

The Transition Individualized Education Program (IEP)

Key Information for Students and Families

Start transition planning early.

- Transition planning can and should begin when the student is even younger than the mandated age of 14. Transition planning and preparation requires real world experiences, collaboration with key stakeholders, and connections to ongoing services and supports.

Maximize student involvement and self-advocacy.

- Students should be involved, as much as possible, in decision making throughout their lives, including learning self-advocacy/self-determination skills and directing their IEP planning and meetings.

Use Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) to gain skills and experiences for adult life.

- Students should be engaged in as many of the five required pre-ETS activities as possible and appropriate to their goals and needs to prepare for adult life: job exploration counseling, work-based learning experiences, counseling on postsecondary opportunities, workplace readiness training, and instruction in self-advocacy.

Use the transition IEP process to plan and prepare for adult life.

- Parents/caregivers and students are central to the transition IEP process and should ensure the student's goals, preferences, and needs are reflected in each component of the IEP plan.
 - **Transition assessments** should be practical, comprehensive, and positively reflect the student's strengths, talents, interests, and support needs in the areas of employment, education/training, and independent living.
 - **Present Levels of Functional Performance** should tell a thorough story of the student in positive and respectful language. There should be descriptions of annual data (progress monitoring) and evaluations of the student.
 - **Transition Services and Activities** should align with the student's postsecondary goals in employment, education and training, and independent living. The

student's services and activities should be individualized, exposing students to unique opportunities related to their area of interest.

- **Annual goals** should relate directly to the present levels of performance and identify the knowledge and skills that the student is expected to acquire.
- **Supported Decision-making**, an alternative to guardianship, allows a person with a disability to keep their rights and make their own decisions with the help of family and/or other trusted individuals. IEP teams must discuss supported decision-making as an option during meetings, particularly those related to transition planning.
- Parents and students should know who is present at their IEP meetings and the roles and responsibilities of those individuals.

Connect with needed adult services, postsecondary education, and supports before leaving high school.

- Adult services include a variety of supports, including postsecondary education. Given the complexity of post-secondary services and eligibility requirements, early planning is essential. Students and families should become familiar with the range of available options to make informed decisions.

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