

Transition Overview

With the implementation of IDEA schools were charged to use the special education process as the vehicle for planning anticipated individual students needs beyond the completion of secondary education. This mandate significantly shifted the focus of the special education process from a narrow view of planning for interventions to support the student within the school, to a broader vision of preparing the student for roles beyond school. Schools need to address areas of education, training, employment and independent living. The process for successful transition planning is best described in the attached flow chart (IDEA 2004 IEP Results Process for Transition Services).

The following three components are essential for achieving these desired outcomes:

- Planning by the student, parents, school staff, and community adult service agencies begins at age 16. This planning must address the interests, values, aptitudes and independent living skills of the student and the available options in the school and the community. The planning should be outcome-based and linkages to existing community resources should be identified in the planning process.
- Selecting options in the available secondary curriculum that students may access depending on their post secondary goals. These options should include: academic preparation for post secondary education, functional or life skills instruction, vocational training in specific occupational areas, training in supported employment and supported community living, and community-based work preparation/apprenticeship opportunities. Ideally, these options should be available within the general education school-to-work program.
- Local interagency and community groups will come together to coordinate adult services for youth with disabilities in transition and will address the issue of making the local community a part of the transition plan.

The assessment process for students with disabilities ages 16-21 should focus on transition into adult life. While the purpose of assessment will vary depending on the individual, the broad purpose includes the following:

- To determine the skills levels the student has in the transition areas.
- To determine the accommodations, supports and services the student will need to attain and maintain their postsecondary goals.
- To determine appropriate placements within educational, vocational and community settings that facilitate the attainment of the postsecondary goals.
- More accommodations for individuals with disabilities.

Successful transition planning for students with disabilities results in one of the following outcomes:

- Placement in an appropriate post secondary education program (community college, four-year college, technical college, or other training institution that trains individuals for employment)
- Placement in a job that pays a livable wage.
- Placement in an ongoing treatment program that the student, parent and other service providers deem appropriate for the student.

Transition needs can be met in a variety of ways. Some examples are:

- Within the regular education curriculum options and/or activities provided by the school counselor.
- Within the special education functional curriculum options and/or activities provided by the special education staff.
- Within the structure of Adult Service Agencies.
- Within the structure of the home and family.
- Combination of the above options.

Developing a Transition Assessment & Summary of Performance (SOP)

Transition assessment can be defined as the ongoing process of determining a student's abilities, attitudes, aptitudes, interests, work behaviors, levels of self-determination and self-advocacy skills, interpersonal skills, academic skills level, and independent living skills over an extended period of time for the purpose of planning an appropriate individual education program (IEP).

Transition assessment provides the student, parents, teachers, and school personnel with information needed for future planning for life after high school. Transition assessment provides information regarding the strengths, limitations, and motivations of a specific student so the student and significant others can make wise choices in terms of both school curriculum and life planning.

Assessment may be formal or informal depending on the information needed for decision making. These should be completed with the student and in some cases with the parents, educators and/or adult service providers. Assessments included in an effective transition evaluation are:

- assessment of future planning needs and goals (i.e. Future Planning Inventory)
- assessment of self-determination and self-advocacy skills (i.e. Self-Determination and Self-Advocacy Skills Questionnaire)
- assessment of learning styles (i.e. C.I.T.E. Learning Styles Instrument)
- assessment of vocational interests (i.e. COPS-high functioning students) (Pictures of Vocational Tasks- low functioning students)
- assessment of vocational values (i.e. COPES- high functioning students) (Job Characteristics and Values- low functioning students)
- assessment of independent living skills (i.e. Life Skills Inventory)

Once the transition assessment information has been gathered it is necessary to summarize this information into a Transition Assessment Summary Report. Use the Transition Planning Inventory as an outline when organizing your information.

The results of transition assessments should be used in making recommendations for instructional strategies, accommodations in instruction, and environments to meet the student's strengths and needs. The results should also help students make a connection between their individual academic program and their post-school ambitions.

Transition assessment results should become a part of the following:

- Integrated Written Assessment Report
- Present Levels of Academic Achievement & Functional Performance in the IEP
- Transition assessment information should be reviewed and updated each year.
- If the student is in the process of a three year evaluation make sure that transition needs/information is included in the assessment profile and assessment plan.

Summary of Performance (SOP)

For any student whose eligibility under special education terminates due to graduation with a regular diploma or exceeding the age of eligibility, the school shall provide the child with a Summary of the Student's Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (SOP) as it relates to the student's measurable goals. The SOP is a summary of existing data and of performance in the academic and functional areas. As the team addresses each area it is vital to include the specially designed instruction, accommodations, modifications, and assistive technology that were utilized in high school to assist the student in making progress.

The SOP must also include recommendations on how to assist the student in achieving the student's measurable postsecondary goals. When completing this section, the following should be considered:

- The support and accommodations the student has benefited from in school and in the community.
- The supports and accommodations that are recommended in post-school life to assist the student in achieving his/her postsecondary goals.
- The specific skills/abilities necessary for the student to achieve the intended goal(s) (e.g., level of support and/or academic adjustments for reading required for college coursework versus those required for employment).
- The intended goal and the student's needs/functional limitations (e.g., plans to go to college but needs to continue developing self-advocacy skills needed to obtain supports and services).
- The adult agencies and individuals supportive of the student that may have a role in supporting student achievement of post school goals (e.g., College Disability support Services). Provide specific contact information for individuals and agencies if available.

Student Input in the SOP: The student should actively participate in developing the SOP in collaboration with school professionals. Asking the student what supports and services have helped him/her to be successful in high school and what services or supports will be needed in the future can help promote self-advocacy. In addition, involving the student in the development of the SOP may enable the student to gain a clearer understanding of his/her disability and how it will impact postsecondary activities. The information gained from the student may be included as an optional section on the SOP form.

The Summary of Performance must be completed during the last year of high school. The specific timing during that last year is based on the individual needs of the student as specified in the transition plan. This will vary depending on the student's postsecondary goals.

**Does the student need the information in the SOP to apply for college?*

- Then the SOP may be done in the fall.

**Will the information be needed to provide the employer with the most current information?*

- Then the SOP may be done in the spring.

Transition IEP Development Sequence

For transition to be discussed and documented accurately and logically, it is critical to understand the flow of the process as described in the following Sequence.

**If you use the IEP Agenda you will follow the sequence outlined below.*

**This process will go much smoother if the Student has been given the opportunity to learn about the IEP process prior to this meeting. A suggested tool to use would be "A Student's Guide to the IEP". It will also be helpful if the information presented at this meeting has been developed and reviewed with the student prior to the meeting.*

Review or revise Measurable Postsecondary Goals (See Examples)

The team should begin its discussion surrounding a transition IEP by considering the student's long range plans after high school and to what extent supports will be necessary in the areas of education/training, employment and independent living skills, when appropriate for the student.

- **Education/Training**

- ✓ College/University (4-year program)
- ✓ Community or technical college (2-year program)
- ✓ Compensatory Education Program (GED)
- ✓ High school completion document or certificate class (Workforce Investment Act, Job Corps, Vocational Rehabilitation)
- ✓ Short-Term education or employment training program
- ✓ Vocational technical school, which is less than a two year program

- **Employment**

- ✓ Competitive Employment – work in the competitive labor market that is performed on a full or part-time basis in an integrated setting and is compensated at or above the minimum wage, but not less than the customary wage and level of benefits paid by the employer for the same or similar work performed by individuals who are not disabled.
- ✓ Supported Employment – is competitive work in integrated work settings, or employment in integrated work settings in which individuals are working toward competitive work consistent with the strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice of the individuals, for individuals with the most significant disabilities for whom competitive employment has not traditionally occurred; or for who competitive employment has been interrupted or intermittent as a result of a significant disability; and who, because of the nature and severity of their disability, need intensive supported employment services.
- ✓ Sheltered Employment - is an accredited occupationally-oriented facility, including a work activities center, operated by a private nonprofit agency, which except for its administrative and support staff, employs disabled persons certified under special provisions of federal minimum wage laws.

- **Independent Living**

Skills or tasks that contribute to the successful independent function of an individual in adulthood in the following domains: leisure/recreation, maintain home and personal care, community participation.

Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (See Examples)

The PLAAFP must address the academic and functional skills the student possesses and the skills the student must acquire to achieve his/her postsecondary goals. **This information should be obtained from the transition assessment.*

- **Jobs and Job Training:** the acquisition of skills for work or other meaningful adult activities, such as work habits, career exploration, community work experience and training.
- **Recreation and Leisure:** the initiation and development of group and/or individual recreational and social skills and activities.
- **Home/Independent Living:** the skills necessary to fully participate in life in the home, including cooking, money, management, personal grooming.
- **Community Participation:** the skills needed to access community resources including people, public places and activities such as transportation and government agencies, activities or organizations the student may want to incorporate into his or her adult life.
- **Postsecondary Training & Learning Opportunities:** education and/or training that occurs over a lifetime.
- **Related Services:** transportation and such development, corrective and other supportive services as are required to assist a student with a disability to benefit from special education.

Review or Develop Transition Services

The definition of transition services explains how improving a student's academic and functional achievement will improve the transition from school to adult living.

- **Course of Study and Graduation Requirements (See Examples)**

The purpose of this section is to identify courses and educational experiences that will lead to graduation and student desired post-school outcomes. All anticipated coursework for the remaining high school years is to be identified as thoroughly as possible. An up-to-date account of the number of credits the student has earned at the time of the IEP meeting is essential.

This information is reviewed and updated each year, as changes are made and the postsecondary plans of the student become more refined. The documentation of credits earned by the student should equal or exceed the number of credits required for graduation.

The IEP team should see a correlation between the postsecondary goals and the Course of Study. For example, if a student expresses interest in employment and a post-secondary program that will require liberal arts focus, the curriculum for high school should identify those classes required to enter a liberal arts program.

When the regular curriculum offerings are inappropriate for a student, individualized programming may be designed through an individual education planning process. Specific course offerings should address the unique learning needs of each individual student. Under such circumstances, The Functional and Community-Based Curriculum may be appropriate.

- **Transfer of Rights (at age 17)**

At age seventeen the IEP must include a statement that the student has been informed of the rights that will transfer to the student upon reaching the age of 18. Having this information at age 17 allows the team, especially the student and parents, to discuss the implications of educational guardianship and initiate the process in a timely manner.

At the age of 18, the school must notify the parents and student of the transfer of rights. This notification may occur on the Prior Written Notice Form. Upon meeting with the student and assuring that the student understands his/her rights, the student shall be asked to sign the *Student Transfer of Rights Form*.

- **Coordinated Set of Strategies and Activities/Agency Collaboration & Responsibilities (See Examples)**

This section of the IEP is formatted to serve as a worksheet for addressing student needs in the areas of instruction, employment, community experiences, independent living, related services, and if necessary, daily living and functional vocational assessment. This section should be a comprehensive “snapshot” of what is required for the duration of a student’s education to assist the student in reaching his or her postsecondary goals.

The team will identify at least one strategy or activity for each postsecondary goal of the student. For each strategy or activity needed the team will also identify the agency responsible, the agency’s responsibility and the timeline for these responsibilities. If the team concurs that no needs exist in any one of the required areas, the team must document the rationale.

Instruction The use of formal techniques and qualified instructors to impart knowledge; typically what is provided in the classroom or other sites to relay instruction or the application of the instructional materials. Instruction should address special education services as well as issues relating to transition.

Community Experience Services provided outside the school building in natural community settings, which may be schools or other agencies; community experiences selected to meet transition needs.

Employment Instructional objective, activities, techniques and services that lead to a job or career; can be provided by school or other entities to include student interest, relevancy of disability and nature of job interests, supports, necessary skills and abilities to succeed, emerging or missing skills, employee behaviors, academic, social and vocational needs, and accommodations.

Related Services: Developmental, corrective and other supportive services that may be required for the upcoming school year are addressed in another section of the IEP. Related services in this section has to do with determining if the related service needs

will continue beyond school, identifying any agency that might provide those services, identifying how the student or parent can access those services, and connecting the student and parent to whomever will provide those services before the student leaves the school system.

Adult Living & Post School Important adult responsibilities such as voting, paying taxes, renting a home, accessing medical services, raising children, etc. which prepare students to live as independently as possible.

Daily Living Activities adults do every day to have access to society, provided by schools or other entities.

Functional Vocational Assessment Assessment that provides information about job or career interests, aptitudes and skills.

When this section is completed, the team should be able to identify the school's responsibilities, including those specific to special education, that are then prioritized as the annual IEP goals. Not every need that is the responsibility of the school automatically becomes an annual goal on the IEP. The team must make a decision about whether a particular activity constitutes a need for special education services or supports which would then become an annual goal.

Annual Goals & Objectives, when appropriate (See Examples)

For each postsecondary goal in the student's IEP, there must be at least one annual goal included that will help the student make progress towards the stated postsecondary goal. One annual goal may link to more than one measurable postsecondary goal. The annual goals are statements that describe what a student with a disability can reasonably be expected to accomplish within a twelve-month period in the student's education program.

Students on the Job

Once students have completed interest, values and aptitude inventories they should be guided in the process of verifying the identified or selected career/employment options. For some students this process will consist of researching and reading about the selected career. For other students this will involve the activity of a job shadowing. Other students might find it beneficial to actually be out on the job as a part of their course work.

When finding potential job sites for students, it is necessary to provide potential job site personnel with information about your program expectations. The best way to do this is working through the following documents:

- Function of Job Facilitator (employer)
- Function of Job Coach
- Job Process
- Area of Disability
- Vocational Training & Work Evaluation Coverage
- Fair Labor Standards Act
- Training Agreement

If students are going to be placed out on the job as a part of their course work, the job selected should be a closely related to the Career Family of the student's interest as possible. For example if the student is interested in working with animals: pet store, pet day care, veterinarian, or personal pet attendant.

If the student is going to be out on the job the following steps should be considered:

- Student Apply for Job Using Personal Data Sheet Information and Resume (Even if job has been preset)
- Student Interview for the Job even if the job has been preset
- Develop Task Analysis of Job (with job facilitator)
- Employer Complete Student Evaluation
- Have employer complete a letter of reference for the student

Adult Service Providers

The student's IEP should contain a statement of interagency responsibilities or any linkages required to ensure that the student has the transition services needed from outside agencies and that representatives from those agencies are invited to attend the IEP meeting. I

Review the Adult Service Providers packet with the parents and students to determine which agency(s) might best meet their needs. After this review send the Universal Referral out to the designated agency. When you receive their response act accordingly. Written parental consent is now required, before the school invites representative from other participating agencies to attend an IEP team meeting. Complete the Request to Invite Outside Agencies Form.

It is critical to remember that planning for the student needs with agencies takes a coordinated effort.

- Make sure you make the above contacts in a reasonable time frame from the proposed meeting date.
- Be open to alternative meeting methods: conference calls, input in writing, input via parents/students meeting
- Make sure you have good contact information in case you need to cancel the meeting
- After the meeting send IEP with highlighted service page of IEP to Adult Service Provider to confirm their responsibility of services agreed upon in the meeting

Postsecondary Education/Training

People with disabilities planning to continue their education after high school may need accommodations and/or services as a result of their disabilities. It is important to plan ahead to allow adequate time to advocate for and coordinate such accommodations and/or services. The following list of activities may be beneficial in preparing students for post-secondary education/training:

- Review with students the Treatment of Disability in High School and College and Academic Differences Between High School and College
- Take entrance exams (i.e. ACT, SAT) consider accommodations for these tests
- Explore sources of financial aid
- Verify high school courses needed for college entrance
- Obtain information and entrance requirements from prospective schools
- Contact Disability Support Services at prospective schools
- Review possible need for assistance with housing, transportation, etc.

Independent Living

For students whose independent living skills need to be a focus of their transition into adult living, design their curriculum around the identified areas of need. It may also be beneficial to collect and include in their portfolio the following artifacts:

- Inventory of Health Needs
- Birth Certificate
- Social Security Number
- SSI information
- Guardian Information
- Medical Insurance
- Bank Account Information
- Immunizations

Transition Checklist-AGE 15

Prior to the development of the age 16 IEP the following tasks need to be completed with student and/or family:

Transition Assessment

- Self-Determination and Self-Advocacy Skills Questionnaire
- Future Planning Inventory
- COPS/COPEs (higher functioning) Pictures of Vocational Tasks/Job Characteristics and Values (lower functioning)
- C.I.T.E. Learning Styles Instrument (if appropriate)
- Life Skills Inventory (if appropriate)
- Summarize Information in a Transition Assessment Report.

**If the student is in the process of assessment for the purpose of initial or three year... the above information should be included in IWAR.*

**This assessment information needs to become a part of the Transition IEP PLAAFP*

Transition IEP

- Prior to the meeting, review "A Student's Guide to the IEP" with student.
- Prior to the meeting, develop draft transition IEP components with student to include:
 - Review PLAAFP
 - Develop Postsecondary Goals
 - Develop draft Course of Study through the 12th grade
 - Using the Transition Assessment Report and Postsecondary Goals, develop draft Transition Services
- Invite student to the IEP (Prior Notice and Invitation)
- Invite parents, teachers, administrators to the IEP (Prior Notice) make sure you check #7 on the Prior Notice. As the actions being considered.
- At the meeting complete and finalize the IEP. (Make sure you use the IEP Meeting Agenda)
- At the meeting review and discuss the Adult Service Provider Options and complete Universal Referral and Request to Invite Outside Agency Form if applicable.
- If students are going to be out on the job as a part of their IEP, review with the team the section of the "Students on the Job" so team members are aware of the steps necessary to make that opportunity successful.

For Students On The Job

- Student will complete Personal Data Sheet
- Student will begin developing their Resume
- Student will apply for the job using Personal Data Sheet and Resume
- Student needs to practice interviewing etiquette...use the Interview Rating Form to assess their skills
- Case manager will review Function of Job Facilitator, Function of Job Coach, Job Process, Area of Disability, Fair Labor Standards Act and Vocational & Work Evaluation Coverage with Job Facilitator/Employer
- Complete Training Agreement with Job Facilitator/Employer
- Complete Task Analysis (when appropriate)
- Have employer complete student evaluation for each job site.
- Collect Letters of Reference of each job site.

For Students Requiring Independent Living Skills

- Begin to collect the following artifacts on the student:
 - *Inventory of Health Needs
 - *Birth Certificate
 - *Social Security Number
 - *SSI Information
 - *Guardian Information
 - *Medical Insurance
 - *Bank Account Information
 - *Immunizations

Transition Checklist-AGE 16

Transition Assessment

- Review and update Transition Assessment Report

**If the student is in the process of assessment for the purpose of initial or three year... the above information should be included in IWAR.*

**This assessment information needs to become a part of the Transition IEP PLAAFP*

Transition IEP

- Prior to the meeting, review "A Student's Guide to the IEP" with student.
- Prior to the meeting, review and update transition IEP components with student
- Invite student to the IEP (Prior Notice and Invitation)
- Invite parents, teachers, administrators to the IEP (Prior Notice) make sure you check #7 on the Prior Notice. As the actions being considered.
- At the meeting complete and finalize the IEP. (Make sure you use the IEP Meeting Agenda)
- If students are going to be out on the job as a part of their IEP, review with the team the section of the "Students on the Job" so team members are aware of the steps necessary to make that opportunity successful.

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- Student will complete Personal Data Sheet
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- Student needs to practice interviewing etiquette...use the Interview Rating Form to assess their skills
- Case manager will review Function of Job Facilitator, Function of Job Coach, Job Process, Area of Disability, Fair Labor Standards Act and Vocational & Work Evaluation Coverage with Job Facilitator/Employer
- Complete Training Agreement with Job Facilitator/Employer
- Complete Task Analysis (when appropriate)
- Have employer complete student evaluation for each job site.
- Collect Letters of Reference of each job site.

For Students Requiring Independent Living Skills

- Continue to collect the following artifacts on the student:
 - *Inventory of Health Needs
 - *Birth Certificate
 - *Social Security Number
 - *SSI Information
 - *Guardian Information
 - *Medical Insurance
 - *Bank Account Information
 - *Immunizations

Four or Two Year College Bound Students

- Review "Academic Differences Between High School and College" with the student
- Review "Treatment of Disability in High School and College" with the student

Transition Checklist-AGE 17

Transition Assessment

- Review and update Transition Assessment Report

**If the student is in the process of assessment for the purpose of initial or three year... the above information should be included in IWAR.*

**This assessment information needs to become a part of the Transition IEP PLAAFP*

Transition IEP

- Prior to the meeting, review "A Student's Guide to the IEP" with student.
- Prior to the meeting, review and update transition IEP components with student
- Discuss Transfer of Rights and document date on the IEP
- Invite student to the IEP (Prior Notice and Invitation)
- Invite parents, teachers, administrators to the IEP (Prior Notice) make sure you check #7 on the Prior Notice. As the actions being considered.
- At the meeting complete and finalize the IEP. (Make sure you use the IEP Meeting Agenda)
- If students are going to be out on the job as a part of their IEP, review with the team the section of the "Students on the Job" so team members are aware of the steps necessary to make that opportunity successful.

For Students On The Job

- Student will complete Personal Data Sheet
- Student will begin developing their Resume
- Student will apply for the job using Personal Data Sheet and Resume
- Student needs to practice interviewing etiquette...use the Interview Rating Form to assess their skills
- Case manager will review Function of Job Facilitator, Function of Job Coach, Job Process, Area of Disability, Fair Labor Standards Act and Vocational & Work Evaluation Coverage with Job Facilitator/Employer
- Complete Training Agreement with Job Facilitator/Employer
- Complete Task Analysis (when appropriate)
- Have employer complete student evaluation for each job site.
- Collect Letters of Reference of each job site.

For Students Requiring Independent Living Skills

- Continue to collect the following artifacts on the student:
 - *Inventory of Health Needs
 - *Guardian Information
 - *Birth Certificate
 - *Medical Insurance
 - *Social Security Number
 - *Bank Account Information
 - *SSI Information
 - *Immunizations

Four or Two Year College Bound Students

- Review "Academic Differences Between High School and College" with the student
- Review "Treatment of Disability in High School and College" with the student
- Discuss the need for college entrance exams (possible accommodations)
- Begin exploring possible post secondary institutions

Transition Checklist-AGE 18

Transition Assessment

- Review and update Transition Assessment Report
- Complete SOP

**If the student is in the process of assessment for the purpose of initial or three year ... the above information should be included in IWAR.*

**This assessment information needs to become a part of the Transition IEP PLAAFP*

Transition IEP

- Prior to the meeting, review "A Student's Guide to the IEP" with student.
- Prior to the meeting, review and update transition IEP components with student
- Discuss Transfer of Rights and complete Transfer of Rights Form
- Invite student to the IEP (Prior Notice and Invitation)
- Invite parents, teachers, administrators to the IEP (Prior Notice) make sure you check #7 on the Prior Notice. As the actions being considered.
- At the meeting complete and finalize the IEP. (Make sure you use the IEP Meeting Agenda)
- If students are going to be out on the job as a part of their IEP, review with the team the section of the "Students on the Job" so team members are aware of the steps necessary to make that opportunity successful.

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- Student will complete Personal Data Sheet
- Student will begin developing their Resume
- Student will apply for the job using Personal Data Sheet and Resume
- Student needs to practice interviewing etiquette...use the Interview Rating Form to assess their skills
- Case manager will review Function of Job Facilitator, Function of Job Coach, Job Process, Area of Disability, Fair Labor Standards Act and Vocational & Work Evaluation Coverage with Job Facilitator/Employer
- Complete Training Agreement with Job Facilitator/Employer
- Complete Task Analysis (when appropriate)
- Have employer complete student evaluation for each job site.
- Collect Letters of Reference of each job site.

For Students Requiring Independent Living Skills

- Continue to collect the following artifacts on the student:
 - *Inventory of Health Needs
 - *Guardian Information
 - *Birth Certificate
 - *Medical Insurance
 - *Social Security Number
 - *Bank Account Information
 - *SSI Information
 - *Immunizations

Four or Two Year College Bound Students

- Review "Academic Differences Between High School and College" with the student
- Review "Treatment of Disability in High School and College" with the student
- Discuss the need for college entrance exams (possible accommodations)
- Continue exploring possible post secondary institution
- Contact Disability Support Services
- Explore sources of Financial Aid
- Review possible need for housing, transportation, etc.