



from Equip for Equality's Special Education Clinic

EFE FACT SHEET – Transitions

Transition from High School

Introduction

A student with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) in high school faces many challenges upon graduation. The rights granted under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) no longer apply. Rights under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) apply only if asserted. This fact sheet is intended to assist students plan for life after high school.

What are the requirements of a transition plan?

- Illinois requires a transition plan be included in a student's IEP starting at age 14 ½. The IDEA requires a transition plan be included in the student's IEP starting at age 16. The transition plan must have appropriate and measurable goals based on age appropriate transitional assessments related to training, education, employment and independent living skills. The services need to be result oriented and based on individual strengths, preferences, interests and goals.
- The transitional services provided must assist the student in accomplishing his or her goals. They must be appropriate post secondary goals based on age and skills.
- When the student reaches majority according to state law (18 in Illinois), the rights under IDEA may be transferred from the parent to the student.
 - 1 year before the student reaches the majority, the student must sign a statement saying he or she is aware that the rights may be transferred. These rights include making decisions about his or her education and future, being responsible for his or her own IEP, changing his or her placement, attending mediation, filing due process, initiating dispute resolution, getting notice of upcoming IEP meetings, giving consent to be re-evaluated and determining his or her eligibility for services.
 - Parents may retain the ability to assert rights on behalf of their high school student after age 18 even if the student has NOT been declared incompetent if the student is unable to make decisions for themselves. The parent must be appointed the student's representative in this situation.

What should the student and parent consider when developing a transition plan?

- What are the student's goals and needs? The school must consider the student's desires when writing the IEP.
- Potential goals include employment, attending a community college, attending a university, living in a dorm, living in an assisted living community, or living in an apartment, obtaining a driver's license to enable the student to drive to school or work, taking public transportation to enable the student to get to school or work, etc. Goals may be large or small, but should be specific. Goals should be written into the IEP.

How should a parent or student get the most effective transition plan for the student?

- Plan ahead and get the transition plan in the IEP as soon as possible when the student turns 14 or as soon as necessary
- Be assertive in telling the school what the student needs and what the student's goals are
- Have clear, consistent and measurable goals for the student

What options does a student have after transitioning out of high school?

- Post secondary education such as college or junior college
- Vocational education and job training
- Employment
- Continuing adult education
- Adult services
- Social skills training to increase community involvement

What types of transition goals should be stated in the IEP if the transitioning student intends to work after high school?

- Completion of training in life skills, vocational skills, social skills, and workplace etiquette
- Visiting/Shadowing a set number of potential places of employment
- Training in taking public transportation

What transition goals should be stated in the IEP if the transitioning student intends to attend college?

The ACT and/or SAT are taken the junior year of high school. The ACT College Board determines whether your child is entitled to extra time on these entrance exams, not the high school and not the IEP.

During the student's sophomore year, the high school counselor must apply for extra time or other accommodations required by the high school student. The ACT College Board issues a letter to the student confirming the extra time and providing directions for exam day. Obtaining this letter is an appropriate transition goal.

When visiting colleges in person or online, visit the Disability Student Services (DSS) offices. Determine if the school has assisted others with a similar disability or if the student will be a pioneer at the college. Investigating the DSS offices of various colleges is an appropriate transition goal.

- Unlike high school, where the federal IDEA requires the school to seek out students in need of services, colleges are NOT required to identify students with disabilities. Unlike high school, where the school may be required to alter course requirements, colleges are NOT required to modify academic requirements, though accommodations under the ADA may be required.
- To be entitled to assistance under the ADA, the college student must identify themselves as needing DSS assistance. This can be done during application process.
- It is the student's choice to self-identify. Proof will be required.
- Students who have advocated on behalf of themselves through high school will have an easier time asserting needs in college. An IEP's transition plan can include obtaining the skills necessary to self advocate. Taking a public speaking course may be an appropriate transition objective. Attending all IEP meetings during high school and identifying needed assistance is an appropriate transition goal.
- Completing the application process for at least four schools with strong DSS offices is an appropriate transition goal.
- An additional resource to consider if your child has the academic ability to attend college but not the functional skills (organizational, independent living, or social) may be College Living Experience (CLE), a structured environment with tutors.
 - Is a post-secondary support service program that provides intensive assistance to students with disabilities including Asperger's Syndrome, autism spectrum disorder and some learning disabilities like dyslexia and ADHD/ADD so that they can complete college and transition into independent adults
 - Allows student to attend four year, two year and technical colleges in Chicago, IL, Denver, CO, Austin, TX, Ft. Lauderdale, FL, Monterey, CA and Washington, D.C.
 - For more information go to www.ExperienceCLE.com

What employment options are there for the transitioning student?

- Apprenticeships
 - An apprenticeship is a formalized career-training program that offers on the job training and work experience. Completing an apprenticeship during high school is an appropriate transition goal.
 - They are industry driven and available through employers, employer associations, government entities and partnerships with labor unions.
 - Apprenticeships are available in many professions including electricians, plumbers and many more.
- Trade and technical schools
- Competitive employment
- Supported employment
 - Allows people with severe disabilities to become more independent through employment
 - Supported employment can provide:
 - A job coach who provides on the job training to help the student learn and perform the job and adjust to the work environment
 - Transportation
 - Assistive technology
 - Specialized job training
- Volunteering

Where can the student get job training?

- One option is the Vocational Rehabilitation Agency (VR), which provides services to people with disabilities that focus on career development, employment preparation, achieving independence and integration into the workplace and community
 - This includes selecting a job goal, determining what services are required to accomplish that goal, training and education, conducting a job search, job search training, help with resumes and interview techniques, job placement assistance, support in keeping a job
 - Also independent living services such as training in self-care, money management and using community transportation are offered
 - The VR can do vocational assessments of the student
 - In order to apply, make an appointment with the local VR and fill out an application
- To be eligible for services you must be a person with a disability that results in a substantial barrier to employment and you require services to get and keep a job
- For more information go to <http://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=29736>

What skills should to be developed in order to help with employment?

- The ability to learn new skills
- Reading, writing and computation
- Oral, verbal and listening communications
- Multi-step problem solving
- Following directions
- Following a procedure or routine
- Adaptability
- Team work
- Negotiation skills
- Interpersonal skills
- Organization
- Self-motivation
- Self-esteem

What types of residential options are there for the student?

- An apartment or home of his or her own
- Living at home with a parent or family member
- Group homes
 - Homes with very few residents usually in a neighborhood that provide the residents with help to increase their ability to live independently
 - Staff helps with cooking, laundry, money management, making personal choices, health and safety issues, mobility, self-medication, social skills and vocational skills
- Semi-independent living which provides supervision, care and training for the person with a disability
- Assisted living
 - For individuals who require help with daily living, but do not require intensive medical assistance
 - Services can include health care management and monitoring, help with daily living activities such as dressing and eating, housekeeping and laundry, help with taking medication, recreational activities, security and transportation
- Additional information about housing can be found through Housing and Urban Development at <http://www.hud.gov/groups/disabilities.cfm>

What types of health care and insurance can the student get upon graduation?

- Medicaid: a health program for low income individuals with a disability
- Apply to the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services

- Medicaid waivers
 - Medicaid Waiver Programs allow children who would normally be institutionalized to live at home
- Supplementary Security Income (SSI)
 - Helps people with a mental or physical impairment that results in the inability to do any substantially gainful activity and can be expected to result in death or will last for longer than a year continuously
 - To apply make an appointment with Social Security
- Food stamps
 - Food stamps help low income families buy food
 - For details, contact the Department of Human Services at <http://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx>

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

Transition Goals For Adolescents with Learning Disabilities by Catherine Trapani, Boston: Little Brown, © 1990.

Learning Outside the Lines: Two Ivy League students with Learning Disabilities by David Cole and Jonathan Mooney, © 2000

Learning How to Learn: Getting into and Surviving College When You Have A Learning Disability by Joyanne Cobb, Washington DC: Child & Family Press, © 2003.

Peterson's Colleges with Programs for Students with Learning Disabilities by Charles T. Magnum II and Stephen S. Strichart, Princeton, NJ: Peterson's © 1994.

National Disability Rights Network's (NDRN) Training & Advocacy Support Center (TASC)



DO YOU HAVE A QUESTION?

Contact Equip for Equality's Special Education Clinic Helpline
1-866-KIDS-046 (voice) or 800-610-02779 (TTY)
SpecialED@equipforequality.org
www.equipforequality.org

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