

PREPARING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES TO SELF-ADVOCATE FOR FAVORABLE
POST SCHOOL OUTCOMES: A QUALITATIVE CASE STUDY OF
TRANSITION SERVICES IN HIGH SCHOOLS

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to add to the body of knowledge about transition services for students with disabilities, specifically the instruction of self-advocacy skills to high school students with disabilities. This investigation was guided by the conceptual framework of social justice theory (Fondacaro & Weinberg, 2002; Odegard & Vereen, 2010; Rawls, 1991, 2001; Zajda, Majhanovich, & Rust, 2006). The study seeks to construct meaning using the social justice theory principles of distribution, recognition, and opportunities (Hyttén & Bettez, 2011) in relation to self-advocacy instruction for special education students in high school. The researcher explored the perceptions of special education staff and college students with disabilities about self-advocacy instruction provided in high schools.

This case study examined three public schools and one community college in one Midwestern state. It explored special education administrator and teacher responses regarding self-advocacy instruction in their high schools. Specifically, it explored college students with disabilities responses regarding the self-advocacy instruction they received while in high school. Data revealed perceptions about the level of self-advocacy instruction that students with disabilities receive while in high school. The implications for this research and practice include opportunities that high schools have to teach students with disabilities self-advocacy skills in order to better prepare them for post school success.