



Andy Beshear
Governor

Jamie Link
Education and Labor Cabinet Secretary

Transition Committee

Minutes
January 30, 2025
9:30am – 10:30am (EST)
Zoom

Members Present:

Interim Chair, Katie Wolf Whaley, Todd Coffey, Johnny Callebs, Tal Curry, Zac Sappenfield, Amanda Hutchison, and Sara Tinker.

Members Absent:

Diana Merzweiler, Larry Taylor and Frank Huffman.

Staff Present:

Nanci Howard, Vocational Rehabilitation Administrator, Jonathan White, KYOVR Assistant Director, and Anu Kumari, Administrative Specialist Senior.

Welcome/Introduction:

Interim Chair, Katie Wolf Whaley and Administrator, Nanci Howard welcomed members to the meeting. Katie introduced Sara Tinker, a Cooperative Consultant with Greater Louisville Education Cooperative in Jefferson County. After Introductions, the agenda was reviewed by all participants.

Review of Education Section of the Advocacy Committee's FAQ on Employment First:

Interim Chair Katie Wolf Whaley reviewed the FAQ template with the committee, explaining that the Advocacy and Education Committee has been developing the document. Committee Chair, Amanda Owen drafted the initial questions and answers, and each committee will provide input on their respective topics. A Google Doc link to the document was shared via email for review and feedback.

Below are the questions contained in the FAQ document that pertains to educational professionals and the committee suggestions/comments.

FAQ Document Review and Discussion:

Educational Professionals

What is Employment First, and how does it impact my work as a professional in this field?

Answer: Employment First statute prioritizes competitive integrated employment as the first option for individuals with disabilities. Education professionals can help set this expectation by ensuring inclusion throughout education and creating expectations that life after school will include employment, as it does for other students. This priority should be included in the discussion around setting goals for transition into adulthood.

Committee Suggestions:

The committee reviewed the FAQ for educational professionals about Employment First, noting concerns about the clarity of "competitive integrated employment" (CIE) and suggesting clear examples for educators, focusing on the basics. They emphasized the need for well-defined terms, proposing a dedicated definitions page with accessible explanations and a fact sheet.

The committee emphasized the importance of using a plain language definition of CIE, to ensure clarity. They also advocated for the principle of "earlier and more often," suggesting that employment-related concepts should be introduced before high school to give students enough time to explore career options.

How do I assist individuals with disabilities in preparing for employment?

Answer: You can assist by conducting assessments of their skills and interests, developing individualized employment plans, providing job readiness training, and connecting them with supported employment services that match their goals. You can use the [UK - HDI Transition Checklists](#) as a tool to think about how to build vocational inventories and skills across grade levels.

You can think about how to implement key pieces of the transition process within your

curriculum around the five targeted areas of Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS): Job exploration counseling, Work based learning experiences, post-secondary opportunities, work readiness training, and self-advocacy instruction. [Pre-ETS flier](#) can help you connect students with Kentucky's Vocational Rehabilitation system and [this website can help you better understand Pre ETS](#) how they can benefit your students.

Committee Suggestions:

The committee discussed the need to clarify the language around Pre-ETS (Pre-Employment Transition Services) in schools, emphasizing the importance of defining specialized terms for teachers and families. Understanding of Pre-ETS varies by school level, and the checklists were mentioned as helpful resources. The committee questioned how to signal this information, such as the checklists, to help educational professionals with current work initiatives already used in the classroom. The committee discussed who that point of contact would be; teacher, guidance counselor, etc.

Discussion was then held regarding concerns about introducing Pre-ETS too late in high school. Some members suggested starting in middle school, while KYOVR Assistant Director Jonathan White proposed even earlier exposure. The committee explored ways to introduce related concepts before age 14. Discussion was held regarding how to connect teachers/educators to programs such as Pre-ETS, that happen outside of school hours.

Jonathan White then announced he has been working in collaboration with the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) for the past couple of years regarding a pilot program in six to eight school districts. He explained the purpose of the pilot program is to provide guidance for collaboration between the local school districts and the local KYOVR offices. Essentially, there will be written guidance that can take students and educators through the process from age 14 and up. Additionally, the intent is to also how to contact their local KYOVR office and how to assist with attending ARC meetings. The pilot school districts chosen were targeted geographically in both urban and rural areas.

How can I promote Employment First with my students and their families?

Answer: As an educator, Employment First requires prioritizing employment for individuals with disabilities. This begins with maximizing inclusion efforts throughout the student's educational career and creating expectations that life after school will include employment, as it does for other students. You can start conversations around the job search process by sharing resources such as this on how to get help finding a job.

Committee Suggestions:

The Committee suggested adding the HDI Checklists here for a resource to educational professionals.

How can I effectively educate and guide the student and/or guardian to help them prepare for employment after high school?

Answer: Stay focused on building skills leading to employment and discussing employment from an early age within ARC meetings. Some suggestions for implementation include regularly including employment planning in conversations, offering age-appropriate career exploration within the classroom but also sharing information with the family and student, collaborating with vocational rehabilitation services, creating workplace simulation environments, and supporting work-based learning opportunities.

Transition discussions should focus on offering integrated employment opportunities, ensuring access to job coaching, and eliminating barriers that prevent individuals from working in their communities. Transition present levels section within the IEP should highlight student interests and strengths. It should also discuss key employability skill development areas such as social communication, self-advocacy, technology literacy, time management, and following workplace instructions.

Successful implementation requires coordinated efforts among special education teachers, general educators, school counselors, rehabilitation specialists, families, and community employment providers. It may be helpful to share [resources that include ideas for families and students to think about employment](#) or to share [examples of other people with disabilities who are successfully employed](#).

Committee Suggestions

The committee discussed ways to assist teachers with best practices so they can better inform parents and students of the opportunities before completing an IEP or Individual Learning Plan. Some committee members expressed challenges due to inconsistencies with education titles across the state. Sara Tinker said some school districts have Directors of Special Education while some have teams, such as Jefferson County.

- Include a link to the council approved document on “How to get help Finding a Job”, which teachers can share with families to connect students to employment opportunities early.
- The "present levels" section should highlight student interests and strengths, but this is often underutilized. Adding examples could make this section more effective and accessible for educators.
- It's beneficial to share topic-specific resources (like a checklist or guide), update them as needed, and highlight them for teachers, as they can be useful in many ways to ensure consistent support for students' transition goals.

Transition 360 Course and IPE Guidance Document Review:

Interim Chair, Katie Wolf Whaley provided an update, mentioned a meeting with Allison Johnson about the Transition 360 course and the upcoming IEP review. She highlighted that significant feedback had been received on the Transition 360 course, but more input was still needed.

Public Comment:

No public comment addressed.

Adjournment:

Interim Chair, Katie Wolf Whaley thanked everyone and adjourned the meeting.

Next Meeting:

- Date: March 27, 2025
- Time: 9:30am to 10:30am (EST)

Administrator: Nanci Howard
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Andy Beshear
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Jamie Link
Education and Labor Cabinet Secretary

Transition Committee

Minutes
March 27, 2025
9:30am – 10:30am (EST)
Zoom

Members Present:

Interim Chair, Katie Wolf Whaley, Johnny Callebs, Tal Curry, Amanda Hutchison, Sara Tinker, Jason Wheatley, and Larry Taylor.

Members Absent:

Diana Merzweiler, Frank Huffman, Gretta Hylton, and Todd Coffey.

Staff Present:

Nanci Howard, Vocational Rehabilitation Administrator, Veronica Dale, KYOVR Manager and Anu Kumari, Administrative Specialist Senior.

Welcome/Introduction:

Interim Chair, Katie Wolf Whaley welcomed members to the meeting. The agenda was reviewed by all participants.

Review of Transition Worksheet:

Council Member, Tal Curry presented a Transition Resource Sheet developed through a workgroup that includes members from the State Advisory Panel for Exceptional Children, the Employment First Council and Kentucky Advisory Council on Autism. He

provided brief demonstration of the worksheet.

Key Features:

- The document includes categorized resource links for transition planning, advocacy, self-determination, including support, decision-making, disability, executive functioning, employment, independent living, transportation, and IEPs.
- The document features hyperlinks to key resources, including:
 - University of Kentucky Human Development Institute (UK-HDI) employment checklist.
 - Kentucky Spin Youth and Adults Suite.
 - Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) transition services for students.
- The workgroup aims to limit resources per category to four or less (except deaf/hard of hearing).

Feedback:

- KYOVR Manager, Veronica Dale provided positive feedback and suggested including Kentucky partnerships focused on behavioral and mental health issues.
- Council Member, Tal Curry acknowledged the suggestion and explained behavioral health and crisis resources had been consolidated to prioritize youth resources.
- Kentucky Partnership for Families and Children (KPFC) was considered for future inclusion. The plans were made to test the resource list with various partners such as, KPFC, KYSPIN, KDE partners, and the Kentucky Autism Training Center.

Approval Process:

- After much discussion, Tal will have the document reviewed for accessibility
- A revised, accessible version will be piloted with a small group for feedback/usability
- Upon receipt of feedback this group will look to have a draft for approval at July Council meeting

- Due to space, the document may not be co-branded with other collaborating entities, but the digital link can include logos.

Review of FAQ Document:

Interim Chair Katie Wolf Whaley stated that the Advocacy and Education Committee Chair, Amanda Owen, collaborated with the special education director and the local school system on the language used. The Advocacy and Education Committee will review the FAQ document once more and it will go to the full council.

Transition 360 Course and IPE Review Document:

Transition 360 Course:

- Katie said the Transition 360 course had not been reviewed, but stated there was a conversation regarding more input from Vocational Rehabilitation and employment related individuals.

IEP Document Review:

- Katie announced that a small workgroup has been meeting to discuss potential plans to review the IEP document. No further update was given due to the review process still in progress.

Public Comment:

No public comment addressed.

Adjournment:

Interim Chair, Katie Wolf Whaley thanked everyone and adjourned the meeting.

Next Meeting:

Date: May 29,2025

Time: 9:30am to 10:30am (EST)

Administrator: Nanci Howard

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Transition Committee

Minutes
May 29th, 2025
9:30am – 10:30am (EST)

Attendees:

Chair, Tal Curry, Katie Wolf Whaley, Larry Taylor, Johnny Callebs, Amanda Hutchison, Sara Tinker, and Frank Huffman.

Staff Attendees:

Nanci Howard, Kentucky Office of Rehabilitation (KYOVR) Administrator, and Anu Kumari, KYOVR Administrative Specialist Senior.

Members Absent:

Diana Merzweiler, Gretta Hylton, and Todd Coffey.

Welcome and Introductions:

Committee Chair, Tal Curry welcomed everyone to the meeting. Introductions were held. Then agenda was reviewed by all participants.

Education and Advocacy FAQs Review:

Committee Chair, Tal Curry, asked for an update on the review of the Advocacy and Education Committee's [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\)](#) document. The FAQs aim to introduce Employment First in plain language with helpful links and resources specific to educational professionals and other groups. Members were encouraged to

review and comment on the Google Doc before June 30th, 2025. KYOVR Administrator, Nanci Howard confirmed the next Advocacy and Education Committee meeting is on July 2nd, 2025, at 9:00am (EST). To adhere to the timeline requested by Advocacy and Education Committee Chair, Amanda Owen, it was proposed to establish an internal deadline of June 16th, 2025, for feedback to ensure sufficient time for revisions prior to the Advocacy and Education Committee meeting.

Transition Resource Sheet for all students with disabilities ages 13-21:

Committee Chair, Tal Curry, provided an update on the ongoing development of the Transition Resource Sheet. The resource is currently being piloted and tested for accessibility. It was noted that a hyperlink and QR code at the top of the document direct users to the Kentucky Advisory Council on Autism's WordPress site which is compatible with screen readers and serving as a temporary accessibility workaround. A survey link is listed at the bottom of the document to collect feedback for future improvements. The State Advisory Panel for Exceptional Children, the Kentucky Advisory Council on Autism, and the Employment First subcommittees have engaged in collaborative discussions to develop this resource tool tailored for transition-age students, beginning as early as ages 13-14. The primary purpose of this Transition Resource Sheet is to support students and their families during Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings by providing comprehensive information about available services, including, Vocational Rehabilitation. The Transition Resource Sheet has been shared via the Supported Employment Training Project, among others, and have received positive feedback thus far. The finalized version will seek endorsement from, Kentucky Department of Education (KDE), Education and Workforce Development Cabinet through the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR), and the Kentucky Advisory Council on Autism, under the Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS). It will be hosted on relevant agency websites, with a goal to release the document at the beginning of the school year, in an accessible PDF format, pending user feedback.

Committee Member, Larry Taylor, announced an upcoming "*Educator Conference*" scheduled for July 8th and 9th, 2025, and shared the registration [link](#).

Committee Member, Amanda Hutchison, announced details regarding the "*Learning Disabilities Association of Kentucky*" (LDA of KY) summer conference that will take place on Saturday, July 12th, 2025, from 9:00am to 1:00pm (EST) at Assumption High School, 2170 Tyler Lane, Louisville, KY 40205. The event is open to both parents and educators, and teachers are eligible to receive up to four hours of professional development credit. Several sessions will be led by LDA of KY board members and invited speakers.

Transition 360 Course and IEP Review Updates:

It was noted that there has been no movement or updates on reviewing the IPE process. Meetings have occurred and extensive Vocational Rehabilitation input and feedback has been received.

2025 Annual Report Recommendations:

KYOVR Administrator Nanci Howard requested content for Employment First Council Annual Report. The committee discussed their priorities over the next several months. Those priorities are:

Access analytics and Evaluation Data:

Data regarding the AETNA collaboration was addressed. This type of data would be included in the Employment First Council Annual Report.

Development of Transition Resource Sheet:

The Transition Resource Sheet is currently being shared, piloted, and refined.

Learning Disability Conference:

Employment First will be featured at the upcoming statewide Learning Disability Conference, offering professional development sessions specifically designed for educators.

DHDID Strategic Plan Alignment:

Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities (DHDID) Strategic Plan includes two goals aligned with Employment First

Educator Institute Presentation:

Employment First council chair, Katie Wolf Whaley will present on behalf of Employment First at the Educator Institute, highlight the critical role of educators

in supporting successful employment outcomes for students with disabilities. Tal Curry will present on What is Autism and share with educators the Transition Resource Sheet for students with disabilities age 13-14 and older.

Additional Discussion:

The committee briefly discussed the recent announcement regarding Kentucky Office of Vocational Rehabilitation's (KYOVR) implementation of Order of Selection (OOS). Effective May 14th, 2025, KYOVR implemented OOS and has temporarily closed all priority categories. A formal notification has been posted on the KYOVR [website](#) for stakeholders seeking additional information.

KYOVR Administrator Nanci Howard provided further details regarding upcoming public forums. A [link](#) was shared that contained detailed information for further inquiries regarding upcoming OOS public hearings. The hearings are scheduled for Tuesday, the June 3rd, 2025 via Zoom at 10:00am and 6:00pm (EST).

She also outlined the information on the process for submitting written comments. Comments should be [emailed](#) or via mail to the Kentucky Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, Public Hearing Comment, 500 Mero Street, 4th Floor., Frankfort, KY 40601. The public comment period begins on May 21st, 2025, at 4:00pm (EST) and ends on June 17th, 2025, at 4:00pm (EST).

Action Items:

- Chair Tal Curry recommended maintaining Order of Selection (OOS) as a standing agenda item.
- Chair Tal Curry encouraged members to identify priorities for the next six months, with particular focus on enhancing transition efforts. This reflection will help guide future priorities and inform the annual report.
- Chair Tal Curry proposed inviting Jeff White to provide input on DHDID and Medicaid waivers at the next Transition Committee meeting.

Public Comment:

No public comment addressed.

Adjournment:

Chair, Tal Curry thanked everyone for their contribution and adjourned the meeting, reminding attendees of the date of the next meeting.

Next Meeting:

Date: July 31st, 2025

Time: 9:00am to 10:00am (EST)

Administrator: Nanci Howard

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Transition Committee

Minutes
July 31st, 2025
9:30am – 10:30am (EST)

Attendees:

Chair, Tal Curry, Katie Wolf Whaley, Jeff White, Johnny Callebs, Amanda Hutchison, Zachery Sappenfield, Todd Coffey, Jason Wheately, and Frank Huffman.

Staff Attendees:

Nanci Howard, Kentucky Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (KYOVR). KYOVR Administrator, Jonathan White Assistant Director, and Anu Kumari, KYOVR Administrative Specialist Senior.

Members Absent:

Larry Taylor and Jessica Beaven

Welcome and Introductions:

Committee Chair, Tal Curry, welcomed everyone to the meeting. Introductions were held. Then agenda was reviewed by all participants.

Education and Advocacy FAQs Approved:

Employment First Council Chair, Katie Wolf Whaley, stated that the FAQ document content was approved during the July quarterly meeting. Issues related to broken hyperlink issues were identified and are currently being addressed. Once these

corrections are completed, the document will be submitted for an official accessibility review.

Transition Resource Sheet for all students with disabilities ages 13–21:

Committee Chair, Tal Curry, provided an update on the Transition Resource Sheet, intended for all students with disabilities ages 13–21. A designated working group is actively focused on enhancing the accessibility of the document and is scheduled to convene in August to review the final version. He indicated a preference for disseminating the information through a new approach, rather than utilizing previous distribution methods.

Transition 360 Course and IEP Review Updates:

It was shared that the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) received a State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG) through the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), to enhance transition services and support successful postsecondary outcomes for students with disabilities.

Tier One:

As part of this initiative, KDE developed a 30-hour online course focused on transition education, aligned with the principles of Employment First. To date, nearly 300 educators across the Commonwealth have completed the course. The demand remains high, with more than 700 educators currently on the waitlist reflecting strong statewide engagement and interest in strengthening transition practices. Participants, including special education teachers, general education teachers, school counselors, administrators, career and technical education (CTE) instructors, paraprofessionals, and employment specialists were in attendance.

Tier Two:

In July 2025, KDE launched tier two of the Transition 360 program with a two-and-a-half-day Focus Institute in Louisville. Approximately 70 educators representing 13 school districts, and two Area Technology Centers attended. KDE's transition coaches will support these teams in implementing their plans throughout the 2025–2026 academic year.

Tier Three:

Tier three is currently in early development and will build upon the foundation established through tiers one and two.

Order of Selection (OOS) Update:

It was noted that all four categories remain closed. There are 1,994 individuals currently on the waitlist as of July 21, 2025. It was explained that Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) funds are still available. However, it was explained that individuals who received Pre-ETS prior to being placed on the waitlist are eligible to continue receiving those services. However, individuals who did not receive Pre-ETS before being placed on the waitlist are not eligible to receive Pre-ETS until they are removed from the waitlist.

DBHDID and Medicaid Waivers:

Employment First Committee Member, Jeff White from the Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities (DBHDID) provided an update on Medicaid waivers and their implications for employment services.

Kentucky currently operates six Medicaid waivers, four of which include Supported Employment services:

- Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) Waiver
- Acquired Brain Injury Long-Term Care (ABI-LTC) Waiver
- Michelle P. Waiver
- Supports for Community Living (SCL) Waiver

In addition, three new waivers are currently in development:

RISE Initiative Waiver:

State Plan Amendment) - Based on 1915(l) regulations, this initiative will provide long-term employment support funding for individuals receiving Individual Placement and Support (IPS) services. It will also support education opportunities for individuals with Severe Mental Illness and Substance Use Disorders. Staff are currently being hired, and the waiver is expected to launch in Fall 2025.

Children's Waiver:

A waiver designed to serve youth in crisis transitioning from the Department for Community Based Services (DCBS) system. It will provide 100 in-state service slots.

Community Integration Waiver:

This waiver is currently in development and aims to provide enhanced wraparound services to support community integration and positive employment outcomes. Further details are forthcoming.

Committee Questions and Answer:

What about work requirements in the community integration waiver?

Currently, the specific eligibility criteria for work requirements for the *Community Integration waiver* remain unclear. These details are expected to be clarified upon the release of the waiver application.

While many details remain unknown the committee emphasized that over 40% of individuals express a desire to work highlighting the continued importance of Employment First efforts.

Is the mental illness waiver offer more than 16 hours a day as work requirements...like the SCL waiver?

The waiver regulations need to be reviewed to determine the maximum number of hours of work requirements.

2025 Annual Report Recommendations:

It was recommended highlighting efforts to expand Career and Technical Education (CTE) certification opportunities for students with disabilities. At the KYACTE Summer Conference, several sessions focused on inclusive practices, with special education teachers in attendance. The committee expressed support for this initiative, noted its alignment with Employment First goals, and recommended its inclusion in the 2025 Annual Report.

Additional Discussion:

The Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) remains steadfast in its commitment to advancing inclusive practices within Career and Technical Education (CTE). As part of this ongoing effort, KDE actively participated in the 2025 Kentucky Association for Career and Technical Education (KYACTE) Summer Conference. The conference featured multiple sessions.

This year, KDE provided funding to support the participation of approximately 30 special education professionals, reinforcing efforts to integrate special education and CTE at the local level. KDE staff led several sessions focused on key topics, including decoding the Individualized Education Program (IEP), enhancing supports for students with disabilities, and building capacity within IEP teams. These included a counselor-specific session designed to strengthen collaboration and alignment between special education and CTE services.

The following website was shared as a resource to support case managers in understanding transition outcomes.

- [SETP Resources](#)

It includes various success stories and resources that could be helpful for case managers to review and utilize in their work with individuals and families.

Action Items:

- The Committee will follow-up with Jason Wheatley regarding KDE Transition website updates.
- The workgroup formed for the review of the IEP will continue.
- The Committee will continue updating the Transition Resource Sheet.
- The Committee will prepare for ongoing discussion and refinement of 2025 Annual Report recommendations.

Public Comment:

No public comment addressed.

Adjournment:

Chair, Tal Curry thanked everyone for their contribution and adjourned the meeting, reminding attendees of the date of the next meeting.

Next Meeting:

Date: September 25th, 2025

Time: 9:30am to 10:30am (EST)

Administrator: Nanci Howard

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Transition Committee Minutes

September 25, 2025

9:30 am – 10:30 am (EST)

Zoom

Members Present

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

Members Absent

Jessica Beaven, Tracy Belfield, Gretta Hylton (proxy, Jason Wheatley), and Todd Coffey

Staff Present

Nanci Howard and Anu Kumari

Welcome, Introductions, and Agenda Review

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

FAQ Document Update

- Content approved by the Council in July 2025.
- Currently undergoing Cabinet review.
- Expected to be included in the Council's annual report.

Transition Resource Sheet Update

- Existing sheet is live and ADA accessible via the Kentucky Advisory Council on Autism's website.
- Updates are being reviewed to the sheet; Employment First and Autism Council will co-brand the final version.
- Workgroup to reconvene for review once accessibility remediation is complete.
- Council Administrator will ask what the process is for a co-branding between two Cabinets and report back to the committee Chair.

Transition 360 Course and IEP Review Updates

- Significant interest has been expressed in the Transition 360 training opportunities, and the committee acknowledged the need for clear updates on availability and participation.
 - Sara Tinker will draft specific questions regarding the Transition 360 training program. Chair Tal Curry will forward these questions to Jason Wheatley and follow up to obtain a consolidated response for the committee.
 - The Committee will follow up with Jason Wheatley regarding KDE Transition 360 updates.
- The IEP Review workgroup will reconvene with additional members who have educational expertise and will continue their work.
- The workgroup formed for the review of the Transition Resource Sheet will also continue.

Order of Selection (OOS) Course and IEP Review Updates

- All priority categories remain closed.
- As of September 22, 2025, there are 3,178 individuals on the waitlist.
- Updated priority category definitions have been drafted to align with RSA guidance.
- OVR staff training scheduled for October 2 and 8 on priority categories.

- Service restoration is dependent on funding availability.

OOS question

What is the process for opening those on the waitlist?

Answer

Those individuals with a signed IPE would continue to receive services. Those who did not have a signed IPE, went directly on the waitlist. Pre-ETS services are not included in OOS. It is based on federal law that the state serves the most significant disabilities first. Once funding is available, categories will begin to open and services will be provided to those with the most significant disabilities.

Additional Discussion

- Kentucky Association of People Supporting Employment First (APSE) “Save the Date” – December 8–9, 2025, Elizabethtown, KY.
- The Greater Louisville Area Cooperative of Kentucky (GLACK) and the Ohio Valley Educational Cooperative (OVIC) will host a Student Transition Conference in March 2026, with participation from 13 counties. The event will include both keynote speakers and a transition resource fair.
- Assistance was asked of the committee to test a website entitled, “Assistive Technology Wizard” website’s accessibility as concerns were raised about the site being ADA compliant.
 - Council member, Johnny Callebs, stated he would ask the Council on Developmental Disabilities staff to assist.
 - Council Chair, Katie Wolf Whaley, offered staff assistance for testing website accessibility.
- Employment Checklists remain available on the Supported Employment Training Project website, with updated [links](#).
- Employment First Council Chair Katie Wolf Whaley reminded the Employment First Council Meeting: October 10, 2025, 1:00–3:00 p.m. at the Transportation Cabinet & Zoom. Opportunity for presentations are still open.

Public Comments

None.

Adjournment

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

Next Meeting Date

TBD

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



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Andy Beshear
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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)