

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that the transition section of an Individualized Education Program (IEP) contain measurable postsecondary goals that are based on transition assessment in the areas of

1. education,
2. employment, and
3. independent living.

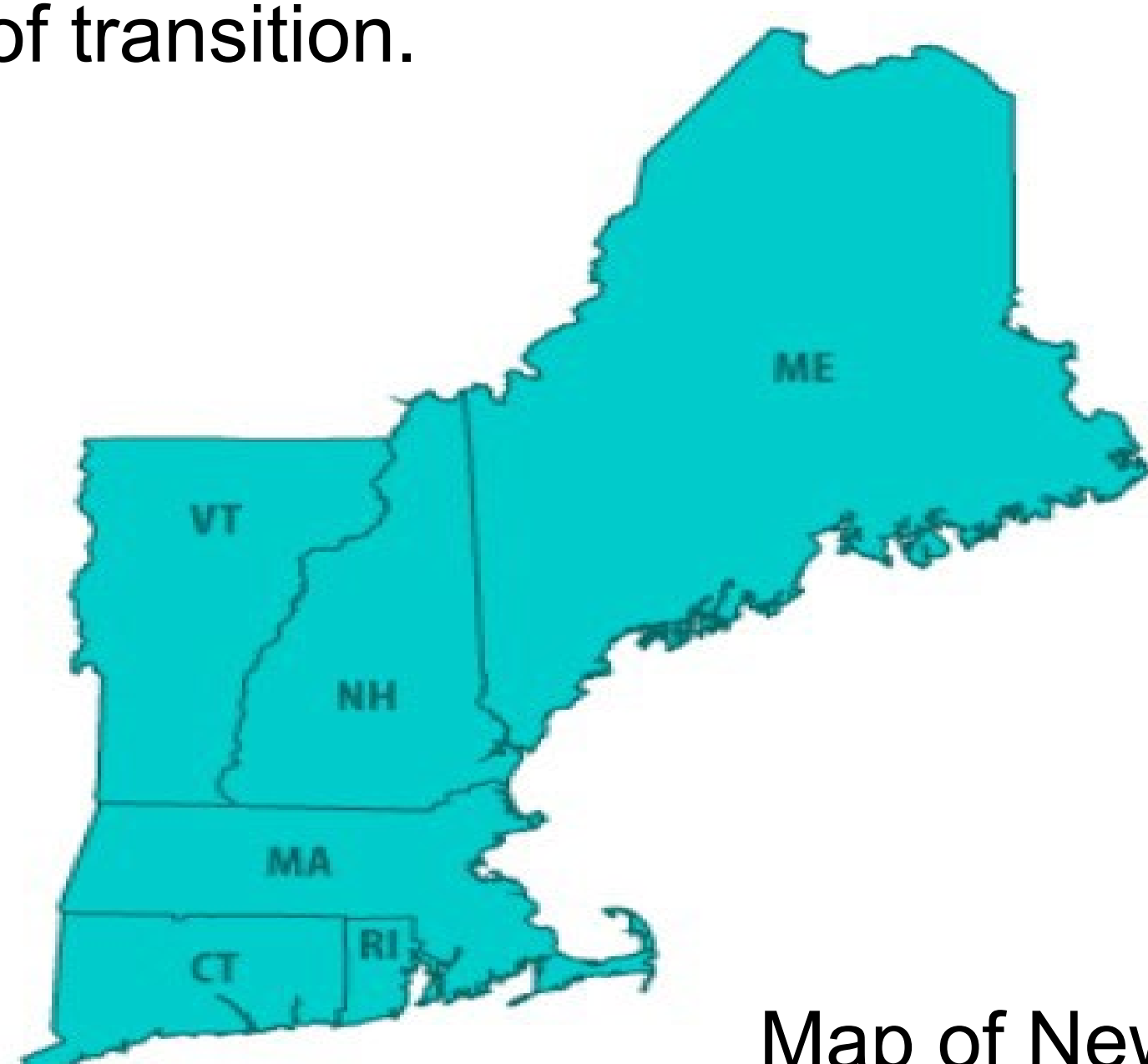
- The State Education Agency is responsible for setting transition program standards as well as assisting in the development of these transition programs for students with disabilities.
- Transition planning has been linked to improved self-determination, employment rates, greater happiness, and improved participation in the community
- Parent's ability to be involved in transition planning can be affected by the means to which they can access information about post-secondary options for their children as in education or careers.
- The purpose of this study is to look in-depth at the New England states (Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut) board of education websites to analyze their transition information.

Methods

The checklist questions included:

1. information regarding transition resources for parents,
2. if the documents are accessible, and
3. the ease navigation of the website for parents in general.

Subjective impressions of each website were also documented based on this researcher's background and knowledge of transition.



Map of New England States

Results

- About 50% of the state board of education websites had specific resources for parents to access as defined by a specific section present for parents.
- 5 of the websites were found to be accessible in terms of readability, ease of download, and compatibility with text-to-speech devices.
- 2 of the websites included documentation that was available in multiple languages.
- 2 of the websites included direct contact information for staff who worked with transition age youth at the state level.

Table 1. Checklist Findings

Checklist Item	Yes (n)	No (n)
Are there transition specific resources for parents?		
Rights and responsibilities documentation	5	1
Outline of post-secondary options	3	3
Career		
Interest surveys	2	4
Vocational rehabilitation	3	3
Post-secondary education		
Scholarships/financial aid	3	3
SAT/ACT information	1	5
Independent living	2	4
Online training modules for parents	2	4
Transition assessments	4	2

Table 2. More Checklist Findings

Checklist Item	Yes (n)	No (n)
Is there a section on secondary transition?	5	1
Is there an explanation of the transition planning process?	3	3
Is there a subsection specifically for parents regarding the transition planning process?	3	3

Discussion

- Based on the results there is a lack of post-secondary transition service information outlined on state education agency websites.
- Results suggest that improvements to accessibility of information for parents on transition planning is needed.
- Due to the small sample size of this study, more research is required in order to examine state board of education websites on a much larger scale.

Conclusions and Next Steps

- Due to the small sample size of this study, more research is required in order to examine state board of education websites on a much larger scale.
- This current study suggests that there must be an increase in ease of access to information regarding transition planning, as well as post-secondary options, for parents, students, and educators.

References

Hatfield, M., Ciccarelli, M., Falkmer, T., Falkmer, M. (2018). Factors related to successful transition planning for adolescents on the autism spectrum. *Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs*, 18(1), 3-14. doi:10.1111/1471-3802.12388

Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004, 20 U.S.C. §§ 1400 *et seq.* (2004).

Acknowledgements

The development of this paper was supported, in part, by funding from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration (Award #T73MC30115) and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Community Living, Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AIDD) (Award #90DDUC0071) awarded to the University of Connecticut Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research, and Service. The opinions expressed, however, are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official position of the Departments.