

Kentucky Interagency Transition Council For Persons with Disabilities (KITC)

Quarterly Meeting
April 26th, 2024

Welcome & Introductions

KITC Chairperson Update (Lou-Ann Land)

- This is my last meeting as chairperson. Debbie Taub will take over as chairperson starting July 2024.
- The input and feedback from everyone in KITC are so important. I'm excited to see what comes next.

New Representative

- Abby O'Keeffe - Transition Age Parent Educator at the Kentucky Special Parent Involvement Network (KY-SPIN).

Presentations

Update on Collaborative Work Between KDE and OVR

Jonathan White (OVR)

- For several years, a KITC subgroup (KY NTACT ITA Team) has been meeting with facilitators from The National Technical Assistance Center on Transition: The Collaborative (NTACT:C).
- This group conducted 12 focus groups with Local Education Agencies (LEAs) and the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR).
- LEA focus group questions were focused on relationships with OVR and how to refer students. In the OVR focus groups, we wanted their perspective on their relationship with schools, how often they go, how big their caseload is, etc.
- Focus groups were evaluated to identify best practices or areas for improvement. The Kentucky Post School Outcomes Center (KYPSO) helped with coding and compiling a final report.

- We learned that OVR comes down to individual relationships. Turnover rates are high; when someone from OVR or a district leaves, that personal connection is broken.
- The Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) was awarded a Disability Innovation Fund (DIF) grant allowing staff dedicated to transition.
- The subgroup is currently on hold, but OVR and KDE are meeting regularly to review the focus group report and discuss strategies for implementing effective practices. Once we have an actionable plan, we'll reconvene with the larger subgroup if needed.
- Our goal is for students to have a happy adult life. From KDE's standpoint, students need an income. From OVR's standpoint, students need a job. We will be looking at where OVR and KDE intersect.
- Once best practices are developed, we will pick districts for piloting. If successful, we will expand and have a roadmap for transition for schools working with OVR. We will bring in other partners as needed.

Comments

- Stacie – I appreciate your intentionality. Our kids need a social aspect, opportunities for advocacy, and opportunities to have community living experiences.
- Carrie – I have a couple of districts that would be great participants in the pilot.
 - Stacie, Tara, Emily, and Jenny also have districts that would be great candidates for pilot participation.
- Jill Griffith – Would like to see all coop areas represented to receive the best state-wide feedback.

Summer Leadership Experience Camp

Teresa Belluscio (HDI)

[Presentation Recording \(Vimeo\)](#)

- Next week, we celebrate two students who graduated from the University of Kentucky (UK) Comprehensive Transition Program (CTP). The CTP program is offered as part of the [Kentucky Supported Higher Education Partnership](#) (KSHEP).
- We also have five students from KSHEP who have completed an [Undergraduate Certificate in Universal Design](#).
- The [Summer Leadership Experience Camp](#) is a summer transition program that's 100% sponsored by OVR and developed by the Human Development Institute (HDI).

- The eighth summer camp will occur July 16th—20th on the UK campus in Haggin Hall. It's an in-person camp but is also offered virtually (there is no limit to virtual applicants). We also encourage parents and OVR Counselors to sign up virtually if they'd like.
- The [application](#) is open until April 30th. So far, we have 17 in-person campers and room for 3 more. The application fee is \$50 but can be waived if needed. All applicants must be approved by their OVR Counselor.
- Eligible applicants are Kentucky high school upperclassmen, current seniors who are graduating, or rising sophomores who will be juniors next year. The program is geared toward students continuing their education past high school (including community college, Carl Perkins, CTP, etc.). Many disabilities are represented, and students have various career interests.
- During the camp, students will learn about topics such as self-advocacy, assistive technology, areas of study, etiquette, transportation, textbooks, and much more.
- Several speakers will be in attendance, including representatives from UK, OVR, Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority (KHEAA), the UK Disability Resource Center (DRC), Eastern Kentucky University (EKU), Western Kentucky University (WKU), the Kentucky Community & Technical College System (KCTCS), and a motivational speaker (Cody Clark).
- Every year, we collect evaluations from students who have completed camp. The evaluation is on a 5-point scale (5 being the best).
 - Students enjoyed attending the camp – 4.8 out of 5
 - Camp helped students understand skills needed for post-high school education - 4.5 out of 5
 - Top three activities that students enjoyed: Cody Clark, Cornerstone Video Gaming Center, and watching the movie 23 Blast.
- Feel free to disseminate the [Summer Leadership Experience Camp flyer](#).

Agency Updates

HDI/KYPSO – Lou-Ann Land

- The 2024 Youth One Year Out (YOYO) former student interview opened on April 1st and closes on August 31st. All former students who exited high school during the 2022-23 school year with an IEP in place at the time of exit should be interviewed.
- KYPSO has presented at several coops to discuss student contact information.

- The YOYO interview used to provide student contact information, but this is no longer the case. Districts must access it in their own records. Instructions were emailed to DoSEs.
- KYPSO also created a Student Contact Form (via Google Forms), which allows districts to collect student contact information before students exit high school. This contact information will be used for the following year's YOYO.
- KYPSO is currently analyzing the 2023 YOYO data and composing an annual report.
- One of the items we collect is students who contact disability services when they go to higher education. It's always less than 45%, which leads to lower success rates.
- We also look at what kinds of support they receive if they are employed. We have a small number of students who answer this question, and of that, a smaller number who use supports. Supports mentioned include a job coach (10% of respondents mentioned this), specific support personnel, or specialized equipment. Both support personnel and specialized equipment were reported by less than 1% of the respondents.
- Across the state of Kentucky, only three people reported that they used all three of the supports: job coach, individual support person, and specialized equipment. All three were attending further education and were competitively employed one year out of high school. This may be statistically insignificant but very significant for each individual. This could inform some of our school programming on preparing kids to disclose their disability and make known their needed supports.

CWTP – Jill Griffiths & Beth McDaniel

- **Jill** – We're working on our beginning-of-the-year training, procedure manual, and form changes.
- Technical Assistance (TA) is ongoing.
- We started regional network meetings for the first time this year. Each of us has at least one regional network and we aligned them with the educational cooperative regions.
- Getting ready to send out our end-of-the-year survey. Will compile that information in June.
- **Beth** - The regional meetings have been great. The HDI team providing the TA for the Community Work Transition Program (CWTP) has done a phenomenal job. The CWTP is an OVR program.

- We've received feedback that building relationships and trust with HDI and TA providers is a great opportunity. They're thinking outside the box, brainstorming, and building connections among Employment Specialists. It's also given the team some perspective on what might not be working.
- This year, 84 school districts have signed MOUs to participate in the CWTP, although not all 84 fully participate. There have been a few challenges in hiring an Employment Specialist or finding a replacement.
- **Jill** - For the majority, they're the only Employment Specialist in their district so it's also been a support system of being heard by their colleagues and receiving support.

DJJ - Ellen Hoffman

- In June, we're having a transition summit in Bowling Green for Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) staff across the state. It's a good opportunity to network and learn about OVR's services.
- Working on a platform that will provide employment services/opportunities in different areas across the state. Will include resources around food and housing. If a person is in West Liberty, they have no idea what's available for someone in Elizabethtown.
 - Lou-Ann – The [Kentucky Center for Statistics \(KYSTATS\)](#) may have a similar database.
 - Beth - [O*NET](#) is a good resource for jobs. There is a job search feature.
 - Abby – KY-SPIN is getting ready to release employment resources. For example, we will have a worksheet explaining how to complete a direct deposit form.

KY-SPIN – Nick Carpenter & Abby O’Keeffe

- **Nick** - I've created [videos on disability denial](#). Feel free to share with your youth.
- Last year, we started [Transition Tuesdays](#) on the 4th Tuesday of every month. Each month, we cover a different transition topic. The next one is May 28th at 9:30 a.m. ET on the Key to Work with Elizabeth Metzger from Kentucky Protection & Advocacy (KY P&A).
- **Abby** – Every month, we develop worksheets covering a wide range of topics such as person-centered planning, mental health, employment, interview skills, IEPs, money management, and post-secondary education.
- Sign up for our monthly online [KY-SPIN newsletter](#).

KDE/Homeless Education – Zach Stumbo

- We just went through our McKinney-Vento grant process. Next time, we can share the districts that will receive the grant over the next 3 years.
- Nearly every state has seen a decrease in the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Kentucky is about 40% lower than where we were last year. Public numbers released do include students with exceptional needs. If you know any students, please ensure they complete the FAFSA, as it's an important measure.
- Under the McKinney-Vento Act, students who are homeless are supposed to receive extra counseling while completing the FAFSA.
- If they're unaccompanied youth (physically separated from their parents), they're supposed to meet with the liaison and receive verification of their status, which opens them up to extra types of funding.

OVR – Jonathan White

- We are always looking for new providers of transition services (specifically pre-ETS). If any co-ops are interested in providing pre-ETS again, please contact Dorothy.

KEDC – Jenny Hogg

- The Kentucky Educational Development Corporation (KEDC) had three reverse career fairs (one more to come). We anticipate a total attendance of 75 students. We only invited senior students with disabilities. Over 85 employers participated.
- A reverse career fair puts students in the driver's seat and gives them more control. They present, and it's the employers who rotate.
- We had students who received job offers on the spot and received great feedback on their interviews.
- My favorite feedback from an employer (who also attended the previous year) was that she heard students identifying that they had a disability, how they navigate that, what their strengths are, and how they work through it.
- Out of the 21 districts in our region, probably 10-12 of our districts participated.
- We have a transition cadre that meets quarterly, and we provide attendees (teachers, Employment Specialists, etc.) resources on how they can equip their students to succeed at these transition fairs.
- The transition fairs are funded by Project Tassel, our American Rescue Plan (ARP) grant. We've partnered with area community and technical colleges. It's mutually

beneficial because they love getting students on campus, and the students can visit the DRC.

NKCES – Emily Borchers

- Northern Kentucky Cooperative for Educational Services (NKCES) will host a reverse career fair on Monday, April 29th. About 50 participants have signed up. The districts are providing transportation, but we are doing everything else. There will be a motivational speaker, and the fair will occur after lunch.
- We also have a transition road trip scheduled for July. I'll take 12 teachers to community-based employment agencies so they can assess whether it'd be a good fit for their students.
- We also have a [Northern Kentucky Transition Institute \(NKTI\)](#) from July 29 to 31. We're hosting three sessions.
- We're planning training for our high school teachers around the attainment pre-ETS series. [Attainment](#) is a company that provides a series of workbooks on career exploration, work-based learning, post-secondary training, workplace readiness, and self-advocacy. Districts can take these materials to their district and implement them with kids in grades 9 and 10.

GRREC – Stacie Hutchinson

- I will transition to low incidence at the end of September but will continue representing Green River Regional Educational Cooperative (GRREC) for KITC.
- We had our last Regional Interagency Transition Team (RITT) school year meeting yesterday, April 25th. We had about 33 participants from our local school districts and related service outside agencies. We had lots of representation from OVR and heard a roundtable discussion for five local institutions. Their accessibility coordinators talked about accommodations in post-secondary education.
- In January, I trained a group of Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH) teachers in our region on person-centered planning.
- We are planning a transition fair focused on STEM. Partnering with our science, technology, engineering, and math grant people and bringing in some community partners.
- We are working with Kentucky School for the Blind (KSB) and Kentucky School for the Deaf (KSD) Outreach Consultants on a transition fair. We did this last November and had a good turnout. It's a great opportunity for them to connect with OVR and some other services that may help support them in their transition.

- We have 13 districts that have partnered with us for the ARP grant. They've been taking field trips to postsecondary education entities and employers. A group will attend the local job Corp next week.
- Our districts are hosting family engagement nights. Topics include social security, FAFSA, OVR, and more.
- We've clustered our ARP grant participants into local areas (GRREC serves 34 local districts) to work on transition workshops. They've held transition fairs, brought in mental health providers to discuss teen mental health, waivers, guardianship, and alternatives to guardianship.
- In July, I'll be at the Ohio Valley Educational Cooperative (OVEC) and West Kentucky Educational Cooperative (WKEC) to talk about person-centered planning.
- This summer, we are instituting a Summer Transition and Employment Program (STEP). We're partnering with the clinical education complex at WKU and inviting middle and high school students in the moderate-severe disability category, their family, and their teachers. We'll discuss self-advocacy and person-centered planning.
 - **Debbie** - [A film](#) that might be of interest about a young man (Sam Habib) as he charts his path to adulthood with advice from activists with disabilities.
 - You might want to share information about the [Smithsonian Zero Barriers project](#) about STEM.
 - **Carrie** - [My Disability Roadmap](#) is also a great film about Samuel. If you want to share it with students, watch it first! Sam is very open about wanting to be an adult.

OVEC – Carrie Stith-Webster

- OVEC had a RITT meeting for the 1st time in a little over a year. Our RITT is in conjunction with the Greater Louisville Education Cooperative (GLEC).
- We have had three transition conferences. Funded with the ARP money.
- Starting to work with a couple of pre-ETS students this summer. Trying to get more kids involved.
- Recently discovered the [REDI](#) program through Walgreens which is an unpaid internship for students to be trained as a customer service assistant in the hopes of being hired at the end of the training. They must have a job coach.

WKEC – Tara Harmon

- 47 of our 48 districts are participating in our transition academy. They're working on parent engagement nights. We're looking at indicator 8 and trying to increase that participation and for the YOYO as well, hitting multiple indicators.
- We had our last RITT meeting in March.
- September 4th and 5th we are hosting a transition fair for our students all over the region. Jonathan Chase will be our keynote speaker.

BCTC/CTP - Kacey Midkiff

- I'm the Comprehensive Transition Program (CTP) Coordinator at Bluegrass Community & Technical College (BCTC). I currently have a caseload of 18 students, 8 of whom will graduate in our first cohort this May. Some of them are continuing for their associate degrees.
- I found eight classes (24 credits) that students can take for a data entry operator certificate.
- We have a partnership with Fayette County, and I have several dual credit students who are also in the CTP program. We're expanding that next year and will begin accepting applications in spring 2025 for the fall 2025 semester.
- I hire mentors that support our students. They attend class and help with homework. If you know of anyone in the Lexington area who would like a flexible job working with the disability population, please send them my way. It pays \$13 an hour.

KVEC – Will Kayatin

- We just finished our Special Education Regional Technical Assistance Centers (SERTACs) region-wide conference and exposition on April 12th, which showcased innovation in special education. Two of the three major transition projects (teacher leaders) that I lead presented their work over the year. Check out the [Transition Pilot Project](#) and the [Peer Support Network](#) playlists.
- KVEC will lead our region-wide low-incidence conference next Friday, May 3rd.

Attendees:

Abby O'Keeffe – KY-SPIN

Beth McDaniel – OVR

Carrie Stith-Webster – OVEC

Chelsea Bocard – KYPSO

Deborah Taub – KYPSO
Dorothy Jenkins – OVR
Ellen Hoffman – DJJ
Emily Borchers – NKCES
Jenny Hogg – KEDC
Jilly Griffiths – HDI/CWTP
Jonathan White – OVR
Kacy Midkiff – BCTC/CTP
Lou-Ann Land – KYPSO
Nick Carpenter – KY-SPIN
Stacie Hutchinson – GRREC
Tara Harmon – WKEC
Teresa Belluscio – HDI
Veronica Dale – OVR
Will Kayatin – KVEC
Zach Stumbo - KDE