Transition & Employment for Culturally/Linguistically Diverse Students in Urban Contexts

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What do we mean by URBAN?

- Higher concentration & variety of jobs
- More transportation options
- More service providers
- Multiple post-secondary ed. options
- Richly diverse population
- High poverty rates & high income levels
“Most schools comprised of majority black and brown students have 80–90% white teachers. These staff don’t typically live in the community, they don’t understand the community, and they have a perception about those students based upon where they come from.”

*Chris Emdin*
The Sad Facts:

- Overrepresentation of students of color in special education.
- Overrepresentation of students of color in school suspensions & expulsions:
  - 1 in 5 Black students in Marion County are suspended.

(2016 School Corporation Annual Report)
The Sad Facts:

- Higher drop-out rates.
- School-to-prison pipeline: ~ 32% of prisoners and 40% of jail inmates have at least one dis/ability.
Barriers that CLD Youth & Families Experience:

- Lack of information about our culture.
- Lack of respect for us & our children.
- Lack of information about the legal requirements for Transition.
- Racial and cultural stereotypes and biases of professionals.

Gary Greene (2011)
More Barriers Experienced by CLD Youth & Families:

- **Language Differences** leading to communication issues.
- **Undocumented Youth** experience fear of deportation and trauma.
Post-school Outcomes for CLD Youth

African American and Latinx individuals with dis/abilities:
- Were less likely to be employed up to 8 years after graduating from high school;
- Made lower wages and received fewer benefits (e.g., health insurance); and
- Had lower rates of postsecondary education compared to their White peers with dis/abilities.

National Longitudinal Transition Study 2
Steps for Teachers/Administrators to Take During Transition Planning

- Demonstrate cultural competence;
- Involve families as co-equal members of transition planning teams;
- Support the values of the family when identifying transition goals & experiences;
- Support students to lead their own transition planning meeting aligned with their cultural practices and beliefs.

Cote, Jones, Sparks & Aldridge (2012)
Supreme Court ‘Endrew’ Ruling on IDEA: Schools must offer students with dis/abilities an “appropriate ambitious education program that allows students to meet challenging objectives” = HIGHER EXPECTATIONS.

Implement school-wide Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports (PBIS) and use “trauma-informed” practices.
IUPUI - SITE

Self-determination, Independence, Transition, Employment

- IUPUI & Indianapolis Public Schools partnership
- Transition from School to Adult Life for Students Ages 18–21
OUTCOMES: What a difference!

- Employment
- Navigation of campus & city
- Managing life & schedules
- Budgeting and finances
- Technology use
- Self-reliance
Outcomes

- Decision making/Problem-solving
- Pursuit of interests
- Confidence & independence
- Seamless transition
- Meaningful day
Creating Inclusive Job Training Opportunities

- Near co–workers vs. isolated.
- Individualized vs. congregated. Student – job task/environment match.
- “Dispersed cluster” sites in urban areas: Individualized placements in proximal departments or businesses (e.g., in office buildings, hotels, hospitals).
- Facilitate natural (co–worker) supports from Day 1.
Program Brochures

- Jargon free language.
- Employment vs. dis/ability focus.
- Describe customized services.
- Examples of other business partners.
- Status enhancing images.
- Clear and concise.
- Contact info.
Customized Employment: Targeted Employer Contact

- Target employers based on each job seeker. Do your homework! Know the business.
- Informational Interviews: Learn about the work & workplace culture/climate.
  - Tell me about your business. What is most important to your company? What types of work are done here?
  - Are there tasks that you need to be completed more efficiently or in a more timely manner? Can I schedule a tour of your business?

- Networking: Use your connections!
- Discuss starting pay: AT LEAST Minimum Wage
State Transformation Activity Record (STAR)

10 Critical Areas to Increase Competitive Integrated Employment

- Data Collection System
- Seamless Transition
- Mental Health
- Employer Engagement
- Provider Transformation
- Capacity Building
- Interagency Coordination
- Rate/Reimbursement
- E1st Policy
- Phase Out

OFFICE OF DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT POLICY
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
Factors That Promote Good Outcomes

- Staff Expertise
- Positive Attitudes; High Expectations
- Strengths-based
- Sense of URGENCY
- Student – Family Centered
- Educate & Empower Families
- Student Self-determination
- Longitudinal Preparation
  (Elementary – MS – High School)
Factors That Promote Good Outcomes

- Systematic Community-based Instruction & Job Training
- Non-school Transition: Ages 18–21
- Team Collaboration (“Senders” & “Receivers”)
- Sufficient Supports
- Graduate Follow-up Data
Provide tips for transition planning for CLD youth with disabilities to staff and families: http://www.pacer.org/parent/php/PHP-c250.pdf

Understand how to design transition programs for CLD students with disabilities: https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1014882

Understand how to work with diverse youth and families in transition and provide training: https://www.multiculturalfamilies.org/resources/professional-webinars/

PACER Center: Cultural Diversity Resources for Educators: http://www.pacer.org/culturaldiversity/resources-for-educators.asp
Additional Resources

- ODEP Customized Employment: [https://www.dol.gov/odep/topics/CustomizedEmployment.htm](https://www.dol.gov/odep/topics/CustomizedEmployment.htm)