Narrative for Transition Activities/Services for Henry CO Youth

***8th Grade***

8.1 In-School Work Experience

While it is assumed that career exploration and work have been discussed for youth receiving Special Education Services, during the Eighth grade year it is important that they begin to demonstrate work skills in work settings. Therefore, having a youth involved in “in-school” work experience is an important first step in helping him/her to develop work skills as well as beginning to see careers first hand. This experience also allows the student to see, with teacher guidance, the importance of the academic skills they are learning. Additionally, the students are learning new skills in the natural context of when they are needed.

8.2 Employment/Career Portfolio

It is during this Year that information should begin to be collected to document the youth’s vocational/career experiences and preferences. This will be the foundation of his/her Employment/Career Portfolio. This Portfolio will provide longitudinal and sequential information for the youth’s Post-Secondary Summary of Performance as required by IDEA 2004.

This Portfolio should include, but not be limited to:

Documentation of the school-based experiences (position experienced, time spent at each experience, tasks performed for each experience)

Evaluations documenting his/her behaviors and performance at each experience

Self-assessments regarding his/her preferences to work-type as well specific tasks

8.3 Parent Resource Meeting

It is important to assist parents in understanding the importance of employment and work skill development at this time. While discussions about work and adult living may have taken place prior to 8th grade, they are usually very general. The thought of entering High School during the next year seems to add a sense of urgency to these discussions. During the Parent Resource Meeting they will be introduced to adult service providers who may be helpful in their child’s future. Given the type and severity of disability, it is possible that some parents will already know some of the agencies as their child may be currently involved with them. At the same time, it is necessary at this time to provide the parents with a general over-view of the agencies that their child may need in the future.

This might be done at the IEP meeting where the transition from Junior High to High School is planned. It might also be done in an open parent meeting at the end of the year where the teacher invites parents in to talk about transition to the High School in general. This might look different in each school in Henry CO.

* 1. Check into the Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Waivers and apply if appropriate.

Iowa has several waivers that might be helpful to youth and their families. Current HCBS Waivers include Children’s Mental Health Waiver, Physical Disability Waiver, Ill and Handicapped Waiver, Mental Retardation Waiver, AIDS/HIV Waiver, and Brain Injury Waiver. While the services provided maybe similar, different Waivers provide different services. Likewise, application process and eligibility criteria may be similar, each waiver has its’ own specific criteria and procedure. It is important that school personnel assist the parent to check into this possibility if not for current use for the future. This would be done through either the Central Point of Coordination (CPC) position or a Department of Human Services caseworker.

* 1. Contact DHS Caseworker

DHS provides many services to youth and their families. As with the Waivers, parents should be aware of the DHS system so they can take advantage of it. If the child is receiving services from DHS, it will be important for school personnel to share educational information with them so services and supports can be coordinated. The DHS caseworker should be invited to the IEP meetings.

8.6 Career Focused Field Trips

As youth are experiencing in-school work experiences they also need to be exploring careers in a general way. During 8th grade Career Focused field Trips should be part of a students curriculum. For example, perhaps the class would go to the Wal-Mart Distribution Center to see its operation. They might also visit the offices of an accountant, a dentist, and/or medical doctor. Another experience might be to the hospital to see the variety of jobs performed there. These experiences have multiple purposes. For example, they allow the teacher to instill the importance of the academic skills being taught and their uses. They can highlight for the students the relationships between class work and the careers in the community. These experiences are also valuable in assisting the student to gather initial information to help them make informed career decisions. It will be important for the students to document their impressions and interests. This information would be placed in their Employment/Career Portfolio so they can refer to it throughout their educational career search.

* 1. Guest Speakers Regarding Careers

Just as youth are learning about careers in the communities through Field Trips, they should also be introduced to careers through guest speakers coming into the classroom. 8.6 and 8.7 might be coordinated in that a guest speaker might come to the classroom and present about his/her occupation and then later in the week or month a Field Trip would be taken to his/her place of employment. Likewise, the guest speaker can highlight academics required or classroom projects could be developed based on the information shared.

8.8 Beginning Resume Written

By the end of the youth’s 8th grade year, he/she should have at least four in-school work experiences. Additionally they may have had summer jobs, volunteered, etc. All these opportunities should be summarized into an initial resume. This will help the youth understand the format of a resume as well as the content. Likewise, they will begin to understand the importance of the career exploration experiences to which they have been exposed.

8.9 Plan for Completing the District’s Core Curriculum Developed.

IA law SF 245 requires that each student has a plan developed for how her/she will complete School’s core curriculum. It also requires that the school report to the student and his/her parents his/her progress in meeting that plan on a yearly basis. The course of study and progress thereof should be reviewed yearly at the annual IEP meeting. IDEA 2004 mandates that a multi-year course of study be included in the student’s IEP beginning when the youth is 16. In Iowa, that age is 14. This course of study must support his/her post-secondary goals.

## Freshman

1. Administer CHOICES, IDEAS or other interest Inventories

During the first semester an interest inventory such as CHOICES, IDEAS, or a similar one should be administered to students. Not only should it be given, but also the results reviewed and interpreted for the youth. The youth should be able to answer questions such as, “What does this say about my career choices?” “Where could be a good job match for me?” “This is the career I am interested in, where can I go to find employment in that area?” “What kind of post-secondary education do I need to do this job?” There should be some sort of summary prepared for the student to put in their Employment/Career Portfolio to be referred to throughout their High School years.

9.2 Class/Experience using Technology for Career Exploration

During the Freshman year it will be important for the youth to continue to explore career options and paths. Coupling that with technology (i.e., computer assisted) will better ensure continued interest. Documentation should be developed (See example in Appendix A) to assist the student to record his/her findings and interests. This documentation should be saved and reviewed with the student during the year.

9.3 Small Group Community Career Exploration—1st Semester

To help students begin to narrow down career choice, during the first semester of their Freshman year small group career exploration trips should be taken. These differ from the “Career Focused Field Trips” conducted during 8th grade in that students select the trips based on their interest. During the 8th grade the students “just went” to prearranged sites. During this Freshman year the students select the sites to visit and go in small groups to the employment site in which they are interested. It will be important to help the student use the information gathered during their 8th grade year as well as from their technology-based career exploration to select sites to visit.

* 1. Contact DHS Caseworker

As during 8th grade, if the child is receiving services from DHS it will be important for school personnel to share educational information with them so services and supports can be coordinated. They should be invited to the IEP meetings. Although it is unlikely that youth who would qualify for DHS services would not be in the system at this age, it still is good practice for the teacher to inform/check with the parents regarding their knowledge of the system.

9.5 Student Mentors

Because the move to High School can be very distressing to students, a student mentor should be assigned to each special education student. This mentor should be a student of “status” and not at risk of dropping out or getting in trouble with the authorities. Depending upon the school, athletes, honor students, band members, or various club members might be appropriate choices. If the entering student has preferences for sports perhaps it might be possible for an athlete to be assigned his/her mentor. If the entering student has an interest in music, perhaps a high school student involved in vocal or instrumental music could be a mentor. There are numerous possibilities. The purpose is to help the entering student to become familiar with and acclimated to the school more rapidly and be better accepted by the high school population. The mentor/mentee agreement should be entered into with the expectation that the relationship will last the school year. Any High School mentor probably will need training and assistance to understand the demands of the role. It might be helpful if the youth was given credit or at least acknowledgment of his/her efforts.

***Sophomore***

* 1. 1-1 Job Shadowing

After the students have gone to selected Career Exploration sites during their Freshman year, they are now better equipped to determine job-shadowing experiences of interest. These Job Shadowing experiences are expected to last from two hours to two-half school days. The teacher will negotiate this based on the shadow site and the student. It must be long enough to assist the student to “see” the work being done, but at the same time not a burden on the employer. While the teacher may have relationships with area businesses that may serve as job shadowing sites, it is likely that sites will be developed based on the individual student’s interest. During this experience the student is expected to observe, assist, and ask questions. The student must document his/her interest, preference, and general impressions of each shadow. At the end of the year a Summary of the Shadowing Experiences will be placed in the students Employment/Career Portfolio.

10.2 Class/Experience using Technology for Career Exploration

As during the Freshman year it will be important for the youth to continue to explore career options and paths during the Sophomore year. Coupling that with technology (i.e., computer assisted) will better ensure continued interest. As before, documentation should be developed to assist the student to record his/her findings and interest. This documentation should be saved and reviewed with the student during the year. This information along with the community shadowing experiences should assist the student to begin to focus on careers of interest.

* 1. Person Centered Career Exploration

During the Sophomore year it will be important to begin to focus on the student’s dreams for the future and what it will take to get there. This should be considered tentative, but nevertheless the conversations must begin and it is recommended that these begin by age 14. Initially the conversations will be general moving toward a more focused discussion as the youth progresses through his/her high school years. Helping students identify things they value (i.e., family, money, home, good cars, travel, etc.) will need to be explored. This will have an impact on the career they select. For example by identifying that they want to stay close to family will limit the career options to them by those found in southeast IA. Additionally, helping the student identify their personal traits and characteristics they bring to employers is also important. Helping the student “take stock” of him/herself, i.e., what is important to them, what they bring to employment, identifying their “preferences” as well as “non-negotiables” as related to life after high school is necessary. Coupling that information with local and national labor market information and local and national economic trends, teachers and others help students to begin to identify meaningful careers.

10.4 Volunteer Work

To help the student build his resume, volunteer work may be pursued. There are strict guidelines for volunteering by the Department of Labor that must be adhered to. But volunteering at a hospital, nursing home, library, or other places that have volunteers can be a good way to increase the student’s knowledge of careers.

* 1. Contact DHS Caseworker

As during the previous grades, if the child is receiving services from DHS, it will be important for school personnel to share educational information with them so services and supports can be coordinated. They should be invited to the IEP meetings. Although it is unlikely that youth who would qualify for DHS services would not be in the system at this age, it still is good practice for the teacher to inform/check with the parents regarding their knowledge of the system.

10.6 Group Mentors

During the Sophomore year it will be helpful to students to have community mentors with businesses in which they have a potential interest. Group mentoring activities will allow the student to learn from the businessperson as well as from other members of the group. Group mentoring will be less time intensive for the employer and that might make it more attractive to more community members.

* 1. Contacting the Guidance Counselor Regarding College Selection and Admissions Requirements

During the last part of the Sophomore year it is important that the student enlist the help of the Guidance Counselor to look at potential colleges and understand their admission requirements. It is the Guidance Counselor who typically does this for secondary students and the teacher’s role should be to help the student use the typical process for all students. Administrating the PLAN assessment might be appropriate for some youth interested in college.

* 1. Help Students Investigate Upward Bound Possibilities

Upward Bound helps prepare youth of low-income families for college. The goal of Upward Bound is to increase the rates at which participants enroll in and graduate from institutions of postsecondary education. Contact SCC for current information regarding the Upward Bound Advisor at 319-385-8012. Or contact the West Burlington campus, and ask for the Director of the TRIO programs 319-752-2731.

10.9 Investigate securing an Iowa Drivers License.

If the student is 16 during the Sophomore year, assisting then, in concert with their parents, to secure a driver license may be appropriate. Given the ruralness of Henry County, be able to drive to work is a necessary skill. Therefore, helping the youth take Drivers Education, prepare for the test and finally take the test may be viewed as part of his/her educational course of study.

* 1. Secure parent permission to contact any adult service agencies.

To comply with IDEA 2004 requirements it is suggested that at the IEP meeting during this year, that you ask for, and get a signed consent form giving, permission to contact adult services agencies during the Junior year. Typical agencies will be IVRS, possibility the CPC, and perhaps SCC. For some youth, contacting a Community Rehabilitation Provider might be appropriate. This will ensure that the appropriate personnel will be able to attend the Transition Resource Team Meeting during the Junior year.

***Junior***

* 1. Contact Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services—1st Semester

It is critical that IVRS be contacted during the first semester of the student’s Junior year. This will allow for a relationship between the assigned counselor, student, and family to be developed to facilitate developing an appropriate and timely plan leading to achievement of the student’s career goal. The local IVRS number is 319-385-9238. The main office serving this area is in Burlington at 319-753-2231.

* 1. Contact the Central Point of Coordination Administrator

If any member of the IEP team feels that any adult service will be needed, it is critical that the Central Point of Coordination Administrator be contacted. That number is 319—385-4050 and the office is located at 106 North Jackson. The office coordinates all adult services paid for by the county. Henry County provides funds for services for county residents with mental illness, chronic mental illness, mental retardation and developmental disabilities. There are also income and resource guidelines that must be met. The process begins by completing a written application that is available at the office. Teachers must make certain that this office is contacted during the Junior Year to ensure funds are available for the student once he/she becomes an adult. It is better to err on the side of referring too many students than not referring one who later is denied services due to lack of funds.

* 1. Up-date Testing for Adult Services

One issue in IA with the non-categorical Special Education Services is that certain adult services need a diagnosis and actual test score. It is difficult to keep knowledgeable regarding which adult service requires what information. Therefore, it is a good idea to ask the AEA to complete a psychological evaluation and/or academic testing for students who will need adult services.

* 1. College Visits

To help the students make good career and post-secondary education decisions, trips to colleges should be arranged. Some schools allow several days for such activities. During the Sophomore year the student worked with the Guidance Counselor looking at potential colleges and the admission requirements; this then is the next step. Documentation of the student’s visit recording what they liked, disliked, and coursework they would pursue as related to what career should be completed. Additionally the student’s general impressions should be captured. Another critical component of the college visits is talking with the college Disability Student Services Coordinator. Discussions must be held regarding accommodations needed and the schools ability to provide them. Depending on the number of visits completed, this information should be summarized and used to assist the student to make an informed decision regarding college. This assistance will most likely come from several places, including the teachers, guidance counselor, AEA staff and parents. The student should take the ACT if necessary.

* 1. Job Seeking/Job Keeping Class

During the Junior year the student should be enrolled in a job seeking or job keeping class or unit of instruction. Curriculum might include expected job searching skills, networking, application completion, understanding application language and information requested, interviewing (including numerous mock interviews both at school and at employment sites), and appropriate interview dress. Job keeping skills would target appropriate work behaviors that keep people employed. There are commercially available materials to help with the development of this class.

* 1. Community Work Experience

By now the student has had numerous in-school experiences and field trips (8th grade), community career exploration and interest inventories (Freshman), job shadowing, volunteer experiences and career exploration via technology (Sophomore). It is now time to become more focused. Therefore, during the Junior year, students should experience multiple work experiences in the community. These should be related to their career of interest to gather first hand knowledge of the job performed. While most of the time this is un-paid, efforts should be made to have students be paid for their work. All Department of Labor guidelines for students with IEP’s should be followed. Individualized work skills/behaviors should be targeted and evaluative information from the employer should be gathered. This information, as well as information from the student regarding his/her preferences, interests, general thoughts, etc., should be documented for each experience. This is then summarized by the student and used to make informed career decisions.

11.7 Focused Employment Mentor—Individual

During the Sophomore year the student met with community mentors in groups. During the Junior year more intense mentoring is called for. During this year each student should be assigned a mentor representing a line of work in which the student is interested. The requirements for the mentoring arrangement should be outlined and expectations made clear. The student would meet regularly with the mentor to discuss questions regarding the selected career and receive career guidance.

11.8 Volunteer Work

As during the Sophomore year, volunteer work may be pursued. There are strict guidelines for volunteering by the Department of Labor that must be adhered to. But volunteering at a hospital, nursing home, library, or other places that have volunteers can be a good way to increase the student’s knowledge of careers as well as help build his/her college application and resume.

11.9 Person Centered Career Exploration

This is a continuation of the process began during the Sophomore year. By now the student has had more experiences and another year of maturity. Building upon the new information the student has gathered during the year, once again they should be assisted to ‘take stock” of their assets, needs, etc. Students will probably require assistance identifying their marketable skills as well as deficits.

11.10 Parent Resource Meeting

By now, parents are beginning to realize that their child has one more year of education. Frequently panic sets in or even denial. Therefore, another Parent Resource meeting is called for. This meeting will focus on the student’s career information, career experiences to date, and adult agencies that have been, or can be involved in the future.

11.11 Contact DHS Caseworker

As during the previous grades, if the child is receiving services from DHS, it will be important for school personnel to share educational information with them so services and supports can be coordinated. They should be invited to the IEP meetings. Although it is unlikely that youth who would qualify for DHS services would not be in the system at this age, it still is good practice for the teacher to inform/check with the parents regarding their knowledge of the system.

11.12 Inform Student of Rights One Year Before They Are 18

By law, schools are required to inform each student of their rights one year before they reach the age of 18. This means that schools must tell the student that when they reach 18 their educational rights will be transferred to them from their parents.

11.13 Inform Parents of Guardianship Requirements and Alternatives

If the parents and/or the team believe that, due the students inability to make decisions that a guardian may be needed, the parents will need to petition the probate court for a guardian or alternative to be appointed. They will need to contact an attorney, complete “A Petition for Appointment of a Guardian or Conservator” form. There is a charge. Legal Services Corporation of IA in Des Moines might be a resource. The local Department of Human Services might also be a contact to tell the parents about.

11.14 Contact Iowa Work Incentive Planning and Assistance Personnel (Iowa WIPA)

If a student is receiving Social Security Benefits, it is good practice to assist them in contacting the WIPA for Iowa. These people are charged with helping the person understand their benefits and the impact of certain activities upon them, (i.e., work). For students, regulations change once a youth reaches 18 so informing them at the same time as you discuss their rights better ensures that information is shared. IA WIPA operates through Iowa Workforce Development. There are two Community Work Incentive Coordinators in the state. Current information can be found at the web site, www.iowawipa.org.

In some cases teachers and parents might want to contact the states Protection and Advocacy organization. Although P&A’s focus is on protecting and advocating for individuals as related to their benefits, by contacting them teachers could gather the information about changes in the WIPA personnel or status.

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Information could also be found on the web site:

<http://www.rcep7.org/~ssabpao/regioninfo/region7.html#IA>

11.15 Help Student Investigate Scholarships

As with any student, the Guidance Counselor should work with the students and parents to secure any scholarships, grants, or loans for which they qualify. It will probably be necessary for the teacher to assist in this by monitoring progress, helping to ensure forms and information get relayed between parents and Guidance Counselor.

11.16 Contact Workforce Investment Act Personnel

If the student has a vocational goal for which the teacher or IEP team feels that existing services are inadequate, Workforce Investment Act personnel should be contacted. While the Workforce Investment Act has goals and objectives it must meet, it has great flexibility in meeting them. There are also income and academic requirements that must be met. However, it might often be worth the time to contact their personnel to see if they have services that could be used to meet a need of a specific student.

11.17 Conduct a “Transition Status” meeting

To help with planning and coordinating services for the student once he/she graduates, it is critical that key players begin the planning process early. This is not a staffing or IEP meeting, but rather the sharing of ideas regarding what the student will need when out of school to reach his/her goals, and information from the key agencies which provide adult services. Recommended participants from outside the school include, Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services personnel, Central Point of Coordinator Administrator if the student is expected to need any type of adult supports, SCC student disability services coordinator, and the AEA staff who know the youth. In-school personnel include the teacher, guidance counselor, and at-risk coordinator if appropriate.

It is important that this planning begin in the Junior year to ensure that funds are available for the student once he/she leaves the school system. Funds are sometimes scarce and waiting lists are quite possible. Helping the student become involve in the adult service process at this point in his/her school career will more likely ensure no gaps in services.

***Senior***

* 1. Community Based Vocational Experiences

This is a continuation of the experiences began during the Junior year. Again, these experiences help the student learn first hand about the work required by different jobs. The academic requirements can be highlighted thus adding importance to the learning back in the classroom. Each student should have specific behavior and skills to be learned at each experience. These should be shared with each employer and regular feedback gathered. Again, this information and the student’s impressions are summarized to help the student make informed career decisions.

* 1. Contact DHS Caseworker

As during the previous grades, if the child is receiving services from DHS, it will be important for school personnel to share educational information with them so services and supports can be coordinated. They should be invited to the IEP meetings. Although it is unlikely that youth who would qualify for DHS services would not be in the system at this age, it still is good practice for the teacher to inform/check with the parents regarding their knowledge of the system.

* 1. Contact Central Point of Coordination Administrator

If any member of the IEP team feels that any adult service will be needed, it is critical that the Central Point of Coordination Administrator be contacted. That number is 319—385-4050. The office coordinates all adults services paid for by the county. If a person over 18 is to receive adult services (living assistance, vocational assistance, medical assistance) it starts at this office. This is especially critical if, during the Junior year, adult services were recommended. The CPC Administrator must be kept informed of the status of the students so the needed adult supports will be in place when needed. It is also possible that the student’s circumstances have changed and adult supports are now thought to be necessary. It is better to err on the side of referring too many students than not referring one who later is denied services due to lack of funds.

* 1. Complete All Paper Work for College

During the Senior year, all paper work must be completed for college. It will likely be necessary for the teacher to assist in this by monitoring progress helping to ensure forms and information get relayed between parent and Guidance Counselor.

* 1. Continue Communication with IVRS

It is important that the teacher keep informed of the IVRS status of the Seniors. Information to be shared between the IVRS Counselor and the parents may have to be routed through the teacher. For students going on to post secondary education or directly into the work force IVRS is a critical support.

* 1. January—Complete FAFSA forms

Because of the income information required, exact adherence to this time line may not be possible. The purpose, however, is that these financial papers are completed while the student is in school while personnel are available to assist. As with several activities during the Senior year, the teacher’s role will be one of monitoring and ensuring that the appropriate information is provided to the appropriate people in a timely fashion.

* 1. January—Take COMPASS test

The COMPASS seems to be the test of choice, especially for students attending Community Colleges. This should be taken during January of the Senior year. Having the test scores may help the student narrow his/her career choice. For example, a student wants to attend the nursing program at SCC. This particular program requires a certain score on the COMPASS. If the student achieves the required score, then he/she proceeds as planned. If he/she doesn’t then there are options. He/she could take the test again and hope for a higher score, or change the career goal to a field related to nursing, but one that does not require a certain score. The COMPASS is free to take and can be taken multiple times. The scores are good for two years.

* 1. Develop Final Resume

During the Senior year, the student should develop a final resume. As with any resume, this document should highlight the student’s employment and career experiences while in high school as well as talents and assets he/she bring to an employment situation. The teacher should assist the student not only with the information, but with the presentation and final printing.

12.9 Develop Summary of Performance

IDEA 2004 requires that school/teachers develop a summary of performance. IDEA 2004 states that when students leave special education either through graduation or exceeding the age of eligibility the school “shall provide the child with a summary of the child’s academic achievement and functional performance, which shall include recommendations on how to assist the child in meeting the child’s postsecondary goals”. (Section. 300.305(e)(3).

12.10 Males Register Selective Service at Age 18

Teachers should ensure that any male students they have are registered with Selective Service at age 18. While the school is not responsible for this, it is good practice for teachers to inform the males and assist if necessary so students will register. It is also good practice to keep informed of any changes in the federal law effecting their students and Selective Service.

12.11 Register to Vote at Age 18

As with registering with Selective Service, schools are not responsible for ensuring students are registered to vote. However, best practice indicates that high schools should prepare students for full community participation including fulfilling their citizen responsibility. Voting should be considered both a right and a responsibility. Therefore, teachers should provide their students information and instruction regarding this important basic right.

12.12 Conduct a “Transition Status” meeting

This is a continuation of the planning process initiated during the Junior year. Once again this is not a staff or an IEP meeting. Information, potential services needed as well as steps and timelines to achieving the student’s post-secondary goals are generated. Recommended participants from outside the school include, Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services personnel, Central Point of Coordinator Administrator if the student is expected to need any type of adult supports, SCC student disability services coordinator, and the AEA staff who know the youth. In-school personnel include the teacher, guidance counselor, and at-risk coordinator if appropriate.