Cornerstones to Effective Transition Planning...Student and Parent Involvement:

For Youth with Disabilities and Their Families

South Dakota
Transition Services Liaison Project
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Greetings,

Welcome to the "Cornerstones!" This guide is designed to help students and families increase their awareness and knowledge of the transition process... LIFE AFTER HIGH SCHOOL!

Thinking about the future can be pretty scary. But we are hoping that this guide will provide some answers for students and their families, or at the very least, point them in the right direction. We will give an **overview of transition planning** (what a student needs to do now while in high school and also after high school) and some **key services** to use during the transition process.

Having a strong foundation is important when students are building their future. The first step in building a strong foundation is laying the cornerstones. That is why we call this guide the "Cornerstones".

Cornerstones will provide ideas about things to do while a student is still in high school. Students should include these ideas in their Individual Education Program (IEP)! Students and parents should read through the "Cornerstones," and work as a team in the transition process. OK....Let's get started!

Thanks to Winnelle Carpenter, author and self-advocacy expert for providing the information on the next 4 pages.

First...

By defining a student's disability they will start to learn more about themselves. The student's will become more self-aware and recognizing the things that they are good at and CAN do.

A. Define the student's disability

What is it?

Research their abilities and disability

Find out what are the best ways for them to learn (Learning Styles).

Learn and prepare to teach others about their disability, so they can learn more about people with disabilities.

Find out what accommodations are, and which ones are most beneficial to them.

Find out their rights, accommodations.

Remember, parents can assist them.

Teachers can explain things.

Explore the different opportunities and options that are available to assist student's with learning.

It is important to answer these questions and find out



WHO you are, What you LIKE, and What your ABILITIES are.

Second...

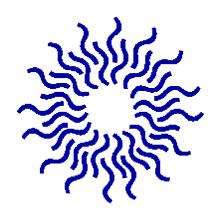
B. Learn about Self-Advocacy

Develop the self-advocacy tools that will empower students to become active participants in planning for their futures.

Self-advocates speak up for themselves on their own behalf. Students need to stand up and ask for what they need, because they realize no one else knows how they think and feel. NO ONE can read their mind!

Self-advocacy is really the BEST kind of advocacy, because, it puts the student in charge. There is no waiting for someone else to change the situation. Self-advocates make the changes for themselves.

Practicing self-advocacy encourages one to move from hopelessness to hopefulness, and from dependence to interdependence.



Winnelle D. Carpenter, M.A. Cognitive Learning Consultants

Students are ENCOURAGED to advocate for themselves when adults:

- Involve them and their families in the design and implementation of their transition-focused IEP early in their education.
- Teach them how to plan, participate in, and run transition-focused IEP meetings.
- Encourage them to write transitionfocused IEP goals in the first person (I will...)
- Listen without judgment & ask, "What happened" in non-confrontational tones.
- Encourage them to self- evaluate.
- Allow them to make mistakes when appropriate.
- Teach them about the five transition areas and help them determine current skills, decide on future goals and design places to attain those goals.
- Help them increase self-knowledge and understanding about their specific disability.
- Help them to identify what is interfering with performance in academic learning and employment.
- Help them develop compensations, accommodations & assistive technology that will enable them to succeed.
- Help them learn how to transfer this knowledge effectively when speaking up on their behalf.
- Allow them to practice ways to express preferences, suggest alternatives, negotiate, ask for accommodations, and solve problems.
- Prepare them for adult life by teaching them skills that can be used in work, living, and leisure activities outside of school.
- Cite their accomplishments and complement their strengths.
- Encourage family members to allow them to practice making choices and to follow through on decisions.
- Provide mentors and role models.
- Have them participate in retreats and workshops.
- Encourage them to take risks.

Students are DISCOURAGED from advocating for themselves when adults:

- Do it for them.
- Tell them "no excuses."
- Have lower expectations of them.
- Write self-advocacy goals on their transition-focused IEP without providing opportunities to teach self-advocacy skills.
- Enable limiting or inappropriate behaviors.
- Don't model self-advocacy.
- Don't provide them several opportunities for success.
- Write their transition-focused IEP without them.
- Don't allow them to sometimes fail.
- Respond negatively.
- Emphasize rules and regulations and discourage options and choices (encourage conformity).
- Make decisions for them.
- Lack sensitivity.
- Lock them into a grading system that discourages them from trying.
- Shame, embarrass, place them under suspicion, overprotect, patronize, invalidate, and humiliate them.
- Discourage them with comments like:
 - "If you'd just try harder."
 - "There is someone worse off than you."
 - "That would be unfair."
 - > "You need to concentrate more."
 - "You will have to do this someday on you own."
 - "Everybody has problems learning."

Third...

C. Parents

It is important to understand what transition is and how the student fits into this picture.

Parents can help students through the transition process and assist them in connecting the links. During the transition years, it is very important that students discuss the transition process with their parents and teachers, and also do research prior to the Individualized Education Program (IEP) meeting.

When a child becomes a teenager, they may feel like a stranger with their parents. As a teenager, sometimes they struggle to find out who they are and to decide what they want to be. As the teenager searches for themselves, they are also asserting their independence. These are trying years for student and their parents, but for student with a disability, these years can be even more confusing and difficult.

Students and parents probably heard the word "transition" for the first time when the student was 14 or 15, and now it may feel like everyone is talking about "transition." It is important to understand what transition is and how the student fits into the picture. Stated simply, transition means change. Everyone has experienced several transitions already the transformation from baby into child, starting school, becoming a young adult. At all phases of life, transition happens, but we will focus on moving from high school to the adult world. Transition is a process and a partnership to prepare the student for adult life, while still in school. Without adequate preparation for adult roles and access to appropriate adult service providers, students with disabilities may face serious difficulties in achieving success and independence.

The following tips should be shared between and among students, parents and teachers!

1.) Listen to Each Other.

- Focus on the student's interests and abilities rather than disabilities.
- Explore their dreams and ideas, even if the student's dreams are different from everyone else's.

2.) Learn the Skills that Student's Will Need as an Adult

- Find ways to be independent from a young age.
- Practice self-help skills, and do tasks around the house.
- Make choices and learn to make wise decisions.
- Learn self advocacy skills.
- Practice the social and communication skills needed for work, school, recreation, and friendships.
- ➤ Be part of the community. Look into after-school and recreational activities, chances to volunteer, and job options.
- Work on IEP goals and objectives at home as well as at school.

3.) Make the Most of the IEP Process

- Begin planning early--at least by age 15, but hopefully earlier.
- ➤ The student should be a part of the planning process as much as possible. Make sure that they are part of the team meetings and have a say.
- ➤ The student's should ask their teacher about leading their own IEP meeting using tools such as MAPS, Personal Centered Planning, etc.

4.) Be Prepared for IEP Meetings

- > Students have the opportunity to bring others to their IEP meetings (relatives, friends, advocates, service providers).
- > Parents should provide moral support, help gather and share information and viewpoints, and even take notes.
- Talk with the special education director or teacher about who should be invited.
- Write down questions and ideas, both before and during the meeting. Ask people to explain anything that is not clear. Get answers to all questions before the meeting ends. Or get a date when people will get back to you. Think about the goals and objectives of the IEP/transition plan. Students and parents should discuss how to help the student prepare for adult life in areas such as living and working in the community?
- Do not feel pressured to make decisions on the spot.

➤ Before leaving the meeting, make sure that the student knows what will happen next, such as when they will get the written IEP, and who the contact person is.

5.) Parents Should be Encouraged to Become Involved in School

- ➤ Get to know the school staff -both the regular and special education staff. Find out about all school services, including regular education and after-school activities (such as sports, and clubs). Get to know the people involved in the activities of interest.
- Parents can join the Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO/PTA), the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC), or the School Improvement Team. They could share ideas with other parents about creating and getting access to inclusive programs and activities.

6.) Start Planning Now for Adult Services and Supports

- Learn about the different programs and services that are available now and when the student gets older. Determine which services can best help the student become independent and to be part of the community.
- Figure out what supports that the student receives now and what will be needed to be continued in the future. Find out what agencies can provide these supports.
- Invite any agencies who might offer transition or adult services to the IEP/transition planning meeting.
- ➤ Begin financial planning for adult life. At age 17, look into applying for SSI (Supplemental Security Income). Find out about PASS (Plan for Achieving Self-Support) plans and other Social Security programs. Find out how adult services will be paid for. Think about estate planning and guardianship issues.

7.) Keep Good Records

- ➤ Before the student leaves school, get copies of all high school transcripts, evaluations, tests, and reports.
- Write down notes on each meeting and phone conversations, with the name of the agency, contact person and date. Keep a copy of all letters between students and agencies. Keep everything in file folders or three-ring notebooks.
- Keep records of any on-the-job training reports or other work experiences a student may have. Get letters of recommendation from the employers, teachers, or job coaches.

8.) Become an Advocate

- ➤ Get to know the laws covering education and disability issues (ADA, IDEA, Rehabilitation Act). Also get to know decision-makers and lawmakers.
- > Join an advocacy group or support group! OR START one!

TO HELP A STUDENT ACQUIRE SKILLS

Thirty years ago, a college degree was a sure thing - a guaranteed ticket to success. But in today's job market, young people need skills. Teens who have mastered the basic skills are able to learn anything. And in the 21st Century, the best-paid workers will be those who are capable of ongoing, lifelong learning. To ensure that teens will be lifelong learners, they must master key skills during high school. How?

Sound overwhelming? Let these simple "Do and "Don't" ideas be a guide:

DO

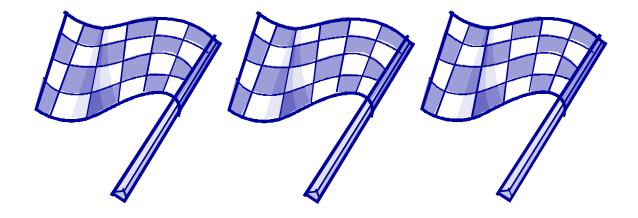
- 1. Express high, yet attainable expectations.
- 2. Attend school regularly.
- 3. Take challenging courses.
- 4. Make sure all homework assignments are completed before pursuing other activities.
- 5. Get assistance when registering for classes.
- 6. Make sure the student receives a well-rounded education, including academic and professional/technical courses.
- 7. Be sure to monitor out-of-school activities, for example, employment, school activities, and clubs.
- 8. Volunteer, job-shadowing and relevant internships during high school.
- 9. Complete an accurate evaluation of skills through an ASSESSMENT given at a local community college or technical college.
- 10. Monitor academic progress on a regular basis.

DON'T

- 1. Don't get sloppy or be incomplete, either at home or at school.
- 2. Don't skip school or duck any other obligations.
- 3. Don't think that grades are more important than skills.
- 4. Don't let anything come before education.
- 5. Don't plan a class schedule at the last minute.
- 6. Don't allow education to be lopsided. Balance is key.
- 7. Don't work more than 15-20 hours per week in a paid job.
- 8. Don't become isolated from the community.

Try these transition tips!

- **1.) Invest.** Find out what school and community learning opportunities are available and how to develop a plan for the future.
- **2.) Get beyond the books.** Explore leadership activities, get involved in student organizations, and meet with community representatives to find out what is available to help build for the future.
- **3.) Get real-life experiences.** Get experience in a variety of school and community settings, understand and practice skills that are needed in life, and gain new abilities through volunteering and service in the community.
- **4.) Discover what's important to and what the students wants to do with their life.** Talk about the students likes and dislikes, what they are interested in, what they still need to learn, what kind of support they might need, and who can help them get there.
- **5.) Explore the future.** Discover the best options for more training and learning after high school, get help with pursuing those options, and explore what is needed to make that happen.
- **6.) Build a life.** Talk about interests for future schooling, career interest, where to live, what to do for fun, and what to do for the future.



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Remember:

Students and parents are equal, decision-making members of the IEP team.

One of the most important responsibilities of families is to prepare children to be interdependent and successful adults. Because students with disabilities are likely to encounter a variety of challenges, transition to life as an adult may have to be more carefully planned. Families must be included as integral members of the transition-focused IEP team. Parents bring a

wealth of information about their children, which is critical to effective transition planning. Listed below are several ways that family members can assist in the development of transition plans with their children:

- Sharing information about "what has worked" in the past, family strengths and resources, incentives that school cannot offer, and most importantly, sharing the parents "dreams" of the future for their, along with challenges that parents face;
- Becoming informed about quality transition planning and relevant community services that can assist and support children in achieving success as adults;
- Assisting in the implementation of identified transition goals;
- Assigning specific duties to children around the home; emphasizing good grooming, physical fitness, and social and communication skills;
- Making sure that the intentions of agreements and collaborative efforts between various agencies are fully met;
- Advocating for the development and initiation of services that do not currently exist in the school or community;
- Providing an assessment of the students skills outside of the school environment;
- Helping children to prepare for participation in their IEP meetings by helping them identify accomplishments, goals, dreams, practice introducing everyone, etc.;
- Actively supporting efforts to provide transition in a variety of community settings and sharing contacts to assist in securing training sites; and
- Provide a variety of community experiences for children.

20 ways to help encourage the development of career awareness:

- 1. Encourage students to use the local library as a resource on careers and information gathering. Invite students to help conduct research if the parent is undergoing a job search themself.
- 2. Have the parent's employer sponsor learning activities at school. For instance, if an employer is a bank and the parent is a bank teller, provide assistance to the students and teachers by helping them establish a school bank. Prior to starting the bank at the school, arrange a tour at the parent's worksite.
- 3. Help organize field trips that are related to the world of work.
- 4. Participate in parent involvement activities at school, particularly those related to School-to-Careers.
- 5. Encourage the child to volunteer for a charity or community organization. This will empower the child to better the community and develop interpersonal and organizational skills.
- 6. Make the child become aware of the connection between education and careers. The parent should talk about how they applied their own education to work and develop games connecting school subjects to work tasks.
- 7. Encourage the child to find summer and seasonal employment. Evaluate the job application & discuss communication skills if an interview is involved.
- 8. Seek information from professional associations on career opportunities.
- 9. Urge schools, employers and businesses in the community to encourage and reward academic achievement.
- 10. Make presentations or speeches at the child's school during a Career Day or School-to-Careers meeting.
- 11. Allow the child or other students to shadow the parent for a day at their workplace. (Shadowing is when a student attends work with an adult for a day to learn more about a career in which he/she is interested.)
- 12. During vacations, work with the child to explore the occupations and careers which are abundant in the community. Review newspapers and attend business and community meetings.

- 13. Read the newspaper together: What are the headlines? What are the jobs that come to mind? Examine the business sections: What companies are growing? Increasing their workforce? Developing new products? Exploring new territory? Which of these is interesting to the child? Why or why not? What school subjects do the articles bring to mind? Is it a favorite subject of child? Review job advertisements. Discuss qualifications in relation to academics.
- 14. Have the child take an interest inventory. What does it tell the child about him/herself? What does it tell the parent about their child?
- 15. Keep a portfolio on the child. Encourage the child to assist in choosing the contents. What kinds of things need to be kept? The portfolio should contain this information: demographic data, personal statistics, activity, school data, interest inventory results and aptitudes, schoolwork samples, photos, special accomplishments, etc. Allow the child to take over maintaining the portfolio when ready and able.
- 16. Involve and encourage friends, relatives and acquaintances to talk to the child about skills and values used in the workplace.
- 17. Plan leisure time activities that explore knowledge, abilities and skills.
- 18. Review these classifications of skills and have the child determine where his or her skills fit: doer, thinker, creator, helper, organizer, persuader. Give definitions of each. What are others? Discuss and list the career possibilities under each category.
- 19. Create a budget for the child for today. Help him/her determine the salary expected in the chosen field. Look at the things the child dreams of owning car, home, boat, etc. Take the child to a local employment agency to determine if there are any available jobs in the field of interest. Determine if the salary meets the expectations of the child. Ask the child what skills and education he/she would need to be qualified for the job. If qualified for the job, ask the child how he/she would handle competing with several other people for the same job even though they possess the same level of education, experience and skill.
- 20. Discuss with the child the changing nature of the job market and the nature of work. Discuss trends in downsizing and rise in temporary workers. Discuss how they deal with these pressures lack of benefits, shift to service jobs, shrinking salaries. Discuss the new opportunities in international employment.

THE ROLES OF FAMILIES IN TRANSITION PLANNING

- 1. If appropriate, work with legal and financial experts to initiate future financial and residential planning by:
 - · applying for the student's Social Security card
 - assisting with an application for SSI
 - developing a "will"
 - determining guardianship
 - pursuing a driver's permit or license.
- 2. Inform other families about transition options, and provide peer support to other parents.
- 3. Promote self-reliance and independence at home.
- 4. Encourage and facilitate social activities with peers.
- 5. Help student set goals; discuss appropriate options.
- 6. Teach and promote daily living skills (banking, cooking, cleaning, etc.).
- 7. Encourage the student to work at a community or neighborhood job.
- 8. Promote good money management, budgeting, saving by the student.
- 9. Explore and promote community resources with student.
- 10. Reinforce work-related behaviors at home (grooming, etiquette, following directions, completing tasks assigned, etc.).
- 11. Provide informal career awareness experiences (discuss various jobs with in the community).
- 12. Provide information about the student's life skills, interests, and aptitudes.
- 13. Help the student develop decision-making and communications skills.
- 14. Provide opportunities for participation in sports, daily exercise, hobbies, etc.
- 15. Assist the student to develop self-advocacy and self-management skills.
- 16. Reinforce positive community citizenship and work values.
- 17. Support positive self-esteem.

MESS RESPONSIBILITIES

Students	Family Members
Inform the IEP team of future adult goals.	
Share successes and accomplishments	Share knowledge about children's personal traits, likes and dislikes, abilities.
Determine strengths and challenges and communicate this information to the IEP team.	Be a role model. Let the child know they can become as independent as they want. Give them chores around the house, focus on grooming, physical fitness, and good social and communication skills.
Express a desire for certain program component, if needed.	Be a "case manager". Make sure that the goals on the transition plan are being fully met. Most likely, the parent will have to work with many different people and agencies to get the adult services and supports the child needs.
Share information about preferences and interests.	Encourage job and career exploration at school and at home. Find out more about Project Skills, summer jobs, and other programs in the school or community.
Work together with IEP group in the decision-making process.	Work for more and better supports. The parent and the child must keep working with service providers, employers and policy makers to create more choices for students with disabilities.
Don't just attend the IEP meeting! TALK, interact and speak out.	Help children prepare to PARTICIPATE in their IEP meetings by identifying accomplishments, goals, dreams, and practice introducing everyone, etc
Have the teacher assist in the "Self- Directed IEP".	Support providing transition services in a variety of community settings to build a variety of experiences.

POES RESPONSIBILITES

Teachers	School Personnel
Encourage and assist students to be	Encourage families to plan
ACTIVE, PREPARED MEMBERS OF	optimistically for their children's future,
THEIR TEAMS.	starting in elementary grades.
Connect students with courses and	Inform students and families about the
activities that will help them to meet	transition planning process.
their goals and meet requirements for	transition planning process.
graduation.	
Ensure that the student's IEP goals are	Talk about the planning process by
implemented.	discussing the meeting's purpose,
·	describing what goes on and who
	typically attends, and identifying the
	role each person will play in supporting
	the student's goals!
Focus on things that the student CAN	Assist the families and students in
do. Talk about students' interests,	understanding appropriate
skills, and experiences.	accommodations and resources for
	daily living.
Celebrate accomplishments before	Help students to experiment with
discussing needs.	assistive technology and how it can
	help them increase interdependence
	and participation in life-enhancing
At IED mostings, analy directly to	activities.
At IEP meetings, speak directly to	Coordinate the planning process.
students, not about them, and ask questions to encourage student	
participation.	
ραιτιοιρατίοπ.	Involve the direct and indirect
	instructional services as designed by
	the IEP team.
	Involve students and family members
	in the design and implementation of the
	transition-focused IEP.
	Encourage families to help their child to
	be their own ADVOCATE (with plenty
	of practice in making and following
	through on choices and decisions).
	Discuss the differences between
	accommodations and modifications.

ROBER RESPONSIBILITY

Adult Service Agencies

Assist the student in accessing services in the community.

Can provide the student information on current labor trends and potential job markets.

Offer programs and services to assist in vocational training, job placement, and living alternatives.

Together with the student and the parents, the adult service providers have the responsibility to follow-up on the transition plan after graduation.

Educate IEP teams about support alternatives in the local community. Can assist the student in identifying goals and accessing resources across a wide variety of areas including: health care, peer support, employment and educational opportunities, self-advocacy, personal safety and individual rights.



Vocational Rehabilitation

- Vocational and personal counseling and guidance
- Project Skills work experiences
- Job seeking skills (training)
 - Job Placement Assistance
- Occupational licenses, tools, equipment, and supplies
- Training and education
- Work adjustment training
- Consultation in job-site modification
 - Physical restoration
- Technological aids and services
- Support services, including interpreters, note-taking, reader services, orientation and mobility, and rehabilitation engineering
 - Specialized evaluations
- Supported Employment

Benefits Planning Specialists

- Assist individuals who receive SSDI or SSI to understand how work will impact their benefits.
- Inform students and parents of the many work incentives within the SSDI and SSI programs that allow the consumer to keep many or all benefits while working.

SBVI

- If an individual has a visual impairment, with or without additional physical or mental disabilities, Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired (SBVI) can offer assistance in transition planning.
 - Adjustment to blindness, including orientation and mobility training and rehabilitation counseling.
- Low vision services.
- Assistance in finding and keeping a job.
- Vocational training.
- Postsecondary training

Social Services

- meeting a variety of essential daily needs, such as housing, employment, financial support, health care and transportation.
- The case manager can determine eligibility for services, help identify which services are needed, seek out appropriate services, and coordinate service delivery.

Independent Living Centers

- Transition specialists at these centers can assist students in identifying goals and accessing resources across a wide variety of areas including:
 - Health care, peer support, employment and educational opportunities, self-advocacy, personal safety, and individual rights.

Postsecondary Education

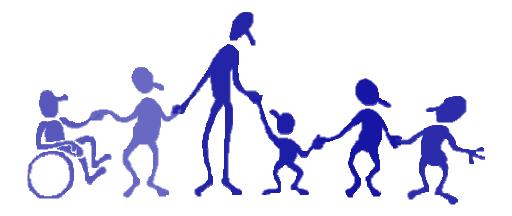
- Postsecondary education may be pursued through all colleges or technical schools.
- Most postsecondary schools have staff designated to counsel students with disabilities.

 These staff may be called
 - These staff may be called Postsecondary Disability Coordinators or 504 Coordinators, and they can help students with transition planning, support services and staff, survival skills, and the application process.

OTHER RESOURCES

A number of other resources exist that may be useful in the transition planning process.

- For students with significant developmental disabilities, who will require substantial lifelong supports, it is critical to connect with <u>Adjustment Training</u> <u>Centers</u> or <u>Resource Coordinators</u> from the Division of Developmental Disabilities by the time a student is 16 years of age.
- For example, a representative from a <u>Social Security</u> office can provide information regarding rules and regulations for people with disabilities and application forms.
- Mental Health Centers can provide evaluations and support through therapy, counseling, and consultation.
- <u>Career Centers</u> (Job Service) can provide job listings and can help with making applications and employer contacts. Career Center staff also have information on Job Corps and Workforce Investment Act (WIA) programs.
- An array of <u>health services</u> can be provided by public health nurses or other health care providers. Depending on individual students, representatives from these services may be included on the transition-focused IEP team.
- The Resource Guide for People with Disabilities is a publication available in both print and electronic format. Published by the Center for Disabilities, this document provides overviews of possible services offered by a variety of agencies and also contains contact information for those agencies. A print copy is part of this tacklebox, and an electronic version is available at: http://www.usd.edu/cd/publications/resourcequide.cfm



QUESTIONS TO ASK...

Questions for Secondary (High School) Personnel:

- What are the career and vocational objectives on the students Individualized Education Program (IEP)?
- Will the student participate in job or career training, if appropriate?
- Which social skills does the IEP team think the student should work on?
- If the student should be included in more vocational or technical classes, what courses are suggested?
- What types of transition and vocational assessments are administered to determine the student's area of interests and strengths?
- Will the student be taught functional math and reading?
- What will students IEP Transition Plan include?
- Is there an objective on recreation activities and how does it tie into the students Transition Plan?
- What functional activities contribute to independence?

Questions for Post-Secondary/Vocational Training or Education Programs:

- What training programs are offered?
- What is the length and cost of the programs?
- What are the entry requirements for this program?
- If the student is to sign up today, how long will it be before he/she can start the program?
- What support services are available for the student?
- How and where can financial assistance be obtained?
- What is the name of the contact person for each program? What is the application procedure?
- What kind of specific vocational training is the school going to pay for?
- Does the program provide assistance in locating a job when the child finishes the program?

Questions for Adult Service Agencies:

- What programs and services are offered by the agency?
- What types of disabilities does the agency serve?
- How does the agency determine eligibility?
- What services would the agency provide the student? What is the cost? Can financial assistance be obtained and, if so, who is the contact?
- For what vocational program is the child qualified?
- Is there a waiting list for the programs? If so, how long?
- Who is the contact person?
- How old does the student have to be to receive services?

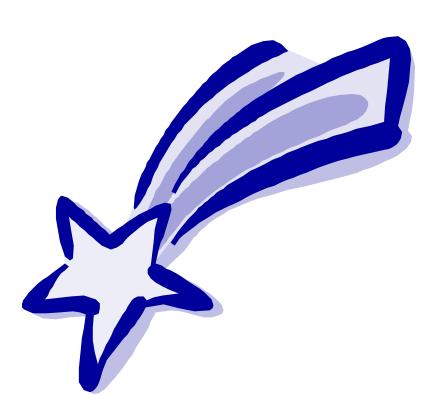
Did the IEP Pass?

Use the following checklist to see whether or not the IEP meets the requirements of IDEA (the federal law covering education for students with disabilities) and SD Special Education Programs Regulations:

Did the student take part in developing the Transition Plan and IEP? If not, did the team take other steps to make sure the student's interests and needs were considered in the plan?
Are the annual goals and objectives in the IEP based on the students interests, preferences, strengths, and needs?
Were staff members of agencies, which might be providing or paying for transition services, invited to the IEP/ transition meeting? If the invited agencies did not send any staff members, did the team take other steps to make sure these agencies took part?
Does the Transition/IEP include the student's long-range (measurable postsecondary) goals in:
 EMPLOYMENT POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION and/or POSTSECONDARY TRAINING INDEPENDENT LIVING (when appropriate)
Does the student's IEP Courses of Study match with what will be needed to reach long-range goals?
Are the annual goals and objectives designed to help the student to reach measurable postsecondary goals?
Are there goals or activity recommendations included in the IEP which will help the student move towards their stated long-term goals and plans?
Did the team include the following in the IEP:

- instruction
- related services
- community experiences
- the creation of employment and other post-school adult living objectives and, when appropriate:
- acquiring daily living skills
- functional vocational evaluation

Was a vocational or other transition assessment begun before the age 16? Is the transition-related progress reviewed at least once a year, and does this information help the team adjust and refine the transition employment goals?
 Was the need for assistive technology in transition considered?
 Did the IEP team meet again if the responsibilities of other agencies identified in the IEP were not met?
 If the student is turning 17, did the team talk about the transfer of rights when the student reaches the age 18?
 If the student is a junior, were graduation and the courses required to meet district requirements discussed?





Transition Checklist



The following is a checklist of transition activities that students, parents, and school personnel may wish to consider when preparing transition plans with the IEP team. The student's skills and interests will determine which items on the checklist are relevant. Use this checklist to determine whether or not these transition issues should be addressed at IEP transition meetings. The checklist can also help identify who should be part of the IEP transition team. Responsibility for carrying out the specific transition activities should be determined at the IEP transition meetings.

Four to Five Years Before Leaving School

- Identify student learning styles and the necessary accommodations to be a successful learner and worker.
- Identify career interests and skills, complete interest and career inventories, and identify additional education or training requirements.
- Explore options for post-secondary education and training including admission criteria.
- Identify interests and options for future living arrangements, including supports.
- □ Learn to communicate effectively student interests, preferences, and needs.
- □ Be able to explain student disabilities and the accommodations he or she needs.
- Learn and practice informed decision-making skills.
- Investigate assistive technology tools that can increase community involvement and employment opportunities.
- Broaden student experiences with community activities and expand friendships.
- Pursue and use local transportation options outside of family.
- Acquire an identification card and the ability to communicate personal information.
- Identify and begin learning skills necessary for independent living including money management.
- Learn and practice personal health care.

Two to Three Years Before Leaving School

- Identify community support services and programs (Vocational Rehabilitation, Centers for Independent Living, Adjustment Training Centers.)
- Coordinate with adult service providers and ensure that appropriate referrals have been made.
- Match career interests and skills with academic course work and community work experiences.
- Gather more information on post-secondary programs and the support services offered; and make arrangements for accommodations to take college entrance exams
- Identify health care providers and become informed about sexuality and family planning issues.

- □ Determine the need for financial support (Supplemental Security Income, state financial supplemental programs, Medicaid, and housing assistance.).
- □ Learn and practice appropriate interpersonal, communication, and social skills for different settings (employment, school, recreation, with peers, etc.).
- □ Explore legal status about decision-making prior to the age of maturity and consider the need for guardianship.
- Begin a resume and update it as needed.
- Practice independent living skills, e.g., budgeting, shopping, cooking, and housekeeping.
- Identify needed personal assistant services, and if appropriate, learn to direct and manage these services.

One Year Before Leaving School

- Apply for financial support programs. (Supplemental Security Income, Independent Living Services, Vocational Rehabilitation, and Adjustment Training Centers).
- Identify the post-secondary school the student plans to attend and arrange for accommodations.
- Practice effective communication by developing interview skills, asking for help, and identifying necessary accommodations at post-secondary and work environments.
- Specify desired job and obtain paid employment with supports as needed.
- □ Take responsibility for arriving on time to work, appointments, and social activities, including transportation needs.
- □ Assume responsibility for health care needs (making appointments, filling and taking prescriptions, etc.).
- Register to vote and for selective service (if a male).

Checklist adapted from the National Transition Network Checklist.

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201 E. Colfax, Denver, CO 80203.

(303)866-6694 or by accessing the CDE website www.cde.state.co.us.Permission to copy.



A Transition Plan Timeline

Transition Checklist

The following is a checklist of transition activities that a student may wish to consider when preparing transition plans with the IEP team. The student's skills and interests will determine which items on the checklist are relevant. Use this checklist to ask whether or not these transition issues should be addressed at IEP transition meetings. The checklist can also help identify who should be part of the IEP.

4 to 5 Years Before Leaving School

Community Living

School a	 □ Think about where and how the student would like to live, and supports needed to do this. □ Begin learning skills needed for independent living. □ Look into assistive technology that can make it easier to have a job and be part of the community. □ Become more involved in the community and make new friends. □ Look into and learn to use public transportation (like buses). □ Look into driver's education. □ Think about skills needed for taking care of money (budgeting, savings, checking account). □ Get an ID card and learn when and how to give out personal information. □ Learn and practice personal health care.
Octiool ai	TO THE TOTAL
	 □ Know how student learns best and what accommodations are needed to do well in school and at work. □ Explore job and career interests and skills. Complete interest and career inventories, and think about other schooling or training that would needed. □ Look into college or continuing education schools or programs, and their admission requirements. □ Start financial planning (financial aid for college or continuing education)
	 ☐ Start financial planning (financial aid for college or continuing education). ☐ Save samples of school work and achievements. ☐ Explore chances to volunteer in the community. ☐ Take part in informational interviews or job shadowing experiences.
Being an	Advocate
	☐ Learn to make clear to others the students interests, wishes, and needs.

☐ Be able to explain abilities and disabilities and any accommodations that			
might be needed. ☐ Learn and practice how to make informed decisions.			
Two to Three Years Before Leaving School			
Community Living			
Learn about community supports offered by community and state agencies. Invite adult service providers, friends, and others to the IEP/Transition meeting.			
Learn independent living skills, such as budgeting, shopping, cooking, and housekeeping.			
Figure out what personal assistant services that will be needed, and how to manage these services.			
Choose health care providers and learn about sexuality and family planning. Visit a variety of adult support agencies. Ask questions about services that could be provided or created to meet the student's needs.			
d Work			
Match career interests and skills with vocational (job-related) courses and work experiences in the community. Seek summer employment (intern in career interest area). Begin a resume and make changes to it as needed. Learn more about colleges and other adult education schools and programs, and the support services offered. Make plans for accommodations to take college entrance exams and complete applications. Seek advice from the school Guidance Counselor. Take part in job shadowing experiences that are offered. Apply to DRS (the Division of Rehabilitation Services) to determine eligibility for services.			
Supports			
Investigate eligibility for income support and health care support like SSI (Supplemental Security Income), Independent Living Services and Medicaid. Work with parents on setting up trusts, if needed. Practice how to communicate best with others at work, at school, with friends, and in the community. Plan ahead to make sure the student will still have assistive technology needed after high school.			

Being an Advocate ☐ Look into the legal status about decision-making before becoming a legal adult (at age 18 in South Dakota). ☐ Learn about the laws that affect the rights of people with disabilities (Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Rehabilitation Act, etc.). One Year Before Leaving School **Community Living** ☐ Make detailed plans for living on own if that's the students goal. Practice independent living skills. ☐ Learn to take care of health care needs (make appointments, fill and take prescriptions, etc.). ☐ Make a list of people or agencies that can help if problems occur. **Supports** ☐ Make sure the student puts in place any income and health care support programs that might needed (SSI, Independent Living Services, Medicaid). ☐ Start building detailed plans of supports that will be needed with adult service agencies. ☐ Begin transitioning into new adult service plan. **School and Work** ☐ Choose the college or adult education school or program to and make plans with the school for accommodations. ☐ Choose and get a job, along with any supports needed. ☐ Learn to be on time for work, appointments, and social activities. ☐ Make plans for how to get to school, work, etc. (bus, car, friends). ☐ Get copies of transcripts and other important records from school before the student graduates. ☐ Write resume and get letters of recommendation from teachers before the student graduates. ☐ Request that the school complete any evaluations needed by adult service providers or colleges, and sign releases to make these records available. Being an Advocate ☐ Work on communication skills and self-advocacy skills. ☐ Become involved with advocacy and support groups. (Here's To Your Student's Future! A Parent's Guide to Transition Planning)

a. Questionnaires

And

b. Assessments







STUDENT / PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE

The following questions will help the student and parents think about their preferences and interests as well as services that will be needed after leaving high school. School staff will use the answers to assist in planning and locating services that match future plans. Parent's can help answer these questions.

1.	. Please give the student's age, grade level and date of graduation:	
	Age Grade Graduation Date (if known)	
2.	What does the student plan to do after they leave school?	
3.	What are the student's preferences, interests, and strengths as they start moving into the adult world?	
4.	What does the student want for themself during the next year after leaving school; in 5 years; 10 years?	
	Employment:	
	Training:	
	Education:	
	Living Arrangements:	
5.	What most concerns the student about their future?	
6.	Is the student presently in contact with any agencies that will or may be involved with them after graduation? Do they plan to make or maintain contact?	

7. Does the student feel they can advocate high school, or does the parent/guardian on their behalf?	for themselves when they graduate from or someone else need to advocate for them	
8. With whom and where would the student	: like to live?	
9. Where would the student like to work? W do?	hat kind of work would the student like to	
10. What recreational/leisure facilities has the student used? Which ones would the student like to use when they graduate from high school?		
11. In what areas does the student feel that they will need assistance to plan when they leave school?		
VocationalWork trainingResidential placementSocial relationshipsTransportation	Placement Financial Recreation/leisure Independent living Sexual awareness	

Adopted from Mark Murphy, Santa Clare County, 1992

STUDENT TRANSITION ASSESSMENT

General Questions for Assessment Planning:

- 1. What are the student's greatest dreams or goals?
- 2. What are the student's greatest fears?
- 3. How can school/agency resources help the student to reach their goals?
- 4. Is there anything the school/family/agencies are doing for now that the student could/should be doing for themselves?

Educational Questions:

- 1. Why is the student successful in some classes?
- 2. Why is the student experiencing difficulty in other classes?
- 3. What modifications does the student need in their classes to succeed?
- 4. How does the student learn best?
- 5. What specific skills does the student lack that could be taught to in school?
- 6. What further educational training does the student wish they could get?
- 7. How would the student pay for further educational training?

Career Questions:

- 1. What would the student like to be doing 2-5-10 years from now?
- 2. What skills are needed to get the job the student wants?
- 3. What kinds of things does the student think they're good at? What are they not good at?
- 4. What kind of vocational training/education would the student like to have after high school?
- 5. What would be the student's ideal job be?
- 6. What kinds of information/classes/training does the student need to have in order to reach their career goals?
- 7. What hobbies, interests, and recreation activities does the student have that could use in a career?
- 8. What job shadowing or job try-outs would the student like to try in order to explore possible careers?
- 9. What kind of work experience has the student had?

Community/Residential Questions:

- 1. Where does the student want to live after they graduate?
- 2. What kind of transportation will be available to the student after graduation?
- 3. What kind of chores/jobs does the student do at home that will help as an independent adult?

- 4. What kind of domestic skills does the student need to help with (cooking, household management, etc.)?
- 5. If the student moved to a new community, how would they locate housing, recreational opportunities, transportation, medical and legal resources, etc. ?
- 6. How would the student manage their money after graduation?
- 7. What money/banking skills does the student need help with?

Medical/Legal Questions:

- 1. Does the student have a family doctor/dentist?
- 2. Does the student have any medical needs that will require support beyond high school?
- 3. If the student's run into a legal problem, how would they handle it? Who will help?
- 4. Who would the student contact in case of emergency?
- 5. What would the student need to know about first aid if help wasn't readily available?
- 6. If student doesn't understand the terms of a contract, who can help?
- 7. What kinds of insurance would the student need, and how would the student pay for it?

Recreation/Leisure Questions:

- 1. What does the student like to do for fun?
- 2. What are hobbies and interests?

- 3. Is there anything the student wishes they could learn how to do that they don't know now (i.e., bowling, swimming, skiing, knitting, painting, etc.)?
- 4. Are there any school activities that the student might like to get involved in?
- 5. What recreation opportunities are offered in the community that might interest the student?
- 6. What recreation resources might a student look for if they move to a new community?
- 7. Would the student rather spend leisure time alone or with others?

Social/Interpersonal Questions:

- 1. How does the student handle conflicts or solve problems?
- 2. Who would the student to go to when they have a problem or need help -at home at school in the community?
- 3. Does the student have someone they trust to talk with when things aren't going well?
- 4. Who does the student include in their circle of friends?





ASSESSMENT FOR PARENTS

The following is a Transition Assessment for Parents, a tool for transition at the IEP meeting.

Dear Parent(s):

As children move closer to graduation, it is important to begin to plan for their future. At the next meeting, we will develop a transition plan. The transition plan will identify future goals for children and ways to support them in reaching these goals. We would all like to see all our students become productive members of society. Parental input and involvement is critical. Please take a few minutes to complete this Transition Assessment. Think of your children as an adult after graduation and identify your dreams/goals for him/her.

Employment:

I think that my son/daughter could work in: Full time regular job (competitive employment) Part time regular job (competitive employment) A job that has support and is supervised, full or part time (supported employment) Military Service Volunteer work Other:
My son's/daughter's strength(s) in this area are:
My son/daughter seems to be interested in working as:
When I think of my son/daughter working, I am afraid that

To work, my son/daughter needs to develop skills in:

Education:
Future education for my son/daughter will include (check all that apply): College or University Community College Vocational training On-the-job training Personal development classes Other
My son's/daughter's educational strengths are:
To attend post-secondary training my son/daughter will need to develop skills in:
Residential/Living:
After graduation my son or daughter will live: On his/her own in a house or apartment With a roommate In a supervised living situation (group home, supervised apartment) With family Other:
My son's/daughter's strength(s) in this area are:
When I think about where my son/daughter will live, I am afraid that
To live as independently as possible, my son or daughter needs to develop skills in:
Recreation and Leisure:
When my son/daughter graduates, I hope he/she is involved in (check all that apply): Independent recreational activities Activities with friends Organized recreational activities (clubs, team sports)

Classes (to develop hobbies, and explore areas of interest) Supported and supervised recreational activities Other:
During free time, my son or daughter enjoys:
My son's/daughter's strength(s) in this area are:
When I think of the free time my son or daughter will have after graduation, I am afraid that:
To be active and enjoy leisure time, my son or daughter needs to develop skills in:
Transportation:
When my son/daughter graduates he/she will (check all that apply): Have a driver's license and car Walk, or ride a bike Use transportation independently (bus, taxi, train) Use supported transportation (family, service groups, car pool, special program) Other:
My son's/daughter's strength(s) in this area are:
When I think of my son/daughter traveling around the community I worry about:
To access transportation my son/daughter needs to develop skills in:
Review items in the following three areas. Please identify 3 to 5 areas only in which your son or daughter needs information/support.

Social/Interpersonal:	
Making friends	
Setting goals	
Family relationship	
Family relationship Handling legal responsibilities	
Handling anger	
Communicating needs/wants	
Communicating needs/wants Relationships with the opposite	SAY
Counseling	SCA
Other:	
Personal Management:	
Hygiono Sofoty	
Hygiene Safety Mobility/transportation	
Mobility/transportation Domestic skills	
Money management/budgeting Time/time management	
Personal care	
Other:	
Other.	
Health:	
Ongoing care for a serious med	lical condition
Sex education	
AIDS awareness	
Information on drug/chemical a	buse
Other:	
Community Supports:	
Cooperative Extension Source	
Independent Hiring Center	
College Students	
DakotaLink (Assistive Technolo	ogy Systems)
Planned Parenthood	
Neighbors	
Red Cross Safety Course	
YWCA	
Drivers Education	
Employment Services	
Child Care	
Doforo hoginai	Colorado Transition N
Before beginnii	ng the process with your child, take a minute to

think through the following questions concerning your own career satisfaction and aspirations.

SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS FOR PARENTS

- 1. What are your interests, values, and skills?
- 2. How do you define success?
- 3. To what extent does your current situation meet these criteria?
- 4. When in your career history have you really been satisfied? What made that so? What made you change that situation?
- 5. What would you do if your career as you know it were no longer an option? What are your alternatives?
- 6. Where do you want to be in two, five, or ten years? What did you want to accomplish before you retire?
- 7. What will you do after you retire?

1. How did you decide which career to follow? **INFLUENCES** 2. Who or what influenced your decisions? **ON YOUR** CAREER **DECISIONS** 3. What messages did your parents and other authorities give you about work? 4. What were your expectations of what you would do with your life? Did you make them proud by fulfilling those expectations or disappoint them by following an alternative path? 5. What did your parents do for a living? How satisfied do you think you were with the way you lived your lives? Did you ever talk with them about your career satisfaction or dissatisfaction? 6. What would you have done differently, if you had known then what you know now?

Think back to your relationship with your parents as you grew up and into adulthood.

PARENTAL INFLUENCE

- 1. Did you seek their advice or rebel against it?
- 2. In what ways do your children's reactions to your suggestions remind you of how you reacted to suggestions made by your parents?
- 3. Were your parents forceful in their opinions and did they expect you to follow their every word, or did they encourage you to form your own position?
- 4. Did your mother and father have different expectations of you?
- 5. How did you react to their parenting styles? To what extent does your parenting style mirror or reject the styles of those who parented you?

Adult Services/Resources Assessment Checklist - Parent Version

Name of Student:		
School:	Date:	
Grade:	Age:	
Name of person completing this form:		

At or before age 16, school staff are required to invite potential adult service providers to student IEP meetings. The IEP must also include a statement of interagency responsibilities or any needed linkages.

Please determine which adult services you feel your son/daughter may need now or continue to benefit from following completion of secondary education services. Discuss results at their IEP meeting.

Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS). DRS funds the "Project Skills" program, a paid work experience program available for students age 16 and older who qualify. DRS assist individuals with physical or mental disabilities to obtain employment and live independently. Services may include: counseling, training, job placement, and more.

Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired (SBVI). SBVI can offer services to individuals who are blind or have a visual impairment, such as adjustment to blindness training, rehabilitation counseling, assistance in finding and keeping a job, tools and supplies needed to reach goals, vocational training, post-secondary preparation, assistive technology, and more.

Social Security Administration. Manages two different disability programs – SSDI and SSI. Both programs provide a monthly income for people with disabilities, but the rules that affect eligibility for them are different.

Centers for Independent Living. Staff at Centers throughout the state can assist in these areas: housing, community resources, independent living skills, peer support, employment, self-advocacy, personal safety, individual rights, and attendant management.

Mental Health Centers. Provide a full range of mental health services including: emergency care, evaluations, case management, consultation, and outpatient care.

One-Stop Career Centers/Career Learning Centers. Can provide job listings and help with making applications and employer contacts.

Assistive Technology. DakotaLink has four centers around the state that can provide assistance to individuals of all ages to help locate, acquire and use the latest available assistive devices that best meet the need to maintain independence at home, work, classroom or in leisure activities.

Adjustment Training Centers (ATC). ATC's are located throughout the state and provide day and/or residential services to individuals with developmental disabilities, primarily age 16 and older. Services include: community living training, home/ community based services, follow-along services, pre-vocational and vocational training.

Advocacy Services. S.D. Advocacy Services provides services such as information and referral, advocates, client assistance program for adults with disabilities, self-advocacy training and more.

Resource Coordinator. The Division of Developmental Disabilities employs statewide Resource Coordinators to assist individuals with developmental disabilities and their families in accessing services.

Health service providers. Can be provided by public health nurses or other health care providers depending on individual student needs.

Post–Secondary Schools. Post-secondary education can be pursued through avenues such as public or private colleges, universities, community colleges, technical colleges, and business and traditional schools. Post-secondary schools have staff specifically assigned to counsel students with disabilities.

Employers. Can offer job sites for work-based learning, Project Skills program, or provide information on what work habits and skill levels are needed for certain kinds of work.

Communication Services for the Deaf (CSD). Serves deaf and hard-of-hearing people in South Dakota. Some services provided include: interpreting, advocacy and consultation, employment services, communication equipment, independent living, mentoring and more.

**Ask school staff to provide you with contact names/phone numbers for any of the above listed resources. A complete listing of these resources is available in the "Resource Guide for People with Disabilities," developed and distributed by Center for Disabilities. To get your free copy, call 1-800-658-3080.



Transition Planning: What – Why – How

What - Planning and Start Early

Growing up is not easy! It is even more complicated for young adults with disabilities. Far too many students with disabilities leave school lacking the academic, technical, and social skills necessary to find and/or maintain employment, and often the jobs that they do find are low-paying and offer no health benefits. As students prepare to move from school to community living and employment, good program planning can help them to become independent, productive adults. Identifying the challenges students will face as adults, and preparing and assisting them to meet those demands successfully, requires careful transition planning beginning at the earliest age possible.

Why - Start Early?

It is important to begin the transition planning process early to allow time for building experiences and accessing the support services needed for the future. Both The Congress and the U.S. Department of Education recognized that early transition planning is important because:

- Transition from special education services and its entitlements is complicated.
- □ For students with severe disabilities and complex needs, it will take time to put post-school services and supports in place.
- Some students will likely be using the services of several agencies, and it will take time and coordination to figure out who can do what and who will pay for what.

Early and long-range planning is critical to accessing many post-school programs or services, which could include anything from support services in college to residential services from an adult service provider. Students and families are often faced with mounds of paperwork, agency jargon that sounds like some sort of alphabet soup, hard to understand eligibility requirements, and the possibility of long waiting lists for some types of services. Early, thoughtful planning will help ensure that the student receives needed services in a timely manner when exiting the school.

How to Plan?

Transition planning involves a team of people drawn from different parts of the student's school and community life. The specific needs of the student for post-secondary

services should determine who is invited to the IEP transition planning meeting. It is important that students be linked to various adult agencies and organizations, such as mental health agencies, vocational rehabilitation, community colleges, housing, and employment and training agencies. If representatives from the agencies do not attend the meeting, the school is required to "take other steps to obtain participation" in planning the student's transition services, such as separate meetings, phone calls or written correspondence. Transition goals cannot be achieved in one year. Transition planning, services, and activities should be approached as a multi-year process. Young adults themselves, along with their parents, play an important role in the transition process. While involving the student in his/her own transition planning is required by law, perhaps the most important reason for student involvement is to build his/her self determination skills. These are essential for the student to develop the ability to manage his or her own life.

The Transition Concept - Three Major Components

- 1) Coach every student, along with his or her family, to think about goals after high school and to develop a long-range plan that will get there.
- 2) Design high school experiences to ensure that the student gains the skills needed to reach his or her desired post-school goals.
- 3) Identify and link students and families to any needed post-school services, supports or programs before the student exits the school system.

To begin with, examine the family's values as well as the young adult's interests, skills, and desires for the future. Encourage the student to talk about their preferences for the future. These preferences should guide the transition planning process while involving students in planning activities that help him/her become a good decision maker and develop self-advocacy skills. Transition services can and should be delivered through curricular and extracurricular activities in many settings -- in academic and vocational classrooms, at home, and throughout the community -- to practice and reinforce newly acquired skills. The more young adults with disabilities have opportunities to practice skills in real-life situations, the more comfortable and natural they will feel in those settings.

IDEA contains detailed requirements for planning the education of individual students including a statement of what must be included in the IEP. Students of transition age must be invited to attend the IEP meeting. The invitation should be documented. If the student does not attend, the school district must document how the student's interests and preferences were considered.

The focus of the IEP should be framed to identify the projected course of study related to the student's post-school outcomes. Consider core courses required for graduation or acceptance into a post-secondary program, any courses and experiences that are modified or specially designed for this student, and elective courses. The concept is to

think about, plan for and ensure that all courses and educational experiences offered to the student will help them achieve their desired post-school goals or outcomes. Basically, the plan becomes a road map for this student. In the student's IEP, this requirement can be met in several ways. For example:

- List the anticipated courses and experiences the student will have by grade level or year.
- Include a narrative statement that outlines the steps the student should take to reach the identified post-school outcome.
- Attach a four-year plan that has been developed for the student as part of a general education, school-to-career, planning process.

To Illustrate the Transition Planning Process

Consider the educational planning generally engaged in with college freshman. Typically, each freshman meets with an adviser to develop a four-year educational plan. This plan is an attempt to help the student select required core courses and those needed for completing a major. If college students did not develop a long-range educational plan early, or simply plan courses taken on a yearly basis, the student may never complete a program of study, never graduate, or at best, graduate on an extended five or six-year plan. The same need for long-range educational planning exists for all students with disabilities. If a long-range educational plan is not developed early, the student could end up not graduating or graduating without the courses and experiences needed for independent living, further training, or employment. Actively involving students in the planning process could motivate them to remain at school. Involving students in the discussion & decision-making may help students understand that the courses they are taking in school have a direct relationship to achieving what they want to do beyond school.

Identify and describe the specific transition services, including related services, required in each domain area to move the student toward his/her identified post-school outcome. Indicate services provided through general education such as school-to-career activities, applied academics, and adult living objectives that fulfill the student's transition needs. Specify services from other agencies and referrals made, as appropriate to the student's needs

When appropriate and feasible, a representative from another agency may participate in the school district's planning meeting. A primary role of the agency representative is that of consultation and technical assistance to the schools in planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to post-school activities. Agency service plans should be developed before the student leaves high school and coordinated with the student's IEP. Sometimes, services and resources can be shared between agencies.

What to Do:

Include the student in all planning meetings!

There are several key components to ensure successful transition. First and foremost, include the student in all planning meetings! Engage the student and parents in thinking about the student's goals for the future. Outline the activities, supports and services needed to move the student towards his/her identified post-school outcome. And, link the student and family with the appropriate adult agencies that can provide continuing supports.

In transition planning consider:

- Employment/career planning
- Living arrangements/housing for the future
- Social and leisure activities
- Security, health, and safety needs
- Post-secondary education and training.
- What kind of supports may be necessary

The IEP and Transition Planning

Follow-up studies of students with disabilities have found that a large number of these students do not go on for further training; they do not receive needed supports and services as adults; and are not as successful when compared with the general population. These findings have led to the conclusion that in order to improve the post-school results of these students, the educational program must be integrated with the student's community living, working & social environments. The transition requirements of IDEA '97 challenge education to improve the post-school results of students with disabilities by doing a better job of planning and preparing students and families for the challenges and complexities of the adult world.



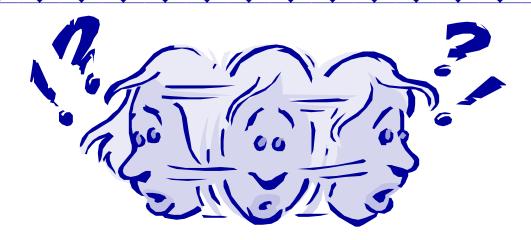
Some material in this publication adapted from: Storms, J., O'Leary, E., & Williams, J. (2000). *Transition Requirements: A Guide for States, Districts, Schools, Universities and Families*. Minneapolis, MN: National Transition Network, University of Minnesot

Ten Things to Remember in the Transition Process!

- 1. Start the process early. What this means is...according to law, transition planning must begin for you by the age of 16. This means that when they are 15, transition planning must occur at the IEP. Starting the process earlier typically results in better outcomes.
- 2. Utilize student strengths and interests. Students may be very good at some things and have difficulty with others. Be aware of the strengths and interests that they have and develop them into specific job skills. Successful transition planning will focus on strengths and interests, not deficits.
- 3. Community-Based Instruction. The community is a natural teaching environment necessary for effective transition planning. Skills that are necessary for employment, independent living, and leisure cannot all be taught in the classroom environment. The classroom and the community should not be thought of as separate, but integral. Teach skills in the classroom, and practice them in the community.
- 4. Utilize the resources of the school. The school has many resources that can be utilized in effective transition planning. Look at the school's curriculum to see what classes may be beneficial for the transition plan. Be sure that the classes that the student is enrolled in match the outcomes identified for post-secondary life. The school also has personnel who should be utilized. Guidance counselors, school to work staff, regular education teachers, and others may have valuable insight in transition planning.
- 5. Plan for transportation needs. Transportation is one of the most overlooked facets of transition planning. Can you imagine what your life would be like if you couldn't drive? Our cars get us to and from work. They get us to the store. We use them to see friends. Many individuals with disabilities will not be able to drive. Effective transition planning must address how you will access your community if driving is not an option for you in adult life.
- **6. Get involved.** Student involvement is the cornerstone of effective transition planning. By law, your "preferences, interests, and strengths" must be considered when planning for transition. Students should not only attend IEP meetings, but should be active participants. Involvement in self-advocacy and self-determination education will increase their active participation in the transition planning process. Self-advocacy and self-determination are not only skills needed for transition planning, but they are also needed for life.

- **7. Follow a sequential, documented process.** Effective transition planning does not happen by accident. By following a sequential, documented process, the student's transition needs are more likely to be met. Use checklists to document progress and plan from year to year.
- 8. Develop relationships first, ask for services later. There are many adult service agencies that may provide service for the student when they leave school. Some may provide services while the student is in school. In either case, develop a relationship with the service provider before services will actually take place. By doing this, the service provider will have a better understanding of the supports and services that may be needed.
- **9. Be creative.** Transition planning is not "black and white." It is gray. It is not concrete. It involves flexibility. One transition plan will not work for everyone. Be creative when planning for transition. Think of the student as an adult. Involve as many "players" as possible. Look for resources in many different places.
- **10. Have high expectations.** When planning for transition, have lofty goals. Transition planning is planning for adult life. To have a happy and productive adult life, we want the student to do as much as possible with the skills they have. Reach for the stars!





Still not Sure What to Do?

The transition process is highly individualized and requires a solid team to maximize student success. Collect relevant information, and build a network of transition contacts that will provide needed input.

Students, teachers, parents, school administrators, guidance counselors, outside agency personnel, and other stakeholders can all contribute valued ideas. Agencies and People who can help are Cornerstones for the student!

Students need to ask questions, research transition topics, start the process early, learn about their disabilities, learn about their strengths, take some risks by trying new things, build relationships, learn by doing, get some work experience, set achievable goals, establish links to the services that the student will need, learn to speak up for themselves and tell people what they need. These are just a few things that can prepare a student for the adult world!

