Public Transportation, Transition Students, and Competitive Employment: Are We There Yet?

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PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION, TRANSITION STUDENTS, AND COMPETITIVE EMPLOYMENT: ARE WE THERE YET?

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Submitted to the faculty of the Office of the Graduate School
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Abstract

This thesis attempts to understand what barriers public transportation creates for transition students wanting to look for competitive employment and how these factors may be addressed in order to remove some of these obstacles to competitive employment. Data sources were obtained through survey questions that were sent to 20 participants and observations from field notes that were obtained over the course of 20 weeks while utilizing public transit. The results of this study demonstrate the need for better travel training programs and training for professionals working with transition students in an effort to address some of the barriers identified. The barriers identified were: Bureaucratic Barriers, Travel Training Barriers, Barriers of Public Transit, and Collaboration.
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CHAPTER 1
Introduction

Statement of the Problem

The lack of viable transportation options often creates barriers for individuals with disabilities seeking competitive employment. Transition students who participate in special education classes often experience significant obstacles in finding employment due to issues with public transit as well as simply lacking the skills to use public transit. The problem is complex due to the various causes of some of these barriers. For example, an Individual Transition Plan (ITP) written while a student is still in high school is often inadequate to address the skills a transition student needs to be successful when leaving school to begin their adult work life. However, identifying why this is not being done is difficult because transition services are the responsibility of employment consultants (EC’s), vocational rehabilitation counselors (VRC’s), public transit systems, special education teachers, transition coordinators, and various other community partners.

Collaboration among all of these parties sounds good in theory but from a pragmatic point of view it is not. In other words, the reality is that ITP’s rarely are the work of true collaboration among community partners and rarely do they include transportation skills as a noted goal at all (Drebing et al., 2012). This is a problem. That is to say, transition students will likely have a problem finding a job or getting to and from a job after they have left high school due to
transportation barriers. Although one of the primary goals listed for post high in ITP’s is competitive employment (Cook et al., 2008).

**Importance of Topic**

Transportation barriers are an issue for transition students looking for competitive employment. If an individual with a disability is not able to get a job, this makes their life more difficult on various levels and therefore makes this an important topic (Attoh, 2012). Although this may be the most basic and critical reason why this topic is important, there are several other reasons why there is a need to study and research this issue.

If a common expectation is competitive employment for students transitioning from school to work but collaboration among community partners does not seem to be the norm, then this is a concern as well (Cook et al., 2008). It is important to study this topic if students are not getting the services or training they need due to a lack of communication and/or coordination of these services. In addition to the fact that students may not be getting the skills they need, they quite possibly may feel defeated before they even begin to look for work. This is important for all of us. In other words, if someone is expected to do something without the appropriate supports they may fail or worse yet they may just give up altogether. This is an important reason to study this issue. Pragmatically this is an important topic due to the complexities of navigating public transit (Bourland, 1996). Non-disabled persons would likely describe public
transportation as complicated if they were to be forced to rely solely on this form of transportation for all of their work and personal needs (Bourland, 1996). Therefore, it seems logical to assume that individuals with a disability would also find the barriers related to public transit to be equally complicated, warranting further review and study.

**Definition of Terms**

*Transition students* for this research will include special education students who are currently in school and working with vocational rehabilitation or special education students who have recently graduated from high school and are working with vocational rehabilitation in pursuit of competitive employment.

*Competitive employment* for this research will be considered employment in the community that is not in a sheltered environment and that pays the lawful minimum wage rate of pay.

*Vocational rehabilitation counselor (VRC)* is a professional who works for the state department and counsels individuals regarding vocational issues.

*Employment Consultant (EC)* is a professional who works with various individuals with disabilities assessing and advising them on their vocational needs.

*Public transit* refers to the city public bus, Citilink, located in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

**Research Questions and Approach**

This research answers the following questions: How is public transportation a barrier to competitive employment for transition students and what can be done to minimize these obstacles for students transitioning from school to work?
Public Transit and Transition Students

This researcher collected data from surveys completed by vocational rehabilitation counselors and employment consultants. Field notes were also taken by this researcher during observations while riding public transportation, Citilink, in Fort Wayne Indiana. Survey responses and observation field notes were used to investigate the research questions.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to explore the barriers that public transit may create for transition students trying to find competitive employment and what may be done to lessen these barriers. As well as to study why these individuals struggle with obtaining, learning, and navigating public transit for job seeking and employment as they transition from school to work.
CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

There have been numerous articles written about the difficulties individuals with a disability face when looking for employment. Many of these articles note the issues surrounding public transportation as a significant barrier to successful outcomes for transition students. The details of how and why public transportation is a barrier to employment for transition students are not clear. The following details some of the research that has been completed on this important topic. Lack of collaboration, mandates, and other transportation barriers all impact competitive employment outcomes for transition students (Cook et al., 2008).

Collaboration

Special education teachers have noted that connecting various agencies for students needing transition services is difficult and creates barriers for these students related to transportation and the options that are available to these students (Collett-Klingenberg & Kolb, 2011). Better outcomes for transition students looking for competitive employment has been shown to be a result of collaboration (Cook et al., 2008). Engaging students with community partners increases chances for students to be linked successfully with vocational rehabilitation (VR) which is called a referral. Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor’s go to meetings for transition students more than other community partners but lack of collaboration is still a problem (Brewer et al., 2011). More vocational rehabilitation services being provided such as public transportation training are associated with better outcomes otherwise known as competitive employment (Cook et al., 2008). Mutually exclusive missions among agencies or
professionals result in a lack of collaboration which as noted above is one of the keys to successful outcomes for transition students wanting to enter the workforce after high school (Dutta, Schiro-Geist, & Kundu, 2009). Lack of collaboration is a barrier to advancing employment outcomes in spite of employment interventions (Drebing et al., 2012).

Uncoordinated hand off to adult services is a barrier for youth leaving high school (Fraker & Rangarajan 2009).

In order to help transition students prepare to hold down a job; a village is needed. This village should include classroom teachers, VRC's, parents, and community business leaders that communicate and collaborate effectively according to Gagliardi (2010). Strategies to address transition barriers for special education students noted collaboration including inter-agency collaboration as an important way to support better outcomes for transition students (Lubbers, Repetto, & McGorray, 2008). Collaboration for transition students going from student services to adult services continues to be a problem. This includes the community at large regarding the lack of collaboration (Rutowski, Datson, VanKuiken, & Riehle, 2006). It has been noted that collaboration resulted in better outcomes for VR as a result of a team effort being used (Muthumbi, 2008).

**Travel Training and Related Definitions**

Travel Training has been defined as knowing how to access, plan, and execute travel, as well as simply using public transit (Bourland, 1996; Rutowski et al., 2006). Transition services have been defined as a set of coordinated activities intended to prepare young people with disabilities to participate in the everyday life of their community (Bourland, 1996). Transition
may also be defined as a comprehensive term that encompasses all of the adjustments and changes needed for a youth to successfully adopt adult roles (Rutowski et al., 2006). Therefore, travel training could be one example of a transition service.

Natural supports have been defined as a network reaching to and from the workplace with the employees' job prospects, performance, and career progress at the center (Garcia-Iriarte, Balcazar & Taylor-Ritz, 2007). A real life example of a natural support for an individual trying to learn how to use public transportation to get to and from work may be another bus rider that takes the same bus to the same place every day and happens to be willing to help their fellow citizen get to their destination. This would be a natural support. Unfortunately, the lack of natural supports for travel training is a barrier due to the need for safety such as not talking to strangers (Garcia, 2008).

A successful vocational rehabilitation closure is defined as a consumer becoming competitively employed after case file closure if an Individual Plan for Employment (IPE) was completed and the provision of vocational rehabilitation services were instrumental with the attainment of employment. An unsuccessful vocational rehabilitation closure is defined as when a consumer is not competitively employed and exits the vocational rehabilitation program without an employment outcome, after having received vocational rehabilitation services (Gonzalez, Rosenthal, & Kim, 2011).

Vocational rehabilitation defines or tracks eleven reasons for case closure. The eleven reasons include declined further services, unable to locate, disability too significant, death,
individual in an institution, transferred to another agency, failure to cooperate, transportation not feasible, extended services not available, sheltered workshops, all other reasons (Cimera, 2010). Status code 26 is defined by vocational rehabilitation as successfully employed and status code 28 is defined by vocational rehabilitation as not successfully employed (Gonzalez et al., 2011). One of the most common reasons for case closure involves lack of transportation to and from work (Cimera, 2010).

Assistance with transportation training (travel training) has been shown to positively influence success on the job for transition students (Migliore et al., 2010). Vocational rehabilitation has also noted that VR outcomes (successful employment) are negatively affected by lack of collaboration among agencies interested in helping transition students get to and from competitive employment via public transit (Drebing et al., 2012). Migliore and others (2011) suggests that employment consultants providing assistance with transportation needs (travel training) positively influences success on the job and bus skills training is a factor that contributes to positive work experience (Brewer et al., 2011). Transportation services are needed before a job search begins and these skills should be addressed as part of a transition student’s needs. Transition supports should include (travel training) transportation assistance (Rogers et al., 2008).

**Special Education Teachers**

Special education teachers may choose to focus on other post school/employment outcomes other than public transportation for various reasons. Some of these reasons may
involve the simple fact that they are unsure of how to access or what the options are for public transportation (Collett-Klingberg & Kolb, 2011). Johnson (2007) suggests that transition students do not rely on their special education teachers to help them with life skills. Additionally, transition students have noted that public transportation may be discussed but very few reported taking public transit on their own while still in high school (Johnson et al., 2007). Learning how to travel independently on public transportation takes systematic training and the ability to read, do math, and tell time are useful for independent travel, but not mandatory (Bourland, 1996). Transition students that lack these skills should not be denied travel training. Rather, the literature suggests that parents and professionals should advocate for travel training in the individualized education plan and that it may be a crucial component of the transition plan as well (Bourland, 1996).

Muthumbi (2008) notes that teachers working with transition students may lack awareness about other service providers that may help with transition services. Also these teachers may not know the eligibility requirements of these systems and therefore can not identify students who may be eligible. As a result, their ability to make appropriate referrals for these students is limited (Muthumbi, 2008).

Transition aged students were most likely to be employed between the ages of 18-19, 46% of them, 38% for 16-17 year olds, 8.7% for 20-21 year olds, 5.25% for 22-23 year olds, and 1.9% for 24 year olds. One reason for this may be that transition students are most likely to develop habits of working while still in high school. Thus demonstrating the importance of providing
meaningful transition services such as transportation skills while these transition students are still in school (Gonzalez, Rosenthal, & Kim, 2011).

Students who get vocational rehabilitation services earlier in high school have better employment outcomes. VR services may include public transportation training as well as covering the cost of bus tickets or a monthly pass. Therefore, transportation barriers may be addressed sooner potentially limiting the barriers created by public transportation for transition students wanting to work competitively (Muthumbi, 2008).

Students often don’t have contact with VR or agencies if not referred during high school (Alfred et al., 2011). A student that has a successful referral with VR has a higher likelihood of employment after high school and older students were more likely to be referred to VR than younger transition students. Additionally, demands of the general education curriculum often make it difficult for students wanting or needing vocational training (Brewer et al., 2010).

It has been noted that VR has not adequately provided supports for students towards the end of their high school tenure (Muthumbi, 2008). Transition planning has varied so much across schools that there is little consensus regarding transition practices that are really effective (Alfred et al., 2011).

**Mandates and Bureaucratic Barriers**

Individuals with Disabilities Act (2004) or IDEA mandates certain components for transition goals to be in individualized education plans (IEP’s). This could include things like public transportation skills for competitive employment as an example. However, Individuals
with Disabilities Act (2004) only enforces IEP’s to have transition goals. What does this mean?
This means that during the transition process for students wanting competitive employment but while still in school, the school need only identify post school outcomes, not obtain post school outcomes. Focus on employment and post school outcomes is also included in this legislation (Hughes & Avokes, 2010).

No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 focuses on academic development. This may limit time for life skills instruction which may include employment for transition students (Brooke et al., 2009). Some people believe that No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (Public Law 107-110) limits critical transition life skills like transportation training for students who need it (Brooke et al., 2009).

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is sometimes referred to as Section 504 and this legislation mandates that VR provide transition services that will improve employment outcomes (Muthumbi, 2008). It has been noted that mutually exclusive missions among agencies results in a lack of collaboration (Dutta, 2009). An example of this could be vocational rehabilitation trying to reduce expenses by limiting bus pass authorizations while a provider agency is trying to get a bus pass approved to improve outcomes through resources. Thus potentially creating a transportation barrier for a client either through delayed transportation services or no transportation services at all (Dutta et al., 2009).

ADA stands for Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (Dutta et al., 2009). ADA requires accessibility procedures for cognitive or communication impairments but these are less easily understood than curb cuts for example (Moore, Flickas, Leoncello, & Hung, 2009). ADA
mandates that paratransit services are available and accessible to people who are unable to use public transit. In addition to this, public transit systems must be accessible to individuals with disabilities (Bourland, 1996). Although public transit must be accessible, there is still a need to link public transit lines with job sites so these are available to all people not just non-disabled people (Hernandez, 2007).

IDEA mandates that students must have a transition plan in formulation by the age of 16. In other words, IDEA requires that the IEP, individualized education plan, include a statement of the needed transition services for students no later than 16 years of age (Gonzalez et al., 2011). Lubbers (2008) notes there continues to be widespread non-compliance with transition planning mandates such as the statement of needed transition services, inviting required participants, and adequate notice of meetings (Lubbers et al., 2008).

If bus training will be extremely tedious with a particular client, it is possible that bus training will not be included in an individual’s plan potentially conserving resources (Obrien & Callahan, 2010). Bourland (1996) suggests that the cost of travel training a student is significant. However, long-term the investment is a sound one (Bourland, 1996).

Some students are reliant on public transportation because their family can’t afford a vehicle (Johnson, McEathron, Fields, & Hill, 2007). The issues relating to poverty is beyond the scope of this research. However, the way poverty relates to disability and employment deserves consideration. According to Hughes and Avoke (2010) the intersection of poverty, disability, and employment is the elephant in the room and 41% of individuals with a disability consider access to public transportation to be a problem.
Employment is a significant problem for the disability community and has a poverty rate that exceeds the general population poverty rate. It is twice as likely that an individual with a disability will have a household income of less than $15,000 annually compared to those without a disability (Hernandez et al., 2010).

How is this relevant to mandates and bureaucratic barriers? When we consider the mandates provided by the ADA, IDEA, NCLB, and The Rehabilitation Act as previously noted it seems that these regulations would effectively address the transportation barriers complicated by the issues of poverty and disability. Unfortunately this does not seem to be the case. One reason may be described once again by mutually exclusive missions for some of these mandates (Dutta, 2009) which seems to result in bureaucratic barriers for transitions students wanting to utilize public transit as a means to gain competitive employment. The ability to get out of poverty requires a job, which requires transportation to get to the job, which requires a job to pay for transportation (Attoh, 2012). This may sound glib, but not when one really considers how interrelated poverty, disability, and employment are and how legislation may possibly be affecting these things (Hughes & Avoke, 2010).

Para transit services have been recommended for employment services participants (Gerver, Ni, Tillman, Dickel, & Kneubuehl 2009) although resource facilitation which includes transportation services has been identified as a barrier to employment (Drebing et al., 2012). Barriers to finding and keeping employment include lack of access to employment services which may include transportation services (Fraker & Rangarajan, 2009). Transportation barriers as outlined in this study for individuals include but were not limited to: personal
communication limitations, challenging behaviors, impaired cognition, feeling depressed due to lack of mobility, care provider “buy in” to access travel training, community coordination and funding, and bureaucratic barriers like qualifying for para transit. (Moore et al., 2009).

**Barriers of Transit**

The ability to drive a car to and from work greatly increases employment outcomes through the ability to work more hours or the ability to get better jobs not on the bus line (Attoh, 2012). The importance of equal access to transportation may be demonstrated by the discovery that employment choices are often limited by the availability of accessible transportation for transition students (Bourland, 1996). Eligibility requirements to be part of an employment program for transition students sometimes include the willingness to access independent transportation options. This speaks to the transportation barriers of fear and anxiety for transition students (Rutowski et al., 2006). In other words students are sometimes not willing to try public transit due to the barriers created by fear and anxiety (Rutowski et al., 2006).

Other barriers of transit often include the lack of or ability to understand money, confusion, and length of time it takes to travel train (Garcia-Iriarte et al., 2007). Stress from coordinating travel sometimes unintentionally compromises an ideal working environment. In other words, a job may be lost due to barriers of transit (Gagliardi, 2010). Seeking and maintaining employment coupled with limited transportation options were identified by VR clients as a significant barrier to employment (Hernandez et al., 2007).

Specific transportation barriers noted by clients were public transportation routes were unpredictable and frustrating, public transit workers were indifferent to accommodations
needed by the disability community, lifts did not always work, and paratransit was time consuming given the number of stops taken along the way. VR clients in this study, one third of them, who had a high likelihood to work noted transportation as a barrier to employment. Additionally it was noted that there is still a need to link public transit lines with job sites so these are available to all people not just nondisabled people (Hernandez et al., 2007). Not showing up when an individual is scheduled to work is an issue that may be related to barriers of transit due to the inconsistency with public transit schedules (Hernandez et al., 2007).

Barriers to transit for bus riders as noted by public transit bus drivers included: anxiety and confusion caused by route changes, memory or remembering which bus to take, social behavior problems like aggression, problem solving or lack of flexibility when forgetting a stop, communication challenges, physical challenges. Fixed route challenges for bus riders included: planning a trip, reading schedules, managing time, getting out the door with needed items, navigating to destination before getting lost, community safety, not talking to strangers, pedestrian safety or crossing the street safely. Paratransit barriers included: planning and scheduling which includes canceling or providing sufficient notice, getting out the door on time, care providers were noted as a barrier for para riders more than fixed route riders possibly due to more intensive supports. In other words, more than one person is involved thus potentially causing a barrier in and of itself. (Moore et al., 2009). Examples of why individuals with a disability may continue to be home bound in spite of availability and an accessible route near their home included: anxiety, fear of getting lost, leaving a comfort zone, financial restrictions, reduced initiation or spontaneity, and lack of opportunity (Moore et al., 2009).
Limited access to safe reliable transportation has been noted as potentially negatively affecting employment outcomes. Fear about safety on public transportation was noted by clients and families alike regarding barriers to positive employment outcomes. Personal safety and other issues surrounding transportation complicate the challenges of finding and maintaining employment that already exist for individuals with disabilities (Johnson et al., 2007).

Summary and Research Questions

There is a great need to increase the number of studies looking at ways to improve success rates and create innovative models to better serve individuals with disabilities looking for work. Interventions that warrant additional study have been identified as resource facilitation which includes transportation to and from work in an effort to improve employment outcomes (Drebing et al., 2012). Little empirical research has been done regarding details of the challenges individuals with disabilities face regarding public transportation (Moore et al., 2009). More studies are needed to further look into outcomes and employment for transition programs (Rutowski et al., 2006). Narrative research is important as a tool to help describe and understand supports that may be needed for successful outcomes in addition to quantitative research that has already been done (Garcia-Iriarte et al., 2007).

Current literature suggests that professionals in the field of employment services experience lack of support isolation, and note little opportunity for exposure to best practices and innovation in the field (Smith, Clark, & DiLeo, 2011). Little agreement on what works or what is effective when it comes to best practices is available in the field of employment services.
Teacher training is considered a serious problem with regard to transition services. In order to improve the transition services students may or may not be getting, better training for teachers in this area may be needed (Lubbers et al., 2008).

This literature review highlights both of these research questions: How is public transportation a barrier to competitive employment for transition students and what can be done to minimize these obstacles for students transitioning from school to work? Numerous issues surrounding transportation barriers and strategies that may help diminish these barriers for transition students have been noted in this literature review. The details of these issues and the importance of identifying specifics for these potential strategies warrant an extensive study of this topic.
CHAPTER 3

Methodology

Participants and Setting

The participants in this study were Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors and Employment Consultants. These individuals were participants based on their completion of a voluntary survey. All responses were anonymous.

The setting for the observations and field notes were the city of Fort Wayne via the public transit, Citilink. The employment consultants who participated in this study are from a large social service agency located in Fort Wayne, Indiana and includes eight individuals. This agency is large and employs well over 1,000 people. The vocational rehabilitation counselors who participated in this study work for the state of Indiana. Their office is located in Fort Wayne, Indiana and includes eight individuals as well.

Data Sources

One of the data sources that were used for this study included a survey titled Public Transportation, Transition Students, and Competitive Employment Survey Questions (see Appendix A) that were distributed to two groups of participants, Employment Consultants and Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors. These surveys had 20 questions with responses based on whether the participant strongly agreed or strongly disagreed with the statement. There was also a single open ended question based on the research questions from this study. The surveys were not submitted for voluntary completion until the IRB approval (see Appendix B) was received for this research study. The questions were based on the research questions from this
study. The survey questions reflected many of the themes presented in the literature review.

Another data source was the field notes taken during observations while riding the Citilink public transit in Fort Wayne, IN. These field notes were taken in journal form in a notebook. The observations were based on whatever happened that day while this researcher was riding the city bus, getting off the city bus, waiting to transfer to another bus, using the facilities at the transfer station, and any other activity associated with using the public transit on each particular day.

**Data and Analysis**

Qualitative research methods were used to collect data for this thesis. The collection procedure for this process involved organizing the responses to the surveys and then categorizing them by themes. Similar and/or differing responses were grouped first and then analyzed for patterns and details again for further review. The two groups were reviewed separately first and then compared and contrasted for similarities and differences. The information gleaned from the literature review was also used to better understand all of the similarities and differences that were found.

Another method used to collect data for this thesis were field notes taken during observations. These observations were from this researcher utilizing the public transit, Citilink, in Fort Wayne, IN. The observation/field notes were recorded in a journal and then organized based on the information gained from this experience in relationships to the research questions for this thesis. In addition to comparisons with the research questions, the data gained from the field notes were also evaluated for relationships with the data obtained from the surveys and
the single open ended question on the surveys as well.

Summary

This research design was a qualitative method approach. The qualitative methods included analysis from the field notes during observations and the survey responses. Every effort was made to glean as much information as possible from all of these data sources in an attempt to broaden the knowledge base we currently have regarding transportation barriers transition students face when looking for work. Triangulation of all of these data sources was ultimately used in an effort to accomplish this.
Chapter 4

Data Analysis

Review of the three data sources was done in order to analyze the responses from the vocational rehabilitation counselor’s and employment consultant’s regarding their views on transportation barriers for transition students when looking for employment. A total of 16 surveys were sent out to the participants, 8 vocational rehabilitation counselors and 8 employment consultants. All surveys were returned with the 20 questions completed. Although all surveys were returned with the 20 survey questions completed, only 6 of the 16 participants completed the single open ended question. This data analysis involved organizing (Brantlinger, 2005) the information obtained into themes based on patterns that emerged after studying the field notes, surveys, and single open ended question responses. The process of organizing the results helped reduce the evidence gleaned into smaller sections that more clearly demonstrated the results of this study.

The responses to the twenty survey questions were organized into categories based on the patterns that emerged after reviewing all of them (Brantlinger, 2005). The responses to the single open ended question were studied for relationships between the themes that emerged from the survey questions by comparing and contrasting the two. The field notes from the public transit observations, Citilink, were then used to better understand and add meaning to the perspectives and views of the survey participants based on what was observed.
Triangulation was used to compare and contrast the results gathered from all three data sources (Brantlinger, 2005). The process of triangulation enabled this researcher to better understand the relationship between all three of these data sources. Triangulation is the process of finding consistency among evidence from multiple and varied data sources (Brantlinger, 2005). Content analysis (Brantlinger, 2005) of the single open ended question responses coupled with the taxonomy of the other data sources also contributed to the findings and analysis of this study.

From this analysis barriers to competitive employment for transition student’s influenced by public transit and potential strategies to reduce these obstacles are identified. Four themes emerged relating to barriers of public transit and some possible ways to minimize these barriers for transition students seeking competitive employment. Barriers to public transit and ways to minimize these barriers also address the two research questions for this study. The four themes identified were: Lack of Collaboration, Improved Travel Training procedures, Barriers of Public Transit, and Bureaucratic Barriers related to legislative mandates. The data results are illustrated at the beginning of each section in a table to better demonstrate the findings of this study. Each response to the single open ended question was coded P1 through P6 ensuring the anonymous nature of these responses. Each survey question was numbered as they appeared on the survey with the total number of responses for each rating 1 through 5 listed. Finally, the data from the observation field notes was coded by week with the respective field notes illustrated.
The collaboration theme identified the barriers created by the lack of collaboration. Travel training and barriers to transit have been identified as themes due to the barriers created by poor travel training or the lack of travel training along with barriers created due to the rules and practices of the public transit company. Lastly, the theme of bureaucratic barriers has been identified to explain some of the obstacles created by legislation and mandates. Additionally, all four of these themes address the two research questions of this study which are: How is public transportation a barrier to competitive employment for transition students? What can be done to minimize these obstacles for students transitioning from school to work?

Lack of Collaboration

The collaboration theme highlights some of the issues with poor collaboration among stakeholders and how this may influence the transition services young people are receiving.

*Table 1 Survey Question Data from “Lack of Collaboration” Theme (collaboration set 1)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Question</th>
<th>Strongly Agree=5</th>
<th>Agree=4</th>
<th>Unsure=3</th>
<th>Disagree=2</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree=1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1 It is sometimes possible to coordinate the Citilink bus transit for any shift.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2 Learning how to use the bus when seeking competitive employment is a good way for students to become more comfortable with the bus once they do become employed.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3 Transportation is one of the most significant barriers to competitive employment for students in special education transitioning from school to work.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In table 1 most of the participants agreed, 94%, according to question number 2 that learning how to use the city bus prior to getting a job would be helpful for students. Question number 3 demonstrates that 88% of all participants felt transportation was a significant barrier to employment. Question number 1 showed that 88% of participants did not agree that it is sometimes possible to coordinate the city bus for any shift although it is sometimes possible to do this.

*Table 2 Survey Question Data from “Lack of Collaboration” Theme (collaboration set 2)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Question</th>
<th>Strongly Agree=5</th>
<th>Agree=4</th>
<th>Unsure=3</th>
<th>Disagree=2</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree=1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Question #7 Most individuals with a disability transitioning from high school to work have been taught how to navigate the public transit, Citilink.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question #10 Public Transit is a viable option for a majority of transition students within the city if they are willing to learn the skills in order to ride the bus.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question #11 The current process for ensuring that students in special education identified as wanting to transition from school to work have the public transportation skills they are going to need is not adequate.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2 illustrates that most of the participants disagreed, 88%, that transition students have been taught how to use the city bus before leaving high school, although 75% of the participants agreed that public transit was a viable option for most transition students. Additionally, 94% of the participants surveyed felt that the process for ensuring students have transit skills when leaving high school was not adequate.

Table 3 Survey Question Data from “Lack of Collaboration” Theme (collaboration set 3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Question</th>
<th>Strongly Agree=5</th>
<th>Agree=4</th>
<th>Unsure=3</th>
<th>Disagree=2</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree=1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Question #15 In your experience, students in special education transitioning from school to work who master navigating the public transit system gain more than just a way to and from work</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question #18 Most transition students looking for competitive work who have transportation barriers know that they may be eligible for a reduced fare pass.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question #20 Public Transportation is underutilized by transition students.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 shows that most participants felt public transit was beneficial beyond just a way to work, but 69% of participants did not believe that most students knew they may be eligible for
reduced fare pass. Less than half of the participants, 38%, were unsure if public transit was underutilized by transition students but 56% of participants believed it was.

A response from 6 of the 16 participants was received for the following single open ended question: Please respond to this question from your experience working with transition students who are just beginning their job search in the “real world”. Describe the transportation barriers often encountered by these young people utilizing public transit and any suggestions on how these barriers could be minimized in the future. Participant 2 responded, “I think fear of unknown is a problem. However, when being trained a few times by someone can help a lot.” Participant 4 responded, “Do not know they can take public transit to many places in town, do not know that they might be able to get “help” with bus passes, students should be given information about public transit options during IEP and IPE meetings so they can make informed decisions.” The responses from participants 2 and 4 note the fear individuals may feel about learning public transit and also the need to communicate this information during meetings with these students. These responses are good examples of how collaboration is an important part of transition services.

Field notes observed from week 3 was “Riders discuss where they get their bus passes from, rehabilitation center, housing authority, and case worker.” Field notes from observation week 13 was “Walkie talkie observed for lost rider.” The provision of bus passes was discussed among bus riders and the agencies providing these bus passes were from three different agencies. The field notes reflect the collaboration that was observed as a strategy to
find a lost rider on the city bus. Communication on a walkie talkie was used between a bus
driver and a Citilink employee in order to locate a rider for a concerned family member.

**Travel Training**

The travel training theme highlights the issues with learning how to utilize public transit as
well as what may be some areas for improvement in this area.

Public Transit and Transition Students

*Table 4 Survey Question Data from “Travel Training” Theme (travel training set 1)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Question</th>
<th>Strongly Agree=5</th>
<th>Agree=4</th>
<th>Unsure=3</th>
<th>Disagree=2</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree=1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Question #1 It is sometimes possible to coordinate the Citilink bus transit for any shift.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question #4 Internet tutorials are a great way for individuals with a disability to learn how to utilize public transportation when looking for or getting to work.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question #8 Public transportation bus training for nondisabled persons is easy to learn.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question #9 There are few exceptions to the rules and steps when learning how to ride the city bus.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In table 4 questions 4 and 9 asked about specific bus training tools and over half of the participants responded that they were unsure, 69% and 56% respectively. Participants responded across the board as to whether bus training was easy to learn, 38% agreed, 24% were unsure, and 38% disagreed according to survey question 8. It is possible to sometimes coordinate bus transit for any shift although only 12% of participants responded reflecting this knowledge according to the responses for question 1.

*Table 5 Survey Question Data from “Travel Training” Theme (travel training set 2)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Question</th>
<th>Strongly Agree=5</th>
<th>Agree=4</th>
<th>Unsure=3</th>
<th>Disagree=2</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree=1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Question #12 Transition students who are comfortable using public transit are usually the smartest students in special education.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question #13 Fear is a significant reason why many individuals with a disability and their family members are afraid to use the bus.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question #17 Individuals with a disability that have transportation issues usually know where the public transit office is located.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question #20 Public Transportation is underutilized by transition students.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As Table 5 notes, participants were not in agreement as to whether the smartest students in special education were more comfortable using public transit. Responses were 12% in agreement, 31% unsure, and 57% disagreeing. Participants agreed or strongly agreed 100% that fear is a significant reason why transition students are afraid to use the bus. Most participants, 75%, disagreed that most students know where the public transit office is located. Over half, 56%, of the participants responded that public transit is underutilized by transition students.

Participants responded to the following question: Please respond to this question from your experience working with transition students who are just beginning their job search in the “real world”. Describe the transportation barriers often encountered by these young people utilizing public transit and any suggestions on how these barriers could be minimized in the future.

Participant 2 responded “I think fear of the unknown is a problem. However, when being trained a few times by someone can help a lot.” Participant 3 responded “Transportation barriers for most transition students are bus schedules, students are limited regarding start and end times once employment is secured, barriers could only be minimized if bus time schedule are changed otherwise students have to stay within bus schedule when searching for employment, bus route is often an issue as well some busses only run so far so if job not within bus route then client cannot secure employment.” Participant 5 responded “To minimize barriers nonprofits and volunteers may take students to nearest bus stops in am or pm, biggest barrier to students is not having access to public transportation.” Training concerns are
reflected in the responses from the participants such as fear, comprehension of bus route limitations, schedules, and knowledge of bus stop locations.

The field notes from observation weeks 1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 10, and 16 demonstrate the complexities of travel training such as flex route direction changes, written format of route schedules, para transit rules, and unreliable route stops and pick ups. Week 1 “Called Citilink five times, directions given were confusing but staff was pleasant.” Week 2, “Bus driver advised rider he would just tell rider when to get off due to riders confusion.” Week 5 “Riders advise co-researcher to call Citilink and not to read route schedules.” Week 7 “Rider advised of bus 2 versus bus 2a incorrectly by citilink.” Week 8 “Flex route 22 requires rider to know what direction bus will be coming from in order to know time between this route and next connecting route.” Week 10 “Rider proudly to tells anyone listening that he rides for free if he doesn’t use his paratransit.” Week 16 “IPFW rider on his cell phone discussed his car breaking down and that he thought riding the city bus would be a good option until his car was fixed, he went on to say he was soooo wrong.” Each of these incidences of field notes shows that training a person to ride the bus is not a simple task due to the dynamic, complicated, and unclear procedures associated with public transit travel.

**Barriers of Transit**

The barriers of transit theme explains some of the problems that exist when one is trying to utilize public transportation but rules and procedures created by the public transit system make it more difficult.
Table 6 Survey Question Data from “Barriers of Transit” Theme (barriers of transit set 1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Question</th>
<th>Strongly Agree=5</th>
<th>Agree=4</th>
<th>Unsure=3</th>
<th>Disagree=2</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree=1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Question #4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet tutorials are a great way for individuals with a disability to learn how to utilize public transportation when looking for work or getting to work.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question #5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One of the most important things to an employer is that a potential employee has transportation to and from work.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From table 6 the number of participants who responded they were unsure if internet tutorials were helpful was 11 out of 16 or 69% and 31% disagreed that they were helpful. Although 15 of the 16 participants or 94% agreed that transportation is one of the most important things to an employer.

Table 7 Survey Question Data from “Barriers of Transit” Theme (barriers of transit set 2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Question</th>
<th>Strongly Agreed=5</th>
<th>Agreed=4</th>
<th>Unsure=3</th>
<th>Disagreed=2</th>
<th>Strongly Disagreed=1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Question #6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In your experience employers think that individuals who ride the bus will not be reliable</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question #13</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fear is a significant reason why many individuals with a disability and their family members are afraid to use the bus.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
According to Table 7 all of the participants strongly agreed or agreed that fear is an important reason why families and job seekers are afraid to use the bus. Over half of the participants, 56%, were unsure if employers think public transit makes workers less reliable.

Table 8 Survey Question Data from “Barriers of Transit” Theme (barriers of transit set 3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Question</th>
<th>Strongly Agree=5</th>
<th>Agree=4</th>
<th>Unsure=3</th>
<th>Disagree=2</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree=1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Question #16</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inconvenient time schedules for the public transit often causes frustrations for job seekers.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question #17</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individuals with a disability that have transportation issues usually know where the public transit office is located.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8 shows that all but one of the participants or 94% of the participants felt inconvenient time schedules were a problem for job seekers using public transit. Most of the participants, 12 out of 16 or 75%, felt individuals with a disability were not likely to know where the public transit office was located.

Table 9

Survey Question Data from “Barriers of Transit” Theme (barriers of transit set 4)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Question</th>
<th>Strongly Agree=5</th>
<th>Agree=4</th>
<th>Unsure=3</th>
<th>Disagree=2</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree=1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Question #19</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost of public Transit is a huge barrier for individuals with a disability seeking employment.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 9 explains that half of the participants, 8 of 16 or 50%, did not agree that cost was a huge barrier of public transit for job seekers. However, 5 of 16 or 31% did believe cost was a significant barrier whereas 3 of 16 or 19% were unsure either way.

Participants responded to this open ended question “Please respond to this question from your experience working with transition students who are just beginning their job search in the real ‘real world’. Describe the transportation barriers often encountered by these young people utilizing public transit and any suggestions on how these barriers could be minimized in the future. Participant 2 responded “I think fear of the unknown is a problem. However, when being trained a few times by someone can help a lot.” Participant 3 responded “Transportation barriers for most transition students are bus schedules, students are limited regarding start and end times once employment is secured, barriers could only be minimized if bus time schedule is changed otherwise students have to stay within bus schedule when searching for employment, bus route is often an issue as well, some buses only run so far so if job not within bus route client cannot secure employment.” Participant 5 responded “To minimize barriers nonprofits or volunteers may take students to nearest bus stop in am or pm, biggest barrier for students is not having access to public transportation.” Participant 6 responded “Scheduling of buses-example Sundays and evenings-thank you for asking.”

Some of the responses to this open ended question reflect barriers created by public transit due to schedules, start and end times, route limitations, no bus routes on Sundays and evenings, and fear of not knowing these things.
The field notes from observation weeks 1, 4, 5, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19, and 20 demonstrates examples of transit barriers. Although the observations are all clearly different, they do reflect problems created by public transit policies, procedures, rules, and/or day to day concerns experienced by public transit riders.

Week 1, ”Observed riders anxious to share bus knowledge, observed few cell phone users on the city bus.” Week 4, ”Observed bus routes in written form never used by riders. ”Week 5,”Riders advised researcher to call bus company and not to use papers (bus route schedules).” Week 12,”Bus pass used often, cash observed less often and more difficult to use.” Week 14,”Observed bus stop riders waving their hands for the bus driver to stop, bus driver did not stop and drove past.” Week 15,”When asked, staff at transit station said if bus driver does not see riders, bus driver does not see riders.” Week 16,”IPFW rider on his cell phone discussed his car breaking down and that he thought riding the city bus would be a good option until his car was fixed, he went on to say he was soooo wrong.” Week 17,”Observed riders at bus stop complaining of the bus times being inconsistent and just being tired and wanting to go home.” Week 19, ”Observed riders discussing how much longer they were going to need to ride the bus before they had saved enough money for a down payment on a house.” Some of the field notes reflect the eagerness of bus riders to help other bus riders. Unfortunately, due to safety taking advice from strangers is not advised. Bus route schedules observed to be an inefficient way to use the bus. Bus drivers were observed to drive past riders waving at bus and inconsistent time schedules.
Bureaucratic Barriers

The theme Bureaucratic Barriers describes how laws and mandates influence the process, barriers, and complexities of transportation transition services for individuals wanting to be competitively employed.

Table 10 Survey Question Data from “Bureaucratic Barriers” Theme (bureaucratic barriers set 1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Question</th>
<th>Strongly Agree=5</th>
<th>Agree=4</th>
<th>Unsure=3</th>
<th>Disagree=2</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree=1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Question #7 Most individuals with a disability transitioning from high school to work have been taught how to navigate the public transit, Citilink.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question #10 Public transit is a viable option for a majority of transition students within the city if they are willing to learn the skills in order to ride the bus.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question #15 In your experience, students in special education transitioning from school to work who master navigating the public transit system gain more than just a way to and from work.</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10 shows that according to question #7, 14 of 16 or 88% of participants did not believe transition students leaving high school knew how to navigate public transit. However, when...
asked in question #10 most of the participants, 75%, thought public transit was a viable option for most transition students. Question #15 demonstrates that 15 out of 16 or 94% of participants felt individuals gain more than just a way to and from work when learning how to use public transit.

Table 11  *Survey Question Data from “Bureaucratic Barriers” Theme (bureaucratic barriers set 2)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Question</th>
<th>Strongly Agree=5</th>
<th>Agree=4</th>
<th>Unsure=3</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree=2</th>
<th>Disagree=1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Question #16 Inconvenient time schedules for the public transit often causes frustrations for job seekers</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question #17 Individuals with a disability that have transportation issues usually know where the public transit office is located</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 11 shows that time schedules were a frustration for job seekers according to 94% of the participants or 15 out of 16. Most participants, 12 of 16 or 75%, did not believe transition students knew where the public transit office was located. Although 2 of the 16 participants or 24%, agreed or strongly agreed that transition students did know where the public transit office was located. This same number, 24% of the participants, were unsure either way as to whether transition students knew where the office was located.
Table 12 Survey Question Data from “Bureaucratic Barriers” Theme (bureaucratic barrier set 3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Question</th>
<th>Strongly Agree=5</th>
<th>Agree=4</th>
<th>Unsure=3</th>
<th>Disagree=2</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree=1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Question #18 Most transition students looking for competitive work who have</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>transportation barriers know that they may be eligible for a reduced fare pass.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question #20 Public transportation is underutilized by transition students.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to Table 12 most participants felt public transit was underutilized by transition students, 9 of 16 or 56%. Additionally, most participants, 69% or 11 of 16, did not believe that most transition students were aware they may be eligible for a reduced fare pass.

Participants responded to this question: Please respond to this question from your experience working with transition students who are just beginning their job search in the “real world”. Describe the transportation barriers often encountered by these young people utilizing public transit and any suggestions on how these barriers could be minimized in the future.

Participant 1 responded, “Transportation is the main key factor to a successful employment among transition students and entering the workforce and it is very hard.” Participant 3 responded, “Transportation barriers for most transition students are bus schedules, students
are limited regarding start and end times once employment is secured, barriers could only be
minimized if bus time schedule is changed otherwise students have to stay within the bus
schedule when searching for employment, bus route is often an issue as well, some busses only
run so far so if job not within bus route client cannot secure employment.” Participant 5
responded, “To minimize barriers nonprofits or volunteers may take students to nearest bus
stop in am or pm, biggest barriers for students is not having access to public transportation.”
Participant 6 responded, “Scheduling of busses-example Sundays and evenings –thank you for
asking.” These responses reflect the significance transportation plays in successful employment
along with the counterintuitive rules and regulations that create barriers to gainful
employment.

Field Notes from observation weeks 1,2, 5, 6,9,10,11,15, and 18 demonstrate some examples
of bureaucratic barriers to public transit. Week 1 observation, ”Called Citilink five times,
directions given were confusing but staff was pleasant.” Week 2 observation, ”Bus driver
advised he would just tell rider when to get off due to riders confusion.” Week 5 observation,”
Riders advised researcher to call Citilink and not to read schedules.” Week 6 observation,” City
ordinance is why routes and stops are not marked along the roads “discussion” observed
between riders.” Week 9 observation,” Observation of new transit station restrooms, shelter,
streaming message board, staff onsite, bus drivers running to and from bathrooms, and
discussion among riders as to long it took to get shelter and bathrooms.” Week 10
observation,” Rider proudly tells anyone listening that he rides for free if he doesn’t use his
paratransit.” Week 11 observation,” Observed case worker with client complaining about size
of bus stop signs along random roads and explanation of city ordinance.” Week 15
observation,” When asked, staff at transit station said if bus driver does not see riders, bus
driver does not see riders.” Week 18 observation,” Observed few but some professionals riding
public transit based on attire, briefcase, laptop, and various other belongings associated with
professional vocations.”

Inefficient communications of route schedules and times are reflected in week 1, 2, and 5
field note observations. Week 6 and 11 notes bureaucratic barriers to larger bus stop signs
along bus routes. Para transit obstacles are reflected in week 10 field notes. Week 15
demonstrates the impossible position riders are in when they are on the side of the road
hoping a bus will stop to pick them up. Week 18 reflects lack of a voice for the majority of
transit riders. These are all examples of barriers to public transit created by bureaucracy.

Summary

After careful study of the data collected for this research study four themes emerged:
Lack of Collaboration, Travel Training, Barriers of Transit, and Bureaucratic Barriers. These
themes created the best opportunity for organization of the findings. Each source of data
collected contributed to these 4 themes. The data collected included observations from field
notes, survey responses, and responses to a single open ended question. The field note
observations were over the course of 20 weeks, the survey responses came from 16
participants (8 employment consultants and 8 vocational rehabilitation counselors), and 8
participants responded to the single open ended question. All participant responses were
anonymous and all participants responded to the survey (16 of 16). However, only half
(8 of 16) of the participants responded to the single open ended question.

The four themes identified: Lack of Collaboration, Travel Training, Barriers of Transit, and Bureaucratic Barriers emerged after careful study of the data. Lack of Collaboration addresses the pattern of poor collaboration among all parties in the transition process. Travel Training looks at the ways learning how to utilize public transit influences competitive employment opportunities for transition students. Barriers of Transit identifies some of the barriers created by the daily operations of public transit for transition students looking for competitive employment. Lastly, Bureaucratic Barriers introduces some of the obstacles created by legislation, mandates, and mutually exclusive missions.
CHAPTER 5

Discussion

One of the research questions for this study asked how, is public transportation a barrier to competitive employment for transition students? Several conclusions can be drawn from the data results that may help answer this question according to the four themes that were identified in chapter 4 which are Collaboration, Travel training, Barriers of transit, and Bureaucratic barriers.

Lack of collaboration is one example of an issue that contributes to transportation barriers for students wanting to transition from school to the adult world. The data demonstrated that collaboration was seen as a positive but that it was not happening. Travel training or the process of learning how to ride public transit is another barrier to employment due to the complexities involved with the process of utilizing public transit. The data results from all three sources: survey, open ended question, and observations illustrate the fact that learning public transit or “travel training” at the very least is not a simple process. Barriers of public transit such as inconvenient schedules, lack of service on Sundays, and lack of service to certain areas in the city also contribute to the obstacles of public transportation experienced by transition students. Bureaucratic barriers created by mandates such as bus stop signs that are too small to read were also illustrated in Chapter 4.
Connections to Previous Literature

Lack of Collaboration

This research study highlights many of the things outlined in the literature review but contributes new knowledge to this topic as well. One of the common concerns revealed in the literature review was the lack of collaboration among all parties involved in the transition process (Cook et al., 2008). This study also found this evidenced from the responses of questions 1 and 2 of the survey and weeks 3 and 13 of the field notes. Observations from week 3 included riders discussing overlapping provisions of bus passes by various agencies which is poor collaboration of services. However, week 13 demonstrated effective collaboration when a lost rider was located through the cooperation of riders, families, and the public transit working together by means of a walkie talkie and a telephone. The study completed by Alfred (2011) also suggested effective or best practices are not available in the field of employment services for transition students. The data from this study supports the concept of collaboration as a powerful tool or best practice in helping transition students reach their goals of competitive employment as well as the fact that it does not seem to be happening often enough. One of the ways this was demonstrated in the research data was in the open ended question noting ways to improve transitions services for students through better communication. Participant 4 responded, “Students should be given information about public transit options during IEP and IPE meetings so they can make informed decisions.”

Questions 11 and 18 from the survey responses of this study also demonstrate similar information regarding lack of collaboration as evidenced in the literature review (Cook et al.,
2008). The responses to number 11 shows that 94% of participants did not feel the coordination from school to work was adequate for transition students. This speaks to the poor collaboration among all stakeholders when preparing these students for this transitional phase of their lives. Additionally, the responses to number 18 also demonstrates poor collaboration among special education teachers, agency providers, and vocational rehabilitation counselors to name a few. Almost 70% of participants felt transition students who wanted to look for competitive employment work did not know they (students) may be eligible for a reduced fare pass. If the professionals working with transition students know about reduced fare opportunities, so should the students needing transportation to and from a job in order to reach their transition goals. This is collaboration or the lack thereof.

Participant 2 noted, "fear of the unknown is an issue but that training a few times helps a lot." and question 10 responses from this research indicated that most participants believe that public transit is a viable option for most transition students if they are willing to do it. This is a good example of the need to work together if the opportunity for transportation is available then transition professionals need to work together to make it happen and eliminate some of the fear that gets in the way of transition students even trying to ride the bus.

Travel Training

The importance of improved teacher training for transition students was noted in this literature review by Lubbers (2008). The study by Smith (2011) goes on to say that professionals, not just special education teachers feel unsupported, isolated, and that innovation and best practices in this field of study are not available to them. The response from
Participant 5 suggested, "Non profits could take students to the nearest bus stop in am or pm."

This suggestion by participant 5 from this research study also supports the need for improved training for all parties involved in the transition process because a non profit taking a student to the bus stop is not an effective or sustainable solution to long term employment. Several other examples of this are also demonstrated through the participant responses to the surveys questions which asked about adequate training, improved training, and comprehension of training procedures in general in questions 17, 8, and 9 respectively. This research revealed that most participants in this study did not believe most transition students know where the public transit office is located in question number 17. Participant responses to number 8 were closely split with half agreeing public transit is easy to learn for non-disabled persons and half believing it is not easy for non-disabled persons to learn how to utilize public transit. Over half of the participant, 9 of 16, were unsure if there were or were not few exceptions to the rules and steps of learning how to ride the city bus. All of these examples support the need for improved training and best practices for transition services.

The participant responses to survey question number 1 in this study demonstrate the need for improved training and best practices for professionals working with transition student as noted in the literature review (Smith, 2011). Most of the participants, 88%, did know that it is possible to sometimes coordinate public transit for any shift. This is important training for transition students to know as well as the professionals who are working with them. Question number 4 of this studies survey asked if internet tutorials were a good way to learn how to use Public transit. More than half, 11 out of 16, participants responded that they simply didn’t
know or they were “unsure”. This speaks directly to the need for better travel training. In other words, if the professionals working with transition students are unsure if something does or doesn’t work well for training purposes then there is likely room for some improvement in this area.

Observations from this research during the weeks of 1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 10, and 16 also support the need and importance of travel training as noted by Migliore (2010) in the literature review. Week 1 observations revealed pleasant transit staff but very confusing directions given to this researcher, week 2 bus driver advised rider he would just tell him when to get off the bus after trying to explain several times how he would know when to get off, and week 5 researcher was advised by other riders not to try using the route maps but to just call Citilink. These are all good examples of the importance of good travel training procedures due to the difficulties of learning the bus. Weeks 7, 8, 10, and 16 are also good examples of this from this study. Week 7 a rider advised this researcher that bus 2a and 2 were marked incorrectly, week 8 observations revealed complexities of flex routes in that rider needs to know what direction the bus is coming from, week 10 a rider shared with all riders that he rides free if he does not use his para transit, and week 16 IPFW student on his cell phone communicated he thought the bus would be a good option when his car broke down but that he was wrong. The observation weeks 1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 10, and 16 above also reinforce that bus skills training is a factor that contributes to a positive work experience (Brewer et al., 2011) as evidenced by the need and difficulties of learning how to use public transit.
Barriers of Transit

The data from this research study found examples of barriers created by public transit rules and procedures that negatively affected transition students wanting to learn how to utilize public transit to get to and from competitive employment. A few of these examples are lack of transit service on weekends, lack of transit service in the evenings, and limited route availability. These barriers were demonstrated in the data from the responses of participant 3 and participant 6 in the survey questions. Participant 6 noted limited transit services like weekends and evenings. Participant 3 noted issues with limited routes, limited schedules, and overall limited flexibility when using public transit and trying to find employment. Limited transportation options (Hernanadez et al., 2007) resulting in limited employment options (Bourland, 1996) were also noted in the literature review of this research study. Participant responses to question 16 support the concern about limited transportation options which asked about inconvenient transit schedules for job seekers. None of the participants disagreed that inconvenient time schedules for public transit caused frustrations for job seekers.

Participant responses to question 6 revealed that participants were not sure if employers think bus riders are unreliable. Over half of the participants responded they were unsure, 9 of 16, to question 6. However, in question 5 participants responded overwhelmingly that one of the most important things to an employer is that an employee has transportation to and from work, 15 of 16 participants agreed that this is one of the most important things to an employer. Hernandez (2007) suggests that not showing up when scheduled to work may be related to
barriers of transit due to inconsistent bus schedules.

Observations made during this study for week 12 supports barriers of transit identified as the lack of ability to understand money (Garcia-Iriarte et al., 2007). This researcher observed cash being used less often than bus passes and cash being more difficult for riders to use during observation week 12. Observation week 14 riders waved for driver to stop and driver did not stop. Week 15 transit staff were asked about the driver not stopping for riders and the response was that if the driver does see the riders the driver does not see the riders. Gagliardi (2010) suggests that stress from coordinating travel sometimes unintentionally compromises an ideal working environment. Observation weeks 14 and 15 are clearly potential examples of such stress as suggested by Gagliardi (2010). Observation week 17 riders complained of inconsistent bus times, not the schedule of times but the times according to the schedules versus when the bus actually arrives to pick the riders up. Similar to this during observation week 19 riders also complained of being tired and just wanting to go home and wondering how much longer they were going to have to ride the bus. Both of these observation weeks, 17 and 19, also support the idea of stress negatively affecting competitive employment for transition students.

Bureaucratic Barriers

This research study found problems with mandates and laws creating mutually exclusive agendas among “partners” providing services for individuals using vocational rehabilitation to help them find employment. One example of data from this study regarding mutually exclusive missions among “partners” was illustrated in survey question number 7 which asked if students Transitioning from school to work had been trained on the skills needed to make this transition.
Most of the participants, 88%, felt this training had not been accomplished. Although, this is not to blame one group versus another, it does demonstrate that “partners” in transition services may have very different priorities depending on what is expected of them by their superiors. Mutually exclusive missions among agencies resulting in a lack of collaboration or poor coordination of services was noted in the literature review as well (Dutta, 2009). Another example from this study that demonstrates this issue with mutually exclusive missions is the percentage of participants, 94%, that felt transition students were not leaving high school with adequate transition skills. This was question number 11 on the survey. Although it may be true that transition students are not getting the transition services or skills they need to become competitively employed, it does not seem clear that one group of professionals is to blame as question number 11 seems to imply. Rather it seems this just makes another good argument for better collaboration among professionals as well as the need for improved transparency about bureaucratic barriers that encourages the blame game but accomplishes nothing.

Participant 1 noted, “Transportation is a key factor in finding employment and it’s hard.” One of the reasons why this participant suggested that transportation is key to finding employment and is hard may relate to what O’Brien and Callahan (2010) suggested about conserving resources by not including bus training in an individual's plan to seek employment. The cost of travel training has been identified as significant by Bourland (1996).

According to Hughes and Avoke (2010) poverty, disability, and employment deserves consideration. During week 18 of observations for this study few professionals riding public transit were noted. Dress, disposition, laptop, briefcase, etc. were used as measures of
professional status. Observations made week 9 of this study included the new transit station and the appreciation of finally having restrooms by numerous riders were noted. Week 11 this researcher noted bus stops signs being too small to see and the cause, a city ordinance, being explained by one rider to another. All three of these observation weeks (18, 9, and 11) support the suggestion made by Hughes and Avoke (2010) that poverty, employment, and disability deserve attention.

In other words, this study demonstrated that individual’s potentially able to influence positive change for public transit were observed to be a minority of the public transit ridership and that basic needs such as restrooms and signs large enough to see did not seem to be a priority. Thus creating bureaucratic barriers for individuals needing and wanting to utilize public transit to find competitive employment.

Implications for Practice

The second research question for this study asked what can be done to minimize these obstacles for students transitioning from school to work? The same four themes identified in the data results section help to answer the second research question of this study as well as providing implications for practice.

One of the most important implications for practice involved improving collaboration among all stakeholders in the transition process. It seems the obstacles to competitive employment and public transit could be minimized with improved commitment to collaboration. In other words, if special education teachers, vocational rehabilitation counselors, agency providers,
students, parents, and advocates were all involved in the process, barriers such as fear to even try public transit could be minimized.

Improved travel training is another implication for practice. The data results demonstrated some of the complexities of learning public transit such as flex routes, inconsistent bus stop times, and bus name changes depending on the direction of a given bus. A concerted effort to improve how transition students are being taught how to use the city bus could minimize some of the struggles these students face when first learning how to use this service to get to and from work.

Barriers of transit such as public bus drivers driving past riders waiting for the bus or no service on Sundays are issues that could minimize barriers to competitive employment if the practice of advocating for these things became a priority among employment services professionals, counselors, and special education teachers. Another implication for practice involves the fourth theme bureaucratic barriers. Simply understanding how some barriers are created due to legislation or mandates would help to minimize some of the barriers created by these things. For example, the bus signs that are too small to see for many riders creates a barrier to public transit. However, according to the observations during this study this is something that the city bus company does not have any control over. Therefore, an implication for practice could be to study where some barriers are coming from so it is possible to address the barriers appropriately.
Summary

The literature review and the data obtained from this research study indicate a need for future studies that focus on new, creative, and effective practices for all employment professionals. This should include special education teachers, vocational rehabilitation counselors, social workers, and all other stakeholders interested in helping transition students reach their employment goals through the transition process. The four themes identified in the data section of this research study; Collaboration, Travel training, Barriers of transit, and Bureaucratic barriers should be a focus for future research studies.

The goal of this study was to add valuable research relating to the two research questions of this study: How is public transportation a barrier to competitive employment for transition students and what can be done to minimize these obstacles for students transitioning from school to work? The lack of empirical research regarding public transportation and the challenges involved for individuals with disabilities as suggested by (Moore, 2009) support the research that was done in this study by the methods of data collection through observations and field notes that were used. The observations and field notes coupled with the survey questions from this research added important information to the body of knowledge regarding barriers to employment such bureaucratic and transit barriers as well as ways to minimize these obstacles such as improved collaboration and travel training procedures. All four of these themes: Lack of Collaboration, Travel training, Transit Barriers, and Bureaucratic Barriers should be the focus of future studies in order to better serve transition students wanting to enter into the adult world of competitive employment.
CHAPTER 6

Conclusion

The results from this research study highlights the need for collaboration among special education teachers, vocational rehabilitation counselors, employment consultants, parents, students, and all other stakeholders. Travel training is also a skill that needs to be prioritized for students wanting to look for work when leaving high school to begin their adult lives. Issues with local public transit companies should also be included in travel training programs so students are aware of their local policies and procedures. Honesty regarding bureaucratic barriers and barriers associated with the operations of public transit are important to reducing the obstacles associated with transportation barriers for transition students. In other words, if we don’t understand how or why something is a barrier then we will never be able to address it. Therefore, being honest about mandates that create mutually exclusive missions among agencies should be studied rather than ignored.

Limitations

Limitations are always a part of a research study. This study included 16 participants. This is a small number of participants and is a limitation. A larger number of participants would be better and one way this could be achieved in the future would be to include special education teachers in the study. This could add another perspective to this topic as well as increase the number of individuals participating in the study. Another limitation of this study involved limited perspectives. In other words, the participants for this study were all from two agencies
in the same town. Additionally, the researcher knew most of the individuals who participated in this study. The participants were Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors and Employment Consultants working in the same town. The participants may have biased answers as they responded to the survey because of the acquaintance of the researcher.

Another limitation of this study involved the lack of interviews with bus riders. Although observations were done in the field involving public transit, interviews were not done with bus riders or bus drivers. All of these limitations could be addressed by including interviews with public transit staff and riders as well as including special education teachers as participants in the data collection process.

Future Research

Although this research study attempts to address the barriers to competitive employment for transition students wanting to work after high school and what may be done to lessen these obstacles, more research needs to be done. For example, surveying more people would be a good start thus allowing a wider range of perspectives to be studied.

A few suggestions for future research would be to investigate better travel training programs with identified strategies for success when learning how to navigate public transit with barriers of the transit system also investigated so transition students know up front what some of the challenges are with public transit for everyone not just transition students. Again, additional interviews with special education teachers, bus riders, or bus drivers may help identify some of these types of strategies. Studying strategies to encourage collaboration among special education teachers, vocational rehabilitation counselors, employment
consultants, parents, and students is also important for future research. It seems clear from the literature review and this research study that collaboration is important to this issue. However, future research that studies how to make collaboration happen would be an invaluable addition to the knowledge base of special education.

The genuine reason for the lack of collaboration also deserves the attention of future researchers in order to better understand why collaboration is not happening. In other words, strategies to make collaboration happen are critical but why collaboration is not happening may also be just as critical. This will require an honest look at the ways mandates, funding sources, and all other bureaucratic barriers influence the poor coordination of services among public transit companies, public school systems, Vocational Rehabilitation, social service agencies, and all other stakeholders. This would be valuable research for the future. It may seem scary or even impossible to consider discussing how or why money, rules, and/or laws may be influencing public transit, transition students, competitive employment, and the skills these students need for their future. However, these students deserve the results this kind of honesty could potentially provide.

Summary

Public Transportation, Transition Students, and Competitive Employment: Are We There Yet? This is the title of this research study. The answer to this question is no. We need to continue studying and researching the issues surrounding public transit and how this influences transition students and their goals of competitive employment after they have finished
high school and are transitioning into a new chapter of their life, adulthood. If we want to help transition students realize their goals of competitive employment through the use of public transit we need to make sure we continue to study this important topic in order to better understand where we are now and where we need to go in the future.
Public Transit and Transition Students  57

References


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Demandside model of high school transition. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*,
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Appendix A – Letter to Participants

Dear Colleagues

Please take a moment to participate in my short survey, “Public Transportation, Transition Students, and Competitive Employment.” I am asking for your help completing this survey because I am finishing my MS at IPFW and your opinions will be a valuable part of my thesis research.

Your participation in this survey is voluntary. You may skip any questions that make you feel uncomfortable.

All responses are confidential. Please do not include your name with the survey answers. Thank you for your assistance in participating in my research study.

If you have any questions regarding this survey, feel free to contact me, Joy Mettler, the co-investigator; or Jane Leatherman the principle investigator:

Jane M. Leatherman, PhD
Associate Professor Director of Special Education Programs
Indiana University Purdue University Fort Wayne

Joy Mettler
Graduate Student, IPFW
Appendix B – IRB Approval

To: JANE LEATHERMAN
NF 250L
From: JEANNIE DICLEMENTI, Chair
Social Science IRB
Date: 10/05/2012
Committee Action: Exemption Granted
IRB Action Date: 10/04/2012
IRB Protocol #: 1210012757
Study Title: Public Transportation, Transition Students, and Competitive Employment: Are We There Yet?
The Institutional Review Board (IRB) has reviewed the above-referenced study application and has
determined that it
meets the criteria for exemption under 45 CFR 46.101(b)(2).
If you wish to make changes to this study, please refer to our guidance “Minor Changes Not Requiring
Review”
located on our website at http://www.irb.purdue.edu/policies.php. For changes requiring IRB review,
please submit an
Amendment to Approved Study form or Personnel Amendment to Study form, whichever is
applicable, located on
the forms page of our website www.irb.purdue.edu/forms.php. Please contact our office if you have any
questions.
Below is a list of best practices that we request you use when conducting your research. The list contains
both general
items as well as those specific to the different exemption categories.
General
• To recruit from Purdue University classrooms, the instructor and all others associated with conduct of the
course (e.g., teaching assistants) must not be present during announcement of the research opportunity or
any recruitment activity. This may be accomplished by announcing, in advance, that class will either start
later
than usual or end earlier than usual so this activity may occur. It should be emphasized that attendance at the
announcement and recruitment are voluntary and the student’s attendance and enrollment decision will not be
shared with those administering the course.
• If students earn extra credit towards their course grade through participation in a research project
conducted by
someone other than the course instructor(s), such as in the example above, the students participation
should only
be shared with the course instructor(s) at the end of the semester. Additionally, instructors who allow
extra credit to
Appendix B – continue IRB

be earned through participation in research must also provide an opportunity for students to earn comparable extra
credit through a non-research activity requiring an amount of time and effort comparable to the research
option.
• When conducting human subjects research at a non-Purdue college/university, investigators are urged to contact
that institution’s IRB to determine requirements for conducting research at that institution.
• When human subjects research will be conducted in schools or places of business, investigators must obtain
written permission from an appropriate authority within the organization. If the written permission was not
submitted with the study application at the time of IRB review (e.g., the school would not issue the letter without
proof of IRB approval, etc.), the investigator must submit the written permission

from an appropriate authority within the organization. If the written permission was not
submitted with the study application at the time of IRB review (e.g., the school would not issue the letter without
proof of IRB approval, etc.), the investigator must submit the written permission to the IRB prior to
engaging in the research activities (e.g., recruitment, study procedures, etc.). This is an institutional requirement.
Category 1
• When human subjects research will be conducted in schools or places of business, investigators must obtain
written permission from an appropriate authority within the organization. If the written permission was not
submitted with the study application at the time of IRB review (e.g., the school would not issue the letter without
proof of IRB approval, etc.), the investigator must submit the written permission to the IRB prior to
engaging in the research activities (e.g., recruitment, study procedures, etc.). This is an institutional requirement.
Categories 2 and 3
• Surveys and questionnaires should indicate
  o only participants 18 years of age and over are eligible to participate in the research; and
  o that participation is voluntary; and
  o that any questions may be skipped; and
  o include the investigator’s name and contact information.
• Investigators should explain to participants the amount of time required to participate. Additionally, they should
explain to participants how confidentiality will be maintained or if it will not be maintained.
• When conducting focus group research, investigators cannot guarantee that all participants in the focus group will
maintain the confidentiality of other group participants. The investigator should make participants aware of this
potential for breach of confidentiality.
• When human subjects research will be conducted in schools or places of business, investigators must obtain
written permission from an appropriate authority within the organization. If the written permission was not
submitted with the study application at the time of IRB review (e.g., the school would not issue the letter without
Appendix B – continue IRB

proof of IRB approval, etc.), the investigator must submit the written permission to the IRB prior to engaging in the research activities (e.g., recruitment, study procedures, etc.). This is an institutional requirement.

Category 6

- Surveys and data collection instruments should note that participation is voluntary.
- Surveys and data collection instruments should note that participants may skip any questions.
- When taste testing foods which are highly allergenic (e.g., peanuts, milk, etc.) investigators should disclose the possibility of a reaction to potential subjects.
Information withheld for privacy.
Appendix D Permission Letter

Information withheld for privacy.
Appendix E – Survey Questions

Public Transportation, Transition Students, and Competitive Employment Survey Questions

Please circle your answer to each question on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1=strongly disagree and 5=strongly agree.

EMPLOYMENT

1. It is sometimes possible to coordinate the Citilink bus transit for any shift a worker may be scheduled.
   5 4 3 2 1

2. Learning how to use the bus when seeking competitive employment is a good way for transition students to become more comfortable with the bus once they do become employed.
   5 4 3 2 1

3. Transportation is one of the most significant barriers to competitive employment for students in special education transitioning from school to work.
   5 4 3 2 1

4. Internet tutorials are a great way for individuals with a disability to learn how to utilize public transportation when looking for work or getting to work.
   5 4 3 2 1

5. One of the most important things to an employer is that a potential employee has transportation to and from work.
   5 4 3 2 1
Appendix E – continue Survey

6. In your experience, employers think that individuals who ride the bus will not be reliable.

   5  4  3  2  1

   TRAINING

7. Most individuals with a disability transitioning from high school to work have been taught how to navigate the public transit, Citilink.

   5  4  3  2  1

8. Public transportation bus training for non disabled persons is easy to learn.

   5  4  3  2  1

9. There are few exceptions to the rules and steps when learning how to ride the city bus.

   5  4  3  2  1

10. Public transit is a viable option for a majority of transition students within the city if they are willing to learn the skills in order to ride the bus.

    5  4  3  2  1

11. The current process for ensuring that students in special education identified as wanting to transition from school to work have the public transportation skills they are going to need is not adequate.

    5  4  3  2  1
12. Transition students who are comfortable using public transit are usually the smartest students in special education.

5 4 3 2 1

13. Fear is a significant reason why many individuals with a disability and their family members are afraid to use the bus.

5 4 3 2 1

14. The way society views public transportation is one of the reasons why transition students looking for competitive employment do not want to utilize public transit.

5 4 3 2 1

15. In your experience, students in special education transitioning from school to work who master navigating the public transit system gain more than just a way to and from work.

5 4 3 2 1

16. Inconvenient time schedules for the public transit often cause frustrations for job seekers.

5 4 3 2 1
Appendix E – continue Survey

BUS KNOWLEDGE

17. Individuals with a disability that have transportation issues usually know where the public transit office is located.

5 4 3 2 1

18. Most transition students looking for competitive work who have transportation barriers know that they may be eligible for a reduced fare pass.

5 4 3 2 1

19. Cost of public transit is a huge barrier for individuals with a disability seeking employment.

5 43 2 1

20. Public transportation is underutilized by transition students.

5 4 3 2 1
Appendix E – continue Survey

Final Question

Please respond to this question from your experience working with transition students who are just beginning their job search in the “real world”. Describe the transportation barriers often encountered by these young people utilizing public transit and any suggestions on how these barriers could be minimized in the future.
Appendix F - Resume

Information withheld for privacy.
Information withheld for privacy.