



and

REACHING EDUCATION RESOLUTIONS INC.



Transition Pathways for Students with Special Needs

October 18, 2013

Topics & Issues

Introduction

Webinar 1: Introduction to Transition Planning

- a) Historical Overview of Transition Planning in Ontario Education Contexts for Students with Special Education Needs
- b) Regulatory and Policy Requirements from 2002 to 2013
- c) New PPM 2013
- d) Development of Protocols and Frameworks to Guide Practice
- e) Challenges in Moving from Regulation and Policy to Practice

Webinar 2: Mediating Challenges in Integrated Transition Planning

- a) Implementing a Person Directed Planning Approach
- b) Defining Roles and Responsibilities in Transition Planning
- c) Identifying Key Components of a Transition Plan
- d) Identifying Key Processes and Structures
- e) Sharing Samples of Transition Plans
- f) Sharing Toolkits and other Planning Resources

Webinar 3: Presentations of Effective Cross-Sector Transition Planning Practices

- a) Leading the way in the Education sector
- b) Leading the way in the Social Service sector
- c) How can we continue to support each other in advancing integrated transition planning?

PURPOSE OF TRANSITION PLANS ACROSS SECTORS

➤ Legal History

- appropriate transitions for students with developmental disabilities routed in the attendance rights in *Education Act* providing right for resident pupils to attend without payment of fees [s.32]
 - right to attend elementary school until the last day of school in June in the year in which the student turns 21 [*Education Act* s.33]
 - previously right to attend 7 years of secondary school - **repealed**
 - confusion regarding whether 21 + 7 when not transferred to secondary school at the age appropriate time 14
 - if transferred at the age appropriate time students will spend 7 years in a secondary school setting

➤ Legal Requirements

- *Human Rights Code*; statute; regulation; policy

➤ MCYS and MCSS

- *Services and Supports to Promote the Social Inclusion of Persons with Developmental Disabilities Act, 2008*
 - has been proclaimed in force in part
 - person directed planning services and supports [s.4(2)] defined as “person-directed planning services and supports means services and supports to assist persons with developmental disabilities in identifying their life vision and goals and finding and using services and supports to meet their identified goals with the help of their families or significant others of their choice.”
- neither have specific legislation requiring transition planning

➤ *Education Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. E.2*

- special education programming and services are required to be made available by all school boards for exceptional pupils [s.170(1)(7)] “Every board **shall provide** or enter into an agreement with another board to provide in accordance with the regulations special education programs and special education services for its **exceptional pupils**”[emphasis added]
 - exceptional pupil is defined by the Education Act [s.1] “*exceptional pupil means a pupil whose behavioural, communicational, intellectual, physical or multiple exceptionalities are such that he or she is considered to need*

placement in a special education program by a committee, established under subparagraph iii of paragraph 5 of subsection 11(1) of the board
(a) of which the pupil is a resident pupil,
(b) that admits or enrolls the pupil other than pursuant to an agreement with another board for the provision of education, or
(c) to which the cost of education in respect of the pupil is payable by the Minister."

- Code arguably requires definition to be expanded to include any pupil whose educational performance is impacted by a disability

➤ Regulation 181/98, Identification and Placement of Exceptional Pupils

- identifies the requirement for transition planning beginning at the age of 14 [s.6(4)] "*where the pupil is 14 years or older, the individual education plan **must also** include a plan for transition to appropriate post-secondary school activities, such as work, further education and community living*" [emphasis added]
 - coincides with promotion or transfer to secondary school at 14 years
 - expectation applies to all students with IEP (exceptional pupils)
- the transition plan is a required element forming part of the IEP
 - not an additional or separate document
 - must be updated when the IEP is updated as part of IEP
 - the goals should be part of the foundation of the IEP as the student moves through secondary school goals identified in IEP have to be relevant to transition planning goals
- consultation is mandated both with parent/guardian and pupil 16 years or older
 - principal is required to consult with community agencies and post-secondary institutions [s.6(7)] "*In developing a transition plan under subsection (4), the principal **shall consult** with such community agencies and post-secondary institutions as he or she considers appropriate*"[emphasis added]

➤ PPM 156 Supporting Transitions for Students with Special Education Needs

- issued February 1, 2013
- expands the need for transition planning to all aspects of education - including between programs, grades and schools
 - refers to transitions at many stages and identifies PPM140

- most would see the transition planning requirement in PPM 140 as a duty to ensure that students can transition from IBI to ABA and between activities and settings within school
- PPM 156 identifies the principal's responsibility to ensure that there is a transition plan for all students with an IEP despite the fact that they might not be identified
 - requirement is broader than Reg 181/98
 - school board has discretion to also provide transition plan for students who receive special programs and/or services but who do not have an IEP
 - students who are not identified and not in a special education placement
 - recommended because consistent with *Code*
- goals, needs for services or supports, roles and responsibilities and timelines are to be included –
 - no specific guidance is provided for how the transition plan is to developed
 - the resource section of the PPM identifies that there are a wide range of strategies, tools and resources, but does not identify any specific resources or requirements
- **Memo to Directors of Education: Integrated Transition Planning for Young People with Developmental Disabilities, from the Ministries of Education, Children Youth Services, Community and Social Services, January 2013**
 - to ensure that there is integrated planning for a very vulnerable population
 - identifies that there were regional protocols developed by MCYS / MCSS in 2012
 - some school boards participated in the development of the protocols
 - regional offices of MCYS / MCSS to outline a new process that will lead to single integrated plan
 - in consultation
 - intended to be an addendum to the Draft Provincial Transition Planning Framework created by MCYS & MCSS in 2011
 - the initiative identifies the need for greater cooperation as well as the need for better planning by school boards

➤ **Transition Planning: A Resource Guide from 2002**

- guidance for school boards regarding transition planning for pathways after school
- recommends establishing a transition planning advisory committee at the system level as part of SEAC or a separate independent committee
 - committee can be structured as the school board desires
 - could be used to identify and consult with community stakeholders - researching and connecting with local associations, businesses
 - identify and recommend processes/protocols/practices for principals to develop standards and expectations across the system
 - can be used to assist with evaluating processes/protocols/practices

➤ **Mitigating Risks of Litigation**

- ensuring principals have adequate training regarding transition planning
- ensuring sufficient support for teaching and administrative staff to develop and implement transition plans
- ensuring consistency
- ensuring consultation, both broad and with parent/student
- ensuring evaluation both system level, school level and individual student level
- assisting teachers and principals to connect with community services
- providing information to parent and the community
 - example: a brochure “ What to Expect During Transition Planning”

Identifying Challenges to Integrated Transition Planning

- **Challenge 1: Teacher/Other Professional as Researcher, Coordinator, and Navigator**
 - Perceived add-on of responsibilities
 - Perceived time away from primary role as instructor
 - Perceived disruption of direct service
 - Finding time in the work day to: research appropriate resources, supports and services; contact people; create team membership; organize meetings; facilitate definition of roles and responsibilities among members; monitor and report on progress
 - Aligning goals in Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and Individual Support Plans (ISPs) to inform goals in Transition Plan and vice versa

- **Challenge 2: Knowledge Transfer and Application of Sector Specific Practices (IEPs, ISPs, Policies, Protocols)**
 - Parent fatigue and frustration over repeating same information for intake, assessment, re-assessment for new services at transition points, gaps in service starts and stops
 - Fragmentation and/or duplication of efforts
 - Lack of mechanisms for sharing information between professionals and organizations
 - Confidentiality agreements
 - Distinguishing policies from practices
 - Planning for meetings

- **Challenge 3: Blending of Core Academic and Life Skills Curriculum and Instruction**
 - Literacy and Math Skills development
 - Interaction of classroom study and community-based experiential learning
 - Application and generalization of skills across contexts
 - Purposeful learning connected to community participation
 - Individualized programming to help them achieve their transition goals

- Transition Plans evolve (a student entering secondary school/ a student exiting secondary school)

➤ **Challenge 4: Using a Person-directed Planning Approach**

- Moving from inclusive policy to inclusive practice
- Inclusion of the consumer's voice (student, client...) and others
- Strengths-based designs honouring identity (race, ethnicity, faith, language, disability, sexual orientation, etc.) in goal setting and measuring of progress
- Explicit instruction in making choices and decisions
- Revisiting our definitions of educational and social care
- Recognizing power dynamics in team membership

➤ **Challenge 5: Cultural Responsiveness in Transition Planning**

- Exploring our own views, cultural values, and practices
- The value of "independence" – how do we define it? Others?
- Building understanding and trust through "natural supports"
- Adapting our interpretations and recommendations to honour family value system