

Transition Institute Supports Youth with Disabilities | CPD

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Kim Mendenhall (left) and Emily Wilson

The third annual Utah Transition Institute was held at Davis Conference Center in Layton in February with more than 150 attendees from 40 local education agencies (LEAs). The Institute was planned by Kim Mendenhall and Emily Wilson, instructional coaches/implementation specialists for the Utah Professional Development Network. UPDN is a program of the Center for Technical Assistance for Excellence in Special education at Utah State University's Center for Persons with Disabilities.

Participants from LEAs gathered to focus on outcomes from Utah's current State Strategic Transition Plan for youth with disabilities ages 16-24. The outcomes include: 1) Supporting youth in their postsecondary goals, particularly linguistically and culturally diverse youth, 2) Ensuring consistent transition team procedures across the state, and 3) Ensuring all team members have knowledge of their roles and responsibilities and can effectively execute them into student transition planning.

"It truly was exciting to see the fire ignite within these LEA teams," Wilson said. "The major intent of the institute was to affect student outcomes in the area of transition from secondary to post-secondary experiences--I think this event allowed the participating LEA transition teams to plan for that end.

Topics discussed during the three-day event included an overview of what is happening with transition nationally, transition and adult services, implementation science and transition planning, IEP development and compliance, and

a college readiness panel. Sarah Bodily, director of Aggies Elevated at USU, participated in the college readiness panel.

"Working with stakeholders nationally and locally for the purpose of improving outcomes for students with disabilities towards college/career readiness and independent living was an amazing experience," Mendenhall said. She and Wilson shared anonymous comments from participants.

"I feel much more focused and less overwhelmed with the whole transition process. I am really excited at what can be accomplished!"

"Getting materials and resources to help us in our quest to improve transition at our school."

"The dedicated time to reflect on my data and work on an aspect of it to create a plan."