



Family Guide to Transition Planning

Preparing Students with Disabilities for Life After High School

Produced by the Technical Assistance Partnership for Transition (TAP) at Cornell University.



Welcome to the Family Guide to Transition Planning

The goal of this guide is to help families understand how to support their student in the transition from high school to adult life. This is often called transition planning. Family engagement in this process is key to improving student outcomes. This guide is for families to use as they begin and go through the transition planning process. Throughout the guide, embedded links point to a variety of resources, including professional development (PD) packages. These can be used to learn more about specific topics. Families are encouraged to review the entire guide but may want to focus on just one section at a time.



Use this QR code to get a digital copy of this file and access the many linked resources within.

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SECTION 1.0



Introduction (Section 1.0)

As students with disabilities get ready for adult life, it's important for everyone in their support network to work together. This includes the student's family, teachers, and service providers or agencies that support them. By sharing information and working together to provide the skills, supports, and services students need, they can help students prepare for the future. Embedded in this document are a variety of resources and tools that can assist with the transition planning process. This includes a user-friendly glossary of the terms and abbreviations used throughout this guide.

Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

Technical Terms

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 to achieve their goals for life after high school.

Committee on Special Education (CSE) is a team that includes the student, their family, school staff, and community organizations (when appropriate). The CSE team works together to build the student's IEP. In New York City (NYC), this is often referred to as an IEP team.

Coordinated set of transition activities are the activities and services that will help the student gain the skills needed to meet their goals.

Individualized Education Program (IEP) is a document that maps out the special education services and supports that will enable a student to make academic progress. It is updated annually and is based on the student's individual strengths, interests, and needs.

Measurable postsecondary goals are identified based off of student transition assessments starting with the IEP in effect when the student turns 15, focusing on the student's goals for life after high school.

Postsecondary means after high school.

Self-determination means acting or causing things to happen as you set and work toward goals in your life.

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

Office of Special Education (OSE) Educational Partnership Terms

OSE Educational Partnership is a collaboration of schools and community organizations that focus on improving services and supports for students with disabilities. The partnership includes regional centers which can be found at OSEpartnership.org.

- **Family and Community Engagement (FACE) Centers** work collaboratively with families and schools. They provide coaching and professional development to promote meaningful family involvement within the educational system, build collaborative community relationships, and provide information and training. [Find your FACE Center here.](#)
- **Regional Partnership Centers (RPC)** provide targeted support to help school districts improve services, supports, and outcomes for students with disabilities.

Common Acronyms

Since these acronyms may be new to you, they will be spelled out the first time they are used in each section of the guide. You will also learn more about each of these terms throughout the guide.

Acronym	Definition
AAC	Augmentative and Alternative Communication
ACCES-VR	Adult Career and Continuing Education Services-Vocational Rehabilitation
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
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
FAPE	Free Appropriate Public Education
FACE Center	Family and Community Engagement Center
GED	General Educational Development Test
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
IEP	Individualized Education Program
ILC	Independent Living Center
NYSAA	New York State Alternate Assessment
NYSCB	New York State Commission for the Blind
OMH	Office of Mental Health
OPWDD	Office for People with Developmental Disabilities

Acronym	Definition
OT	Occupational Therapy
Pre-ETS	Pre-Employment Transition Services
PT	Physical Therapy
RPC	Regional Partnership Center
SDI	Specially Designed Instruction
SED	State Education Department
SSA	Social Security Administration
SSDI	Social Security Disability Insurance
SSI	Supplemental Security Income
VR	Vocational Rehabilitation
WBL	Work-Based Learning
WIOA	Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act

What Is Transition Planning?

Transition planning is the ongoing process of preparing students with disabilities for the adult life they choose after high school. A truly successful transition process comes from comprehensive team planning that is driven by the dreams, desires, and abilities of students. A transition plan provides the basic structure for preparing an individual to live, work, and play in the community, as fully and independently as possible.¹

When students exit the school system, they will no longer receive the same supports and services. Some questions to consider when thinking about life after high school include: What

¹ 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>

will happen in their life beyond the school schedule? What will their weekly schedule look like? What kind of activities will be on their calendar? Where will they work or live?

The transition process is a “big picture” concept, and yet, it happens on a daily basis. Keeping the big picture in mind will help to guide the everyday activities that will lead to the student’s transition goals.

Here are three questions that should be discussed with the student:

Where are
you now?

Where do you
want to go?

How do you
get there?

These questions and more are discussed with a **team known as the CSE that is made up of the student, their family, school staff, and community organizations (when appropriate)**. The CSE shares information, agrees on goals, and creates a plan for the student’s life after high school. This includes **where the student would like to work, learn, and live after high school**. The plan should also honor the **student’s and family’s cultural values and priorities**. This information is documented in an IEP, which is a living document that changes and develops as your child does. It is like a roadmap that plots an educational journey guiding students through high school and toward their desired post-school activities. (See *Section 3: Transition in the IEP* for more information.)

Transition planning is an ongoing process that is a student-centered, collaborative effort across multiple school years. During transition planning, the following should be considered:

- Results of age-appropriate, culturally responsive transition assessments
- Family and student input as valued partners in the planning process
- Cultural and family values
- Collaboration with participating state and community agencies to provide the student with appropriate services to meet post-school goals
- Coursework to meet the requirements for a New York State (NYS) Diploma or Exiting Commencement Credential
- Instruction toward the CDOS credential option
- Opportunities for career development activities, including in-school and out-of-school job training, WBL, and CTE coursework

PURPOSE of Transition Planning	To help students and families create a vision for the future about where the student will work, learn, and participate in their community.
FOCUS of Transition Planning	• Future education and training • Future careers and employment • Independent living and community participation • Self-determination

What are transition services?

Transition services provide the instruction, supports, and opportunities needed for the student to achieve their future goals. Services may include:

- Related instruction (e.g., resource room)
- Related services (e.g., speech therapy, counseling services, physical therapy)
- Community and employment experiences (e.g., job shadowing, WBL experiences)
- Development of employment and adult living objectives (e.g., identifying steps toward independent travel, exploring entry-level job options, planning for supported living)
- Learning daily living skills (e.g., budgeting, meal preparation, managing personal schedules)
- Functional vocational evaluation (e.g., observations of a student performing work tasks)
- Connections to adult services (e.g., introductions to State and community agencies)
- Courses of study (e.g., selecting classes aligned with a career pathway, enrolling in CTE programs)

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 make progress towards those goals.

For example, if a student wants to work as a chef in a restaurant, transition planning will involve creating a plan to help prepare the student for becoming a chef. This plan might include taking a culinary CTE class, participating in a WBL experience in a food service setting, learning social skills, and applying to ACCES-VR for job assistance.

Who is eligible for transition services in NYS?

Federal law requires transition planning for students with disabilities to begin with the first IEP in effect at age 16. However, NYS law requires transition planning to begin even earlier. In NYS, transition planning must begin **no later than the first IEP to be in effect when the student turns age 15** and updated annually. If determined appropriate, it may even begin at a younger age.

Once the transition planning process begins, the school **must invite the student to participate in CSE meetings**. (As a reminder, in NYC this may be referred to as an IEP meeting.) This doesn't mean that students can't or shouldn't attend at younger ages, when appropriate. Participating in their CSE meetings can help students understand their educational services and accommodations. It also allows the team to hear directly from the student about their strengths, interests, goals, and challenges. Family members are also essential members of the CSE team and can provide important information about the student to inform the transition planning process. Moreover, NYS regulation requires students aged 12 to receive an assessment to determine vocational skills, aptitudes, and interests.² This includes students who are over the age of 12 and are referred to special education for the first time. *More information on this can be found in Section 3: Transition in the IEP.*



Looking for more information on an Introduction to Transition?

Connect with your local FACE Center about the following trainings:

- “An Introduction to Transition Planning”
- “What is an IEP? For Families of School-Age Students”

² Individuals with Disabilities Act, 20 U.S.C. § 1401. (2004).

The header graphic features a dark green background on the left with the text 'SECTION 2.0' in large, white, sans-serif font. To the right, there is a photograph of a wooden gavel resting on a wooden surface, with several books visible in the background. The books have spines with gold lettering, including the words 'LEGAL' and 'CONV'.

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**. These laws and regulations provide standards relevant to transition planning for students with disabilities.

The **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)** of 1990 is a federal law that makes it illegal to discriminate based on disability.

The **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)** of 2004 is a federal law that mandates equity, accountability, and excellence in education for children with disabilities. It authorizes the Individualized Education Program (IEP), which is described in Section 1.0.

The **Rehabilitation Act** is a federal law that defines transition as a coordinated set of activities for a student that promote movement from school to post-school activities. This includes postsecondary education, vocational training, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, and community participation. The Rehabilitation Act also makes a clear distinction between a “student with a disability” and “youth with a disability” for purposes of Section 504.

The [Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act \(WIOA\)](#) requires job exploration services be provided to help students with disabilities. WIOA requires [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). These services include job exploration counseling, work-based learning (WBL) experiences, counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or postsecondary educational programs, workplace readiness training to develop social skills and independent living, and instruction in self-advocacy (including instruction in person-centered planning) which may include peer mentoring.

New York State (NYS) Regulations of the Commissioner of Education

School Guidance/Counseling Programs

Regulations: [Section 100.2\(j\)](#)

Schools have to make sure students in kindergarten through twelfth grade have access to a school counselor. School counseling and guidance programs prepare students for future college and career opportunities. Programs help students build age-appropriate skills related to college and career readiness, academics, and social-emotional development standards. Programs provide information, skill building, and support to help students learn about and access current and future educational programs.

In grades six through twelve, counselors make annual individual progress review plans for each student. These plans provide updates on each student’s educational progress and career plan. A student’s individual progress review plan is separate from their IEP. However, the two plans must be consistent with each other. In other words, they need to align and support each other. For example, the Committee on Special Education (CSE) team should consider the information in the individual progress review plan when identifying the student’s postsecondary goals and transition services in their IEP. For this reason, the best practice is for the school counselor to meet with the student to create the individual progress review plan prior to the CSE team meeting to update the IEP.

Middle School Instruction in Career Development and Occupational Studies (CDOS) and Career and Technical Education (CTE)

Regulations: [Section 100.4\(c\)](#)

All middle school students receive instruction aligned to standards in CDOS and CTE. For CTE, the student must complete 1¾ units of study:

- One unit of study is equal to three hours of instruction per week for a school year.
- Instruction can begin as early as grade five.
- Instruction can be delivered by teachers appropriately certified in a CTE content area.

Initial Career Assessment

Regulations: [Section 200.4\(b\)\(6\)\(viii\)](#)

Students age 12, and those referred to special education for the first time who are age 12 and over, **shall receive an assessment** that includes:

- A review of school records and teacher assessments
- Parent/family and student interviews to determine vocational skills, aptitudes, and interests

Transition Services

Regulations: [Section 200.4\(d\)\(2\)\(ix\)](#)

Transition planning must be included in each student's IEP starting when the student is age 15. This means that at the CSE meeting prior to the student turning 15, transition planning must be discussed. Transition planning can also begin at a younger age, if appropriate. The IEP must be updated annually and include the following:

- **Present levels of performance:** Include a statement of the student's needs, strengths, preferences, and interests related to transitioning from school to post-school activities.
- **Measurable postsecondary goals:** Based on age-appropriate transition assessments in the areas of training, education, employment and, where appropriate, independent living skills.

- **Transition needs:** The student’s needs as they relate to transition from school to post-school activities. This includes the “courses of study”—coursework and programs—to be provided to the student to reach their postsecondary goals.
- **Annual goals:** Based on the student’s current knowledge, skills, and progress towards grade level learning standards.
- **Transition services:** A coordinated set of activities to support the student's transition from school to post-school activities. *See Section 3: Transition Planning in the IEP for a full description of services.*

Diploma Requirements

Regulations: [Section 100.5](#)

See the Diploma and Credential Options subsection of section 4 for more information.

Discussion of Diploma and Credential Requirements

Regulations: [Section 200.4\(d\)\(2\)\(ix\)\(b\)-\(c\)](#)

Once transition planning has begun (by age 15), the CSE team will discuss graduation requirements, diploma options, and the student’s progress. The school should make sure:

- Families receive written information explaining the graduation requirements.
- Families understand that graduating from high school with a diploma ends their child’s entitlement to a free appropriate public education.

Student Exit Summary

Regulations: [Section 200.4\(c\)\(4\)](#)

School districts are required to provide students with IEPs who leave high school with an exit summary of the student’s academic achievement and functional performance. The exit summary includes recommendations on how to support the student in meeting their postsecondary goals.



Looking for more information on transition laws and guiding principles?

Connect with your local Family and Community Engagement (FACE) Center about the following trainings:

- “Agency 101”
- “An Introduction to Transition Planning”
- “Supporting Your Child in WBL Experiences”
- “What Is an IEP? For Families of School-Age Students”

SECTION 3.0



Transition Planning in the IEP (Section 3.0)

How and when to begin transition planning?

Transition planning for a student's future **begins as early as elementary school** with career awareness and exploration activities. In New York State (NYS), the Committee on Special Education (CSE) begins formal transition planning when developing the Individualized Education Program (IEP) that will be in effect when **a student turns 15**. This means that beginning at age 14 a student must be invited to their CSE meeting to participate in their transition planning, because the student will turn 15 during the time this IEP is in effect. This will continue each year. It is important to discuss with students what their goals are for the future and how they want to participate in the transition planning process. It is helpful to prepare them for the meeting by talking with students about what happens during the meeting, who attends, and how they can participate.

Every school year until the day before the student's 22nd birthday or the student obtains a high school diploma, whichever occurs first, there needs to be thoughtful and comprehensive transition planning at the CSE meeting and on their transition plan.

CSE membership in NYS includes:

- Parent/Guardian
- Student (when appropriate)
- One general education teacher
- One special education teacher/provider
- District representative (CPSE or CSE Chairperson)
- Others with knowledge/expertise
- Individual to interpret evaluations (this may be someone listed above, other than the parent)

Additional members as requested (by the student or family)

- School physician
- Parent member (a parent of a student with a disability who provides insight, supports communication, and helps ensure the family's perspective is represented during the meeting)
- Agency representative (from an agency who is likely to provide or pay for transition services)

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

Families provide valuable information for transition planning and must be invited to CSE meetings. Families:

- Provide knowledge of the student's strengths, struggles, and development
- Provide information on the student's medical history
- Provide information about the student's experiences at home and in the community
- Offer thoughts about whether current strategies and instruction are helping the student
- Offer suggestions for change and improvement

Transition Planning in the IEP

Transition planning begins with transition assessment. Transition assessments help gather information about the **student's strengths, preferences, interests, and needs as well as their goals for after high school. These assessments should be done together with the student, school district, family, and community agencies.** A variety of transition assessments are used based on what we need to know to develop a transition plan that centers around the student. These may be formal assessments (such as standardized tests, aptitude tests, and achievement

tests) or informal assessments (such as teacher/family observations, student interviews, and career interest inventories). *See Appendix A for sample strength-based assessments for students and families.*

Students with disabilities will complete their first career interest and skills assessment by age 12 at the latest, as required in NYS. **This assessment process then continues throughout the high school years.** Families are an essential partner in the process and should be included in discussions around planning, conducting, and reviewing transition assessments.

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

These individualized transition assessments are used as the basis for creating an IEP that identifies and supports the student's identified goals for life after high school. Once transition assessments are completed, educators use the information to write the present levels of performance, measurable postsecondary goals, course(s) of study, annual goals, and coordinated set of transition activities located within the student's IEP.

For more information on what a New York State Education Department (NYSED) IEP looks like, and examples educators may use in each section, click here—[NYSED IEP Template](#).

The following explains the sections of the IEP that are most relevant to transition planning.

Present Levels of Performance

In addition to describing a student's academic achievement, social and physical development, and management needs, transition-focused present levels of performance summarize the results of transition assessments, 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 goals.

Measurable Postsecondary Goals

Starting with the IEP that will be in place when a student is 15 years old, the CSE 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 or participate in productive activities 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, based on age-appropriate transition assessments, and should reflect the student and family’s cultural beliefs and values. Postsecondary goals are reviewed and updated as needed every year. *For an additional resource see Appendix B: Planning for the Future with Measurable Postsecondary Goals.*

Sample Goals:

Education/Training:

After high school, Lisa will attend a two-year college to take courses in animal care.

After graduation, Levi will receive training on job skills through the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) Pathway to Employment.

Employment:

After graduation, Lisa will work as a dog groomer as she pursues courses in veterinary science.

After high school, with the support of a job coach, Levi will work as a part-time grocery stocker.

Independent Living Skills:

After high school, Lisa will live with family and manage personal finances independently.

After high school, Levi will utilize Community Habilitation services to attend sporting events and art classes.

Transition Needs and Courses of Study

Based on the student's goals for after high school, transition needs and courses of study are identified. Transition needs are the skills, behaviors, and/or experiences the student needs to achieve their goals for after high school.

Sample Transition Needs:

Lisa needs to develop self-advocacy, time management, editing, and financial literacy skills; be able to complete job application forms independently; learn appropriate work habits when supervisor is not present; and develop community leisure skills.

Levi needs to develop social, self-advocacy, and self-regulation skills; learn work skills such as problem solving and following picture schedules; and develop safety skills to navigate his community with less help.

Courses of study are the high school courses and programs that the student will take while in high school to prepare them to meet their post-school goals. **Examples of courses of study might include elective classes and/or a series of courses in a Career and Technical Education (CTE) field related to the student's goals for after high school.** Having high expectations and providing the student with appropriate support positively impacts decisions made regarding the student's course of study. These decisions are likely to have a positive impact on their post-school opportunities.

Sample Courses of Study:

Lisa plans to go to college for animal care. Beyond the required curriculum for a diploma, she needs to take courses that include animal biology and computer processing. To provide job exploration and skill development, her course of study should include CTE courses in veterinary science.

Levi will receive Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) in a modified general education curriculum that includes skill development in the following areas: life skills, functional reading, adaptive physical education, and art. In addition, Levi will be working toward Career Development and Occupational Studies (CDOS) learning standards to support the Skills and Achievement Commencement Credential.

Measurable Annual Goals

Measurable annual goals describe **what the student is expected to achieve in one year**. The goals are aligned with the academic, social, and physical skills the student needs 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 for Lisa:

Example 1: When given a writing assignment, Lisa will use a tablet or other device to write and edit the assignment that meets a 3 on the English Language Arts (ELA) rubric.

Example 2: When given a work-based learning (WBL) task, Lisa will complete the task with zero prompts.

Example 3: When given a series of 10 practical scenarios, Lisa will use a problem-solving approach to solve financial math problems with 75% accuracy.

Sample Goals for Levi:

Example 1: When given a topic, Levi will use his Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) device to engage in 4 conversational turns with a peer.

Example 2: When given a 5-step task and a picture schedule, Levi will complete 5 out of 5 steps.

Recommended Programs and Services

The IEP must indicate the recommended programs and services, including related services that will be provided for the student to:

- Advance appropriately toward their annual goals
- Be involved and progress in the general education curriculum (or for preschool students, in appropriate activities)
- Participate in extracurricular and other nonacademic activities
- Learn and participate in activities with other students with disabilities and nondisabled students

Sample Programs and Services:

Programs and Services	Service Delivery Recommendations	Frequency	Duration	Location
Program:				
Resource Room	Instruction on use of assistive technology, organization and self-regulation strategies	3x per week	60 minutes per session	Resource room
Related Services:				
Speech and Language Therapy	Small group	1x per week	40 minutes per session	Therapy room
Supplementary Aids, Modifications, and Accommodations:				
Breaks	After 1 hour of work	Daily	Community-based work experience	Work site
Assistive Technology:				
Tablet with task charts	Pictures accompanied with written words	Daily	Community-based work experience	Work site

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 postsecondary goals**. The CSE 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 (only included if the student has a related service identified in special education programs and services)
- Community experiences
- Employment or other post-school adult living objectives

- Acquisition of daily living skills (if appropriate)
- Functional vocational assessment (if appropriate)

Examples of activities for each category are listed below.

Instruction

Identify any courses and/or instruction in specific skills:

- CTE courses in Culinary Arts
- Instruction in strategies for note taking
- Instruction in self-advocacy skills
- Electronics elective
- SDI in problem-solving

Related Services (only included if the student has a related service identified in special education programs and services)

Identify any service related to the improvement of job skills:

- School social work to improve coping skills
- Speech and language services to develop communication skills for a work setting
- Physical Therapy (PT) to improve stamina
- Counseling to develop self-advocacy skills
- Occupational Therapy (OT) to improve dressing and self-care

Community Experiences

Identify any service or experience a student needs to participate in their community or to learn how to access community resources:

- Research services provided at the public library
- Practice banking in the community
- Job shadowing experience in two occupations of interest
- Learn to take the bus to the community center
- Identify community recreational activities

Development of Employment and Other Post-School Adult Living Objectives

Identify any service or activity the student needs to prepare for employment or other adult goals:

- Utilize online resources to explore careers in an industry of interest
- Practice interviewing skills
- Initiate an intake referral for Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS)
- Participate in the school's work experience program
- Practice completing sample college and employment applications
- Tour day habilitation programs for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities

Daily Living Skills (when appropriate)

Identify any service or activity to assist the student in learning daily living skills:

- Learn how to read and follow a bus schedule
- Identify steps to use a stove safely
- Plan and manage a weekly schedule
- Learn to choose appropriate clothing for different seasons/occasions
- Create a budget to purchase items needed to live independently based on a sample salary

Functional Vocational Assessment (when appropriate)

Identify if the student needs an assessment in an actual or simulated work setting or with real work sample experiences to determine strengths, abilities, and needs.

- An evaluation with a local community agency which includes worksite observations
- Ongoing observations at WBL sites to assess work-appropriate socialization skills
- An assessment to demonstrate greeting customers at two community-based worksites

Sample Coordinated Set of Transition Activities for Lisa:

Service	Activity
Instruction	SDI in self-advocacy skills
Related Services	Considered, not needed
Community Experiences	Access and identify leisure activities from a local community page
Development of Employment and Other Post-School Adult Living Objectives	Complete two job applications independently
Daily Living Skills (when appropriate)	Plan and manage a weekly schedule
Functional Vocational Assessment (when appropriate)	Considered, not needed

Sample Coordinated Set of Transition Activities for Levi:

Service	Activity
Instruction	SDI in functional reading
Related Services	Speech therapy to develop social skills using AAC device
Community Experiences	Instruction in community safety skills
Development of Employment and Other Post-School Adult Living Objectives	Participate in WBL at the school store
Daily Living Skills (when appropriate)	Engage in role-playing to practice self-advocacy skills
Functional Vocational Assessment (when appropriate)	Participate in a situational assessment to demonstrate conversational turn-taking at two community-based worksites



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

Connect with your local Family and Community Engagement (FACE) Center about the following trainings:

- “An Introduction to Transition Planning”
- “Early Steps to Future Careers: Embedding Career Development into Elementary School”
- “Student Involvement in the IEP for Families”
- “What is an IEP? For Families of School-Age Students”

SECTION 4.0



Diploma and Credential Options (Section 4.0)

A high school diploma is required for most jobs, colleges, and United States (US) military branches. It's important for families to understand what classes and tests are required to earn a diploma. Students with severe disabilities who take the New York State Alternate Assessment (NYSAA) in all subjects in high school do not qualify for a diploma. NYSAA is only for students with the most severe cognitive disabilities. Students who qualify will take NYSAA and not the Regents examinations. NYSAA measures student performance on different standards that are less complex than the standards assessed by the Regents examinations. Instead of a diploma, students who take NYSAA will receive a Skills and Achievement Commencement Credential. *See the Commencement Credential Options section below for more information.*

Students with disabilities have the right to attend school until the day before their 22nd birthday or they obtain a high school diploma, whichever comes first. The State Education Department's (SED) Office of Special Education (OSE) recommends that school districts consider providing such services through the end of the school year in which they turn 22 or upon the receipt of a high school diploma, whichever occurs first. This should be a larger discussion between schools and families concerning students' transition from school to post-school activities.

Students, families, educators, and community and State agencies should work together to plan and track both academic and personal accomplishments. This can help improve the student's opportunities after high school.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and New York State (NYS) regulations require schools to provide a student with a disability with a [Student Exit Summary](#). This document provides a detailed description of:

- The student's academic achievement and functional performance
- Recommendations on how to assist the student in meeting their postsecondary goals

Once transition planning has formally begun at age 15, the progress a student has made toward graduation must be discussed with families and parents must be provided with written information explaining graduation requirements. As the student progresses through school, their courses of study should be adjusted to reflect the student's changing strengths, interests, and future plans.

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

Diploma Options

The Board of Regents is currently working to transform what it looks like to graduate with a high school diploma in NYS. These changes are guided by the work of the Blue-Ribbon Commission on Graduation Measures. The plan is called "NY Inspires." As part of this plan, the Board of Regents adopted the new [NYS Portrait of a Graduate](#). It is important to note **the current graduation requirements remain in effect for all public-school students in NYS until specific changes are approved by the Board of Regents.** However, there is a new [exemption from diploma testing requirements](#) for students who experience a major life event (such as medical conditions, death of a family member, or other trauma).

There are currently **three types of high school diplomas**: local, Regents, and Regents with Advanced Designation. Alternatively, a student can earn a High School Equivalency diploma through one of four pathways:

- [Passing the General Educational Development Test \(GED® Test\)](#)
- [Earning 24 college credits](#)
- [Completing the National External Diploma Program](#)
- [Passing a combination of GED subject tests along with Regents subject tests](#)

To earn a diploma, students must earn 22 course credits (as outlined in the table below), pass four required Regents assessments (one in each subject area—English Language Arts [ELA], Math, Science, Social Studies), and meet requirements of one approved pathway assessment option (Arts, Career and Technical Education [CTE], Career Development and Occupational Studies [CDOS], Civics, Humanities, Science/Math, or World Languages). 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.

The 22 credits referenced above for graduation options include:

Subject	Credits
English	4
Social Studies <i>Distributed as follows:</i> • Global History and Geography (2) • U.S. History (1) • Participation in Government (1/2) • Economics (1/2)	4
Science <i>Distributed as follows:</i> • Life Science (1) • Physical Science (1) • Life Science or Physical Science (1)	3
Mathematics	3
World Languages	1
Visual Art, Music, Dance, and/or Theater	1
Physical Education <i>Participation each semester</i>	2
Health	0.5
Electives	3.5
Total	22

In New York City (NYC), students must earn 44 credits to graduate. The distribution is the same across subject areas, however; credit requirements are doubled because course credit is assigned in a different manner than the rest of the state.

A student with a disability may be excused from the required credit in World Languages but must still earn 22 credits to graduate. This exemption must be noted on the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP).

Regents Diploma

- Earn 22 credits (44 credits in NYC).
- Score 65 or higher on four Regents examinations (ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies) and meet requirements of one approved pathway assessment option (Arts, Career and Technical Education [CTE], Career Development and Occupational Studies [CDOS], Civics, Humanities, Science/Math, or World Languages).
- Regents diploma through one successful appeal: score 65 or higher on three required Regents examinations, successful appeal of one Regents examination score of 60–64, and meet requirements of one approved pathway assessment option.

Regents with Advanced Designation

- Earn 22 credits (44 credits in NYC).
- Score 65 or higher on seven Regents examinations (three Math, two Science [one Physical Science and one Life Science], one English, and one Social Studies).
- Successful completion of one [pathway](#) assessment (Arts, CTE, CDOS, Civics, Humanities, STEM, or World Languages).
- Choose one of three sequence options (a group of courses building upon a student's skills and interests in a particular area). Sequences are available in either World Languages, Arts, or CTE. A student who is exempt from the diploma credit in World Languages is also exempt from the sequence required for advanced designation.

Appeal Process for Regents Examinations

A student who has failed either one or two of the required Regents examinations twice, has participated in academic help, and meets all credit and course requirements may appeal to graduate with a diploma using a lower score. An appeal may be given to the principal by a student, parent, or teacher and recommended by the teacher or department chairperson in the

subject of the Regents examination under appeal. A school appeal committee makes a recommendation to the superintendent to approve or deny the appeal.

Local Diploma (for all students)

- Earn 22 credits (44 credits in NYC).
- Score 65 or higher on two required Regents examinations, successfully appeal two Regents examination scores of 60–64, and meet requirements of one pathway assessment option.

Appeal for Low Score on a Regents Exam (for students who are classified as English Language Learners [ELL])

- Earn 22 credits (44 credits in NYC).
- Score 65 or higher on two required Regents examinations, successfully appeal one ELA Regents examination score of 55–59, meet requirements of one pathway assessment option, and may appeal one Regents examination score of 60–64 if needed.
- Must have entered the United States in high school to be eligible.

Local Diploma Safety Net Options (for students with disabilities)

Low Pass Safety Net (for students with a current IEP, if recommended in a 504 Accommodation Plan, or if recommended for students declassified in 8th grade or later)

- Earn 22 credits (44 credits in NYC).
- Score 55 or higher on four required Regents examinations and meet the requirements of one pathway assessment option.

Low Pass Safety Net with Appeal (for students with a current IEP, if recommended in a 504 Accommodation Plan, or if recommended for students declassified in 8th grade or later)

- Score 55 or higher on two required Regents examinations, successfully appeal up to two Regents examinations scores of 52–54, and meet requirements of one pathway assessment option.

Compensatory Safety Net Option (for students with a current IEP, or if recommended in a 504 Accommodation Plan, or if recommended for students declassified in 8th grade or later)

- A score of 65 or higher on any single Regents examination may compensate for a score between 45–54 on either a Social Studies or Science Regents examination.
- Each passing examination can only be used to compensate for one exam with a low score.
- Students must score 55 on Math and ELA Regents examinations (or 52–54 through successful appeal) and meet course requirements.

Superintendent’s Determination Option (for students with a current IEP only)

For a student who participated in all Regents examinations and does not meet graduation requirements through safety net options, a parent/guardian may submit a written request for the superintendent to review other evidence of graduation level proficiency (required credits and coursework) in the subject areas in which the student has not earned the minimum Regents examination scores. To be able to ask for this type of review for Math and ELA Regents examination scores, the student must have completed the requirements for the CDOS Commencement Credential. The student and parent/guardian must receive **written** notice of the superintendent’s decision that the student has either met or has not met the requirements for the award of a local diploma.

If you believe your student is not on track to graduate, speak to your school’s 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:
[Graduation Requirements Guidance and Resources—Family Resources](#)

Commencement Credential Options

NYS has **two credential options** for students with disabilities. **These credentials are not diplomas and cannot be used to apply to college, the military, and some vocational training programs or jobs** that require a high school diploma or [high school equivalency exam](#).

CDOS Commencement Credential:

- Is a credential that recognizes the student's readiness for entry-level employment
- Includes a Career Plan and Employability Profile
- Can help a student earn a diploma, supplement a diploma, or serve as a standalone credential for students **who do not earn a diploma**
- Cannot be earned by students who participate in the NYSAA testing program in all subject areas

CDOS Commencement Credential Option 1 Requirements:

Students must have:

- Attended school for 12 years, excluding kindergarten, or until the day before their 22nd birthday
- Developed a Career Plan documenting career goals and preparation
- Completed a minimum of 216 hours of CTE coursework (with a minimum of 54 hours of Work-Based Learning [WBL]) and/or WBL experiences
- At least one Employability Profile documenting work-related skills and experiences
- Demonstrated commencement level achievement of CDOS Learning Standards in:
 - Career development
 - Integrated learning
 - Universal foundation skills

CDOS Commencement Credential Option 2 Requirements:

- Passes a New York State Education Department (NYSED)-approved nationally recognized work readiness assessment

Students may exit high school with the CDOS Commencement Credential if they are able to meet these requirements but are not able to meet diploma requirements. At no point should a decision be made that a student stop working toward earning a high school diploma in order to concentrate only on earning this credential.

Skills and Achievement Commencement Credential

Students in NYS who are assessed using the [NYSAA](#) will exit high school with the Skills and Achievement Commencement Credential. This credential is **NOT** a high school diploma. As such, it limits students' options for education and employment after high school. Generally, most

jobs, colleges, postsecondary training programs, and US military branches require a high school diploma.

Every year, the Committee on Special Education (CSE) team is required to discuss and decide whether a student will take NYSA or general assessments. Families must be included in this decision. To prepare for this conversation, use the questions in Appendix C. NYS has a [decision-making tool](#) to help the team decide whether a student should take NYSA. A student must meet all the criteria in order to be eligible. Remember, even students who may struggle with Regents examinations have multiple options for earning a diploma (*see Diploma Options above*).

This credential provides learning experiences both in school and, whenever possible and appropriate, in the community, to support and improve opportunities for post-school living, learning, and earning.

Similar to the Regents Diploma, local diploma, and CDOS Commencement Credential, schools must provide an Exit Summary for students who are awarded a Skills and Achievement Commencement Credential. The [Skills and Achievement Exit Summary](#) includes detailed information on the student's skills and strengths and levels of independence in academic, career development and foundation skills needed for post-school living, learning and working.

Skills and Achievement Commencement Credential requirements:

- Students must have attended school for at least 12 years (excluding kindergarten) or until the day before their 22nd birthday.
- Students have eligibility to participate in the NYSA testing program indicated on their IEP.

For the most current information on exiting credentials, visit [Standards and Instruction—Exiting Credentials](#).

For more information on NYSA, visit [NYSA Parent Resources](#).

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:³

- 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

What do schools need to share and discuss with families?

The development of transition goals and services (at age 15) must include a discussion with the student's parents including:

- Graduation requirements (these can vary depending on the year in which the student enters grade nine)
- Progress toward graduating with a diploma (including the courses the student has passed and number of credits the student has earned)
- Assessments required for graduation that the student has taken and passed
- The appeal, safety net, and superintendent determination options that may be available to the student

—(Section 200.4(d)(2)(ix)(b))

At the CSE meeting in which transition services will be discussed, the student's parents will be provided with **written** information explaining the graduation requirements, including:

- How to seek an appeal to graduate with a lower score on a Regents examination.
- How to request that a student be considered for a local diploma through the superintendent determination pathway.
- Information that graduation from high school will end their child's entitlement to a free public education.

³ 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.

Before your student graduates from high school, you will receive a written letter with important information. This letter identifies the diploma or credential your student is receiving. It also informs you that your student is no longer eligible to receive free special education (i.e., Free Appropriate Public Education [FAPE]) after graduating with a diploma. However, if your student exits high school with either the CDOS Commencement Credential or the Skills and Achievement Commencement Credential as their only exiting credential, they are eligible to attend school until the day before their 22nd birthday.



Want to know more about diploma and credential options?

Connect with your local Family and Community Engagement (FACE) Center about the following trainings:

- “CDOS Learning Standards Across the Lifespan: Connecting Skills to Knowledge”
- “Diploma and Credential Options for Students with Disabilities”
- “NYSAA: Essential Information for Families of Students with Disabilities”
- “What is an IEP? For Families of School-Age Students”

SECTION 5.0



How Families Can Support Transition Planning (Section 5.0)

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. Learning doesn't just happen at school. Family members play an important role in helping students continue their learning outside of school, too. These experiences help students develop skills and practical knowledge to be successful both in school and in life.⁴

Families can partner with educators to help students prepare for life after high school in many ways. One key way is through the Individualized Education Program (IEP) transition planning process, where families are invited to Committee on Special Education (CSE) meetings and serve as partners with the school in IEP decision-making. It's important for families to understand this process so that they can share ideas, help make decisions, and support their

⁴ Caspe, M. & Lopez, E. M. (2014). How organizations provide learning opportunities for children and families. Harvard Family Research Project.

students. The following chart gives many examples of important roles families can play in transition planning:

Role of Family	How This Can Support Transition Planning
Communicating high expectations	Families let students know they believe in their ability to learn and achieve their goals. They talk with students about their interests, goals, and plans for the future. They explain how important school is and how it will help students achieve their goals.
Monitoring student performance	Families stay up to date on assignments, testing results, homework completion, and other academic progress. This can happen through online portals and other methods of communication.
Supporting student learning at home	Families model the importance of reading and learning. They also help students connect what is learned to everyday activities. For example, families can engage students in projects at home (such as cooking, building, and cleaning). They can also explore career interests and life skills (for example, trips to the bank, colleges and trade schools, volunteering, work-based learning (WBL), and adult service providers).
Guiding the student's education	Families engage students in conversations about the student's future goals and planning how to achieve these goals. This can include helping them select appropriate classes, volunteer opportunities, extracurricular activities, and other experiences.
Advocating for the student	Families encourage the students to become their own advocates 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.

What does research tell us about family engagement and postsecondary transition?⁵

- Having positive school and family relationships is essential for school improvement.⁶
- Strong partnerships between schools and families have a positive effect on graduation rates, employment, and achievement of postsecondary goals.⁷
- Families play an important role in fostering the development of self-determination skills (e.g., goal setting, problem-solving, decision making) that help students achieve postsecondary goals.⁸

In addition to the postsecondary outcomes, research also shows us that family involvement and engagement improves school-age outcomes such as:

- Higher grades and test scores
- Better attendance
- More positive behavior
- Higher graduation rate
- Better social skills⁹

⁵ 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.

⁶ Bryk, A.S., Sebring, P.B., Allensworth, E., Luppescu, S., & Easton, J. (2010). *Organizing schools for improvement: Lessons from Chicago*. University of Chicago Press.

⁷ 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.

⁸ Wandry, D. L., & Pleet, A. M. (2012). Family involvement in transition planning. In M. L. Wehmeyer and K. W. Webb (Eds.), *Handbook of adolescent transition education for youth with disabilities*, (pp. 102-118). Routledge.

⁹ Henderson, A. T., & Mapp, K. L. (2002). *A new wave of evidence: The impact of school, family, and community connections on student achievement*. Annual Synthesis. <https://sedl.org/connections/resources/evidence.pdf>

Van Voorhis, F. L., Maier, M. F., Epstein, J. L., & Lloyd, C. M. (2013, October). The impact of family involvement on the education of children ages 3 to 8: A focus on literacy and math achievement outcomes and social-emotional skills (ERIC Document No. ED545474). MDRC. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED545474.pdf>.

How can families help the student by being involved in transition planning?

Families can help students learn skills they need to reach postsecondary goals. Families can support student transition by:¹⁰

- Setting high expectations for what the student can do
- Being actively involved in their education
- Participating in CSE and transition meetings
- Helping students build skills to participate in CSE meetings and advocate for what they need
- Shifting gradually from being 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

Consider using this linked resource for [Tips to Maximize the Parent Role in Transition](#).

What is the student's role in transition planning?

Students' involvement in their CSE meetings has a number of benefits that support their journeys to adulthood. **Students should play an active role in planning for their own future and must be invited to CSE meetings.** The student's participation and voice in CSE meetings will help them to understand their disability, their strengths, and the academic and social/emotional areas that they will continue to develop. CSE meetings are also an opportunity for students to discuss their goals and learn about the unique accommodations or modifications that can support them. Families can help students develop the confidence and skills they need to participate.

Family members, educators, and other supportive adults should support and encourage students to:¹¹

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

¹⁰ National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth. (2019). *Guideposts for Success 2.0: A framework for successful youth transition to adulthood*. Institute for Educational Leadership.

¹¹ National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth. (2019). *Guideposts for Success 2.0: A framework for successful youth transition to adulthood*. Institute for Educational Leadership.

- Explore interests, options, 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 skills

Consider using this resource from PACER’s National Parent Center on Transition and Employment—[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 process has several benefits, including helping the student learn more about:

- Their strengths and goals for the future
- Their disability and the related academic, social/emotional, and physical skills that need further development and support
- Accommodations or modifications that can help them reach their goals



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

Connect with your local Family and Community Engagement (FACE) Center about the following trainings:

- “Student-Involvement in the IEP for Families”
- “Supporting Your Child in WBL Experiences”
- “What Is an IEP? for Families of School-Age Students”

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

The transition planning process is driven by the goals, desires, and abilities of the student. For a student to participate fully in the transition planning process, developing self-determination skills is important.

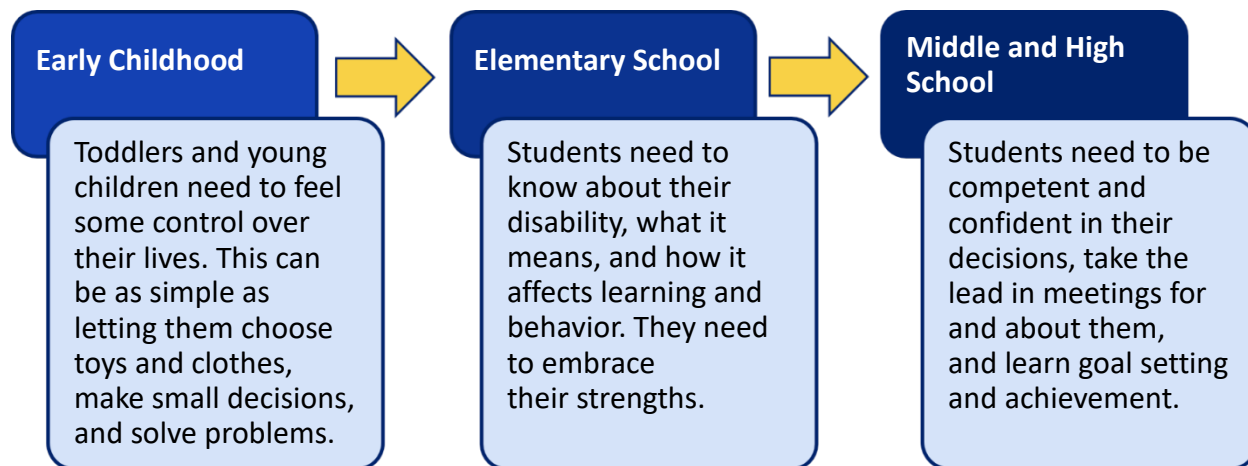
Being self-determined means “acting or causing things to happen as you set and work toward goals in your life.” ¹²

People who are self-determined are able to solve problems, make decisions, and set goals that impact their lives. Adolescents become more self-determined as they identify their interests and preferences, set and work toward their goals, engage in problem-solving, and advocate for themselves. These actions are critical for all students and are often embedded across the curriculum. However, students need support to learn and practice these skills if they are to lead self-determined lives (Shogren et al., 2019).

Throughout the transition process, **it is important to help students gain the skills they need to 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. This means that students learn to make choices and decisions about their goals and how they will meet them. They also identify their preferences and interests. Helping your child to make decisions and giving them choices will help them to feel empowered. When they are older, they will be better able to make life decisions and overcome challenges.

¹² Shogren, K. A., Raley, S. K., Burke, K. M., & Wehmeyer, M. L. (2019). *The self-determined learning model of instruction teacher's guide*. Kansas University Center on Developmental Disabilities.

From Choice-Making to Leading



Different cultures hold different views about individual choice-making versus collective or community-driven decisions. It's important for families and educators to work together to decide how self-determination skill development can align with their values and beliefs. While self-determination emphasizes helping the student develop the skills to set and achieve goals, family input and guidance is essential. As with all aspects of transition planning, when considering self-determination instruction for students, **it is important to consider cultural norms and values.**

Students who have greater self-determination and self-advocacy skills are **significantly more likely to go on to postsecondary education.** Students with disabilities who go on to postsecondary education experience **better employment outcomes** than those who don't.



Want to know more about self-determination?

Connect with your local FACE Center about the following trainings:

- "How to Foster and Support Self-Determination in All Students"
- "Student Involvement in the IEP for Families"
- "What is an IEP? For Families of School-Age Students"

What is the school district's role in supporting students and families in transition?

The CSE team can provide opportunities and supports that will lead the student to achieve their postsecondary goals. Professionals, educators, and service providers can support students by:¹³

- Communicating and modeling high expectations for what students can do and achieve
- Working in partnership with families to promote the 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 of transition
- Implementing [culturally responsive transition practices](#)
- Recognizing and respecting differences among family environments
- Assisting families with accessing and learning how to use technology
- Coordinating and integrating services across multiple systems

¹³ National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth. (2019). *Guideposts for Success 2.0: A framework for successful youth transition to adulthood*. Institute for Educational Leadership.

SECTION 6.0



Post High School Planning (Section 6.0)

As students begin to plan for the future, they should be exploring post-school options in education, employment, and independent living. This is known as postsecondary planning. There are many agencies and organizations that provide services and support to students and adults with disabilities.

High School Vs. Adulthood

Adults with disabilities still have protections under federal law. However, the laws are different and have different requirements. In high school, students are entitled to receive special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Schools are required to identify, teach, and accommodate students with disabilities who need special education. In adulthood, students have to self-identify, request accommodations, and be found eligible under the Americans with Disabilities Act ([ADA](#)) at their college, postsecondary school, vocational training programs, and/or workplace. **Accommodations will not be made automatically.**

Students with disabilities are encouraged to learn about:

- The impact of their disability on learning
- Their rights regarding discrimination
- Their responsibilities for their own learning
- The responsibilities of postsecondary schools

Understanding the difference between the entitlement to public education and the eligibility for adult services can be confusing. The chart below outlines the differences.

High School/IDEA (Entitlement)	Adulthood/ADA (Eligibility)
Services are provided under IDEA or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act	Services are provided under ADA or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act
School district is responsible for identifying students who have disabilities	Young adults self-identify and self-advocate
Parents/guardians have access to student records	Young adults have sole access to their records unless they give consent for parent/guardian access
School district is responsible for students' evaluation at no cost to the family	Young adults are responsible for their own evaluation
Parents/guardians and teachers set goals and management needs for students, including time management and organization	Young adults must organize and structure their own time
Grading and curriculum standards may be modified according to student' needs	Young adults attending an education/training program have grades based on achievement
Provide related services	Provide access to any activity sponsored by the institution and/or agency
Transportation is provided if necessary	Transportation is the young adult's responsibility

College, Trade Schools, and other Postsecondary Education

Students with disabilities who are interested in continuing their education and skill development after high school have many options. They may pursue a two or four-year college or university, a college experience program, vocational or trade school, training in the military, adult or continuing education classes, on-the-job training, or skill development through a day habilitation or other prevocational program. Early in the transition process, a student is encouraged to:

- Take interesting and challenging courses that prepare the student for college
- Be involved in school or community-based activities that allow the student to explore career interests, including work-based learning or internship opportunities
- Meet with a school counselor to discuss career goals, programs of study, and college requirements
- Take standardized tests if required for admission
- Apply for admission
- Apply for scholarships and other financial aid as needed
- Be an active participant during the Committee on Special Education (CSE) meetings

Students should also consult with their CSE team or 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 between high school and college.

Accommodations in College

Since there are **no Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) in college**, students and their families are advised to work closely with the disability support services office on campus. College disability offices can coordinate accommodations, alternative formats, and other support. To get accommodations, students must have a qualifying disability and self-identify directly at the disability services office of the college. Remember, in college, students are in charge of their own education. The college cannot talk to families about private student information unless the student gives permission.

Accommodations in college are not exactly the same as accommodations in high school. In high school, accommodations may include shortened assignments, extended due dates, and extra reminders or support from teachers. After high school, accommodations focus on access, such

as note-taking support, assistive technology, or extra time on tests. Colleges do not have to provide modifications that change what students are required to learn.

What documentation will college disability services need?

Required documentation varies from college to college. Generally, colleges **do not accept** high school IEPs as documentation of a disability. They will usually accept evaluation results used in IEP development. Many colleges require a recent evaluation that is no more than three years old. Providing a copy of the IEP can help show the academic accommodations that were used in high school. Offering information about accommodations that have been used in the past is helpful in determining what college accommodations may be necessary.

If the student is found eligible for services, the disability office will develop an accommodation plan.

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](#)

Employment

Consider what types of jobs or productive activities your student might do after high school. Will they work full-time or part-time? Will they volunteer in their community? Some students may be able to work independently. Others may need more support to learn tasks and maintain a job. While not all students will be ready for employment when they leave high school, skill development activities should work toward the goal of employment. *Consider using the Transition Planning Profile in Appendix C to explore student strengths and needs related to employment.*

Students should have the opportunity to participate in career exploration activities while still in high school. One type of activity is a career interest inventory. This can help students match their interests to possible careers. Internships, apprenticeships, and volunteering are great ways for students to learn the technical, academic, and interpersonal skills they need to function in a workplace. This can be done through a [Work-Based Learning](#) (WBL) program. Students who participate in WBL are more likely to be employed, have a higher quality job, and earn a living wage after high school (Ross et al., 2020). WBL also emphasizes supportive relationships with adults, connections to broader social and professional networks, and real

work experiences that provide 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 a Pre-Employment Transition Services ([Pre-ETS program](#)). Pre-ETS are free, individualized services that focus on career exploration and work experience for students with a documented disability ages 14–22. Pre-ETS can include:

- Job exploration counseling
- WBL experiences
- Counseling on postsecondary education opportunities
- Workplace readiness training
- Instruction in self-advocacy

Pre-ETS can be provided individually to a student or in small groups at school or in the community. The transition from school to work requires a variety of supports and collaborative efforts among education and workforce programs. No single institution or organization can provide the full range of services that may be required. **Collaboration and coordinated efforts among education and workforce programs, including Vocational Rehabilitation (VR), are essential in assisting students with disabilities to make the transition from school to work.**

Adult Career and Continuing Education Services-Vocational Rehabilitation ([ACCES-VR](#)) provides a [range of services](#) to help individuals with disabilities reach employment goals. This agency works with students, families, and school districts to coordinate appropriate services for students with disabilities as they transition out of high school and into the workforce. New York State (NYS) also has a separate VR agency for blind individuals which is the NYS Commission for the Blind (NYSCB). NYSCB is under the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS).

Students and families 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](#).

Employment can also impact benefits from the Social Security Administration (SSA). This includes Social Security Income (SSI), 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 the local office to get help with these questions.

Independent Living

Independent living is more than just deciding where to live and who to live with. Students and their families should also consider how they are going to access adult services, participate in the community, and have fun after high school. This includes exploring whether they will need residential supports and how they will develop important life skills. Independent living skills include money management, preparing meals, washing laundry, medication management, transportation, and more. *Use Appendix E to identify immediate and long-term needs in independent living skills.*

There are agencies and organizations that support adults with disabilities with independent living needs. For example, [Independent Living Centers](#) (ILCs) provide things like training, peer mentoring, and referrals. The NYS [Office for People with Developmental Disabilities](#) (OPWDD) offers many services including day programs, residential supports, and care coordination. Additionally, the NYS [Office of Mental Health](#) (OMH) provides inpatient, outpatient, and emergency services to support mental health and wellbeing. *See Appendix D for a full chart of Adult Services Agencies.*

Collaborating with State Agencies and Community-Based Organizations

Families and schools can help improve student outcomes by collaborating with agencies and organizations that provide services to adults with disabilities. Collaboration is a predictor of positive post-school outcomes for students with disabilities. Research has shown that solid academic preparation along with transition planning, student empowerment, family involvement, activities connecting transition resources, and work experiences are critically important in influencing school-to-work transition outcomes.

Examples of collaboration can include:

- Inviting outside agencies to the CSE meeting, with student consent or parental consent if the student is not yet 18
- Coordinating work experience schedules
- Keeping lines of communication open
- Including teachers in the development of employment activities

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

Students and families should also have copies of health, education, and other records readily available. These will be needed for the application process.

Eligibility to State and federally funded agencies depends on legal status. Some families may feel unsafe or uncomfortable working with formal agencies due to the legal status of various family members, including the student. This information is private, and professionals should respect family choices regarding interagency collaboration. In addition, families and communities may have had negative experiences with formal agencies in the past due to a variety of reasons relating back to systemic and implicit bias and an individual’s intersectionality. Transition professionals should consider how to support students and families, including looking beyond State and federal agencies to local agencies like community centers, faith-based organizations, and cultural centers.

Additionally, it may be helpful to invite the State agency or community partner to the CSE meeting so they can assist in developing future goals. You can also use *Appendix D: Adult Service Agencies Chart* to help you find agencies that support adults with disabilities.



Want to know more about post high school planning, adult services, and community-based organizations?

Connect with your local FACE Center about the following trainings:

- “Agency 101”
- “Student-Involvement in the IEP for Families”
- “Supporting Your Child in WBL Experiences”

Conclusion

We hope this guide has been a helpful starting point as you support your child's transition planning. You play an important role in preparing your child for adult life. Take time to reflect, ask questions, and talk with others as you move forward. Keep coming back to the ideas and resources in this guide and reach out to your CSE team as needed.

Transition Resources

Index of Resources to Supplement Section 1.0

Resource Title	Link
A Transition Guide to Postsecondary Education and Employment for Students and Youth with Disabilities	sites.ed.gov/idea/files/postsecondary-transition-guide-august-2020.pdf
Center for Parent Information and Resources	parentcenterhub.org/
Guideposts for Success 2.0: A Framework for Successful Youth Transition to Adulthood	files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED598433.pdf
National Technical Assistance Center on Transition: The Collaborative (NTACT:C)	transitionta.org/
New York State Education Department (NYSED) Career and Technical Education (CTE)	nysed.gov/career-technical-education
NYSED Transition from School to Post School for Students with Disabilities	nysed.gov/special-education/transition-school-post-school-students-disabilities
Social Security Administration (SSA)	ssa.gov/
The 411 on Disability Disclosure Guide	iel.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/411_Disability_Disclosure_complete.pdf
Social Security Income (SSI) at Work Toolkit	ssi.disabilitybenefitsatwork.org/

Index of Linked Resources for Section 2.0

Resource Title	Link
Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)	dol.gov/agencies/eta/wioa
Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS)	https://www.acces.nysed.gov/vr/pre-ets
Guidance Programs and Comprehensive Developmental School Counseling/Guidance Programs Commissioner's Regulation §100.2(j)	https://www.nysed.gov/sites/default/files/programs/student-support-services/school-counseling-plan-guidance.pdf
Commissioner's Regulation 100.4(c)(1)(xii-xiii)	nysed.gov/standards-instruction/part-100-regulations-commissioner-education#UnitsofStudyGrades7and8
New York State Middle Level CTE Requirement	https://www.nysed.gov/career-technical-education/new-york-state-middle-level-cte-requirement
Commissioner's Regulation §200.4 Procedures for Referral, Evaluation, IEP Development, Placement and Review	nysed.gov/special-education/section-2004-procedures-referral-evaluation-iep-development-placement-and-review

Index of Linked Resources for Section 3.0

Resource Title	Link
NYSED Individualized Education Program (IEP) Template	nysed.gov/special-education/model-student-information-summary-form-and-mandatory-iep
New York State (NYS) Diploma Requirements Tracking Tool	nysed.gov/sites/default/files/programs/curriculum-instruction/diploma-requirements-tracking-tool.pdf
Graduation Requirements	nysed.gov/standards-instruction/graduation-requirements
Appeals, Safety Nets, and Superintendent Determination	nysed.gov/standards-instruction/appeals-safety-nets-and-superintendent-determination

Resource Title	Link
<u>NYS Diploma Requirements Applicable to All Students Enrolled in Grades 9–12</u>	nysed.gov/sites/default/files/programs/standards-instruction/currentdiploma requirements.pdf
<u>Graduation Requirements Guidance and Resources—Family Resources</u>	nysed.gov/standards-instruction/graduation-requirements-guidance-and-resources
<u>High School Equivalency Exam</u>	access.nysed.gov/hse/high-school-equivalency-hse
<u>New York State Alternate Assessment (NYSAA)</u>	nysed.gov/state-assessment/new-york-state-alternate-assessment
<u>Student Exit Summary</u>	https://www.nysed.gov/special-education/student-exit-summary
<u>Standards and Instruction—Exiting Credentials</u>	nysed.gov/standards-instruction/exiting-credentials
<u>NYSAA Parent Resources</u>	nysed.gov/state-assessment/nysaa-parent-resources
<u>Transition to Postsecondary Education or Training: What Parents Can Do Now</u>	media.pacer.org/php/php-c319.pdf
<u>Set a Postsecondary Education or Training Destination and Map a Course to Get There</u>	accessnorth.net/lifeTransitions/lifeTransitionsResources/pacerPostSecondaryEdTrainingMap.pdf

Index of Linked Resources for Section 4.0

Resource Title	Link
<u>Tips to Maximize the Parent Role in Transition</u>	worktogethernc.com/wp-content/uploads/NPC-11.pdf
<u>Ten Tips That May Help Your Child’s Transition to Adulthood</u>	spinconference.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/PACER-10-Tips-for-Transitioning-to-Adult.pdf
<u>Keys to Success in the Family-School Partnership—ENGLISH</u>	pathfinder-nd.org/resources/161.pdf
<u>Keys to Success in the Parent-School Partnership—SPANISH</u>	web.archive.org/web/20230324184200/http://www.pacer.org:80/pdf/ge/GE-1s.pdf

Resource Title	Link
Division on Career Development and Transition (DCDT) Fast Facts—Culturally Responsive Transition Practices	dcdt.exceptionalchildren.org/sites/default/files/2021-03/CultResponsiveFASTFACTS10_15_19.docx

Index of Linked Resources for Section 5.0

Resource Title	Link
Work-Based Learning (WBL)	nysed.gov/career-technical-education/work-based-learning-wbl-programs
Pre-ETS	acces.nysed.gov/vr/pre-ets
Guide to Adult Career and Continuing Education Services—Vocational Rehabilitation (ACCES-VR) Transition Services	acces.nysed.gov/sites/acces/files/vr/guidetotransitionservices.pdf
Job Accommodation Network (JAN)	askjan.org/info-by-role.cfm#for-individuals
Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)	ada.gov/
ACCES-VR	acces.nysed.gov/vr/student-and-youth-transition-services
New York State Commission for the Blind (NYSCB)	ocfs.ny.gov/programs/nyscb/
Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD)	opwdd.ny.gov/
Office of Mental Health (OMH)	omh.ny.gov/
Independent Living Centers (ILCs)	acces.nysed.gov/vr/independent-living-centers
NYS Career Centers	dol.ny.gov/career-centers
Resource Page for Families on College and Students with Disabilities	thinkcollege.net/family-resources
Common College Accommodations	thinkcollege.net/sites/default/files/files/resources/HTTC_04_Getting_Accommodations_to_Succeed.pdf

Appendix

Appendix A: Strength-Based Assessment

Student's Name:

Person Completing Form:

Relationship to Student:

Date:

Questions	Answers
Strengths: What are your student's strengths, talents, abilities, skills, and things they like to do?	
Dreams: What are your student's hopes and dreams for the future? What are your hopes and dreams for your student's future?	

Questions	Answers
What Helps: What is needed to make your student's dreams happen? What helps them to do a good job and learn best?	
Favorite Subjects: What are your student's favorite subjects in school?	
Least Favorite Subjects: What are your student's least favorite subjects?	
Future Learning: What does your student want to learn more about?	

Appendix B: Informal Transition Assessment— Parent Interview

Parent Interview Informal Transition Assessment

Student Name

Date

In New York, initial planning for the future your child wants after high school begins at age 12. This starts by speaking with you about interests and talents your child has, what kind of career they might want, what skills would be needed to get a job, where they may want to live, and what types of things might be helpful for others to know if support is needed along the way. We also review your child's school records and interview your child to determine vocational or career skills and interests.

Formal transition planning for your child's future will begin at age 15 and includes informal and formal transition assessments, services, linkages to adult agencies, and activities your child needs to learn, work, and live where they want to after high school. We will review, revise, and discuss your child's vision for the future each year until your child exits high school and document needed transition services in their Individualized Education Program (IEP).

Please answer the following questions to the best of your ability. There are no right or wrong answers. Your input will help your child's school team to create goals and develop your child's skills.

- 1. In general, what are your child's strengths or what does your child do best?**
- 2. In general, what does your child have difficulty doing?**
- 3. What does your child like about school?**
- 4. What is the hardest part about school for your child?**

5. What things does your child enjoy doing outside of school?
6. What if any, situations cause your child to become upset, and what calms your child down?
7. Generally, how well does your child interact with friends, siblings, and other adults?
8. What are your expectations for your child after high school (related to living, learning, working, etc.)?
9. What type of work do you think your child would like as an adult? (e.g., teaching, welding, computer programming, business administration, firefighting, retail, farming, childcare, construction, restaurant, etc.)
10. What does your child need to learn to prepare for the work they want?
11. What jobs or chores does your child do at home?
12. What school activities is your child involved in?
13. What hobbies or community activities is your child involved in?
14. What type of community activities do you hope your child will participate in as an adult? (e.g., clubs, political/religious/community groups, recreational activities)

15. What kind of education/training do you see your child doing after graduation? (Check all that apply.)

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ University/College (4 year) | ☐ Technical/Vocational school |
| ☐ Community college (2 year) | ☐ Military service |
| ☐ College Experience Program | ☐ Training in a center-based day program |
| ☐ Take adult education courses/classes | ☐ On-the-job training |
| ☐ Connect with adult service provider to get a job (Vocational Rehabilitation, etc.) | |
| ☐ Other | |

16. Where do you hope your child lives after high school and/or as an adult?

- ☐ On their own in a house/apartment
- ☐ In a house/apartment—with support
- ☐ In a house/apartment with a friend, relative
- ☐ Continue living with our family
- ☐ In a home with other people with disabilities
- ☐ On a military base
- ☐ College campus-dormitory/residences
- ☐ Other

17. Do you feel your child has the skills necessary to live on their own?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ Yes, with family support
- ☐ No, I feel they need help/instruction/support in the following areas:
 - ☐ Handling money (making a budget, counting change, managing bank accounts, credit cards, etc.)
 - ☐ Household management (cooking, cleaning, paying bills, etc.)
 - ☐ Safety (protecting personal information, internet safety, emergencies)
 - ☐ Personal appearance (hygiene, laundry, dressing for work, etc.)
 - ☐ Ordering at restaurants, in the community, and online
 - ☐ Shopping (for food, clothing, medicine, and other necessary items, etc.)
 - ☐ Traveling in the community (using public transportation/Uber, driving, etc.)

18. In your child's current classes, what do you feel they need extra help or instruction with to help them meet their educational and/or work goals after high school?

19. Check any of the following services that you feel would be helpful for your child to experience before leaving high school to achieve their long-term goals.

Career Planning

- ☐ College visit(s)
- ☐ Career/technical school visit(s)
- ☐ Military recruiting office presentation

Academic/Career/Job Instruction

- ☐ Advanced Placement coursework
- ☐ Career tech coursework
- ☐ Career/Job skills coursework and practice (writing resumes, filling out job applications, social skills, interviewing)
- ☐ Independent living skill development (money, budgeting, household management, hygiene, laundry, cooking, transportation, self-advocacy, etc.)
- ☐ Other

Work and Community Experiences

- ☐ In-school work experiences
- ☐ On-the-job training/apprenticeship/internship
- ☐ Community work experiences
- ☐ Community volunteer work experiences (in volunteer settings)
- ☐ Other

There are state agencies and community organizations that can provide support services to your child when they become an adult including assistance with understanding eligibility requirements and application processes. Services may include but are not limited to employment, community involvement, accessing financial benefits, health care, and housing needs.

20. Please check any of the agencies below you feel your child may need after high school.

- ☐ **Office for People with Developmental Disabilities**
(OPWDD; Multiple lifelong services for individuals with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities and other neurological impairments)
- ☐ **Adult Career and Continuing Education Services-Vocational Rehabilitation**
(ACCES-VR; Assistance for identifying, preparing, and achieving employment)
- ☐ **NYS Commission for the Blind**
(NYSCB; Direct services promoting independent living skills and employment for individuals who are legally blind)
- ☐ **Office of Mental Health**
(OMH; Support services, treatment programs, and therapies for individuals with mental health needs and their families)
- ☐ **Independent Living Centers**
(ILC; Services such as peer counseling, advocacy, independent living skills training, transitions, benefits advisement, assistive technology, and accessibility)

- ☐ **Office of Workforce Development**
(Job training and placement support)
- ☐ **College Disability Services Offices**
(Accommodations for eligible students)
- ☐ **Social Security Administration**
(SSA; Eligibility for Supplemental Security Income/Social Security Disability Insurance [SSI/SSDI])
- ☐ Other

Discover Agencies in Your Area

The New York State Education Department (NYSED) has designed a Community Resource Map to connect families and professionals with local agencies and community resources in their area that can help with issues from early childhood through the transition to post-school life. This map can be found at map.osepartnership.org

21. Please check any of the transition services/agencies described above, from whom your child already receives services or benefits.

- ☐ Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD)
- ☐ Adult Career and Continuing Education Services-Vocational Rehabilitation (ACCES-VR)
- ☐ NYS Commission for the Blind (NYSCB)
- ☐ Office of Mental Health (OMH)
- ☐ Independent Living Center (ILC)
- ☐ Social Security Administration (SSA)
- ☐ Other(s)

22. What are your greatest concerns for your child regarding the transition to adulthood? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Future employment opportunities and supports
- ☐ Continued education after high school
- ☐ Daily, everyday living skills
- ☐ Adult living/housing options
- ☐ Social needs (self-esteem, making/keeping friends, adjusting to community environments)
- ☐ Appropriate behavior (adhering to codes of conduct in work settings, college, in public)
- ☐ Communication
- ☐ Travel skills/transportation
- ☐ Managing money
- ☐ Medical/health issues
- ☐ Leisure/recreational opportunities
- ☐ Accessing adult support services in the community

23. Additional comments or concerns:

Age 12 Transition Assessment Summary

Review of Records Summary

Review of Teacher Assessments Summary

Student Interview Summary

Parent Interview Summary

Summary of Additional Information Related to Transition Planning

Appendix C: Preparing for a Committee on Special Education (CSE) Discussion about New York State Alternate Assessment (NYSAA)

1. What are your goals for your child this year—academically, physically, and social-emotionally? What supports do you think they will need to achieve those goals?
2. What do you know about New York State (NYS) standardized assessments? What do you know about the NYSAA for students with severe disabilities?
3. Think about your child as an adult. Describe what you hope your child will be doing—in terms of living arrangements, employment, social life, community involvement, higher education/training, etc.

Adapted from: Thurlow, M.L., Strunk, K., Hall, S., & Hawes, M. (2021). IEP team resource: Making decisions about participation in the alternate assessment. National Center on Educational Outcomes.

Appendix D: Transition Planning Checklist

Postsecondary Transition Planning Checklist

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 that families can use as a general guide.** Each category will walk students and families through important steps in the transition planning process. Keep in mind that every student's journey is unique. Students and families are encouraged to connect with their school counselors, Committee on Special Education (CSE) team, and Family and Community Engagement (FACE) Center representatives for more ideas and resources.

Prior to Age 12

- ☐ Help your child learn about different jobs, activities, and hobbies.
- ☐ Encourage your child to ask for help when needed.
- ☐ Practice with your child to learn how to ask for help in different situations.
- ☐ Work with your child to learn to get along with and play with others.
- ☐ Assist your child in learning how to talk about their strengths and needs.
- ☐ Begin exploring a variety of jobs with your child.
- ☐ Develop skills and routines at home to complete everyday tasks such as getting dressed, brushing teeth, making a simple meal, etc.
- ☐ Think about ways to increase your child's independence.
- ☐ Provide opportunities to see people at work in different settings.
- ☐ Teach counting and money skills, including experiences with shopping and banking.
- ☐ Help your child learn early work skills such as taking responsibility, making decisions, solving problems, planning their time, and working with others, both at home and in the community.
- ☐ Provide opportunities to make choices and decisions, solve simple problems, explore and take risks, and learn from experiences of success and failure.

- ☐ Be an active participant during Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings (e.g., provide information about your child's strengths and needs, ask questions, etc.).
- ☐ Learn about and apply to relevant agencies (e.g., eligible individuals can apply for services from OPWDD as early as infancy).
- ☐ Other: _____

Ages 12–14

- ☐ Talk about planning for life after high school with your child. Use the [Family Guide to Transition Planning](#) talking points.
- ☐ Speak with your child about their IEP and their CSE meetings, so they can begin to become more involved when appropriate.
- ☐ Be an active participant during IEP meetings (e.g., provide information about your child's strengths and needs, ask questions, etc.)
- ☐ Talk with your child about how they can be a part of their IEP meeting and encourage their participation (e.g., attend and listen, share their strengths and interests, talk about what helps them learn, share their goals for after high school).
- ☐ Talk with your child about their interests, desires, and goals.
- ☐ Provide your child with opportunities to explore their interests and learn about themselves.
- ☐ When your child is turning 12, work with school staff to complete the student and family portions of the student's initial vocational assessment.
- ☐ Provide opportunities for increased independence and responsibility at home.
- ☐ Talk with your child and their teachers about ways to increase responsibility at school.
- ☐ Provide your child with opportunities to explore a wide variety of leisure activities in the community.
- ☐ Gather important documents such as your child's birth certificate, social security card, photo ID, medical information, and IEP to include in a Transition Portfolio.
- ☐ Discuss high school choices with your child, their school counselor, and other staff at their school (if appropriate).

- ☐ Attend high school fairs and explore high schools that may be a good fit for your child (if appropriate).
- ☐ Learn about and then help your child explore Career and Technical Education (CTE) and other high school options that match their career goals.
- ☐ Learn about different kinds of work-based learning (WBL) opportunities that may be available.
- ☐ Develop your child's skills for learning on their own (planning their time, study skills, note-taking, etc.).
- ☐ Develop skills to increase independence, manage on their own with everyday tasks, and make their own decisions.
- ☐ Think about volunteer job opportunities in the community, babysitting opportunities, or other ways your child can develop job skills.
- ☐ Learn about the [Transition to Postsecondary Education or Training: What Parents Can Do Now.](#)
- ☐ [Set a Postsecondary Education or Training Destination and Map a Course to Get There.](#)
- ☐ Attend family workshops on Transition to learn about the process of Transition Planning.
- ☐ Help your child to understand their disability, and when/who/how to ask for assistance.
- ☐ Talk about how to obtain employment certificates/working papers with your child's school.
- ☐ Learn about and connect with agencies such as OPWDD and Adult Career and Continuing Education Services – Vocational Rehabilitation (ACCES-VR) when appropriate.
- ☐ Apply to relevant agencies (e.g., eligible students may apply to OPWDD as early as infancy).
- ☐ Other: _____

Ages 14–17

- ☐ Encourage your child to continue to explore community and leisure activities of interest.
- ☐ Continue to be an active participant during IEP meetings (e.g., provide information about your child's strengths and needs, ask questions, etc.).

- ☐ Talk with your child about how they can be a part of their CSE meeting and encourage their participation (e.g., attend and listen, share their strengths and interests, talk about what helps them learn, share their goals for after high school).
- ☐ Work with your child and the IEP team to develop their transition plan.
- ☐ Learn about the [Transition to Postsecondary Education or Training: What Parents Can Do Now.](#)
- ☐ [Set a Postsecondary Education or Training Destination and Map a Course to Get There.](#)
- ☐ Encourage your child to take advantage of WBL experiences.
- ☐ Contact a teacher, counselor, or CSE chair to ask about having your child participate in Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) through ACCES-VR.
- ☐ Explore volunteering, paid work experiences, and connections to community-based activities.
- ☐ Learn about the different graduation options and credentials such as the Career Development and Occupational Studies (CDOS) commencement credential.
- ☐ Discuss with your child and school staff about which graduation pathway is most appropriate for them.
- ☐ Together with your child, meet regularly with their career and/or school counselor to plan for appropriate courses and/or Regents examinations to make sure that your student is on track to graduate with the expected diploma or credential.
- ☐ Provide consent for requesting College Board accommodations for college entrance tests.
- ☐ Have your child take college entrance tests like the SAT or American College Testing (ACT) exam with or without accommodations, when appropriate.
- ☐ Explore colleges and trade schools.
- ☐ Talk about how to obtain employment certificates/working papers with your child's school.
- ☐ Apply for employment certificate (working papers), as needed.
- ☐ Learn about [job accommodations](#) and employment rights under Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- ☐ Explore college, vocational, and independent living options as appropriate for your child, including agencies such as OPWDD and ACCES-VR.

- ☐ Visit postsecondary options when possible (e.g., colleges, trade schools, day programs, etc.).
- ☐ Support your child in applying for colleges by their deadlines.
- ☐ Apply to relevant agencies that provide services, training, or education for adults with disabilities (e.g., eligible students may apply to OPWDD as early as infancy, and ACCES-VR as early as 14).
- ☐ Inform the school's Special Education Office of community agency representatives you'd like invited to your child's IEP meeting (e.g., Care Coordinator, ACCES-VR Counselor, etc.).
- ☐ Determine if your child needs travel training to learn how to travel independently using public transportation.
- ☐ Discuss obtaining a driver's permit, license, or non-driver's identification.
- ☐ Encourage independence in all areas of life such as self-care activities, money management, and travel in the community.
- ☐ With your child, start identifying adult health care providers by asking your child's pediatrician for recommendations.
- ☐ If you have not already, help your child access sexual education and understand changes related to puberty.
- ☐ Together with your child, create a vision of their life after leaving school or when they turn 22.
- ☐ Attend transition-related workshops, fairs, conferences, seminars, webinars, etc.
- ☐ Other: _____

Ages 17–22

- ☐ Meet with your child's school counselor to make sure that they are on track toward the expected graduation diploma and/or credential and for help with college applications as needed.
- ☐ Connect with any agencies or organizations that can provide services, training, or education following your child's graduation or aging out of high school.

- ☐ Visit postsecondary options when possible (e.g., colleges, day programs, etc.).
- ☐ Support your child in applying for colleges by their deadlines.
- ☐ Continue to be an active participant during CSE meetings (e.g., provide information about your child's strengths and needs, ask questions, etc.).
- ☐ Continue to talk with your child about how they can be a part of their CSE meeting and encourage their participation (e.g., attend and listen, share their strengths and interests, talk about what helps them learn, share their goals for after high school).
- ☐ Inform the school's Special Education Office of community agency representatives you'd like invited to your child's meeting (e.g., Care Coordinator, ACCES-VR Counselor, etc.).
- ☐ Prepare your child to discuss their disability in a college student services office and request accommodations for college classes.
- ☐ Review your child's Student Exit Summary.
- ☐ Obtain a copy of your child's Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP); if applicable.
- ☐ Get a copy of the last IEP.
- ☐ Get a copy of the last psychological evaluation.
- ☐ If applicable, assist your child with registration for selective service.
- ☐ Assist your child with obtaining a driver's permit, license, or non-driver's identification.
- ☐ Continue to practice money management and banking skills.
- ☐ If you have not already, help your child learn how to manage their medications, make appointments, and talk with health care providers.
- ☐ Discuss where your child would like to live and the possible supports they will need.
- ☐ Encourage your child to register to vote.
- ☐ Apply for employment certificate (working papers), as needed.
- ☐ Apply to relevant agencies (e.g., eligible students may apply to OPWDD as early as infancy and ACCES-VR as early as 14).
- ☐ Apply for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Medicaid (if applicable).
- ☐ Other: _____

Appendix E: Adult Service Agencies Chart

Agency	Brief Description	Services Offered
<u>ACCES-VR</u>	Works with students, families, and school districts to coordinate appropriate services for students with disabilities who are leaving secondary education and entering adult vocational rehabilitation, work opportunities, and/or related services.	• Pre-ETS for students with disabilities eligible for ACCES-VR services • Pre-ETS for students with disabilities Potentially Eligible for ACCES-VR services • VR services needed for an individual to obtain, maintain, or advance in a job
<u>NYSCB</u>	This service works to: • Enhance employability • Maximize independence • Assist in the development of people who are legally blind	Provide consultation to school-age students that may include: • 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-ETS

Agency	Brief Description	Services Offered
<u>OPWDD</u>	Responsible for coordinating services for New Yorkers with developmental disabilities. These include: • Intellectual disabilities • Cerebral palsy • Autism spectrum disorders, • Other neurological impairments.	Provides the following services directly as well as through a network of nonprofit service-providing agencies: • Care coordination • Family advocacy training • Family supports and services • Environmental modifications • Community support services • Day programs • Residential supports • Employment and pre-employment support • Prioritizes individual choices, needs, and desires in making decisions
<u>OMH</u>	Promotes the mental health and well-being of all New Yorkers. They also support children and families in their social and emotional development.	• Variety of inpatient and outpatient programs • Emergency services and community support • Residential and family care programs
<u>ILCs</u>	Provides an array of services that assist New Yorkers with all disabilities to live fully integrated and self-directed lives. ILCs are private, not-for profit organizations, governed by a majority of people with disabilities and staffed primarily by people with disabilities.	• Provide a set of core services which includes peer counseling, independent living skills training, information and referral, and advocacy • Additional services can also include housing assistance, benefits counseling, securing and maintaining equipment, voter registration, and workshops
<u>Workforce Development/ New York State Career Centers</u>	These centers aid individuals seeking employment by providing free workshops, local career fairs, and career counseling.	• Classes, workshops, job fairs, and informational sessions on a variety of career-focused topics • Career centers also offer additional services specifically for in-school and out-of-school youth ages 16–24

Appendix F: Planning for Life After High School

Student Name: _____

Projected Graduation Date: _____

Home School District: _____

Age: _____

School Currently Attending: _____

Life Area	What is your immediate need in this area?	Do you have any long-term concerns?
Employment/ Continuing Education		
Recreation/ Leisure		
Living Arrangements		
Transportation		

Life Area	What is your immediate need in this area?	Do you have any long-term concerns?
Medical/ Health		
Financial/ Income		
Advocacy/ Legal Guardianship Services		
Personal/ Family Relationships		

For More Information

Contacts

FACE Center Specialist

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Additional Contacts or Upcoming Regional Training Information

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