



Overview

PaTTAN's Transition Systems Framework (TSF) is a research-based framework developed from a systematic review of the current scientific literature on individual, family, school and community-level factors that positively predict the likelihood of students with disabilities in obtaining employment, postsecondary education and training and independent living after graduating from high school. The framework includes 13 practices (Table 1), those which are supported by scientific correlational evidence demonstrating their positive relationship to at least one of the three possible outcome areas: employment, postsecondary education and training and independent living. The majority of these studies were conducted using data from the National Longitudinal Transition Study (NLTS) I and II. For more information about the NLTS, please see the following [link](#).

The National Technical Assistance Center on Transition (NTACT-C) in collaboration with the United States Department of Education, developed a set of three criteria levels to evaluate and categorize the scientific evidence both for and against a particular factor's relationship to employment, postsecondary education and training and independent living outcomes. These criteria levels include "Evidence-Based Predictor", "Research-Based Predictor" and "Promising Predictor". Evidence-based predictors are supported by at least two a priori quasi-experimental correlational studies that identified a statistically significant relationship with a specific and measurable transition outcome and in their publication, reported relevant effect size(s) for the relationship(s). Importantly, for a predictor to be evidence-based, there must not be any studies that have employed the same design but have identified a negative relationship between the same factor(s) and outcome(s). Research-based predictors are supported by at least two a priori quasi-experimental correlational studies that identified a statistically significant relationship with a specific and measurable transition outcome and in their publication, reported relevant effect size(s) for the relationship(s). For a predictor to be research based, there must be more studies (that have employed the same design) that have identified a positive relationship than those that identified a negative relationship between the same factor(s) and outcome(s). Finally, promising predictors are supported by one a priori quasi-experimental correlational study or two exploratory correlational studies that identified a statistically significant relationship with a specific and measurable transition outcome and in their publication, reported relevant effect size(s) for the relationship(s). Additional information about these levels of evidence can be found [here](#).

Drawing upon additional scientific literature, Pennsylvania state code, federal law and its own organizational expertise, PaTTAN defined the 13 factors, many of which are transition practices, programs and services (Table 1) currently supported as being at-least promising practices for students with disabilities obtaining positive employment, postsecondary education and independent living outcomes after graduating high school. Each definition is marked with superscript to identify the scientific literature that informed its development.

EBP = Evidence Based Predictor, RBP = Research Based Predictor, PP = Promising Predictor, No Alignment = There is no research-based evidence. For more information about these criteria, [see the following document](#).

Practice	Definition	Employment	Postsecondary Education	Independent Living
Career Technical Education (CTE)	A sequence of in-school and community-based hands-on learning experiences designed to ensure students develop career-specific knowledge and skills in addition to soft skills and employability skills. This sequence includes preparation and completion of vertical and/or horizontal credentialing pathways (full or micro) related to a specific career. Active and equitable participation of students with disabilities in the sequence is supported through career counseling as well as relevant accommodations and supports. ¹	EBP ₂	RBP ₂	No Alignment
Inclusion	Students with disabilities are educated with non-disabled peers to the greatest extent possible and special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of students with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs only if the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. ^{1,3}	RBP ₂	RBP ₂	RBP ₂
Paid Work-Based Learning	Students participating in paid work experiences while still enrolled in high school (e.g., part-time or full-time jobs, paid internships and work-study) that are focused on the development of general and career specific job skills. ¹	RBP ₂	RBP ₂	PP ₂
Family Expectations	Student with a disability's parent / legal guardian has an expectation for the student to obtain part-time or full-time paid employment after graduating high school. ¹	RBP ₂	PP ₂	No Alignment
Program of Study	A sequence of courses that support students in developing the academic and functional skills required for attaining their measurable post school goals while also prioritizing standard diploma requirements and participation in the general curriculum. ¹	RBP ₂	RBP ₂	No Alignment
Student Support Network	A network of individuals (e.g., school staff, agency staff and service providers, employers, non-profits, family, friends and community members) who collaborate with a student with a disability on the design and implementation of coordinated set of transition activities and services that are aligned with their measurable annual goals and postsecondary goals. ¹	RBP ₂	PP ₂	PP ₂
Transition Program	A coordinated set of school and community-based activities and services aligned with a student with a disability's measurable annual goals and designed to support their attainment of their measurable postsecondary goals. The program is implemented by highly qualified staff who fulfill well-defined instructional and administrative roles. Program staff draw upon valid and reliable measures to continuously evaluate students' growth and needs. ¹	PP ₂	RBP ₂	No Alignment
Exit Status	Students with disabilities obtaining a high school diploma through the completion of the requirements define by the state, which may include curriculum credits and state assessments. ¹	PP ₂	No Alignment	No Alignment
Career Awareness	School and community-based opportunities for students to learn about potential career pathways, including their prerequisite training/education and skill requirements, roles and responsibilities, compensation, benefits and drawbacks or challenges, as well as their alignment to the student's preferences, interests, goals, strengths and needs. ¹	PP ₂	PP ₂	No Alignment
Interagency Collaboration	The implementation of formal and informal plans and policies for sharing information, resources and responsibility related to the design and delivery of transition activities and services between school, agency and community partners. ¹	PP ₂	PP ₂	No Alignment
Technology Skills / Digital Literacy	Students being able to effectively and safely utilize current technology in school, at home, in the workplace and/or community in order consume, create and communicate information through digital media (e.g., text, video, audio, etc.). ¹	PP ₂	No Alignment	No Alignment
Self-Determination	Student ability to develop, communicate and implement a plan to achieve their self-generated goals, those of which take into consideration current and future factors within their life, including but not limited to their strengths, needs and preferences. ¹	RBP ₂	RBP ₂	PP ₂
Independent Living Skills	Student ability to manage, with relevant supports, their general, every-day non-work-related adult responsibilities, which include but are not limited to their personal health, living environment, social relationships, finances and civic responsibilities. ¹	PP ₂	PP ₂	EBP ₂

References

1 Rowe, D. A., Alverson, C. Y., Unruh, D. K., Fowler, C. H., Kellems, R., & Test, D. W. (2015). A Delphi Study to Operationalize Evidence-Based Predictors in Secondary Transition. Career Development and Transition for Exceptional Individuals, 38(2), 113-126. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2165143414526429>

2 Mazzotti, V.L., Rowe, D. A., Kwiatek, S., Voggt, A., Chang, W.-H., Fowler, C. H., Poppen, M., Sinclair, J., & Test, D. W. (2021). Secondary Transition Predictors of Postschool Success: An Update to the Research Base. Career Development and Transition for Exceptional Individuals, 44(1), 47-64. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2165143420959793>

3. 22 Pa. Code 14.102 (a) (2) (xxiv)