

## INFORMATION TO USERS

This manuscript has been reproduced from the microfilm master. UMI films the text directly from the original or copy submitted. Thus, some thesis and dissertation copies are in typewriter face, while others may be from any type of computer printer.

**The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted.** Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleedthrough, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send UMI a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

Oversize materials (e.g., maps, drawings, charts) are reproduced by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps. Each original is also photographed in one exposure and is included in reduced form at the back of the book.

Photographs included in the original manuscript have been reproduced xerographically in this copy. Higher quality 6" x 9" black and white photographic prints are available for any photographs or illustrations appearing in this copy for an additional charge. Contact UMI directly to order.

# UMI

A Bell & Howell Information Company  
300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor MI 48106-1346 USA  
313/761-4700 800/521-0600



**Mandated Transition Services: An Examination of the  
Linkages Between Policy, Secondary Special Education Programs and  
Student Outcomes**

by

**Patricia Ann Brown**

**A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of**

**Doctor of Education**

**University of Washington**

**1997**

Approved by



(Chairperson of Supervisory Committee)

Program Authorized to Offer Degree

College of Education

Date

January 21, 1997

UMI Number: 9730038

Copyright 1997 by  
Brown, Patricia Ann

All rights reserved.

---

UMI Microform 9730038  
Copyright 1997, by UMI Company. All rights reserved.

This microform edition is protected against unauthorized  
copying under Title 17, United States Code.

---

**UMI**  
300 North Zeeb Road  
Ann Arbor, MI 48103

©

Copyright 1997

Patricia Ann Brown



University of Washington

Abstract

Mandated Transition Services: An Examination of the  
Linkages Between Policy, Secondary Special Education Programs and  
Student Outcomes

by Patricia Ann Brown

Chairperson of the Supervisory Committee: Professor Eugene Edgar  
College of Education

The questions asked in this study were: (1) Are there differences in post-school outcomes among students with moderate/severe mental retardation who graduated in 1985, 1990, and 1995 from three school districts in Washington state at 2 discrete points in time since graduation (at 1 year for the 1990 and 1995 graduates and at 6 years for the 1985 and 1990 graduates). Specifically, what are the outcome differences between (a) 1990 and 1995 graduates one year after high school and (b) 1985 and 1990 graduates 6 years after high school for each of the outcome variables of employment, enrollment in postsecondary school or training, engagement in employment, education or both and independence; (2) How were transition services implemented, in response to state policy or other factors, for students with moderate/severe mental retardation who graduated in 1990 and 1995? (3) In what ways, if at all, were differences in outcomes for 1990 and 1995 graduates associated with how districts and schools implemented transition services?

The data revealed no significant differences, in the aggregate, for any of the measured outcomes between 1990 and 1995 graduates one year after high school or 1985 and 1990 graduates 6 years after high school. However, findings from the individual student cases suggest that the mandate for transition may

have an impact on the high school program for students with moderate/ severe mental retardation. Informants agree that, since the passage of the transition policy, the high school program has become more community-based, employment oriented, and age-appropriate with an increased emphasis on establishing linkages with adult service providers. The transition policy served as a catalyst in hastening this change process.

Included are implications for policy and school practice and recommendations for further research.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
<b>LIST OF FIGURES.....</b>	<b>V</b>
<b>LIST OF TABLES.....</b>	<b>VI</b>
<b>CHAPTER 1: STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<i>INITIAL CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS.....</i>	<i>4</i>
<b>CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE .....</b>	<b>16</b>
<i>DESIGN OF TRANSITION POLICY .....</i>	<i>17</i>
<i>POSTSCHOOL OUTCOMES OF STUDENTS WITH MENTAL RETARDATION .....</i>	<i>20</i>
<i>Postsecondary Education.....</i>	<i>20</i>
<i>Employment.....</i>	<i>22</i>
<i>Earnings .....</i>	<i>25</i>
<i>Living Arrangements .....</i>	<i>26</i>
<i>Summary .....</i>	<i>27</i>
<b>CHAPTER 3: METHOD .....</b>	<b>32</b>
<i>RESEARCH QUESTIONS .....</i>	<i>32</i>
<i>DEFINITIONS OF TERMS.....</i>	<i>34</i>
<i>Disability Categories .....</i>	<i>34</i>
<i>Time Frame.....</i>	<i>35</i>
<i>Outcome Variables And Other Student Related Factors.....</i>	<i>35</i>
<i>Intervening Factors.....</i>	<i>35</i>
<i>RESEARCH STRATEGY.....</i>	<i>36</i>
<i>QUANTITATIVE DESCRIPTION OF TRANSITION STUDENT OUTCOMES .....</i>	<i>37</i>
<i>Sample and Setting .....</i>	<i>37</i>
<i>Procedure for Collecting Outcomes Data.....</i>	<i>38</i>
<i>Quantitative Analysis Strategy.....</i>	<i>39</i>
<i>CASE STUDIES OF GRADUATES WITH MODERATE/SEVERE MENTAL RETARDATION .....</i>	<i>40</i>
<i>Sample .....</i>	<i>40</i>
<i>Setting .....</i>	<i>42</i>
<i>Data Collection Procedures .....</i>	<i>43</i>
<i>Data Analysis .....</i>	<i>45</i>
<i>STUDY DESIGN LIMITATIONS.....</i>	<i>49</i>
<i>Quantitative substudy .....</i>	<i>49</i>
<i>Qualitative substudy.....</i>	<i>50</i>
<b>CHAPTER 4: FINDING 1–POSTSECONDARY OUTCOMES AND TRANSITION SERVICES AT THE CLASSROOM LEVEL .....</b>	<b>52</b>
<i>POSTSECONDARY OUTCOMES .....</i>	<i>53</i>
<i>Contact Rate .....</i>	<i>53</i>

	PAGE
<i>Data Summed Across the Three Districts</i> .....	53
<i>Relationship of Districts to Postsecondary Outcomes</i> .....	57
<b>THE NATURE AND EXTENT OF CHANGE IN TRANSITION SERVICES AT THE CLASSROOM</b>	
<b>LEVEL</b> .....	61
<i>Changes at ASD</i> .....	63
<i>Changes at PSD</i> .....	64
<i>Changes at CSD</i> .....	65
<b>CHAPTER 5: FINDING 2–DISTRICT IMPLEMENTATION OF</b>	
<b>TRANSITION POLICY</b> .....	<b>69</b>
<i>DISTRICT RESPONSE TO THE STATE POLICY ON TRANSITION</i> .....	69
<i>INFLUENCES ON DISTRICT-LEVEL IMPLEMENTATION</i> .....	72
<i>Influences on Implementation in CSD</i> .....	72
<i>Influences on Implementation in PSD</i> .....	78
<i>Influences on Implementation in ASD</i> .....	82
<i>INVOLVEMENT OF FAMILIES AND STUDENTS IN THE TRANSITION PROCESS</i> .....	89
<b>CHAPTER 6: FINDING 3–HOW TRANSITION POLICY IS LINKED TO</b>	
<b>CLASSROOMS AND OUTCOMES</b> .....	<b>94</b>
<i>THE EFFECT OF DISTRICT ACTIONS ON CLASSROOM-LEVEL IMPLEMENTATION</i> .....	94
<i>Student Placement Decisions</i> .....	95
<i>Professional Autonomy</i> .....	97
<i>Administrative Support</i> .....	98
<i>Allocation of Resources</i> .....	99
<i>HOW POSTSCHOOL OUTCOMES REFLECT IMPLEMENTATION OF TRANSITION POLICY</i> . 102	
<i>Jill and Jeanne</i> .....	103
<i>Ed and Donny</i> .....	106
<i>Mickie and John</i> .....	108
<b>CHAPTER 7: DISCUSSION</b> .....	<b>112</b>
<i>THE INFLUENCE OF THE TRANSITION POLICY ON POSTSCHOOL OUTCOMES</i> .....	113
<i>Postschool Outcomes of Students with Moderate/Severe Mental Retardation</i> .....	114
<i>Implementation of Mandated Transition Services at the Classroom Level</i> .....	119
<i>Implementation of Mandated Transition Services at the District Level</i> .....	123
<i>Evidence of Possible Policy-Outcomes Connections in Individual Cases</i> .....	127
<i>How the Transition Mandate May be Influencing Postschool Outcomes</i> .....	129
<b>EXPLAINING THE APPARENT PATTERNS OF POLICY INFLUENCE</b> .....	<b>130</b>
<i>Explanations Rooted in the Study Sampling and Timeframe</i> .....	130
<i>Explanations Rooted in the Way Districts and Teachers Respond to Organizational</i>	
<i>Shocks</i> .....	133
<i>Explanations Rooted in Persistent Implementation Barriers at the Local Level</i> .....	137
<i>Other Possible Explanations for Diverse Student Outcomes Less Related to Policy</i> .....	141

	PAGE
IMPLICATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH .....	148
IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY AND SCHOOL PRACTICE .....	152
<i>Addressing Fragmented or Partial Implementation</i> .....	153
<i>Addressing Competing Models of Special Education</i> .....	157
<i>Addressing the Cost Of Providing Community Services</i> .....	158
<i>Addressing Family Preferences and Involvement in the Transition Process</i> .....	158
<i>Addressing Adult Service Availability</i> .....	159
<i>Addressing the Impact of the Disability on Student Outcomes</i> .....	160
<i>Addressing the Choice of Policy Instrument</i> .....	161
CONCLUSION.....	162
<b>REFERENCES .....</b>	<b>164</b>
<b>APPENDIX A: METHODOLOGICAL APPENDIX .....</b>	<b>171</b>
TABLE A-1: STUDENT ENGAGEMENT 1 YEAR OUT OF SCHOOL FOR THE 1990 AND 1995 COHORTS.....	173
TABLE A-2: STUDENT ENGAGEMENT 6 YEARS OUT OF SCHOOL FOR THE 1985 AND 1990 COHORTS.....	174
TABLE A-3: STUDENT EMPLOYMENT 1 YEAR OUT OF SCHOOL FOR THE 1990 AND 1995 COHORTS.....	175
TABLE A-4: STUDENT EMPLOYMENT 6 YEARS OUT OF SCHOOL FOR THE 1985 AND 1990 COHORTS.....	176
TABLE A-5: STUDENTS LIVING INDEPENDENTLY 1 YEAR OUT OF SCHOOL FOR THE 1990 AND 1995 COHORTS.....	177
TABLE A-6: STUDENTS LIVING INDEPENDENTLY 6 YEARS OUT OF SCHOOL FOR THE 1985 AND 1990 COHORTS.....	178
TABLE A-7: CURRENT ENROLLMENT FOR STUDENTS IN POSTSECONDARY TRAINING 1 YEAR OUT OF SCHOOL FOR THE 1990 AND 1995 COHORTS .....	179
TABLE A-8: CURRENT ENROLLMENT OF STUDENTS IN POSTSECONDARY TRAINING 6 YEARS OUT OF SCHOOL FOR THE 1985 AND 1990 .....	180
TABLE A-9: CSD INTERVIEW INFORMANTS .....	181
TABLE A-10: PSD INTERVIEW INFORMANTS .....	182
TABLE A-11: ASD INTERVIEW INFORMANTS .....	183
APPENDIX A-12: STUDY DESIGN AND PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS QUESTIONS.....	184
APPENDIX A-13: CODING CATEGORIES .....	188
APPENDIX A-14: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL/QUALITATIVE SUBSTUDY/ALL COHORTS.....	190
APPENDIX A-15: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL/QUANTITATIVE SUBSTUDY/ALL COHORTS....	196
APPENDIX A-16: DEFINITIONS OF OUTCOME VARIABLES .....	199
APPENDIX A-17: DATA COLLECTION MATRIX .....	204
APPENDIX A-18: 1992 CENSUS AND EMPLOYMENT DATA.....	205

<b>APPENDIX B: RELATIONSHIP OF DISTRICTS TO OUTCOME VARIABLES.....</b>	<b>206</b>
<i>TABLE B-1: RELATIONSHIP OF DISTRICTS TO CURRENT ENROLLMENT IN POSTSECONDARY TRAINING OF 1990 GRADUATES WITH MENTAL RETARDATION 1 YEAR OUT OF SCHOOL.....</i>	<i>208</i>
<i>TABLE B-2: RELATIONSHIP OF DISTRICTS TO INDEPENDENT LIVING OF 1990 GRADUATES WITH MENTAL RETARDATION 1 YEAR OUT OF SCHOOL .....</i>	<i>209</i>
<i>TABLE B-3: RELATIONSHIP OF DISTRICTS TO EMPLOYMENT OF 1995 GRADUATES WITH MENTAL RETARDATION 1 YEAR OUT OF SCHOOL .....</i>	<i>210</i>
<i>TABLE B-4: RELATIONSHIP OF DISTRICTS TO CURRENT ENROLLMENT IN POSTSECONDARY TRAINING OF 1995 GRADUATES WITH MENTAL RETARDATION 1 YEAR OUT OF SCHOOL.....</i>	<i>211</i>
<i>TABLE B-5: RELATIONSHIP OF DISTRICTS TO ENGAGEMENT OF 1995 GRADUATES WITH MENTAL RETARDATION 1 YEAR OUT OF SCHOOL .....</i>	<i>212</i>
<i>TABLE B-6: RELATIONSHIP OF DISTRICTS TO RESIDENCE OF 1995 GRADUATES WITH MENTAL RETARDATION 1 YEAR OUT OF SCHOOL .....</i>	<i>213</i>
<i>TABLE B-7: RELATIONSHIP OF DISTRICTS TO EMPLOYMENT OF 1990 GRADUATES WITH MENTAL RETARDATION 6 YEARS OUT OF SCHOOL .....</i>	<i>214</i>
<i>TABLE B-8: RELATIONSHIP OF DISTRICTS TO CURRENT ENROLLMENT IN POSTSECONDARY TRAINING OF 1990 GRADUATES WITH MENTAL RETARDATION 6 YEARS OUT OF SCHOOL .....</i>	<i>215</i>
<i>TABLE B-9: RELATIONSHIP OF DISTRICTS TO ENGAGEMENT OF 1990 GRADUATES WITH MENTAL RETARDATION 6 YEARS OUT OF SCHOOL .....</i>	<i>216</i>
<i>TABLE B-10: RELATIONSHIP OF DISTRICTS TO RESIDENCE OF 1990 GRADUATES WITH MENTAL RETARDATION 6 YEARS OUT OF SCHOOL .....</i>	<i>217</i>
<i>TABLE B-11: RELATIONSHIP OF DISTRICTS TO EMPLOYMENT OF 1985 GRADUATES WITH MENTAL RETARDATION 6 YEARS OUT OF SCHOOL.....</i>	<i>218</i>
<i>TABLE B-12: RELATIONSHIP OF DISTRICTS TO RESIDENCE OF 1985 GRADUATES WITH MENTAL RETARDATION 6 YEARS OUT OF SCHOOL .....</i>	<i>219</i>

## LIST OF FIGURES

<i>NUMBER</i>	<i>PAGE</i>
FIGURE 1: INITIAL CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK .....	5
FIGURE 2: ENGAGEMENT AND EMPLOYMENT OF THE 1990 COHORT OF STUDENTS WITH MODERATE MENTAL RETARDATION ONE YEAR OUT OF SCHOOL .....	58
FIGURE 3: ENROLLMENT IN POSTSECONDARY TRAINING OF THE 1985 COHORT OF STUDENTS WITH SEVERE MENTAL RETARDATION SIX YEARS OUT OF SCHOOL ....	60
FIGURE 4: ENGAGEMENT OF THE 1985 COHORT OF STUDENTS WITH MODERATE MENTAL RETARDATION SIX YEARS OUT OF SCHOOL .....	60
FIGURE 5: REVISED CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK .....	149

## LIST OF TABLES

<i>NUMBER</i>	<i>PAGE</i>
TABLE 1: ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK OF POLICY INSTRUMENTS.....	17
TABLE 2: PERCENTAGE OF 1983-1987 WASHINGTON STATE GRADUATES WHO REPORTED BEING EMPLOYED SIX TO TWENTY-FOUR MONTHS AFTER GRADUATION .....	24
TABLE 3: SUMMARY OF STUDY DESIGN LIMITATIONS.....	30
TABLE 4: CONTACT RATE OF STUDENTS WITH MODERATE AND SEVERE MENTAL RETARDATION.....	55
TABLE 5: CONTACT RATES OF STUDENTS WITH MODERATE AND SEVERE MENTAL RETARDATION 6 YEARS OUT OF SCHOOL BY DISTRICT .....	55
TABLE 6: STUDENT OUTCOMES ONE YEAR OUT OF SCHOOL FOR THE 1990 AND 1995 COHORTS BY DISABILITY .....	56
TABLE 7: STUDENT OUTCOMES SIX YEARS OUT OF SCHOOL FOR THE 1985 AND 1990 COHORTS BY DISABILITY .....	56
TABLE 8: RELATIONSHIP OF DISTRICTS TO ENGAGEMENT OF 1990 GRADUATES WITH MENTAL RETARDATION ONE YEAR OUT OF SCHOOL .....	57
TABLE 9: RELATIONSHIP OF DISTRICTS TO EMPLOYMENT OF 1990 GRADUATES WITH MENTAL RETARDATION 1 YEAR OUT OF SCHOOL .....	58
TABLE 10: RELATIONSHIP OF DISTRICTS TO CURRENT ENROLLMENT IN POSTSECONDARY TRAINING OF 1985 GRADUATES WITH MENTAL RETARDATION SIX YEARS OUT OF SCHOOL.....	59
TABLE 11: RELATIONSHIP OF DISTRICTS TO ENGAGEMENT OF 1985 GRADUATES WITH MENTAL RETARDATION SIX YEARS OUT OF SCHOOL .....	59
TABLE 12: TRANSITION SERVICES IN STUDENT IEPs: 1990 AND 1995 .....	65
TABLE 13: INDICATORS OF QUALITY IN THE 1990 AND 1995 PROGRAMS BY DISTRICT	67
TABLE 14: DISTRICT ACTIONS AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON CLASSROOM LEVEL IMPLEMENTATION .....	96
TABLE 15: STUDENT PLACEMENT IN TRANSITION PROGRAMS .....	97

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank many individuals who assisted, encouraged, supported, and mentored me as I embarked on this adventure.

To my colleagues: Stephanie Prince and Don Goldstein, who patiently taught me about collecting and analyzing quantitative data.

To my coworkers: Linda Price, Cinda Johnson, and especially, Steve Nourse, who encouraged me, bought me lunch when I needed a sympathetic ear and who always had time for me.

To my committee members: Dr. Michael Knapp, Dr. Sheila Lowenbraun, Dr. Felix Billingsley, and Dr. Kurt Johnson, who read and re-read my drafts and whose constructive critique made this dissertation a far better product than it would otherwise have been.

To my committee chairperson: Dr. Eugene Edgar, whose support and encouragement were invaluable.

To my family: My parents, Iris and William Ott, my husband Gale, and my daughters, Sarah and Alice. This dissertation is really yours—you allowed me to put our lives on hold while I completed this journey. Thank you so much, I love you all.

## CHAPTER 1

### STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Prior to the passage of the Education of the Handicapped Act (P.L. 94-142) in 1975, public schools excluded over one million children with disabilities. Access to a free and appropriate public education, as guaranteed by P.L. 94-142, presumably also ensures more equitable postschool outcomes for students with disabilities. However, students with mental retardation leaving special education do not enjoy the same success as young adults as their non-disabled peers (Edgar, 1987; Hasazi, Gordon, Roe, Hull, Finck & Salembier, 1985; Sitlington, Frank, & Carson, 1991). Outcomes research on students with mental retardation report unemployment rates ranging from 28.7% (Hasazi, et al., 1985) to 57.4% (Levine & Edgar, 1987). Fewer than 15% of the students with disabilities who complete school earn above the minimum wage (Edgar, 1987) and only 21% of the students with mental retardation are employed full time (Hasazi, et al., 1985).

These outcomes may reflect curricular and teaching practices that are unlikely to produce more equitable postschool outcomes for students with mental retardation. Hasazi, et al. (1985) substantiated this and found that students in work experience programs of short duration, that may or may not have included wages and "had few of the contingencies associated with real jobs" were "not more likely to be employed than those who did not" (Hasazi, et al., 1985, p. 232). Nonetheless, "regardless of the severity of the handicapping

condition, experience with real work is likely to produce better employment outcomes" (Hasazi, et al., 1985, p.232). Research suggests, however, that the secondary curriculum may positively influence postschool outcomes for these students when that curriculum is age-appropriate, community-based, and employment-oriented (Halpern, 1987; Hardman & McDonald, 1987; Wilcox & Bellamy, 1987; Wehman, Kregel, Barcus, & Schalock, 1986).

Recent policies have attempted to encourage these kinds of curricular changes. P.L. 101-476, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), defines transition as "A coordinated set of activities for a student, designated within an outcome oriented process, which promotes movement from school to postschool (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living or community participation" (34 C.F.R. Section 300.18). DeStefano and Wermuth (1992) contend that there are three goals embedded in the IDEA transition mandate: (1) the establishment of linkages among key transition players: the school, family, and community; (2) "instructional and educational experiences and related services beyond those generally associated with academic outcomes (DeStefano & Wermuth, 1992, p. 548) and (3) personnel preparation programs that teach the skills needed to establish these community linkages and implement the curricular changes.

Application of the federal mandate at the state level is reflected in the Washington Administration Codes (WACs); at the local level, the WACs are expressed through mandated classroom-level services including: instruction,

community experiences, vocational education and training, employment objectives, adult living objectives, and daily living skills. Additionally, these services “shall be based upon the individual student needs, taking into account the student’s preferences and interests” (WAC 392-172-060).

What we know about the local-level implementation of mandates suggests that mandates alone are not sufficient to ensure educational excellence (Fuhrman, 1994) or any change other than compliance with paperwork requirements (Berman, 1982). These dynamics of educational policy systems, then, raise important questions about whether state transition mandates influence curriculum, and ultimately, student outcomes.

The purpose of this study, therefore, is to investigate (1) the local implementation of the Washington state mandate for transition, relative to the three policy goals, and (2) whether these local efforts are associated with more equitable outcomes for students with moderate/severe mental retardation. This research seeks to determine, in specific settings:

1. the differences, if any, in postschool outcomes among students with moderate/severe mental retardation who graduated in 1985 (prior to the mandate for transition services), 1990 (the year the mandate took effect), and 1995 (students eligible to receive mandated services throughout their high school careers) from three school districts in Washington state at two points in time since graduation (at one year for the 1990 and 1995 graduates and at six years for the 1985 and 1990 graduates);

2. how transition services and policies were implemented for students with moderate/severe mental retardation in 1990 and 1995;
3. in what ways, if at all, the differences in outcomes for 1990 and 1995 graduates with moderate/severe mental retardation are associated with how districts and schools implemented transition services.

The choice of examining the postschool outcomes of students with moderate/severe mental retardation is based on the fact that (1) unlike persons with mild mental retardation, those with moderate or severe mental retardation are always eligible for ongoing support services from the Division of Developmental Disabilities, and (2) unlike many students with profound levels of mental retardation, youth with moderate/severe mental retardation are employable with natural supports in the workplace (Nisbet & Hagner, 1988).

#### Initial Conceptual Framework and Research Questions

Policies, such as transition, pass through several filters as they go from the federal level to the state level to the school district and finally the individual, as summarized schematically in Figure 1. As policies pass through each of these filters, various changes, usually interpretations or re-interpretations, occur.

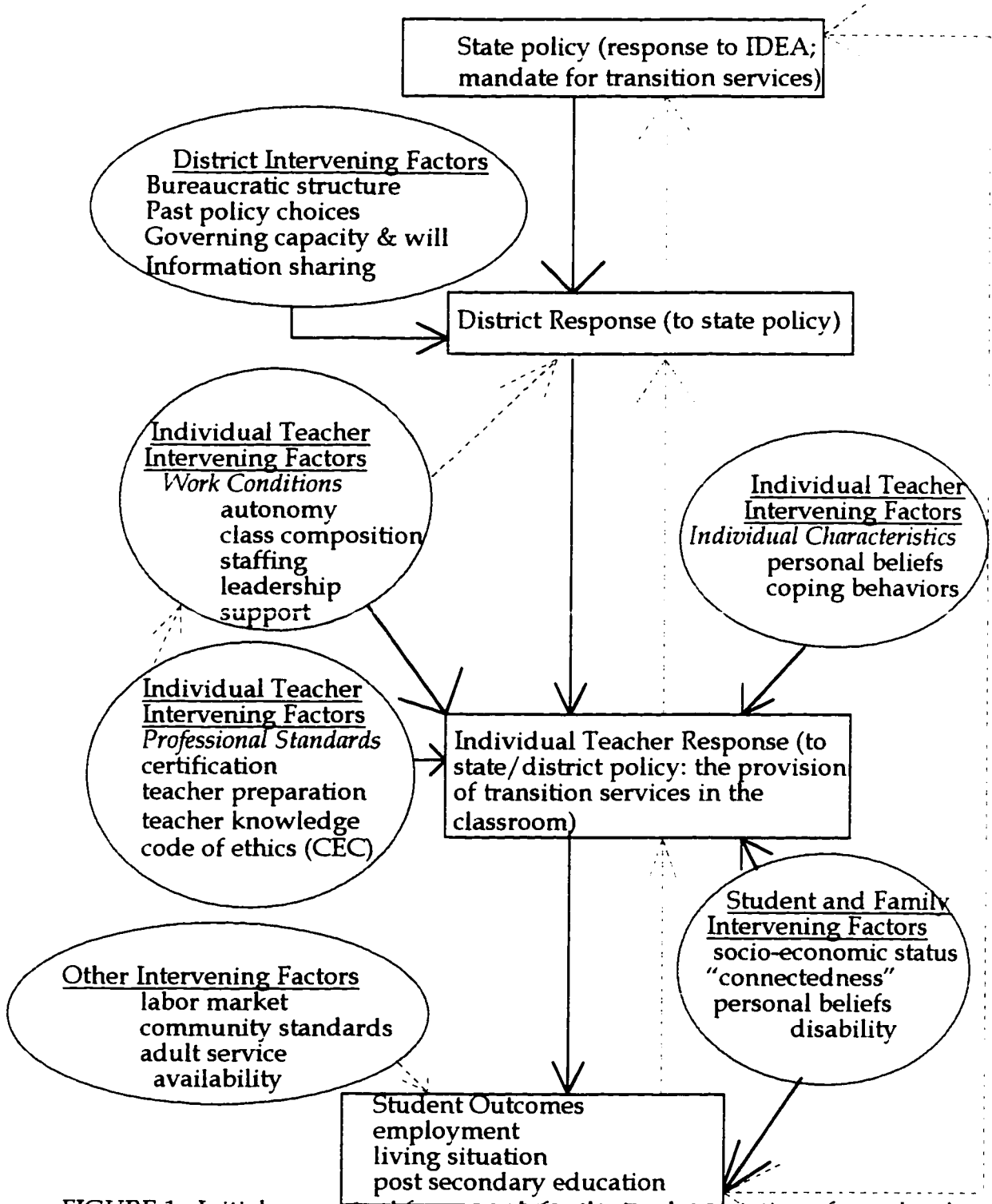


FIGURE 1: Initial conceptual framework for the implementation of mandated transition services in high school programs for students with mental retardation.

The transition policy at the state level was a response to the federal mandate for transition included in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The state interpretation of the transition mandate outlines services that must be included in the secondary program of students with disabilities and attempts to influence what occurs in secondary special education classrooms. For example, Washington state mandates a functional vocational evaluation (FVE) while federal legislation only suggests this. The FVE requirement emphasizes the importance of linking the student's interests and aptitude to his/her vocational education/training and that training to employment opportunities. Along with vocational education/training and employment objectives, other required transition services are: instruction, adult and daily living skills, such as shopping and banking skills and community experiences, including transportation and accessing community recreation centers.

At the district level, several intervening factors may influence this process of implementing a mandate, including (1) bureaucratic structure (Wermuth & Grayson, 1995; Schwille, Porter, Belli, Floden, Freeman, Knappen, Kuhs, & Schmidt, 1986; Fullan, 1993; Cohen & Ball, 1990; Cohen & Barnes, 1993; Elmore, 1986; Marsh & Odden, 1991); (2) implementation strategies; (3) governing capacity and will (Wermuth & Grayson, 1995; Knapp, Stearns, Turnbull, David, & Peterson, 1991), (4) approaches to information sharing (Wermuth & Grayson, 1995) and (5) past policy choices (Wermuth & Grayson, 1995).

In setting the context for their study of transition policy implementation at the state level, Wermuth & Grayson (1995) stated that bureaucratic structure "describes who is, or is at least responsible for, implementing...policies within a given state" (p.28). At the district level, the key players responsible for implementing a state policy include: the school board (for setting both local policies and local response to state policy), the superintendent, and the building principal. Transition, a policy affecting only students with disabilities, comes under the auspices of special education. Therefore, the special education director is also a key player in its implementation.

One common response to the transition mandate, within the bureaucratic structure at the district level, has been the creation of a new staff position, transition specialist. This person is often responsible for ensuring compliance with the mandate, organizing appropriate staff inservice training, and coordinating services with adult agencies for secondary students who are leaving the public school system.

Although not considered by Wermuth & Grayson in their analysis of transition policy implementation, state or district bureaucratic structures are likely to imply, or be associated with, district strategies for implementing a particular policy. These implementation strategies may be top-down or bottom-up. Marsh and Odden (1991) describe top-down strategies as those coordinated by district leadership while bottom-up strategies rely on "teachers and schools, rather than district leadership, ...(to develop) linkages to regional networks of

assistance and program development" (p.238). Debate about the efficacy of either strategy continues in the literature with growing support for the use of both strategies to implement educational reform. Fullan (1993) suggests that:

Top-down strategies result in conflict, or superficial compliance, or both. Expecting local units to flourish through laissez-faire decentralization leads to drift, narrowness, or inertia. Combined strategies that capitalize on the center's strengths (to provide prospective direction, incentives, networking, and retrospective monitoring) and locals' capacities (to learn, create, respond to, and contribute) are more likely to achieve greater overall coherence. Such systems also have greater accountability, given that the need to obtain political support for ideas is built into the patterns of interaction (p. 201).

In the case of transition policies at the local level, the hiring of the district-level transition specialist indicates a top-down strategy. A bottom-up strategy may include the formation of a building-level team that develops tools to assist in the transition implementation process, such as a compilation of assessment tests used for the functional vocational evaluation. It is currently unknown whether districts using a top-down strategy are implementing transition more efficiently and effectively than those districts using a bottom-up strategy, such as site-based management or building management teams.

Wermuth and Grayson (1995) cite McDonnell and Elmore (1987) in defining governing capacity as "the ability of the initiating level to implement a policy and the ability of the target to meet the policy's requirements" (p.28). Governing capacity, therefore, includes investigating the ability of personnel to carry out the requirements of the policy. In the case of transition, capacity may

be manifested in the availability of fiscal resources "specifically allocated for...policy implementation" (Wermuth and Grayson, 1995, p.29). In districts implementing transition policies, funding is an important issue since transition is an unfunded mandate. These fiscal resources might take the form of support for specialized staff, staff development, and curriculum materials. Governing capacity may also include (1) the availability of inservice training in transition, (2) staff contracts that allow the provision of instruction outside of the school building (in order to comply with the mandate for community experiences), and (3) the absence of current district policies and procedures that compete with transition, e.g., district policies regarding graduation. In discussing will, McLaughlin (1991) observed that "capacity, admittedly a difficult issue, is something that policy can address...but will, or the attitudes, motivation, and beliefs that underlie an implementor's response to a policy's goals or strategies, is less amenable to policy intervention" (p.187). When districts implement the transition mandate, the will to do so may manifest itself as: (1) the commitment of resources, including release time for staff, directed toward implementing the mandate, (2) creating a new position, "transition specialist", to oversee the implementation process, and/or (3) creating a mission statement that emphasizes the postschool outcomes for students, including those with disabilities.

"Information sharing refers to formal and informal linkages between systems that facilitate the continuous two-way flow of information on...policy

implementation and service provision" (Wermuth & Grayson, 1995, p.29). One of the goals of the transition mandate includes a requirement for the establishment of adult service linkages for students with disabilities.

Information sharing between the school system and adult service providers may take many forms, the most common being the formation of interagency agreements (Stowitschek, 1992).

Finally, past policy choices, according to McDonnell and Elmore (1987) "influence what the public wants from government and how it expects goals to be accomplished" (Wermuth & Grayson, 1995, p.29,30) e.g., through the preferred use of a particular policy instrument. At the district level, evidence of transition prior to the mandate may be present in grading policies and graduation policies. The choice of policy instruments, e.g., inducements such as grant funding, also influences the implementation of the transition mandate at the district level. In Washington state, transition grants to local school districts have been available since 1988, two years before the mandate for transition.

At the individual teacher level, factors that influence policy implementation include work conditions, professional standards, and individual characteristics. Environmental forces "exert a telling influence on the teachers' approach to instruction in mathematics, reading and writing" (Knapp, 1995, p. 9-3). These forces include: "staffing and student assignment, the organization of the instructional day, subject-specific instructional leadership, collegial and administrative support, and the degree of professional autonomy granted to

teachers" (Knapp, 1995, p.9-3). Lipsky (1980) also discusses the "critical role in the transformation of top-level policy" (Summer, 1995, p.11) played by work conditions such as inadequate resources and vague or conflicting goal expectations that contribute to the transformation of policy at the service delivery level. The mandated transition service of community experiences impacts both classroom composition and teacher work load. For example, a teacher must take her class into the community for vocational training or recreation but, for safety reasons, can only take half of her class at one time. Therefore, another teacher in the building needs to increase his/her class load in order to "cover" for the teacher in the community.

Professional standards that influence teachers' knowledge and skills are expressed through teacher certification (McLaughlin, 1991; McLaughlin, Valdivieso, Spence, & Fuller, 1988), teacher preparation programs (Knapp, 1995) and written codes of conduct such as the CEC code of ethics. For example, special education certification in several states, including Washington, is a K-12 certification. The focus of teacher preparation in special education is often early childhood/elementary issues with little emphasis on transition, vocational education/training, or collaboration with adult service agencies. Teachers, therefore, are often poorly prepared to implement the transition mandate.

Personal factors including personal beliefs about students and teaching (Smylie, 1994; Knapp, 1995; Ball, 1990; Spillane, 1994; Talbert & McLaughlin, 1993) and coping behaviors (Lipsky, 1980; Ball, 1990) also contribute to the

transformation of a policy at the individual teacher or service delivery level.

Teachers' beliefs about student needs, as discussed by Talbert and McLaughlin (1993), will "shape teachers' goals, conceptions of practice, and roles in myriad ways" (p.181). Ball (1990), and Cohen and Ball (1990) suggest that teacher practices shape policy just as policy shapes practice and "they (teachers) apprehend and enact new instructional policies in light of inherited knowledge, belief, and practice" (Cohen & Ball, 1990, p.335).

Coping behaviors are those behaviors adopted by "street-level bureaucrats," including special education teachers, to deal with conflicting work expectations and the chronic shortages of resources. "Street-level bureaucrats" refer to "public service workers who interact directly with citizens in the course of their jobs, and who have substantial discretion in the execution of their work" (Lipsky, 1980, p.3). Furthermore,

Street-level bureaucrats make policy in two related respects. They exercise wide discretion in decisions about citizens with whom they interact. Then, when taken in concert, their individual actions add up to agency behavior...The policy-making roles of street-level bureaucrats are built upon two interrelated facets of their positions: relatively high degrees of discretion and relative autonomy from organizational authority (Lipsky, 1980, p.13).

For example, special education is an open entitlement program designed to meet the individual needs of the student; cost cannot be the determining factor in the provision of services. However, the federal government does not fully fund special education, therefore, special education teachers often feel constrained in the type of program that they can design for an individual student.

Factors other than a policy such as transition influence student outcomes. The personal beliefs of the student and the family, including beliefs about work (Sitlington, Frank, & Carson, 1991; Wehman, et al., 1985) and the student's disability [e.g., the level of retardation may influence the level of family support that the student receives in both seeking and keeping employment]. The socio-economic status of the student/family, the extent to which the family has a network of friends who can help informally support the student in the community and on the job, and the ability of the family to access publicly funded support from adult services agencies, may also influence the student's transition from school to work. Economic conditions in the community, community standards and expectations regarding persons with disabilities, size of the school district (Knapp, et al., 1991) and the availability of adult services may also influence the implementation of the transition policy and the postschool adjustment of students with moderate/severe mental retardation.

In order to document this postschool adjustment of students with moderate/severe mental retardation and the implementation process for transition services, this study will attempt to answer three questions:

1. Were there differences in postschool outcomes among students with moderate/severe mental retardation who graduated in 1985 (prior to the mandate for transition services), 1990 (the year the mandate took effect), and 1995 (students eligible to receive mandated services throughout their high school careers) from three school districts in Washington state at two discrete points in time since graduation (at one year for the 1990 and 1995 graduates and at six years for the 1985 and 1990 graduates). Specifically, for graduates with moderate/severe mental retardation, what are the outcome differences

between (a) 1990 and 1995 graduates one year after high school and (b) 1985 and 1990 graduates six years after high school for each outcome variable?

Outcome variables:

- a. employed vs. not employed
  - b. currently enrolled vs. not enrolled in postsecondary school or training
  - c. engaged vs. not engaged in employment or education or both
  - d. independent vs. dependent residence
2. How were transition services implemented, in response to state policy or other forces, for students with moderate/severe mental retardation in 1990 and 1995?
- 2.1 What forms did these services take at the classroom level?
  - 2.2 Did the extent or nature of transition services change following the mandate?
  - 2.3 How did district-level implementation realize or reinterpret the state mandate?
  - 2.4 What factors influenced district-level implementation?
  - 2.5. How were individual students and families involved in the transition process?
  - 2.6 How did the pattern of involvement change from 1990 to 1995?
  - 2.7 How did district actions affect classroom level implementation?
3. In what ways, if at all, were differences in outcomes for 1990 and 1995 graduates associated with how districts and schools implemented transition services?
- 3.1 What within-school factors are associated with differences in outcomes?

3.2 What district-level factors are associated with differences in outcomes?

## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Although first mentioned in the Education of the Handicapped Amendments of 1983, dialogue about transition really started in 1984, when the director of the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS), Madelyn Will, wrote Bridges from School to Working Life. In it, she described transition as a movement from school to work for students with special needs, occurring at the point of graduation and continuing into the first year of adult life. The following year, Andrew Halpern expanded Will's definition of transition to include access to community recreational facilities and residential services. The conversation continued when Wehman, Kregel, Barcus, and Schalock (1986) defined transition as an extended process of planning for the adult life of individuals with disabilities.

While the preceding chapter has framed a set of questions about the implementation and possible impact of transition policies, we have not yet examined carefully the starting point (design of policy) and ending point (student postschool outcomes) of the policy-outcomes connection. We turn to that task in this chapter, drawing on literature related to policy design and postschool outcomes for students with identified disabilities. This chapter begins with a review of the literature on the design of transition policy. Following this section is a review of the national, state, and regional studies on the postsecondary outcomes experienced by students with mental retardation, especially, moderate/severe mental retardation.

### Design of Transition Policy

Policies can be conceptualized as “a set of tools or instruments designed to achieve a specific outcome” (Snauwaert, 1992, p.510). Using this framework, the federal government chose "mandate" as the policy instrument for transition in 1990 as a requirement of the IDEA. However, there are other types of policy instruments. Wermuth and Grayson (1995) discuss a typology developed by McDonnell and Elmore that include: mandates, inducements, capacity building and systems change.

Table 1  
Analytical Framework of Policy Instruments<sup>1</sup>

Policy Instrument	Primary Elements	Expected Effects
Mandates	Rules or regulations (e.g., IEP objectives, service requirements)	Compliance
Inducements	Funding (procurements) (e.g., block grants, some demonstration projects)	Production of value, goods, and services; short-term returns
Capacity Building	Funding or resources (investment) (e.g., personnel preparation grants, provision of technical assistance, information dissemination, some demonstration projects)	Enhancement of skills, material, intellectual, and human resources; long-term returns

<sup>1</sup> Wermuth & Grayson, 1995, p.14

Table 1 (continued)

Analytical Framework of Policy Instruments<sup>2</sup>

Policy Instrument	Primary Elements	Expected Effects
System Change	Authority (e.g., interagency agreements, cooperative funding strategies, agency creation)	Altered composition of delivery systems; transfer of authority among agencies.

These policy instruments, originally developed to discuss the implementation of educational reform policies, were used by Wermuth and Grayson (1995) in an analysis of state-level transition policy implementation because "of the similarity between implementation of educational reform policies and transition policies that both span across multiple systems" (p.13).

The first transition policy instrument used at the federal level was an inducement–funding for model demonstration projects authorized by The Education of the Handicapped Amendments of 1983. Three years later, the Education of the Handicapped Act Amendments of 1986 reauthorized and expanded these discretionary programs, encouraging the development of state-level interagency agreements for the provision of transition services. These interagency agreements were a first attempt at system change for transition (DeStefano & Wermuth, 1992, p.538).

In 1990, President Bush signed P.L. 101-476, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The IDEA changed the policy instrument used to implement transition from system change to a mandate for the provision

<sup>2</sup> Wermuth & Grayson, 1995, p.14

of transition services for students in special education who are 16 years of age and older. This shift from system change to mandate announced a complementary shift in the perception by policymakers of the core problem that the policy addresses (Snauwaert, 1992); from encouraging a voluntary sharing of responsibility for student outcomes to focusing on school compliance to provide transition services to students with disabilities that will, presumably, lead to better outcomes for students. The IDEA provides a definition of transition services as,

A coordinated set of activities for a student, designated within an outcome oriented process, which promotes movement from school to postschool activities, including postsecondary education, vocational training, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living or community participation (34 C.F.R. Section 300.18).

Policymakers at the federal level, therefore, have utilized several different forms of policy instrumentation for transition, moving from an inducement to systems change to mandate. Each stage implies differences in implementation and anticipated results, presumably evidenced in the postschool outcomes of students with disabilities.

The most common policy instrument for the implementation of transition at the state level is system change through the use of interagency agreements. Mandates or documents reflecting legislative activity is the least common policy instrument (Stowitschek, 1992).

The state of Washington actively approached the implementation of a transition policy prior to the federal mandate in a manner parallel to the federal policy through (1) a system change policy instrument, i.e., the formulation of an interagency agreement between the Office of the Superintendent of Public

Instruction (OSPI) and two divisions within the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS), Vocational Rehabilitation and Developmental Disabilities and (2) an inducement, in the form of grants and technical assistance to local school districts to implement transition plans for students with disabilities prior to mandating transition services in 1990. Stowitschek's (1992) study of policy and planning in transition programs at the state level found only four "stars," including Washington, that provided documentation indicating activity in all of the study's areas of transition planning, including: interagency activity, a transition data base, evaluation of transition outcomes, a state plan, and parent/family participation in the transition process.

#### Postschool Outcomes of Students with Mental Retardation

The following sections will address the national study on student outcomes for students with mental retardation (Wagner, D'Amico, Marder, Newmann, & Blackorby, 1992), followed by discussion of state-level follow-up studies and concluding with regional studies, as appropriate.

Since there are few studies that have differentiated the outcomes between students with mild, moderate and severe mental retardation, each section will begin with what we know about students with mental retardation in the aggregate, followed by the available information about the postschool outcomes for students with moderate and severe mental retardation.

#### Postsecondary Education

Overall, we know that students with mental retardation are more likely to attend a vocational than an academic program and that graduation rates from these programs are low-approximately half the graduation rate compared to all students with disabilities.

Nationally, there is an increase in enrollment in postsecondary education three to five years out of school (12.8%) for students with mental retardation over those students who are out of school two or fewer years (8.3%). Following the 12.8% attending three to five years after school leaving, we know that<sup>3</sup>:

1. 9.6% attend a vocational school, 3.6% attend a two year college (some overlap in these numbers may be attributable to attendance at two year colleges in vocational, rather than academic, programs). These figures are lower than the percentages for all students with disabilities; 15.9% of all students with disabilities attend a vocational school and 11.8% attend a two year college.
2. Students with mental retardation are more likely to participate in a vocational program (11.9%) than an academic (.2%) or a mixed program (.6%).
3. Approximately 6.4% of the 12.8% who attend some type of postsecondary training complete a program with a degree; 5.1% do not [other students complete programs that do not confer degrees]. Compare this to the 27.7% of all students with disabilities who attend some type of postsecondary training; 11.9% complete a degree program, 8.3% do not with the remaining 7.5% of the students enrolled in programs that do not confer degrees.

In a state follow-up study of students with mental retardation, Edgar & Levine (1987) categorized postsecondary education into: community college, vocational technical school, four year college, and trade school. They reported that 14% of the special education graduates who exited between 1978 and 1984 attended a postsecondary school. The majority of these students attended community college, followed by trade school, vocational technical school and one who attended a four year college. This is a higher figure than reported by

---

<sup>3</sup> Source: Wagner, D'Amico, Marder, Newmann, & Blackorby (1992).

Hasazi, et al. (1985) in Vermont. For students who exited between 1981 and 1983, only 6.8% were in some type of postsecondary education, including job training.

The Pilley (1988) and Thurlow, et al. (1989) studies, which differentiate between different levels of mental retardation, indicated that the more significant the level of mental retardation, the less likely the student will participate in any postsecondary education, including job training programs. Low rates of participation in postsecondary education for students with mental retardation, reported in regional follow-up studies, ranged from 2% (Schalock, et al., 1992) to 18% (Pilley, 1988).

Thurlow, et al. (1989) reported a low rate (9%) of participation in postsecondary job training for students with moderate mental retardation.

### Employment

There is more consistency in the reported non-sheltered employment rates of students with mild mental retardation and severe mental retardation than for students with moderate mental retardation. Differences in high school program, the availability of adult service support and/or teacher and family expectations for the student may contribute to this variability.

Participation in competitive employment increases for students with mental retardation as they grow older, with part-time employment more prevalent than full-time employment.

Overall, 79.6% of the students with mental retardation nationwide have been employed at some point, in the five years that students were followed since leaving high school (Wagner, et al., 1992). There is a pronounced increase of 11.6% in competitive employment between two years out of school (25.4%) and three to five years out of school (37%). Part-time employment increases for

former students with mental retardation by only 5% but full-time employment for these former students increases by 11.1% between two year out of school and three to five years out of school.

Of the students out of school two years or less, 8.8% are in sheltered employment. Of these students, 37% move into competitive employment at the three to five year point; 30% stayed in the sheltered workshop; 1% entered the volunteer force and 31% became unemployed.

It is difficult to compare the state-level follow-up studies of students with mental retardation because of the variability in the amount of time students that have been out of school reported among these studies and the level of mental retardation reported in the state studies.

Connecticut, which reported an 80.7% employment rate for students with mild mental retardation (McGuire, Archambault, Gillung, & Strauch, 1987), interviewed students who exited school between 1981 and 1984. Vermont reported a 46.4% employment rate for students with mental retardation in the aggregate, who exited school between 1981 and 1983<sup>4</sup> and Iowa reported a 48.7% employment rate for students with mild mental retardation one year out of school<sup>5</sup>.

Unlike the Vermont and Connecticut studies, Washington state differentiated between mild and severe mental retardation in a follow-up study conducted with students who exited school between 1983 and 1987 (see table 2)<sup>6</sup>. Iowa reported on the outcomes of 14 students with severe/profound mental disabilities (Sitlington, et al., 1991) in a separate study from the one previously cited, which indicated a very stable picture of sheltered employment. In year

---

<sup>4</sup> Hasazi, S.B., Gordon, L.R., Roe, C.A., Finck, D., Hull, M., & Salembier, G. (1985).

<sup>5</sup> Sitlington, P.L., & Frank, A.P. (1989).

<sup>6</sup> Edgar, E., Levine, P., Levine, R., & Dubey, M. (1988).

one, 64% of the students were in sheltered employment and 36% were unemployed; in year two, 71% were in sheltered employment with 29% unemployed.

Table 2

Percentage of 1983-1987 Washington State Graduates Who Reported Being Employed<sup>7</sup> Six to Twenty-Four Months After Graduation

	Severe Mental Retardation	Mild Mental Retardation
6 months out	34.6%	41%
12 months out	40%	40%
18 months out	39%	50%
24 months out	30%	55%

Regional studies, which include studies of individual school districts and/or parts of one state, reported higher employment rates for students with mild mental retardation than for students with moderate to severe levels of mental retardation. Bruininks, et al. (1990) report an 80% employment rate for students with mild mental retardation and 32% for students with moderate mental retardation. This indicates a potential problem in aggregating data from students with mild, moderate, and severe mental retardation.

Wehman et al.'s (1985) study of 165 students with severe disabilities who exited school between 1978 and 1983 indicated that 12% were competitively employed, 9% were in sheltered employment and 78.6% were unemployed. Differences in the availability and philosophy of the adult services in Iowa and Virginia may explain the difference between the Sitlington et al. (1991) study and the Wehman, et al. (1985) study. However, Wehman's study defined severe disability as a student with moderate, severe or profound mental retardation.

---

<sup>7</sup> includes sheltered employment

Unemployment rates for students with moderate and severe mental retardation are higher than for students with mild mental retardation (Bruininks, et al., 1990; Gordon & Goldbach, 1989). These rates range from 17% (Coonley, et al., 1980) to 33% (Schalock, 1986). Factors that may explain this broad range include:

1. definitions of employment and unemployment. Coonley, et al. (1980) include "sporadic" employment in the employment rate.
2. place of residence. The unemployment rate reported by Schlock was for youth living in rural Nebraska; Coonley reported on students living in Kansas City.

### Earnings

It is difficult to compare earnings across studies because of the different manner in which earnings are reported (e.g., hourly wage, monthly wage, annual income) and because of the components of earnings reported in some studies, such as SSI and ASDI, as well as wages earned through employment. However, students with mental retardation are less likely to be working competitively, less likely to be working full time and, therefore, less likely to earn above the minimum wage level than other youth with disabilities. The national median wage reported for students with mental retardation out of school two years is \$3.50/hour; at three to five years out, the median wage increases to \$5.00/hour (Wagner, et al., 1992). However, few youth with mental retardation earn over \$6.00/hour. There was only a 2.9% increase from two years out of school to three to five years out in the number of students earning over \$6.00/hour compared to a 30.8% increase for youth with disabilities overall. Therefore, even though youth with mental retardation who are out of school

three to five years are working full-time, they are still likely to earn less than \$13,000/year.

The state studies report low earnings for youth in the mild/moderate range of mental retardation. Only 4% to 6% of these young adults earn above the minimum wage (Affleck, et al., 1990; Edgar & Levine, 1987). Sitlington, et al. (1989) report a slightly higher percentage of 8.8% and McGuire (1987) is again the exception with 59.6% earning between \$3.50 and \$6.50/hour.

Students with severe disabilities earned substantially less with wages ranging from .20/hour for 53% of the sample (Sitlington, et al., 1991) to less than \$100/month for 54% of the Wehman, et al. (1985) sample.

### Living Arrangements

Dependent/independent living is defined by the graduates' residence, which is the home in which the graduate spends the majority of his or her time. A "dependent" residence for a graduate with mental retardation includes living in the parents' home, with other relatives or in a foster home, in a group home, tenant support, or incarcerated in prison. "Independent" residence includes living in a house or apartment alone and without on-going support from an adult service provider, or with friends, roommates, a spouse or partner, in a dormitory or barracks, in a residence provided by an employer (e.g., on a fishing boat), or traveling.

Over time, rates of independent living for youth with mental retardation increase with students with mild mental retardation the most likely to live independently. Students with moderate to severe/profound levels of mental retardation rarely live independently.

Nationally, there is an increase in independent living between the two year (4.3%) and the three to five year point (23.7%). However, the percentage of

youth living with their parents is still very high (63.8%) at the three to five year point.

State and regional studies also indicate that the more significant the level of mental retardation, the more likely the youth will live in a group home and the less likely he/she is to be living independently (Bruininks, et al., 1990). Students with mild mental retardation are the most likely to live at home (Gordon & Goldbach, 1989; Bruininks, et al., 1990; Sitlington, et al., 1989& 1991; Edgar & Levine, 1987; Hasazi, et al., 1985). Low rates of independent living were reported at all levels of mental retardation. These ranged from 5-16% for students with mild mental retardation (Haring & Lovett, 1990; Bruininks, et al., 1990) to 0-3% for students with moderate mental retardation (Gordon & Goldbach, 1989; Bruininks, et al., 1990) and 0 for students with severe mental retardation (Gordon & Goldbach, 1989; Bruininks, et al., 1990; Haring & Lovett, 1990).

### Summary

Overall, the postschool outcomes for students with mental retardation, at all levels, are not good. Youth with mental retardation earn low wages and have low rates of participation in postsecondary education, including job training. These youth are also more likely to work part-time and to live dependently than other graduates with disabilities.

However, the national, state-level, and regional studies about the postschool outcomes of students with mental retardation have design limitations that confuse the picture of what we know about these students.

Often, the results sections of studies do not delineate the level of mental retardation. Wagner, et al. (1992) state that

The category of youth with mental retardation includes those with an extremely broad range of

intellectual abilities. Within this category are youth with such severe retardation that their intellectual ability is not measurable. At the other end of the spectrum are youth with measured IQs as high as 79, the cutoff in some states for classifying students as having mental retardation. Using a single category label, rather than distinguishing youth based on severity of their retardation, masks this diversity of ability and a corresponding diversity of experience (p.8-4).

Study design issues focusing on definitions include changes in definitions over time and lack of clarity in the use of terms. Affleck, Edgar, Levine, & Kortering (1990) and Haring and Lovett (1990) mention that since the passage of the Education of Handicapped Children's Act (EHA), changes have occurred in the definition of mental retardation. Therefore, changes in the definition of mental retardation occurred after the publication of the studies by Brodin, et al. (1973), Chaffin, et al. (1971), Dinger (1961), and Phelps (1956).

The Hasazi, et al. (1985) and Pilley (1988) studies lack clarity in their use of the terms TMR and EMR, using neither I.Q. scores or adaptive behavior indicators in the definition. Additionally, in some studies (Roessler, et al., 1990; Schalock, 1986), I.Q. scores were not reported at all. Finally, although Sitlington, Frank, & Carson (1991) define the term "mental disability", this category includes students with I.Q.'s one standard deviation below the norm instead of two, making comparisons with other state studies very difficult.

Single point in time data collection and using only categorical and cross-categorical samples of former special education students without comparative

information on a nonhandicapped cohort, a limitation discussed in Affleck, et al (1990 and Haring and Lovett (1990), is a common design weakness.

Often, parents, guardians or informed others provide the primary source of information in follow-up studies. Levine & Edgar (1994) urged caution in the use of data obtained from informed others in the areas of salary level, hours worked, and medical benefits.

Finally, in both the Coonley, et al. (1980) and the Hasazi, et al. (1985) studies, former teachers or vocational adjustment coordinators interviewed students. This may result in interviewer bias.

Haring and Lovett (1990) discuss limitations of follow-up studies resulting from inappropriate sampling strategies. These include: (1) lack of experimental control (students cannot be randomly assigned to special education classes), (2) representativeness of the sample and (3) limited geographical area from which the sample is selected. There were sampling issues in the Affleck, et al. (1990); Edgar & Levine (1987); Bruininks, et al. (1990); Gordon & Goldbach, 1989; McGuire, et al. (1987); and Roessler, et al. (1990) studies, primarily in the representativeness of the sample. Often, the respondents represented individuals from a higher socio-economic status (SES) than the nonrespondents, who could not be contacted because of nonworking or disconnected phone numbers. In Coonley, et al. (1980), all those interviewed were attendees at a reunion for former work study graduates. Haring & Lovett (1990); Kregel, et al. (1986); Pilley (1988); Roessler, et al. (1990); Schalock, et al. (1986 & 1992) and

Thurlow, Bruininks, & Lange (1989) selected samples from limited geographical areas, e.g., rural Nebraska (Schalock, et al., 1986 & 1992) or a single school district (Pilley, 1988).

Haring and Lovett (1990) discuss the inadequate description of the actual content of the special education program as a weakness in the design of many follow-up studies. The state study by McGuire, et al. (1987) and the regional studies by Brolin, et al. (1973), Kregel, et al. (1986), Phelps (1956), and Wehman, et al. (1985) did not discuss the high school program of the former special education students. Table 3 summarizes these study design limitations.

Table 3

## Summary Of Study Design Limitations

Study	Sample	1 Time Data	Geo. Area	Def.	Limited Outcomes	Info/HS Program	Respond. Agree.	Interview Bias
Affleck	+	-	-	-	-	-	+	-
Bruininks	+?	+	+	-	-	-	+	-
Coonley	+	+	+	-	+	-	-	+
Edgar	+	++	-	-	-	-	+	-
Gordon	+	-	+	-	-	-	+	-
Haring	-	+	+	-	-	-	+	-
Hasazi	-	+	-	-	-	+	+(some)	+
Kregel	+	+	+	-	+	+	+(some)	-
McGuire	+	-	-	-	-	+	+	-

Table 3 (continued)

## Summary of Study Design Limitations

Study	Sample	1 Time Data	Geo. Area	Def.	Limited Outcomes	Info/HS Program	Respond. Agree.	Interview Bias
Pilley	-	+	+	-	-	-	+	?
Roessler	+	+	+	+	-	+	+(some)	?
Sitlington91a	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-
Sitlington91b	-	-	-	+	-	+	+	-
Thurlow	+?	+	+	-	-	-	+	-
Schalock'86	?	?	+	?	?	?	?	?
Schalock'92	+?	+	+	-	-	-	+(some)	?
SRI	-	-	-	-	-	-	+(some)	-
Wehman	+	+	-	-	+	+	+	-

## CHAPTER 3

### METHOD

The purpose of this study is to investigate (1) how the Washington state mandate for transition has been implemented locally and (2) whether these local efforts are associated with improved outcomes for students with moderate/severe mental retardation. In order to document these outcomes for students with moderate/severe mental retardation and the implementation process for transition services, I examined the postschool outcomes for three cohorts of special education graduates with moderate or severe mental retardation at two points in time (one year and six years after graduation). Previous outcomes studies have indicated that, over time, the postschool outcomes for youth with mental retardation improve, particularly in the areas of employment and independent living, although not for students with moderate/severe mental retardation. By examining the postschool outcomes at two points in time, I hoped to differentiate between improvements in outcomes due to student maturation and evidence of the influence of the transition mandate as implemented at the district and classroom levels.

In this chapter, I pose the research questions, define all terms, describe the sample, procedures and protocol used to collect the data, and outline the analytic strategies.

#### Research Questions

The following three questions apply to three school districts in Washington state:

1. Are there differences in postschool outcomes among students with moderate/severe mental retardation who graduated in 1985 (prior to the mandate for transition services), 1990 (the year the mandate took effect),

and 1995 (a year by which students could have received mandated services throughout their high school careers) at two discrete points in time since graduation? Specifically, what are the differences between (a) 1990 and 1995 graduates one year after high school and (b) 1985 and 1990 graduates six years after high school for the following four outcome variables?

- a. employed vs. not employed
  - b. currently enrolled vs. not enrolled in postsecondary school or training
  - c. engaged vs. not engaged in employment or education or both
  - d. independent vs. dependent residence
2. How were transition services and policies implemented, in response to state policy or other forces, for students with moderate/severe mental retardation who graduated in 1990 and 1995?
- 2.1 What forms did these services take at the classroom level?
  - 2.2 Did the extent or nature of transition services change following the mandate?
  - 2.3 How did district-level implementation realize or reinterpret state mandate or policies related to transition, if any?
  - 2.4 What factors influenced district-level implementation?
  - 2.5. How were individual students and families involved in the transition process?
  - 2.6 How did the pattern of involvement change from 1990 to 1995?
  - 2.7 How did district actions affect classroom level implementation?

3. In what ways, if at all, were differences in outcomes for 1990 and 1995 graduates associated with how districts and schools implemented transition policies and services?
  - 3.1 What within-school factors are associated with differences in outcomes?
  - 3.2 What district-level factors are associated with differences in outcomes?

### Definitions of Terms

The definitions of terms includes: definitions of moderate and severe/profound mental retardation found in the Washington Administrative Code and a description of the time frame. Definitions of the outcome measures examined in this study, and definitions of the intervening variables included in the initial conceptual framework are found in Appendix A-16.

### Disability Categories

This study draws on a subsample from the Washington State Follow Along Study (the Decade Project)<sup>8</sup> comprising all subjects categorized as students with moderate/severe mental retardation. According to the Washington Administrative Code 392-171-421, which was in effect at the time of this study, the two categories of mental retardation are defined as follows:

Moderate mental retardation. Intellectual functioning (IQ) range from approximately 30 to 50 and the following conditions:  
(i) Academic functioning equal to one-half or less of chronological age/grade; and  
(ii) Adaptive behavior equal to one-half or less chronological age/grade.

---

<sup>8</sup> Edgar, E., Levine, P., Levine, R., & Dubcy, M. (1988).

Severe/profound mental retardation. Intellectual functioning (IQ) range under 30 and the following conditions:

(i) Academic functioning equal to one-third or less of chronological age/grade; and

(ii) Adaptive behavior equal to one-third or less chronological age/grade.

### Time Frame

There are four outcome data points relative to the three graduation years 1985, 1990 and 1995. One interview was conducted with 1995 graduates and the 1985 graduates, two interviews were conducted with 1990 graduates.

Point 1 = one year after graduation for the 1995 graduates

one year after graduation for the 1990 graduates

Point 2 = six years after graduation for the 1990 graduates

six years after graduation for the 1985 graduates

### Outcome Variables and Other Student Related Factors

School districts provided demographic information including each student's gender, primary disability, birthdate, and parents' / guardians' names, addresses, and phone numbers.

Parents or guardians were then interviewed by telephone. The information requested in the interview focused primarily on the postschool experiences of the graduates. In particular, interviewers solicited information about the graduates' current and previous employment status, including job title, salary, working hours, and benefits offered; postsecondary education, training, and graduation credentials; and residential status. Definitions of the outcome variables are included in Appendix A-16.

### Intervening Factors

Unlike the outcome variables of employment, postsecondary education, engagement, and living arrangements, the factors that influence the implementation of the goals expressed in the transition mandate cannot be easily

quantified. These factors are, however, operationally defined in the Appendix A-16. The definitions are purposely kept broad to permit qualitative examination of these factors to identify more specific manifestations of them.

### Research Strategy

The research questions posed earlier call for a two-part research strategy, combining a quantitative approach to studying outcomes for students with moderate/severe mental retardation and a qualitative approach to examining the factors that influence the implementation of a transition policy and the consequences of policy implementation for student outcomes.

Traditionally, postschool outcomes have been used as one measure of special education program effectiveness with the most commonly used outcome measures being: employment status, earning levels, living arrangements, and participation in postsecondary education or training (Wagner, et al., 1992). These data have also been used to justify the initiation of policy at the federal and state levels (Ysseldyke, Thurlow, & Gilman, 1993; Sykes & Harding, 1995). However, research indicates that factors outside of the school program may also impact these outcomes, e.g., economic conditions in the community, the personal beliefs of the student and family, community standards and expectations, and the availability of adult services (Sitlington, Frank, & Carson, 1991; Wagner, et al., 1992; Wehman, et al., 1985). Therefore, in order to know the extent to which a policy influences the postschool outcomes for students, it is necessary to look for "footprints" of the policy.

Examining the postschool outcomes of different cohorts at different points in time may indicate differences in what happens to students over time after they exit the public school system but it does little to explain the factors that

influence those differences. By using qualitative methods to ascertain, from the perspectives of an administrator, teacher, student, and parent, what occurred while the student was still in school, we can search for evidence of the transition mandate—"footprints" that indicate policy implementation at the classroom level. These footprints may be inferred from student and family familiarity with and involvement in the delivery of transition services, district policies and procedures that outline the delivery of transition services, and curricula that reflect a concern for transition.

#### Quantitative Description of Transition Student Outcomes

The purpose of this substudy was to explore the differences in postschool outcomes for students with moderate/severe mental retardation who graduated from high school in 1985 (prior to the mandate for transition services), 1990 (the year the transition services were mandated) and 1995 (the first graduating class of high school students who were eligible to receive the mandated transition services throughout their high school years). Telephone interviews were conducted with the parents or guardians of students with moderate/severe mental retardation who completed high school in 1990 (six years after graduation) and 1995 (one year after graduation). This information was compared to previously collected data, using the same protocol and procedures, on 1985 graduates (six years after graduation) and 1990 graduates (one year after graduation).

#### Sample and Setting

This study used a data set that is part of a larger study entitled The First Decade After Graduation. The Decade Project comprised two cohorts of subjects (students with disabilities and students without disabilities) who graduated

from three school districts (one urban and two suburban) in Washington state. The original Decade Project sample included all students in the three districts who had individualized education plans (IEPs) at the time of graduation and were labeled in one of the twelve disability categories defined in the Washington Administrative Code. For this substudy of students with moderate/severe mental retardation, graduates from special education identified at the time of graduation as having moderate or severe mental retardation were included. Due to the population characteristics, the subjects sampled were actually the parents/guardians as proxies for the students. The sample consists of the following: Cohort 1 comprises the parents/guardians of 23 students who graduated in June, 1985; Cohort 2, the parents/guardians of 16 students who graduated in June 1990 and Cohort 3, the parents/guardians of 14 students who graduated in June, 1995 (see tables 4 and 5).

#### Procedure for Collecting Outcomes Data

The special education directors in the three school districts provided master lists of the graduates. The parents of every graduate with moderate/severe mental retardation received a consent letter in the mail. Only subjects that responded to the letter were contacted for an interview.

Training of the interviewers. Interviewers who conducted the 1985 and 1990 (year one) telephone interviews with parents received training that included instruction in the survey instrument and practice in interview techniques such as specific probing styles, responses to inquiries, and methods of handling difficult or unique situations. The 1990 (year six) and 1995 (year one) parent telephone interviews were conducted by one interviewer who received this initial training and one interviewer who received similar training in the survey instrument.

Parent telephone interviews. Year one interviews for the 1985 and 1990 cohorts were conducted as part of the original Decade project. Interviews were conducted between January and June, 1991, approximately 5 1\2 to 6 years postgraduation for Cohort 1 (1985 graduates), and 6 to 12 months postgraduation for Cohort 2 (1990 graduates). Interviews for the 1990 graduates (Cohort 2, year six) and the 1995 graduates (Cohort 3) were conducted between February and June, 1996. Procedures for the Cohort 2 (year six) and Cohort 3 interviews coincided with the procedures previously used for Cohort 1 and 2 (year one). First, an attempt was made to interview the contact person for every subject except those who indicated (by letter or telephone) that they did not wish to participate. The "contact" was the person considered most familiar with the graduate's current situation as well as his or her situation at the time of graduation. In most cases this person was the graduate's parent. If the parent was unavailable or inappropriate (e.g., a stepparent who was not in contact with the graduate) staff interviewed a "parent substitute." These included guardians, other relatives (grandparent, aunt, uncle), foster parents, and group-home directors. In cases where a parent or parent substitute are unavailable, attempts were made to contact and interview the graduate. Detailed notes were kept for all interview attempts, including time and date, result (e.g., a wrong number, a specific time to call back, a referral to a more appropriate contact person), and possible leads for another phone number or contact person.

#### Quantitative Analysis Strategy

For the types of variables being examined in this substudy, descriptive analytic methods are appropriate. For example, for each variable (e.g., employment) across each group (e.g., Cohort 1), simple descriptive statistics were calculated, e.g., frequencies and percentages. Fisher's Exact Test was used

when the expected frequencies in each cell were small ( $N < 20$ ) (Siegel, 1956). Percentages were expressed relative to the specific group under study.

Outcome findings were presented by level of mental retardation and cohort (year of graduation). In addition, results were reported by school district and by years elapsed since graduation. In order to make comparisons across cohorts, this study was constrained by the methodology used to collect data in the original Decade study.

#### Case Studies of Graduates with Moderate/Severe Mental Retardation

In order to document how transition services were implemented for students with moderate/severe mental retardation and to determine in what ways their postschool outcomes, determined in the quantitative substudy described above, are associated with the implementation of transition policies and services, a second substudy was undertaken. Parents of students with moderate/severe mental retardation, teachers, and administrators were interviewed and pertinent school documents reviewed, resulting in 6 case studies of the implementation and impact of policies related to transition and their effects at the individual student level. According to Murphy (1980) this type of fieldwork method helps us to understand "how people perceive the program, and how it operates and why" (p.7) and complements outcomes evaluations.

#### Sample

Interviews were conducted with students, their teachers, and an administrator in each of three school districts and compiled into case studies of the implementation and impact of transition services (or their absence) at the student level and the relationship of these services to the transition policy. Three

of the students, one from each school district, were 1995 graduates of their high schools and three graduated in 1990. Graduates from 1985 were not interviewed because of potential issues with memory, selective recall and the telescoping effect (Blackorby & Edgar, 1992); the longer students are out of school, the less reliable their memory of events that occurred while in school.

Only the 1995 graduates have been eligible to receive the mandated transition services throughout their high school careers. Typically, there are very few students with moderate/severe mental retardation graduating from any district in any given year due to the low incidence of mental retardation. School district personnel selected the 1995 students from among those who (1) were eligible for special education services under the category of moderate or severe mental retardation, and (2) were considered by teachers as having moderate or severe mental retardation as the primary disability, and (3) were exiting the public school system in June, 1995. The selection was based on student and parent interest in participating in the study and staff selection of the students who best exemplified the program. "Best exemplified" was defined as those students who, by teacher perception, were experiencing positive postschool outcomes, such as employment, independent living, and/or enrollment in a postsecondary educational setting.

The 1990 graduates were selected by the investigator from a cohort of students who participated in the First Decade project. The selection criteria were the same as for the 1995 group with the exception of the exit date from the public school system. Prior to selection, teachers were asked if they remembered any of the students on the 1990 graduate list and which, if any, of those students were most memorable. Teacher responses regarding their most memorable students were taken into consideration for selection of the 1990 case studies.

Interestingly, although in two districts “most memorable” was considered by staff as equivalent to “best exemplified,” in the third district [PSD], the most memorable 1990 graduate was a student who the teacher considered not doing well; a student that, because of his unsuccessful school-to-adult life transition, motivated the staff to change the high school program.

Data from a variety of personnel in the three school districts were collected. Informants included transition specialists/administrators, special education teachers, parents and/or caregivers and, when possible, the students (see Appendix A, tables A-9, A-10, A-11).

The districts chosen are the districts that have participated in the Decade Project for the last 10 years, providing access to student names and records for the 1990 and 1995 graduates. These districts reflect conditions that pertain to many urban/suburban school districts in Washington state and have had access to state-funded technical assistance in the area of transition. The districts differ in their approach to transition programming. This difference is manifested in (1) the location of the transition program (on the high school campus, on a community college campus, or in the community), and (2) the focus of the program (employment or recreation and leisure).

### Setting

ASD is in a large metropolitan area in western Washington with a student population of over 41,000 students. Steel High School (pseudonym) is one of the schools that provides programming for students with mental retardation. Students who are 18 years of age and who have developmental disabilities may transfer from Steel into the transition program housed at the community college. There, students receive on-the-job vocational training and are placed in paid job placements with adult agency support prior to graduation.

PSD is in a suburban setting in western Washington and has a diverse student population of over 17,000. Students with mental retardation attend a school-based program at Baylor High School (pseudonym). Although the program is housed on the main campus of the high school, the students spend much of their day accessing recreational sites in the community as well as learning functional living skills within the natural environment of students' homes. Community access, recreation and leisure skill are a priority in this program rather than vocational training. Appendix A-18 contains 1992 census data for Washington State, King County, and the three school districts.

CSD is also in western Washington, adjacent to a large metropolitan area with a school district student population of over 14,000 students. The community in which CSD is located consists primarily of professionals in the middle to upper middle income range. Secondary students eligible for special education services are grouped into one of the district's four high schools. Students who are 18 years of age and who require additional time to complete the goals written in the IEP may transfer into the off campus transition program housed in an office building in the downtown area. These students receive on-the-job vocational training and/or classroom based vocational training at the community college. Students with developmental disabilities primarily receive on-the-job vocational training culminating in paid employment prior to graduation.

#### Data Collection Procedures

Data collection for the case studies included interviews with administrators, teachers, students, and parents; observations of classrooms and off-campus student work sites (for the 1995 graduates); a review of academic records, when available and district transition policies and procedures. The

open-ended interviews, utilizing a semi-structured interview guide approach (Patton, 1980), were tape recorded and structured to elicit information regarding the process of implementing mandated transition services. The general interview guide (Appendix A-14) allowed for flexibility in the wording and sequence of questions necessary when interviewing both adolescents with cognitive impairments, parents, teachers, and educational administrators. A data collection matrix, relating the research questions to the sources of information used to answer the questions, is contained in the Appendix A-17.

Implementation of the transition policy at the district and school level was examined through interviews, observations, and document review. Interviews with special education administrators focused on: 1) bureaucratic structure, 2) staffing patterns for providing transition services, and 3) funding of services. Interviews with teachers addressed 1) work conditions, including class composition; 2) issues of professional standards, including teacher knowledge about transition and their description of transition services; and 3) teacher personal beliefs and coping behaviors. Teachers were also asked about the curriculum used with the specific students who are participating in the study. Parents of students participating in the qualitative substudy were interviewed at least once to document student and family involvement in the transition process and student postschool outcomes.

Classroom observations of the 1995 graduates documented the consistency between practices described by teachers in the interviews and implementation of transition services in the classroom setting. All of the 1995 student participants were in self-contained settings; two districts provide off-campus settings which were observed and one provides a school-based setting which was also observed. Each 1995 student participating in the qualitative

substudy was observed for one full school day in the Spring of 1995. The day, selected by the teacher, was representative of a typical day and allowed observation of the students in their typical environments.

### Data Analysis

The two-fold purpose of this substudy guided the data analysis: (1) how the Washington state mandate for transition has been implemented locally and (2) whether these local efforts are associated with more equitable outcomes for students with moderate/severe mental retardation

The analysis proceeded on two levels. A within-case analysis of each student case provided an in-depth description of the transition process and the description necessary to "build or emerge a theory about it" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p.90).

The within-case analysis of the three 1995 cases:

1. described the current (one year out) outcomes for the student.
2. described the kind of learning experiences that were specifically designed to help with transition, that the student experienced in high school.
3. described the main philosophy and structure of the school's transition program from 1991 to 1995.
4. indicated if and how this program reflected state transition requirements.
5. explained why the program took the form it did and described other factors that influenced the program.
6. suggested the influences of state policy on the school and its program.

The within-case analysis of the three 1990 cases:

1. described and compared the current (six year out) outcomes for the student and the one year out outcomes for the student.
2. described the kind of learning experiences, specifically designed to help with transition, that the student experienced in high school.
3. described the main philosophy and, if appropriate, the transformation of the structure of the school's transition program from 1986 to 1990.
4. explained why the program took the form it did and described other factors that influenced the program.

A cross-case analysis 1) across the 3 school districts within each time period and 2) across the two time periods (1990, 1995) was conducted. The analysis across the two time periods (1990 and 1995) focused on deepening an "understanding and explanation" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p.173) of transition services across time and the impact (or absence of impact) of the mandate for transition on the provision of these services at the classroom level. The analysis across districts contributed to more general insights into the possible impacts of a mandate like transition by "looking at multiple actors in multiple settings" (Miles & Huberman, nod., p.435). Specifically, the cross-case analyses compared the three 1995 cases to:

1. determine variations in the program-to-outcome linkages.
2. provide explanations for this variation, including district policies, district or school conditions, and the characteristics of students and their families.
3. determine variations in the policy-to-program linkages.
4. determine explanations for this variation.

5. determine conditions under which the policy appears to have had greatest (and least) effect on program.
6. determine conditions under which the policy appears to have had the greatest (and least) effect on outcomes.

The cross-case analyses compared the three 1990 cases to determine variations in the program-to-outcome linkages and to provide explanations for this variation, including district policies, district or school conditions, and the characteristics of students and their families.

Because many of the factors that influence the implementation of educational policy at the district level are beyond the scope of this study, including the small sample size and the influence of the local community on activities within the school district (Knapp, et al., 1991), inferences from the cross-case analysis cannot provide generalizations about the transition process to all school districts. However, a “general” (i.e., not case-specific) understanding of the factors that *can* influence the implementation of policy goals at the local level and the nature and mechanisms of relationships between policy implementation and student outcomes can be devised from these cases. A preliminary list of analysis questions appears in the Appendix A-12.

The multiple actors in each case study includes: the student with mental retardation, the student’s parents, the special education teacher who case managed each student’s Individualized Education Plan (IEP), and the special education administrator most familiar with the district policy on transition.

The data set for the case studies includes: transcribed interviews, classroom/worksite observations recorded in field notes (for the 1995 graduates), and information from document reviews, including student schedules, academic records and district policies regarding transition, recorded

in field notes. The open-ended interviews, utilizing a semi-structured interview guide approach (Patton, 1980) were tape recorded and transcribed verbatim.

Field notes and classroom observations documented the consistency between practices expressed by teachers in the interviews and implementation of transition services in the classroom or worksite for the 1995 cohort.

All raw material marked with the name of the school district, informant's name, position, and date of the interview; corresponding codes facilitated matching raw material to sanitized data on all material. Sanitized data is data that has the informants name and references to the school and/or district replaced with a code. Raw materials were kept in a locked box. Sanitized data was organized by cases. Each case consisted of two to four interviews: administrator, teacher (when appropriate), student (when appropriate) and parent and accompanying field notes. Identification numbers were assigned to each interview within the case, e.g., Case 1SD.01A, indicating the school district, the first interview, and A indicating an administrator interview. Transcripts, including preliminary analytic notes, were stored on computer disk in a word processing program, then entered and coded using Ethnograph. Transcripts were indexed by identification number and thematic code.

Data reduction, the process of "selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming the data that appear in written-up field notes or transcriptions" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p.10), was an ongoing process. Both interviews and observations were summarized, and preliminary thematic codes used to cluster the data to aid in data reduction and the analysis process. A framework for this initial thematic coding scheme, using informants as the analytic unit, appears in the Appendix A-13. In addition to data reduction and initial coding, formal data analysis strategies included refining the coding

categories in order to begin to test hypotheses regarding the process of the transition mandate as it filters through the layers from school district to classroom to student and family. Confirming and disconfirming evidence was sought through the triangulation of interviews with administrators, teachers, students, and parents as well as observations of the 1995 students and review of the students' daily schedule and, when possible, academic records.

### Study Design Limitations

There are two sets of design limitations: (1) design limitations pertaining to the quantitative substudy and (2) design limitations pertaining to the qualitative substudy.

#### Design Limitations in the Quantitative Substudy

Reviews of survey research (Bruininks, Wolman & Thurlow, 1990; Halpern, 1990; Haring & Lovett, 1990) indicate that there are several limitations to follow-up studies that should be considered in examining the postschool outcomes of special education students. The most common limitations, as discussed in chapter 2, include: (1) aggregated data, (2) issues with definitions, e.g., changes in definitions over time and lack of clarity in the use of terms, (3) single point in time data collection, (4) respondent agreement, e.g., using parents to respond to questions about the current status of their son/daughter, (5) interviewer bias, (6) sampling, and (7) limited information about the high school program. Study design limitations were present in the studies reviewed for this research (see Table 3). However, the most common issues were those associated with sample selection and data collection techniques.

The limitations in this study included issues in respondent agreement, specifically, asking parents or guardians for information regarding the

graduates' salary level and number of hours worked (Levine & Edgar, 1995); the effects of nonresponse, and the extremely low number of available respondents due to the low incidence of moderate/severe mental retardation.

Despite a potential issue with respondent agreement, interviewing the student with mental retardation may also result in significant methodological issues, including the tendency to answer yes to questions regardless of content (Bruininks, Wolman & Thurlow, 1990).

Nonresponse, through refusal or inability to contact the respondent, is a problem with all types of survey research and may result in bias (Blackorby & Edgar, 1992; Bruininks, Wolman & Thurlow, 1990). This bias often takes one of two forms: (1) respondents may answer questions in a manner gauged to please the interviewer or (2) the respondents who participate in the survey may be those who are "experiencing more success" (Blackorby & Edgar, 1992, p.377).

#### Design Limitations in the Qualitative Substudy

A great limitation of quantitative study designs lies in the lack of "explanatory research on the process of acclimatization to postschool life for all individuals, including those with disabilities" (Blackorby & Edgar, 1992, p. 381). Qualitative research studies can, however, add much to longitudinal research studies to "provide powerful information to the field of special education" (Blackorby & Edgar, 1992, p.383).

However, one of the design limitations in the qualitative substudy described in this dissertation is that the 1995 student and family informants in the qualitative case studies were nominated by school personnel, as discussed earlier. The 1990 participants were selected by the researcher from participants in the Decade Project. Additionally, there were limitations to using a case study method in which all three sites have well-established programs, as is the case

here. Knapp, et al. (1991) stated that "just as the perception of a very new program will probably exaggerate its defects, the perception of a long-standing program or set of programs may well exaggerate its benefits" (p.122).

Both survey research and face-to-face interviews may be subject to issues with memory, selective recall, and telescoping, as previously discussed in chapter three. In selective recall, informants forget certain events, e.g., periods of unemployment; telescoping refers to overestimating "the importance of an event or its status" (Blackorby & Edgar, 1992, p.378).

Additional limitations of this qualitative substudy include: selecting only one case from each district per time period which may result in confounding school district and individual factors and limiting classroom observation to one day late in the student's high school program which may result in choosing an atypical day in the student's school experience, and the potential influence of cultural and economic factors on intervening events.

## **CHAPTER 4:**

### **FINDING 1—POSTSECONDARY OUTCOMES AND TRANSITION SERVICES AT THE CLASSROOM LEVEL**

This study sought to determine if the provision of mandated transition services at the classroom level influenced student postschool outcomes. In order to do so, this study first examined any differences in the postschool outcomes among students with moderate/severe mental retardation who graduated in 1985 (prior to the mandate for transition services), 1990 (the year the mandate took effect), and 1995 (students eligible to receive mandated services throughout their high school careers).

This chapter reports on (1) the findings regarding the rates of engagement, employment, independent living, and enrollment in postsecondary training for the 1985 and 1990 cohorts six years out of school and the 1990 and 1995 cohorts one year out of school for three school districts in Washington state and (2) the nature and extent of change between 1990 and 1995 in the provision of transition services at the classroom level. Subsequent chapters present findings on district implementation of the transition policy and how policy is linked to classrooms and outcomes.

### Postsecondary Outcomes

There were no significant differences in any of the measured postsecondary outcomes for the students with moderate/severe mental retardation at either one year out or six years out of school. However, there were differences among the districts in employment, engagement, and enrollment in postsecondary training for some students

#### Contact Rate

The contact rates of students with moderate and severe mental retardation one year out of school for the 1990 and 1995 cohorts and six years out of school for the 1985 and 1990 cohorts are listed in tables 4 and 5. The low incidence of mental retardation results in few graduates per school district each year; the inability to contact only one graduate, therefore, significantly reduces the contact percentage rate. Also, as indicated in table 6, the longer students are out of school, the more difficult it becomes to make an initial contact, primarily due to a change in group home or foster care placement.

#### Data Summed Across the Three Districts

For the students with moderate/severe mental retardation, there were no significant differences in any of the measured postsecondary outcomes for those students who graduated prior to mandated services (1985 cohort), those who graduated the year that services were mandated (1990 cohort), or those who were eligible for mandated services throughout their high school years (1995

cohort) at either one year or six years out of school (see tables 6 and 7).

Specifically,

1. There were no significant differences noted for any of the comparisons in engagement (see tables A-1 and A-2), defined as employment or attendance in postsecondary education, or both at the time of the telephone contact.
2. There were no significant differences noted for any of the comparisons in employment (see tables A-3 and A-4), defined as working, at the time of the interview, at least one hour per week in a capacity that pays a wage, including competitive employment and supported employment.
3. There were no significant differences noted for any of the comparisons in living independently (see tables A-5 and A-6). Living arrangement is defined by the graduates' residence, which is the home in which the subject spends the majority of his or her time. An independent living arrangement includes living in a house or apartment alone, or with friends, roommates, a spouse or partner, in a dormitory or barracks; or living in an employer-provided (e.g., on a fishing boat) residence, or traveling.
4. There were no significant differences noted for any of the comparisons in enrollment in postsecondary education (see tables A-7 and A-8). Enrollment in postsecondary education is defined as attendance, at the time of the interview, in some form of postsecondary school or training, including: community college, university, business, vocational or trade school, or Job Corps.

Table 4

## Contact Rate of Students with Moderate and Severe Mental Retardation

## 1 Year Out Of School by District

	1990 Cohort			1995 Cohort		
	Total # of Graduates	Total # Contacted	%	Total # of Graduates	Total # Contacted	%
Severe	2	2	100%	4	3	75%
CSD	1	1	100%	1	1	100%
PSD	0	0	0	1	1	100%
ASD	1	1	100%	2	1	50%
Moderate	16	16	100%	11	11	100%
CSD	6	6	100%	5	5	100%
PSD	2	2	100%	0	0	0
ASD	8	8	100%	6	6	100%

Table 5

## Contact Rates of Students with Moderate and Severe Mental Retardation

## Six Years Out Of School by District

	1985 Cohort			1990 Cohort		
	Total # of Graduates	Total # Contacted	%	Total # of Graduates	Total # Contacted	%
Severe	10	7	70%	2	1	50%
CSD	2	2	100%	1	0	0
PSD	4	2	50%	0	0	0
ASD	4	3	75%	2	1	50%
Moderate	23	16	70%	16	16	100%
CSD	6	6	100%	6	6	100%
PSD	7	3	43%	2	2	100%
ASD	10	7	70%	8	8	100%

56  
Table 6

Student Outcomes One Year Out of School for the 1990 and 1995 Cohorts by  
Level of Disability

	1990		1995		X <sup>2</sup>	df	p
	Contacted	Engaged	Contacted	Engaged			
Severe	2	50%	3	33%			NS
Moderate	16	69%	11	55%			NS
	Contacted	Employed	Contacted	Employed			
Severe	2	50%	3	33%			NS
Moderate	16	50%	11	45%			NS
	Contacted	Independ.	Contacted	Independ.			
Severe	2	0	3	0	-	-	-
Moderate	16	0	11	9%			NS
	Contacted	Enrolled	Contacted	Enrolled			
Severe	2	0	3	0	-	-	-
Moderate	16	31%	11	9%	-	-	NS

Table 7

Student Outcomes Six Years Out of School for the 1985 and 1990 Cohorts by  
Disability

	1985		1990		X <sup>2</sup>	df	p
	Contacted	Engaged	Contacted	Engaged			
Severe	7	71%	1	100%			NS
Moderate	16	69%	16	69%			NS
	Contacted	Employed	Contacted	Employed			
Severe	7	57%	1	100%			NS
Moderate	16	63%	16	63%			NS
	Contacted	Independ.	Contacted	Independ.			
Severe	7	14%	1	0			NS
Moderate	16	6%	16	0			NS
	Contacted	Enrolled	Contacted	Enrolled			
Severe	7	29%	1	0			NS
Moderate	16	25%	16	6%			NS

Relationship of Districts to Postsecondary Outcomes

There were significant differences in postschool outcomes when the outcomes were considered by district. Youth with moderate mental retardation from CSD were engaged<sup>9</sup> and/or employed<sup>10</sup> at a significantly better level than similar youth from the other two school districts (see tables 8, 9, 10, figures 2 and 4). Youth with severe mental retardation from PSD were enrolled in postsecondary training at a significantly better level than similar youth from the other two school districts (see table 10 and figure 3).<sup>11</sup>

Table 8

Relationship of Districts to Engagement of 1990 Graduates With Mental Retardation One Year Out of School

	Contacted	Engaged		X <sup>2</sup>	df	p
	N	n	%			
Severe						
CSD	1	1	100%			NS*
PSD	0	0	0			
ASD	1	0				
Moderate						
CSD	6	6	100%	6.011	2	p<.05
PSD	2	1	50%			
ASD	8	4	50%			

<sup>9</sup> 1990 cohort 1 year out of school and 1985 cohort 6 years out of school

<sup>10</sup> 1990 cohort 1 year

<sup>11</sup> 1985 cohort 6 years out of school

\* Fishers Exact Test

58  
Table 9

Relationship of Districts to Employment of 1990 Graduates With Mental Retardation 1 Year Out of School

	Contacted		Employed		X <sup>2</sup>	df	p	
	N	n	%					
<b>Severe</b>								
CSD	1	1	100%				NS*	
PSD	0	0	0					
ASD	1	0	0					
<b>Moderate</b>								
CSD	6	5	83%	6.188	2	p<.05		
PSD	2	0	0					
ASD	8	3	38%					

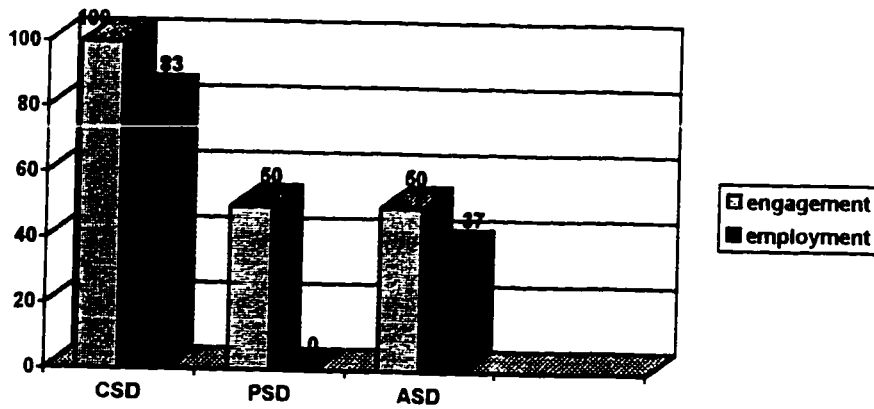


Figure 2: Engagement and Employment of The 1990 Cohort of Students with Moderate Mental Retardation One Year Out of School

\* Fishers Exact Test

Table 10

Relationship of Districts to Enrollment in Postsecondary Training of 1985 Graduates with Mental Retardation Six Years Out of School

	Contacted		Currently Enrolled		X <sup>2</sup>	df	p
	N	n	%				
<b>Severe</b>							
CSD	2	0	0		8.37577	2	p<.05**
PSD	2	2	100%				
ASD	3	0	0				
<b>Moderate</b>							
CSD	6	1	17%		.47504	2	NS**
PSD	3	1	33%				
ASD	7	1	14%				

Table 11

Relationship Of Districts to Engagement Of 1985 Graduates With Mental Retardation Six Years Out Of School

	Contacted		Engaged		X <sup>2</sup>	df	p
	N	n	%				
<b>Severe</b>							
CSD	2	2	100%		4.55669	2	NS**
PSD	2	2	100%				
ASD	3	1	33%				
<b>Moderate</b>							
CSD	6	6	100%		6.49497	2	p<.05**
PSD	3	2	67%				
ASD	7	3	43%				

\*\*\* Likelihood Ratio  
 \*\*\* Likelihood Ratio  
 \*\*\* Likelihood Ratio  
 \*\*\* Likelihood Ratio

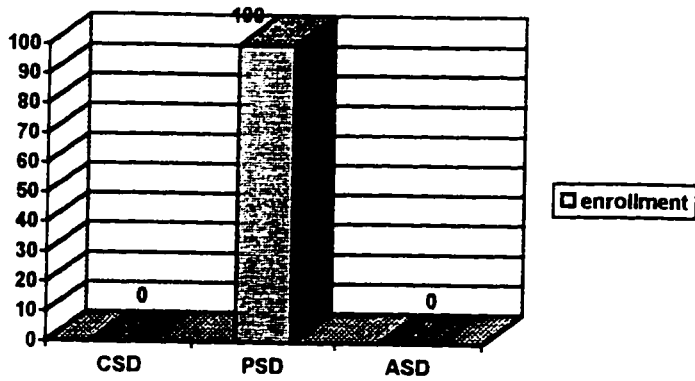


Figure 3: Enrollment in Postsecondary Training Of The 1985 Cohort Of Students With Severe Mental Retardation Six Years Out Of School

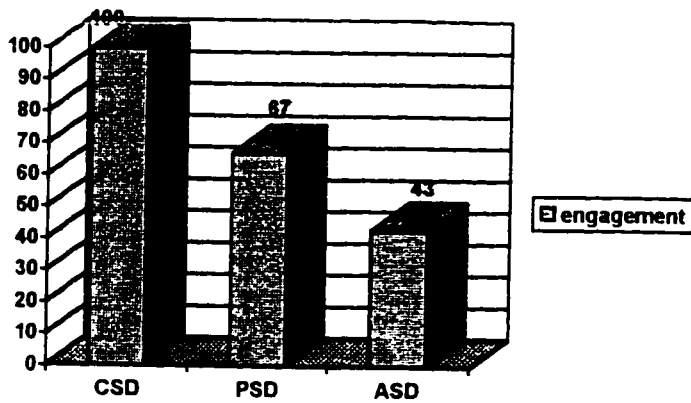


Figure 4: Engagement Of The 1985 Cohort Of Students With Moderate Mental Retardation Six Years Out Of School

## The Nature and Extent of Change in Transition Services at the Classroom Level

Although there were no statistically significant differences in any of the measured postschool outcomes for students with moderate/severe mental retardation either at one year out of school or at six years out of school, significant differences were found among the districts on some outcome measures (see tables 8, 9, 10, 11). This study, therefore, sought to examine how transition services were implemented for students with moderate/severe mental retardation in 1990 and in 1995 within each of these three districts. Investigating the extent or nature of change, if any, in these services following the mandate might provide some possible explanations for the lack of statistically significant differences in outcomes in the aggregate while explaining the statistically significant differences among the districts on some of the outcome measures.

In order for school districts in Washington state to meet the mandate for transition services at the classroom level, six services must be provided to all students with disabilities age 16 and older: (1) vocational education and training; (2) preparation for employment; (3) preparation for adult living, such as balancing a check book and accessing public transportation; (4) teaching of daily living skills (when appropriate), such as personal hygiene and time management skills; (5) academic instruction, including functional academics, and (6) community experiences. In Washington state, these services must be based on a functional vocational evaluation (FVE) that reflects student interests,

aptitudes, and occupational availability and lead to the student's anticipated postschool outcomes. Also, linkages for the student with appropriate adult services must be established.

Table 12 compares the inclusion of transition services in the IEPs for two of the three 1990 student cases with those in 1995. As the table indicates, there were relatively few differences between the IEPs for the two sets of students, regarding the attention paid to transition-related services. The only differences were in the provision of adult living objectives and in the identification of anticipated postschool outcomes. The latter are documented in the 1995 student case IEPs as environments, e.g., competitive employment, postsecondary education, independent living, or supported living and employment. The provision of a functional vocational evaluation, though required, did not change substantially between 1990 and 1995. In 1990, student interests only were reflected on the IEP; in 1995, the evaluation of student aptitude continued to be problematic in the functional vocational evaluation.

Although transition services seem to be included in student IEPs both in 1990 and 1995, teacher informants in all three districts reported attempts at improving the quality of student learning experiences between 1990 and 1995. Thus, the nature and extent of transition-oriented services appears to have changed considerably across these years, even though, on the surface, the attention to transition appeared roughly equivalent at the two time points.

### Changes at ASD

ASD reported the greatest number of changes between 1990 and 1995. The seven areas of change included: parent training and support; a program that includes a focus on independent living, recreation, and employment including job training in real work settings; opportunities to interact with peers of varying ability; involving employers in supporting students on the job, addressing appropriate work behaviors, and instituting an interagency/community transition team.

Joan, an ASD teacher, discussed the motivation for staff to dramatically change the secondary program. She stated that "a student can't leave our program the way it used to be and go out into the adult world" (ASDT2, 1442-1446). Therefore, staff began meeting with parents and helped to institute a parent-led support group that meets regularly. The program moved off-campus to a community college site where students work in a variety of settings, both on the college campus and in the surrounding community. Employers and co-workers provide most of the on-site support to the students, with school staff checking in on a regular basis. Finally, an interagency team that meets monthly enables staff to share information about student support needs with local adult service providers and facilitates the establishment of adult service linkages prior to the student exiting school.

### Changes at PSD

PSD staff reported changes in five areas: self-determination training, provision of a program that focused on the teaching of functional living skills, opportunities to interact with peers of varying ability, and broadening the program focus to address appropriate work behaviors and include recreation, employment, and living.

Gary, one of the PSD teachers, instituted a student-directed IEP process which enables students to pick preferred activities prior to the IEP meeting. These activities take precedence over the priorities of the family and the teacher. Also, the student "leads" the IEP meeting to the greatest extent possible.

Both PSD teachers and Mrs. "M", the caregiver of Donny, a 1995 graduate, reported that the program shifted to one that was more functional between 1990 and 1995. In referring to this change, Patty, one of the teachers, described Ed, who graduated in 1990. She stated that "...at that time he (Ed) graduated with very little skills really, but at that time, that was what everybody was graduating with" (PSDT2, 1052-1059). By 1995, the program had also begun to focus on employment and recreation as well as independent living. However, although PSD addresses employment in the program, there are concerns about this component. Gary, one of the teachers, stated that "We've been pretty successful as far as the majority of students that leave are placed someplace in a job. Unfortunately, many of them have not kept the jobs" (PSDT1, 349-354).

### Changes at CSD

The staff at CSD reported changes in four areas. First, they instituted personal profiles for each student which are prepared early in the last year of school and sent to local providers of employment services, the DD case manager and the vocational rehabilitation counselor assigned to the high school. These profiles assist in matching the student with appropriate adult service agencies. Next, the program became more oriented toward the teaching of functional living skills. Although the teacher reports a functional program in 1990, the parent disagrees. Mrs. F, the caregiver of Jill who graduated in 1990, reported that "I really think some of these adults...when they graduate, they're not trained yet fully. They're trained just so far, but the training that comes between the ages of 21-25 is imperative because that's the training that they can function [with] in society" (CSDP90, 498-505).

Table 12

#### Transition Services in Student IEPs: 1990 and 1995

Transition Services	1990	1995
functional vocational evaluation	sometimes	sometimes
instruction	yes	yes
vocational education/training	yes	yes
employment objectives	yes	yes
adult living objectives	sometimes	yes
daily living skills	yes	yes
community experiences	yes	yes
identify anticipated postschool outcome	no	yes
establish linkages with adult services	yes	yes

The third change focuses on opportunities for students to interact with peers of varying ability. In 1990, the program for students with developmental disabilities split into two programs. Students with multiple significant disabilities remained in a self-contained high school setting. Students who could access transportation independently moved from the self-contained classroom at the high school to a community-based setting where they spend most of their day on job sites or accessing community recreation sites.

Finally, the focus of the program broadened between 1990 and 1995, to include preparation for independent living as well as employment. Bea, the CSD transition program director, stated that “depending on the student, we may work with them on finding an apartment or pricing an apartment” (Case2CSD, 958-960). However, Jeanne’s mother, in response to a question about assistance in looking at independent living for her daughter who graduated in 1995, stated that “no, they (the school) don’t get into that at all. Just jobs (so) you’re on your own” (Case 2CSD, 1932-1936).

Table 13 summarizes the changes in transition services offered by the three districts from 1990 to 1995, using indicators of quality applicable to outcomes-oriented secondary programs for students with significant disabilities (Elliott, et al, 1995).

Table 13

Indicators of Quality in the 1990 and 1995 Programs by District<sup>12</sup>

Quality Indicator	CSD		ASD		PSD	
	1990	1995	1990	1995	1990	1995
Team planning	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
parent training & support	no	no	no	yes	no	no
personal profile for student	no	yes	no	no	no	no
student self-determination training	no	no	no	no	no	yes
community referenced	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
functional	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes
chronologically age appropriate	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
job training in real work settings	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes
interact with peers of varying ability	no	yes	no	yes	no	yes
employment, living, & recreation	no	yes	no	yes	no	yes
addresses appropriate work behavior	yes	yes	no	yes	no	yes
employers involved in support on job	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes
support in place prior to school leaving	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes <sup>13</sup>	yes
graduate follow up data collected	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
interagency/community team exists	no	no	no	yes	no	no

In summary, despite the fact that all three districts implemented major programmatic changes between 1990 and 1995, there were statistically significant differences in postschool outcomes for students with moderate/severe mental retardation in all three school districts. These changes,

<sup>12</sup> Source: Elliott, S., Brown, P., Nourse, S., Price, L., Walls, L., Bilyeu, B., Johnson, C., Tyson, P., Rich, J., VanNoy, J., & Edgar, E. (1995). *Transition guide for Washington State*.

<sup>13</sup> Patty, the teacher, stated "And we worked hard to have him (Ed, a 1990 graduate) have a job. We went to D. Kitchen and worked with the people there" (HSDT3, 64-67). However, it is unclear exactly how much support the employer or coworkers provided Ed.

which may reflect more thoughtful transition services provided to students, include: (1) placing a minimum age for entry into the transition program--all three districts now focus on transition with students age 18-21; (2) moving the transition program off campus (CSD and ASD) or providing transition services primarily in community-based settings (PSD) and, thereby enhancing opportunities for students to interact with peers of varying abilities, including nondisabled peers; (3) changing the secondary curriculum to one that focuses less on academic remediation and more on employment, vocational education and training in appropriate work behaviors, functional living and recreational skills training, and linkages with adult service providers.

Therefore, it appears, on the surface at least, that greater attention was being paid to transition-related services five years after the state mandate went into effect than at the mandate's inception.

## CHAPTER 5:

### FINDING 2--DISTRICT IMPLEMENTATION OF TRANSITION POLICY

The changes in the program discussed in chapter 4 imply that districts were, in part, attempting to respond to the new state mandate for transition services. However, their response involved some reinterpretation of the mandate. Each of the three districts reinterpreted the mandate for transition services by doing one or more of the following: (1) exceeding the requirements in providing services off campus or during non-traditional school hours; (2) creating a new program for the provision of transition services rather than incorporating the services into existing programs, and (3) focusing on 18-21 year old students instead of students age 16-21.

This chapter begins with a review of the way districts responded to the transition mandate, followed by an examination of the factors that may have influenced district-level implementation. The chapter concludes with an investigation of the extent to which districts meet the requirement to foster the meaningful participation of parents and students in the transition process.

#### District Response to the State Policy on Transition

CSD began to change the focus of their program for all high school students with mental retardation in 1988 by including community activities and preparation for employment in the curriculum. In 1990, CSD started a new high school-based transition program for students age 18-21 who could

independently access public transit. The program focused on preparation for employment and students spent most of their school day in the community instead of on the high school campus. In 1992, the program moved off-campus to an office complex located in the downtown area. Students now report each day to either unpaid work experience or paid work sites. Transition center staff check on these students on a regular basis. On Fridays, the students may report to the transition center office to work on social skills and adult living objectives, e.g., banking. Friday afternoons are usually spent accessing community recreation activities. Many students spend their entire day at work and do not report into the transition center office at all. Students who are not able to independently access public transit attend a program on the high school campus. This program stresses functional academics and community access.

Unlike CSD, the PSD program, which began in 1992, does not have an off-campus site. However, students age 18-21 have an option of attending a traditional high school-based program of functional academics and community access or the transition program. The students in the transition program do not follow a typical high school schedule. They arrive at the high school three days per week (Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday) by public transit. Activities focus on functional academic and social skills. On Wednesdays, students meet at a previously determined location (usually the home of one of the students) to practice independent living skills: planning, shopping, and preparing a meal; cleaning, doing laundry, and, in the afternoon, participating in some type of

recreational activity. Students also plan and participate in at least two recreational activities per month in small groups outside of school hours, e.g., evenings or weekends, supported by school staff on a rotating basis. Neither students nor staff attend school on Fridays; this is considered compensatory time for the after school/weekend activities that are part of the program.

Similar to CSD, students turning 18 in ASD have had the option of participating in the off-campus transition program within their geographic region or remaining in their home high school. The off-campus sites, in existence since 1993, are supported by the home high school staff and include a community college, a house, and a hospital (only the community college site agreed to participate in this study). Students attending the community college-based transition program report to the campus, via public transit, each morning. Students unable to access public transit independently use a public "dial-a-ride" service. On Monday through Thursday, after a brief "meeting," students disperse to their work experience sites, which are primarily unpaid experiences. School staff provide support on these sites, which include: the community college office of admissions, the beauty salon and cafeteria on campus, and an off-campus hospital site. Some students are in paid work sites, e.g., fast-food restaurants. Fridays are recreation days; students usually chose an activity such as bowling or swimming followed by lunch at a restaurant. Staff provide the support during these activities. Students who do not wish to participate in the

transition program have the option of remaining on the high school campus in a functional academic program until age 21.

### Influences on District-Level Implementation

Several factors may have influenced district-level implementation of the state mandate for transition: (1) the districts' capacity to implement the mandate, including leadership and the availability of adequate fiscal resources; (2) the bureaucratic structure of the district which includes the manner in which compliance with state and federal transition-related regulations were addressed and the districts' organizational structure; (3) other interests that may have impeded the districts' implementation efforts; (4) experience with providing transition services prior to the mandate, (5) the will or commitment by staff to provide the mandated services; and (6) the professional autonomy afforded staff during the implementation process.

### Influences on Implementation in CSD

CSD provides a clear instance of how prior programmatic efforts and experience, combined with adequate capacity and strong leadership, provide fertile soil for a state transition mandate to take root. This combination of district intervening factors looks somewhat different from those indicated in the initial conceptual framework in chapter 1; changes in the framework resulting from the investigation of CSD, as well as PSD and ASD, are indicated in the revised conceptual framework in chapter 7.

Transition services for students aged 15-21 with developmental disabilities, including mental retardation, had been in place in this district since 1987--three years prior to the mandate. Prior to 1987, students with developmental disabilities attended one high school in the district and were in a self-contained program. In the fall of 1987, however, Melinda, the classroom teacher, began advocating for programmatic change and her vision of a good transition program appears to have had a significant impact on CSD's subsequent interpretation of the transition mandate. Roger, the special education administrator, stated that CSD was "pretty involved in transition when the mandate came because of our work with developmentally disabled kids over the years" (CSDA2, 115-119). Therefore, he states, "there wasn't a lot of process. We matched what the state said it had to look like with what we were already doing and kind of merged the two" (CSDA2, 132-136). This reliance on previous experiences with transition-like services seems to be more influential on how the district responded to the state mandate than did previous policy choices. Therefore, in addition to previous policy choices, "previous experiences" is added to the revised conceptual framework in chapter 7.

Early program restructuring before the state transition mandate clearly set the stage for the mandate to take hold in some fashion. The program restructuring in 1987 began with redesigning the job duties of two instructional aides, enabling them to provide support to students on community sites, for both recreation and job exploration. The following year, Melinda advocated for

hiring Bea, who had extensive experience in providing community-based vocational instruction. Together, they began instituting major changes in the secondary program because, as Bea remarked, the existing program had students “sit in a shop and sand little toys [which] is not what [the] student needs” (CSDT2, 825-826). Initially, Melinda worked on living and social skills with all of the students in the classroom every morning while Bea worked with the students on vocational training in the community every afternoon. By 1990, however, Melinda and Bea had divided the students into two groups—15 to 17 and 18 to 21. The younger students stayed in the classroom with some training in community access while Bea worked with the 18-21 year old students on community-based employment preparation. In 1992, the second major change occurred. The 18-21 year old students were divided into two groups: those who could learn to independently access public transit and those who could not. The 18-21 year old “independents” were moved off-campus because “we need to be in the community, we need to get off of this campus—we’ve been here four years—seven years is too long” (CSDT2, 863-866). The “dependents” remained in the on-campus program.

The capacity to implement a mandate like transition seems to be very staff dependent, i.e., implementation depends on the commitment of the staff to implement. In CSD, this commitment to transition services for students with developmental disabilities was made three years before the mandate. Bea stated that Melinda “was the only one who ever took the responsibility for the post

high school employment or services of any graduate" (CSDA1, 337-342) prior to the mandate. She created a transition program despite the fact that "our director of special ed never said, 'I want you to make sure that these students are connected' ...it was just that's what [Melinda] and I believed in and [we] did it" (CSDA1, 397-403).

Roger corroborated Bea's point of view in stating that mandates such as transition are implemented "by chance really. It happens at the whim of whatever staff members are willing to try to [do] some [of] that stuff" (CSDA2, 744-747). Furthermore, pressure to implement is not felt at the teacher level, "so when you say they [transition services] have to happen, they have to happen to the extent to which individual multi-disciplinary teams become convinced they have to happen, or IEP transition teams, and there isn't a huge pressure for that at this point in time" (CSDA2, 761-767). He suggests that negative sanctions are the most effective way to exert pressure for action and, in order to create the needed "huge pressure", something more punishing than being found out of compliance by state monitors would need to occur to teachers, e.g., a complaint filed with the Office of Civil Rights (CSDA2, 777).

Initially, the additional money to pay for the off-campus site rental (a church) was obtained through a grant written by Melinda and Bea. The grant funding was sufficient for two years. No additional staff were hired; Bea and one instructional assistant ran the program. By 1992, however, Bea thought it was time to enhance the program. Working together with Roger, she facilitated

a cooperative agreement between CSD and an adjoining school district. The funds provided by the other district enabled her to rent a larger office space in the downtown area. However, since the cooperative agreement required the transition program to open their enrollment to eligible students from that district, additional non-certificated support staff were needed and Bea provided the staff development. In 1994, the program expanded again to include students with milder disabilities, e.g., learning disabilities, with another increase in both certificated and non-certificated staff. This expansion in the number of eligible students was deemed necessary because (1) many students with milder disabilities were not successfully achieving adult outcomes, the purpose for transition stated by both staff and the administrator and (2) by expanding the number of eligible students, the program could be declared a "building" which would give the program its own budget and greater control over staff allocation.

The latter was possible by 1994 because CSD was in the process of moving from a centrally managed special education system to a building-based management system in which a pre-determined resource allocation is given to each building with the principal authorized to use those resources within the building to best meet the needs of his/her students. Roger stated that this restructuring was the result of: (1) "downsizing, flattening of the organization" (CSDA2, 320-321) and (2) an effort to turn more programming control over to the buildings. Roger described the role of central office administration as one of

support to the building management teams who decide how to allocate the budget and staff to provide special education services. However, in the off-campus transition program, the organizational structure is unique because “we’re small...[so] we just really make our own decisions” (CSDA1, 590-591).

CSD staff had both the knowledgeable leadership and the resources needed to fulfill their interpretation of the transition mandate. Although Bea believes that “at least half of what I do should be done at the high school” (Case2CSD, 761-762), she concurs with Roger that a transition program should be an additional program to “fill that gap for the kids for whom the standard 12 years of public education just [doesn’t] quite make it” (CSDA2, 367-370).

Despite his support for transition, Roger believes that mandates are “set up, right from the beginning, to compete” (CSDA2, 545-546) with other mandates. The compliance aspect of the mandate, for example, allows little time for assimilation into the local context.

CSD reinterpreted the mandate for transition services for students with mental retardation to fit what was already in place, i.e., an add-on program that focused on employment and community access. The implementation of this interpretation, resulting from the transition program envisioned by the teachers in the DD program three years prior to the mandate, was possible for several reasons. First, CSD had the capacity to implement the program. The district had the knowledgeable, committed leaders to provide needed staff development and the fiscal resources to implement the program. Next, the district’s building-

based organizational structure was a “good fit” for the transition program staff. Accustomed to a high degree of professional autonomy, staff were able to control both their own funds and staff allocation after the off-campus program was declared a “building” in 1994. Finally, the three years of experience prior to the mandate enabled CSD to implement the mandate quickly by expanding the off-campus program to serve students with learning disabilities as well as students with mental retardation.

#### Influences on Implementation in PSD

As in CSD, PSD’s reinterpretation of the transition mandate is rooted in the program for students with developmental disabilities where teachers had previous experience with providing transition-like services. When the mandate for transition was first announced, the district went through an interpretation process which included a “filtering down” of information. The regulation went from the state office to the within-district area administrator, who has responsibility for vocational education and special education, to the assistant director, who has responsibility for day-to-day special education decisions. Jay, the transition specialist, then took the lead in the implementation process due to her content area expertise. This “filtering down” process is reflected in both the initial and revised conceptual frameworks.

When the new transition requirements reached the assistant special education director, his reaction was “Uh, oh. What do we do now? What haven’t we been doing or have we been doing this already?” (PSDA2, 22,25, 41).

Jay, who had worked in the DD program for two years, suggested that the district look at the DD program and adapt their transition process “to really kind of make it a little bit easier in some ways for the resource room program, but still within compliance with the law” (PSDA2, 44-47).

Once again, as with CSD, programmatic changes that increased the emphasis on transition services had begun before the state mandate, indicating a reliance on previous experiences in interpreting the state mandate. As Jay knew, Gary and Patty [teachers in the program for students with mental retardation] had already begun to revamp their program. Patty described the program prior to 1990 as “our little mini-institution” (PSDT3, 151). However, beginning in 1990, the teachers realized that the students were not being successful after leaving the school system. Unlike CSD, however, the impetus for further change lay in their assessment of student success. One student, Ed, had a major impact on their program, according to Patty.

Ed was a “capable kid, lots of social skills [but] very shy” (PSDT3, 59-60). Patty and Gary worked very hard to find Ed a job. They finally succeeded in placing him as a busperson/dishwasher at DK’s, a local restaurant and were pleased to discover that “he did this job...we never would have thought we could teach him the job” (PSDT3, 73-75). Problems began, however, when the family chose not to actively participate in the transition process. According to the teachers, Ed’s mother was not actively seeking postsecondary support for Ed

and would not allow him to independently ride the bus to work<sup>14</sup>. Both of these actions were necessary in order for Ed to keep his job after graduation. Ed did lose his job and remains unemployed. Patty and Gary both report that they strongly felt that they had failed Ed because “he had no friends, he did have a job that he had lost, and he had no way to call anybody, and he never did anything...it was horrible” (PSDT3, 133-137). The decision was made at that point to change the program. Patty continued, “He [Ed] happened to be real influential for me just realizing that we failed. I don’t think we taught him anything he used anymore, not that it’s exactly my fault, but that definitely...changed what I wanted to teach and I’m sure [Gary] would have said that we threw things out for awhile and revamped to a very large degree what we’re doing with our 18-21 year olds. They’re just hardly ever here [now]” (PSDT3, 294-305).

The teachers began writing transition plans for all of the students, responding to their need for transition services in some unusual ways. The professional autonomy extended to the teachers by the central office administration enabled the staff to plan for a program that would enable students to maintain social relationships, prepare them for independent living, and teach them to access community recreational resources as well as

---

<sup>14</sup> According to Mrs. “L,” however, she did not seek postsecondary support for Ed because she felt strongly that Ed’s large, extended family would continue to provide support for Ed, as they have in the past. She also stated that she was uncomfortable with him riding the bus independently because he may have a sleep disorder: he falls asleep frequently when he is not active and she feared he would sleep through his stop.

employment. This planning process took approximately two years, and by 1992, the transition program was in place. For parents preferring a classroom-based academic program, that option continued to be offered. However, students were now divided by age rather than by ability level, with most of the 18-21 year old students following a non-traditional school schedule, including longer hours, no school on Friday, and small group weekend activities at least twice a month.

Following a non-traditional school schedule was a second choice for the teachers in PSD. Gary reported that they wanted to move the 18-21 program off-campus, but were unable to locate an affordable, accessible site. Instead, students “go through the graduation ceremony [at 18] and then their last three years...we consider them to be in this transition program and we try to disassociate ourselves from the high school; we don’t participate in assemblies or anything else” (PSDT1, 503-510).

Like CSD, PSD’s interpretation of the transition mandate reflected the direction already embarked upon by the teachers in the program for students with mental retardation. Several factors seemed influential: (1) the teachers’ beliefs about student outcomes and the connection of these outcomes to the high school program; (2) the professional autonomy of the teachers; and (3) the support provided to the teachers by the administrators. All of these individual factors are reflected in both the initial and the revised conceptual frameworks.

The teachers emphasized that their motivation to change their program was not to meet the mandate, but because they were unhappy with the outcomes

that students like Ed were experiencing. In fact, the program changes preceded the districts response to the mandate and “it [the transition policy] wasn’t given to us and then we did it. It was already done” (PSDT3, 311-312). However, the teachers attribute their success in changing the program quickly and dramatically to their professional autonomy and administrative support.

In describing how the program was changed from five to four days per week, Gary stated that the principal, central office administrators, program coordinator, and union representatives all said, “as long as its okay with you guys [referring to the teachers in the DD program], [then it’s ] all right” (PSDT2, 568-570). He stated further that “as far as giving us freedom, letting us do what we want, trying new things, failing at things, the district is actually really hands off” (PSDT2, 927-933).

### Influences on Implementation in ASD

While ASD’s interpretation of the transition mandate was influenced by previous experience with the provision of transition-like services [see district intervening factors in the revised conceptual framework, chapter 7], these experiences differed from those in CSD or PSD. Experience in providing transition services has a long history in this district. At the classroom level, transition services began in 1977. Teachers at one (of four) high school were, according to Leonard, an administrator who was a classroom teacher at that time, unhappy with the outcomes experienced by students after graduation. This school, a “center” which included students with disabilities, housed

approximately 160 special education students with a wide range of disabilities. A decision at the building/department level was made to change the high school program for students with disabilities from an academic remediation program to one that would include more vocational education in order to better prepare them for adult life. This included “a lot of changes to our curriculum, how we structured our time as teachers and assistants, and dramatically changed the way that the students’ day was spent” (ASDA3, 83-88). The motivation to change at the classroom level at this time was, therefore, influenced by the teachers’ personal beliefs, as reflected in both versions of the conceptual framework.

Leonard worked closely with another person on the vocational part of the new curriculum and this person had very different personality traits from Leonard, but they “made a good combination—we were a hard act to say no to” (ASDA3, 318-320). Leonard commented that “a lot of changes do occur because of personalities, whether they’re charismatic or not, I don’t know but whether it’s the right combination of people at the right time” (ASDA3, 306-310).

The planning for this restructuring occurred over a summer and began with “assessing where we thought the kids were and then developing what we thought a reasonable sequence of activities around different domains would be” (ASDA3, 118-122). These domains, based on a career development model, included: community awareness and exploration, self-awareness, and job awareness, exploration, and skill building. He stated that now, as a central

office administrator that, "I couldn't move a district that fast in one direction or another if I tried to" (236-238). It is important to note, however, that the teachers had a great deal of professional autonomy and the restructuring of the department in 1977 was a local decision and "It was not at all driven by state special ed saying we really ought to be doing something differently, it was a really strongly held belief at the building level and we really did bring about a substantial amount of change over the course of the summer" (ASDA3, 228-235).

Students with disabilities no longer attend center schools. The high school programs for students with mental retardation, like the program begun by Leonard in 1977, teach functional living skills and had traditionally provided some vocational exploration opportunities to students, e.g., delivering newspapers, sorting clothes at a resale center, and working with plants in a greenhouse. However, in 1988, the teachers in one of the high school DD programs began to look for options specifically designed for students age 18-21. They wanted a program that would better prepare students to live and work independently in their communities and that would be in a more age-appropriate setting. Reatha and Joan, the two teachers, report that they began talking with central office administrators about program changes in 1989. However, it was not until the mandate for transition was passed that they received permission to start an off-campus transition program. Two planning years followed, with program implementation beginning in 1993. This emphasizes the potential influence of the state mandate on district

implementation, even when the district has had considerable previous experience with providing transition-like services [see the revised conceptual framework in chapter 7].

Like CSD and PSD, students age 18-21 in ASD receive the bulk of the transition services. Although the high school program for younger students provides functional academic instruction and training in daily living skills, vocational education/training, preparation for employment and adult living skills are primarily addressed in an off-campus program for older students. As previously stated, the program for students age 18-21 is located on the campus of a local community college which students access via public transit. Once they have arrived on campus, they meet with the high school staff briefly and then move to their work experience or paid job sites.

The implementation of the off-campus program is attributed by the teachers to their capacity to implement the program, not to the mandate for services. Reatha and Joan stated that “legally, the district is supposed to supply transition, although there isn’t anything that I know of written anywhere that defines what that is supposed to look like. And I think that we have kind of as a group, the folks that do transition...have kind of been creating as we go along. But there is nothing that says that is the way it’s going to stay. I’m sure if money’s changed, that it would change very quickly” (ASDT2, 490-502).

The transition mandate seemed to be important in giving the already motivated staff the additional leverage at the district level to obtain the resources

needed to implement the program that they wanted to do all along. Mandy, the district transition specialist, stated that “there were people in each of our programs who had sort of had that interest for a long time and when the opportunity came for them to act on it, they talked internally with their colleagues about how they could do that, how they could reconfigure themselves, how they could support taking their group of students off campus” (ASDA1, 337-347).

In this district, it appears that teachers in special education, especially the teachers of students with moderate/severe disabilities, have a great deal of professional autonomy--reaching into the realm of allocation of resources. Mandy stated that “in terms of how the students are distributed or how they’re covered or whatever it’s pretty much to the staff internally to figure that out...they’re going to have to figure out how they’re going to distribute their resources” (ASDA1, 809-813; 841-843). She later stated that “special education (central office) technically doesn’t have any control over curriculum. So I would say...each teacher kind of makes up their own curriculum” (ASDA2, 114-119). This autonomy in curriculum development was corroborated by Reatha and Joan who reported that curriculum design is “basically, it’s really up to the personalities of the people that are running the program” (ASDT2, 822-825).

The reinterpretation of the transition mandate is also influenced by issues that impede the implementation process, including the accountability requirements and the lack of additional funding to meet the added

requirements. These competing interests, not considered in the original conceptual framework, are included in the revised version.

Leonard expressed real concern for the accountability requirements of the mandate. He believes that the paperwork involved with the transition mandate competes with implementing transition services: "we were already focusing on the intent of the law and my concern was that as we swung into the paper trail, we would lose the intent of the bill--begin to feel like we were just doing the paperwork" (ASDA3, 382-387). He went on to state that the accountability aspects of the mandate "feeds the belief that this is just a paperwork process--it's impossible to do it right, that if we were to do it right, we would do nothing but paperwork" (ASDA3, 601-605). The paperwork takes an inordinate amount of time to complete, therefore, teachers must balance their time between being in compliance with the letter of the law with honoring the intent of the law. Leonard stated that "people believe they're using 100% of their time, and whenever we add something else, we're taking something away--we're in constant competition" (ASDA3, 621-625).

Mandy's concern centered on the requirement that districts provide transition services without receiving any additional funding to support this requirement. She stated that "It (transition) definitely competes with other priorities and other things that we are legally required to do as well as our own internal policies and procedures for the things that we feel required to do" (1ASD, 985-991). Some of the competing needs mentioned by both

administrators and teachers included assistive technology and related services for students K-12.

The addition of new requirements without additional funding resulted in special education staffing cuts during the 1995/1996 school year. These cuts affected the implementation of the district's interpretation of the mandate, e.g., trying to develop community experiences and jobs for students. The latter is "very time intense—you can't be attached to a classroom and be running students through many different kinds of work experiences five days a week from 7:15 to 2:15" (ASDA1, 257-262). Therefore, ASD is attempting to reconfigure existing staff because "we're not going to have any new resources, we're not going to have any more resources, so we have to figure out how to do with what we've got" (ASDA1, 280-284). Joan mused that "It's never been addressed that maybe staffing for transition programs needs to be different than it is for school-based programs" (ASDT2, 327-330).

The transition mandate in ASD seems to have acted as a catalyst in a district that perceives itself as already doing much of what is being mandated. Mandy stated, however, that without the mandate, transition "would have happened in some fashion or form...but certainly not with the speed and certainly not with the level of sophistication that it's reached" (ASDA1, 865-872).

### Involvement of Families and Students in the Transition Process

While the combination of influences just discussed set in motion, or further facilitated, changes in transition-related services, the process did not necessarily engage parents or students as extensively as it might.

Indicators of student and family involvement in the transition process include: (1) reports by parents of getting information about adult services prior to school leaving, (2) reports by parents and students on their attendance and participation in the transitional IEP process and (3) student signatures on their IEPs.

In 1990, two of the three parents reported getting information about adult services from the school prior to their son/daughter leaving school. In 1995, all three parents reported receiving this information.

However, three major themes emerged in interviews with families regarding how they felt about their involvement in the transition process in 1990 and 1995: positive feelings about specific teachers and staff members, feeling pressured to accept unwanted services and/or to accept jobs that the family considered inappropriate, and feeling not valued by the IEP team.

Parent reports indicate little active involvement in the transition process. Positive reports by parents tend to center on interactions with specific teachers who parents felt had done a good job but not about a specific program or district. In CSD and ASD, where parents reported not feeling valued as a

member of the IEP team, limited parent involvement was an issue with the parents of both 1990 and 1995 graduates.

In CSD, for example, Mrs. "F", the care provider for Jill who graduated in 1990, described her frustration in trying to get the teachers in Jill's program to reinforce some of the skills that she was working on with Jill at home. She reported "that's all I ask for, is just to respect the things that we've worked on so hard" (CSDP90, 1132-1135). Similarly, Mrs. "T", whose daughter Jeanne graduated in 1995, complained that when she requested that certain objectives be written into the IEP, "They'd write it down but they wouldn't necessarily work on it" (Case 2CSD, 1755-1756).

In ASD, Mrs. "M," whose granddaughter graduated in 1990, seemed uninterested in talking about the IEP or transition process other than to state that "yes, we [would] meet over there [in Mickie's classroom] after school" (ASDP90, 351-352).

In PSD, however, Gary contends that since changing to a negotiated IEP process in 1992, parental involvement has increased. In this process, Gary works one-on-one with each student in listing all of his/her preferred activities for the year; the parents of each student are asked to list all of their priorities in a similar manner before coming into the IEP meeting. Gary lists his school priorities separately. At the IEP meeting, all of these activities are listed on large sheets of paper on the wall and the student, parents, and Gary negotiate which activities can be addressed at school, which ones should be addressed at home

and which should be a combination of home and school working together. Mrs. "M," the careprovider to one of the 1995 graduates, stated that "With [Gary], I know I'm heard" (PSDP95, 357). Gary admits that "in the past I've had very little parent involvement" (PSDT1, 1221) but now "I have a lot of parent involvement and it's really nice because I'm not just saying this is my responsibility and so there is a lot more interaction back and forth" (PSDT1, 1222-1228).

The parents of both the 1990 and 1995 graduates in all three districts reported feeling pressured to accept or sign up for unwanted services and feeling pressured to accept jobs on behalf of their son/daughter that they considered inappropriate.

In PSD, for example, Ed's mother talked at length about "the system." She described how, prior to Ed's graduation in 1990, the teachers told her that Ed needed to get "started in the system through school. It was their, I'm not going to say pressuring, but-you know-saying that if something happened to John [her husband] and I that if he wasn't in the system, it's harder to get in later and we might as well sign up now" (PSDP90, 571-578). The pressure to enroll her son in the adult service system was not the only pressure placed on the family. She also felt obligated to allow Ed to accept the job at DK's as a busperson/dishwasher. But, she stated, "To me, he never should have been working with food; [John] and I just cringed over the whole idea" (PSDP90, 783-785). By 1995, this perception by parents of being pressured into accepting jobs on behalf of their son/daughter had changed little. Donny's caregiver reported

that Donny was "kind of talked into it [a job as a grocery store stocker]without realizing that he was going to be working nights [and] would have no social life" (PSDP95, 400-404).

Mrs. "G," whose son graduated from ASD in 1995, felt that a vocational program was the most appropriate for John but she also felt that the school had their own plans for him that did not reflect her wishes, "And so, very often I have found very unrealistic expectations and a direction that was not in sync with what I wanted for my kids and I had to say so" (ASD.01P 237-241).

Although satisfied with her son's program and with the teachers, Mrs. "G" felt left out of the decision-making process. Despite her misgivings about the appropriateness of the job placements for two of her sons, she went along with the school decision because "the opportunity was there and it made sense... (but) there are lots of opportunities out in the community, we just haven't developed them--snagged them--yet" (ASD.01P 362-363, 375-378). Partly because she trusted John's transition program teachers and partly from lack of time and energy, Mrs. "G" felt that ultimately, in making career decisions for John, "Who decides it? The school decides it" (ASD.01P. 361-362).

Student involvement seems, at best, limited to input into IEP goals and objectives, as in PSD. Rarely do students or families have a choice of job or work experience site. Student participation is required by the transition mandate. For compliance purposes, the student's signature on the IEP is considered an indicator of that student's involvement in the transition process. Although

students in all three districts signed their IEPs, it appears that the signature alone is not a good indicator of active student participation in the process.

In sum, parents of both the 1990 and 1995 graduates reported positive feelings about individual teachers in each of the three school districts. However, when asked about participation in the transition/IEP process, the responses seemed to change little between the 1990 and 1995 parents of CSD, ASD, or PSD graduates.

Parents continue to report negative experiences with schools in all three districts, primarily feeling pressured to accept unwanted services and jobs for their sons/daughters that were deemed inappropriate by the families.

Student involvement in the transition process also appears to have changed little between 1990 and 1995 in CSD and ASD. In PSD, students provide more input into IEP goals and objectives, according to the teacher. However, there was no indication in any of the districts that students or families were provided with opportunities to choose work experience or job sites.

**CHAPTER 6:**  
**FINDING 3—HOW TRANSITION POLICY IS LINKED TO CLASSROOMS  
AND OUTCOMES**

The findings in chapter 5 imply that districts were attempting to respond to the new state mandate for transition services. Each district responded by either partially implementing the mandated services or, in some instances, exceeding the requirements of the mandate, or both.

This chapter begins with examining the effect of the actions taken by each of the three districts on the classroom-level implementation of the transition mandate, followed by an analysis of the postschool outcomes of the six case study graduates and the potential relationship between these outcomes and the implementation of the transition policy. The chapter concludes with a look at factors that may influence student outcomes.

**The Effect of District Actions on Classroom-level Implementation**

Several district actions influenced classroom level implementation of the transition mandate, including: student placement decisions, the autonomy afforded teachers by district administrators, the provision of administration support to teachers, and the allocation of resources. Table 14 summarizes these actions and their influence on the classroom level implementation of the mandate.

### Student Placement Decisions

Student placement decisions made by the central office influence classroom composition, which informants report, influences the manner in which transition services are provided. Classroom composition especially seems to affect the extent to which students access community resources. Joan, a teacher in ASD, commented that, "It seems to me they were trying to have an off-campus work program and then they got so many students with so many special needs [like wheelchairs] that they were hampered in a way with their ability to get off [campus]" (ASDT2, 780-787). The three districts approached the placement of students into transition programs differently. CSD places students into one of three transition programs depending on the students' age and skill level. In order to be placed in CSD's off-campus transition program, students must have met the age and skill level prerequisites. The transition services for students who do not meet these requirements look quite different; students are in a classroom-based transition program with a focus on community access. Vocational education and training for employment are not a priority.

As previously stated, PSD and ASD placed students by age and family preference, regardless of skill level. In PSD, any student may chose to participate in the "non-traditional" transition program. This heterogeneous grouping, while reported to be beneficial by the teachers, also presents some challenges to providing employment preparation.

Table 14

## District Actions and Their Influence on Classroom Level Implementation

District Action	Influence On Implementation
student placement decisions	class composition
granting autonomy to teachers	enabled teachers to design transition programs according to their own vision
provision of administrative support	enabled teachers to implement the transition program that they designed
allocation of resources	facilitated the provision of transition services according to the program design

Consequently, staff focus on maximizing community access and independent living skills while encouraging family linkages to adult services for the provision of employment opportunities.

ASD also places students by age without requiring any prerequisite skills. As in PSD, this has posed challenges in placing students on jobs. Staff have coped with this mandate for preparation for employment by placing students in a series of unpaid work experiences. It is unclear whether these experiences lead to paid employment after graduation. ASD, however, did take into consideration the geographical region in which the students live while PSD's and CSD's programs served the entire district. PSD and CSD, however, are smaller districts. Table 15 illustrates these differences.

Table 15

## Student Placement in Transition Programs

District	Approach	Illustration
CSD	Placement by age and skill level--district level program	"Transition Program 1 [is] the DD independent, Transition Program 2 [are] LD who are doing [the] wide variety [of activities]...and Transition Program 3 [is] the dependent and enclave kids" (CSDT2, 912-918).
PSD	Placement by age-district level program	"We said it was kind of silly to be separating them out into a single class...[so] we said everybody who is 14 will be in this class, 15 in this class, 16 in this class...and that was a much better way, because then we had some kids who were high capabilities to kids who were very low capabilities working together" (PSDT2, 275-286).
ASD	Placement by age-within traditional school boundaries--not a district-wide program	"Actually, when they come to our program, we don't eliminate anybody. All are allowed to come to our program--it doesn't matter what their physical disabilities [are]" (4ASD, 281-285).

Professional Autonomy

In all three districts, the teachers who work with students with mental retardation seem to have a great deal of professional autonomy. Patty, the teacher from PSD, contends that "we're very autonomous, probably more so than we should be" (PSDT3, 420-421). One explanation that Patty suggested for this

high degree of autonomy may be that "with this population that are more disabled, [administrators] are not very knowledgeable about our situation" (PSDT3, 240-243). Joan, from ASD, corroborates; she commented that "No one is telling us what we need to do; they all [referring to programs] look different" (ASDT2, 799-800) but "if we decided tomorrow that we didn't want to do this anymore...there probably wouldn't be a lot of fuss about it from the administration" (ASDT2, 954-964).

Given the freedom to design the transition programs, Reatha, from ASD, and her colleagues in PSD and CSD chose to provide transition services "separate from the school program" (ASDT2, 509) despite the fact that "there's no policy that says that" (ASDT2, 506). Teachers in all three districts described a process of "creating as we go along" (ASDT2, 498-499) in order to meet, and often to exceed, the requirements of the mandate. Reatha summarized by stating that "I think we all appreciate the flexibility and the freedom we've had to develop the program" (4ASD, 909-911).

### Administrative Support

Teachers in all three districts expressed confidence in their own ability to make important day-to-day program decisions. However, the teachers also deemed good administrative support in advocating for adequate funding very important. Patty, from PSD, complained that "There was a time when we were a little richer in both budget and staff because of some combination of a receptive director and being able to advocate and having a population of pretty tough

kids" (PSDT3, 224-229). However, she observed that administrators are "somewhat supportive if you come up with some good ideas" (PSDT3, 244). Similarly, in ASD, Joan stated that "For the first two years of the program, our staff really grew. And there was somebody within administration that was really supporting transition and really pushing for it and wanted it to happen" (ASDT2, 232-238).

### Allocation of Resources

During the interview process, administrators in all three districts discussed the relationship between the allocation of resources and the implementation of transition services. Their concerns focused on the concept of "diminishing resources" in which the districts are mandated to provide services without receiving additional funds for the provision of these services.

All three districts interpreted the transition mandate as a requirement for an add-on program. Such programs are more expensive than traditional classroom-based K-12 programs, primarily due to the need for additional staff. Concerns about this additional cost repeatedly surfaced during conversations with administrators who feared that funding cutbacks at the state level would result in the elimination of local off-campus transition programs because, "it [transition] definitely competes with other priorities and other things that we are legally required to do" (ASD.01A, 986-988) like the provision of assistive technology and other related, therapeutic services. Diminishing resources seems to be a real concern as a result of a new funding formula for special education in

which (1) all students receiving special education services are funded at the same level and (2) special education funding to school districts is capped at 12.7% of the student population.

Faced with this dilemma of competing student needs, each district coped with the situation of diminishing resources to implement community-based services differently. CSD chose to serve fewer students in this model and only those with vocational goals who could independently access public transit. This eliminated the need for school-provided transportation and staff to accompany students to community sites. Students who could not meet the pre-requisites could continue in the classroom-based transition program. ASD is working toward combining special education funding with vocational education funding and considering ways to share staff. To date, however, there has been considerable resistance to these overtures because of, "the whole culture in this district. Special Ed [has] always maintained a separate budget, but now, with those diminishing resources, it will be interesting to see [if] that's going to force more collaboration internally" (ASD.01A, 1335-1339). Without this combined funding and staffing, the administrators in ASD believe that the off-campus program will need to cut at least one staff person. PSD relies heavily on parent involvement, both to provide funds for community access activities and in allowing the use of their homes for living skills training. Employment training will continue to be a low priority in this program.

The teachers' perspective also seemed to indicate that the allocation of resources significantly influences the way in which a program is implemented. Reatha observed that "the program is always changing because the money's always changing" (4ASD, 912-913). Her colleague, Joan, also felt that "the way the money's are distributed will make the biggest difference—it affects the way our students are served" (4ASD, 698-701).

In sum, four kinds of actions, which all three districts have taken, emerged as affecting the classroom level implementation of the transition mandate.

District decisions about student placement influenced the composition of individual classrooms which, teachers state, affects the manner in which transition services are provided, especially community experiences.

The degree of autonomy given to teachers influenced the program design. In all three districts, which were similar on this dimension, the teachers in the programs for students with mental retardation advocated for age-appropriate programs for students age 18-21 prior to the mandate for transition. Teachers and administrators in all three districts spoke at length about the programs designed by these teachers prior to the mandate and the impact of these programs on the subsequent implementation of the mandate district-wide. Each teacher reported making programmatic changes and, although they went through administrative channels, they all considered that to be more of a professional courtesy rather than a requirement.

Teachers in all three districts considered adequate staffing and resources of the transition program as an indication of administrative support. Staffing affects the quality of the provision of transition services to students and the number of students who can adequately receive these services while the allocation of fiscal resources affects the manner in which transition services are provided to students. Despite the fact that the transition mandate requires services in the preparation for independent adult living, employment, and community access adequate staffing and fiscal resources impacts: (1) the location of the program, e.g., on or off the high school campus; and (2) the focus of the program, e.g., community access, preparation for independent living and/or preparation for employment. It appears that all three districts lacked the capacity to fully implement all of the mandated transition services for all students with mental retardation.

#### How Postschool Outcomes Reflect the Implementation of Transition Policy

As indicated in chapter 4, there were no significant differences in postschool student outcomes between the 1990 and 1995 graduates of CSD, PSD, and ASD. However, there were differences in outcomes between each of the three 1990 student case studies and their 1995 student case counterparts within the same districts. These differences may be somewhat related to programmatic changes and the influence of district actions on the implementation of the

transition mandate, that occurred in all three districts between 1990 and 1995, stimulated, in part, by the transition policy. However, it is important to note that the six student case studies represented either exemplary cases (the ASD and CSD 1990 and 1995 student cases and the PSD 1995 student case) or the most memorable case (the PSD 1990 student case, considered by staff to be an unsuccessful transition case), so direct comparisons are problematic.

### Jill and Jeanne

Jill and Jeanne are both graduates of CSD. Jill graduated in 1990 and Jeanne in 1995. Jill's record indicates that she is moderately mentally retarded. Jeanne was classified as health impaired but her teacher reported that she functions as a moderately mentally retarded young adult.

The program for students with mental retardation in CSD is a district-level program. Therefore, it is not possible to differentiate between within-school and district-level factors that may have influenced Jill and Jeanne's postschool outcomes. However, available school records, teacher report and parent/guardian report indicate that Jill and Jeanne had very different learning experiences during their last year of high school.

Jill currently lives in an foster care home with several children who range in age from 12 to 26. She has lived here since she was twelve and she is now the oldest resident. While her school records were incomplete, her foster mother/careprovider, Mrs. "F" discussed, at length, her high school program and life since graduation.

While still in school, Jill participated in CSD's on-campus transition program, the only option available during the 1989/1990 school year. Mrs. "F" reported that Jill had some work experience while in high school; specifically, she worked in a community-based enclave situation, stuffing envelopes. Upon graduation, she went to work in a sheltered workshop. However, the placement was inappropriate. Mrs. "F" stated that "It was not good for her...she was losing abilities" (CSDP90, 270-274). Although Jill has been employed since graduation for brief periods of time, including working at a hot dog stand, at the time of the interview she had been unemployed for over a year and is not currently looking for work. However, she is engaged in several activities including a day program. This pattern of sporadic employment may not be idiosyncratic to Jill. In fact, four of the six students in the student cases [two of the 1990 graduates and two of the 1995 graduates] have been sporadically employed.

Jeanne attended a private high school and, according to her school records, participated in a functional academic program with little emphasis on vocational training or preparation for independent living. She did, however, participate one summer in a summer youth employment program, working on a landscaping crew. Although she was relatively unexposed to transition services during her high school program, at age 20, her parents enrolled her in CSD's off-campus transition program. Her last year began with a situational assessment of her interests and aptitudes by working on three unpaid work experience sites: one retail, one food service, and one office/business. After five months on these

sites, Jeanne's transition team [Jeanne, her parents, and the special education teacher] decided that Jeanne would best enjoy working in an office environment. By March, Jeanne was placed in an office job with support from an adult service agency. The linkage with this agency was facilitated by the transition program staff.

Jeanne continues to live at home, by choice. She has successfully changed jobs since graduation to another office position that offered more hours. She has also taken several classes at the local community center which offers classes specifically for persons with cognitive disabilities.

Neither Jill nor Jeanne had extensive vocational training as part of their high school program. Unlike Jill, however, Jeanne did go through a comprehensive functional vocational evaluation prior to placement on a job. This seems to have facilitated her current job satisfaction. However, it is important to note that Jill was employed upon graduation, as was Jeanne and neither young woman was living independently at one year out of school. It is impossible to know whether Jeanne's long-term (six year out of school) outcomes will differ from Jill's. Also, there are many differences between the two women which may impact both short and long term differences in outcomes, including: parental vs. custodial care, private vs. public high school education, a diagnosis of health impaired vs. moderate mental retardation, and, possibly, socioeconomic status.

Ed and Donny

Ed is a 1990 graduate of PSD; Donny graduated in 1995. Although both are classified with moderate mental retardation, their lives look quite different. Ed lives at home with his mother and father. He has been unemployed since 1990, less than three months after graduating from high school and he has never enrolled in any type of postsecondary training. Ed served as a catalyst for change in the PSD program because he was considered a failure by his high school teachers.

Donny lives with three other young men in his own home. Two careproviders support the four men, as needed. According to Mrs. "M", one of the care providers, someone checks in with the four men on a daily basis. Although Donny did not have a job when he left PSD, he currently works in a fast food restaurant. He has not participated in any postsecondary training.

As in CSD, the program for students with mental retardation in PSD is a district-level program. Therefore, it is not possible to differentiate between within-school and district-level factors that may have influenced Ed and Donny's postschool outcomes. However, the Individualized Education Plans (IEP) for Ed and Donny indicate that they also had very different learning experiences during their last year of high school.

Ed's IEP indicates that his program continued to focus primarily on pre-vocational or work readiness skills, e.g., following a personal schedule. His vocational goal was "to participate in a community job placement." However,

the steps to achieve this goal were (1) to find and maintain a job for two months and (2) to work independently for 20 hours. Ed did begin working at DK's three months prior to graduation but his schedule was sporadic, including taking two weeks off at graduation because, his mother stated, "there was so much going on, there wasn't any time for [it]" (PSDP90, 188-189). The linkages with adult service providers, specifically the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Division of Developmental Disabilities, were not well established; DVR was not invited to the exit IEP meeting and there is no indication that an intake interview was ever done. As previously indicated, however, Ed's parents were not interested in pursuing adult service support and felt pressured when school staff insisted on the involvement of the Division of Developmental Disabilities.

After his graduation, Ed's parents paid the high school's educational assistant to continue Ed's job support for the summer. However, when an accident prevented the aide from continuing this support, Ed's mother acted as job coach. She stated that the aide had taught her a little about supporting Ed on the job just prior to the accident but she described the experience as "basically, I would sit in the lounge and come out every once in a while and say, okay, it's this time, is this done?" (PSDP90, 74-77). Ed's job ended one week later.

Donny's IEP, a considerably longer document, indicates goals and objectives in all of the same categories as Ed's. However, Donny's records indicate that during his high school program, he had two long-term, paid work experiences. One job ended when the company moved out of the area; the other

when Donny decided that he did not like to work night shifts. Also, the adult service linkages for Donny were well established prior to graduation. His IEP was signed by Donny, Donny's caregiver, and a representative from DVR.

In addition to their different experiences in vocational training and the extent of the linkages made for them with adult service providers, there were also differences in their preparation for adult living. Ed's plan indicates that he was taught how to prepare breakfast independently and to use a telephone. These skills were taught in a classroom setting. Donny's program was much more extensive, including: cleaning and maintaining a home, shopping for and preparing meals independently, and initiating and participating in leisure activities with friends. All of these skills were taught in a natural setting, including Donny's own home.

Ed was employed at graduation from high school, while Donny was not. However, one year out of school, Ed was unemployed while Donny found a position that he seems to enjoy. While Donny's one-year out postschool outcomes seem to be better than Ed's, it is only conjecture that his long-term outcomes will look different from Ed's.

### Mickie and John

Mickie and John are both graduates of ASD. Mickie graduated in 1990 and John in 1995. John's records indicate that he was classified as moderately mentally retarded. Mickie's records were not available; however, Mickie's grandmother reported that she is moderately mentally retarded.

Mickie lives at home with her grandmother. Information from her grandmother indicates that Mickie participated in a school-based transition program during her last two years in school. Prior to that, Mickie was in Patty's PSD high school program and a classmate of Ed's.

While in the transition program, Mickie had several unpaid, short-term work experiences, e.g., childcare and working on a cleaning crew. She also participated one summer in a youth employment program working part-time in a hotel laundry. Upon graduation, with support from DVR, Mickie went to work in a restaurant. However, her previous work experiences were primarily exploratory in nature and she was unprepared to work every day for six to eight hours and she lost her job after a short time. She remains unemployed. Her grandmother reports that the DD case manager comes by once a year, but "we haven't used them actively" (ASDP90, 254). Mickie helps her grandmother with household chores and is not actively seeking employment or participating in any activities outside of the home. However, Mickie said that she would like to work in a restaurant clearing the tables.

John lives at home with his two brothers, three sisters and his foster mother and father. His school records indicate that he participated in the off-campus transition program. Teacher report, parent report, personal observation and his IEP all indicate that John's program focused on preparation for employment. After assessment in several settings, including an office setting, John became employed as a kitchen helper in a bakery. However, when

management changed at the bakery, John lost his job. The transition program staff then found John a job at a fast food restaurant. Mrs. "G," John's mother, stated that John took the job because, "that was the opportunity that was there and it made sense; it was down the street from us" (ASDP95, 361-363).

At John's exit IEP meeting, representatives from DVR and DDD were present. Although Mrs. "G" expressed great frustration with the adult service system, the school staff did ensure that appropriate linkages were in place prior to his graduation. John currently receives support on his job by a supported employment specialist that is funded by DDD.

John continues to be employed at the fast food restaurant, although his hours have been cut back. He plans to continue to live with his foster family. However, if he should decide to live in a tenant support situation in the future, both his teachers and Mrs. "G" report that he has adequate adult living skills to maintain his own home and access the community, areas that were addressed on his IEP as part of his high school program.

As with both CSD graduates [Jill and Jeanne] and both PSD graduates [Ed and Donny], it is only possible to compare the one year out postschool outcomes for the two students. At one year out of school, John seems to be experiencing a better employment outcome; at one year out, neither student either lived independently nor enrolled in any postsecondary training.

In the next chapter, a discussion of the connection between the transition policy and postschool outcomes, including evidence from these individual student cases, is undertaken.

## CHAPTER 7

### DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was twofold: 1) to investigate how the Washington state mandate for transition has been implemented locally, relative to the three policy goals of establishing adult service linkages, providing outcomes-oriented educational experiences and preparing personnel to establish community linkages and implement curricular changes; and 2) to investigate whether these local efforts were associated with more equitable outcomes for students with mental retardation, especially those with moderate or severe mental retardation. As a result, the following questions were asked regarding students with moderate/severe mental retardation in three school districts:

1. Are there differences in postschool outcomes among who graduated in 1985, 1990, and 1995?
2. How were transition services implemented, in response to state policy or other forces, for students who graduated in 1990 and 1995?
3. In what ways, if at all, were differences in outcomes for 1990 and 1995 graduates associated with how districts and schools implemented transition services?

This chapter will discuss the postschool outcomes of students with moderate/severe mental retardation in relation to the impact [or lack of impact] of the transition mandate on these outcomes by tracing back to the mandate from the student, through their high school experiences, to district-level decisions

concerning the implementation of the transition mandate along with other district-level decisions. Barriers to this implementation, factors outside of the school that may influence the postschool outcomes of students, and the subsequent implications of this study for policy and school practice will also be addressed.

### The Influence of the Transition Policy on Postschool Outcomes

This section discusses the findings of this study on the postschool outcomes experienced by students with moderate/severe mental retardation both at one year and six years out of school while analyzing the early implementation of the transition mandate at the classroom level, from 1990 to 1995.

In the aggregate, the one year outcomes for the 1990 and 1995 graduates and the six year outcomes for the 1985 and 1990 graduates are remarkably similar both to each other and to the findings of earlier studies. The only exception is for students with severe mental retardation six years out of school (both the 1985 and 1990 cohorts) who are experiencing higher rates of employment and engagement compared to students reported in earlier studies. However, the number of students with severe mental retardation participating in this study was very small, making it difficult to draw confident generalizations.

The findings of this study also indicate that, between 1990 and 1995, the most notable change in transition services at the classroom level was in the area

of curriculum. This increased focus on community-based experiences, instruction in functional academics, and daily living skills reflects one of the three goals embedded within the transition mandate of IDEA, i.e., “instructional and educational experiences and related services beyond those generally associated with academic outcomes” (DeStephano and Wermuth, 1990, p. 548).

### Postschool Outcomes of Students with Moderate/Severe

#### Mental Retardation

As reported in chapter 4, there were no statistically significant differences among the 1985, 1990 and 1995 graduates in the aggregate; all three cohorts of students in these three districts seemed to experience remarkably similar outcomes at both one year out of school and at six years out of school. Below are summarized briefly the outcome patterns by handicapping category and time frame.

Students with moderate mental retardation one year out of school. In the areas of employment, engagement, and independent living, the 1990 and 1995 graduates with moderate mental retardation were similar one year out of school. However, more 1990 graduates enrolled in some type of postsecondary training than did the 1995 graduates one year out of school.

The employment rates one year out of school in this study were 50% for the 1990s and 45% for the 1995 graduates with moderate mental retardation. Similarly, the engagement rates were 69% for the 1990 graduates and 55% for the 1995 graduates. However, in the area of postsecondary training,

the 1990's seem to be doing better than the 1995's. While five of the sixteen 1990 graduates (31%) attended some form of postsecondary training, only one of the eleven 1995 graduates (9%) did so.

The employment rates found in this study are higher than those reported in earlier studies, even though these studies considered employment at greater than one year out of school. Bruininks, et al. (1990) reported a 32% employment rate one to five years out of school for students with moderate mental retardation; Gordon and Goldbach (1989) reported a 23% employment rate for students two to three years out of school.

No state or regional studies reported on the rates of postsecondary training for students with moderate mental retardation one year out of school but nationally about 8.3% of all students with mental retardation who have been out of school less than two years attend postsecondary training. This figure is similar to the 9% rate reported for the 1995 graduates in this study.

Both the 1990 and 1995 graduates experienced low rates of living independently. In 1995, one student (9%) was reported to be living independently; in 1990, no students were living independently. Other studies have reported similarly low rates of independent living for students with mental retardation. Bruininks, et al. (1990) reported only 1% living independently one to five years out of school and Gordon and Goldbach (1989) found no students living independently two to three years out of school.

Students with moderate mental retardation six years out of school. The longer term patterns [over five years] for these students resembled that for students who had more recently graduated. The 1990 students with moderate mental retardation did as well as the 1985 graduates in the areas of engagement (69% in 1985; 69% in 1990), employment (63% in 1985; 63% in 1990), and independent living (6% in 1985; 0 in 1990). However, the 1985 graduates seem to access postsecondary training at a higher rate than the 1990 graduates (25% in 1985, 6% in 1990).

The low rates of independent living were similar to those reported in earlier studies, although some of these studies reported outcomes at greater than six years out of school. Kregel, et al. (1986) found 3% of the students with moderate/severe mental retardation living independently three to eight years out of school. Haring and Lovett (1990) reported no students living independently five to eight years out of school.

The rate of participation in postsecondary training for the 1985 graduates is higher than figures reported in earlier studies. However, the 6% figure for the 1990 graduates is comparable to the 9% reported by Thurlow et al. (1989).

Similarly, the 69% employment rate reported by Haring and Lovett (1990) for graduates with moderate mental retardation five to eight years out of school is comparable to the 63% rate reported in this study.

Students with severe mental retardation one year out of school. In all of the measured outcome areas, the 1990 and 1995 students with severe MR were remarkably similar at one year out of school.

No students with severe mental retardation were living independently or enrolled in postsecondary training one year out of school in either the 1990 or 1995 cohort and the 1990 graduates were engaged and employed at a rate of 50% one year out of school; 33% of the 1995 graduates were similarly engaged and employed.

No studies reported on the engagement or enrollment in postsecondary training for students with severe mental retardation. In the area of independent living, Bruininks et al. (1990), Haring and Lovett (1990), and Gordon and Goldbach (1989) reported 0 living independently one to five years out of school. The findings in this study are closer to the 61% employment rate reported earlier by Bruininks, et al. (1990) than to the 0 reported by Haring and Lovett (1990) and Gordon and Goldbach (1989).

Students with severe mental retardation six years out of school. At six years out of school, the 1985 and 1990 graduates were similar in independent living and postsecondary training while the 1990 graduates seem to be employed and engaged at slightly higher rates.

While one 1985 graduate was reported to be living independently six years out of school, no 1990 graduates were living independently. Similarly, two 1985 graduates accessed postsecondary training, while no 1990 graduates did so.

The 1990 graduates, however, were employed and engaged at 100%; the 1985 graduates were employed at 57% and engaged at 71%.

The employment and participation in postsecondary training findings of this study are higher than those reported by Thurlow et al. (1989). This earlier study reported that 5% of the students with severe mental retardation, who had been out of school for three to seven years, were employed and 2% participated in some form of postsecondary job training.

It would be tempting to conclude from the outcome patterns just reviewed that the transition mandate was exerting no influence over outcomes whatsoever. However, a closer look at what has taken place between mandate and outcomes, with respect to individual cases, suggests that the mandate may be exerting some influence on the local level, which is beginning to, or can, influence what students do after leaving school. As we review below, the findings of this study do indicate that the provision of transition services may have changed the classroom experiences for students with moderate/severe mental retardation over time. The student case studies from 1990 and 1995 attest to the possible positive impact of the transition mandate on the outcomes for selected 1995 case study graduates. Although the student case studies cannot be generalized, they do indicate the “footprints” of the mandate at the classroom level and the potential impact of transition services on students’ lives.

### Implementation of Mandated Transition Services at the Classroom Level

Determining the forms that transition services took at the classroom level and examining what occurred while the student was still in school facilitated the search for evidence of the transition mandate—"footprints" indicating policy implementation at the classroom level and the potential impact of this policy on student outcomes. The three districts varied in the implementation of the mandated transition services at the classroom level. These variations were manifested in the manner in which all of the mandated services were provided to students, including: the functional vocational evaluation, instruction and vocational education/training, community experiences and employment objectives, daily living skills and adult living objectives. This section discusses the implementation of these services at the classroom level.

Functional vocational evaluation. Although the teachers in the three districts met the requirement for a functional vocational evaluation (FVE), each interpreted the purpose of an FVE differently: (1) as a "first step" to aid in appropriate placement on a worksite, as in CSD; (2) to evaluate student performance on a worksite, as in ASD; (3) as a tool to help determine student interests, not necessarily related to employment, as in PSD.

At the classroom level in CSD, the functional vocational evaluation was addressed by placing all students, regardless of expressed interest, on two half-day work experience sites. Data was then collected on student interest, aptitude and work related behaviors in these sites. Upon completion of this situational

assessment, students were placed into paid positions. The teachers in the CSD transition program noted that few students are able to make realistic occupational choices prior to the situational assessment due to their previous lack of job experience. However, the variety of job choices in the half-day work experience sites is limited primarily to light custodial, office assistant, day care, and retail support such as product stocking.

In PSD, students on vocational sites receive support from the school staff, who document student aptitude and work. However, the focus of this program is independent living and community access and many students are not in vocational settings. The functional vocational evaluation for these students is based on student and family expressed interests.

ASD has a district vocational evaluator. This person compiles the functional vocational evaluation information for the teachers. Originally, the evaluator used interest inventories and commercial aptitude tests for the students in the transition program but the teachers reported that this information was not particularly useful. The evaluation is now based on evaluator and teacher observations in community work experience sites. However, as in CSD, the variety of available sites is limited.

Instruction and vocational education/training. Teachers may find themselves in a conundrum over what to teach when policies that require both remediation of the educational impact of the student's disability [as the students IEPs typically do] and building on student vocational strengths and interests [as

the functional vocational evaluation does] are perceived to be competing.

Should the focus be on remediating poor math skills, or finding a job?

Integrating vocational and academic subjects may require both time and expertise that many teachers do not possess.

Possibly because of this dilemma, all three districts interpreted the mandate as focusing on instruction leading to employment, i.e., vocational education and training, and districts encouraged teachers to “self-select” to teach in either the vocational/transition program or the academic high school program. All of the classroom teachers that participated in this study volunteered to teach in the transition program.

Community experiences and employment objectives. Although IDEA mandates community experiences as one of the transition services for students age 16-21, all three classrooms in this study focused on this service for students age 18-21. The classroom at CSD went from a self-contained, school-based, functional academic program to an off-campus, employment-oriented, community-based vocational program within three years. The classrooms at ASD and PSD changed focus within four years.

Both CSD and ASD routinely combined employment objectives with the provision of community experiences. PSD combined adult living objectives with community experiences.

The teacher at CSD stated that she would consider herself a failure if any of the students exited without a paid job. This perception seems to be reflected

in the significant differences found between CSD and the other two districts in the areas of employment and engagement. CSD graduates are employed and engaged at significantly higher rates than in the other two districts (see tables 8, 9, and 11). At ASD, the teachers considered the provision of work experiences very important, but placement in a paid job was not entirely within their capacity. As previously stated, PSD chose to focus on independent living and community access, which the teacher interpreted as adult living objectives; unless employment was an expressed family priority, this service was not routinely provided.

Daily living skills and adult living objectives. Daily living skills are a mainstay of the programs for students with mental retardation; adult living objectives, which are not defined in IDEA or the Washington Administration Codes, were defined differently by the teachers in the three programs. In PSD, adult living objectives including skills for independent living and community access. In CSD, adult living objectives were considered those skills needed to support employment, e.g., the ability to use public transit. In ASD, adult living objectives included recreation and leisure skills.

Among the three classrooms that participated in this study, however, adult living objectives and daily living skills were addressed for all students only in the PSD classroom. The teachers in both the CSD and ASD classrooms stated that these services were provided at the high school for students age 16-

18. Once students were in the “transition program”, these services were de-emphasized, primarily due to limitations on teacher time to teach these skills.

In summary, none of the programs provided all of the transition services in the same way nor with the same degree of attention. It appears that programs can only focus on one of the three major areas: employment, independent living or recreation/leisure, but not all three at once. This fragmented or partial implementation may be due to (1) teacher beliefs about the importance of one area over another, as reflected in both versions of the conceptual framework; (2) insufficient capacity, i.e., staff and fiscal resources to implement a program that emphasizes all three areas simultaneously, and/or (3) staff training and competence in implementing a program that that emphasizes all three areas simultaneously. The extent to which these three areas influence the mandate has not been quantified in this study, however, all three are included in both the initial and revised conceptual frameworks. Additionally, to understand these possibilities more fully, and to consider other possible influences, we need to take one more step back from outcomes, to the ways districts responded to the mandate.

#### Implementation of Mandated Transition Services at the District Level

Variations in actions taken at the district level also influenced classroom implementation of the transition mandate. Because the teachers in the classrooms that participated in this research were more proactive than reactive toward the new mandate, these actions occurred in an interactive rather than in a

strictly top-down manner. As discussed in chapter five, these district actions include: student placement decisions, the extent of autonomy afforded the teachers of students with mental retardation, and the extent of administrative support, including the allocation of resources, for teachers in the transition programs.

Student placement and classroom composition. Student placement decisions were made at the district level and each district used different criteria to make these decisions.

In all three districts, the availability of resources influenced student placement decisions. In CSD, the district decided to institute the prerequisite skill of independent community bus skills to determine entry into the off-campus program. This enabled the off-campus transition program to serve more students with fewer staff and without using the school transit system. Students who could not meet this prerequisite could remain in an on-campus transition program with limited community access.

In PSD, all students in the district with developmental disabilities attend the same program; in ASD, all students within a geographical area attend the same program. This enables the districts to consolidate the small number of students with the available resources, teachers, support staff and therapists, in one school in order to provide intensive student services. This also results in a more heterogeneous group of students than in CSD off-campus program.

This classroom composition seems to influence the manner in which transition services are provided. Community experiences in the more homogeneous CSD program focuses on individual competitive employment for those who can access public transportation and community access and daily living skills for those who cannot. At PSD and ASD, community experiences are more likely to come about as small groups of students access community resources, such as, the YMCA, with very little individual competitive employment.

The types of community experiences that the school staff can provide to individual students as well as the ability to provide employment opportunities, including individual competitive employment experiences to students, therefore, appears to be influenced by classroom composition.

Professional autonomy and program design. Teachers' beliefs influence the extent to which a policy will be implemented. Spillane (1994) and Ball (1990) both discuss how teachers will interpret a policy to fit their personal beliefs. The impetus to make changes in the direction called for by the mandate came from the teachers in those programs with support from district and school administration. However, teachers' beliefs would have little impact on program design and the implementation of transition services if the teachers did not have a great deal of professional autonomy. As stated in chapter five, the teachers in this study did have a great deal of professional autonomy, probably because the administrators in all three districts had very little knowledge of or experience

with students with more significant disabilities. Therefore, they left the programming decisions to the teachers.

Administrative support, allocation of resources, and program implementation. Teachers echoed their administrators' concern for the lack of new resources to implement transition according to their vision. Joan, a teacher in ASD, in voicing a concern expressed by all six teachers interviewed in this study, said "I guess the way the moneys are distributed will make the biggest difference. It affects the way our students are served" (ASD.01T 698-701).

At the district level, teachers typically sought support from administrators for the allocation of resources to implement their programs. However, more recently, as resources began to shrink and teachers became concerned with program cutbacks, the teachers began to look beyond their immediate administrators to seek support for their programs. In ASD, the teachers made a presentation to the school board; in CSD, the teachers hosted members of the school board and the superintendent on a tour of the off-campus program, including employment site visits.

This lack of adequate staffing and fiscal resources for transition has also brought teachers and families together to advocate for resources from both the state and the district. Maggie, the transition specialist in ASD, commented that "if these threats [of funding and program cuts] do come to pass [it will be interesting to see] what kind of a stance our staff takes in developing that family as ally. We may see that this is something that our staff and our families come

together on" (ASD.01A 1673-1681). In fact, Mrs. T., a parent, and Joan, a teacher in ASD, both report advocating for resources for transition from the state legislature; Mrs. T. by writing letters to the local newspaper and her legislators and Joan by participating in a rally on the steps of the state capitol during the legislative session.

#### Evidence of Possible Policy-Outcomes Connections in Individual Cases

Findings from this study indicate that, in the aggregate, there were no significant differences in outcomes between students who graduated before transition services were mandated and those who graduated five years after the mandate took effect.

Although it is impossible to generalize from the student cases, there were differences in outcomes for the students who participated in the case studies that were part of this research. In CSD and ASD, where the major programmatic change was to a focus on preparation for employment, the 1995 graduates are employed while the 1990 graduates are not. In PSD, where the emphasis is on teaching adult living skills, the 1995 graduate is living independently while the 1990 graduate is living at home. Additionally, in CSD, the change in program focus, which began in 1988, seems to be reflected in the significantly higher rates of both employment and engagement for the 1990 students with moderate disabilities at one year out of school [see tables 8 and 9] and higher employment and engagement rates for the 1995 graduates than in either of the other two districts [see tables B-3 and B-5]. However, in the aggregate, the 1995 CSD

graduates were employed and engaged at one year out of school at lower rates than the 1990 CSD graduates, possibly attesting to other explanations less related to policy which are addressed later in this chapter.

Sequential provision of vocational assessment, exploration opportunities, and vocational training may influence postschool outcomes and are included within the list of services mandated by the transition policy. For example, in ASD, Mickie, the 1990 graduate, was never vocationally assessed nor did she receive any vocational training. Her program focused on vocational exploration. However, John's program contained all three elements.

Staff that facilitated the establishment of linkages with adult service providers, another requirement of the transition mandate, also may have contributed to positive postschool outcomes for some students. Jeanne, Donny, and John all receive and utilize support funded by the Division of Developmental Disabilities. This support includes, but is not limited to, employment services. Jill also utilizes support from DDD through the day activity program. However, Ed and Mickie have not actively accessed adult service support. Parent reports and school records indicate that these linkages were not firmly established prior to school leaving and that the parents/guardians of Ed and Mickie did not fully understand the purpose or potential benefit of these services.

Finally, teaching of adult living skills may also influence the quality of life experienced by graduates. In PSD, the different postschool experiences of

Donny and Ed are striking. Donny is living semi-independently with friends while Ed is unable to prepare his own meals or shop independently. It is unlikely that he could live in a tenant support situation. As John's case indicated, if a student prefers to continue to live with his/her parents, learning these skills maximizes their ability to contribute at home.

### How the Transition Mandate May be Influencing Postschool Outcomes

The transition mandate may be influencing the postschool outcomes of students with moderate/severe mental retardation in several ways.

First, at the classroom level, as evidenced in the individual student cases, community-based vocational training, linkages with adult services established prior to school leaving, and the teaching of adult living skills may positively influence student postschool outcomes.

Next, the focus of the program, e.g., employment [ASD and CSD] or independent living and recreation/leisure [PSD], also potentially impacts student outcomes, as evidenced in the differences in student outcomes among the three districts (see tables 8, 9, 10, and 11).

Finally, as earlier analyses have demonstrated, these programmatic features are in place, in part, because of the state transition mandate which acted as a catalyst at the district level. Even when changes at the classroom level began prior to the mandate for transition [as occurred in ASD and CSD], Maggie, the ASD transition specialist, stated that without the mandate, the changes at the

classroom level “wouldn’t (have) happened as quickly and as sweeping(ly) as it did” (ASDA2, 243-244).

### Explaining the Apparent Patterns of Policy Influence

There are several possible explanations for the possible influence of policy on individual cases despite the lack of an indication of the policy’s influence in the aggregate. These explanations fall into four categories: (1) explanations rooted in the study sample and timeframe, (2) those rooted in the ways that districts and teachers respond to organizational shock, (3) persistent implementation barriers at the local level, and (4) other possible explanations less related to policy

#### Explanations Rooted in the Study Sampling and Timeframe

Within the category of study sampling and timeframe, there are five possible explanations for the influence of the transition policy on individual cases despite the lack of an indication of the policy’s influence in the aggregate.

First, there were very few students within the three districts who were categorized as having moderate or severe mental retardation (see table 4 and 5). These small numbers make it impossible to make confident conclusions about the influence of the policy on this group of students.

Next, the method used to chose the individual cases may have biased the results. As described in chapter 3, for the 1990 and 1995 individual student cases, teachers were asked to select exemplary or most memorable students. In

two of the districts, exemplary students were chosen; in the third district (PSD), one exemplary student was chosen (the 1995 graduate), however, the 1990 graduate was considered most memorable because teachers considered him to have not successfully transitioned to adult life. Therefore, the outcomes experienced by the students in the individual cases may not have been representative of those experienced by all of the [typical] students with moderate/severe mental retardation who graduated from these three districts. Also, contrasting particular cases may bias study findings. For example, in PSD, an exemplary student (the 1995 graduate) was contrasted with a student who was considered a failure (the 1990 graduate).

Another sampling limitation of this study concerns the consistency of labels used to describe the students. For example, Jeanne was described by her mother and her teacher as a student with moderate mental retardation. However, her school records, obtained after all of the interviews were completed, indicated that she was categorized as health impaired. When asked to explain this discrepancy, the teacher stated that students with mental retardation are categorized as health impaired whenever possible because "it sounds better" (CSDT, personal communication, May 14, 1996), perhaps indicating a negative perception within the community of persons with mental retardation. Although this was the only instance in this study of a discrepancy between teacher/parent reported disability and the label used in the school

records, researchers may want to consider obtaining school records first before beginning the sample selection process.

The decision to only interview graduates from the three school districts also limited this study. The outcomes experienced by students with moderate/severe mental retardation who exit prior to age 21, without graduating, may be considerably different.

Finally, it may be too soon to determine the effects of the mandate on student outcomes. Although the mandate, as part of the IDEA, went into effect in 1990, this research indicates that there was some "lag time" between the mandate and the implementation of the requirements of the mandate. Part of that lag time occurred at the state level; the federal requirements were reviewed and interpreted through the WAC process. It was during this interpretation process that the federal recommendation for a functional vocational evaluation was made a Washington state requirement. Part of the lag time also occurred at the district level; in ASD, for example, implementation at the classroom level began in 1993. It appears that the district required some time to interpret the state requirements and to determine the best way to implement those requirements within the local context. Therefore, although the 1995 graduates were eligible to receive the mandated transition services throughout their high school careers [and did so in CSD who has been providing transition-like services since 1990], they may actually have only received those services for two years in ASD and three in PSD. Therefore, we do not know what student

outcomes may look like when (1) full implementation of the transition mandate is in place and (2) teachers are more familiar with the requirements of the mandate and the delivery, at the classroom level, of the required services.

### Explanations Rooted in the Way Districts and Teachers Respond to

#### Organizational Shocks

Mandating transition services placed considerable stress on the special education system in these three districts. The districts had one year to implement the mandate prior to compliance monitoring by the state, with no additional state funds provided directly to school districts to implement the new requirements. This lack of additional funding may have hindered the capacity of the three districts to implement the mandated services [see revised conceptual framework] and led to organizational stress. Although the state did fund a technical assistance center, the small staff of that center resulted in limited opportunities for staff development, which, as indicated in the conceptual framework, may influence implementation at the teacher/classroom level. Finally, the presence of competing political forces [e.g., graduation requirements and discussions about essential learnings developed at the state level] also added to the stress on the system. As stated by one special education director, "Conflict is set up simply because transition comes in as somebody's great idea, nicely organized, plunked into a system that may or may not see any relevance [to it]" (CSDA2, 587-590).

All three districts responded to the organizational shock at the district level by reinterpreting the mandate while still providing transition services and educational experiences “beyond those generally associated with academic outcomes” (DeStephano and Wermuth, 1990, p. 548). There are several possible explanations for this reinterpretation.

In the provision of community experiences for students with developmental disabilities age 18-21, the three districts provided services above and beyond the mandate. The programs were designed by the teachers who had professional discretion in how the programs were designed and who reported learning about off-campus programs in their university coursework and in inservice training classes. Since the rationale for off-campus programs is age-appropriate placement, all of the teachers advocated for changes in programming for some of the students age 18-21. The changes in programming for students age 16-18 were less dramatic.

Starting a new program to meet students’ needs rather than incorporating new services into existing programs is a standard operating procedure in school districts. Early special education itself is an example (Skrtic, 1991). All three districts only partially met the letter of the law in changing the programs for 18-21 year old students in order to incorporate transition services. By creating a separate program, essentially a postsecondary program, for the provision of transition services, districts were able to implement the services more rapidly than would have been possible if the services were incorporated into existing

high school programs. However, these new programs seem to conflict with existing policies in the area of graduation requirements, one of the “other forces” listed as an intervening factor at the district level [see revised conceptual framework].

The three classrooms that participated in this study were able to absorb much of the organizational shock that resulted from the mandate to provide transition services. Several factors may have contributed to this.

First, the teachers’ training, as indicated in the conceptual framework, may have predisposed them to build transition services into their practice. The six teachers involved in these classrooms all received their professional training (special education endorsement and/or master’s degree) within the last ten years. The concept of transition has been addressed in the literature since 1985 and four of the teachers specifically stated that transition issues were discussed as part of their professional training. Therefore, the concept of transition was not “news” to these teachers, who assumed primary responsibility for the implementation of the transition mandate at the classroom level for students with mental retardation. These programs also largely influenced district-level interpretation of the mandate (see chapters four and five).

Second, the autonomy [also an individual teacher intervening factor listed in the conceptual framework] granted teachers gave them flexibility to respond to the policy as they saw fit. The teachers all reported high degrees of professional autonomy, attributed to administrators who were confident in the

teachers' abilities to provide appropriate services. However, the teachers also reported that the administrators did not fully understand the unique needs of students with more significant disabilities and, therefore, tended to take a "hands off" approach to these programs. Each teacher reported making programmatic changes and, although they went through administrative channels, they all considered that more of a professional courtesy than a requirement. Bea summarized it best when describing the process of moving the CSD transition program off-campus; "And so M. (another teacher) and I came downtown, and located the church, and went in and talked to the minister and negotiated that and went back to the assistant superintendent who said, of course, we need to study this for a year. And we said, no we're not going to study this for a year...we're going to move the program off-campus (CSDT2, 870-881).

Third, programmatic changes may have been easier because the classrooms were initially small, self-contained classrooms and, with fewer people involved, the changes may have had little impact on the school as a whole. In describing the process of programmatic change at four different sites, Maggie, of ASD, stated that in two sites, the change was difficult and resulted in considerable strife due to the large number of staff persons involved but that "in the other two situations we don't have that problem because it's a smaller staff" (1ASD, 444-446).

### Explanations Rooted in Persistent Implementation Barriers at the Local Level

There are several major barriers, however, to implementing all of the transition services mandated by the IDEA at the district level. These include: limitations on implementing the requirement for a functional vocational evaluation and its relationship to competing policies, models of special education, the cost of providing community services and issues surrounding the establishment of linkages between adult service providers, families, and schools.

Functional vocational evaluation. In order to implement the functional vocational evaluation component of the transition mandate, staff may need training in both formal and informal methods of vocational evaluation and its relationship to the secondary program for students with disabilities. This demand for training is likely to exceed the professional development resources of many districts. Additionally, the three districts may lack the capacity to implement the FVE because there is no systematic way of providing functional vocational evaluation for large numbers of students (approximately 12.7% of the total student population) on an ongoing basis, as required by law, with current staffing levels and available opportunities in the community. This demand for training is likely to exceed the professional development resources of many districts. Consequently, special education teachers are attempting to do these evaluations using existing resources, considerably adding to their work load.

Philosophically, the requirement to include a functional vocational evaluation and transition services into the IEP can be problematic, especially the

“fit” between the IEP and the requirement for a functional vocational evaluation. The latter requirement in Washington state may imply that vocational education and training and transition services are the same thing, resulting in too narrow a focus on the provision of transition services and the de-emphasis on outcomes other than paid employment.

Models of special education that may not support transition. Teachers and administrators may perceive that students are not mature enough or ready to access the community for community experiences or employment opportunities at age 16. They may be using a “readiness” framework that, until the supported employment initiative, was a popular model for students with mental retardation. A “readiness” model stipulates that students must master pre-vocational skills prior to learning vocational skills. These pre-vocational skills include the acquisition of appropriate work related behaviors and basic academic skills in math and language.

A focus on “readiness” may inhibit full implementation of the transition services by encouraging teachers to continue to focus only on academic skills rather than including employment and preparation for adult living in the curriculum, as required by the mandate. Consequently, as indicated in the cases of the three districts that participated in this study, the provision of these latter services becomes the focus of a 19-21 year old program, rather than an integral part of the 16-21 program, as required by the mandate.

Cost of providing community experiences. Informants reported that the provision of community experiences costs more than classroom-based instruction due to transportation costs and the higher staffing levels required to supervise students in community settings. Teachers, as indicated in both versions of the conceptual framework, report coping with this issue of cost through a "triage" method of serving the oldest students first, i.e., focusing transition services on students age 18-21 or on the functionally more capable students who can access public transportation.

Establishing linkages among providers, families, and schools. Teachers in two of the study districts talked about the importance of linking with the families. The families from these two districts reported really positive feelings about the teachers, but the linkages seem to be personal not systemic. Parents reported feeling "out of the loop," often expressing frustration with the school district and the community of adult service providers but were generally satisfied with individual teachers and felt that the teachers do a good job. Mrs. T., a parent in CSD, even suggested that "they (teachers) were all good in different ways" (CSD.01P, 1859-1859).

There are several reasons why parents may have expressed these feelings. Teachers must provide services, including community experiences and employment opportunities, in order to comply with the transition mandate and, teachers believe, to ensure better outcomes for students. However, the employment opportunities in the community are limited, as are the time to

provide the transition services and the resources with which teachers have to implement the services. Teachers cope with this dilemma by pressuring families to accept available services.

Another reason contributing to these feelings may be the lack of adequate communication between the school and home resulting in the family feeling not valued during the planning process. Specifically, the goals of the transition program are often not clearly communicated to families, leading to misunderstandings about anticipated outcomes for the student. For example, in CSD, the goal of the program is paid employment prior to school leaving. Since that is the primary goal, Jeanne's program focused on those skills needed for her immediate employment, e.g., accessing the bus service and specific vocational skills, rather than Mrs. T's preference that Jeanne learn to manage her money.

Finally, school staff may not appreciate that transition from school to adult life is a major transition for both the student and the family and, therefore, may not be adequately addressing the family's concerns. Maggie, the transition specialist for ASD, emphasized how important it is to "spend almost as much time with our families in education and working with them as we do trying to get the students ready to move off as well" (1ASD, 948-952).

Very little was reported by either teachers or families about student involvement in the transition process. There seems to be a perception, not supported in the research literature, that persons with cognitive impairments are unable to make choices. This perceived inability results in teachers and parents

making choices for the students during the transition process. Mrs. G. reported that John would be happy doing any kind of work. Mrs. T., Jeanne's mother, admitted to "directing" her daughter into office work, despite the fact that Jeanne stated a preference for retail sales or food service. Only in PSD was meaningful student participation seriously addressed. The teacher has instituted a system of student-directed IEPs which allows students to indicate their choices in activities prior to the IEP meeting. The teacher reported that the student's choices takes precedence over that of the parents.

#### Other Possible Explanations for Diverse Student Outcomes Less Related to Policy

Consideration should be given to the possibility that transition services are not the most powerful influence on the postschool outcomes of students with moderate or severe mental retardation. While the high school program may have influenced the postschool outcomes of these students with mental retardation, other influences examined in this study, less related to policy, may also explain these difference. These include: (1) family preferences and the extent of family involvement in the transition process; (2) the availability of adult services for students after graduation and opportunities for employment and independent living in the students' community, and (3) the impact of the student's disability on his/her life, the lack of postsecondary options (other than employment) for students and factors unique to the individual, such as personality and physical characteristics.

Family preferences and involvement in the transition process. Although many reports in the literature emphasize the importance of family and student involvement in the transition process (Wehman, et al., 1985; Anderson, 1987; Everson & Moon, 1987; Gillet, 1987; Halpern, 1992, Johnson, Thompson, Sinclair, Krantz, Evelo, & Thompson, 1994), few studies have examined the extent of this involvement or identified family perceptions or concerns about the transition from school to adult life (Johnson & Rusch, 1993). This is especially puzzling, considering the importance of student access to a family/friend network to find appropriate employment after school leaving (Hasazi, et al., 1985; Wehman, et al., 1985; Schalock, et al., 1986).

As discussed previously in this chapter, this study found limited family and student involvement in the transition process with families expressing dissatisfaction with the school system. Parents reported feeling that their concerns went unheard and unvalued by the school system, especially if they preferred for their son/daughter to remain living at home or participate in activities other than paid work. Findings in this study indicate that a family preference for outcomes that other than employment or independent living is potentially a powerful influence on the student's life after high school.

Availability of adult services and opportunities in the community. In their 1990 study, Haring and Lovett concluded that "It is erroneous to label public school education a failure because follow-up studies report dismaying results. The failure has been our reluctance to recognize the need for continual

services throughout adulthood and a hesitancy to assure that adult programs receive support, and function under requirements similar to those governing school programs" (p. 59). This need for continued support has been recognized in several studies (Johnson et al., 1995; Johnson & Rusch, 1993; Bruininks, et al., 1988). The lack of guaranteed continued support may explain the distrust in the adult service system expressed by the parents in this study and the Gordon (1989) study which found that parents did not view the adult service system as a "potential source of help in many areas" (p.73). In Washington state, the legislature has directed that a portion of the budget for the employment support of persons with developmental disabilities be specifically designated for students transitioning from school to adult life. Although the funding is not adequate to meet the needs of all transitioning students, school district personnel indicate a smoother transition process for the students who do receive the designated funding. However, there is no equivalent designated funding for outcomes other than employment.

We cannot assume that adequate funding of an adult service entitlement system alone will improve the outcomes for students with moderate/severe mental retardation any more than a quality secondary program will guarantee improved outcomes. Thurlow et al. (1989) suggested that regional economic differences as well as service differences may result in higher employment rates. Riches, Parmenter, Fegent, & Bailey (1993) concurred in stating that "No matter how effective school and transition processes may be, if there are no programs or

positions to which students can make a transition post school, then other efforts may well be in vain" (p.64).

Impact of the disability, lack of options other than employment, and uniquely individual factors. Johnson et al. (1995) reported that "there are several significant, yet not surprising, differences in outcomes for individuals as a function of severity of disability" (p. 82). While this study found no significant outcome differences by graduation cohort, the findings do suggest that students with severe mental retardation may not do as well overall after school leaving as students with moderate mental retardation. While overall employment rates for persons with mental retardation (including mild mental retardation) have been reported in the mid-40 percent range (Hasazi, et al., 1985; Edgar and Levine, 1987), studies reporting rates for students with severe mental retardation range from 0% (Haring & Lovett, 1990) to 61% (Bruininks, et al., 1990). However, the range for competitive employment is 0% to 7%. One interpretation of these findings may be that employment, especially competitive employment, or independent living for persons with severe mental retardation may not be achievable outcomes.

Findings from this study indicate that, although all of the students in the case studies were either classified as moderately mentally retarded or reported to be functioning as moderately mentally retarded young adults, there were considerable differences among the six case study students. Jill is diagnosed with moderate mental retardation while Jeanne is diagnosed as health impaired.

Jill had great difficulty in answering any questions during the interview process. Her responses were limited to echoing statements made by her foster mother. Jeanne, however, was highly verbal and answered several questions about the types of classes that she took during high school. Like Jeanne, Mickie was able to answer several questions about her high school experiences [mainly descriptive in nature]. She was quite shy, however, and was not comfortable speaking at length. John, the 1995 graduate, answered "yes" to virtually every question. These differences among the students could have contributed to the outcomes experienced by each of them.

Other uniquely individual factors, implied in the six student cases, may also contribute to differences in postschool outcomes among the six students that are less attributable to policy and school practice. For example, in the cases of Jill and Jeanne, Jill has lived in a foster care situation since she was twelve while Jeanne lives with her natural family and Jill attended public school while Jeanne attended private school for her four years of high school.

There were also differences between Ed and Donny. Although both Ed and Donny are non-verbal, Ed is very shy but Donny is social; Ed seems to have very little stamina but Donny was reported to be energetic when motivated. Donny lives in custodial care while Ed lives with his natural family. Also, while Ed may have some health issues, Donny's health is good.

Like Donny and Jill, John has lived with a foster family while Mickie lives with her grandmother. While John's health is good, Mickie has required extensive counseling since leaving school due to mental health issues.

Therefore, custodial vs. parental care, physical and mental health issues, different personality characteristics and differences in socio-economic status [as indicated in this study by access to private school education] may influence postschool outcomes while remaining outside of the scope of the transition policy.

Another explanation for the differences among the case study students may be differences in the provision of adult service support between 1990 and 1995. For example, the legislature directed that a portion of the DD money be targeted for transition students as they exit the high school setting. This money was designated for the provision of employment services. However, due to insufficient funds, not all transition students could be served under this proviso. It is unknown whether the proviso influenced the provision of employment services for any of the students in this study. Interestingly, teachers and parents rarely ask for this type of information, therefore, they usually do not know about how service decisions are made at the adult service level.

#### Implications for Study Conceptualization and Further Research

Findings from this study suggest some changes to the initial conceptual framework proposed in chapter one as well as several questions that would

benefit from further conceptualization and research. This section proposes a revised conceptual framework and undertakes recommendations for further research.

### Revised Conceptual Framework

In chapter 1, an initial conceptual framework proposing the filters through which the transition mandate passed as it went from the federal level to the state level, to the school district and, finally, to the individual level was proposed. As the policy passed through these filters, interpretations or reinterpretations of the policy occurred. Findings from this study have largely confirmed the categories and relationships between constructs suggested by the initial framework, with minimal alterations to the components or influencing factors within each of these levels.

The revised conceptual framework [see figure 5] indicates that, at the district level, the models of special education that are in place within the district may influence the district's response to the policy, as may previous experiences with similar requirements [rather than previous policy choices] and other interests that compete with the requirements of the policy. These issues are addressed in this chapter.

At the individual teacher level, findings did not substantiate the influence of certification or a code of ethics on the implementation of the transition mandate. Leadership, reported by teachers as important, seems more appropriately to be considered an element of capacity rather than as a separate

entity. However, work conditions, individual characteristics and the teacher's preparation and knowledge seem to influence implementation to some extent.

Finally, although not considered in the initial conceptual framework, the impact of the student's disability may influence postschool outcomes, as subsequently discussed in this chapter.

### Implications for Further Research

Several questions remained unanswered by this study that would benefit from further conceptual analysis as well as empirical research.

If transition includes "connecting" students with disabilities to their communities, can school districts actually implement the transition mandate for *all* students? Currently, the requirement to "establish linkages" implies linkages with support agencies, such as DDD or DVR. However, these agencies provide services based on eligibility criteria and do not provide entitlement services, as do schools. Therefore, not everyone exiting special education receives these services. What types of linkages might schools facilitate other than those with publicly-funded agencies? How might the mandate to establish such linkages be implemented? In order to answer these questions, a series of surveys of at the local level, possibly using the same boundaries as the Educational Service Districts, could be undertaken to determine the nature and extent of local resources. An analysis of these resources could then be undertaken to determine (1) eligibility criteria, (2) type of service available, (3) cost of services, and

State policy (response to IDEA; mandate for transition services)

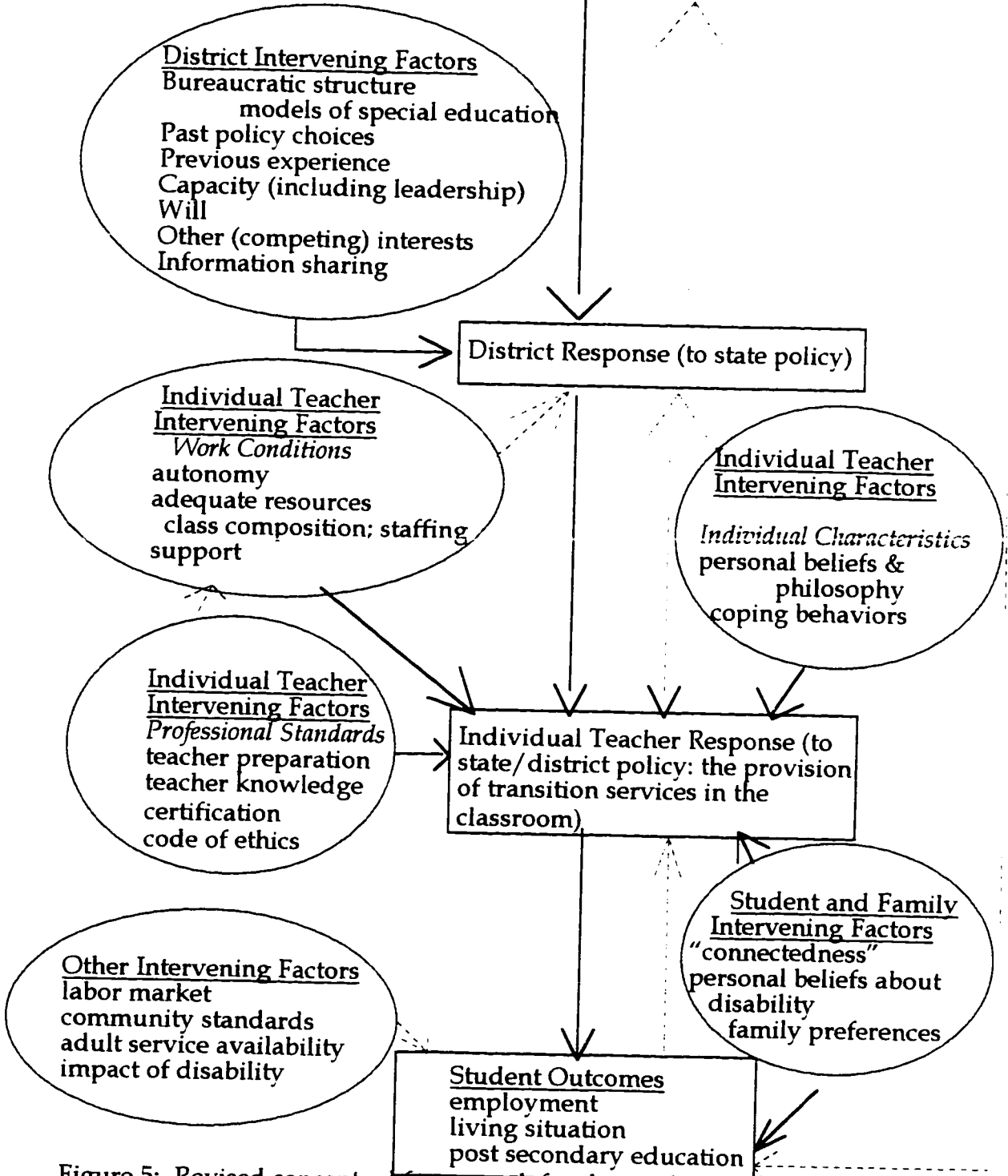


Figure 5: Revised conceptual framework for the implementation of mandated transition services in high school programs for students with mental retardation

(4) potential barriers to utilization of the services by young adults with moderate/severe mental retardation. Using this information, a comprehensive data base could then be compiled for use by school staff and families in identifying potential postschool linkages beyond the publicly funded agencies typically considered by IEP teams.

It became apparent, during the analysis of the case studies, that informants perceived issues differently. Administrators, for example, tended to discuss resource issues much more than teachers; parents spoke a great deal about how they felt about different school-related situations. Time constraints on this study did not permit pursuing the potential influence of different perspectives held by stakeholders on the implementation of the transition policy. In order to address this issue, a Delphi survey of stakeholders in the transition process, e.g., administrators of schools and adult service agencies, school staff, families, and consumers, could be undertaken. This survey could be used to both identify important issues in transition and determine the priority of these issues according to each group of stakeholders.

One of the limitations of the quantitative substudy was the small number of respondents with moderate/severe mental retardation. Consequently, it is difficult to draw generalizations about the potential impact of the transition policy on student outcomes. Considering the low incidence of moderate/severe mental retardation, is it possible to meaningfully measure the postsecondary outcomes of these students in a manner useful both to school districts and to

policymakers? Researchers might consider a study that includes a larger number of districts, e.g., at the regional level,<sup>15</sup> in order to increase the number of respondents while allowing for considerations of local context.

Another limitation of this study was in selecting only exemplary sites to participate; all three districts had experience with the provision of transition-like services prior to the transition mandate. Therefore, the impact or lack of impact of previous experience with transition-like services on implementation of the mandate at the classroom and district level is unknown. Future studies may want to consider the inclusion of districts that have not had previous experience with transition-like services in order to better determine the extent of previous experience on the implementation of a mandate like transition.

Finally, if the transition plan is truly the student's plan, and the student is unable to clearly communicate his/her priorities, how do we ensure that the plan accurately reflects the student's choice? As implied in the latter question, the student is largely missing from this analysis for several reasons. Primary among these is the difficulty communicating, over a short period of time, with a student with moderate mental retardation. Jeanne spoke well, but had difficulty understanding some of my questions. Also, she tended to rely on her mother to answer questions that required any indication of choice [e.g., who was your favorite teacher?]. John had difficulty with verbal communication and could

---

<sup>15</sup> One possible way to determine regional level might be to use the Educational Service District boundaries.

only answer yes/no questions. Donny was non-verbal and communicated with gestures that were often difficult to interpret. Time constraints on this study limited the amount of time spent with each student but future research should take this limitation into consideration and allow for longer periods of time spent with the student. Researchers may also want to consider the use of an interpreter who is familiar with the student to facilitate the best representation of the students' perspective.

### Implications for Policy and School Practice

Several factors, both within-school and outside of school, were found to influence and, at times, impede, the implementation of the transition mandate. Some of these factors are more amenable to public policy intervention than others. Public policy may be able to address many of the issues associated with fragmented or partial implementation of the mandate, competing models of special education, the cost of providing the mandated services, the establishment of linkages with adult service agencies, and the choice of policy instrument. Less amenable to public policy intervention may be the impact of family preference and the severity of the student's disability on postsecondary outcomes. However, policy intervention may lessen the consequences of pressure on families to accept available services and the lack of a variety of options available to students with significant disabilities.

### Addressing Fragmented or Partial Implementation

This study found that the mandates for instruction, community experiences and daily living skills were met. However, functional vocational evaluations, vocational training, employment objectives, adult living objectives, and linkages with adult service providers were not consistently provided across the three districts.

As stated in Chapter 2, the expected effect of a mandate, such as transition, is compliance with rules or regulations. This study indicates that the mandate has met this expectation. In the three districts that participated in this study, the programs for students with mental retardation largely complied with the regulations regarding transition, specifically, transition services were provided to the students.

In the area of community experiences, all three districts exceeded the requirements of the mandate for students age 18-21 by providing work experiences off-campus. However, in 1985, Hasazi et al. found that "those youths who participated in part time real jobs during high school or summer jobs were far more likely to be employed following high school than those who did not" (p. 232). Students who participated in unpaid work experience were no more likely to become employed after high school than those students who did not participate in work experience programs.

The three districts varied in the provision of vocational education and training, with CSD providing the most comprehensive vocational program.

However, CSD does have prerequisites for entry into that program.

Employment objectives were problematic in all three districts, although most notably in PSD where the program emphasis was on independent living and recreation/leisure.

It seems likely that there are barriers to full implementation, as discussed in a previous section of this chapter. These barriers seem to fall into three general categories: philosophical barriers, barriers resulting from a lack of sufficient training, and fiscal barriers, as reflected in the revised conceptual framework presented in this chapter.

In order to address the philosophical barriers to the implementation transition services within the context of the IEP, policymakers may want to consider the elimination of the requirement for transition goals and objectives within the IEP. The latter, according to department of education guidelines, should be based on the students interests and aptitudes, as indicated in the FVE. However, goals and objectives in the IEP are typically based on remediation of the student's area of deficit. The requirement for transition goals and objectives, therefore, could be replaced with a requirement for student-directed transition activities based on the functional vocational evaluation.

Teachers and school district personnel may not have been adequately trained in techniques in functional vocational evaluation and report that there are few sources for this training. State policymakers may want to consider the inclusion of these techniques in teacher preparation programs for teachers

intending to work in secondary special education programs, high school career counselor preparation programs, and programs leading to the certification of school psychologists in Washington state. This may be addressed as either a required course or as a recommended course in a program leading to a special education teacher endorsement or ESA certification. Funding sources for inservice training in the functional vocational evaluation and the provision of mandated transition services could also be investigated by state policymakers in order to facilitate implementation by teachers and school district staff currently in the field.

Policy may also be able to address the apparent lack of resources for carrying out functional vocational evaluations. This issue may best be addressed at the state department of education level. For example, school district personnel may not have a system in place for providing a functional vocational evaluation on an ongoing basis for large numbers of students. The development of models, at the state level, for systematically providing functional vocational evaluations on an ongoing basis might be helpful at the local level. Included in these models could be processes for performing and funding evaluations collaboratively with adult service agencies such as the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. Providing models of collaboratively funded interagency training, to include techniques in functional vocational evaluation and community-based vocational training, may also serve to promote shared responsibility for the

transition mandate and foster linkages between schools and adult service providers.

State policymakers may also want to consider that transition services may not be a powerful influence on the postsecondary outcomes of students with moderate to severe mental retardation. If this is the case, then perhaps consideration should be given to (1) exempting these students from the requirements of the mandate while undertaking studies into the mandate's effectiveness with other students of disability or (2) facilitate the full implementation of the mandate with adequate time allowed to study the impact of the mandated services on student outcomes. This second choice will better enable us to determine the extent of the mandate's influence or lack of influence on students' lives.

Policy action alone, however, will not address all of the reasons for fragmented or partial implementation. Some of these lie at the school level. This study and others (Johnson, et al. 1995; Hasazi et al., 1985) indicate that most students participate in unpaid work experiences while in school, fulfilling the mandate for community experiences and vocational education. However, in order to meet the intent of the transition mandate, schools must "provide *meaningful* work experience in community settings (and) train mobility and daily living skills necessary for adult life" (Haring and Lovett, 1990, p.60, italics added). Schools, therefore, may want to investigate models which provide these

meaningful work experiences, such as, adaptations to supported employment models (Nisbet & Hagner, 1988; Elliott, et al., 1995).

The mandate for employment opportunities has proved more problematic for schools. Until full implementation of the transition mandate is achieved, including the provision of employment opportunities and preparation for independent living via instruction in daily living skills and adult living objectives, it will be impossible to determine the extent of the influence of the high school program on the outcomes of students with moderate/severe mental retardation.

Additionally, schools may want to investigate options other than independent living and work. Opportunities for good citizenship such as volunteerism and community service could also be considered appropriate outcomes and a measure of success for students.

#### Addressing Competing Models of Special Education

Similarly, in order to address barriers to implementation resulting, perhaps, from currently popular models of special education, school districts may want to continue the provision of in-service training for special education teachers, school counselors, and school psychologists in the functional vocational evaluation and its relationship to the secondary program for students with disabilities and models of providing transition services that are complementary to adult services models. Development and training in a vocational education model that emphasizes placing the student/training the student/supporting the

student and similar to the model for supported employment may be more appropriate for students with moderate/severe mental retardation than the pre-vocational model of train/place/support.

#### Addressing the Cost of Providing Community Services

Policymakers may want to investigate the assertion made by teachers and administrators that community experiences and employment objectives cost more to provide than classroom-based instruction. If this assertion is accurate, then consideration could be given to either: (a) increasing the funding for the provision of these services, (b) funding projects to demonstrate cost-effective ways to provide these services, or (c) eliminating the mandated provision of these services. Of these three alternatives, the second seems to be the most feasible.

#### Addressing Family Preferences and Involvement in the Transition Process

Pressuring families to accept available services may be a coping behavior on the part of school personnel being asked to do something they feel unable to do and related to the issue of the capacity of the district to provide the mandated services. Policymakers may want to consider expanding the capacity of districts to provide services within district budget constraints by either (1) changing the policy of providing services regardless of cost or (2) lessening the number of mandated services.

Regardless of actions taken by state policymakers, school districts may want to consider instituting staff training in choice making and self-

determination for students with cognitive impairments. Consideration could also be given to alternative ways of including families in the transition process, [e.g., families could be given an array of options for participating in school endeavors, including many currently used options, such as, councils and advisory committees, parent nights, and conferences]. Additional methods might include: in-home IEP meetings for families with child care or other concerns that may prevent them from attending school-based meetings, videotaped information, and Internet “chat rooms” that enable families to access and exchange transition information at a time most convenient for them.

#### Addressing Adult Service Availability

Planning for the transition from school to adult life depends on families and school staff knowing the type and extent of support available after school leaving while the student is still in school. Teachers reported that, possibly due to funding constraints at the adult service level, the type of assurance of continued support that families need in order to plan for transition is very difficult to attain. Policymakers may want to examine ways to facilitate the connection between students and families with adult service support prior to graduation that may be amenable to policy design and implementation. For example, state policymakers may want to investigate funding formulas that would allow students to receive employment services, while still in school, from an adult service provider funded by the Division of Developmental Disabilities

and/or the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, thus eliminating the “first dollar” responsibility currently held by schools.

One possibility would be to examine any existing barriers to interagency coordination, such as constraints on blended funding and inconsistencies in the definitions used to categorize disabilities. Also, examining the functional assessment and evaluation systems used by schools and adult service systems might lead to assessments that could transfer from one system to the next, minimizing the need for multiple assessments. Service provision with shared funding to defray excessive burdens on any one provider might also be an area for investigation.

As indicated in this study, school personnel and families are beginning to work together to lobby the school district for the adequate staffing and funding of off-campus transition programs. Schools staff may want to investigate lobbying with families and advocacy groups for policies that facilitate the establishment of linkages with adult service providers prior to graduation.

#### Addressing the Impact of the Disability on Student Outcomes

Although lessening the severity of a disability is not amenable to public policy, lessening the impact that the disability has on the student’s life may be. Schalock et al. (1992) stated that “enhanced transition programs leading to integrated living and employment with support services” (p.37) may enhance the outcomes for persons with mild to moderate disabilities. However, Sowers and Powers (1991) stated that this may not be the case for persons with more

significant disabilities. Currently, there is a decreasing availability of sheltered employment options and day activity programs while there is a growing popularity of supported competitive employment. Policymakers may want to examine the impact of increasing, rather than decreasing, the array of options available for persons with significant disabilities.

School staff can begin helping families to consider an array of appropriate activities, including but not limited to independent living and employment, early in the student's transition planning process. Once appropriate activities are identified, schools could join with families in advocating for the development of these services by the local adult service providers.

#### Addressing the Choice of Policy Instrument

If the intent of the transition mandate, as stated in chapter one, is to provide more equitable outcomes for students with disabilities, including students with mental retardation, then perhaps the wrong policy instrument has been chosen. The adequacy and allocation of resources, including staffing levels, program money, and teacher planning time, was identified by the informants in this study as the major concern in implementing the transition mandate.

Considering this, perhaps a more appropriate policy instrument would have been a capacity building instrument, such as a combination of personnel preparation grants and wide-scale investment in demonstration projects in order to enhance teacher skills.

However, this study does indicate that the three districts had considerable previous experience with transition-like services; the mandate seems to have legitimized what was already occurring in all three districts. Therefore, another possibility might have been to provide additional funding designated for the implementation of the mandated transition services. However, school districts may want to consider incorporating transition services into existing programs. Although add-on programs facilitate rapid, initial implementation, the long-term costs of add-on programs may become prohibitive, resulting in fragmented, or partial, implementation.

### Conclusion

The data from this research indicate that for students with moderate/severe mental retardation in the three target districts, we cannot establish differences in postsecondary outcomes between those students who left the public school system before transition services were mandated and students who have left since services have been mandated. However, because of issues with statistically measuring student outcomes for a very small population of students and the fact that full implementation of the transition mandate is still in its' early stages, we cannot decisively conclude that such differences do not exist. The case studies, in fact, indicated that such differences may exist, at least for some students.

The data are somewhat clearer on the impact of the mandate for transition on the high school program for students with moderate/severe mental retardation. Since the passage of the transition policy, the high school program in these districts has become more community-based, employment oriented, and age-appropriate with an increased emphasis on establishing linkages with adult service providers. Although these programs were already in the process of evolving prior to the mandate, the policy both served as a catalyst in hastening the change process and appeared to legitimize and reinforce the provision of transition-like services that was already occurring within all three districts.

## REFERENCES

- Affleck, J.Q., Edgar, E., Levine, P., & Kortering, L. (1990). Postschool status of students classified as mildly mentally retarded, learning disabled, or nonhandicapped: Does it get better with time? Education and Training of the Mentally Retarded, December, 315-324.
- Ball, D.L. (1990). Reflections and deflections of policy: The case of Carol Turner. Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 12(3), 247-259.
- Berman, P. (1982). Learning to comply. Peabody Journal of Education, 60: 53-65.
- Blackorby, J. & Edgar, E. (1992). Longitudinal studies in the postschool adjustment of students with disabilities. In F.R. Rusch, L. DeStefano, J. Chadsey-Rusch, L. Allen Phelps, & E. Szymanski (Eds.) Transition from School to Adult Life: Models, linkages, and policy. Sycamore: Sycamore Publishing Company.
- Brolin, D, Durand, R., Kromer, K., Muller, P. (1973). Post-school adjustment of educable retarded students. Education and Training of the Mentally Retarded, 10, 144-149.
- Bruininks, R., Lewis, D.R., & Thurlow, M.L. (1990). Outcomes and costs of special education programs for persons with mental retardation. ERIC Document #334 742
- Bruininks, R., Wolman, C., & Thurlow, M. (1990). Considerations in designing survey studies and follow-up systems for special education service programs. RASE, 11(2), 7-17, 46.
- Chaffin, J.D., Spellman, C.R., Regain, C.E., & Davison, R. (1971). Two followup studies of former educable mentally retarded students from the Kansas Work-Study Project. Exceptional Children, Summer, 733-738.
- Cohen, D.K., & Ball, D.L. (1990). Relations between policy and practice. Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 12(3), 331-338.
- Cohen, D.K., & Barnes, C.A. (1993). Pedagogy and policy and Conclusion: A new pedagogy for policy? In D.K. Cohen, M.W. McLaughlin, & J.E. Talbert (Eds.), Teaching for understanding: Issues for policy and practice. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

- Coonley, P., Klopfenstein, R.E., Sitlington, P., Wild, M.L., & Wright, P. (1980). A fifteen year follow up study of the North Kansas City public schools work study graduates. ERIC Document #196 211.
- DeStefano, L. & Wermuth, T.R. (1992). IDEA (P.L. 101-476): Defining a second generation of transition services. In F.R. Rusch, L. DeStefano, J. Chadsey-Rusch, L. Allen Phelps, & E. Szymanski (Eds.) Transition from School to Adult Life: Models, linkages, and policy. Sycamore: Sycamore Publishing Company.
- Dinger, J.C. (1961). Postschool adjustment of former educable retarded pupils. Exceptional Children, March, 353-360.
- Edgar, E. (1987). Secondary programs in special education: Are many of them justifiable? Exceptional Children, 53(6), 555-561.
- Elliott, S., Brown, P., Nourse, S., Price, L., Walls, L., Bilyeu, B., Johnson, C., Tyson, P., Rich, J., VanNoy, J., & Edgar, E. (1995). Transition guide for Washington State. Seattle: Center for Change in Transition Services.
- Elmore, R. (1986). Complexity and control: What legislators and administrators can do about implementing public policy. In L. Shulman & G. Sykes (Eds.), The handbook of teaching and policy. New York: Longmans.
- Elmore, R. & Sykes, G. (1992.). Excerpt (pp. 186-208) from: Curriculum policy. In P.W. Jackson (Ed.), Handbook of research on curriculum. New York: Macmillan.
- Federal Register (Vol. 57, No 189, pp. 44794-44852). Washington, DC: U.S. government Printing Office, September 29, 1992.
- Fuhrman, S. (1994). Legislatures and education policy. In R.F. Elmore & S.H. Fuhrman (Eds.), The Governance of Curriculum. Alexandria: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Fullan, M. (1994). Coordinating top-down and bottom-up strategies for educational reform. In R.F. Elmore & S.H. Fuhrman (Eds.), The Governance of Curriculum. Alexandria: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Gordon, E., & Goldbach, R.L. (1989). Three years of follow-up of mentally retarded youth: Stability and change. ERIC Document #321 475.
- Halpern, A.S. (1985). Transition: A look at the foundation. Exceptional Children, 51(6), 497-486.

- Halpern, A.S.(1990). A methodological review of follow-up and follow-along studies tracking school leavers from special education. Career Development for Exceptional Individuals, 13(1), 13-28.
- Haring, K., & Lovett, D. (1990). A study of the social and vocational adjustment of young adults with mental retardation. Education and Training of the Mentally Retarded, March, 52-61.
- Hasazi, S.B., Gordon, L.R., Roe, C.A., Hull, M., Finck, K., & Salembier, G. (1985). A statewide follow-up on post high school employment and residential status of students labeled, "mentally retarded." Education and Training of the Mentally Retarded, December, 222-234.
- Hasazi, S.B., Hock, M.L., & Cravedi-Cheng, L. (1992). Vermont's post-school indicators: Using satisfaction and postschool outcome data for program improvement. In R. Rusch, L. DeStefano, J. Chadsey-Rusch, L.A. Phelps, & E. Szymanski (Eds.), Transition from school to adult life: Modes, linkages, and policy. Sycamore: Sycamore Publishing Co.
- Johnson, D.R., McGrew, K., Bloomberg, L., Lin, H., & Bruininks, R.H. (1995). Descriptive findings of the national transition study of individuals with severe disabilities leaving school. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota.
- Knapp, M.S. (1995). Teaching for meaning in high-poverty classrooms. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Knapp, M.S., Stearns, M.S., Turnbull, B.J., David, J.L., & Peterson, S.M. (1991). Cumulative effects of federal education policies at the local level in A.R. Odden (Ed.), Education Policy Implementation. New York: State University of New York Press.
- Kregel, J., Wehman, P., Seyfarth, J. & Marshall, K. (1986). Community integration of young adults with mental retardation: Transition from school to adulthood. Education and Training of the Mentally Retarded, March, 35-42.
- Levine, P., & Edgar, E. (1987). Special education students in transition: Washington state data 1976-1986. Seattle: University of Washington
- Levine, P., & Edgar, E. (1994). Respondent agreement in follow-up studies of graduates of special and regular education programs. Exceptional Children, 60(4), 334-343.

- Lincoln, Y. & Guba, E. (1985). Establishing trustworthiness. In Y. Lincoln & E. Guba, Naturalistic Inquiry. Newbury Parks: Sage Publishing.
- Lipsky, M. (1980). Street-level bureaucracy: Dilemmas of the individual in public services. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Marsh, D.D. & Odden, A.R. (1990). Implementation of the California mathematics and science curriculum frameworks. In A.R. Odden (Ed.), Education Policy Implementation. New York: State University of New York Press.
- McGuire, J.M., Archambault, F.X., Gillung, T.B., Strauch, J.D. (1987). Connecticut's statewide follow-up study of former special education program graduates. ERIC Document # 303-951.
- McLaughlin, M.W. (1991). Learning from experience: Lessons from policy implementation. In A.R. Odden (Ed.), Education Policy Implementation. New York: State University of New York Press.
- McLaughlin, M.J., Valdivieso, C.H., Spence, K.L., & Fuller, B.C. (1988). Special education teacher preparation: A synthesis of four research studies. Exceptional Children, 55(3), 215-221.
- McDonnell, L.M., & Elmore, R.F. (1991). Getting the job done: Alternative policy instruments in A.R. Odden (Ed.), Education Policy Implementation. New York: State University of New York Press.
- Miles, M.B. & Huberman, A.M. (1994). Qualitative Data Analysis. Beverly Hills: Sage Publishing.
- Miles, M.B. & Huberman, A.M. (n.d.). Handbook of Qualitative Research.
- Phelps, H. (1956). Postschool adjustment of mentally retarded children in selected Ohio cities. Exceptional Children, November, 58-91.
- Morsink, C.V., & Lenk, L.L. (1992). The delivery of special education programs and services. Remedial and Special Education, 13(6), 33-43.
- Murphy, J.T. (1980). Getting the Facts: A fieldwork guide for evaluators and policy analysts. Santa Monica: Goodyear Publishing Company, Inc.
- Nisbet, J. & Hagner, D. (1988). Natural supports in the workplace: A reexamination of supported employment. Journal of the Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps, 13(4), 260-267.

- Patton, M.Q. (1980). Qualitative interviewing. In M.Q. Patton, Qualitative Evaluation Methods. Beverly Hills: Sage Publishing.
- Pilley, J. (1988). Plans and outcomes: A study of the transition of the Vancouver School Board's 1987 mentally handicapped graduates. B.C. Journal of Special Education, 12(3), 210-213.
- Roessler, R.T., Brolin, D.E., & Johnson, J.M. (1990). Factors affecting employment success and quality of life: A one year follow-up of students in special education. Career Development for Exceptional Individuals, 13(2), 95-107.
- Schalock, R.L., Wolzen, B., Ross, I., Elliott, B., Werbel, G., & Peterson, K. (1986). Post-secondary community placement of handicapped students: A five-year follow-up. Learning Disabilities Quarterly, 9 (Fall), 295-303.
- Schalock, R.L., Holl, C., Elliott, B., & Ross, I. (1992). A longitudinal follow-up of graduates from a rural special education program. Learning Disabilities Quarterly, 15 (Winter), 29-38.
- Schwille, J., Porter, A., Belli, G., Floden, R., Freeman, D., Knappen, L., Kuhs, T., & Schmidt, W. (1986). Teachers as policy brokers in the context of elementary school mathematics. In L. Shulman & G. Sykes (Eds.), The handbook of teaching and policy. New York: Longmans.
- Siegel, S. (1956). Nonparametric statistics for the behavioral sciences. New York: McGraw Hill.
- Sitlington, P., Frank, A.R., & Carson, R. (1991). Adult adjustment of individuals with severe/profound disabilities one and three years after leaving school. Iowa statewide follow-up study. ERIC Document # 335 861
- Sitlington, P., Frank, A.R., & Carson, R. (1991). Iowa statewide follow-up study. Changes in the adult adjustment of graduates with mental disabilities, one vs. three years out of school. ERIC Document # 342 170
- Skrtic, T.M. (1991). Behind special education: A critical analysis of professional culture and school organization. Denver: Love Publishing Company.
- Smylie, M.A. (1994). Redesigning teachers' work: Connections to the classroom. Review of Research in Education, 20, 129-177.

- Snaauwaert, D.T. (1992). Transition policy. In F.R. Rusch, L.DeStefano, J. Chadsey-Rusch, L. Allen Phelps, & E. Szymanski (Eds.) Transition from School to Adult Life: Models, linkages, and policy. Sycamore: Sycamore Publishing Company.
- Spillane, J. (1994). How districts mediate between state policy initiatives and teachers' practices. In R.F. Elmore & S.H. Fuhrman (Eds.), The Governance of Curriculum. Alexandria: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Stowitschek, J.J. (1992). Policy and planning in transition programs at the state agency level. In F.R. Rusch, L.DeStefano, J. Chadsey-Rusch, L. Allen Phelps, & E. Szymanski (Eds.) Transition from School to Adult Life: Models, linkages, and policy. Sycamore: Sycamore Publishing Company.
- Summers, A. (1995). School psychologists' transformation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act: A qualitative study. Unpublished doctoral dissertation: University of Washington.
- Sykes, T. & Harding, E. (1995). Student outcomes in special education: A review and study options. Olympia: Washington State Institute for Public Policy.
- Talbert, J. & McLaughlin, M. (1993). Understanding teaching in context. In D.Cohen, M.McLaughlin, & J.Talbert (Eds.). Teaching for Understanding: Issues for policy and practice. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Thurlow, M.L., Bruininks, R.H., & Lange, C.M. (1989). Assessing post-school outcomes for students with moderate to severe mental retardation. ERIC Document # 319 203.
- Wagner, M., D'Amico, R., Marder, C., Newmann, L., & Blackorby, J.(1992). What happens next? Trends in postschool outcomes for youth with disabilities. Menlo Park: SRI International.
- Wehman, P., Kregel, J., & Seyfarth, J. (1985). Transition from school to work for individuals with severe handicaps: A follow-up study. IASH, 10(3), 132-136.
- Wehman, P., Kregel, J., Barcus, J., & Schalock, R. (1986). Vocational transition for students with developmental disabilities. In W.E. Kiernan, & J.A. Stark (Eds.), Pathways to employment for adults with developmental disabilities. Baltimore: Paul H. Brooks.

Wermuth, T.R., & Grayson, T.E. (1995). Case studies of state-level cross-disciplinary transition policy implementation. Urbana-Champaign: Transition Research Institute at Illinois.

Wilcox, B. & Bellamy, G.T. (1987). The Activities Catalog: An alternative curriculum for youth and adults with severe disabilities. Baltimore: Paul H. Brooks

Will, M. (1984). OSERS Programming for the Transition of Youth with Disabilities: Bridges from school to working life. Washington, DC: Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services

Ysseldyke, J., Thurlow, M., & Gilman, C. (1993). Educational outcomes and indicators for students completing school. Minneapolis: National Center on Educational Outcomes.

## APPENDIX A: METHODOLOGICAL APPENDIX

- Table A-1: Student Engagement 1 Year Out Of School For The 1990 And 1995 Cohorts By Disability and District Of Attendance
- Table A-2: Student Engagement 6 Years Out Of School For The 1985 And 1990 Cohorts By Disability and District Of Attendance
- Table A-3: Student Employment 1 Year Out Of School For The 1990 And 1995 Cohorts By Disability and District Of Attendance
- Table A-4: Student Employment 6 Years Out Of School For The 1985 And 1990 Cohorts By Disability and District Of Attendance
- Table A-5: Students Living Independently 1 Year Out Of School For The 1990 And 1995 Cohorts By Disability and District Of Attendance
- Table A-6: Students Living Independently 6 Years Out Of School For The 1985 And 1990 Cohorts By Disability and District Of Attendance
- Table A-7: Current Enrollment for Students in Postsecondary Training 1 Year Out Of School For The 1990 And 1995 Cohorts By Disability and District Of Attendance
- Table A-8: Current Enrollment of Students in Postsecondary Training 6 Years Out Of School For The 1985 And 1990 Cohorts By Disability and District Of Attendance
- Table A-9: CSD Interview Informants
- Table A-10: PSD Interview Informants
- Table A-11: ASD Interview Informants

**APPENDIX A: METHODOLOGICAL APPENDIX (continued)**

**Appendix A-12: Study Design And Preliminary Analysis Questions**

**Appendix A-13: Coding Categories**

**Appendix A-14: Interview Protocol/Qualitative Substudy/ All Cohorts**

**Appendix A-15: Interview Protocol/Quantitative Substudy/ All Cohorts**

**Appendix A-16: Definitions Of Outcome Variables and Intervening Factors**

**Appendix A-17: Data Collection Matrix**

**Appendix A-18: 1992 Census and Employment Data for Washington State, King  
County, and the Three School Districts**

173  
Table A-1

Student Engagement 1 Year Out Of School For The 1990 And 1995 Cohorts  
By Disability and District Of Attendance

	1990 Cohort			1995 Cohort			X <sup>2</sup>	df	p
	Contacted	Engaged		Contacted	Engaged				
	N	n	%	N	n	%			
Severe	2	1	50%	3	1	33%			NS*
CSD	1	1	100%	1	0	0			NS*
PSD	0	0	0	1	1	100%	-	-	-
ASD	1	0	0	1	0	0	-	-	-
Moderate	16	11	69%	11	6	55%			NS*
CSD	6	6	100%	5	3	60%			NS*
PSD	2	1	50%	0	0	0	-	-	-
ASD	8	4	50%	6	3	50%			NS*

\* Fishers Exact Test

174  
Table A-2

Student Engagement 6 Years Out Of School For The 1985 And 1990 Cohorts

By Disability and District Of Attendance

	1985 Cohort			1990 Cohort			X <sup>2</sup>	df	p
	Contacted	Engaged		Contacted	Engaged				
	N	n	%	N	n	%			
Severe	7	5	71%	1	1	100%			NS*
CSD	2	2	100%	0	0	0	-	-	-
PSD	2	2	100%	0	0	0	-	-	-
ASD	3	1	33%	1	1	100%			NS*
Moderate	16	11	69%	16	11	69%	.0000	1	NS**
CSD	6	6	100%	6	5	83%			NS*
PSD	3	2	67%	2	0	0			NS*
ASD	9	5	56%	8	6	75%			NS*

\* Fishers Exact Test

\*\* Continuity Correction

Table A-3: Student Employment 1 Year Out Of School For The 1990 And 1995

		Cohorts								
		1990 Cohort			1995 Cohort					
		Contacted		Employed	Contacted		Employed			
		N	n	%	N	n	%	X <sup>2</sup>	df	p
Severe		2	1	50%	3	1	33%			NS*
	CSD	1	1	100%	1	0	0			NS*
	PSD	0	0	0	1	1	100%	-	-	-
	ASD	1	0	0	1	0	0	-	-	-
Moderate		16	8	50%	11	5	45%	.0000	1	NS**
	CSD	6	5	83%	5	3	60%			NS*
	PSD	2	0	0	0	0	0	-	-	-
	ASD	8	3	37%	6	2	33%			NS*

\* Fishers Exact Test

\*\* Continuity Correction

176  
Table A-4

Student Employment 6 Years Out Of School For The 1985 And 1990 Cohorts  
By Disability and District Of Attendance

	1985 Cohort			1990 Cohort			X <sup>2</sup>	df	p
	Contacted	Employed		Contacted	Employed				
	N	n	%	N	n	%			
Severe	7	4	57%	1	1	100%			NS*
CSD	2	2	100%	0	0	0	-	-	-
PSD	2	1	50%	0	0	0	-	-	-
ASD	3	1	33%	1	1	100%			NS*
Moderate	16	10	63%	16	10	63%	.0000	1	NS*
CSD	6	5	83%	6	4	67%			NS*
PSD	3	2	67%	2	0	0			NS*
ASD	9	3	43%	8	6	75%			NS*

---

\* Fishers Exact Test

\*\* Continuity Correction

177  
Table A-5

Students Living Independently 1 Year Out Of School For The 1990 And 1995  
Cohorts By Disability and District Of Attendance

	1990 Cohort			1995 Cohort			X <sup>2</sup>	df	p
	Contacted	Living		Contacted	Living				
		Independent			Independent				
	N	n	%	N	n	%			
Severe	2	0	0	3	0	0	-	-	-
CSD	1	0	0	1	0	0	-	-	-
PSD	0	0	0	1	0	0	-	-	-
ASD	1	0	0	1	0	0	-	-	-
Moderate	16	0	0	11	1	9%			NS*
CSD	6	0	0	5	1	20%			NS*
PSD	2	0	0	0	0	0	-	-	-
ASD	8	0	0	6	0	0	-	-	-

\* Fishers Exact Test

178  
Table A-6

Students Living Independently 6 Years Out Of School For The 1985 And 1990

Cohorts By Disability and District Of Attendance

	1985 Cohort			1990 Cohort			X <sup>2</sup>	df	p
	Contacted	Living		Contacted	Living				
	N	n	%	N	n	%			
Severe	7	1	14%	1	0	0			NS*
CSD	2	0	0	0	0	0	-	-	-
PSD	2	1	50%	0	0	0	-	-	-
ASD	3	0	0	1	0	0	-	-	-
Moderate	16	1	6%	16	0	0			NS*
CSD	6	0	0	6	0	0	-	-	-
PSD	3	1	33%	2	0	0			NS*
ASD	9	0	0	8	0	0	-	-	-

\* Fishers Exact Test

179  
Table A-7

Current Enrollment for Students in Postsecondary Training 1 Year Out Of School  
For The 1990 And 1995 Cohorts By Disability and District Of Attendance

	1990 Cohort			1995 Cohort			X <sup>2</sup>	df	p
	Contacted	Currently	Enrolled	Contacted	Currently	Enrolled			
	N	n		%	N				
Severe	2	0	0	3	0	0	-	-	-
CSD	1	0	0	1	0	0	-	-	-
PSD	0	0	0	1	0	0	-	-	-
ASD	1	0	0	1	0	0	-	-	-
Moderate	16	5	31%	11	1	9%			NS*
CSD	6	3	50%	5	0	0			NS*
PSD	2	1	50%	0	0	0	-	-	-
ASD	8	1	12%	6	1	17%			NS*

\* Fishers Exact Test

180  
Table A-8

Current Enrollment of Students in Postsecondary Training 6 Years Out Of School  
For The 1985 And 1990 Cohorts By Disability and District Of Attendance

	1985 Cohort			1990 Cohort			X <sup>2</sup>	df	p
	Contacted	Currently	Enrolled	Contacted	Currently	Enrolled			
	N	n		%	N				
Severe	7	2	29%	1	0	0			NS*
CSD	2	0	0	0	0	0	-	-	-
PSD	2	2	100%	0	0	0	-	-	-
ASD	3	0	0	1	0	0	-	-	-
Moderate	16	4	25%	16	1	6%			NS*
CSD	6	1	17%	6	1	17%			NS*
PSD	3	1	33%	2	0	0			NS*
ASD	9	2	29%	8	0	0			NS*

\* Fishers Exact Test

Table A-9: CSD Interview Informants

Name	Position
Jeanne	1995 graduate
Mrs. T.	Jeanne's mother
Mike	Jeanne's teacher
Jill	1990 graduate
Mrs. F.	Jill's care provider
Bea	Transition program director
Roger	district director of special education

Table A-10: PSD Interview Informants

Name	Position
Donny	1995 graduate
Mrs. "M"	Donny's care provider
Gary	Donny's teacher
Ed	1990 graduate
Mrs. L	Ed's mother
Patty	Ed's teacher
Jay	district transition specialist

Table A-11: ASD Interview Informants

Name	Position
John	1995 graduate
Mrs. G	John's foster mother
Reatha and Joan	John's special education teachers
Lilly	John's job coach (special education paraprofessional)
Mickie	1990 special education graduate
Mrs. "M"	Mickie's grandmother with whom Mickie lives
Mandy	district transition specialist
Leonard	mid-level central office special education administrator

184  
Appendix A-12

Study Design And Preliminary Analysis Questions

<u>Study design</u>	<u>Data Sources</u>	<u>Personal</u> <u>interview</u>	<u>Observation</u>	<u>Record review</u>
	Telephone interview	X		
Bureau. structure		X		
Fiscal resources		X		X
Past policy choices		X		
Governing capacity		X		
Information sharing		X		
Autonomy		X	X	
Class composition		X	X	
Staffing		X		
Leadership		X		
Support				

## Appendix A-12 (continued)

<u>Study design</u>	<u>Data Sources</u>			
	Telephone interview	Personal interview	Observation	Record review
Certification		X		
Teacher preparation		X		
Transition services in the high school program		X	X	X
Teacher knowledge		X		
Personal beliefs & coping behaviors		X		
Student disability		X		X
Sd.involvement		X		
Student outcomes	X			

## Appendix A-12 (continued)

Preliminary Analysis Questions

## 1. Wallowing in data

- 1.1 Where do I find indicators of bureaucratic structure, resources, past policy choices, capacity, information sharing, work conditions, professional standards, individual factors, student and family characteristics and student outcomes in my data set?
- 1.2 What thoughts, images, impressions, hunches are sparked by a close reading of my data set?

## 2. Organizing data

- 2.1 How should I order or sort the data?
- 2.2 How should I store the data so that it is retrievable and can be easily managed?
- 2.3 How should I label and index the data?

## 3. Reducing data

- 3.1 How can the raw data be summarized? What are the logical or meaningful units for summarizing the data?
- 3.2 What are the main elements, messages, or features of the raw data?
- 3.3 What are the descriptive highlights?

## 4. Classifying and categorizing the data

- 4.1 Where are the data set instances of bureaucratic structure, resources, past policy choices, capacity, information sharing, work conditions, professional standards, individual factors, student and family characteristics and student outcomes?

## Appendix A-12 (continued)

Preliminary Analysis Questions

- 4.2 Into what conceptual bins can instances of bureaucratic structure, resources, past policy choices, capacity, information sharing, work conditions, professional standards, individual factors, student and family characteristics and student outcomes be placed?
5. Identifying relationships, patterns, and themes
  - 5.1 To what is bureaucratic structure, resources, past policy choices, capacity, information sharing, work conditions, professional standards, individual factors, student and family characteristics and student outcomes related or linked?
  - 5.2 What larger themes or patterns run through the data set?
6. Developing and testing propositions
  - 6.1 What instances in the data set confirm or demonstrate the proposition that mandated transition services positively influence the outcomes for students with mental retardation?
  - 6.2 How might the proposition that mandated transition services positively influence the outcomes for students with mental retardation be changed to accommodate disconfirming evidence?

## Appendix A-13

## Coding Categories

**admin sup** = administrative support (presence or absence) as expressed by teachers and administrators

**adminstruc** = administrative structure within the district and/or building

**beliefs** = beliefs expressed by administrators, teachers, and families about students and disability

**class** = class composition (the combination of students in a classroom), e.g., grouping students with disabilities heterogeneously rather than homogeneously.

**conflict** = conflicting or competing interests or needs

**coping** = coping behaviors, i.e., those behaviors adopted by teachers to deal with conflicting work expectations.

**involve** = involvement of students and families in the transition process and the high school program

**leadership** = the essential characteristics of an educational leader as expressed by teachers and administrators

**learning exper** = student learning experiences while in high school

**other infl** = events/activities outside of the high school that influence student outcomes, as expressed by teachers, administrators, students, and families

**outcome** = student outcomes in the areas of employment, engagement, and living arrangement

## Appendix A-13 (continued)

philosophy = expressed philosophy of the high school program

prev exper = previous experiences, including past policy choices and  
programmatic experiences prior to the transition mandate

prof aut = the perceived extent of professional autonomy as expressed by  
teachers and administrators

program = the structure of the high school program

resources = school district resources, including staff and fiscal resources

staff dev = staff development, including opportunities to attend in-services  
training on transition issues.

will = motivation and beliefs expressed by teachers and administrators that  
indicate the presence of non-mandated transition activities and/or transition  
activities that pre-date the mandate at the district and classroom level.

## Appendix A-14

## Interview Protocol/Qualitative Substudy/All Cohorts

Student Interview: *High school experiences*

1. Did you have paying jobs while you were in high school (including summer jobs)?
  - a. How many?
  - b. What type of jobs were they?/ what did you do?
2. What classes did you take that you really liked? Why?
3. What vocational classes did you take?
4. Who was your favorite teacher? Why?  
probe: specific ways in which the teacher was helpful or not helpful
5. Tell me about what you did after school; did you participate in any extra-curricular activities? school clubs, sports, etc.
6. Tell me about your career interests
7. How do you know that you will like that; have you had a class or work experience in that field?
8. In general, how satisfied are you with the job training that you received in high school?
9. In general, how satisfied are you with the basic skills training that you received in high school? Did you learn how to read shopping lists and signs? Did you learn how to write a check?
10. In general, how satisfied are you with the personal living skills training that you received in high school? Did you learn how to go to the grocery store? Take care of your home?

## Appendix A-14 (continued)

Teacher: *Program and post graduate description of a specific student:*

1. How long have you taught in \_\_\_ District? Have you taught in other programs at (name of high school)? (If so, which programs?) (*insert starting date on timeline*)
2. Do you remember (student's name)? Do you know what (student's name) is doing now?
3. Were transition services provided for (student's name)? Tell me how?  
Probe for: instruction, community experiences, employment opportunities, vocational education/training, adult living skills, daily living skills, and linkages with adult service providers.
4. Were more staff hired since you started providing transition services? (If yes, who? What do they do?)
5. For 1995 and 1990 grads: Is there a transition policy in the district? Has that policy changed or influenced (student's name) high school program? (If yes, how?).  
For 1985 grads: Did the district have a transition policy while (student's name) was in school? If yes, did it change (student's name) high school program? How?
6. What do you see as the most important influence(s) on (student's name)?  
How does (that influence) relate to what (student's name) is doing now?  
*Working Conditions in the Classroom (refer to timeline drawing)*
6. Tell me about your classroom—has the composition of your classes changed (show on the timeline—between 1991-1995?) (between 1986-1990?) (If yes, how?)

## Appendix A-14 (continued)

7. Describe how curricular and instructional decisions are made in this district.  
Has this changed over time? If so, how?
8. Do you feel that you receive adequate support to do your job from administration? In what ways does the administration support you? (Probe: who and how within central administration; who and how within building administration). Has this changed over time? If so, how?
9. Do you feel that you receive adequate support to do your job from parents? In what ways do parents support you? Has this changed over time? If so, how?
10. Who are the "leaders" among the personnel in your building? What makes them "leaders?"

*Professional Standards*

1. When and where did you attend your preservice teacher education program?  
(insert on timeline) Tell me about your teacher preparation program.  
Probe for: secondary level teacher preparation, information about the history and philosophy of transition, components of interagency agreements, the adult service system, and the provision of community-based experiences to students with disabilities.
2. How do you keep "up to date"?
3. To what professional organizations do you belong? Tell me about (that organization's) code of ethics or code of professional conduct?

*Individual Factors*

1. Here is a little scenario--tell me what you would do. (probes for coping behaviors and personal beliefs).

District student counts, which fund the vocational job developer position, are down. The job developer will be cut to 1/2 time. Special education

## Appendix A-14 (continued)

department funding is already committed for this school year. Employment objectives and community experiences as well as vocational education./training are mandated services for special education students. The job developer has told you that he can work with 3 of your 15 students currently in transition. How do you prioritize your student selection, why, and how do you provide transition services to the remaining 12 students.

Administrators

1. Tell me about how your district interprets a state mandate? What are the steps you go through to interpret a mandate into a policy that the district can implement? (Probe: where do your policies and procedures come from?)
2. How are decisions regarding curriculum, instruction, and allocation of staff made in this district? Probe: is this process different for special education? (e.g., site-based decision making teams, etc.).
3. What do you see as the purpose of transition?  
probe: curriculum issue; instruction issue
4. Do you think the state transition mandate affects content (what you teach); do you think it affects instruction (how you teach?)
5. Do you think the state transition mandate competes with other important things?  
probe: inclusion, graduation requirements, services to students without disabilities
6. Does your district have a policy for transition. Is it in the district manual? Tell me about it—What do you expect teachers to do? When did your district first establish a formal transition policy? Has it changed since last year? In

## Appendix A-14 (continued)

the last 6 years--since 1990)? (If yes, what forces or conditions have brought about the changes?)--*refer to timeline*

7. Tell me about how your district has funded transition related activities

Probe: functional vocational evaluation, community experiences--how were these decisions made (Probe specifics--site-based, building based)? Has it changed over time? *refer to timeline.*

8. Tell me about how your district staffs transition related activities

Probe: new staff, transition coordinator--how were these decisions made(Probe specifics--site-based, building based)? Has it changed over time? *refer to timeline.*

### Parents

1. How is (son/daughter) doing now?
2. What do you think contributed to (the outcome previously stated)
3. In what ways did the school help (or not help) with (son/daughter's) transition from school to adult life.

Probe for: vocational education/training, community experiences, work experience, daily living skills, adult living skills, functional academics and linkages with adult service agencies.

4. Tell me about (son/daughter's) high school experiences? What good things stand out in your memory? What wasn't good about high school for (son/daughter)?
5. Have you ever received any information about your son/daughter's transition/moving from school to work? Did anyone help you with (son/daughter's) transition?

## Appendix A-14 (continued)

6. Has your son/daughter taken any vocational classes? Did you receive information regarding career opportunities at the high school?
7. Have the IEP meetings been scheduled to accommodate your preferences?
8. Tell me about how do you provide input into the IEP?
9. Were you asked if you liked the meeting?
10. Tell me about any information/testing your son/daughter has received about his/her career interests and aptitudes
11. Who was your favorite teacher? Why?
12. What was the best year your child had at the high school? What made it great?

## Appendix A-15: Interview protocol/Quantitative substudy/ All cohorts

## Follow-up Telephone Questionnaire Parent Form

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Student ID# \_\_\_\_\_

District/School \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Interview \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer \_\_\_\_\_ Year of Graduation \_\_\_\_\_

Student Gender \_\_\_\_\_ Student's Birthdate \_\_\_\_\_

## A. POSTSCHOOL EDUCATION: (Military, sheltered workshop, &amp; on-the-job training are not included)

1. Is \_\_\_\_\_ currently in any type of school or training? Yes No

a. If yes, where? \_\_\_\_\_

0=social skills (community integration)  
(e.g. DD program)

5=job skills

1=community college

6=Job Corps

2=university or 4 year

7=other

3=business, vocational, trade school

8=don't know, refused

4=graduate equivalence degree(GED)

## B. EMPLOYMENT:

2. Does \_\_\_\_\_ currently work for pay? Yes No  
(If no, skip to #3; if yes, continue)a. What is their current job title or position?  
\_\_\_\_\_

If employed: a: What type of business does he/she work for? \_\_\_\_\_

Is the work related to his/her vocational training? Yes No

b. How many hours per week does \_\_\_\_\_ work? \_\_\_\_\_  
(if a range is given, ask: About how many hours would it be in an average week?)

## Appendix A-15 (continued)

c. How much money does \_\_\_\_\_ make from his/her job annually? \_\_\_\_\_.

Is that gross pay before taxes \_\_\_\_\_ or take home pay? \_\_\_\_\_  
(If graduate has a job or business in which tips might be a part of the earning, ask:

Does \_\_\_\_\_ receive tips in addition to the other income? Yes No Tips? \$ \_\_\_\_\_

d. Is \_\_\_\_\_ covered by any medical insurance? Yes No

IF YES: Is the medical insurance provided by his/her business or job?

Yes No

IF NO: Does \_\_\_\_\_ receive medical coupons? Yes No

Does \_\_\_\_\_'s business or job provide:

Paid vacation? Yes No Paid sick leave? Yes No

Retirement? Yes No (proceed to #4)

3. Is \_\_\_\_\_ seeking employment? Yes No

Is \_\_\_\_\_ covered by any medical insurance or receive medical coupons? Yes No

If yes, by whom: parents/guardian \_\_\_\_\_ self \_\_\_\_\_ public \_\_\_\_\_

## C. RESIDENCE

4. Does \_\_\_\_\_ currently live in your household? Yes No

If no: Where does \_\_\_\_\_ currently live?

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Probe for a residential setting, not a address, using the codes below)

Appendix A-15 (continued)

- |  |   |                                     |
|--|---|-------------------------------------|
| 1=parent's home  | 5=dormitory/barracks  | 9=street, shelter                   |
| 2=with other relatives   | 6=supervised group<br>home, institution, adult<br>foster home, nursing<br>home, ICF | 10=employer<br>provided(e.g., ship) |
| 3=foster home  | 7=tenant support  | 11=travelling                       |
| 4=in house or<br>apt.(alone,with friends,<br>or w/partner or spouse) | 8=incarcerated: prison,<br>detention home, halfway<br>house                         | 12=other _____                      |
|  |   | 13=unknown, refused                 |

D. SOCIAL/RECREATIONAL

5. Is \_\_\_\_\_ now or has he/she ever been married?

- 1=never married
- 2=now married

- 3=previously married
- 4=don't know, refused

6. Does \_\_\_\_\_ have any children? Yes      No    If yes, ask: how many? \_\_\_\_\_    If no, mark a "0"

7. How satisfied are you with \_\_\_\_\_'s overall life situation (employment, school, residence, social life) now? \_\_\_\_\_

- 1=very satisfied
- 2=somewhat satisfied
- 5=don't know, refuse

- 3=not very satisfied
- 4=not at all satisfied

## Appendix A-16

## Definitions of Outcome Variables

*Employment* is defined as working, at the time of the interview, at least 1 hour per week in a capacity that pays a wage. Included is all competitive employment, supported employment, and sheltered workshop. Parenting is not considered "employment."

*Postsecondary education* comprises attendance, at the time of the interview, in some form of postsecondary school or training. These include community college, university, business, vocational or trade school, or Job Corps.

*Engagement* is defined as current employment, current attendance in postsecondary education, or both. Conversely, unengaged means doing neither at the time of the interview--not working AND not in school.

*Living arrangement* is defined by the graduates' residence, which is the home in which the subject spends the majority of his or her time. Residence is coded as dependent: living in parents' home, with other relatives or in a foster home, in a group home, tenant support, or incarcerated in prison; or independent: in a house or apartment alone, or with friends, roommates, a spouse or partner, in a dormitory or barracks, or employer-provided (e.g., on a fishing boat), or traveling.

## Appendix A-16 (continued)

Intervening Factors

District level intervening factors. *Governing capacity* is the ability, reflected in resources and expertise, to initiate implementation of the transition mandate. This capacity is manifested in such tangible ways as a district budget that indicates funding to implement transition services and an inservice schedule indicating staff training on transition issues.

*Bureaucratic structure* describes positions and units responsible for implementing the transition policy within a district and the formally established relationships among them. Bureaucratic structure is often represented as an organizational chart, reflecting the typical modes and patterns of communication, of the key implementors for transition, e.g., the special education director, the building principal, the transition specialist, and the special education teacher.

*Will* refers to the motivation and beliefs that underlie the district's response to the transition mandate. Evidence of non-mandatory transition activities at the district level, e.g., grant applications, district support for teachers to attend transition conferences, and published mission statements that indicate a focus on transition, are examples of will.

## Appendix A-16 (continued)

*Past policy choices* that may influence “what the public wants from government and how it expects goals to be accomplished” (Wermuth & Grayson, 1995, p.29, 30) may be exemplified by policies and procedures written prior to the mandate that have direct bearing on the way districts approach the delivery of transition services, e.g., grading policies, graduation policies and documentation of the array of placement options available to students with disabilities. Similarly, *previous experiences* refers to experiences in providing services similar to those subsequently mandated.

Individual teacher-level intervening factors. Individual teacher-level intervening factors include work conditions, professional standards, and individual teacher characteristics. Work conditions include:

*Classroom composition*, defined as the range and type of disabilities experienced by the students within individual classrooms, is indicated by class lists and the disability label under which each student qualifies for special education, as applicable.

*Staffing levels* refer to the student-to-staff ratio in individual classrooms.

## Appendix A-16 (continued)

*Leadership* refers to the availability of mentors and knowledgeable administrators who can provide guidance to classroom teachers in the area of transition.

*Professional autonomy* is the extent to which individual teachers may make curricular and programming decisions.

*Collegial and administrative support* refers to the extent to which colleagues and administrators support individual teachers in their curricular and programming decisions.

Professional standards include:

*Teacher preparation*, referring to the individual teacher's pre-service and in-service training in the area of transition, including secondary curriculum, instructional methods, and student assessment.

*Teacher knowledge*, i.e., the individual teachers understanding of transition.

Individual characteristics. Individual characteristics include:

*Personal beliefs* which include individual teacher expressed beliefs about students with mental retardation, teaching, the purposes of education, and the transition process.

## Appendix A-16 (continued)

*Coping behaviors*, which are those behaviors adopted by street-level bureaucrats, including special education teachers, to deal with conflicting work expectations.

Individual student and family intervening factors include:

*Connectedness*, which is the extent to which the family has a network of friends who can help informally to support the student in the community and on the job and the ability of the family to access publicly funded support from adult services agencies.

*Personal beliefs*, which refers to the student's and family's convictions about work, the student's ability to work and the significance of the student's disability.

*Family preferences*, referring to the favored activities, jobs, places of residence, and support systems favored by the families of persons with disabilities.

## Appendix A-17

## Data collection matrix

Research question	Informant(s)	Instrument (length, frequency)	Time frame
1	parent/student	telephone interview (20 min.); 1985's (1), 1990's (2), 1995's (1)	Decade data; Spring '96
2.1	teacher, parent, student	interviews (60 min.); 1990's (1), 1995's (2)	Spring '95 & '96
2.2	administrator	interviews (45-60 min.)	Spring '95 & '96
2.3	teacher, parent, student	interviews (60 min.); 1990's (1), 1995's (2)	Spring '95 & '96
2.4	teacher, administrator	interviews (60 min.); class. observation (60 min., 1)	Spring '95 & '96
2.5	administrator, teacher	interviews (45-60 min.); doc. review	Spring '95 & '96
3.1	administrator, teacher, parent, student	interviews (45 to 60 min., 1)	Spring '96
3.2	administrator, teacher, parent, student	interviews (45 to 60 min., 1)	Spring '96

## Appendix A-18

## 1992 Census and Employment Data

for Washington State, King County, and the Three School Districts

Demographic Area	Population	% in Labor Force	Civilian Labor Force	Overall Unemployment Rate
Washington	3,730,985	66.7%	2,433,177	5.7%
King County	1,199,620	71.4%	853,717	4.1%
ASD	439,363	68.4%	298,819	4.9%
PSD	14,088	66.6%	9,347	4.2%
CSD	70,757	72.8%	51,442	3.0%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (1992). 1990 census of the population and housing. Summary social, economic, and housing characteristics: Washington. U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration (May).

## APPENDIX B: RELATIONSHIP OF DISTRICTS TO OUTCOME VARIABLES

Table B-1: Relationship Of Districts To Current Enrollment In Postsecondary Training Of 1990 Graduates With Mental Retardation 1 Year Out Of School

Table B-2: Relationship Of Districts To Independent Living Of 1990 Graduates With Mental Retardation 1 Year Out Of School

Table B-3: Relationship Of Districts To Employment Of 1995 Graduates With Mental Retardation 1 Year Out Of School

Table B-4: Relationship Of Districts To Current Enrollment In Postsecondary Training Of 1995 Graduates With Mental Retardation 1 Year Out Of School

Table B-5: Relationship Of Districts To Engagement Of 1995 Graduates With Mental Retardation 1 Year Out Of School

Table B-6: Relationship Of Districts To Residence Of 1995 Graduates With Mental Retardation 1 Year Out Of School

Table B-7: Relationship Of Districts To Employment Of 1990 Graduates With Mental Retardation 6 Years Out Of School

Table B-8: Relationship Of Districts To Current Enrollment In Postsecondary Training Of 1990 Graduates With Mental Retardation 6 Years Out Of School

## APPENDIX B: RELATIONSHIP OF DISTRICTS TO OUTCOME VARIABLES

(continued)

Table B-9: Relationship Of Districts To Engagement Of 1990 Graduates With  
Mental Retardation 6 Years Out Of School

Table B-10: Relationship Of Districts To Residence Of 1990 Graduates With  
Mental Retardation 6 Years Out Of School

Table B-11: Relationship Of Districts To Employment Of 1985 Graduates With  
Mental Retardation 6 Years Out Of School

Table B-12: Relationship Of Districts To Residence Of 1985 Graduates With  
Mental Retardation 6 Years Out Of School

208  
Table B-1

Relationship Of Districts to Current Enrollment in Postsecondary Training Of  
1990 Graduates With Mental Retardation 1 Year Out Of School

District	Contacted	Currently Enrolled		X <sup>2</sup>	df	p
	N	n	%			
<b>Moderate</b>						
CSD	6	3	50%			NS <sup>***</sup>
PSD	2	1	50%			
ASD	8	1	13%			
<b>Severe</b>						
CSD	1	0	0	-	-	-
PSD	0	0	0			
ASD	1	0	0			

\*\*\* Likelihood Ratio

209  
Table B-2

Relationship Of Districts to Independent Living Of 1990 Graduates With Mental  
Retardation 1 Year Out Of School

District	Contacted	Residing		X <sup>2</sup>	df	p
	N	n	%			
<b>Moderate</b>						
CSD	6	0	0	-	-	-
PSD	2	0	0			
ASD	8	0	0			
<b>Severe</b>						
CSD	1	0	0	-	-	-
PSD	0	0	0			
ASD	1	0	0			

210  
Table B-3

Relationship Of Districts to Employment Of 1995 Graduates With Mental  
Retardation 1 Year Out Of School

District	Contacted	Employed		X <sup>2</sup>	df	p
	N	n	%			
Moderate						
CSD	5	3	60%			NS*
PSD	0	0	0			
ASD	6	2	33%			
Severe						
CSD	1	0	0	3.819	2	NS***
PSD	1	1	100%			
ASD	1	0	0			

\* Fishers Exact Test  
\*\*\* Likelihood Ratio

211  
Table B-4

Relationship Of Districts to Current Enrollment in Postsecondary Training Of  
1995 Graduates With Mental Retardation 1 Year Out Of School

District	Contacted	Current Enrolled		X <sup>2</sup>	df	p
	N	n	%			
<b>Moderate</b>						
CSD	5	0	0			NS*
PSD	0	0	0			
ASD	6	1	17%			
<b>Severe</b>						
CSD	1	0	0	-	-	-
PSD	1	0	0			
ASD	1	0	0			

\* Fishers Exact Test

212  
Table B-5

Relationship Of Districts to Engagement Of 1995 Graduates With Mental  
Retardation 1 Year Out Of School

District	Contacted	Engaged		X <sup>2</sup>	df	p
	N	n	%			
<b>Moderate</b>						
CSD	5	3	60%			NS*
PSD	0	0	0			
ASD	6	3	50%			
<b>Severe</b>						
CSD	1	0	0	3.819	2	NS**
PSD	1	1	100%			
ASD	1	0	0			

\* Fishers Exact Test  
\*\* Likelihood Ratio

213  
Table B-6

Relationship Of Districts to Residence Of 1995 Graduates With Mental  
Retardation 1 Year Out Of School

District	Contacted	Residing Independently		X <sup>2</sup>	df	p
	N	n	%			
<b>Moderate</b>						
CSD	5	1	20%			NS*
PSD	0	0	0			
ASD	6	0	0			
<b>Severe</b>						
CSD	1	0	0	-	-	-
PSD	1	0	0			
ASD	1	0	0			

\* Fishers Exact Test

214  
Table B-7

Relationship Of Districts to Employment Of 1990 Graduates With Mental  
Retardation 6 Years Out Of School

District	Contacted	Employed		X <sup>2</sup>	df	p
	N	n	%			
<b>Moderate</b>						
CSD	6	4	67%	4.53449	2	NS**
PSD	2	0	0			
ASD	8	6	75%			
<b>Severe</b>						
CSD	0	0	0	-	-	-
PSD	0	0	0			
ASD	1	1	100%			

\*\*\*Likelihood Ratio

215  
Table B-8

Relationship Of Districts to Current Enrollment in Postsecondary Training Of  
1990 Graduates With Mental Retardation 6 Years Out Of School

District	Contacted	Currently Enrolled		X <sup>2</sup>	df	p
	N	n	%			
<b>Moderate</b>						
CSD	6	1	17%	2.07460	2	NS**
PSD	2	0	0			
ASD	8	0	0			
<b>Severe</b>						
CSD	0	0	0	-	-	-
PSD	0	0	9			
ASD	1	0	0			

\*\*\* Likelihood Ratio

216  
Table B-9

Relationship Of Districts to Engagement Of 1990 Graduates With Mental  
Retardation 6 Years Out Of School

District	Contacted	Engaged		X <sup>2</sup>	df	p
	N	n	%			
<b>Moderate</b>						
CSD	6	5	83%	5.47067	2	NS <sup>***</sup>
PSD	2	0	0			
ASD	8	6	75%			
<b>Severe</b>						
CSD	0	0	0	-	-	-
PSD	0	0	0			
ASD	1	1	100%			

\*\*\* Likelihood Ratio

217  
Table B-10

Relationship Of Districts to Residence Of 1990 Graduates With Mental  
Retardation 6 Years Out Of School

District	Contacted	Residing		X <sup>2</sup>	df	p
	N	n	%			
<b>Moderate</b>						
CSD	6	0	0	-	-	-
PSD	2	0	0			
ASD	8	0	0			
<b>Severe</b>						
CSD	0	0	0	-	-	-
PSD	0	0	0			
ASD	1	0	0			

218  
Table B-11

Relationship Of Districts to Employment Of 1985 Graduates With Mental  
Retardation 6 Years Out Of School

District	Contacted		Employed		X <sup>2</sup>	df	p
	N	n	%				
Moderate							
CSD	6	5	83%		2.38349	2	NS <sup>***</sup>
PSD	3	2	68%				
ASD	7	3	43%				
Severe							
CSD	2	2	100%		2.96904	2	NS <sup>***</sup>
PSD	2	1	50%				
ASD	3	1	33%				

\*\*\* Likelihood Ratio  
\*\*\* Likelihood Ratio

219  
Table B-12

Relationship Of Districts to Residence Of 1985 Graduates With Mental  
Retardation 6 Years Out Of School

District	Contacted	Residing		X <sup>2</sup>	df	p
	N	n	%			
<b>Moderate</b>						
CSD	6	0	0	3.66225	2	NS**
PSD	3	1	33%			
ASD	7	0	0			
<b>Severe</b>						
CSD	2	0	0	2.96904	2	NS**
PSD	2	1	50%			
ASD	3	0	0			

---

\*\*\* Likelihood Ratio  
\*\*\* Likelihood Ratio

## VITA

Patricia Ann Brown

---

### EDUCATION

---

Institution	Degree and Date	Major
Alfred University Alfred, New York	BA, 1972	Sociology
University of Washington Seattle, Washington	M.Ed., 1989	Special Education
University of Washington Seattle, Washington	Ed.D., 1997	Special Education

---

### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

---

1993 - present	Adjunct faculty, College of Education, Seattle Pacific University
1992 - present	Continuing Education Specialist (Interagency Transition Systems Specialist), University of Washington
1990 - 1992	Project Manager, Local Options Generated through Interagency Collaboration (LOGIC), Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and Puget Sound Educational Service District
1989 - 1990	Implementation Specialist, Washington Transition Project, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction
1989	Research Assistant, Job Search and Success Curriculum, University of Washington

---

**CERTIFICATION**


---

Continuing Teacher Professional Education Certificate, endorsements: K-12  
Special Education and 4-12 Sociology

---

**PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**


---

Washington Association of Vocational Special Needs Personnel (WAVESNP)  
National Association of Vocational Special Needs Personnel (NAVESNP)  
Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)  
Division on Career Development and Transition (CEC/DCDT)

---

**SPECIAL LOCAL RESPONSIBILITIES**


---

1996	Central Kitsap School District Professional- Technical Education Advisory Committee
1995 - present	Olympic Education Service District Staff Development Cooperative Advisory Board
1994 - present	Clallam/Jefferson County Transition Council
1994 - present	Kitsap County Transition Council
1992 - 1993	King County/Seattle School District Interagency Transition Council
1989 - 1990	Independent Living Advisory Board, Washington State Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
1989 - 1990	State Interagency Task Force, Olympia, Washington

**PUBLICATIONS**

Brown, J., Berkell, D., Brown, P., & Price, L. (in press). Transition practices for students with mental retardation and developmental disabilities. In A. Hilton, D. Finn, & R. Ringlaben (Eds.), Best and effective practices in developmental disabilities. Austin: Pro-ed.

Brown, P. & Nourse, S. (in press). Moving from school to adult life: Transition services for students with disabilities. In K. Johnson & J. Haselkorn (Eds.), Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Clinics of North America. Philadelphia: W.B. Sanders & Co.

Elliott, S., Brown, P., Nourse, S., Price, L., Walls, L., Bilyeu, B., Johnson, C., Tyson, P., Rich, J., VanNoy, J., & Edgar, E. (1994). Transition guide for Washington. Seattle: Center for Change in Transition Services.

Sykes, T., Harding, E., Edgar, E., Brown, P., Hadreas, C., Kelly, B., Pious, C., & Levine, R. (1994). Outcomes in special education: What we know and how we could know more. Olympia: Washington State Institute on Public Policy.

Brown, P. (1991). Preparing students for supported employment: Information for teachers about developing community jobs, training students, and providing support. Olympia: OSPI.

Brown, P. (1991). Providing supported employment opportunities: Parent guidelines. Olympia: OSPI.

Brown, P. (1989). Best practices in transition: A national survey of SEP grant awardees. Seattle: University of Washington (unpublished document).

---

#### SELECTED PRESENTATIONS

---

Brown, P. (July, 1996). Supported employment: The foundations. Lecture, undergraduate students in special education teacher preparation program, Central Washington University, Ellensburg, WA.

Brown, P. (November, 1995). Incorporating functional vocational evaluation information into the transitional secondary IEP. Lecture, special education staff, Stanwood School District, Stanwood, WA.

Brown, P. (May, 1995). Transitional secondary IEPs. Lecture, College of Education, graduate students, University of Washington, Seattle, WA.

Brown, P. (April, 1995). Introduction to transition for para-educators. Workshop, Vancouver School District, Vancouver, WA.

Brown, P. & Walls, L. (May, 1994). Schools and communities working together: Strategies for working with employers. Workshop, Educational Service District 189, Mt. Vernon, WA.

Brown, P. (November, 1993). Supported employment: An introduction for teachers. Lecture, College of Education, undergraduate students, University of Washington, Seattle, WA.

Brown, P. (March, 1992). Job coaching for educators. Paper presented at the WAVESNP conference, Blaine, WA.

Brown, P. (November, 1990). Teachers as job developers and job coaches. Paper presented at the National TASH conference, San Francisco, CA.