Post-Secondary Transition Planning and Services

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Equip for Equality
Equip for Equality

Mission to advance the human and civil rights of people with disabilities

- Private and independent not-for-profit
- Federally mandated and funded, every state has a Protection & Advocacy System
- Serves people with all disabilities of all ages across the state

- Special Education Helpline:
  - Any parent or service provider for a student with a disability can call with questions (866-543-7046) about special ed law
  - Completely free
  - Provide, at a minimum, self-advocacy assistance to caller
Throughout the Training

- **Questions**
  - Use the chat box or Raise Your Hand
  - If your question is personal and you do not want it read out loud, please indicate that in the chat.

- **Polls**
  - You have to click out of the poll after you answer to close the window.
What are Transition Services?

Transition services are a **coordinated set of activities** for a child with a disability that are designed to be within a results-oriented process focused on improving the *academic and functional achievement* of the child with a disability to facilitate the child's movement from school to post-school activities, including *post-secondary education*, *vocational education*, *integrated employment* (including supported employment), *continuing and adult education*, *adult services*, *independent living*, or *community participation*.

These services are based on the *individual* child’s needs, taking into account their *strengths*, *preferences*, and *interests*.

34 CFR § 300.43(a).
Who Gets Transition Services?

- All students with disabilities being served with an IEP
  - Students with a 504 plan are entitled to some transition planning services, but not to the extent being discussed today.
- In Illinois, age 14 ½ to their 22nd birthday or when they graduate high school*
- These services apply no matter the student’s placement or diploma track
Why Transition Services are important

- There are 94,795 transition-age students with disabilities in IL.
- Similar services can be much harder to access as an adult.
- Over 20,000 adults with disabilities waiting for services under IL Medicaid with the average wait time being 7 years.
The Transition Plan

- **Student driven** process, mapping out your child’s future with clear directions to help your child develop her potential and achieve her hopes and dreams.

- This plan should begin at **age 14 ½** and span throughout your child’s eligibility (until age 22 or graduation).

- Focus should be on your child’s **academic and functional** achievement needed for life after school.

- This plan includes services and supports needed to achieve the student’s goals.
What’s Your Experience?

Does your child currently have a transition plan?
A. Yes
B. No
C. My child is not 14 ½ yet
How is the Transition Plan Created?

- Beginning when your child is 14 ½
- Created by the IEP team, including
  - Your child; and
  - Representatives of any agencies that may be responsible for providing or paying for transition services (with parental consent)
- Outlines your child’s current levels, goals, and the services your child needs to reach those goals.
Transition Assessments

The transition plan must be “based upon age-appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment, and, where appropriate, independent living skills.”

34 CFR 300.320(b)

- Assessments provide information for IEP teams to use in developing and writing practical, achievable, and measurable post-school goals and to identify the transition services necessary to help your child reach those goals.

- These assessments should begin BEFORE your child turns 14 ½ and BEFORE goals or services are selected.
Transition Assessments

Transition assessments should provide answers to the following questions:

- **What** does your child want to do after secondary school (education or training, employment)?

- **Where** does your child want to live (apartment, family home, group home)?

- **How** does your child want to take part in the community (transportation, recreation, community activities, etc.)?
Types of Transition Assessments

- Behavioral assessments
- Aptitude tests
- Interest and work values inventories
- Personalities or preference tests
- Career maturity or readiness tests

- Self-determination assessments
- Work-related temperament scales
- Vocational assessment
- Transition planning inventories
What’s Your Experience?

How often has your child’s school completed transition assessments?

A. Never
B. Once, for the initial transition plan
C. A few times, not every year
D. Every year since my child became eligible
### Transition Assessments

**Assessments must, at minimum, address the areas of Employment, Education, Training, and, if applicable, Independent Living Skills.**

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<tr>
<th>TRANSITION ASSESSMENTS</th>
<th>Assessment Type</th>
<th>Responsible Agency/Person</th>
<th>Date Conducted</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>EMPLOYMENT</td>
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<td>EDUCATION</td>
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<td>TRAINING</td>
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<tr>
<td>INDEPENDENT LIVING SKILLS</td>
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Post-Secondary Outcomes and Goals

- Transition **goals** should be based on the age-appropriate transition assessments.

- Focused on **Employment**, **Education or Training**, and **Independent Living**.

- Goals must be individualized.
  - The IEP team must “consider” your child’s **strengths**, **preferences**, and **interests** when developing transition goals. *34 CFR § 300.43(a)(2)*
Post-Secondary Outcomes and Goals

- These goals must be **reviewed annually** and adjusted to meet your child’s needs.
- As IEP goals, transition goals **require criteria for completion and progress reports**.
- Goals should **become increasingly specific** as your child comes closer to the time she will be leaving school.
- Break down your child’s larger goal into realistic steps.
Good Examples:

- Laura will go to a four-year college and major in math.
- Starting in June 2014, Jane will ride the train by herself to her job at the bakery, where she will get employer-offered training, to improve her culinary skills.
- Joey will demonstrate the ability to communicate what he needs and/or wants.

Bad Examples:

- After graduation, Maria will explore her career options.
- Matthew wants to be an NFL player after high school.
Does your child have appropriate transition goals?
A. Yes
B. Some are appropriate, but not all
C. No
D. My child is not 14 ½ yet
The plan must include goals related to employment, independent living, post-secondary education AND/OR training.
Course of Study

- Description of the coursework necessary to prepare your child for post-secondary activities and goal achievement
- List every course the student is required to take in order to graduate
- Course of study is required even if on non-diploma track
- Should be individualized to meet your child’s needs, including if your child requires more than four years in high school
Because students are eligible for special education services until the age of 22, IEP teams need to consider what additional courses your child may need beyond the traditional 4 years of high school.
Transition Services

- Individualized education strategies to improve your child’s academic and functional achievement.
- These services should be developed based on your child’s goals and assessments
  - What does your child want to achieve?
  - What supports do they need to achieve this goal?
Transition Services

Must Include:

- Instruction
  - take an adult living course; take an ACT/SAT prep class; have transportation training; get tutoring in reading

- Community Experiences
  - buy groceries; volunteer at the animal shelter; look at apartments for rent; open a bank account

- Job and Other Adult Living Objectives
  - practice interviewing; apply for DRS; job shadowing; get a driver’s license; learn how to self-advocate
Transition Services

May Include:

- **Daily Living Skills**
  - learn to cook; practice organizational skills; learn to use an ATM card; hygiene skills

- **Functional Vocational Evaluation**
  - process that provides information about job or career interests, aptitudes, and skills.
  - Information is gathered through situational assessments in the setting where the job is performed
Transition Services

May Include:

- Linkages for After Graduation
  - Division of Rehabilitative Services
  - Division of Developmental Disabilities
  - Social Security Administration
  - Centers for Independent Living
IL Division of Rehabilitative Services (DRS)

- Services designed to assist individuals with disabilities in achieving full community participation through employment, education, and independent living opportunities.

- Provides transition assistance including job-training, assistance finding a job, college tuition assistance, vocational evaluations, and assistive technology.

- Offer programming designed for students
  - Fast Track (pre-DRS enrollment; must be DRS eligible)
  - STEP
IL Division of Rehabilitative Services (DRS)

- Ask your school case manager for a referral to DRS to access these services.
  - **Employment**: Vocational guidance and counseling, vocational assessment for possible career choices, job search and placement, assistance with assistive technology or accommodations to “bridge the gap,” job coaching, and job training.
  - **Education**: Assistance with tuition at community and four-year colleges or universities.
  - **Independent Living**: Support with transportation or housing for purposes of maintaining employment.
IL Division of Developmental Disabilities

- Provides services and supports to people with developmental disabilities based on the individual's needs, talents, strengths, and informed choices.
- Requires Pre-Admission Screening to register with the Waiting List/Prioritization of Urgency of Need for Services ("PUNS") database.
- Contact 1-888-337-5267 to find out who the PAS agent is for your region if you need:
  - Residential Living Arrangements: Services provided in homes that are staffed 24 hours per day.
  - In-Home Supports: Services and supports provided in the individual's own home to help her live more independently.
  - Day Services: Supported employment, skills training or job coaching.
Transition Services

For each service, the IEP must identify:

- The date your child will begin receiving the service.
- The frequency with which the service will be provided.
- The location at which your child will receive the service.
- How long the district will continue providing the service.

34 CFR 300.320 (a)(7)
Examples of Transition Services

- Instruction
  - high school courses
  - career program
  - post-high school curriculum

- Evidenced based reading methodologies

- Behavior programs

- Specialized consultants

- Related Services
  - Transportation, AT, Counseling, etc.

- Community experiences

- Development of employment (job shadow/placement)

- Post-school adult living objectives

- Acquiring daily living skills

- Evaluations (assistive technology, vocational, etc.)

- Special education and enhanced related services
Dual Enrollment

- High school students with disabilities who have an IEP and are receiving services under the IDEA can take courses offered by a community college or post-secondary educational institution while still receiving services from the district.
  - Must still meet requirements for enrollment at post-secondary institution

- Helpful option if your child is considering post-secondary education.
  - Can help your child determine what supports she needs to be successful in this environment and any additional skills she needs to work on before graduation

- This includes dual enrollment in Comprehensive Transition Programs
Transition Services and Remote Learning

Some remote learning options include:

- Work on Independent Living Skills in the home
  - Cooking, laundry, self-direction, etc.
- Virtual Informational Interviews and Interview Practice
- Job Shadowing
- Professional Communication Skills
  - Email, phone calls, zoom, etc.
- Virtual field trips to job sites
- Virtual career presentations
- Communication with mentors/job coaches in field of interest
- Online transition and vocational assessments
Has your child received transition services during remote learning?

A. Yes
B. No
C. I don’t know
Building the Plan

**EFE Transition Plan Module**

Walks parents and students through the transition process while creating a helpful document for transition planning at the child’s next IEP meeting.

In Illinois each student with an Individualized Education Program “IEP” must have a transition plan as part of her IEP, at least by the time she is 14.5 years old. Equip for Equality’s Transition Plan Training Module will help you get the transition planning process started.

**Introduction**

One of life’s most challenging transitions occurs when a student prepares to leave high school and transition to adult life. This is true for students with disabilities and their families and requires planning to prepare for the future. In Illinois each student with an Individualized Education Program “IEP” must have a transition plan as part of her IEP, at least by the time she is 14.5 years old.

This module will guide you through each part of the transition process. At the end, you will be able to download a helpful document to bring to your next IEP meeting. This document is a template to guide the IEP team while developing the transition plan.

As you work through the training module, please remember the student is the most important person in this process. Successful transition planning is a results-driven process, based upon the student’s skills, interests and abilities. You, the student, should answer the questions in this training module.

**References**

- U.S. Department of Education – 34 CFR 300.320(b)
- Illinois State Board of Education Secondary Transition

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- Illinois State Board of Education Secondary Transition
What if the transition plan is inappropriate or transition services are not being provided?

- The school is responsible for providing appropriate transition planning and services, regardless of:
  - Economic conditions in the community
  - Parental involvement
  - Student engagement
  - Failure of other agencies

- If these services are not being provided or are inappropriate, it may be considered a denial of free appropriate public education (FAPE).
Denial of FAPE

- Failure to provide timely and appropriate transition services may be a denial of FAPE. Some examples include:
  - Plan does not include measurable goals
  - Not based on comprehensive transition assessment
  - Pre-determination of a student’s transition services or placement
  - Excluding parents from development of transition plan
  - Generic plans and programs (if not meeting student needs)
  - Services outlined in the plan are not actually provided
## Dispute Resolution Options

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<th>Option</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Independent Education Evaluation (IEE)</strong></td>
<td>• Request an IEE to obtain reliable and accurate assessment data.</td>
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<td><strong>IEP meeting</strong></td>
<td>• Request an IEP meeting to discuss your concerns with the IEP team and revise the transition plan or IEP services.</td>
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<td><strong>Mediation</strong></td>
<td>• Request mediation to reach a binding, out of court resolution with the district.</td>
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<td><strong>Due Process Hearing</strong></td>
<td>• Request a due process hearing to bring the issue before an impartial hearing officer to decide.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Administrative State Complaint</strong></td>
<td>• File a state complaint with the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) to get the state to investigate the problem and issue findings.</td>
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Other Transition Issues:

- Age of Majority
- Graduation
- Summary of Performance
What happens when my child turns 18?

- 18 is the age of majority in Illinois.
  - School should provide notice of transfer of rights one year before your child turns 18
  - Your child now has right to make her own life decisions, including those related to her education.

- Your child can choose to delegate her educational decision-making rights
  - Only lasts one year and can be revoked at any time

- If your child decides to retain decision-making rights, you can still be involved in the process with her consent.
Graduation

- When your child graduates with a “regular high school diploma” their eligibility for special education ends.

- Graduation may be delayed if your child needs further educational programming, including transition services.
  - Parent/Child may request delay, but the school does not have to agree to delay graduation if your child has met graduation requirements.

- Graduation is a change in placement
  - Must be discussed in IEP meeting before your child is graduated
  - School must provide notice of intention to graduate your child (PWN).
Examples of *Improper* Graduation

- Your child did not receive appropriate services prior to graduation
- Parent/Child were not provided notice of graduation or given opportunity to meaningfully participate in discussion about change in placement
Summary of Performance

For a student who graduates with a regular high school diploma or ages out of special education eligibility, a public agency must provide the child with a summary of the child’s academic achievement and functional performance, which shall include recommendations on how to assist the child in meeting the child’s post high school goals.

§300.305(3)

- Document meant to assist in determining reasonable accommodations for your child in post-secondary setting
- Should be developed by IEP team, including your child, during their last year of eligibility
- Team should consider that this document may be used by your child as a self-advocacy tool with future employers, college disability services, tutors, DRS coordinators, and other service providers.
What is in the SOP?

Goals identified by the student, their parent(s), and the IEP team.
The student’s **current academic and functional abilities** and most recent assessments in the areas of:

**Academic Reading & Math**
- Basic skills, reading comprehension, decoding, math calculation skills, math problem solving

**Functional Performance**
- General ability & problem solving, attention/organization, social skills and behaviors, self advocacy

**Independent Living**
- Self-car, transportation, life skills, personal safety

**Communication Status (written and oral)**
- Speech/language, writing ability, expressive/receptive language

**Vocational & Career**
- Job training, career explorations
Recommendations for post-school accommodations and modifications for:

- Post-Secondary Education or Vocational Training
- Employment
- Independent Living
- Community Participation

And related Connections to adult service agencies
1. How does your disability affect you in the work environment? What strengths do you have in the work environment?

2. What strengths and needs should professionals know about you as you enter the postsecondary education or work environment?

3. How does your disability affect your schoolwork and school activities (e.g. grades, assignments)?

4. Complete the table below by identifying the accommodations and supports that have been tried by teachers or by you (e.g. pacing, extra time, visual supports, adaptive equipment) to help you succeed in school. Please indicate whether each one was effective or not effective:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accommodations/Supports</th>
<th>Effective</th>
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**Student’s Perspective**

- what accommodations and supports does she think she needs after graduation?
Identifying Transition Issues: Jonathan’s Story

Jonathan, a student with a learning disability, graduated high school in four years because he had the credits to graduate. But with only a 5th grade reading level, no work experience, and poorly developed social skills, Jonathan could not find a job. His transition plan had focused on researching college programs, but he didn’t want to go to college. He had never written a resume and did not know where to look for jobs. He didn’t think that he had any skills that an employer would like.
Transition Assessments

- Jonathan needs appropriate transition assessments to help him identify his strengths and weaknesses related to employment, job training, and independent living.

- These assessments should be revisited every year to make sure they are providing accurate, up to date information to inform the transition plan.

Jonathan, a student with a learning disability, graduated high school in four years because he had the credits to graduate. But with only a 5th grade reading level, no work experience, and poorly developed social skills, Jonathan could not find a job. His transition plan had focused on researching college programs, but he didn’t want to go to college. He had never written a resume and did not know where to look for jobs. He didn’t think that he had any skills that an employer would like.
Post-Secondary Outcomes and Goals

- Jonathan’s goals do not match his own interests and preferences.
  - Post-Secondary Outcomes should stem from the student’s own preferences and interests.
  - Goals should also consider student ability, looking at assessment data and present levels of performance.

Jonathan, a student with a learning disability, graduated high school in four years because he had the credits to graduate. But with only a 5th grade reading level, no work experience, and poorly developed social skills, Jonathan could not find a job. His transition plan had focused on researching college programs, but he didn’t want to go to college. He had never written a resume and did not know where to look for jobs. He didn’t think that he had any skills that an employer would like.
Course of Study

Jonathan graduated in four years, but without the skills he needed to be successful after high school.

Course of study should consider extending student’s time in high school beyond four years to accommodate additional coursework

For example, reading at a 5th grade level, Jonathan’s team should have considered additional reading courses and vocational course opportunities.

*Jonathan, a student with a learning disability, graduated high school in four years because he had the credits to graduate. But with only a 5th grade reading level, no work experience, and poorly developed social skills, Jonathan could not find a job. His transition plan had focused on researching college programs, but he didn’t want to go to college. He had never written a resume and did not know where to look for jobs. He didn’t think that he had any skills that an employer would like.*
Transition Services

- Jonathan did not have appropriate assessments or post-secondary goals to guide transition services.

- He wanted to be able to find a job, but left high school not knowing how to write a resume, where to look for jobs or what kinds of jobs he is qualified for.

Jonathan, a student with a learning disability, graduated high school in four years because he had the credits to graduate. **But with only a 5th grade reading level, no work experience, and poorly developed social skills, Jonathan could not find a job.** His transition plan had focused on researching college programs, but he didn’t want to go to college. **He had never written a resume and did not know where to look for jobs.** He didn’t think that he had any skills that an employer would like.
Remedies

- Possible rescission of diploma
- Reinstatement of eligibility
- Vocational Assessments
- Compensatory education to pay for vocational training and appropriate transition services

Jonathan, a student with a learning disability, graduated high school in four years because he had the credits to graduate. But with only a 5th grade reading level, no work experience, and poorly developed social skills, Jonathan could not find a job. His transition plan had focused on researching college programs, but he didn’t want to go to college. He had never written a resume and did not know where to look for jobs. He didn’t think that he had any skills that an employer would like.
Special Education Hotline

We help students with disabilities secure a free appropriate public education. Any parent with a special education concern or question can call our statewide helpline for assistance.

We provide:

➢ Self-Advocacy Assistance
➢ Sample Letters and Forms
➢ Trainings to Interested Groups
➢ Legal Advocacy, in Select Cases

866-KIDS-046

www.equipforequality.org

If you have any further questions about this presentation or need assistance with transition services, please contact Emily Wilson at (312) 895-7309 or emilyw@equipforequality.org.
Book an Intake Appointment

Select Emily Wilson from the drop-down menu and pick the date & time that work for you.