Kent TAN Minutes – December 18, 2018

Paul started out the meeting by reviewing the agenda and the goal of KENT TAN. We had approximately 52 in attendance.

**Agency Showcase**

Gracious Grounds – A faith-based community offering housing to people with unique abilities. They currently have two locations with differing levels of responsibility. Residents are responsible for cooking their own meals. Residents are expected to keep their rooms’ clean, help with home cleaning through paid house chores and be responsible for their own medication and personal hygiene. Each location has a resident assistant. Gracious Grounds was contacted by the Lakeshore Gardens apartment owner and will have 24 units made available to them in one and two bedroom apartments. They also have 8.2 acres in Ferrysburg, MI that is in the dreaming stage.

# Adult Living Focus:

On an IEP there must be a measurable postsecondary goal: After you graduate high school, where do you want to live? When and will statements are mandated. This question needs to address skills to make this goals happen, i.e. managing finances. Consider barriers around the skill and the students’ awareness of these barriers. ISD provides ESTR for local districts. Other assessments include Life Skills Inventory and Ansell Casey Life Skills Assessment.

**Table Discussion** - Barriers for student and barriers in Kent County:

* Dignity of risk – support the student so the risk does not impede them
* Housing options/finances
* Fear of the unknown
* Transportation
* Accessibility of rental property and cost
* Financial skill
* Realistic opportunities
* Parent vs student vs teacher vision
* Language
* Graduated levels of independent living needed
* Unfamiliarity with informed decision making
* Limited confidence with independence
* Parent not being involved
* Encouragement of dependence to continue to receive SSI benefits by caretaker
* Public transportation
* Lack of resources in northern counties
* Navigating various systems
* Fixed income
* Understanding the difference between paid and volunteer positions
* Self-management of medication
* Lack of proper supervision/staffing
* The variety of disabilities impacting individual independence
* Appropriate time to hold transitions conversations

Successful practices:

* Integration of seamless transition into the county – additional services available, more collaboration
* Case manager helped organize participation in GRCC program
* MCTI: allows students to experience independence/natural environment
* RITS: 3 students in supported independence/connect with agencies/navigating the system
* Colleges offering supported living options for students
* Marshall Plan: KCTC, ISD vocational options
* Gracious Grounds: role model in the county using a tiered system
* Seamless transition into housing goal
* Travel training in Kent County
* Benefit counselors for home assessments
* Touring group homes to remove stigma
* Library membership to access activities
* Sheldon House model – build daily living skills, confidence
* Training center – apartment experience for 2 weeks (Kalamazoo)
* Successful placement through independence supports coordinator. Parent bought house, 2-3 ASD students live with support/CLS worker.
* MCTI placement/project search provide independence
* House mate list through Network 180
* Self-directed services
* OASIS parent group

Innovative Ideas:

* Intermediary program for students not ready to leave school. Students with EI would benefit.
* Assistive technology – med dispensers, security systems, cell phone notification
* More renting for AFC providers
* Off-site staff person covers a radius
* Integrated housing in community
* Transitional living center on college campus, staffed by students in special education/medical programs
* Tool similar to Zillow for transition options
* Goal: success equals realistic transition
* Restructure of education system – focus on health education, insurance, taxes
* Parent toured housing options
* Count-wide affordable transportation
* Graduated supported living in communities where they can stay
* Education students live in homes as mentors and earn loan forgiveness
* Students meet with managers of subsidized housing
* Students meet AFC home directors
* Teach students to protect their credit

# School Staff

MDE

* Informal transition assessment does not require consent
* Formal transition requires consent
* Parent, teacher, IEP team member requests information, a formal assessment is required
* ESTR contains all 4 criteria and does not require consent. MDE considers it an informal assessment
* Kent ISD is waiting for MDE to determine if consent will be a stand-alone document or continue to be part of the REED.

# 2019 Events

“Transition Endgame”, a transition conference for high school and post-secondary students, will be held March 18, 2019 at Kent ISD. The students are assigned a family and must navigate how to support them in “Life Unplugged”. Students must be able to use a calculator for basic math or the school must provide enough staff to support the attending students. Break-out sessions will include collaborating in the workplace, preparing for hot jobs and social media and digital footprints.