Transition to Adulthood:

How a Lack of Knowledge and Understanding of the Transition Process Can Adversely Affect Proactive Person-Centered Transition Planning

by

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Abstract

According to Section 1414 (d) (1) (A) (i) (VIII) of the Individuals with Disabilities Act 2004 (IDEA 2004) (U.S. Department of Education, 2019), the law states that for any Individualized Education Plan (IEP) that will be in place when a student turns 16 years old, there will be measurable postsecondary goals related to three main areas: training, education and employment and, if deemed necessary, independent living skills, and that these goals will be updated annually. Additionally there must be transition services listed in the IEP that are designed to help the student reach those postsecondary goals. This study takes an in-depth look at one educational cooperative and the seven school districts it serves, to determine how knowledgeable the special education teachers of students aged 13-21, students with disabilities aged 13-21, and parents of students with disabilities aged 13-21 are regarding the timeline for transition, available community resources, and possible options for postsecondary training and education that are crucial for the success of students with disabilities after high school.

Keywords: transition, transition planning, community service providers, advocate, students with disabilities, parents of students with disabilities, measurable postsecondary goals, training, education, employment, independent living skills, rural schools

Chapter I

Background – needs more

While the primary focus of this project is the Perry-Lecompton school district and their associated towns of Perry and Lecompton, this project has the potential to be used for all of the school districts in Jefferson County, Kansas that are served by Keystone Learning Services (Keystone), the special education cooperative (Valley Falls, Jefferson County North, Jeff West, Oskaloosa, McLouth, Perry-Lecompton, John Dewey Learning Academy and Turning Point), (Keystone Learning Services, 2021) . All of these school districts are located in rural communities with limited resources, plagued by moderate to high levels of poverty and moderate to low levels of economic opportunities. These small towns have grown and diminished with the ebb and flow of industry and technology, but each has continued to survive in one way or another. The southern half of Jefferson County (Perry-Lecompton, Jeff West, Oskaloosa and McLouth) is immediately surrounded by Lawrence and Topeka, and only a short distance from Kansas City, offering a multitude of options for transition services.

The Perry-Lecompton school district is located approximately 12 miles from Lawrence, Kansas and 20 miles from Topeka, Kansas. They are often referred to as a "bedroom" communities because there are very few local businesses and the majority of the residents work in either Lawrence or Topeka. The proximity to Lawrence and Topeka offers the residents of Perry and Lecompton a unique ability to access a multitude of resources for employment, shopping, government offices, and recreation.

Each town, Perry and Lecompton, had their own schools until 1966 when the state of Kansas issued a unification program forever joining the two (as well as Grantville and Williamstown located to the west and east of Perry respectively) into one school district (History of Perry Rural High School, n.d. & Historic Lecompton, 2017). Perry and Lecompton maintained separate grade schools until 2006 when these were also consolidated, moving all PreK-1st to Perry and 2nd – 4th Lecompton. Despite their reluctance in joining schools, the students and families in each of these communities share in common the reality that in order to receive most transition to adult services and supports for adults with special needs, they will have to travel to either Lawrence or Topeka, regardless of the distance.

demographics

The following chart outlines the overall demographics of Jefferson County, as well as the specific demographics of Perry and Lecompton (Douglas County) as these towns are the primary communities served by Perry-Lecompton Public Schools, USD 343.

Category		Jefferson County*	Perry**	Lecompton**
Population Estimate		19,043	949	749
Under 18 years (%)		22.7	25.0	28.0
65 years and over (%)		18.9	20.0	13.0
Race and Hispanic Origin (%)	White	95.8	94.1	83.0
	All other races (including those of two or more)	4.2	5.0	17.0
Number of housing units		8,477	436	263
Owner-occupied (%)		84.1	79.0	80.0
Median value of owner-occupied units		$150,000	$122,300	$107,700
Median gross rent		$760	NR	NR
Households with a computer (%)		90.0	NR	NR
Households with broadband Internet (%)		82.6	NR	NR

Mean travel time to work (minutes)	29.5	22.8	21.3
Median income (2019 dollars)	$64,864	$53,750	$53,611
Persons in poverty (%)	7.8	15.2	26.4

*(United States Census Bureau, 2019), **(Census Reporter, 2019)

The highlighted categories are those that have the greatest potential to influence the make-up of the community affected by this project. In addition to the information provided by the United States Census Bureau (2019) the Kansas Department of Education also reports on demographic information for the Perry-Lecompton Public Schools community and that information is outlined below.

Reporting Category (2020)	Total
Total Enrollment	767
Students with Disabilities	22.9%
Race – White	87.4%
Race – African American	1%
Race – Hispanic	5.1%
Race – Other	6.5%
Transported Students	723.5
Attendance	94.0%
Chronic Absenteeism	14.99%
Dropout Rate	1.4%
Free and Reduced Lunches	37.55%

(Kansas Report Card, 2020)

According to the Kansas Report Card for 2019-2020 as found on the Kansas Department of Education (KSDE) website, the three highlighted categories are all areas that Perry-Lecompton Public Schools rates higher than the state average. These categories do not reflect on each other, but rather point to significant barriers that the school community deals with in their attempts to promote student success and engagement in elementary and secondary school. An additional impact of the moderately high percent of students with disabilities, is in the lack of community disability services and supports in either Perry or Lecompton, as previously mentioned. This puts additional stress on the school to provide services and supports to families and depends on

special education teachers, related service providers and administration to increase their knowledge about services and supports available in neighboring communities (Lawrence, Topeka and the greater Jefferson County).

community assets

Both Perry and Lecompton have Pride Committees that meet monthly to organize community events such as Easter Egg Hunts, Christmas Tree lightings, Christmas decorating contests, fall festivals, etc. as well as seek grants and donations for community improvement. Both towns also have small community libraries run by volunteers, which host summer reading events for young children. Perry and Lecompton have several small church communities who host summer programs for the youth and one church in each town hosts a Harvesters food donation once a month.

Perry and Lecompton are both just on either side of the Kansas River. Perry has the Perry Nature Trail which winds through the forested area on the north side of the river. There is also a small boat dock on the Perry side of the river. Lecompton has two museums, one located in the old high school building, and one in Constitutional Hall, several small historic buildings and a historic walking trail that meanders through the heart of the community telling about various businesses and houses that used to stand prior to the Civil War.

Perry is a satellite community for Highland Community College (HCC), where juniors and seniors and high school graduates can take college classes, they also have online classes available. In a portion of the building where HCC is located is a new program, run by Keystone, called Turning Point. Turning Point is a program for 18-21 year olds who did not earn a regular diploma from their high school. The facility has a kitchen and a mock apartment so that students

can practice daily living skills. The students are also encouraged to practice employability skills and work toward seeking employment.

In Oskaloosa, another town in Jefferson County that is served by Keystone, but farther from Lawrence (22 miles) and Topeka (33 miles), there is a larger library, and a public park and swimming pool. Every summer, near the end of June, the city of Oskaloosa hosts a festival with a parade, amusement rides, carnival games and craft booths. Oskaloosa also has a medical clinic, F.W. Huston and pharmacy and a long-term care center. The Guidance Center (mental health clinic) is located in Oskaloosa allowing people a place to find mental health care and attendant care. The majority of the businesses in Oskaloosa are located in their downtown area which is located around the City Hall building, making those businesses and services all easily accessible. Oskaloosa is also the location of the Jefferson County law enforcement and County Health Department.

Meriden, another "southern" town in Jefferson County served by Keystone also boasts more businesses and services than Perry or Lecompton. Meriden is located 35 miles from Lawrence and 15 miles from Topeka. Meriden has a strip mall in which all stores are full – a grocery store, pharmacy, coffee shop and pizza restaurant. Meriden has an indoor recreation center called Mammoth Sports. In September 2020 the owners of Mammoth Sports started Woolly Farms, Inc. that offers a weekly activity for young adults 18-21 years old who have significant disabilities. These activities are centered on building social skills, developing hobbies (crafting, gardening, etc.) and developing employability skills. The same family who owns and operates Woolly Farms, Inc. also owns the coffee shop, the recreation center, and a daycare/preschool and they help the young adults in their 18-21 year old program apprentice at these businesses to practice their skills and ultimately find a job.

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In an effort to assist both educators and families with the transition process the conclusion of this project will be a manual that outlines the when/what/who of each stage of the transition process, including grade level transition assessments and documentation beginning in 7th and 8th grade and ending with placement in postsecondary services (college, vocational, functional).

Purpose Statement

, in general, families are not familiar with the transition process or the community resources that are available for them to utilize. The research will also show that even though the special education teacher does not continue to be a provider for a person with disabilities after they graduate or are aged out of special education, getting families connected to community services, providing them with information about agencies and adult supports is regularly the responsibility of the special education teacher. To this end, it is vital that special education teachers have available a transition framework that guides them through the years to ensure that a student and their family are provided with needed and important information in a timely manner.

Research Question

This research proposal seeks to discover what specific gaps in knowledge and information there are, regarding the transition to adulthood process, for special education teachers of students with disabilities aged 13-21, for parents of students with disabilities aged 13-21, and for students with disabilities aged 13-21 that are either employed by or receive services from the targeted educational cooperative. The proposal also seeks to determine the

following: what specific transition services are currently being employed in each of the seven school districts associated with the target educational cooperative, if there are possible transition services that can be co-coordinated because of their close proximity (no more than 35 miles apart), shared county and limited resources of the individual communities and school districts, and if and where there are significant information and understanding gaps regarding the transition process in any of the identified groups.

Implications

If School Wide Positive Behavior Support (SWBPS) was found effective for those students currently being educated in alternative education school and the students' problem behavior was reduced, they could then possibly be educated in traditional education settings. The long-term effects could mean that more students with disabilities, especially those with emotional disabilities, would graduate high school and would engage in less deviant behaviors. Students with emotional disabilities who are served in traditional education settings have more interaction with typically developing students. Also, students served in traditional education settings are more likely to receive a higher quality education due to less time spent on redirection behaviors, classroom disruptions, and less time spent on teaching social skills or replacement behaviors. SWPBS could also reduce the frequency of restraints and seclusions that are used with students with emotional disabilities who are physically aggressive therefore, reducing the long-term effects of both types of responses to behavior.

Definition of Key Terms

Transition:

Transition planning:

Community service providers:

Advocate:

Students with disabilities:

Parents of students with disabilities:

Measurable postsecondary goals:

Postsecondary training:

Postsecondary education:

Structured employment:

Independent living skills:

Rural schools:

Chapter II

Review of Literature

Students who require transition services

History of transition services

Transition services in the school setting

she outlinesin

Transition services in the community setting

Challenges of transition services in a rural setting

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) 2004, requires that positive behavior interventions are implemented and used in the child's individual education plan (IEP) to ensure that students are educated in their least restrictive environment (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.). IDEA also requires that funding be put aside to ensure that teachers are trained in positive behavior interventions (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.). Although IDEA is not specific in what positive behavior supports and interventions are to look like in the school system, it is clear that they are to be used for children with disabilities.

multi-tiered support system

In the state of Kansas it is strongly advised, but not mandated, that all schools implement a Multi-Tiered Support System (MTSS). MTSS requires that all students be supported in a tiered system for both academics and behavior. The behavior aspect of MTSS is set up exactly like School wide Positive Behavior Supports System (SWPBS) with the exact same language exception for the actual name and that MTSS includes academics. Kansas' definition of MTSS is "a coherent continuum of evidence based, system-wide practices to support a rapid response to academic and behavioral needs, with frequent data-based monitoring for instructional decision-making to empower each Kansas student to achieve to high standards" (Kansas Multi-Tier Support System [MTSS], 2008).

MTSS is not something that is implemented in one year. Due to all of the academic and behavior components of truly implementing MTSS, it is a four-year process to fully implement all of the changes. Wichita is currently in the fifth year of implementing MTSS at a district level. Wichita Public Schools trained the teachers by cohorts focusing on behavior for two years and academic for two years. The training rotated until each school was trained for four year in the implementation of MTSS. Focus and priority schools are provided with extra training to ensure

that they are implementing MTSS with fidelity and to ensure that the school continues to grow in the area of behavior and academics.

As with SWPBS, MTSS requires that the school have interventions for all students (tier one), some students (tier two), and few students (tier three). At this author's school, tier one interventions include school-wide character traits, common area and classroom expectations posted and taught, school wide reward system based on character traits, and consequences stated and posted in the classroom. Tier two interventions within my school include check in/check out system, school "jobs", mystery motivators, and individual data collection sheets. When a student reaches tier three at my school, a functional behavior assessment (FBA) is conducted and a behavior plan is written based on information from the FBA.

effectiveness.

As mentioned earlier in the article, the School Wide Behavior Support Interventions and Supports is a three tier model of supports; universal, secondary, and tertiary. Those students needing the most intensive supports would be considered tier three or tertiary students. Although students with emotional disabilities are often in the secondary and tertiary levels of supports, it is also important to determine if the other levels in the tiered support system are effective in decreasing challenging behaviors. To determine the effectiveness of SWPBS on all three tiers, research will be examined for both students with and without disabilities.

A meta-analysis on the effectiveness of SWPBS on various age levels and demographics was conducted and the results indicated that SWPBS was moderately successful in reducing students challenging behaviors (Solomon, Klein, Hintze, Cressey, & Peller, 2012). A three-year study conducted with elementary schools in Hawaii and Illinois, using experimental and control groups, found that those schools implementing SWPBS were perceived as being safer (Horner et

al., 2009). The same study also saw an increase in third grade reading assessments in those schools that were implementing SWPBS over time, where the control group's scores remained steady (Horner et al., 2009).

Horner, Sugai, and Anderson conduced a review of all peer reviewed research articles from 2000 until 2009 to determine the effectiveness of SWPBS. Through their review of research articles, the authors determined four important impacts the universal level of SWBPS had on a school environment. The first impact determined was that SWPBS could be implemented in a range of context and school with fidelity based on the School Wide Evaluation Tool (SET) (Horner, Sugai, & Anderson, 2010). This is important because it adds to the research that supports SWPBS being effective for students and staff members from various background, ethnic groups, and age levels. The second impact found was that the universal level of interventions clearer organization of staff member's roles in the education system (Horner, Sugai, & Anderson, 2010). The third impact of the universal tier interventions in this study was overall reductions in problem behaviors and increase in the staff and students perception of safety in the school (Horner, Sugai, & Anderson, 2010). The fourth and final impact of the universal tier interventions was an increase in the student's academic performance (Horner, Sugai, & Anderson, 2010).

Tier Two interventions that were found to be effective through Horner, Sugai, and Anderson's review of research from 2000-2009, included the check-in/check-out system, First Step to Success, Check and Connect, and Think Time (2010). Again, SWPBS in not a set curriculum therefore the inclusion or exclusion of these tier two interventions does not determine or discriminate the effectiveness of a SWPBS in a school based on the existence or non-existence of these certain interventions. The following chart defines these tier two interventions.

Intervention	Definition
Check and Connect	"a systematic structure for linking students to supportive adults in the school and adapting that support to meet the needs of each student" (Horner, Sugai, & Anderson, 2010)
Check In/Check Out	"a daily report card intervention designed to improve daily structure, social links with adults, access to academic support, and coordination between home and school" (Horner, Sugai, & Anderson, 2010)
Step to Success	"an identified student is assigned a First step to success coach who sits with the student and provides one on one training in appropriate behavior" (Horner, Sugai, & Anderson, 2010)
Time to Think	"is designed to enable the teacher and student to stop a negative school exchange and provide the student feedback and an opportunity to plan" (Horner, Sugai, & Anderson, 2010)

Transition assessments and professional collaboration

Multiple articles that were reviewed either referenced the TAGG (Transition Assessment and Goal Generator) or specifically used it as an instrument of measurement for transition. The TAGG was developed at the University of Oklahoma in 2015 supported by the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Special Education Research, (University of Oklahoma, 2015). The research completed in the article, *Predicting Postsecondary Education and Employment Outcomes Using Results from the Transition Assessment and Goal Generator* by Jennifer Burnes, PhD, James E. Martin, PhD, Robert Terry, PhD, Amber E McConnell PhD, and Maeghan N. Hennessey, PhD (2017) used the behavior constructs in the TAGG to measure relationships between activities students participate in during high school and their success postsecondary. The data showed a promising correlation between the behavior constructs 1) Interacting with Others, 2) Student Involvement in the IEP, 3) Support Community, 4) Employment, and 5) Goal

Setting and Attainment for students with disabilities continuing their education after high school, (p. 10).

The TAGG was used to measure non-academic constructs that were, "related to post-school employment and education," (McConnell, Martin, & Hennessey, 2015) in a second article reviewed. In this case the results of the TAGG were compared in relation to the, "… (a) percentage of time secondary students with disabilities receive[d] instruction in general education and (b) [the] GPA of secondary students with disabilities," (p. 333). In the research conducted by McConnell, et.al. (2015) showed that there was very little relationship between a student's GPA and their TAGG outcomes and furthermore do not correlate with the concept of persistence, (p. 334). Further, the research indicates that while academically demanding classes are valuable they are not enough to predict college completion or success in the workforce.

Collaboration between special education teachers, parents, and community service providers is the inter-web in which a student can be fully supported during both their years in high school and during their transition into adult life, generally referred to as postsecondary which can be an educational institution or placement in the workforce. Amy L. Accardo, Joy F. Xin, and Maragaret Shuff (2020) took a measured look at the impact that collaboration with families can have on relationships with students. Using the rating scale Parent-Teacher Relationship Scale (PTRS) developed by Vickers and Minke in 1995, the authors compared the beginning results with the ending results of the teacher candidates in two groups, one that participated in a Family Collaboration Project and one that did not. Based on the results there was a direct correlation with the level of collaboration between a student's parents and the teacher candidate and the level of student gain, (2020).

Another article that focuses specifically on how collaboration impacts student success with transition and postsecondary life. The authors were looking at career awareness, "… career awareness, inclusion in general education, work experience, self-determination, and self-advocacy, parental involvement, self-care/development," (Frazier, Perryman, & Kucharczyk, 2020). This team of authors outlined several key groups that are important collaborators 1) interdisciplinary transition team, 2) special education teachers, 3) speech-language pathologists, 4) school counselors, and 5) community and vocational resources. Each position plays a part in providing services for students with disabilities as they plan what they will do after high school. The conclusion of this research determined that while all it is firmly established that collaboration between these providers is important for a student to achieve a successful outcome, the need to conduct further research on the correlation between collaboration and student post-secondary success.

These four interventions are just a few of the many tier two interventions that are evidenced based, although these four are the most commonly used (Horner, Sugai, & Anderson, 2010). It is important to understand the student to determine which tier two interventions will be the most effective and monitor those intervention through data collection to determine their effectiveness.

To determine if SWPBS would be an effective strategy for reducing problem behaviors in an alternative school setting, it is important to determine if SWPBS in effective for students with special needs in a traditional education setting. Since students who are served in alternative education settings, typically are those students with special needs who exhibit higher rates of challenging behaviors, if SWPBS is not effective for those students with lower rates of challenging behaviors with special needs, it is less likely to be successful for those students served in an alternative education setting.

A review of research was conducted by Freeman et al., (2006) which determined the studies that focused on students with significant disabilities who participated in SWPBS interventions. This study identified several single subject studies of students with disabilities whose behavior was reduced through the use of tier two and tier three interventions (Freeman et al., 2006). The review of research also found a single subject study for a student that was determined not to need special education services after tier three intervention were put in place (Freeman et al., 2006). Research specially addressing the effectiveness of SWPBS for students with disabilities is limited. However, due to promising results from the studies that have been conducted, more research should be conducted.

Population Concerned

Issues

Effects

CHAPTER III

Methodology

Article overviewsSurvey

3	Barnard-Brak, L., Schmidt, M., Wei, T., Hodges, T., & Robinson, E. L. (2013). Providing Postsecondary Transition Services to Youth with Disabilities: Results of a Pilot Program. *Journal of Postsecondary Education and Disability, 26*(2), 135-144.	
Research Question	**Research Method**	**Relevance**
1. Did the mentoring intervention associated with a statistically significant decrease in negative attitudes towards requesting accommodations among high school students with disabilities across the academic year? 2. Were these differences in attitudes towards	Forty-three high school students with disabilities were surveyed. The group reported themselves as 21 female, 22 males. They also reported themselves as 20 White, 16 African American, and 9 Hispanic. Finally students identified themselves as 33 students with a hidden disability and 3 students with a visible disability. The mentoring intervention was a one-on-one meeting weekly for an hour for an entire academic year. Each mentor had between seven and ten students. Topics covered	The research indicated that for those students who participated in the mentoring program there was a decrease in negative attitudes toward asking for accommodations. When students are more willing to ask for accommodations on their own, the student showing an increase in self-advocacy is a life skill that will benefit them regardless of the path they choose postsecondary. The authors noted that in order for the pilot program to be successful the local university had partnered with local schools to provide the students and mentors, who were college students, a space to meet regularly. Logistically it was stated that in order for successful collaboration to occur there needed to be a coordination between building level and district level administration, as collaborating with an outside agency requires more coordinating than is possible for any one teacher. This finding supports the need

requesting accommodations significantly associated with whether the participant applied to college?	multiple topics related to transition to postsecondary education, including college visits. To measure students' attitudes pre- and post-intervention, the Attitudes Toward Requesting Accommodations scale created by Barnard-Brak, Sulak, Tate and Lechtenberger in 2010 was used.	for a transition coordinator whose sole responsibility it is to be the single-point of contact between the building/district administration and outside agencies in order to provide quality and substantial postsecondary opportunities. This is significantly relevant to this research because lack of communication, lack of ability to maintain regular communication is one of the stated problem areas that result in poorly created transition plans.
4	Burns, J. J., Martin, J. E., Terry, R. P., McConnell, A. E., & Hennessey, M. N. (2017). Predicting Postsecondary Education and Employment Outcomes Using Results From the Transition Assessment and Goal Generator. *Career Development and Transition for Exceptional Individuals*. doi:https://doi.org/10.1177%2F2165143417705353	
Research Question	**Research Method**	**Relevance**
1. Do TAGG results predict post-high school education and employment outcomes of former high school students with disabilities? 2. Do construct scores across Student, Professional, and Family TAGG versions predict postsecondary education and employment outcomes of former high school students with disabilities who completed the TAGG years earlier while in high school? 3. Do high school GPAs of these former students add incremental evidence to	Participants were selected over three academic years resulting in a total of 2,310 (172 professionals, 847 family members, and 1,291 students) from 42 states and 162 rural, urban and suburban schools. Students were reached by contacting special education teachers who had completed the TAGG study, relying on the teachers to contact their students who had also completed the TAGG when in high school. This resulted in 151 former students who completed the follow-up survey.	This study is relevant in several areas. First, the data indicates that using the TAGG constructs produce several positive outcomes for behaviors in school, 1) interacting with others, 2) student involvement in IEP, 3) support community, and 4) goal setting and attainment. Second, the results of the TAGG constructs provide reliable indicators for a student's areas of success postsecondary. Finally, using the TAGG constructs gives special education teachers a reliable assessment to use to discover possible behaviors that need to be addressed in a student's annual transition goals in their IEP. Using a consistent method for assessing students' behaviors and attitudes toward transition gives students, parents and teachers a consistent way to discuss transition to adulthood by identifying areas of strengths of needs. Having quantifiable data allows special education teachers to move the postsecondary conversation away from fears, and misconceptions to behaviors and measurable goals that shown to be meaningful for the student.

predicting postsecondary education and employment outcomes?		
5	Cassidy, K., Franco, Y. P., & Meo, E. (2018, March 3). Preparation for Adulthood: A Teacher Inquiry Study for Facilitating Life Skills in Secondary Education in the United States. *Journal of Educational Issues, 4*(1), 33-46. doi:10.5296/jei.v4i1.12471	
Research Question	**Research Method**	**Relevance**
1. In what ways could we implement realistic life skill lessons, while adhering to district standards?	A life skills interest survey was the first strategy used. Given to students at One Tree High and Two Tree High as well as 10 educators. Students were asked to complete SMART goals and reviewed/reflected on them after 3 weeks. Small group social skills instruction that lasted for 8 weeks, two times a week. Data was collected using the interest surveys, semi-structured interviews, anecdotal notes, and student/teacher reflections over the course of two months.	While this study did not specifically look at transition services, it did look at explicitly teaching students life skills, which are a key component to a student successfully transitioning into postsecondary life. The enthusiasm that students exhibited in learning about topics that could be covered under the umbrella of life skills correlates with the assumption that many students are not being prepared for life after high school by outside sources (parents, outside support groups, community involvement, community outreach, etc.). The quote that adequately displays the importance of the information presented by these authors, is stated in the closing paragraphs, "Despite chaotic days, we [the researchers] made life skills instruction a priority…" (p. 44). Life skills are the basis of a transition plan.
6	Frazier, K. F., Perryman, K. L., & Kucharczyk, S. (2020). Transition Services for Students with Significant Disabilities: Building Successful Collaborations among School Professionals. *Journal of School-Based Counseling Policy & Evaluation, 2*(2), 131-141. doi:https://doi.org/10.25774/80b3-kc43	
Research Question	**Research Method**	**Relevance**
NA	NA	Collaboration between special education teachers and community transition services are a way to ensure that supports and services for the student and their family does not lag. This article does not present research, but does explore each of the components of putting together a transition plan that meets the needs of the student by developing successful collaboration between multiple service providers. The areas discussed are: interdisciplinary transition team, planning a

		successful transition, collaborative role of special educators in transition, collaborative role of speech-language pathologists in transition, collaborative role of school counselors in transition, cooperative relationship among professionals, and connecting students to community and vocational resources. In the conclusion the authors make several important statements. They acknowledge that while there has been little research done investigating the relationship between successful collaboration of special education providers, community services providers, families and students it is undeniable that there is a positive correlation between collaboration and students successfully achieving their postsecondary goals.
7	Lipscomb, S., Halmson, J., Liu, A. Y., Burghardt, J., Johnson, D. R., Thurlow, M., . . . Silverberg, M. (2017). *Preparing for life after high school: The characteristics and experiences of youth in special education. Findings from the National Longitudinal Transition Study 2012. Volume 2: Comparisons across disability groups: Executive summary (NCEE 2017-2019).* Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance. Retrieved from https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/projects/evaluation/disabilities_nlts2012.asp	
Research Question	**Research Method**	**Relevance**
This is a longitudinal report that focuses on multiple aspects of preparing for life after high school. For the purposes of this research the following questions are being reviewed: Table ES10. Percentages of youth whose parents (or another adult in the household) are engaged at home and in school in specified ways, by disability group. Table ES11. Percentages of youth who attended and provided input during a transition-planning meeting, by disability group.	The survey was sent to nearly 13,000 students with disabilities both with and without an IEP in grades 7 through 12 (or secondary ungraded classes). The survey was also sent to the parents of these students in either 2012 or 2013 when the students were aged 13 to 21 years old.	This is a longitudinal study and has been published in multiple volumes. This Volume 2 focuses specifically on issues that deal with students' abilities to successfully be prepared for life after high school. For the purposes of this research only three sections of Volume 2 were reviewed. Looking at Table ES11. *Percentages of youth who attended and provided input during a transition-planning by disability group* it is evident that while over 50% of the students in each disability group report that they have met with school staff to develop a transition plan. In contrast parents in each disability group were less confident in the student having the opportunity to provide input for their transition plan. As student input is ultimately important in the creation of a transition plan that will not only meet needs, but has motivating goals that encourage the student to want to participate in not only the planning, but also in meeting the goals.

Table ES12. Percentages of youth and their parents with expectations for postsecondary education, by disability group.		
8	McConnell, A. E., Martin, J. E., & Hennessey, M. N. (2015). Indicators of Postsecondary Employment and Education for Youth With Disabilities in Relation to GPA and General Education. *Remedial and Special Education, 36*(6), 327-336.	
Research Question	**Research Method**	**Relevance**
Examining the extent relations exist between non-academic behaviors research has identified as associated with post-school education and employment measured by the TAGG and (a) percentage of time secondary students with disabilities receive instruction in general education, (b) GPA of secondary students with disabilities, and (c) each TAGG construct and percentage of time spent in general education and student GPA.	The primary method of data collection was the TAGG survey. Research was conducted over 2 academic years and included 650 students with disabilities, 497 family members and 72 high school special education teachers. The participants were from 49 school districts across nine states. Independent Variables -- Percentage of time in general education -- GPA Dependent Variables -- TAGG total score -- TAGG construct scores	The implications of this study give validity to the importance of a focus on non-academic skills for students with disabilities in order to better prepare them for postsecondary success. While student GPAs are often linked to success at post-secondary institutions, this study indicates that a student's GPA and their successful transition into postsecondary education and employment are not singularly linked. The connection that this study makes to the current research is in the need for specific instruction and opportunities for students with disabilities to have opportunities to develop skills not directly related to academics. When looking for options for students with disabilities to get these opportunities it often is the relationships with outside agencies that make this possible.
9	Miller, K. D., Schleien, S. J., White, A. L., & Harrington, L. (2018). "Letting Go:" Parent Perspectives on the Outcomes of an Inclusive Postsecondary Education Experience for Students with Developmental Disabilities. *Journal of Postsecondary Education and Disability, 31*(3), 267-285.	
Research Question	**Research Method**	**Relevance**
1. What parents hoped their son or daughter with IDD would gain from an IPSE (individualized postsecondary education) experience?	Telephone interviews were conducted with parents of current and graduate students of the Integrative Community Studies (ICS) certificate from the University of North Carolina Greensboro. Two specific questions were asked:	Parents who have the confidence in their child to attend college – have obviously had access to a good transition program that prepared their child for a successful life after high school. ICS is a program specifically designed to support students with disabilities find success at a post-secondary institution. While students receive academic support through participation in the program the focus is on adjusting to college life, financial literacy, self-advocacy, self-determination, and career

2. What parents believed were the outcomes of their young adults' IPSE experience.	1) Why they thought it was important for their son/daughter to attend college, 2) What they hoped their young adult would gain from attending college, and 3) What actual gains, benefits, and outcomes they observed in their student/graduate?	development. While it can be reasonably stated that students with disabilities need more opportunities and extra exposure to these topics, often with hands-on experiences, it can also be reasonably stated that adding these same opportunities as part of a student's high school experience is important for post-secondary success.
10	Miller-Warren, V. (2015, June). Examining the Quality of Secondary Transition Plans Against Research-based Criteria in Preparing Students with Disabilities for Postsecondary Success. *The Journal of Special Education Apprenticeship, 4*(1), 1-13.	
Research Question	**Research Method**	**Relevance**
1. How does the quality of the secondary transition plans of students who graduated from a special education program in 2011 meet the research-based proposed criteria of a sound transition plan in preparing the students for postsecondary?	Thirty-nine secondary student transition plans were evaluated using keywords and phrases chosen from research-based characteristics of quality transition plans. A Likert rating scale, based on the Indicator 13 checklist, was devised. Total points ranged from 5-25 based on the number of keywords that were found in each of the criteria areas evaluated. Criteria: 1. Age appropriate and measureable postsecondary goals 2. Curriculum and instruction services that prepared the student to achieve their postsecondary goals 3. Self-determination, and community experiences 4. Outside agency involvement, parent and teacher input and collaboration 5. Identifiable services needed by the student from outside agencies to achieve his/her postsecondary goals	Poorly written transition plans are a result of teachers not fully understanding student transition needs and thus it decreases their ability to write appropriate postsecondary goals. This study also gives a great scale that can be replicated by other special education programs or individual teachers to get a baseline assessment of their own transition plans. The results of this study indicate, just as this research has proposed, that a majority of special education students do not have quality transition plans, which is the primary focus of special education services for students aged 16-21 (starting at age 14 in Kansas).

11	Newman, L. A., Madaus, J. W., & Javitz, H. S. (2016). Effect of Transition Planning on Postsecondary Support Receipt by Students With Disabilities. *Exceptional Children, 82*(4), 497-514.	
Research Question	**Research Method**	**Relevance**
1. What was the impact of two transition planning components: receipt of transition planning education and having a transition plan that specified postsecondary accommodations as a needed post-high school services – on receipt of postsecondary disability-related supports? 2. What was the impact of the two transition planning components on receipt of supports available to the general postsecondary student body?	There were 1,210 surveyed using the criteria that they had 1) at least one parent or youth who participated in an interview or survey after leaving high school that reported postsecondary school attendance, and 2) they participated in a Wave 1 or Wave 2 school program survey (as part of the National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 conducted over a nine year period 2001-2009). Two specific pieces of data were looked at 1) if a student had received transition planning education, and 2) whether or not there were accommodations listed on the transition plan as something needed for the student after high school.	There are many aspects of this study that give validity to the premise of this research presented in this paper. Specifically, the authors state over and over that in order for students to find postsecondary success they require a transition plan in high school that outlines specifically the accommodations that were used to help the student find academic success. The end goal of the research in this paper is to justify the need for the use of a Transition Framework that can be used by all special education teachers who work with students with disabilities ages 14-21. The implications of the research of Newman, Madaus and Javitz states that the importance of explicit instruction for students with disabilities is in the, "… transition related guideposts that serve as an organizational framework for youth and families, practitioners…" (p. 21).
12	Rabren, K., Eaves, R. C., Dunn, C., & Darch, C. (2013). Students with Learning Disabilities' Satisfaction, Employment, and Postsecondary Education Outcomes. *Journal of Education and Learning, 2*(2), 14-22.	
Research Question	**Research Method**	**Relevance**
1. What is the influence of postsecondary education/training on postsecondary satisfaction? 2. What is the influence between	Former students with disabilities who graduated during 2007 and 2008 and had been out of school for one year were given the Alabama Post-School Transition Survey. The pool consisted of 1,341 total students, of those 801 were identified as LD and it	The relevance of this research is not directly applicable, but just like several of the articles reviewed, it is relevant in the way that several of the previous articles have been. This article shows the importance of transition planning and transition activities. The reality of having quality transition planning and activities being key components to a student's transition plan is shown over and over.

postsecondary employment on postsecondary satisfaction? 3. Is there an interaction between postsecondary education/training and postsecondary employment on postsecondary satisfaction?	was those students that were the focus of this research.	The fact that students need these services and opportunities and they are needs that are above and beyond student academic needs it is reasonable to suggest that building relationships with outside collaborative resources and understanding what services community partners can provide is key to a student's overall success.
13	Robinson, J. P.-D., & Gershwin Mueller, T. P.-D. (2020, Winter). Hopes and Hurdles: Parents' Perceptions and Experiences with Transition Planning for Students with Intellectual Disabilities. *Journal of American Academy of Special Education*, 82-159.	
Research Question	**Research Method**	**Relevance**
1. What were the parents' perceptions of the transition planning process for their children with Intellectual Disabilities? 2. What were the parents' experiences with the transition planning process for their children with Intellectual Disabilities?	The researchers contacted participants initially through email to receive consent to participate. The criteria for being included in the survey was 1) being the parent of a student who received special education and was identified under the eligibility category of ID, and 2) the student either had to be currently enrolled in high school or have graduated prior to the conduct of the study.	This article shows the direct link between involvement of community resources and an understanding of the transition process with a student's success in postsecondary life and their satisfaction with that life.
14	Scheef, A., & Mahfouz, J. (2020). Supporting the Post-School Goals of Youth with Disabilities through Use of a Transition Coordinator. *Research in Educational Administration & Leadership, 5*(1), 43-69. doi:10.30828/real/2020.1.2	
Research Question	**Research Method**	**Relevance**
NA	NA	The authors present, thorough information through a literature review, a valid argument that the responsibilities of providing proper support for students with disabilities for transition is more than can be successfully handled by someone who is

		teaching and attempting to make connections with community providers is often more than one person can manage.
15	Shaw, S. F., Keenan, W. R., Madaus, J. W., & Banerjee, M. (2010). Disability Documentation, the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act, and the Summary of Performance: How are they linked? *Journal of Postsecondary Education and Disability, 22*(3), 142-150.	
Research Question	**Research Method**	**Relevance**
NA	The article is outlining the importance of the Summary of Performance and how it is linked to the Americans with Disabilities Act. The author's explain the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) and the limitations that the original ADA law. They continue the discussion by focusing on how the changes made under the new provisions of the ADAAA make it easier for students with disabilities to have access to the needed accommodations/modifications that they need in order to be successful postsecondary.	This article address the gap between secondary and postsecondary institutions with regard to knowledge and acceptance of accommodations/modifications. The article states that there are many parents that do not know that a student's IEP does not go on to postsecondary institutions. Additionally, because students do not have to have a full re-evaluation completed every three years according to IDEA 2004, students will often be unprepared to present a current cognitive report outlining their specific needs. A report for which there are few people in postsecondary institutions working with students with disabilities able to fully understand. This article supports the assertion that there is a disconnect between secondary providers services and the needs of students and families in a postsecondary life.
16	Weiss, M. P., Hutchins, B. C., & Meece, J. L. (2012). The Postsecondary Educational Plans of Rural Youth with Disabilities and Their Nondisabled Peers. *Career Development and Transition for Exceptional Individuals, 35*(3), 180-189. doi:10.1177/2165143412450313	
Research Question	**Research Method**	**Relevance**
1. To identify the future educational plans of rural 11th – and 12th grade students with disabilities. 2. To examine the participation in programs and activities related to these goals. 3. To identify the sources from	Data for this research was collected in 2007 and 2008. Participants of the study were selected from rural communities, 73 schools from 34 states. Only students who were in 11th and 12th grade were considered because they are those who are closest to making their transition to adulthood.	This articles relevance is specific to the rural population that was surveyed. All of the communities that were being looked at in the research of this paper are all rural communities. Just as many of the other articles reviewed support the need for partnerships with community resources, it does the same, but because it covers rural youth specifically.

which these students received the most helpful information about postsecondary options.	There were several points of information collected using the following questions: 1. Are you planning to continue your education beyond high school? 2. What type of high school program are you enrolled in? 3. Where have you gotten information that was *most helpful* for your plans after high school? 4. During the past year, how often have you done each of the following activities? Students were engaged in career exploration activities and career counseling.	

Findings

The literature review clearly outlines that those who work with students with disabilities are aware of the need to take a strategic look at the processes in place to help facilitate students and families to have a success when transitioning to postsecondary. Two articles reviewed featured the TAGG assessment as their instrument of measurement both indicating that the results were reliable. The TAGG assessment is available online through the University of Oklahoma Jeannine Rainbolt College of Education Zarrow Center for Learning Enrichment (https://tagg.ou.edu/tagg/) and it is free to use.

Collaboration between providers and families, which was the initial basis of this research is a second key component that was mentioned positively in seven out of sixteen articles of research. There was not one research group that said that collaboration was not beneficial to the process. One collaboration group that had not been previously considered was a mentoring

group. Barnard-Brak, Schmidt, Wei, Hodges, & Robinson (2003) launched their piolot program in which family collaboration was at the heart of it but it was facilitated by students with disabilities having a mentor (as part of a college class assignment) that met with them on a weekly basis.

Each article that spoke about what activities in school students with disabilities participated in that had a positive correlation to their postsecondary success mentioned those students being included in general education classrooms, (Baer, Daviso III, Flexer, McMahan Queen, & Meindl, 2011; Burns, Martin, Terry, McConnell, & Hennessey, 2017). While students with disabilities being included in the general education classroom is regularly touted as best-practice, Cassidy, Franco, & Meo, (2018) completed a look into how life skills (important functional skills needed for postsecondary life) can be effectively incorporated into general education classes. The researchers encountered the age-old issue of state standards, but there is also an argument to be made that the life skills that a student with disabilities needs may be so far removed from their peers abilities, that it is not appropriate to attempt to incorporate into the general education classroom.

There were not any articles found that discussed having a systematic framework to guide the transition process. While the TAGG assessment is very complete needs assessment it does not address the question of *when*, for families that have students with significant and/or multiple disabilities, to community service providers as soon as possible. There are several providers that could provide this important information, but it often falls to the special education teacher.

Discussion

Whether the pool surveyed was 1000+ or the pool was 70+ there was not one research article that addressed the need for a systematic transition framework that could be referenced by

all providers to ensure that the student with learning disabilities is not simply being passed from one provider to the next without a detailed plan for the stages of transition. To aid families and providers in this regard the Kansas Department of Education developed a document titled *Passport to Independence: Transition from School to Work Timeline*. The timeline begins when a student is 12 years old as they are approaching the age, in Kansas, for which transition will become a focus of their IEP. If the first conversation about community services, that need to be provided for a student upon graduation or exiting special education, are being introduced to a family when the student is 12 years old, that is already putting that student at a disadvantage as the waitlist for services is, on average, 8 or 9 years.

The purpose of framing this literature review around the background of the three rural communities in northeast Kansas, was with the intention of being able to provide community specific information that would aid in the development of a transition framework. What the literature review has shown, is in order to create something so specifically tailored, a survey of local students with disabilities and their parents is the only reliable way to gather that information. The government resources for the county are available online, but the transition process should not be seen as just another "set of hoops" that a family with a student with disabilities has to navigate on their own. Getting input from the families that the framework is designed for, sets those families up for buy-in to the process; it allows parents and students to know that they are being listened to and that the plan – while it can apply to numerous students and families with a multitude of different needs – truly is something that has been individualized to fit their needs.

Reflection

The majority of the information found through the literature review was not anything that shouldn't be expected by someone who has been teaching in special education for any amount of time now. The TAGG Assessment was also not new to me as I have already used it once this year. I found the TAGG to be not only thorough, but because it is available online a teacher can share the assessment directly with the family and when it is completed the teacher gets a notification. So it is also really fast and convenient. As mentioned in the *discussion* section the goal for me is still to conduct a survey of the local parents and students with disabilities and to create a transition framework.

I believe that having a framework that all teachers and related service providers can reference will help, 1) keep teachers on track, so they are not rushing at the end trying to just load a family with all the supports they need right before graduation, and 2) this 2021-2022 school year has shown to be a year of exits from a lot of places of employment and teachers have not been spared that drain. Having a transition framework and keeping portfolios for students beginning at age 14, is extremely helpful when new teachers are brought into a district so they are not re-doing assessments or activities and the student can more easily just pick up where they left off the previous year.

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