

## **PSCA Career Education and Development ... It's About The Future**

Anne S. Morris, Chairperson

Consider the natural connections and programming links which school counselors can make with the Transition Programs in their districts and Intermediate Units. There are wonderful transition activities taking place via IDEA legislation on behalf of students with learning disabilities. What an outstanding opportunity for school counselors to consider networking with transition coordinators and special education teachers with the goal of collaborating to design and develop strategies which would enhance your district's career education and development programs benefiting all students. In many areas of the state, counselors are doing just that ... the development of comprehensive K-12 Career Education Programs can, if collaboratively designed, meet legislative mandates and the needs of students with diverse needs.

In an attempt to clarify and understand this concept, let us review the legislation. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) drives transition planning. The legislation provides students with opportunities to look to the future – to be involved in planning their own education, to be heard, to voice their interests, preferences, and concerns, and to share in making decisions that directly affect them. At age 14, the IEP contains a “statement of transition service needs.” This statement focuses on the student's program of study to determine if courses are in line with post-secondary goals. At age 16, the IEP includes a “statement of transition service.” The IEP team looks at services and strategies delivered in a wide range of areas, which may include academic instruction and support, career awareness, and awareness of post-secondary training options.

Transition in school is student focused. This means that “active and engaged” student participation in the transition process beginning in the middle school is essential. Each student's IEP should be driven by the identification of valued and attainable post-secondary goals.

In review, transition is a process – a partnership involving parents, school, and community working together in support of the career and educational development / and or community life planning for students with disabilities.

Of course, transition strategies will differ from student to student based upon individual needs and preferences. Should this not be true for all students? The transition process is mandated to begin at age 14 and continues through graduation from high school. Specifically, transition is “a coordinated set of activities” for a student that:

- ❑ *Is designed within an outcome-oriented process, which promotes movement from school to post-school activities. Post-school activities may include post-secondary education, vocational training, integrated employment, continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, and community participation.*
- ❑ *Is based on the individual student’s needs, taking into account the student’s preferences and interests.*
- ❑ *May include instruction, related services, community experience, the development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives, and when appropriate, the acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation.”*

Clearly there are natural connections between a well designed career education program and transition law. If a linkage has not already been made in your school, consider partnering with the transition coordinator in your district to provide programs and services for all students.

Transition is an important state-wide initiative and there are a myriad of resources available to you. Your area PaTTAN – Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network centers in Pittsburgh, Harrisburg, and King of Prussia are poised and ready to provide resources and services including curriculum, assessment, instruction, consultation, and training. The mission of the Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network, is to support the efforts of the Bureau of Special Education and its initiatives and to build the capacity of local educational agencies to provide appropriate services to students who receive special education services.

In each of the past-three years, the Pennsylvania Transition Conference has been held, in Harrisburg to address the many aspects of transition programming. The 2004 Pennsylvania Transition Conference is scheduled for July 13 – 16, 2004. Interested individuals may download a power-point presentation from the 2003 Transition Conference – Creating Communities of Practice from the PaTTAN website. [www.pattan.k12.pa.state.us](http://www.pattan.k12.pa.state.us).

### **Recourses ... Discover the Linkages Between Transition and Excellent Career Development Programming**

You may find the following website sampling of value to educators, students and families as you design your program ...

- ❑ **Accessible PA** – [www.accessiblepa.state.pa.us](http://www.accessiblepa.state.pa.us)
- ❑ **America's Career Info Net** – [www.acinet.org/acinet/](http://www.acinet.org/acinet/)
- ❑ **Association On Higher Education and Disability:** [www.ahead.org](http://www.ahead.org)
- ❑ **American's with Disabilities** – [www.disabilityinfogov](http://www.disabilityinfogov)
- ❑ **PHEAA Early Awareness Resources – Going Places Programs** - [www.aesmentor.org](http://www.aesmentor.org)
- ❑ **LDOnline** – [www.ldonline.org](http://www.ldonline.org)
- ❑ **National Career Development Website** – [www.careervoyages.gov](http://www.careervoyages.gov)
- ❑ **National Center on Secondary Education and Transition** – [www.ncset.org](http://www.ncset.org)

- ❑ **National Occupational Education Coordinating Committee** – [www.noicc.gov](http://www.noicc.gov)
- ❑ **National Program on Self-determination** – [www.self-determination.org](http://www.self-determination.org)
- ❑ **National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research** –  
[www.ed.gov/offices/OSERS/NIDRR](http://www.ed.gov/offices/OSERS/NIDRR)
- ❑ **Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency** – [www.pheaa.org](http://www.pheaa.org)
- ❑ **Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry** – [www.dli.state.pa.us](http://www.dli.state.pa.us)
- ❑ **Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network** – [www.pattan.k12.pa.us](http://www.pattan.k12.pa.us)

### **Counselors Helping Counselors - New Website Feature Planned!**

Finally, we would love to hear from you! If you have not yet shared information with us regarding strategies for career and educational development in your district, we encourage you to do so. Please share a project or activity that works especially well for you. We may highlight your program in a future issue of the *PA Counselor*.

To share information, we would appreciate it if you would provide a paragraph or two describing your favorite strategy, the name and location of your school, grade-level served, your name and title and the names of colleagues if you like, and a sentence or so about the community you serve. A photograph would be super as well – if you could send it digitally – wonderful! (If you send a photograph including students, please be sure that you have parental permission for us to post the photograph!) Email: [annemorris@aol.com](mailto:annemorris@aol.com). Snail mail: Anne Morris, Transition Coordinator, Secondary Counselor, Great Valley School District, 255 N. Phoenixville Pike, Malvern, PA 19355. Thanks for your consideration!

## **Career Development Conference in April**

The Mid-Atlantic Networking for Career Development Association (MANCDA) is pleased to announce that the 2004 MANCDA Conference will be held in Lancaster, Pennsylvania on April 19 and 20, 2004. The conference is a must for anyone involved in career and workforce development. The conference theme is, "Capitalizing Resources for Workforce Development." The conference will be held at the Eden Resort Inn and Conference Center, Routes 30 and 272, Lancaster, Pennsylvania and will be preceded by an optional Professional Development Institute. Real Game Training will be conducted as part of this conference on Saturday, April 17 and Sunday, April 18 for Grade Levels 5/6, 7/8, and 9/10. Visit the MANCDA website at [www.MANCDA.org](http://www.MANCDA.org) today for full conference information on speakers and workshops and registration forms.