



Kentucky Employment First Council
500 Mero Street, 1st Floor SE
Frankfort, KY 40601
Toll Free: (800) 372-7172
Direct: (502) 782-3421
Email: Nanci.Howard@ky.gov

Andy Beshear
Governor

Jamie Link
Secretary, Education and Labor Cabinet

Employment First Council Transition Committee Meeting Minutes

November 20, 2025
9:30 am – 10:30 am (EST)
Zoom
Meeting ID: 873 3870 6907

Members Present

Tal Curry, Katie Wolf Whaley, Johnny Callebs, Larry Taylor, Frank Huffman, Sara Tinker, Amanda Hutchison, Jason Wheatley, and Zac Sappenfield

Members Absent

None

Staff Present

Jonathan White, Nanci Howard, and Anu Kumari

Guest

Stacie Hutchison

Welcome | Introductions | Agenda Review

Employment First Transition Committee Chair, Tal Curry, welcomed attendees, and introductions were held. The agenda was reviewed and acknowledged by all participants.

FAQ Document Discussion

The Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) have been formally approved and posted on the Employment First [website](#).

Transition Resource Sheet Discussion

The Transition Resource Sheet was revised and reformatted to align with ADA accessibility and screen-reader standards.

Key highlights:

- The latest version is dated September 26, 2025.
- Two external links on the Transition Resource Sheet were identified as nonfunctional:
 - Kentucky Housing Corporation Resource Guide- The previous link returned a 404 error; however, the correct link was located during the meeting and will be updated.
 - Transportation Initiative (UK-HDI)- The link remained inaccessible, and preliminary information indicated that the project had concluded, and the webpage was removed.
- Any links that cannot be verified or updated will be removed from the document.
- An accessible online version remained available on the Kentucky Advisory Council on Autism webpage via QR code and direct hyperlink.
- Website analytics from April 21 through June 30, 2025, reflected 488 total document views of the Transition Resource Sheet.
- Survey participation was discussed, and additional follow-up efforts were planned to encourage responses.
- Once the final link corrections are completed, the updated resource sheet will be resubmitted for Cabinet review and approval.
- Co-branding with partner agencies was discussed; however, due to limited space within the layout, logo placement may need to occur on the webpage.

The Kentucky Department of Education's Transition 360 Update

A comprehensive update was provided on the Kentucky Transition 360 for Educators initiative, led by the Kentucky Department of Education's (KDE) Office of Special

Education and Early Learning. The project is funded through the federal State Personnel Development Grant and is currently in Year 3 of a 5-year performance period.

Program Structure

The initiative develops educator capacity in five core areas:

1. Policy
2. Collaborative Systems
3. Transition Planning
4. Career Development
5. Student Skill Development

Participant Overview

As of October 2025, 424 educators have participated in Tier 1 training, representing 74 school districts and Area Technology Centers.

Participants represent 10+ professional role groups across all grade levels, including:

- Special education teachers
- General educators
- Community technical education teachers
- School counselors
- Directors of special education
- Job coaches/employment specialists.

Representation included all grade bands statewide, and recruitment continues, with plans to enroll approximately 150 additional educators in the coming months. Outreach efforts include statewide newsletters to increase participation across multiple role groups. Feedback has been consistently positive.

Tier Structure

Tier 1: Foundational Learning

- Online course, self-paced training housed in KDE's Canvas-based Learning Hub.
- Consists of 26 interactive modules (approx. 30 hours).
- Incorporates assessments, discussion boards, and adult-learning-aligned content.

Tier 2: Implementation and Coaching

- Tier 2 was formally launched during the in-person kickoff held in July 2025.

- KDE staff provide ongoing coaching and deep-dive training sessions throughout the year.
- Participants are required to attend scheduled online training sessions as part of the implementation process.

Tier 3: Leadership Development (In Progress)

This is currently under development and will focus on leadership and sustainability.

Program Impact

- Across Tier 1 and Tier 2, 486 educators have participated to date.
- Tier 2 districts are actively implementing transition-focused action plans aimed at improving post-school outcomes for students with disabilities.
- Recruitment efforts are ongoing, with plans to enroll an additional cohort within the current project year.

IEP Review Updates

The committee acknowledged the need to reconvene the workgroup reviewing Individualized Education Program (IEP) materials. Additional updates will be provided at the future meeting.

Committee Question and Answer

Question: A committee member asked whether SERTAC could be included in the Transition 360 training—either as full participants or in an audit capacity—so they could learn the model and help extend the work to educators not currently part of the grant-supported cohort.

Answer: Yes, this topic is scheduled for discussion at the December 11, 2025, SERTAC Directors Meeting.

Autism Works Study Discussion

An overview was provided on the Autism Works Study.

Purpose of the Study

The study will evaluate the effectiveness of the IPS model for autistic adults, particularly in improving employment outcomes.

Study Design

- Approximately 180–190 autistic adults will participate.

Participants will be randomly assigned to either the Traditional supported employment or the IPS-supported employment model.

Future Steps

- Lori Norton has been invited to present detailed information about the Autism Works Study at the January Employment First Council meeting.
- Additional coordination will occur with Jeff White, UKHDI partners, and DBHDID leadership.

Committee Question and Answer

Question: A committee member asked for clarification on the differences between the Individual Placement and Support (IPS) model and customized employment.

Answer: It was clarified that IPS and Customized Employment differ significantly. IPS focuses on rapid job placement, while Customized Employment involves individualized discovery and employer negotiation. IPS follows its own fidelity model, and potential adaptations for autistic individuals are still being explored in the study.

Order of Selection (OOS) update

- All priority categories remain closed.
- Individuals who are determined eligible for OVR services are placed on the waitlist.
- If additional funding becomes available, OVR will first evaluate financial capacity and begin serving individuals on the waitlist prior to reopening any priority categories.
- Students with disabilities may continue Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) only if they initiated Pre-ETS prior to being placed on the waitlist, and the service falls under the five federally required Pre-ETS components.
- Students who did not receive Pre-ETS prior to waitlisting cannot begin Pre-ETS until they are removed from the waitlist.

Stakeholders should reference the official OVR website for the current Order of Selection information.

2026 Meeting Dates Discussion

The committee will continue meeting on Thursdays, 9:30–10:30 AM, every six weeks, beginning February 2026. The Administrator will schedule a meeting and send a calendar invitation.

Public Comments

None.

Adjournment

Committee Chair Tal Curry thanked everyone for their contribution and adjourned the meeting.

Next Meeting Date

February 19, 2026

9:30 am- 10:30 am (EST)