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Running Project Part One-Assessment Plan

**Current disability and educational status:** Jackson is a 9th-grade student enrolled in a large high school campus. He has been working from home since March, but attends daily Zoom sessions and actively participates in class most days. He currently receives service for a primary disability of intellectual impairment and a secondary diagnosis of speech and language. Jackson was diagnosed with down syndrome at 3 days old. Cognitive testing indicates moderately delayed comprehension and spatial skills. Socialization is an area of strength for Jackson. He has friends on campus and enjoys being silly and recreational activities. Jackson is very athletic. He can participate in games and a general education PE class without modification, except for long-distance running. Jordan excels in basketball and has many friends on the team.

Academic performance: Jackson has been receiving speech therapy for expressive language and pragmatics. He works very hard in speech and generally meets his goals in this area. He has made progress during middle school in making friends and appropriately introducing himself. He benefited from introduction strategies from previous school staff and SLP. He no longer needs assistance in meeting new peers and introducing himself. When asked Jackson states, he does not need any assistance with making friends or conversing, but has expressed he needs help “to remember new words”. Jackson currently receives support to finish multi-syllabus words and decrease his rate of speech. Jackson can use a calculator and manipulatives when counting and completing tasks. He can rote count to 12. Mental math remains difficult during math lessons. He can recognize more or less up to 10. Jackson can write his first name from memory. He can dictate and use a model for last name and comprehension answers on work samples. Jordan benefits from peers who demonstrate appropriate behavior in general education classes.

**Transition needs:** Jackson enjoys and excels in life-skills activities. He enjoys being independent and discussing adult living situations and plans with picture and verbal support for work recall. He expresses he would like to live at home as an adult and get a job. He enjoys leading activities with familiar peers. Jackson enjoys keeping himself and his items tidy. He can go to the bathroom and take care of his personal needs with minimal supervision. Jackson can ride on a bus without behavior support. He needs some redirection to look at street safety signs and pay attention to environmental cues in the community. Transition assessments both formal and informal will be utilized with school service providers, classroom staff, and family through the use of interviews. Speech is an area of concern for Jackson’s family. They have requested a full assessment due to skill regression, school closure, and distance learning since March of last year.

**Development of an Assessment plan:** Jackson is currently due for a triennial evaluation. He is also turning 15 this month and will need transition services implemented before his next birthday and subsequent IEP. The family has requested a full cognitive assessment in addition to on-going transition-based assessments. The formal assessments will be done in person with service providers over a multi-day period. The testing procedures will be provided to best serve Jackson’s introduction to transition services while fulfilling the cognitive portion of his assessment (requested) plan. The cognitive testing, done by the school psychologist, will not be modified as standardized measures for cognitive ability. The psychologist is planning to use rating scales Vineland-BASC-3 social/emotional Woodcock-Johnson and Weschler-non-verbal scale. The school’s speech therapist has indicated they will use a variety of testing measures both modified with pictures and standardized (unmodified) testing procedures. At this time speech assessment is a critical area of need. OT and ATAC service providers will also use formal standardized testing without modifications. The assessment focus of speech acquisition will be utilized with DEMMS and a clinical evaluation of language fundamentals (5th edition). There is some concern among Jackson’s previous teacher and his family speech capability has regressed due to distance learning and limited socialization opportunities over the past year. Test results are expected to indicate the direction for speech goals and services. Results will be communicated with stakeholders at an upcoming annual IEP. Updates to the plan will be provided quarterly and as needed to ensure on-going data collections and relevancy.

Informal and curriculum-based assessments will be completed with the special education teacher, classroom paraeducators, and with the family during distance learning. Paraeducators will receive training for data retrieval as well as peer-tutors who assist in the classroom to ensure unbiased results in data collection. Several service providers will work together with the family to collect data within the timeline of the assessment plan. Informal assessments are beneficial for a student in Jackson’s program. “Hundreds of informal assessment devices or procedures are currently used with students who have disabilities (Clark p.37)”. Interviews with Jackson and his family will assist with approaching a transition plan to best benefit Jackson as he progresses in high school. Jackson learns best by having picture options provided when making choices. Informal assessments and measures of the curriculum will be modified with pictures and shortened text to increase understanding and retention of ideas. Jackson does better when topics are revisited over several days and within a routine. The family will also be consulted to best address cultural differences and plans such as independent living, money management, and residency planning throughout the transition period. While Jackson is part of the dominant community culture his parents are slightly older than those of his peers. This could influence placement in a group home or supported living placement sooner for Jackson than his age-based peers. Jackson will benefit from a wide range of both formal and informal assessments as he enters high school to evaluate possible skill loss and help plan for an active future in which he can self-advocate and find vocational success. The team and family are specifically looking for transition plans and regression of speech and social skills as affected by the current virtual learning schedule. Addressing specifically speech goals and objectives will allow Jackson to learn communication skills in a variety of settings and help ensure a smooth successful transition process.

**Reference**

Clark, G. M. (2007). Assessment for transitions planning. Austin, TX: PRO-ED. 37-63.

Informal Assessments for Transition Series Combo Kit. (n.d.). Retrieved February 02, 2021, from <https://www.linguisystems.com/Products/12477/informal-assessments-for-transition-series--combo-kit.aspx>