

Family Guide to Transition Planning

Preparing Students with Disabilities for Life After High School

Produced by the Technical Assistance Partnership for Transition



Welcome to the Family Guide to Transition Planning

The purpose of the Family Guide to Transition Planning—Preparing Students with Disabilities for Life After High School is to assist families in understanding the transition planning process specifically from high school to life after high school. When families are knowledgeable about the transition process and invited to participate by educational organizations (EOs), students with disabilities experience improved post-school outcomes in the areas of employment, postsecondary education, and independent living.

This guide is intended to be utilized with families as they embark on or are looking to dive deeper into the transition planning process. Throughout the guide, embedded links point to a variety of resources, including PD packages, to enhance family’s understanding of the material. Families are encouraged to review the entire guide, either individually or in a group setting, while understanding there may also be a need for focusing on one particular section at a time.

Suggested citation. Elliott, J., Karhan, A., Technical Assistance Partnership (TAP) for Transition. (2021). *Family Guide to Transition Planning—Preparing Students with Disabilities for Life After High School*. New York State Education Department (NYSED), Office of Special Education (OSE) Educational Partnership.

A citation is a reference to a source. The authors of this publication give permission for others to paraphrase, directly quote, or print portions or the entire guide when the guide is referenced or cited. The suggested APA reference can be used as a reference to allow your reader or audience to track down the original document and protects you from plagiarism (i.e., presenting or using the words, ideas, or images of others as your own).

Table of Contents

Welcome to the Family Guide to Transition Planning	1
Introduction (Section 1.0).....	4
Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations	4
What is Transition Planning?	7
What are transition services?	8
Transition Laws and Guiding Principles (Section 2.0)	10
The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)	11
The Rehabilitation Act	11
Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA).....	11
How Families Can Support Transition Planning (Section 3.0)	13
What is the family’s role in transition planning?.....	13
What is the student’s role in transition planning?	15
What is the District’s role in supporting students and families in transition? ...	17
Overview of Transition Planning (Section 4.0)	20
How and when do I begin transition planning?	20
What is the family’s role at the CSE meeting?	21
What is the role of assessments?	21
Transition Planning in the IEP	22
Graduation Options.....	26
What do families need to know about graduation requirements to support successful transition for students?	30

Postsecondary Planning (Section 5.0)	35
Postsecondary Education	35
Employment	35
Independent Living	37
Adult Services (Section 6.0)	40
State Agencies	41
Community-Based Organizations	43
Transition Resources	45
Appendix	46
Appendix A: Strength-Based Assessments.....	46
Appendix B: Planning for the Future with Measurable Postsecondary Goals ...	48
Appendix C: Transition Services Worksheet	53
Appendix D: Transition Planning Profile	54
Note Catcher	56
For More Information	57
Contacts	57
Endnotes	58

SECTION 1.0



Introduction (Section 1.0)

As students with disabilities prepare to transition to adult life, educators, families, and agencies are highly encouraged to work together to provide students with the information, skills, supports, and services they need to have the future they want. Embedded in this document are a variety of resources and tools that can assist with the transition planning process, including a user-friendly glossary of the terms and abbreviations used throughout this guide.

Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

Technical Terms

Transition planning is the ongoing process of preparing students with disabilities for the adult life they choose after high school.

The **Transition Specialist (TS)** will provide training and technical assistance on issues related to transition planning and services.

The **Family and Community Engagement Center (FACE Center)** works collaboratively to provide technical assistance and professional development that will promote meaningful family involvement within the educational system, build collaborative community relationships, and provide information and training about available service options and delivery systems for school-age students.

A **Free Appropriate Public** Education means that the child with disabilities will receive the same education as a child without disability.

Self-determination is defined as:¹

- A combination of skills and beliefs that enable a student to engage in goal-directed, self-regulated, autonomous behavior
- An individual's understanding of own strengths and limitations
- An individual's belief in oneself as capable and effective

Starting when a student is 15 years old, the IEP team will begin considering their goals for life after high school. These are called **measurable postsecondary goals**.

Annual goals describe what the student is expected to achieve in one year. The goals are aligned with the academic, social, and physical skills that the student needs in order to achieve their goals for life after high school.

The **Coordinated Set of Transition Activities** are the activities and services that will help the student gain the skills needed to meet their goals.

Legislation

The **Americans with Disabilities Act** of 1990 or **ADA** is a civil rights law that prohibits discrimination based on disability.

The **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act** of 2004 (**IDEA**) is a United States law that mandates equity, accountability, and excellence in education for children with disabilities.

The **Rehabilitation Act** is a federal law that defines transition a coordinated set of activities for a student, designed within an outcome-oriented process that promotes movement from school to post-school activities, including postsecondary education, vocational training, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation.

Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) provides services as an early start to job exploration (these begin during the school year that a student turns 14 years old) and are designed to help students with disabilities who are eligible or potentially eligible for Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services identify their career interests.

Common Acronyms

Acronym	Definition
ACCES-VR	Adult Career and Continuing Education Services—Vocational Rehabilitation
CDOS	Career Development and Occupational Studies
CPSE	Committee on Preschool Special Education
CSE	Committee on Special Education
CTE	Career and Technical Education
ELA	English Language Arts
EO	Educational Organization
FAPE	Free Appropriate Public Education
FACE Center	Family and Community Engagement Center
GED	General Education Diploma
IEP	Individualized Education Program
NYSAA	New York State Alternate Assessment
Pre-ETS	Pre-Employment Transition Services
SACC	Skills and Achievement Commencement Credential
SSI	Supplemental Security Income
TS	Transition Specialist
VR	Vocational Rehabilitation
WBL	Work-Based Learning

What is Transition Planning?

Transition planning is the ongoing process of preparing students with disabilities for the adult life they choose after high school.

During the transition planning process, students, with support from a team that includes families, school staff, and/or community organizations, share information, agree on goals, and create a plan for the student’s life after high school.

The goal of transition planning is to identify where a student would like to work, learn, and live after high school so the team can provide opportunities and supports that will lead the student to achieve their postsecondary goals. Transition planning is a collaborative effort and is an on-going process across multiple school years.

Transition teams should consider the following:

- Results of age-appropriate transition assessments
- Parent input as partners in the planning process
- Collaboration with participating state and community agencies to provide the student with appropriate services to meet post-school goals
- Instruction toward the Career Development and Occupational Studies (CDOS) credential option
- Opportunities for career development activities, including in-school and out of-school job training and Career and Technical Education (CTE) coursework

PURPOSE of Transition Planning	To help students and families establish a vision for the future about where the student will work, learn, and participate in the community.
FOCUS of Transition Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Future education and training• Future careers and employment• Independent living• Self-determination

What are transition services?

According to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 2004, transition services include 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 postsecondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation.

Transition teams should consider the following:

- Related instruction (e.g., resource room)
- Related services (e.g., speech therapy, counseling services, physical therapy)
- Community and employment experiences
- Development of employment and adult living objectives
- Acquisition of daily living skills
- Functional vocational evaluation
- Linkages to adult services
- Course of study

Transition planning involves **backward planning**. This means the student identifies goals for the future, then the team prioritizes necessary skills and supports the student's needs at each grade level to enable progress towards those goals.

For example, if a student wants to work as a chef in a restaurant after high school, transition planning will involve creating a plan to provide **related instruction** (for example, social skills needed), **community and employment experiences, adult living objectives, linkages to adult services, related services** (for example, communication skills needed), and **course(s) of study** to help prepare the student for becoming a chef.

Who is eligible for transition services in New York State (NYS)?

While federal law requires transition planning for students with disabilities to begin with the first Individualized Education Program (IEP) in effect at age 16, NYS law requires transition planning to begin **no later than the first IEP to be in effect when the student turns age 15** (and at a younger age, if determined appropriate) and updated annually.

Once the student is 15 years old, the school **must invite the student to participate**. Families are partners in the IEP process and should be invited to all IEP meetings. A family’s inclusion in the transition planning process is essential to ensure they are able to support their child in preparing for adult life.

Moreover, NYS regulation requires students aged 12, and those referred to special education for the first time who are age 12 and over, to receive an assessment to determine vocational skills, aptitudes, and interests.²

Looking for more information on an Introduction to Transition?

EOs: Review the “Transition in the IEP: 4-Part Series” training package.

Families: Review the “Understanding the Individualized Education Program (IEP) Process for Parents of School-Age Students with a Disability” training package.

SECTION 2.0



Transition Laws and Guiding Principles (Section 2.0)

Federal and state laws and regulations **protect the rights of students with disabilities and their families** to ensure all students with disabilities have access to a [Free Appropriate Public Education \(FAPE\)](#). These laws and regulations provide standards relevant to transition planning for students with disabilities.

A Free Appropriate Public Education means that the child with disabilities will receive the same education as a child without disability. The term “appropriate” means the education must be designed to meet the student’s individual educational needs, which must be assessed through appropriate evaluation and placement procedures.³ FAPE can be achieved by giving the child special services, usually written in an IEP. These services may include accommodations for children who use adaptive equipment, services for academic needs, speech and language services and modifications to make a learning environment more comfortable for children with disabilities.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) defines *transition services* as “a coordinated set of activities for a student, designed within a results-oriented process, which promotes movement from school to post-school activities, including:

- Postsecondary education
- Vocational training
- Integrated employment (including supported employment)
- Continuing and adult education
- Adult services
- Independent Living
- Community participation

These activities are based on the student’s needs, considering the student’s strengths, preferences, interests, and vision for adult life.⁴

The Rehabilitation Act

The federal Rehabilitation Act has a similar definition of transition services using an outcome-oriented approach with **a focus on career development, competitive employment in the integrated labor market, and self-sufficiency of the individual.**

The Rehabilitation Act also makes a clear distinction between a “student with a disability” and “youth with a disability.” In general, a “student with a disability” is an individual with a disability who is enrolled in an education program; meets certain age requirements; and is eligible for and receiving special education or related services under IDEA or is an individual with a disability for purposes of Section 504. A “youth with a disability” is an individual with a disability who is between the ages of 14 and 24 years of age. There is no requirement that a “youth with a disability” be participating in an educational program.⁵

Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA)

[The Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act \(WIOA\)](#) was signed into effect in 2014, and the regulations were issued in 2016. WIOA provides [Pre-Employment Transition Services \(Pre-ETS\)](#) as an early start to job exploration (these begin during the school year that a student turns 14 years old) and are designed to help students with disabilities who are eligible or potentially

eligible for Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services identify their career interests. These services include:

- Job exploration counseling
- Work-based learning (WBL) experiences, which may include in-school or community-based opportunities
- Counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or postsecondary educational programs
- Workplace readiness training to develop social skills and independent living
- Instruction in self-advocacy, (including instruction in person-centered planning), which may include peer mentoring

Pre-ETS are **not meant to replace the transition services in a student’s IEP**, but rather to enhance the transition plan and should be coordinated with other transition services provided by the school.

Looking for more information on transition laws and guiding principles?

EOs: Review the “Work-Based Learning: 4-Part Series” and “Agency 101” training packages.

Families: Talk to your local FACE Center about additional training, such as “Agency 101” and technical assistance that can be provided.

SECTION 3.0



How Families Can Support Transition Planning (Section 3.0)

What is the family's role in transition planning?

Students benefit from having supportive adults in their lives, especially as they prepare to transition to the adult world. When students engage in learning experiences outside of school, it helps them develop skills and practical knowledge to be successful both in school and in life.⁶ **Families are invited to IEP meetings and serve as partners with the school in the IEP planning process.** To effectively engage in the transition planning process and support students successfully, families need to be knowledgeable about the transition process as part of IEP development. Educators and families can partner to help students prepare for life after high school in many ways. The following chart provides an overview of crucial roles families can play in a student's education to prepare the student for the transition to the adult world:

Role of Family	How This Can Support Transition Planning
Communicating high expectations	Families talk with students about their interests, goals, and plans for the future and reinforce the importance of school and how it will help students achieve their goals.
Monitoring student performance	Families are kept up-to-date about assignments, testing results, homework completion and other academic progress through online portals and other methods of communication.
Supporting student learning at home	Families model the importance of reading and learning and connecting what is learned to everyday activities. For example, families can engage students in projects at home (such as cooking, building, cleaning) and explore community living and career interests (for example, trips to the bank, colleges and trade schools, adult service providers).
Guiding the students' education	<p>Families engage students in conversations about the students' future goals and planning how to achieve these goals.</p> <p>This can include selection of appropriate classes, volunteer opportunities, extracurricular activities, and experiences to support the students' interests and future goals.</p>
Advocating for the student	Families encourage the students to become their own advocate and help to strengthen their ability to make good choices, ask questions, ask for help, and prioritize tasks and activities.

Adapted from: National Charter School Resource Center (2020). *Planning for family engagement in the charter school life cycle: A toolkit for school leaders*. Bethesda, MD. Manhattan Strategy Group.

Students benefit from having supportive adults in their lives, especially as they prepare to transition to the adult world. When students engage in learning experiences outside of school, it helps them develop skills and practical knowledge to be successful both in school and in life.⁷

What does research tell us about family engagement and postsecondary transition?⁸

- Having positive school and family relationships is an essential component for sustained school improvement.⁹
- Strong partnerships with families have a positive effect on graduation rates, employment, and achievement of postsecondary goals.¹⁰

- Families play an important role in fostering development of self-determination skills (e.g., goal setting, problem solving, decision making) that help students achieve postsecondary goals.¹¹

In addition to the postsecondary outcomes, research also shows us school-age outcomes such as:

- Higher grades and test scores;
- Better attendance;
- Positive attitudes and behavior;
- Higher graduation rate; and
- Better social skills and adaptation in school.

How can families support the student in playing an active role in transition planning?

Families can help students learn skills they need to reach postsecondary goals. Families can support student transition by:¹²

- Communicating and modeling high expectations for what the student can do and achieve
- Supporting student's learning through active involvement in their education
- Participating in student-directed IEP and transition meetings
- Building skills in students and supporting their ability to advocate for services and opportunities
- Shifting gradually from the student's advocate to their coach
- Developing their own and the student's understanding of high school, postsecondary, and employment requirements AND relevant policies, rights, and responsibilities
- Ensuring equity of voice in the IEP meeting

[Tips to Maximize the Parent Role in Transition](#)

What is the student's role in transition planning?

Students should play an active role in planning for their own future and **must be invited to the IEP meeting**. Understanding the student's role in transition planning can help families identify skills they can teach and supports they can provide to the student throughout the process.

Students should be encouraged by supportive adults to:¹³

- Understand their disability and how this impacts them in various settings

- Explore interests, options, and access resources and supports for postsecondary education, employment, and community living
- Identify and participate in career preparation, WBL, and paid employment opportunities
- Develop skills and competencies necessary to meet postsecondary goals for employment, education, and community living
- Develop self-determination skills
- Voice their preferences
- Build and use social capital
- Develop financial capability

[PACER Resource—Ten Tips That May Help Your Child Transition](#)

Why is it important for students to be involved in transition planning?

Student involvement in the transition planning and IEP process has several benefits, including:

- Helping the student to understand their disability and their strengths, and what academic and social/emotional areas need further development
- Providing an opportunity for students to discuss their goals and learn about accommodations or modifications that are available to support these goals

Want to know more about the youth and family’s role in transition planning?

EOs: Review the “Student Directed IEP: 4-Part Series” and “Transition in the IEP: 4-Part Series” training packages.

Families: Review the “Student Directed IEP for Families” and “Understanding the Individualized Education Program (IEP) Process for Parents of School-Age Students with a Disability” training packages.

What is self-determination and how does it benefit students in transition planning?

Self-determination is defined as:¹⁴

- A combination of skills and beliefs that enable a student to engage in goal-directed, self-regulated, autonomous behavior
- An individual’s understanding of own strengths and limitations

- An individual’s belief in oneself as capable and effective

Throughout the transition process, it is important to help students gain skills that will help them play a more active role in making decisions and preparing for their future. Through the process of self-determination, students take control of their lives. Self-determination involves making choices and decisions about one’s own goals and how one will meet them.

Students who have greater self-determination and self-advocacy skills **are significantly more likely to go on to postsecondary education, and students with disabilities who go on to postsecondary education experience better employment outcomes than students with disabilities who do not go on to postsecondary education.**¹⁵

Self-determination enables students to identify preferences, make choices, and determine their strengths. This is reflected in their IEP. Self-determination aligns with New York State Education Department (NYSED) regulations, which state:

“Under the youth’s present levels of performance, a statement of the youth’s needs, taking into account the youth’s strengths, preferences and interests, as they relate to transition from school to post-school activities as defined in 200.1(fff) of this Part.” Section 200.4(d)(2)(ix)(a)(1)

Want to know more about self-determination?

EOs: Review the “Promoting Self-Determination,” “Student-Directed IEP: 4-Part Series,” and “Transition in the IEP: 4-Part Series” training packages.

Families: Review the “Understanding the Individualized Education Program (IEP) Process for Parents of School-Age Students with a Disability” training package.

What is the District’s role in supporting students and families in transition?

Professionals, educators, and service providers can support students and families throughout the transition process by:¹⁶

- Communicating and modeling high expectations for what students can do and achieve
- Working in partnership with families to promote student’s academic learning, career development, health, access to community supports, and transition to adult life

- Engaging families and students as partners in transition assessment and individualized planning
- Including families of **all** students, including those students who are culturally and linguistically diverse, in the process of collaboration, planning, and implementation for transition
- Strengthening and practicing cultural competency
- Recognizing and respecting differences among family environments
- Assisting families with accessing and learning how to use technology
- Coordinating and integrating services across multiple systems

[Keys to Success in the Family-School Partnership - ENGLISH](#)

[Keys to Success in the Parent-School Partnership - SPANISH](#)

What is the District’s role in supporting students and families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds with transition planning?

All families benefit from support and training on the transition process. Students and families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds may also benefit from the following additional supports and guidance:¹⁷

- More support to understand the steps, phases, and goals of the transition process
- Additional explanation of the skills a student may need related to specific career path and future goals
- Access to translated resources about transition and transition planning
- Support in navigating immigration and safety issues for the student
- Assistance in connecting with local resources in the community
- Promoting increased knowledge of and comfort with school policy, practices and procedures
- Encourage the engagement of relevant extended family and community by ensuring that families know that can invite supports to the meeting
- Connecting families to existing support programs such as the regional FACE Centers

Educators should also consider how families and students feel, and strive to educate themselves in order to apply strategies to make environments welcoming and inclusive. School staff members must be creative and meet parents/families where they are in order to build relationships and facilitate long-term engagement. Educators should elevate the family’s frame of reference and voice when considering postsecondary goals and consider the family’s community as an opportunity to seek support for a coordinated set of transition activities and

interagency collaboration. Additionally, educators will need to be mindful of common barriers of family engagement and how to overcome them including but not limited to, professional attitudes, bureaucratic barriers, diversity concerns, and contextual barriers.¹⁸

Additional resources for educators on working with students and families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds:

- NTACTION—[Quick Guide on Working with CLD Student and Families](#)
- Greene, G. (2011). Transition planning for culturally and linguistically diverse youth.

SECTION 4.0



Overview of Transition Planning (Section 4.0)

How and when do I begin transition planning?

Parents can begin thinking about and planning for the student's future at any point after birth, and even some preschools engage in transition-related activities with students and families.

Once a student turns 15, or earlier as appropriate, the school district will begin to invite them to the **Committee on Special Education (CSE)** meeting. It is important to discuss with students how they want to participate in the transition planning process and make these planning meetings meaningful. It is helpful to prepare them for the meeting by reviewing the participants, discussing the purpose of the meeting, and determining the student's role in the meeting.

Every school year until the student graduates or turns 21, there needs to be thoughtful and comprehensive transition planning at the IEP meeting and on their transition plan.

CSE membership in NYS

- Parent/Guardian
- 1 General Education Teacher
- 1 Special Education Teacher/Provider

- District Representative (Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) or CSE Chairperson)
- Others with knowledge/expertise
- Individual to interpret evaluations (may be someone listed above, other than the parent)
- Student

Additional members as requested (by the student or family)

- School physician
- Parent member
- Agency representative

What is the family’s role at the CSE meeting?

- Families must be invited to the CSE transition meetings.
- Families provide knowledge about their student’s interests and medical history, as well as information about their student’s experiences at home and in the community.

What is the role of assessments?

Throughout the transition planning process, educators use a variety of transition assessments. These assessments may be formal (such as a computer-based or written questionnaire) or informal (such as teacher/family observation or self-evaluation). Transition assessments help gather individualized information about the **student’s strengths, preferences, and interests as well as their post-school goals. These assessments involve collaboration between the school district, family, and community agencies.**

Information gathered from the assessments is used to help the student identify goals for life after high school, and these are called *measurable postsecondary goals*. Postsecondary goals relate to living, learning, and earning within the community after high school.

Additionally, transition assessments may be requested verbally or in writing by the parent/guardian to the school district. This assessment process should be ongoing during the high school years and should be mindful of cultural considerations.

Transition Planning in the IEP

Once transition assessments are completed, Educators consider the data to write the Present Levels of Performance, Postsecondary Goals, Coordinated Set of Activities, and Annual Goals.

Present Levels of Performance

In addition to describing a student’s academic, social physical, and management needs, transition-focused present levels of performance summarize the transition assessment results, including strengths, interests, and preferences. The present levels of performance should consider the student’s current functioning levels to determine what they need to access the curriculum and achieve their postsecondary measurable goals.

Measurable Postsecondary Goals

Starting when a student is 15 years old, the IEP team will begin considering their **goals for life after high school**. These are called *measurable postsecondary goals* and they focus on three specific areas:

- Education/training—where and how is the student going to continue to learn new skills after graduation?
- Employment—where is the student going to work after graduation?
- Independent Living (when applicable)—where is the student going to live, how are they going to access adult services, and how will they participate in community activities?

Postsecondary goals need to be appropriate to the student’s needs and based on age-appropriate transition assessments. Postsecondary goals should be reviewed and updated on an annual basis.

Sample Goals:

Education/Training: Lisa will attend a 2-year college to take courses in animal care.

Employment: Lisa will work as a dog groomer as she participates in veterinary science coursework.

Independent Living Skills: Lisa will obtain her driver’s license. She will live in an apartment assisted by friends and family.

Annual Goals

Annual goals describe **what the student is expected to achieve in one year**. The goals are aligned with the academic, social, and physical skills that the student needs in order to achieve their goals for life after high school. Both measurable postsecondary goals and annual goals are developed based on the individual and unique qualities of the student, and are connected to their interests and desires for life after high school.

Sample Goals:

Example 1: Given grade-level material, Maeve will orally read 100 words per minute, with no more than two errors for five consecutive trials. Observations will be recorded weekly.

Example 2: Rayna will be able to utilize a daily schedule by placing the picture symbols on the schedule in the correct order, with a maximum of one prompt per trial.

Example 3: Given a multi-step activity, Mason will complete the task by following the steps in correct sequence with no more than one (verbal/physical) prompt across a variety of settings in three out of four trials over 2 weeks. Scoring of his work sample/checklist will be recorded weekly.

Coordinated Set of Transition Activities

The Coordinated Set of Transition Activities are the activities and services that will help the student **gain the skills needed to meet their goals**. The IEP team will begin considering a coordinated set of transition activities starting at age 15 (or at a younger age, if appropriate).

These activities and services are based on the student's needs, strengths, preferences, and interests. For each activity, the person responsible for the activities or services, usually the school or another agency, is identified. The coordinated set of transition activities are divided into the following six categories: instruction, related services, community experiences, employment or other post-school adult living objectives, acquisition of daily living skills (if applicable), and functional vocational assessment (if applicable). Examples of goals for each category are listed below.

Instruction

Identify course/program/instructional skill

- Use of assistive technology, such as a tablet or adapted equipment, to complete a routine task
- The youth will meet with their school counselor to identify courses/electives in (insert the youth's area of interest)
- The youth will self-monitor daily and long-term time schedules.

Related Services

Could identify activity related to improvement of job skills

- Occupational Therapy: Dressing, self-care, can be included as an activity, organizing materials/class assignments, time management
- Speech: Use of communication device to request clarification/supports; interview skills to practice conversational turn-taking and expressive language
- Physical Therapy: Navigation of educational/community settings; use of transportation services, navigating various settings (use of elevator, stairs, handicap accessible bathroom, cafeteria services, community settings – library, etc.
- Counselor: Self-advocacy, coping strategies to participate in classroom/social conversations, self-regulate behaviors in various WBL/community settings

Community Experiences

Identify any experience taking place in the community, be as specific as possible

- The youth will utilize the internet to identify businesses aligned with their career interest within a 3–5 mile radius of the school (to schedule job shadow, interview workers, volunteer, apply for part-time work)
- The youth will meet with their Adult Career Continuing Educational Services-Vocational Rehabilitation (ACCES-VR) counselor to learn about available services and the application process

Development of Employment

Clearly identify participation in the program as well as assessments and/or activities that will take place

- The youth will complete self and career inventories to assist with career exploration
- The youth will compare and contrast between their two career options
- The youth will begin their college/trade school search and career preparation

Daily Living Skills

Identify activities related to Activities of Daily Living (ADL) the youth will participate in

- Read a bus schedule
- Organization
- Time management
- Self-care/dressing
- Money management, etc.

Recommended Programs and Services

Identify program if it is special education only (such as: Community-Based Work Experience for Youths with Disabilities)

- Youth requires break after 1 hour of work to regain strength
- Computer tablet programmed with task chart to prompt youth through work related tasks

Want to know more about the youth and family's role in transition planning?

- **EOs:** Review the "Transition in the IEP: 4-Part Series" training package.

- **Families:** Review the “Understanding the Individualized Education Program (IEP) Process for Parents of School-Age Students with a Disability” training package.

Graduation Options

All students, including students with disabilities, are encouraged to work toward the highest diploma option available. Once in high school, students, transition specialists, school counselors, and teachers should work together to plan and track both academic and personal accomplishments to optimize the student’s opportunities after high school.

Additionally, **a student has the right to attend school until the end of the school year in which they turn 21 or obtain a high school diploma.**

Below is an overview of the high school diploma and commencement credentials available to students with disabilities.

Diploma Options

There are currently **three types of high school diplomas:** local, Regents, and Regents with Advanced Designation.

To earn a diploma, students must earn specific course credits and pass specific Regents exams. All students may take the Regents more than once.

Students and families can utilize the [NYS Diploma Requirements Tracking Tool](#) to monitor a student’s progress towards meeting credit and assessment requirements.



Regents

- 22 credits
- Score 65% or higher on five Regents exams (ELA, Math, Science, Global History, U.S. History)

Advanced Regents

- 22 credits
- Score 65% or higher on five Regents exams (ELA, Math, Science, Global History, U.S. History)
- Score 65% or higher on additional Regents exams (Foreign Language and additional Math and Science)

Local Diploma

- This is available only to students with IEPs and some 504 plans.
- 22 credits
- Safety net for Regents:
 - Low Pass Option
 - Compensatory Option
 - Portfolio Option
 - 4+1 Option

The 22 credits referenced above include:

Subject	Credits
English	4
Social Studies <i>Distributed as follows:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Global History & Geography (2)• U.S. History (1)• Participation in Government (1/2)• Economics (1/2)	4
Science <i>Distributed as follows:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Life Science (1)• Physical Science (1)• Life Science or Physical Science (1)	3
Mathematics	3
Languages Other than English (LOTE)	1*
Visual Art, Music, Dance, and/or Theater	1

Subject	Credits
Physical Education <i>Participation each semester</i>	2
Health	0.5
Electives	3.5
Total	22

If you believe your student is not on track to graduate, speak to your school’s guidance counselor immediately.

For the most current information on graduation options and requirements visit:

[NYS Diploma Requirements Applicable to All Students Enrolled in Grades 9–12](#)

Helpful resources created specifically for families can also be found here:

[Understanding NYS Diploma Requirements—Family Resources](#)

Credential Options

NYS has **two credential options** for students with disabilities. These credentials were created to replace the IEP diploma, which is no longer offered to students. **These credentials are not diplomas and cannot be used to apply to college, the military, and some vocational training programs** that require a [high school equivalency exam](#) or high school diploma.

[CDOS Commencement Credential](#)

- Indicates career readiness for entry-level jobs
- Includes a Career Plan, Employability Profile, and Student Exit Summary
- Can supplement a Regents or local diploma

CDOS requirements:

- Students must have attended school for 12 years or until age 21
- 216 hours of CTE coursework, which includes 54 hours of WBL
- Maintained the national work readiness credential requirements (assessment-based certification)
- School must have curriculum-based evidence that the student has demonstrated achievement of knowledge of CDOS Learning Standards
 - Career development

- Integrated learning
- Universal foundation skills

All New York State students may exit high school with the CDOS Commencement Credential if they are unable to meet the diploma requirements. At no point should a decision be made that a student stops working toward a high school diploma in order to concentrate only on earning this credential.

Skills and Achievement Commencement Credential (SACC)

Students in NYS who are assessed using the [New York State Alternate Assessment \(NYSAA\)](#) may exit high school with the SACC. The SACC includes a [Student Exit Summary](#) that states the following:

- Student's skills, strengths, and interests
- Student's academic levels (alternate assessment scores)
- Student's level of achievement of the CDOS Commencement Credential standards

SACC requirements:

- Students must have attended school for 12 years or until age 21
- Students with alternate assessment on their IEPs

For the most current information on graduation options and requirements visit: [Curriculum and Instruction—Exiting Credentials](#)

For more information on NYSAA visit:

[A Parent's Quick Guide to the New York State Alternate Assessment \(NYSAA\) \(nysed.gov\)](#)

[Parent Notification of Participation in NYSAA Sample Letter \(nysed.gov\)](#)

[Eligibility Criteria for Participation in NYSAA \(nysed.gov\)](#)

What do families need to know about graduation requirements to support successful transition for students?

Parents and other family members play a crucial role in helping their student:¹⁹

- Understand graduation pathways available to them and requirements for each pathway

- Define college and career goals
- Choose a pathway to a diploma that is relevant to student’s postsecondary goals

Want to know more about diploma and credential options?

- **EOs:** Review the “Diploma and Credentials” and “CDOS: Module 2” training packages.
- **Families:** Talk to your local FACE Center about additional training, such as “Understanding the Individualized Education Program (IEP) Process for Parents of School-Age Students with a Disability.”

Transition Checklists

Students and families can often find transition planning to be an overwhelming process and may be unsure where and how to begin. Below is a comprehensive checklist from an early age to school exit. Each category will walk students and families through important steps in the transition planning process. Students and families are encouraged to connect with their Transition Specialists and FACE Center representative for more ideas and resources.

Prior to Age 12:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Introduce and expose the student to a range of jobs, activities, and hobbies | <input type="checkbox"/> Develop self-care, daily-living skills, and routines at home |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Encourage choice making | <input type="checkbox"/> Talk about the value of work and teach behaviors that develop employment potential |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Encourage the student to ask for help appropriately when needed | <input type="checkbox"/> Provide opportunities to see people at work in different settings |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Engage in role play with the student to help them strengthen their ability to ask for help in different situations | <input type="checkbox"/> Teach money management skills, along with shopping experiences and banking skills |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Help the student learn to work and play cooperatively with others | <input type="checkbox"/> Promote appropriate behavior at home and in social situations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Assist the student develop and learn about self-determination | <input type="checkbox"/> Provide opportunities to make choices and decisions, to explore and take risks, and to learn from experiences of success and failure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Assist the student in learning how to verbalize their strengths and needs | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Begin career exploration activities | |

Ages 12-14:

- Introduce and discuss transition planning with the student
- Speak with the student about their IEP and their IEP meetings, so they can begin to become more involved when appropriate
- Talk with the student about their interests, desires, and goals
- Provide the student with opportunities to explore their interests
- During the year in which the student turns 12, they will complete the student part, and you will complete the family's part, of the first vocational assessment
- Provide opportunities for increased independence and responsibility at home.
- Talk with the student and your student's teachers about opportunities for increased responsibility at school
- Provide the student with opportunities to explore a wide variety of community and leisure activities
- Gather important documents such as the student's birth certificate, social security card, photo ID, medical information, and IEP for their Transition Portfolio
- Discuss high school choice with the student, the guidance counselor, and other staff at your student's school
- Attend high school fairs and explore high schools that may be a good fit for the student
- Determine if CTE programs are a good fit
- Develop skills for academic independence (time management, study skills, note taking, etc.)
- Think about volunteer job opportunities in the community, paper routes, or other ways to develop job skills
- Attend parent workshops on Transition to become informed about the process of Transition Planning
- Help the student to understand their disability; when to ask and who to ask for assistance

Ages 14-17:

- Encourage the student to continue to explore community and leisure activities of interest
- Talk with the student about their role in the IEP meeting and encourage their participation
- Work with the student and the IEP team to develop your student's transition plan
- Encourage the student to take advantage of WBL experiences
- Encourage the student to consider employment and volunteer experiences
- Seek summer job opportunities
- Learn about the different graduation options and credentials such as the CDOS commencement credential
- Discuss with the student and school staff which graduation pathway is most appropriate for your student
- Meet regularly with the student and their career and/or school counselor to identify appropriate courses and/or Regents exams to ensure that your student is on track to graduate with the expected diploma or credential
- Have the student take the SAT or ACT with or without accommodations
- Explore colleges or trade schools
- Explore and connect with external agencies such as OPWDD and ACCES-VR when appropriate
- Provide consent for requesting College Board accommodations
- Explore and apply for college, vocational and independent living options as appropriate for your student
- Determine if the student requires Travel Training to learn how to travel independently using public transportation
- Encourage independence in all areas of life such as self-care activities, money management, and travel in the community
- With the student, start identifying adult health care providers by asking your student's pediatrician for recommendations
- If you have not already, help the student access sexual education and understand changes related to puberty
- Talk about the value of work
- Teach and support behaviors that develop employment potential
- Together with the student, create a vision of their life after leaving school or at age 22
- Attend transition-related workshops, fairs, conferences, seminars, webinars, etc.
- Encourage relationships and nurture friendships
- Explore volunteering, paid work experience, and connections to community-based activities

Ages 17-21:

- Meet with the student's guidance counselor to ensure that they are on track toward the graduation diploma and/or credential agreed upon, and for assistance with college applications as appropriate
- Connect with any agencies or organizations that will provide services, training, or education following the student's graduation or aging out of high school
- Review the student's Student Exit Summary.
- Apply for SSI (Supplemental Security Income) and Medicaid
- Have a male student register for selective service
- Continue to financially plan
- If you have not already, help the student learn how to manage their medications, make appointments, and communicate with health care providers
- Discuss where the student would like to live and the supports they will need
- Encourage the student to register to vote.

Before the student graduates from high school, you will receive a written notice that identifies the diploma or credential your student is receiving and informs you that the student is no longer eligible to receive a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) after graduation. However, if your student exits high school with either the CDOS Commencement Credential or the SACC as their sole exiting credential, you will receive written notice stating that they are eligible to attend school through the school year in which they turn 21.

SECTION 5.0



Postsecondary Planning (Section 5.0)

As students begin to plan for the future, they should be exploring post-school options in postsecondary education, employment, and independent living.

Postsecondary Education

Students with disabilities who are interested in postsecondary education may pursue a college or university, a college experience program, vocational, or trade school. Students should consult with their IEP team, transition specialist, and other school personnel to learn more about the variety of options available. It will also be important for students and families to understand the legal and programmatic differences in high school and college (See the Entitlement vs. Eligibility section, later, for more information).

Some students may seek employment, either during or after high school graduation. Students should have the opportunity to participate in career exploration activities and complete interest inventory assessments to discover possible career paths. This can be done through a [Work-Based Learning \(WBL\)](#) program. Through WBL experiences such as internships and apprenticeships, students can learn the technical, academic, and interpersonal skills they need

to function in a workplace. WBL also emphasizes supportive relationships with adults, connections to broader social and professional networks, and authentic work experiences that provides hands-on learning opportunities and the chance to take on new roles and responsibilities.

Students with disabilities can complete WBL in-school, online, or through [Pre-Employment Transition Service \(Pre-ETS\) program](#). Transition from school to work requires a variety of supports and collaborative efforts among education and workforce programs. No one institution or organization can provide the full range of services that may be required to serve youth with disabilities. However, collaboration and coordinated efforts among education and workforce programs, including vocational rehabilitation, is essential in assisting students with disabilities to make the transition from school to work.

By working closely with school districts, the P-12 Office of Special Education and community providers, ACCES-VR helps to ensure that all youth with disabilities are prepared for employment, post-secondary education and community living when they leave school. ACCES-VR can provide a range of services to help eligible individuals reach an employment goal.

Students with disabilities can also receive services through [ACCES-VR](#). One of the primary roles of State VR agencies is to empower individuals with disabilities, including students and youth with disabilities, to make informed choices about their careers by providing a continuum of services to achieve employment outcomes in competitive integrated employment or supported employment. Students and youth with disabilities receive a broad range of services under the VR program, in group settings or on an individual basis, as appropriate.²⁰ Additional information on ACCES-VR can be found in the section, Postsecondary Planning.

Students and families who are working can find valuable information about job accommodations related to specific disabilities, as well as other valuable resources related to work and disability issues at [The Job Accommodation Network \(JAN\) website](#).

Another area to explore is how working will impact benefits from the Social Security Administration (SSA) such as Social Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and health insurance from Medicaid and Medicare. Be sure to consider available work incentive programs and rules. It may be helpful to contact a benefits advisor at SSA or local office to obtain individualized help with these questions.

Independent Living

Transition planning includes considering where a student will live after high school and whether they need residential supports. Independent living skills include money management, preparing meals, washing laundry, medication management, transportation, and more.

Family Checklist for Postsecondary Planning

Postsecondary Education

- Meet with school guidance counselors or Transition Specialists to discuss career goals, such as vocational and educational goals, programs of study, college requirements, including the admissions process and any standardized tests required for admission
- Connect with the school regarding any testing accommodations that the student may require on the PSAT, SAT, or AP exams
- Be an active participant during IEP meetings
- Research colleges including the supports available for students with disabilities
- Research the college application process and financial aid process
- Ensure the student is completing required credits and passing required Regents exams to earn the highest diploma possible
- Explore travel training and independent travel needs if applicable
- Prepare the student to discuss their disability in a college student services office and request accommodations for college classes
- Explore CTE programs
- Be involved in school or community-based activities that allow the student to explore career interests, including WBL or internship opportunities
- Talk to your child about [Postsecondary Education or Training: A Checklist for Parents](#)
- [Set a Postsecondary Education or Training Destination and Map a Course to Get there](#)

Employment

- Research and then help the student explore CTE and other high school options aligned to their career goals
- Connect with Adult Career and Continuing Education Services—Vocational Rehabilitation (ACCESS-VR) and/or other community agencies to learn about services that may be available
- Help the student explore different types of careers and their requirements
- Learn about different kinds of WBL opportunities that may be available
- Explore travel training and/or independent travel needs as appropriate
- [Talk to your Child About Employment: A Checklist for Parents](#)
- [Set an Employment Destination and Map a Course to Get There](#)

Independent Living

- Research your options and visit programs when possible
- Research to see if the student meets eligibility requirements for services through the New York State Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD)
- If you have not yet done so, this must be done when the student is between 18 and 21 years of age for them to receive services directly after high school
- If appropriate, include ACCESS-VR, OPWDD, and/or other community agencies in the student’s IEP meeting

Want to know more about postsecondary planning?

EOs: Review the “Agency 101,” “Student-Directed IEP for Professionals: 4-Part Series,” “Work-Based Learning: 4-Part Series,” and “Transition in the IEP: 4-Part Series.”

Families: Talk to your local FACE Center about additional training, such as “Agency 101,” “Student-Directed IEP for Families,” and “How Parents and Families Can Effectively Engage in Work-Based Learning Experiences (WBLEs)” and technical assistance that can be provided.

SECTION 6.0



Adult Services (Section 6.0)

In high school, students are entitled to receive special education services under IDEA. Once they transition out of high school, they will have to request accommodations under the [Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\)](#) at their college, postsecondary school, vocational training programs, and/or workplace. **Accommodations will not be made automatically.**

High School (IDEA)	Postsecondary (ADA)
Services are provided under IDEA, or section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act	Services are provided under ADA or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act
Parents and students advocate	Students self-identify and self-advocate
Parents have access to student records	Students have sole access to their records unless consent is given
School district is responsible for student's evaluation at no cost to the family	Students are responsible for their own evaluation
Parents and teachers set goals and management needs for students, including time management and organization	Students must organize and structure their own time

High School (IDEA)	Postsecondary (ADA)
Grading and curriculum standards may be modified according to student' needs if the student is alternately assessed	Grades are based on merit
Provide related services	Provide access to any activity sponsored by the institution
Transportation is provided if necessary	Transportation is the students' responsibility

State Agencies

Students with disabilities can begin to apply for adult services **as early as 17 or their junior year of high school**. Students and families should have copies of health, education, and other records readily available as they will be needed for the application process.

Agency	Eligibility	Services Offered
<u>Adult Career & Continuing Education Services – Vocational Rehabilitation (ACCES-VR)</u>	<p>Students with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • physical, • developmental, or • emotional disabilities <p>whose disability may prevent them from working or make work more challenging, and students capable of working with additional training or education.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services needed for an individual to obtain, maintain or advance in a job • Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) for students with disabilities eligible for ACCES-VR services • Pre-ETS for students with disabilities Potentially Eligible for ACCES-VR services

Agency	Eligibility	Services Offered
New York State Commission for the Blind (NYSCB)	Students who are legally blind or visually impaired	Provide consultation to school-age student that may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommending assessments and assisting in the interpretation of results • Resource referral • Rehabilitation teaching • Orientation and mobility • Low vision exams and devices related to vocational goal • Adaptive equipment for home use • Summer student employment (SYEP) • Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS)
Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD)	Students with developmental disabilities that occur before age 22, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intellectual disabilities • Autism • Cerebral palsy • Seizure disorders and; • Other neurological impairments, IQ score lower than 70, and deficits in adaptive behavior skills. 	Provides the following services directly as well as through a network of nonprofit service providing agencies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care coordination • Families advocacy training • Family supports and services • Environmental modifications • Community support services • Day programs • Residential supports • Employment and pre-employment supports • Prioritizes individual choices, needs, and desires in making decisions
Office of Mental Health (OMH)	Students with Axis 1 diagnosis: (severe mental illness, i.e., major depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Variety of inpatient and outpatient programs • Emergency services and community support • Residential and family care programs

Each agency’s website contains specific information about the programs and services they offer. Students and families are encouraged to connect with their transition specialist and FACE Center representative to learn more.

Additionally, it may be helpful to [invite the state agency or community partner](#) to the IEP meeting so they can assist in developing future goals.

Community-Based Organizations

There are many community-based services available that can provide resources for transition-age students and families including:

[Independent Living Centers \(ILCs\)](#): ILCs provide a variety of services to individuals with disabilities including peer mentoring, skills training, resources, housing, transportation, and employment.

[NYS Career Centers](#): These centers aid individuals seeking employment by providing workshops, local career fairs, and career counseling.

College Disability Services: Students with disabilities are encouraged to be well informed about their rights and responsibilities, as well as the responsibilities of postsecondary schools. These services assist in providing accommodations to students who have a qualifying disability and self-identify.

What documentation will college disability services need?

Required documentation varies from college to college. Current evaluation documents that show the student’s disability continues over time and confirms the need for accommodations is helpful. Offering information about accommodations that have been used in the past is helpful in determining what college accommodations may be necessary.

Generally, colleges **do not accept** high school IEPs as documentation of a disability. They will usually accept evaluation results used in IEP development. Providing a copy of the IEP can be helpful in demonstrating the academic accommodations that were used in high school.

Additional Resources on attending college for students with disabilities and their families:

[Resource Page for Families on College and Students with Disabilities](#)

[Common College Accommodations](#)

Want to know more about adult services and community-based organizations?

EOs: Review the “Agency 101,” Work-Based Learning: 4-Part Series,” and “Transition in the IEP: 4-Part Series” training packages.

Families: Talk to your local FACE Center about additional training and technical assistance that can be provided.

Transition Resources

[A Transition Guide to Postsecondary Education and Employment for Students and Youth with Disabilities. Revised August 2020. \(PDF\)](#)

[Families Center Hub](#)

[GUIDEPOSTS FOR SUCCESS 2.0 A Framework for Successful Youth Transition to Adulthood](#)

[National Association of Special Education Teachers \(NASET\) | Transition Resources for Parents](#)

[National Parent Center on Transition and Employment \(pacer.org\)](#)

[NTECT:C | National Technical Assistance Center on Transition: The Collaborative \(transitionta.org\)](#)

[NYS Department of Labor \(DOL\)](#)

[NYS Diploma Types](#)

[NYS Special Education Department \(NYSED\) Transition Resources](#)

[NYSED Career and Technical Education](#)

[NYSED Work-Based Learning Guide](#)

[Social Security Administration](#)

[The 411 on Disability Disclosure Guide](#)

[Transition Student, Family and School Resources from the NYSED Transition Site](#)

[VR Toolkit for SSI Youth](#)

[WINTAC | Working together with Vocational Rehabilitation programs and their partners to effectively implement the requirements of WIOA](#)

Appendix

Appendix A: Strength-Based Assessments

Parent/Guardian/Caregiver's Strength-Based Assessment

Parent/Guardian/Caregiver:	Today's Date:
<p>Abilities: What are the student's strengths, talents, abilities, skills, things they like to do?</p>	<p>Favorite Subjects: What are the student's favorite subjects in school?</p>
<p>Dreams: What are the student's hopes and dreams for the future? What are your hopes and dreams for the student's future?</p>	<p>Least Favorite Subjects: What are the student's least favorite subjects?</p>
<p>What Helps: What is needed to make the student's dreams happen? What helps them to do a good job and learn best?</p>	<p>Future Learning: What does the student want to learn more about?</p>

Student's Strength-Based Assessment

Student:	Today's Date:
<p>Abilities: What are your strengths, talents, abilities, skills, things you like to do?</p>	<p>Favorite Subjects: What are your favorite subjects in school?</p>
<p>Dreams: What are your hopes and dreams for the future?</p>	<p>Least Favorite Subjects: What are your least favorite subjects?</p>
<p>What Helps: What is needed to make your dreams happen? (for example, more information about a course of interest, work experiences in my field of interest, extra help with Math, etc.)</p>	<p>Future Learning: What do you want to learn more about?</p>

Appendix B: Planning for the Future with Measurable Postsecondary Goals

What is a measurable postsecondary goal?

Measurable postsecondary goals help with planning for the future. It's never too early to start setting these goals. These goals describe where a student would like to work, learn, and live after high school. They usually focus on the future: education goals, employment goals, independent living goals, and so on. Measurable postsecondary goals are an opportunity for teachers and caregivers to support a student with identifying steps for achieving the student's vision for their adult life.

It is important to know that measurable postsecondary goals are part of a student's IEP. These goals may take years to reach and include activities from as early as birth all the way through young adulthood. Writing them in the IEP helps caregivers, schools, and others support a student with reaching their goals.

What is an IEP?

An IEP is a written statement for a student with a disability that is developed, reviewed, and revised by a CSE or CPSE. For students ages 15 and older, the IEP should include measurable postsecondary goals and planned transition services. These goals and services are reviewed annually.

The IEP is the tool that ensures a student with a disability has access to the general education curriculum and is provided the appropriate learning opportunities, accommodations, adaptations, specialized services, and supports needed for the student to progress toward achieving learning standards and to meet their unique needs related to the disability.

The CSE meets annually to discuss the following, as part of the IEP development process:

- The student's progress toward meeting the annual goals
- Caregiver concerns for the student's education
- Any new evaluation information (which can be completed by the school or an approved outside provider)
- The student's progress in the general education curriculum, including strengths, interests, and needs (or for preschool students, participation in appropriate activities)

- The student’s need for testing accommodations
- The least restrictive environment for the student
- Student exit options, including graduation and diploma options, as well as general state assessments and NYSAA

How can I make sure my student’s IEP reflects their postsecondary goals?

It is important for you and the student to attend the IEP meeting. At the meeting, you can share your ideas and ensure that the measurable postsecondary goals are reflected in the IEP.

Why should I encourage my student to write measurable postsecondary goals?

It is never too early to begin planning for the future. Together you can complete career and interest assessments to develop an understanding of the student’s strengths, preferences, and needs. Free assessments can be found online, or you can use the ones provided in this document. You can also connect with your student’s Transition Specialist (TS), Special Education Teacher, CSE Team, or Family and Community Engagement Center (FACE) specialist for more resources.

Training/Education

1. What are your favorite subjects in school?

2. What subjects (if any) do you NOT like?

3. What do you want to learn more about? (These do not have to be school subjects; they can be anything you are interested in.)

4. Where do you want to continue learning? This could include college, vocational training, driver's education classes, etc.

Measurable Postsecondary Training/Education Goal

Using the information above, write a measurable postsecondary goal specific to training/education. For example: *I am interested in animal care so I will attend a 2-year college to take courses in animal care.*

Employment

The questions below can help you and your student determine a career path, as well as which diploma option may be best for them. For more information specific to New York State (NYS) diploma options, navigate to the Overview of Transition Planning section of the Family Guide.

1. What things do you like to do? List your likes, skills, and talents: _____

2. What things do you really dislike doing? _____

3. If you could have any job, what would it be? _____

4. What do you think you would like most about the job? _____

5. What other jobs do you think you might like to try? _____

Measurable Postsecondary Employment Goal

Using the information above, write a measurable postsecondary goal for employment. For example: *I am interested in animal care. My goal is to work as a dog groomer as I participate in veterinary science courses.*

Independent Living

1. What do you like to do for fun outside of school or work? _____

2. Do you plan on moving out of your family's home at some point in your life?
___ YES (answer questions 3–6)
___ NO (do not answer questions 3–6)
3. When do you plan to move out? _____
4. Where would you like to live? _____

5. In what type of home do you plan on living after graduation? _____

6. Who, if anyone, would you like to live with? They can be specific people, or general groups such as friends, spouse, etc. _____

Measurable Postsecondary Independent Living Goals

Using the information above, write a measurable postsecondary goal specific to Independent Living. For example: *I will share an apartment with a friend. I will ride the public bus by myself and shop in the community.*

Appendix C: Transition Services Worksheet

Student Name: _____

Projected Graduation Date: _____

Home School District: _____

Age: _____

School Currently Attending: _____

	Employment/ Continuing Education	Recreation/ Leisure	Living Arrangements	Transport- ation	Medical/ Health	Financial/ Income	Advocacy/ Legal Guardianship Services	Personal/ Family Relationships
What is your immediate need in this area?								
Do you have any long-term concerns?								
Additional information needed in this area?								
What information do you have that will be helpful to us in addressing this area?								
What can we do right now to work together in this area? Please address any long-term concern.								
Who is responsible?								
Follow-up date:								

Appendix D: Transition Planning Profile

The Transition Planning Profile is a tool that can be used to think about success in the workplace. It puts information about strengths, interests, and needs into a simple visual format that can help a student make informed day-to-day decisions about their future based on their desires, strengths, and needs.

For example, a student who is deciding whether to apply for work at a library or at a fast food restaurant can review his profile to see that he prefers working in a quiet atmosphere and at his own pace. This might cause him to lean toward the library. His decision would be to apply to the library because it matches his strengths and preferences.

It is important when using this planning tool to remember that:

- The student's input is crucial to the success of any planning effort.
- Use language that is easy for the student to understand.
- Feedback from the school and other professionals working with your family can and should be included in the profile.
- The profile can and should be updated often.

Student Transition Planning Profile

	Strengths	Hurdles	Accommodations/ Skill Development
Self-Determination			
Work Tolerance			
Interpersonal Skills			
Communication Skills			
Mobility			

For More Information

Contacts

Transition Specialist

FACE Center Specialist

Additional Contacts

Endnotes

- ¹ Field, S., Martin, J., Miller, R., Ward, M., & Wehmeyer, M. (1998). *A practical guide for teaching self-determination*. Reston, VA: Council for Exceptional Children.
- ² Individuals with Disabilities Act, 20 U.S.C. § 1401(2004)
- ³ Individuals with Disabilities Act, 20 U.S.C. § 1401(2004)
- ⁴ Individuals with Disabilities Act, 20 U.S.C. § 1401(2004)
- ⁵ Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services United States Department of Education (2020). A Transition Guide to Postsecondary Education and Employment for Students and Youth with Disabilities. <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/transition/products/postsecondary-transition-guide-08-2020.pdf>
- ⁶ Caspe, M. & Lopez, E. M. (2014). How organizations provide learning opportunities for children and families. Harvard Family Research Project.
- ⁷ Caspe, M. & Lopez, E. M. (2014). How organizations provide learning opportunities for children and families. Harvard Family Research Project.
- ⁸ Epstein, J. L., Sanders, M. G., Sheldon, S. B., Simon, B. S., Salinas, K. C., Jansorn, N. R., ... & Williams, K. J. (2018). *School, family, and community partnerships: Your handbook for action*. Corwin Press.
- ⁹ Bryk, A.S., Sebring, P.B., Allensworth, E., Luppescu, S., & Easton, J. (2010). *Organizing schools for improvement: Lessons from Chicago*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- ¹⁰ Kohler, P. D., Gothberg, J. E., Fowler, C., & Coyle, J. (2016). Taxonomy for transition programming 2.0: A model for planning, organizing, and evaluating transition education, services, and programs. Western Michigan University.
- ¹¹ Wandry, D. L, & Pleet, A. M. (2012). Family involvement in transition planning. In ML Wehmeyer and K. W. Webb (Eds.) *Handbook of adolescent transition education for youth with disabilities*, (pp. 102-118). New York, NY: Routledge.
- ¹² National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth. (2019). *Guideposts for Success 2.0: A framework for successful youth transition to adulthood*. Washington, D.C.: Institute for Educational Leadership.
- ¹³ National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth. (2019). *Guideposts for Success 2.0: A framework for successful youth transition to adulthood*. Washington, D.C.: Institute for Educational Leadership.
- ¹⁴ Field, S., Martin, J., Miller, R., Ward, M., & Wehmeyer, M. (1998). *A practical guide for teaching self-determination*. Reston, VA: Council for Exceptional Children.
- ¹⁵ Test, D. W., Fowler, C., & Kohler, P. (2013). *Evidence-based practices and predictors in secondary education: What we know and what we still need to know*. Charlotte, NC: National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center.
- ¹⁶ National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth. (2019). *Guideposts for Success 2.0: A framework for successful youth transition to adulthood*. Washington, D.C.: Institute for Educational Leadership.
- ¹⁷ PACER Center (2017). *Transition planning tips for culturally diverse youth with disabilities*. <https://www.pacer.org/parent/php/PHP-c250.pdf>
- ¹⁸ Kim, K. H., & Morningstar, M. E. (2005). Transition planning involving culturally and linguistically diverse families. *Career Development for Exceptional Individuals*, 28(2), 92-103.

¹⁹ Larson, M., Richards, C., & Wills, J. (2010, December- 2011, January). Graduation requirements and diploma options: What families need to know. *Our Children*, 14-17. National PTA.

²⁰ Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services United States Department of Education (2020). A Transition Guide to Postsecondary Education and Employment for Students and Youth with Disabilities.

<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/transition/products/postsecondary-transition-guide-08-2020.pdf>