Your child should have a transition plan in his or her Individualized Education Program (IEP) starting at age 14 ½ to help prepare for life after high school. The plan should help with getting a job, further schooling, and living independently.

**Transition Plan Basics**

What is a transition plan?

- A plan within the IEP that will help prepare your child for life after high school.
- It lists your child’s goals after leaving high school and the services that will help meet those goals.
- It connects your child to colleges, vocational training programs, education programs, adult services, and other community resources.
- It is based on your child’s needs, preferences, and interests.

Who creates the transition plan?

- The IEP team.
- You, as a part of the IEP team.
- Your child.
- Outside organizations that may help your child such as the Illinois Department of Human Services Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS).

When does the IEP team create the transition plan?

- When your child turns 14 ½.
- Sooner, if needed.
- Every time the IEP team meets after your child turns 14 1/2 to update it.

**Parts of the Transition Plan**

Transition Assessments

- The school must get information on your child’s needs, interests & preferences.
- Possible transition assessments include:
Formal and informal testing;
Student and family interviews;
Observations.

Measurable Post-School Goals
- Goals focused on what your child will do after graduation or leaving high school.
- The team **must** write goals about:
  - Education and/or training;
  - Employment; and
  - Independent living.
- Good Examples:
  - Latonya will go to a four-year college and major in math.
  - Starting in June 2014, Jane will ride the train by herself to her job at the bakery, where she will get employer-offered training, to improve her culinary skills.
- Bad Examples:
  - After graduation, Maria will explore her career options (too late).
  - Matthew wants to be an NFL player after high school (not realistic).

Transition Services
- Activities or “steps” to meet your child’s goals.
- **Must** include:
  - Instruction (examples: take an adult living course; take an ACT/SAT prep class; have transportation training; get tutoring in reading).
  - Community experiences (examples: buy groceries; volunteer at the animal shelter; look at apartments for rent; open a bank account).
  - Job and other adult living objectives (examples: practice interviewing; apply for DRS; job shadowing; get a driver’s license; learn how to self-advocate).
- **May** include, if appropriate:
  - Daily living skills (examples: learn to cook; practice organizational skills; learn to use an ATM card; hygiene skills).
  - Functional vocational evaluation.

Creating a Transition Plan
Should my child participate in transition planning?
- Yes!
Your child should attend the IEP meeting at least to discuss transition planning.
Share his or her interests, preferences, and goals after high school.

How can I get an effective transition plan for my child?

- Start talking with your child now about her future.
- Ask the school to complete transition assessments.
- Tell the school about your child’s needs and goals.
- Think about what skills and knowledge your child needs to achieve her goals.
- Help the team brainstorm services and accommodations to assist your child in reaching those goals.
- Ask questions!
- If you do not understand what services are available, do not be afraid to ask.
- Do your own research.
- Find out what community resources are available.
- The school district is still responsible for providing transition services even if your child gets services from community partners.
- Those services can include a vocational program or other training programs.

What should I do if I am not happy with my child’s transition plan?

- Ask for an IEP meeting.
- At the meeting, come prepared with questions and requests:
  - Ask the team to describe:
    1. What services your child receives;
    2. Who is responsible for providing the services; and
    3. Any data the team has on your child’s transition goals.
  - Prepare a written parent report explaining all of your concerns and make specific requests.
- If you do not agree with the new IEP, you can:
  - Continue trying to work with the school to make changes;
  - Request mediation or a due process hearing; and
  - Review Equip for Equality’s Conflict Resolution Fact Sheet.

Statute of Limitations: There are very specific deadlines for challenging something that you disagree with at the school. You may request a due process hearing to ask a hearing officer to correct a problem that has occurred within the last two years, unless it is recurring or fits another of the very narrow exceptions. You may request that the Illinois State Board of Education investigate a problem that has happened in the last year. Please consult Equip for Equality’s Conflict Resolution Options fact sheet for more information on these deadlines.
DO YOU HAVE A QUESTION?
Call 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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