0.42, a standard deviation of 0.90, and 50% who strongly agreed and agreed. The overall mean for Barriers to Implementation of Regulations was 0.48 with a standard deviation of 0.87 and 67% who strongly agreed and agreed (Table 9).

Table 9

_Means, Standard Deviation, Minimum and Maximum Barriers to Implementation of Regulations_

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
<th>% Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Teacher Training in Transition Planning</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Student Involvement in Transition Planning</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Parent/Guardian Involvement in Transition Planning</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Administrative Support in Transition Planning</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.97</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Resources</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementation of Regulations Totals</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. N=12. Percentage represents the likelihood of this practice.
Research Question 8-Transition Readiness Results

Data from the 2018-2019 districts report cards as reported by the two districts included in this study were used to answer research question number eight. These data were used to compare the transition outcomes of students with and without disabilities. Transition readiness in the state of Kentucky means students meet benchmark scores on the American College Test (ACT) and/or pass the Kentucky Occupational Skill Standard Assessment (KOSSA) exam for the career pathway of study (KDE, 2018). Students who meet the ACT benchmark in all areas are considered academic ready and those students who pass a KOSSA exam in a specific career pathway, are considered career ready. Students may be both academic and career ready (KDE, 2018).

The information was obtained from the state department website to answer question eight that stated, how prepared for transition readiness are SWD in comparison to students without disabilities. District A had a total of 1,060 graduates in the 2018-2019 school year and of those graduates 8% were students with disabilities (KDE, 2018). SWD were 2% of the 508 students who were academic ready (KDE, 2018) districtwide. They were 5% of the 546 students who were career ready districtwide (Table 10). In the state of Kentucky, students may be both academic and career ready. To be academic ready, students must meet benchmarks in all areas of the American College Test (ACT). To be career ready, students must take the Kentucky Occupational Skills Standards Assessment (KOSSA) and pass with 70% or higher to receive a certificate (KDE, 2018). In District B, 983 students graduated and of those, 11% were SWD (KDE, 2018). The district reported 462 students without disabilities were academic ready and 1% of SWD were academic
ready (KDE, 2018). The total number of students without disabilities who were career ready was 348 with SWD being 5%. (KDE, 2018). The Pearson chi-square test indicated there was not a significant difference between the two districts in graduation rate, Pearson’s $\chi^2 (1) = 2.00, p < .157$.

Table 10

Transition Readiness of Students with and without Disabilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>District A</th>
<th>District B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sw/oD</td>
<td>SWD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduates</td>
<td>974</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Ready</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career Ready</td>
<td>518</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: District A reported 1060 total graduates and District B reported 983 total graduates.
Sw/oD = Total Students without Disabilities in District A and B.
SWD = Disabilities (IEP) in District A and District B. Graduates = Number of Graduates
Academic Ready = Number of students Academic Ready. Career Ready = Number of students Career Ready. % of SWD represent what percent of the total count SWD are in each area.
Summary

On research questions one through seven, participants acknowledged some level of transition planning was taking place in their school. The data were not conclusive in identifying to what extent transition planning ensued by the educators who participated. Data from research question eight, indicated SWD were not graduating with the academic and career readiness at the same rate as their peers.

In the next chapter, I discuss the findings, limitations, and recommendations. As well, I discuss the implications for further studies.
CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION

Introduction

The purpose of this quantitative study was to identify how the perceptions of educators from two Kentucky school districts converged and diverged regarding transition planning being used to prepare SWD for transition to postsecondary. This chapter includes a discussion of the findings as related to the literature on transition planning and the implications of the research questions. Also included are the limitations of the study. The chapter closes with recommendations for practice, implications for future planning, and a summary.

This chapter contains discussion and future research possibilities to help address the research questions:

(R1): To what extent do educators in the two regional districts use transition planning? To what extent does transition planning vary by high school?

(R2): To what extent do students with special needs participate in work-related practices in the two regional districts? To what extent does participation vary by high school?

(R3): To what extent do students with special needs participate in related practices in the two regional districts? To what extent does participation vary by high school?

(R4): To what extent do students with special needs participate in assessment practices (Transition Portfolios, Participant Record Review, Transition Assessment, Career/Vocational Assessment, and Standardized Assessment) in the two regional districts? To what extent does participation vary by high school?

(R5): To what extent do all school staff participate in the IEP in the two regional districts? To what extent does participation vary by high school?
(R6): What is the extent of parent/guardian involvement in the two regional districts? To what extent does participation vary by high school?

(R7): To what extent does the staff implement IDEA transition regulations in the two regional districts? To what extent does implementation vary by high school?

(R8): How prepared for transition readiness are students with disabilities in comparison to students without disabilities?

Summary of Findings

The scale of reliability yielded a strong Cronbach alpha. Within the results of the subscales, there was variability of the mean and standard deviation. There was evidence of low standard deviation resulting in the items being closer together around the mean. The process of transition planning based on the SETQ results in several components that aid in the preparation of transition planning for SWD were comprised of six categories: (a) Work Practices, (b) Community Participation, (c) Assessment Practices, (d) Educators Practices, (e) Parental Involvement, and (f) Barriers to Implementation of Regulations. Each of the categories resulted in educators, to a degree, implying that to some level, the components were being done but to what extent was not defined, nor was by whom.

Transition Planning is the process by which SWD are prepared for successful postsecondary outcomes. In the state of Kentucky, postsecondary transition planning begins in the 8th grade or at age 14, whichever occurs first (Guidance Document, 2020; Trainor et al., 2016). Students must be invited to each ARC where transition services are to be discussed (Guidance Document, 2020; Trainor et al., 2016). Successful postsecondary outcomes, which has been legally mandated for over two decades, are linked to transition planning (Trainor et al., 2016). Transition planning involves a
transition assessment that identifies student’s strengths, interests, and preferences and for which a measurable goal can be written (Trainor et al., 2016).

Just as students fall behind academically due to misalignment of systems, SWD fail to graduate prepared for successful transition outcomes. To change the narrative, an overhaul of transition planning must take place. This may include implementing a multi-tiered system of support for college and career readiness that uses evidence-based practices. The purpose of this quantitative descriptive study was to explore the perceptions of educators and the transition outcomes of SWD. The study was important to identify areas of transition planning in practice that were utilized, those that need to be increased, and barriers to implementation.

In the 2018-2019 school year, District A had more graduates of students without disabilities who were academic ready in comparison to SWD. The same district had more students without disabilities who were career ready in comparison to SWD. Similarly, based on data from District B, there were more graduates without disabilities who were academic ready in comparison to SWD. Within District B, there were more graduates without disabilities who were career ready than SWD. An overall increase in transition planning and preparation is needed for SWD in order to increase postsecondary outcomes (Lombardi et al., 2020). One measure of increasing school-wide outcomes is to use the framework of college and career readiness skills developed by Morningstar et al. (2017) that encompasses both academic and nonacademic skills that can be delivered in a multi-tiered system of supports.

The implications of study in this chapter are examined to gain a better understanding of how the study added to the knowledge of transition planning. The
review of transition planning must include Multi-tiered System of Supports (MTSS) and evidence-based practices that lead to successful postsecondary outcomes for SWD. The results of this study have produced researcher recommendations for further study in transition planning.

**Interpretation of the Findings**

There are seven areas from the SETQ survey that are interpreted. Within each area are subgroups that were agreed by educators as being practiced. These areas are identified and discussed in the interpretation of the findings.

**Transition Planning**

The subcategories in transition planning indicated educators in both districts agreed Educators Practice During Planning and Assessment Practices were being practiced. These results were similar to a study conducted by Kortering and Braziel (2008) that identified vocational assessments as a promising intervention strategy. Appropriate assessments identify areas of strengths and match students’ interest and abilities (Kortering & Braziel, 2008). Similarly, to the use of appropriate assessments, the transition planning process must be comprehensive and include the dreams, desires, and abilities of the students (Test et al., 2009; Transition Guide, 2020). Transition planning must include Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) and other agencies who may provide additional supports needed before, during, and after employment, such as assistive or rehabilitation technology, orientation and mobility services, career exploration, or work experience opportunities (Test et al., 2009; Transition Guide, 2020).
Work Practices

The subcategories in work practices indicated educators in both districts agreed job-related social skills, job-seeking skills, and cooperative or volunteer placement for SWD were being practiced. The subcategories with the least experience were paid work experiences, employment training with supports, and visits to potential employers and recreational facilities. Research indicates students who participate in the general education classroom and work experiences have a moderately strong predictor of successful postsecondary transition outcomes (Test et al., 2009). An increase in exposure through visits to potential employers and providing more opportunities for SWD may increase post school employment outcome success. SWD can gain transferrable skills through participation in community-based work experiences (Test et al., 2009; Transition Guide, 2020).

In most high schools in order for students to work during the school day, participate in cooperative education, or internship, they must be on a particular track and have taken specific classes but for SWD this should be an exception. Only a small percentage of SWD have the opportunity to train with an Employment Specialist/Job Coach. Additionally, SWD are the least likely to go on a field trip let alone visit potential employers and recreational facilities and for this reason opportunities should be created that allows SWD to gain the experience that they would not otherwise.

Community Participation

Educators agreed with the subcategories being practiced as Community Supports and Programs, Optional Living Arrangements, and Independent Living Skills, in the Community Participation section. Additional supports in related practices could result in
students participating in the community to a higher degree. Similar research conducted by Morningstar et al. (2017) of a college and career readiness framework with a domain of transition knowledge assisted SWD in adult living in areas of transportation, health and wellness needs.

Another study by Carter et al. (2016) identified collaboration with community partners to include employers to increase student outcomes. Through community experiences, SWD have a more positive postsecondary outcome (Mazzotti et al., 2014). Research suggests communities have resources that could aid in the preparation of SWD in their transition to adulthood but, if not offered, a disservice to this population is occurring (Hoover, 2016). To better prepare SWD for transition, participation in service learning, summer work (Carter et al., 2010), community mapping, community-based instruction, and vocational-based instruction should be considered while students are in high school (Hoover, 2016).

It has been my experience that for SWD, community participation rarely happens. Many are unfamiliar with the process of how to make living arrangements, are unsure if they will live independent of their parents and are not aware of community supports and programs. Additionally, many SWD do not drive nor understand transportation in the area that they live. Being able to make doctors and dental appointments for health and wellness is not something that this population of students understand how to do. SWD would benefit from all aspects of community participation.

**Assessment Practices**

The educators agreed that assessment practices occurred within student transition planning. The subcategories that were agreed upon within assessment practices were
Transition Portfolios, Participant Record Review, Transition Assessment, Career/Vocational Assessment, and Standardized Assessment. In similar studies related to assessment practices, researchers suggested the assessments given to SWD should be age-appropriate, include career and vocational options, and be based on individual student’s needs (Mazzotti et al., 2014; Trainor et al., 2016). Additionally, scholars found using data from various assessments such as progress reports, present level of performance, multidisciplinary reports, observations, and vocational interest inventories, increases the successful outcomes of SWD (Test et al., 2009; Trainor et al., 2016). Finally, when necessary, the areas of independent living, recreation and leisure, and health should be included in the transition assessments of SWD (Kortering & Braziel, 2008).

While many assessments are being used, they have little impact on ensuring the successful outcomes of SWD. Educators have little to no understanding how to use the assessments in guiding students in the identification of potential careers. Typically, assessments are just a compliance component and not reviewed or discussed with students to determine actions necessary to achieve their desired outcome. Each SWD have unique needs and the assessments of each of these students can aide in developing a transition plan that is individualized and will assist in meeting the students’ desired postsecondary outcome.

**Educators’ Practices**

In this study, participants agreed that Educators’ Practices during planning were occurring in the area of procedures related to Setting up Meetings, Progress Monitoring, and Having Documentation of the IEP. In similar research, Flannery and Hellemn (2015)
found for teachers to implement transition services in the IEP, there must be an understanding between the development and connection of the components. Additionally, researchers suggest there should be a continuous emphasis on understanding the development and implementation of the IEP since it is the conceptual and practical intersection of policy, schools, and families of SWD (Blackwell & Rosetti, 2014). Another study indicated the IEP serves as the foundation for successful student outcomes and if the IEP is viewed only as a requirement, a crucial opportunity for the development and implementation of the law will not be fulfilled (Blackwell & Rosetti, 2014).

I agree with Flannery and Hellemn (2015) who stated that educators could benefit from pre-service and in-service transition training. Educators who work with SWD are often trained in areas related to academics and seldom have the opportunity to attend training that will provide understanding and clarity related to the specifics of developing SWD. Although educators write IEPs regularly, they often lack the continuity in understanding how the IEP is connected to post school outcomes.

**Parent/Guardian Involvement**

In the category of Parent/Guardian Involvement in transition planning, the subcategories educators agreed were occurring were Sharing of Knowledge of Students, Selection of Transition Goals, and Attending Meetings. Trainor et al. (2016) provided supporting information from The National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS-2) related to parental involvement in transition planning for SWD. The researchers noted while parents and guardians participated in transition meetings, very few had meetings with educators to discuss postsecondary goals for their child (Trainor et al., 2016).
Often as SWD get older, parent/guardian involvement diminishes. It should be intentional for educators to continue to involve the parent/guardian beyond knowledge sharing, selecting transition goals, and meeting attendance. Parents should be an active part of the transition planning, have discussions related to the postsecondary goals, and understand how to support their student through transition.

**Barriers to Implementation of Regulations**

Only 67% of educators agreed Lack of Teacher Training was the least barrier to implementation of the regulations with Support from Administrators being biggest barrier. In similar research, it was found that educators could benefit from pre-service and in-service transition training to clarify the intent of the student’s post-school outcome success (Flannery & Hellemn, 2015; Flannery et al., 2015). The regulation IDEA (2004) as a support of system improvement activities, guarantees educators, parents, and guardians have the appropriate tools (IDEA, 2004). Additionally, IDEA also assesses the effectiveness of efforts to educate SWD (IDEA, 2004). Researchers found when planning for transition of students with special needs, LEA’s that provide professional development to educators, implicate compliance of the law (Landmark & Zhang, 2012). Further research indicates training on the IEP development of measurable postsecondary transition goals that state what the student intends to do upon completion of high school and how mastery will be obtained, needs to remain the focus (Landmark & Zhang, 2012). Scholars found that administrators who ensure educators receive adequate and continuous professional development in implementation of regulations promote effective evidence-based practices in secondary transition services (Test et al., 2015).
A barrier is created when regulations are left for interpretation. However, administrators should ensure that educators have the necessary supports through professional development in implementation of regulations that promote effective evidence-based practices in secondary transition services (Test, Bartholomew, and Bethune, 2015). Educators should regularly participate in the professional development that is offered for Indicator 13 which addresses postsecondary goals for students beginning at age 14. In addition to training on Indicator 13, educators should also understand Indicator 14 which measures the postsecondary outcome of students. When the educators have a better understanding of their role in preparing students for postsecondary transition, there stands a chance for an increase in positive outcomes for SWD.

**Prepared for Transition Readiness**

Districts within the state are responsible for reporting student outcomes to the state department. Students with and without disabilities must meet the state of Kentucky’s definition of career or college ready in order to be deemed successful within the state accountability model (KDE, 2021). In Kentucky during the 2018 school year, there were 11 ways identified to show transition readiness (Transition Readiness, 2018) that consisted of six ways for academic readiness and five ways for career readiness. These options became the new requirements for the state accountability system. It is through Career and Technical Education that all students have the opportunity to become career ready by choosing a career pathway and obtaining certification in the specific area (CTE, 2021).
Implications for Policy

The SEQT survey resulted in educators agreeing that some areas of transition planning of SWD occurred in a manner that may be in correlation with compliance but not the outcomes. IDEA (2004) has specific expectations of transition planning for SWD who have an IEP in K-12 schools that leads from secondary to postsecondary. While the policies of IDEA and the Rehabilitation Act (1973), as amended by the WIOA, have made a clear shift towards increasing the transition preparation of SWD, the K-12 system should look at the transition planning process to ensure it is including opportunities and programs that prepare this population of students for positive postsecondary outcomes (Transition Guide, 2020).

The U.S. ED’s A Transition Guide to Postsecondary Education and Employment for SWD helps bring clarity to the above laws and their intended outcomes (2020). Transition planning is an integral part of ensuring SWD receive what is necessary in order to successfully transition. Additionally, in the state of Kentucky, educators have the evidence-based Kentucky Taxonomy for Transition Programming (2017), which is a model for planning, organizing, and evaluating transition education, services, and programs. The Kentucky Taxonomy for Transition Programming maps out the process of transition planning for SWD and represents a transition-focused education. This model was developed as a guide to assist with increasing student outcomes. Test et al. found educators who use evidence-based practices increase SWD postsecondary outcomes (2009). Thus, transition teams who are responsible for transition planning should not only comply with the laws but should understand the expectation of the laws and how individualized transition planning leads to successful postsecondary transitional outcome.
Implications for Practice

Transition planning encompasses several components that come together to facilitate the outcomes of SWD. One component of transition planning is age-appropriate assessments. By using career and vocational assessments and a comprehensive transition assessment that includes information about interests, perceptions, and performance skills of students, educators gain a more holistic picture of students that can be used during transition planning (Rowe et al., 2015). There is a need for a continued emphasis for maximizing the transition process and ensuring all relevant parties are participating directly or are informing the assessment practice of transition. According to research, the ideal element for SWD includes evidence-based predictors (Mazzotti et al., 2014; Test et al., 2009).

Within the Kentucky Taxonomy for Transition Programming (2017), educators have a model for transition planning that emphasizes the inclusion of students in the planning process. A strategically aligned IEP with integrated transition provides for a transition plan that assists SWD in successful postsecondary outcomes (Flannery & Hellemn, 2015). There is a need for a solid, highly individualized transition plan that prepares all SWD for life after high school that is in alignment with IDEA. To achieve a plan that will allow for SWD to transition successfully, practitioners need to include the student throughout the planning process. In addition, a representative from various agencies who assists in the transition should be a part of the planning.

In order to assist educators in aligning with the laws as they pertain to the transition planning process, it is recommended that ongoing professional development, professional learning communities, and conference attendance occur on a continuous
basis to ensure transition goals lead to successful transitional outcomes. It is also
recommended educators have a clear understanding of what the intent of the law is and
make every effort to uphold it by ensuring the SWD transition plan achieves transition
goals. In order to assist with preparing SWD for post-school employment, researchers
suggest community employment opportunities be expanded by connecting all
stakeholders, strengthening collaborations among all who would be involved before,
during and after transitioning, and equipping new employers to hire students (Carter et
al., 2016). Additionally, going beyond the disability community is essential to increase
expectations and employment opportunities for SWD by sharing resources and successful
outcomes with the community (Carter et al., 2016).

To meet Indicator 13 requirements under IDEA (2004) transition planning for
SWD in the state of Kentucky begins at the age of 14 where the transitional IEP includes
appropriate measurable postsecondary goals that will enable students to meet their
postsecondary goals in education, employment, and independent living. A study
conducted on the class of 2011 by Miller-Warren (2015) found that the quality of the
secondary plan did not meet the proposed criteria of a sound plan but were merely
compliant and not intentional. A well-developed transition plan is intentional of the
outcomes of the SWD. To achieve the positive outcomes, educators, families, students,
communities, and agencies must systemically align supports and implementation of
learning during the transition planning process (Kohler, et al., 2016). Through the lenses
of a transition focused education, strategies are implemented that keep SWD in school,
increase school climate, and vocational rehabilitation services (Kohler, et al., 2016).
Transition planning is more complex than compliance. A student’s IEP should include
goals that are linked to post-secondary outcomes that consider one’s strengths and interests (Snell-Rood et al., 2020). Congress in 2014 further stressed the need for transition planning and services by the passage of the WIOA (Snell-Rood et al., 2020). Snell-Rood et al., (2020) state that

“transition planning is inherently cross-disciplinary and cross-organizational and thus unique: while the IEP process in schools is well studied as an evidence-based practice, transition planning’s ultimate implementation in employment and community settings is articulated as a set of mandated aspirational policies and guidelines/practices, without sufficient research to identify and define the specific intervention components that will lead to successful outcomes.”

In the research conducted by Snell-Rood et al., (2020) transition planning lacked appropriate goal setting, communication among stakeholders, and adequate involvement of all decision-makers. The study (Snell-Rood et al., 2020) also found that parents felt that the goals were either too low or only met the needs of the students with an average IQ leaving those with intellectual disabilities with inadequate planning. To yield equitable outcomes, transition planning needs to be vastly individualized (Snell-Rood et al., 2020). Snell-Rood et al., (2020) also found that parents sensed that educational skills were given precedence over skills that would be more pertinent to goals of independent living and employment.
Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

The researcher will discuss the five limitations of this study. Although there were limitations that did not provide a solid representation of the region, the information gained adds to the body of research in the area of transition. The recommendations for future research suggest ways for this study to be improved upon.

Limitations

The limitations of this study included the research questions and the lack of the survey not identifying who specifically was responsible for transition planning; the small sample size; the survey not focusing on a specific disability; and lack of representation of the sample. The first limitation was that the research questions could not be fully addressed as written because the survey question did not ask respondents to identify whether or not they were the person responsible for the implementation of transition planning of SWD. Additionally, the District A superintendent limited the survey respondents to only special education staff due to directing correspondence to the Director of Special Education who only provided email addresses for certified special educators; this yielded a small response rate of four out of thirty special education teachers. Further, the final set of respondents did not represent all high schools within the district. The superintendent of District B chose to route the survey through the human resource manager, who then distributed the information to building administrators, who then were to disseminate the information to all staff. This process yielded a total of eight participants who were, much like those responding from District A, mostly special education teachers; again, the small sample did not include representatives from all high
schools within the district. Thus, it is highly likely the survey did not reach (and certainly was not completed by) the broader intended audience (i.e. general education teachers, employment specialists, instructional assistants, special education consultants, transition coordinators, special education department chairs), but rather, by dissemination processes (District A) or default (District B), was answer mainly by special education teachers.

Another limitation was the sample size of 12 educators who were responsible for transition planning for the district, out of an expectation of 56 between the two districts and seven high schools. Due to the complexity of the data collection process that was required by the school districts, there was a lack of responses. The next limitation was the survey was not specific to one of the thirteen particular disability categories but was all encompassing of all disabilities. A final limitation was the two Kentucky districts surveyed may not be representative of all regional districts in the state. Based on the small sample size, not much information was gained to attest to the perceptions of all those who would be involved with the transition of SWD.

**Recommendations for Future Research**

The suggestion for future research based on the results of the current study would be to conduct this study again. In conducting this study again, the survey questions should be modified to specify if the educators completing the survey are the responsible parties for transition planning of SWD. To gain a better response rate, the research could post an announcement via social media asking for those who work with the transition planning of SWD to complete the survey. This could offer a broader perspective within the state. Another suggestion would be to conduct the study in one specific disability category. Since transition planning encompasses many facets, another area of future
research could examine the relationship between transition planning for SWD and their outcomes such as workforce entry, supported employment, enrollment in higher education, enrollment in certificate or apprenticeship programs, and enrollment in higher education.

Additional future research using this study, should exam more specifically, if what the educators are doing during the transition planning process is having a positive effect on the outcome of SWD. Moreover, a closer look at how policy aligns with the transition planning process. Educators should map out the transition plan of each student and include the stakeholders who will need to be involved in ensuring that each phase of the process is conducted. This will need to include VR, community members, employers, parents/guardians, and students.

**Conclusion**

Based on the results of this study, educators agreed that some level of transition planning occurs in their districts but leaves to ponder that there is room for better understanding and growth in several areas. While transition planning encompasses many areas of preparation, SWD continue to need guidance with many areas. The educators also agreed that assessment practices are occurring in their districts. These assessments should drive the planning of students’ transition. There was agreement with the need for improvement in the areas of work practices for SWD, community participation for SWD, parent/guardian involvement, and implementation of regulations. SWD have significant difficulties with finding and maintaining work; however, with additional focused transition planning, the area of work practice may increase significantly. Promotion of community participation should be a focal point during the transition planning process for
SWD are not often part of the communities in which they live. The IDEA (2004) and WIOA (2014) laws have clearly defined the process of transition planning. By increasing adherence to those laws in the overall transition planning process, SWD have a better opportunity of postsecondary success. Transition planning should consider the outcome of SWD.

Although students without disabilities continue to graduate high school and either go on to enroll in postsecondary education or enter the workforce, they are achieving desirable postsecondary outcomes at a much higher rate than SWD. Opportunities to increase positive outcomes should exist for this population. This may be offered through the adjustment of the master schedules, participation in dual credit coursework, internships, work-based learning, cooperative learning and job shadowing. All stakeholders must be included in ensuring that successful outcomes occur and may include parents, outside agencies, community members, and educators.
REFERENCES


https://doi.org/10.1177/0885728811419166


Youth. (n.d.). Retrieved from https://kcc.ky.gov/training/Pages/Youth.aspx
Secondary Education Transition Questionnaire (SETQ)

Secondary Education Transition Questionnaire (SETQ)

The purpose of this survey is to gain information about transition practices in your school. It is to be completed by special educators and staff who are familiar with secondary education transition practices used by your school. This survey should take about twenty minutes to complete. Your participation in this survey is voluntary. Your responses will remain completely anonymous and all responses will only be presented as aggregate data.

* Required

Thank you for participating in my study! Please look over our procedures and terms of consent before proceeding.

Transition of Students with Disabilities

Transition Planning
The following practices involving students were used in your school. The following questions are asking about post-secondary education related practices currently used in transition planning in your school. Please select the statement that best describes your level with the following questions. Choose one for each statement.

Work-Related Practices
The following work-related practices involving students were used in your school: The following questions are asking you about work-related practices currently used during transition planning in your school. Please select the item that best describes your level with the following questions. Choose one for each statement.

1. Students with disabilities receive direct teaching of job-related social skills.

* Mark only one oval.

  Strongly disagree
  Disagree
  Neutral
  Agree
  Strongly agree
2. Students with disabilities receive direct teaching of job-seeking skills.

*Mark only one oval.
Strongly disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly agree

3. Students with disabilities are provided opportunities for job sampling through co-op or volunteer placements.

* Mark only one oval.
Strongly Disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly agree

4. Students with disabilities participate in paid work experience prior to graduation.

* Mark only one oval.
Strongly disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly agree

5. Students with disabilities specify desired job and obtain paid or volunteer employment with supports as needed.

*Mark only one oval.
Strongly disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly agree

6. Students with disabilities visit potential employment or recreation locations.
The following participation related practices involving students were used in your school.

**Related Practices**
The following questions are asking you about community participation related to practices currently used during transition planning in your school. Please select the item that best describes your level with the following questions. Choose one for each statement.

7. Students with disabilities identify and increase independence in skills necessary for planned living environment.

*Mark only one oval.
Strongly disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly agree

8. Students with disabilities acquire identification card.

*Mark only one oval.
Strongly disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly agree
9. Students with disabilities identify community support services and programs that will provide post school support.

*Mark only one oval.*
- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

10. Students with disabilities pursue and learn to use local transportation options outside of family.

*Mark only one oval.*
- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

11. Students with disabilities assume responsibility for health care needs (making appointments and taking prescriptions, etc.)

*Mark only one oval.*
- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

12. Students with learning disabilities learn and practice independent living skills, e.g., budgeting, shopping, cooking, and housekeeping.

*Mark only one oval.*
- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree
13. Students with disabilities identify interests and options for future living arrangements.

*Mark only one oval.
Strongly Disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly agree

Assessment Practices
The following transition assessment practices involving students were used in your school. The following questions are asking you about the assessment practices currently used in your school. Please select the item that best describes your level with the following questions. Choose one for each statement.

14. Students with disabilities have a transition portfolio.

*Mark only one oval.
Strongly disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly agree

15. Students with disabilities participate in a record review that includes the current IEP and report cards as well as any documentation relating to current skills and interests.

*Mark only one oval.
Strongly disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly agree

16. Students with disabilities are given an assessment to determine postsecondary interests.

*Mark only one oval.
Strongly disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly agree
17. Students with disabilities are given a career/vocational assessment.

*Mark only one oval.*
- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

18. Students with disabilities assessment includes standardized measures of academic, social, communication, cognitive or adaptive living skills.

*Mark only one oval.*
- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

**Exceptional Educator**
The following practices involving teachers were used in your school. The following questions are asking you about practices involving the IEP teacher during transition planning in your school. Please select the item that best describes your level with the following questions. Choose one for each statement.

19. The IEP teacher schedules and facilitates transition planning meetings.

*Mark only one oval.*
- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

20. The IEP teacher coordinates the development, implementation and monitoring of the transition goal.

*Mark only one oval.*
- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree
21. The IEP teacher documents the transition planning process through the IEP.

* Mark only one oval.
  Strongly disagree
  Disagree
  Neutral
  Agree
  Strongly agree

22. The IEP teacher maintains a record of team members and completed assessments.

* Mark only one oval.
  Strongly disagree
  Disagree
  Neutral
  Agree
  Strongly agree

23. The IEP teacher provides opportunities for the student to foster work and independent living skills during their high school years.

* Mark only one oval.
  Strongly disagree
  Disagree
  Neutral
  Agree
  Strongly agree

24. The IEP teacher conducts and/or arranges for assessment.

* Mark only one oval.
  Strongly disagree
  Disagree
  Neutral
  Agree
  Strongly agree

25. The faculty has received training in transition planning.

* Mark only one oval.
  Strongly disagree
  Disagree
  Neutral
  Agree
  Strongly agree
26. The faculty is involved in training to implement transition programs.

*Mark only one oval.
Strongly Disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly Agree

27. If offered, I would participate in transition planning staff development.

* Mark only one oval.
Strongly disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly agree

28. I received training in transition planning in my teacher preparation classes.

* Mark only one oval.
Strongly disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly agree

The following practices involving parents were used in your school.

**Parental Involvement**
The following questions are asking you about parent involvement during transition planning in your school. Please select the item that best describes your level with the following questions. Choose one for each statement.

29. Parents of students with disabilities are involved in transition planning.

*Mark only one oval.
Strongly Disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly agree
30. Parents of students with disabilities share their knowledge of their child's interests, strengths, and needs with the team.

*Mark only one oval.*
Strongly disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly agree

31. Parents of students with disabilities participate in the selection of appropriate goals and objectives for the IEP.

*Mark only one oval.*
Strongly disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly agree

32. Parents of students with disabilities become familiar with resources available for adults with special needs.

*Mark only one oval.*
Strongly disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly agree

33. Parents of students with disabilities attend the IEP meeting.

*Mark only one oval.*
Strongly disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly agree
34. Parents of students with disabilities have received training in transition planning.

*Mark only one oval.
Strongly disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly agree

**Implementation of IDEA**

**Transition Regulations**
The following were considered challenges to the implementation of IDEA Transition Regulations in your school. The following questions are asking you about barriers to the implementation of the IDEA transition regulations in your school. Please select the item that best describes your level with the following questions. Choose one for each statement.

35. A challenge to the implementation of IDEA transition regulations is lack of teacher training in transition planning.

* Mark only one oval.
Strongly disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly agree

36. A challenge to the implementation of IDEA transition regulations is lack of student involvement in transition planning.

* Mark only one oval.
Strongly disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly agree

37. A challenge to the implementation of IDEA transition regulations is lack of parent involvement in transition planning.

*Mark only one oval.
Strongly disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly agree
38. A challenge to the implementation of IDEA transition regulations is lack of administrative support in transition planning.

*Mark only one oval.*
Strongly disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly agree

39. A challenge to the implementation of IDEA transition regulations is lack of resources.

*Mark only one oval.*
Strongly disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly agree

40. Does your school employ a transition coordinator or transition specialist?

*Mark only one oval.*
Yes
No

Respondent Information

Part Two

41. Your Gender:

*Mark only one oval.*
Female
Male

42. Your Race/Ethnicity:

*Mark only one oval.*
White (Non-Hispanic)
African-American
Hispanic
Asian/Pacific Islander
Other:
43. Check the highest level of education you have achieved.

*Mark only one oval.*
Bachelor Degree
Master’s Degree
Education Specialist Degree
Doctorate Degree

44. Please identify the school for which you are employed.

45. Check the grade level of the class(es) that you teach. *Mark only one oval.*
9
10
11
12
mixed level

46. Please select your position.

*Mark only one oval.*
Employment Specialist
Instructional Assistant
Special Education Consultant
Special Education Department Chair
Special Education Teacher
Transition Coordinator
Other:

47. Select the content area(s) of the class(es) that you teach. *Check all that apply.*

Reading
English Language Arts
Mathematics
Science
Social Studies
Life Skills
Foreign Language
Fine Arts, Music
Business (Vocational)
Other:
48. Please select all areas for which you are currently certified. *Check all that apply.*

Special Education (K-12)
Secondary General Education (Please specify)
English
Mathematics
Science
Social Studies
Other:

49. How many years have you been teaching?

**PLEASE REFER TO THE CURRENT SCHOOL YEAR WHEN ANSWERING THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS**

50. Number of subjects you teach in a day

51. Total number of students in each class

52. Number of students with learning disabilities in each class

53. Number of students graduating with a Commonwealth of Kentucky diploma

54. Number of students graduating with a Kentucky Diploma

55. Number of students graduating with a Kentucky Alternative diploma
Appendix B

INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT

Project Title: An Evaluation of Perceptions of Postsecondary Transition Practices of Students with Disabilities

Investigator: Marisa Duarte, Education Doctoral Leadership, marisa.duarte@topper.wku.edu

You are being asked to participate in a project conducted through Western Kentucky University. The University requires that you give your signed agreement to participate in this project.

You must be 18 years old or older to participate in this research study.

The investigator will explain to you in detail the purpose of the project, the procedures to be used, and the potential benefits and possible risks of participation. You may ask any questions you have to help you understand the project. A basic explanation of the project is written below. Please read this explanation and discuss with the researcher any questions you may have.

If you then decide to participate in the project, please sign this form in the presence of the person who explained the project to you. You should be given a copy of this form to keep.

1. Nature and Purpose of the Project: You are invited to participate in a research study about the perceptions of transition practices of students with disabilities in your high school. The goal of this research study is to describe the transition practices implemented by those who work with transitioning special education students from public secondary school.

2. Explanation of Procedures: If you agree to participate in this study, you would be asked to participate in an online survey that will take approximately 25 minutes to complete. A demographic profile to be completed will be at the end of the survey. If you prefer to complete the survey by paper and pen, then contact me via email (marisa.duarte@topper.wku.edu) and I will mail a survey.

There are 2 qualifications to participate in this study: (1) You must work directly with transitioning students with disabilities either as certified or classified; (2) You must be in the high school grades 9-12.

3. Discomfort and Risks: There are no known anticipated risk to participants other than possible cognitive fatigue from the decision-making process as it relates to daily transition practices with students.

4. Benefits: The participants may not have any direct benefit, but participation benefits include contributing to an understanding of the topic, adding to the knowledge, updating the research literature, and learning something about self by virtue of the interview process. Additional benefits of participating in this research project will include a) surveying faculty and staff about current transition practices, (b) assessing areas of strengths and weaknesses among current programs, and (c) indicating areas of need of educator development. A summary of the findings with recommendations for future professional development will be provided.

WKU IRB# 20-180
Approved: 1/27/2020
End Date: 1/27/2021
EXPEDITED
Original: 1/27/2020
5. **Confidentiality:** The information that you share with us will be kept confidential to the full extent of the law should you choose to participate in this study. Study findings will be presented only in summary form and your name would not be used in any report. Records will be viewed, stored, and maintained in private, secure files only accessible by the P.I. for three years following the study, after which time they will be destroyed.

6. **Refusal/Withdrawal:** Refusal to participate in this study will have no effect on any future services you may be entitled to from the University. Anyone who agrees to participate in this study is free to withdraw from the study at any time with no penalty.

You understand also that it is not possible to identify all potential risks in an experimental procedure, and you believe that reasonable safeguards have been taken to minimize both the known and potential but unknown risks.

**Your continued cooperation with the following research implies your consent.**

THE DATED APPROVAL ON THIS CONSENT FORM INDICATES THAT THIS PROJECT HAS BEEN REVIEWED AND APPROVED BY THE WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
Robin Pyles, Human Protections Administrator
TELEPHONE: (270) 745-3360

![IRB Approval Stamp]

WKU IRB# 20-180
Approved: 1/27/2020
End Date: 1/27/2021
EXPEDITED
Original: 1/27/2020
DATE: January 27, 2020

TO: Marisa Duarte
FROM: Western Kentucky University (WKU) IRB

PROJECT TITLE: [1544703-1] Dissertation
REFERENCE #: IRB 20-180
SUBMISSION TYPE: New Project

ACTION: APPROVED
APPROVAL DATE: January 27, 2020
EXPIRATION DATE: January 27, 2021
REVIEW TYPE: Expedited Review

Thank you for your submission of New Project materials for this project. The Western Kentucky University (WKU) IRB has APPROVED your submission. This approval is based on an appropriate risk/benefit ratio and a project design wherein the risks have been minimized. All research must be conducted in accordance with this approved submission.

This submission has received Expedited Review based on the applicable federal regulation.

Please remember that informed consent is a process beginning with a description of the project and insurance of participant understanding followed by an implied consent form. Informed consent must continue throughout the project via a dialogue between the researcher and research participant. Federal regulations require each participant receive a copy of the consent document.

Please note that any revision to previously approved materials must be approved by this office prior to initiation. Please use the appropriate revision forms for this procedure.

All UNANTICIPATED PROBLEMS involving risks to subjects or others and SERIOUS and UNEXPECTED adverse events must be reported promptly to this office. Please use the appropriate reporting forms for this procedure. All FDA and sponsor reporting requirements should also be followed.

All NON-COMPLIANCE issues or COMPLAINTS regarding this project must be reported promptly to this office.

This project has been determined to be a MINIMAL RISK project. Based on the risks, this project requires continuing review by this committee on an annual basis. Please use the appropriate forms for this procedure. Your documentation for continuing review must be received with sufficient time for review and continued approval before the expiration date of January 27, 2021.

Please note that all research records must be retained for a minimum of three years after the completion
of the project.

If you have any questions, please contact Robin Pyles at (270) 745-3360 or irb@wku.edu. Please include your project title and reference number in all correspondence with this committee.

This letter has been electronically signed in accordance with all applicable regulations, and a copy is retained within Western Kentucky University (WKU) IRB’s records.
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Name: Duarte, Marisa Jones

Email (to receive future readership statistics): marisawjones@gmail.com

Type of document: ['Dissertation']

Title: THE PERCEPTIONS OF EDUCATORS ON TRANSITION PLANNING AND THE POSTSECONDARY TRANSITION READINESS OUTCOMES OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Keywords (3-5 keywords not included in the title that uniquely describe content): Process; IDEA; WIOA; Success

Committee Chair: Nicholas Brake

Additional Committee Members: Antony D Norman Gary Houchens Kimberlee Everson

Select 3-5 TopSCHOLAR® disciplines for indexing your research topic in TopSCHOLAR®: Education Leadership Special Education and Teaching Disability Law Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling

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