



Demystifying Transition Assessment

By Colleen Thoma Ph.D., Ronald Tamura Ph.D.

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Assessment is the cornerstone of every good transition plan. Now there's a book that demystifies the what, when, why, and how of collecting transition assessment data—and using the results to help students with disabilities prepare for adulthood.

Developed by two respected transition authorities, this practical guide prepares education professionals to use today's best assessment tools and strategies to identify which transition approaches really work. You'll discover how to

- choose assessments appropriate for each situation and student
- apply best assessment practices in 7 key areas (see sidebar)
- collect the right data at the right time
- implement evidence-based practices that meet IDEA requirements for transition assessment
- make the most of informal assessments and formal performance-based methods tailored to each student's needs
- translate assessment results into better, more personalized transition IEP plans

To help you find the assessment tools that best meet your needs, the book includes an invaluable **quick-reference guide to more than 90 transition assessments** and which areas they assess. You'll also follow **case studies** of a teacher and two students as they navigate the transition assessment process, and you'll get **sample forms** for assessing student skills and goals, enhancing transition IEPs, helping students plan for college and employment, and much more.

Essential for every transition specialist and educator, this book will be your

trusted companion as you make sound decisions about assessment; ensure individualized, person-centered transition plans; and support students' post-school goals and dreams.

Strengthen transition assessment in 7 key areas:

- Academics
- Self-determination
- Employment
- Community living
- Postsecondary education
- Recreation and leisure
- Health care

The book is part of the Brookes Publishing Transition to Adulthood Series

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Editorial Review

Review

“The mark of a quality publication for me is to have the thought, 'I wish I had written this.' This book expands existing information on transition assessment as well as synthesizes a growing body of literature on this topic. I highly recommend it.”

(Gary M. Clark, Ed.D.)

About the Author

Colleen A. Thoma, Ph.D., earned her doctoral degree from Indiana University, where she began her research on self-determination in transition planning. She is currently Associate Professor in the Department of Special Education and Disability Policy and Director of Doctoral Studies in the School of Education at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) in Richmond. She teaches courses on disability policy, transition and secondary education, curriculum and instruction, and characteristics of students with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities. Her research interests include preparation of teachers to support self-determined transition planning, student-directed individualized education program development, and the impact of student self-determination on transition and academic outcomes. She has mentored doctoral candidates at VCU (including her co-author, Dr. Christina Bartholomew) in their own research on self-determination, teacher preparation, and transition services. Dr. Thoma's scholarship, teaching, and service have focused primarily in the areas of self-determination, transition planning and services, and teacher preparation. She co-authored a book on transition assessment with Dr. Caren Sax, *Transition Assessment: Wise Practices for Quality Lives* (Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co., 2002), and has authored or co-authored more than 40 peerreviewed journal articles, book chapters, and technical reports. She is a frequent presenter at major national conferences, with more than 100 peerreviewed presentations over the past 10 years. She is the recipient of VCU School of Education's award for Distinguished Scholarship (2007). Her leadership in the field of transition services also included 5 years on the executive board of the Division on Career Development and Transition, a division of the Council for Exceptional Children, including 1 year as President.

Ronald Tamura, Ph.D., earned his doctoral degree from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, and is currently Associate Professor at Southern Connecticut State University in the Department of Special Education and Reading where he teaches graduate courses in the areas of developmental disabilities, learning disabilities, collaboration and consultation, and secondary transition. His research interests include personnel preparation, self-determination, transition, and positive behavior supports. He was elected and served as a member of the Board of Directors for the Council for Exceptional Children. He is a former secondary-level special educator and has worked for the Connecticut State Department of Education in the Bureau of Special Education as an Education Consultant. He has contributed as coauthor on journal articles, book chapters, and conference proceedings in the areas of transition, instructional strategies, and self-determination.

Dr. Wehman is Professor of Physical Medicine with joint appointments in the Departments of Rehabilitation Counseling and also Special Education and Disability Policy at Virginia Commonwealth University. He serves as Chairman of the Division of Rehabilitation Research in the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation. Dr. Wehman has his Ph.D. in Behavioral Disabilities from University of Wisconsin-Madison.

As one of the original founders of supported employment, he has worked closely with business and industry since 1980 and has published over 200 articles and authored or edited more than 40 books primarily in transition, severe disabilities, autism, traumatic brain injury and employment for persons with disabilities. He has been the Principal Investigator on 41 million dollars in grants during his career.

As the father of two young adults with disabilities, he brings a strong parental as well as business perspective to his work. He is highly active in speaking to professionals, parents, advocates and businesses on transition and employment for people with autism, traumatic brain injury, spinal cord injury and other developmental disabilities. On a daily basis he works with individuals with disabilities, communicates regularly with professionals in the world of business related to disability and diversity, and is active in teaching and mentoring medical students, residents, and doctoral students in rehabilitation medicine, special education, rehabilitation and psychology. A major focus of Dr. Wehman's work is on expanding the partnerships with businesses of all sizes so that more persons with disabilities can gain entrance into the workplace and retain employment successfully.

He is a recipient of the Kennedy Foundation Award in Mental Retardation in 1990 and President's Committee on Employment for Persons with Disabilities in 1992. Dr. Wehman was recognized as one of the 50 most influential special educators of the millennium by the *Remedial and Special Education* journal in December, 2000. He is also Editor-in-Chief of *The Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*.

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Center on Postsecondary Education for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities, the ADD funded Consortium on Postsecondary Education for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities and Office of Postsecondary Education funded National Coordinating Center. Debra has over 25 years of experience working with youth and adults with disabilities, their families, faculty, and professionals that support youth in becoming contributing valued members of their community via participation in inclusive secondary and postsecondary education, and competitive employment. Since 1997, Ms. Hart has directed five federal grants designed to create access to postsecondary education for youth with intellectual disabilities.

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Dr. David W. Test, Ph.D. Professor of Special Education at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, teaches courses in single subject research, transition, classroom management, and professional writing.

The majority of Dr. Test's publications have focused on self-determination, transition, community-based training, and supported employment. Along with Dr. Nellie Aspel and Dr. Jane Everson he wrote the first transition methods textbook titled *Transition Methods for Youth with Disabilities*. Dr. Test currently serves as a Co-Principle Investigator (with Dr. Paula Kohler and Dr. Larry Kortering) of the National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center, Co-Director on the North Carolina Indicator 14, Postschool Outcomes Project (with Dr. Claudia Flowers), and the UNC Charlotte Doctoral Leadership Personnel Preparation Program (with Dr. Diane Browder). He and Dr. Bob Algozzine currently serve as co-editors of *Career Development for Exceptional Individuals*.

Michael L. Wehmeyer, Ph.D. is Professor of Special Education; Director, Kansas University Center on Developmental Disabilities; and Senior Scientist, Beach Center on Disability, all at the University of Kansas. He has published more than 25 books and 250 scholarly articles and book chapters on topics related to self-determination, special education, intellectual disability, and eugenics. He is a co-author of the widely used textbook *Exceptional Lives: Special Education in Today's Schools*, published by Merrill/Prentice Hall, now in its 7th Edition. His most recent book, co-authored with J. David Smith, is *Good Blood, Bad Blood: Science, Nature, and the Myth of the Kallikaks*, published by the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD). Dr. Wehmeyer is Past-President (2010-2011) of the Board of Directors for and a Fellow of AAIDD; a past president of the Council for Exceptional Children's Division on

Career Development and Transition (DCDT); a Fellow of the American Psychological Association (APA), Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Division (Div. 33); a Fellow of the International Association for the Scientific Study of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IASSIDD); and former Editor-in-Chief of the journal Remedial and Special Education. He is a co-author of the AAIDD Supports Intensity Scale, and the 2010 AAIDD Intellectual Disability Terminology, Classification, and Systems of Supports Manual.

Edwin Achola is an adjunct faculty in the Department of Special Education and Disability Policy at Virginia Commonwealth University. He currently teaches the secondary education and transition planning class designed for practitioners in the M.Ed. program and those seeking special education endorsement. He also teaches an undergraduate special education introductory class. Edwin has worked both as a general and special educator with both high and middle school students in Kenya and the United States. He is also a doctoral student at Virginia Commonwealth University in the same department. Presently, he is engaged in investigating practitioner transition assessment practices and postsecondary education for African American students with intellectual disabilities. His research interests include postsecondary education for students with disabilities, transition planning, and personnel preparation.

Christina C. Bartholomew, Ph.D., earned her doctoral degree from Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) in Richmond in December 2007. Prior to enrolling in the doctoral program, she worked as a special educator in the Commonwealth of Virginia. During her teaching experience, she worked with students with disabilities in both academic and employment settings. She has served as the student representative on the board of the Council for Exceptional Children's Division on Career Development and Transition and was awarded the Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society Scholarship Award for VCU's School of Education in 2006. Dr. Bartholomew has worked on a statewide project promoting the instruction of self-determination skills in secondary settings and has created and implemented professional development seminars for middle school teachers in the areas of coteaching, collaboration, and assessment practices. Dr. Bartholomew has taught several graduate-level courses in secondary and transition programming, co-teaching and collaboration, instructional methods for individuals with intellectual disabilities, and trends and characteristics in special education. She has presented at numerous state and national conferences on self-determination, student-led individualized education programs, and linking transition to academic goals and instruction. She has conducted dissertation research in the area of teacher perceptions of school and classroom influences on their support for student self-determination, and she has coauthored articles for educational journals. She currently works in the field of special education as an adjunct instructor at VCU and as an educational consultant.

Elizabeth Battaglia, Ed.D., received her master of science degree in learning disabilities and sixth-year professional diploma in special education from Southern Connecticut State University, New Haven, Connecticut. Dr. Battaglia obtained her doctorate degree in educational instructional leadership K-12 from Argosy University of Sarasota, Florida. Dr. Battaglia is employed by Capital Region Education Council in Hartford, Connecticut. She works around the state to assist school districts with transition planning, assessment, implementation of transition activities, and numerous workshops on transition. Dr. Battaglia is working with several programs to develop 18- to 21-year-old programs for students with disabilities. Her areas of interest include transition assessment, planning effective transition programs for students, developing 18- to 21-year-old programs, differentiation, and infusing vocational skills into the general education curriculum.

Kimberly Boyd, M.T., received her master in teaching degree in special education from Virginia Commonwealth University and is currently a third-year doctoral student in the Department of Special Education and Disability Policy. Her professional areas of interest include working with students with intellectual disability (ID), postsecondary education for students with ID, and the improvement of transition services for all students with disabilities. Ms. Boyd currently works as a special education coordinator for a local public high school.

Lyman L. Dukes, III, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Special Education at the University of South Florida St. Petersburg, joined the faculty in 2001. He is also Principal Investigator of Project 10: Transition Education Network, which is a transition-focused training and technical assistance center funded by the Florida Department of Education. Previously, he has worked as a secondary level special education teacher as well as a rehabilitation therapist and behavioral consultant for people with significant disabilities. His current research interests include transition from school to postsecondary settings, transition assessment and the use of the summary of performance for high school students with disabilities, programmatic self-assessment for postsecondary disability services, and the use of blended instruction at the postsecondary level.

Roberta Gentry, Ph.D., received a bachelor of arts degree in psychology with a minor in sociology from Mary Baldwin College in Virginia. She worked as a neuropsychological test technician and at state and private psychiatric hospitals prior to completing a master of teaching degree at the University of Virginia. She spent almost twenty years in the public school setting as a special education teacher and special education administrator prior to completing her doctoral degree at Virginia Commonwealth University. Currently, Dr. Gentry is Assistant Professor of Special Education at the University of Mary Washington in Virginia.

Joseph W. Madaus, Ph.D., is Director of the Center on Postsecondary Education and Disability and is Associate Professor in the Department of Educational Psychology at the University of Connecticut. Prior to joining the faculty at the University of Connecticut, he was Director of the Learning Resource Center at Mitchell College in New London, Connecticut, and was Director of the University Program for College Students with Learning Disabilities at the University of Connecticut. He was a Distinguished Research Fellow in the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research Mary Switzer Fellowship program and he serves on multiple journal editorial boards. In 2007, Dr. Madaus received both the Teaching Promise and Teaching Innovation award from the University of Connecticut chapter of the American Association of University Professors. In 2008, he was named as a University Teaching Fellow, the highest teaching honor at the University of Connecticut.

James E. Martin, Ph.D., is the Zarrow Endowed Professor in Special Education and Director of the Zarrow Center for Learning Enrichment at the University of Oklahoma. He received a bachelor of science degree and a master's degree in education from Eastern Illinois University, and he received a doctorate in special education with an emphasis on secondary transition from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Prior to his current position, Dr. Martin served as a professor of special education and as the first Director of the Center of Self-Determination at the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs. Through the years, he has specialized in the development and implementation of self-determination methodology in educational, transitional, and supported employment programs. Dr. Martin has written extensively on special education, self-determination, and transition. He has also co-authored several instructional packages, including the Self-

Directed IEP Kit (Martin, Huber Marshall, Maxson, & Jerman, Sopris West, 1996), ChoiceMaker Self-Determination Assessment (Martin & Marshall, Sopris West, 1995), and Take Action: Making Goals Happen (Huber Marshall, Martin, Maxson, Hughes, Miller, McGill, & Jerman, Sopris West, 1998).

Mary E. Morningstar, Ph.D., is Associate Professor in the Department of Special Education at the University of Kansas and Director of the Transition Coalition, which offers online transition training and resources for practitioners. She coordinates the online masters program in transition and teaches several classes related to secondary education and transition including vocational training and employment, interagency and community services, and transition assessment. She also coordinates the teacher education program for teachers of students with significant disabilities. Dr. Morningstar has been involved in training and staff development regarding transition from school to adult life for over 25 years. Prior to moving to Kansas, she worked as a teacher for students with significant intellectual disabilities. Dr. Morningstar has been an active advocate for all persons with disabilities based on her experiences as a sibling of a brother with disabilities.

Cynthia Nixon, Ed.D., is currently Associate Professor in Education at Francis Marion University (FMU) in Florence, South Carolina, where she teaches graduate classes in learning disabilities. She received her Ed.D. and M.Ed. from West Virginia University in special education and her undergraduate degree from Fairmont State College in secondary education/U.S. history and geography. She has more than 15 years experience teaching youth with disabilities in West Virginia. Dr. Nixon was Director of Special Education for Richland School District Two and Darlington School District before joining the faculty at FMU. She was also Associate Professor at East Carolina University before moving to South Carolina with her family. She is Past President for the Division on Career Development and Transition (DCDT) and a 25-year member of the Council of Exceptional Children. She is currently the Conference Planner for DCDT. At the state level, Dr. Nixon is a member of the S.C. Transition Advisory Team, treasurer of South Carolina DCDT, and is the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) Specialized Professional Association coordinator for the special education program at FMU. She also serves on the Board of Reviewers for NCATE. In addition to her work, Professor Nixon shows and raises Tennessee walking horses.

Paul Wehman, Ph.D., is Professor of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, with joint appointments in the Departments of Rehabilitation Counseling and Special Education and Disability Policy at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU). He serves as Chairman of the Division of Rehabilitation Research in the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation at the Medical College of Virginia.

Dr. Wehman has his doctorate in behavioral disabilities from University of Wisconsin-Madison. He helped to develop supported employment at VCU in the early 1980s and has published more than 200 articles and authored or edited 40 books primarily on transition, severe disabilities, and employment for people with disabilities. He received the Kennedy Foundation Award in Mental Retardation in 1990 and the Distinguished Service Award from the President's Committee on Employment for Persons with Disabilities in 1992. He received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Association for Persons in Supported Employment (APSE) in 2006 and the VCU School of Medicine Research Recognition Award in 2007. Dr. Wehman was also recognized as one of the 50 most influential special educators of the millennium by the *Remedial and Special Education* journal in December 2000. He is Editor-in-Chief of the *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*.

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