

# Secondary Transition

## Road Map

Secondary Transition is the process of preparing students for adult life after they leave high school. Transition planning begins at age 14, or younger if determined appropriate by the IEP team, as students explore and discover what they want their post-school outcomes to be through career awareness exploration activities. The transition process continues through high school as academic instruction and community experiences support these outcomes. The entire process is based on the individual student's needs, taking into account the student's strengths, preferences, and interests. Transition can be thought of as a bridge between school programs and the opportunities of adult life, including higher education or training, employment, independent living and community participation. Educators facilitate students' successful transition by guiding them through the following activities, thus preparing students to cross the bridge into adult life.

### Conduct Assessment (Identify interests, preferences, aptitudes, abilities, and skills)

The Division on Career Development and Transition (DCDT) of the Council for Exceptional Children defines transition assessment as an "...ongoing process of collecting data on the individual's needs, preferences, and interests as they relate to the demands of current and future working, educational, living, and personal and social environments. Assessment data serves as the common thread in the transition process and forms the basis for defining goals and services to be included in the Individualized Education Program (IEP)." Transition assessments can be formal or informal. Formal assessments typically involve using a standardized procedure for administering, scoring, and interpreting an assessment. For example: adaptive behavior/daily living skills assessments; general and specific aptitude tests; interest inventories; intelligence tests; achievement tests; career maturity or employability tests; and self-determination assessments. Informal assessments could be interviews and questionnaires, direct observations, curriculum-based assessments, or environmental analyses.

### Develop Annual IEP

The IEP team (made up of the student, parents, teachers, administrators, and related service providers) writes the Individualized Education Program (IEP). The team must discuss what the student would like to do when high school is completed. These plans must include the kind of education or training the student will receive, the kind of job the student might have, where the student will live, and how the student will spend time in the community.

**Identify Post-School Goals:** Federal law requires "appropriate, measurable postsecondary goals based upon age appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment, and, where appropriate, independent living skills" (§300.320[b][1]).

Characteristics of Post-School Goals:

- Are based on student's assessment data
- Identify where student will be AFTER high school
- NOT intended to describe events that occur IN high school
- NOT the same thing as an IEP annual goal
- Used for planning course(s) of study
- Lead to measurable annual IEP goal(s)
- Address education/training, employment, independent living
- Are observable, countable
- Link to agencies/community to support outcome

### Determine Present Levels of Academic Achievement & Functional Performance

Present levels of academic achievement refer to a student's performance in his or her current educational program within the general education curriculum including reading, writing, and math. Functional performance is related to activities of daily living, such as hygiene, dressing, social skills, basic consumer skills, ability to access public transportation, and community-based instruction.

#### Characteristics of Present Levels:

- Include statements of academic and functional skills as they relate to post-school goals
- Provide the baseline for development of annual goals
- Identify student strengths and prioritize needs
- Are measurable and observable
- Guide development of other areas of the IEP
- Describe effect of the student's disability on performance

**Select Courses of Study:** Courses of study refer to the list of academic courses that the students will complete each year that support the achievement of their individual post-school goals.

#### Characteristics of Courses of Study:

- Support post-school goals
- Focus on improving academic and functional achievement
- Facilitate movement from school to post school by aligning curriculum with identified transition outcomes
- Should promote graduation by meeting district standards
- Combined from first year to final year of transition planning = coordinated set of activities

**Choose Related Activities (Transition services, activities, and agency linkages):** Transition services and activities refer to the list of related activities that the students will complete each year that support the achievement of their individual post-school goals. The person(s)/ agency responsible are those key people, businesses, governmental and private agencies, educational staff, and organizations that together promote students' pursuit of successful outcomes during the transition process.

#### Characteristics of Transition Activities and Services:

- Are action steps
- Occur during the current IEP
- Lead to the achievement of post-school goals

- Can occur both in school and in the community
- Combined from first year to final year of transition planning = coordinated set of activities

**Create Measurable Annual Goals:** Measurable Annual IEP Goals are measurable estimates of expected student outcomes in an academic year based on the student's present levels of academic achievement and functional performance and anticipated rate of learning. Measurable Annual Goals are based on the student's present levels and should lead to the achievement of the post-school goals. Each measurable goal must include the student's name; describe the condition in which the student will perform the behavior; clearly define the behavior (what the student will do) in measurable, observable terms; and indicate the performance criteria for each goal (the level the student must demonstrate for mastery, how consistently the student needs to perform the skill(s) before it's considered "mastered," and over what period of time the behavior must be observed at the level of mastery.)

#### Conduct Progress Monitoring and Review Progress

Progress monitoring is a scientifically-based practice that is used to assess students' academic performance and evaluate the effectiveness of instruction. It involves collecting and analyzing data over time, to determine if classroom instruction is meeting the needs of students.

#### Provide a Summary of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance

IDEA 2004 requires that local school districts provide a Summary of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (SAAFP) to students with disabilities who are exiting high school. The SAAFP contains a summary of the student's academic and functional performance, as well as recommendations on how to assist the student in meeting post-school goals. The SAAFP should clearly state what students need to do to achieve their post-school goals. It should also help students to identify needed supports to achieve their post-school goals, to articulate individual strengths, and to better understand the impact of their disabilities as they enter adult life.

# Secondary Transition Road Map

For students who are 14 years of age or older (or younger if determined appropriate by the IEP team), a transition plan must be developed that includes appropriate measurable postsecondary goals related to training, education, employment, and when appropriate, independent living skills.

