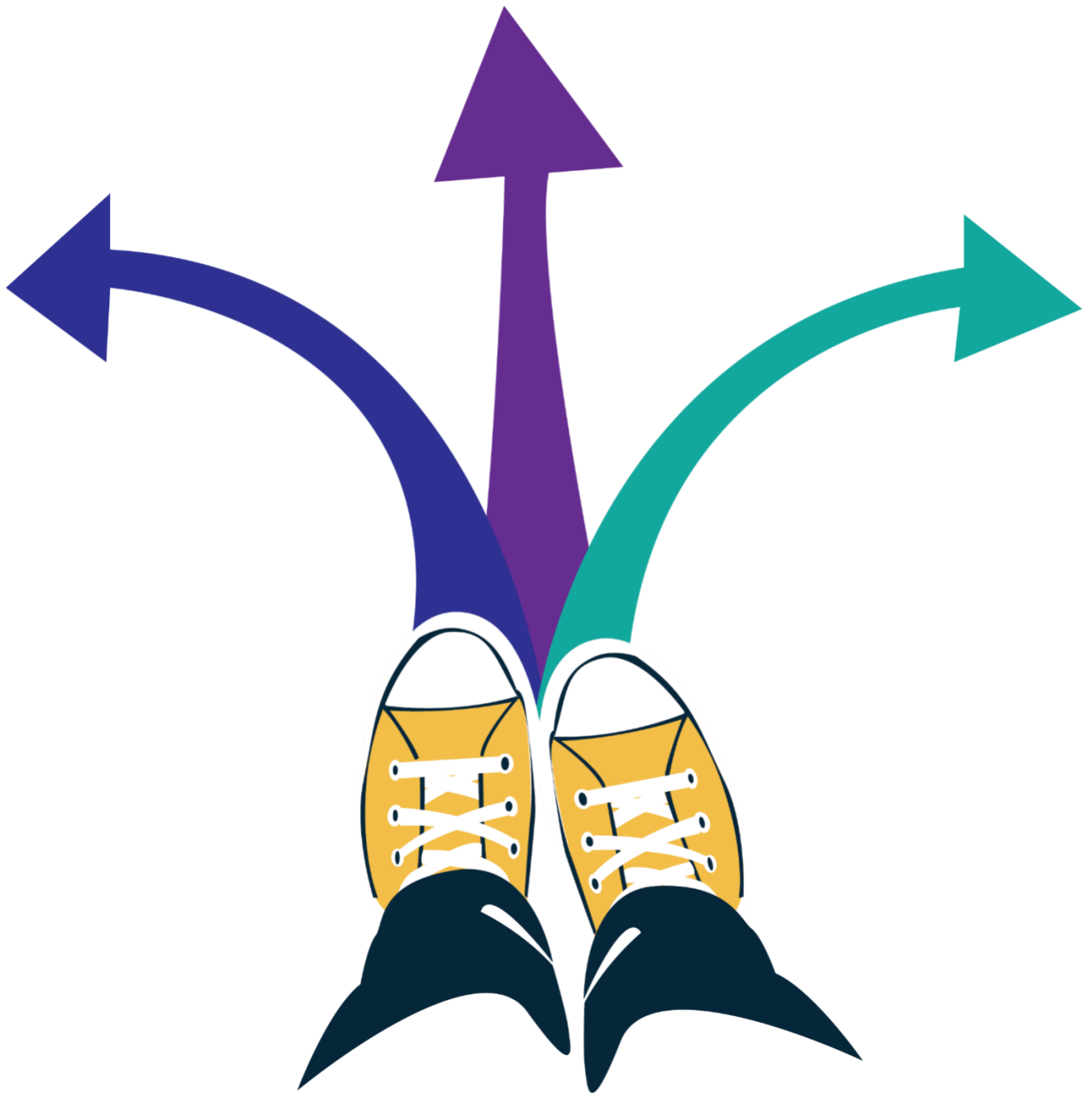


# Guide to Transition Planning for Students with Disabilities

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## Table of Contents

Guide to Transition Planning for Students with Disabilities.....	1
Introduction.....	4
The Goals of Transition Planning.....	4
Stages of Career Development.....	5
Stage 1: Career Awareness.....	5
Stage 2: Career Exploration.....	5
Stage 3: Career Preparation.....	5
Stage 4: Career Assimilation.....	5
Section I: Transition Planning in the IEP Process.....	6
Overview.....	6
Transition Assessments.....	6
Informal Assessments.....	7
Student Interview.....	8
Parent Interview.....	9
Teacher/Educational Staff Report.....	9
Formal Assessments.....	9
Situational Vocational Assessment.....	10
Transition and the IEP.....	10
Measurable Postsecondary Goals.....	11
Sample Goals.....	12
Transition Needs and Courses of Study.....	13
Measurable Annual Goals.....	14
Coordinated Set of Transition Activities.....	14
Instruction.....	14
Examples:.....	15
Travel Training.....	15
Roles and Responsibilities in the IEP Team and Transition Planning Team.....	18
Teacher.....	19
School Counselor.....	19
Related Service Provider.....	20
Student.....	20
Parent.....	21
Transition Services Agency (also known as “Participating Agency Representative”).....	22
Section II: Transition Timeline.....	24
Overview of Transition Timeline.....	24

Elementary School.....	24
Middle School .....	25
High School .....	26
Critical Components of Transition Planning During High School .....	27
Diploma and Credential Options.....	27
Transition Portfolio.....	30
Suggested Student Transition Portfolio Documents and Records .....	31
Exit Summary .....	31
Considerations for Life after High School .....	32
College Exploration.....	33
Supporting Multilingual Learners/English Language Learners in preparing for college and career .....	34
Trade school and/or entering the work force.....	35
Day Program.....	35
Appendix A – Sample Student Invitation Letters.....	36
Sample Student Invitation Letter to IEP Meeting .....	36
Sample Student Invitation Letter to IEP Meeting .....	37
Sample Student Invitation Letter to IEP Meeting .....	38
Appendix C – Sample Transition Service Agency Letters.....	42
Sample Letter Advising Parents to Contact Agencies for Services .....	42
Sample Letter Requesting Parental Consent to Invite Transition Services Agency Representative to IEP Meeting.....	43
Sample Letter Requesting Student’s Consent to Invite Agency Representative to IEP Meeting.....	44
Sample Letter to Invite Agency Personnel to Transition IEP Meeting.....	45
Appendix D – Transition Planning Overview Letter for Family .....	46
Appendix E – NYC and NYS Agencies Providing Transition Services .....	49
Adult Career and Continuing Education Services-Vocational Rehabilitation (ACCES-VR) .....	49
New York State Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) .....	50
The New York State Commission for the Blind (NYSCB).....	51
New York State Office of Mental Health (OMH).....	51
Appendix F – Transition and College Access Centers .....	52

## Introduction

This Guide to Transition Planning for Students with Disabilities highlights the essential components of transition planning in the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE). It is designed for all stakeholders involved in planning for the successful transition of students with disabilities from high school to their postsecondary lives, including college and career planning and readiness.

This document includes an overview of the purpose of transition planning, sample transition timelines, and suggestions for how to integrate transition planning into school-wide curriculum for students from elementary school through commencement, to best prepare students for school exit and postsecondary life.

NYCDOE is committed to working collaboratively with parents, families, educators, and communities to improve student achievement and ensure that each student graduates from high school prepared for college, a career, and/or participation in their community. The goal is for each student to have a clear path and an individualized roadmap to independence.

Please use this guide and provide your valued feedback or questions by emailing [TransitionSupport@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:TransitionSupport@schools.nyc.gov). Together we can ensure successful postsecondary futures for all students.

## The Goals of Transition Planning

Our interest as educators is to best prepare students to succeed in the endeavors they choose after completing high school. Our aim is for each student to live, learn, and earn as independently and successfully as possible upon graduation or exiting school. The goals of the transition planning process are to:

- Incorporate a student's **needs, abilities, interests, and strengths** into planning for postsecondary activities, including college and career readiness
- Enable each student and their family to make **informed choices**
- Include **community experiences** in school instruction
- Develop a student's employment and adult living skills
- Enable each student to find success in moving from school to post-school activities

Whether students begin working directly after high school or following additional postsecondary educational experiences (e.g., college and university), we support students as they move from job awareness to career assimilation. This is true regardless of the level of support students may require at the workplace or volunteer site, including if they're expected to work independently.

## Stages of Career Development

### Stage 1: Career Awareness

- Exposure to why people need and want to work; contributions to lifestyle and life choices.
- Exposure to a wide range of careers and jobs.
- Exposure to work expectations, education/training skill requirements, and social/communication skills.

### Stage 2: Career Exploration

- Job shadowing and trial work experiences to narrow career choices to 1 or 2 preferred careers.
- Matching career requirements with personal abilities, skills, aptitudes, and preferred lifestyle; assessing careers for “best-match.”
- Developing a plan to meet requirements and achieve a “best match” career; continuing work experience to ensure this “best match” reflects stable interests and skills.

### Stage 3: Career Preparation

- Narrowing and confirming one career field; students may still explore a range of positions within this field.
- Increasing work experience opportunities to prepare for full-time work in the community; include vocational rehabilitation services as needed.
- Refine interviewing and job seeking skills for work experience positions and develop job maintenance skills and social/communication skills to keep one’s position.
- Identify potential career advancement and self-advocacy opportunities and strategies.

### Stage 4: Career Assimilation

- Implementation of job seeking, interviewing, and related skills to locate and obtain a job of choice, in a location of choice.
- Ongoing match of work conditions and environment with personal lifestyle preferences and needs; use of problem-solving skills and employment resources (including vocational rehabilitation) if needed.
- Participation in work culture and employee activities, on and off-the-job, to support satisfaction between career and worker.

Donn E. Brolin, Career Development and Transition Services: A Functional Life Skills Approach (2004).

Transition services are integral to providing a free and appropriate public education (FAPE). One of the main purposes of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act is to “ensure that all children with disabilities have available to them a free appropriate public education that emphasizes special education and related services designed to . . . **prepare them for further education, employment, and independent living**”.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> 34 C.F.R. § 300.1(a).

# Section I: Transition Planning in the IEP Process

## Overview

*Transition planning* is the process of planning for students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) to move from school to post-school activities. All transition planning must consider the student's strengths, preferences, and interests; the impact of the student's disability; and specific supports aligned to student needs. A team including the student, the parents, teachers who know the student, related service providers when appropriate, and outside agencies (if applicable) is responsible for planning for the student's post-secondary transition.

Thorough transition planning should begin in the early grades and align to the [Career Development and Occupational Studies \(CDOS\) Standards](#). Guidance on how to engage in thoughtful transition planning in [elementary](#) and [middle school](#) is in [Section II](#) of this guide.

- The formal transition planning process begins with the first vocational assessment, administered in the year in which the student turns 12. Detailed information regarding transition assessments can found below in the [Transition Assessments](#) part of this section of the guide.
- To ensure families and students understand their roles in planning for success after high school, schools must:
  - Send each family of a student with an IEP a letter that explains the stages of the transition process. The [Transition Planning Overview Letter](#) is in the Appendix. This letter must be sent to the family of each student with an IEP who is 14 years old, at least a month before their IEP meeting.
  - Talk to families of students with IEPs about the [Family Guide to Transition Planning](#) and about the NYCDOE [Transition and College Access Centers](#).
- For students age 14 or older, transition planning activities and services designed to move the student from school to post-school life must be discussed in the IEP meeting and documented in the student's IEP, and the student must be invited to the IEP meeting. These formal IEP requirements are set out below, in the [Transition and the IEP](#) section of this guide.
- See the [critical components and considerations for transition planning during high school](#) section, which includes information on [diplomas and credentials](#), creating a [transition portfolio](#), [considerations for post-school life](#) (including college, trade school, employment, and living options), and [exit summaries](#).

**Transition planning** is a results-oriented process that focuses on improving the academic and functional achievement of students with disabilities to facilitate the movement from school to post-school activities.

**Transition services** are a coordinated set of activities for students with disabilities that is designed with a results-oriented process to promote movement from school to post-school activities. Transition services must be based on the individual student's needs, taking into account the student's strengths, preferences and interests.

**Post-school activities** include postsecondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living and/or community participation.

## Transition Assessments

Transition assessment is an ongoing process of collecting information on a student's strengths, needs, preferences and interests as they relate to the demands of current and future living, learning and work. Transition assessments provide information that will help guide students as they make

important decisions about their futures based on their own interests, strengths, needs, and desires. These assessments serve as the common thread throughout the transition process. Up-to-date and thorough assessments provide the foundation for:

- Developing the student's goals for after high school (**Measurable Postsecondary Goals**)
- Defining the curriculum and course of study that the student needs to pursue those goals (**Transition Needs and Course of Study**)
- Determining what services and/or activities will be instrumental in preparing the student to meet their goals (**Coordinated Set of Transition Activities**)

Vocational assessments are a type of transition assessment, which gathers information that will help to develop the student's career goals. Examples of transition assessments that are not vocational assessments include self-determination assessments and independent living assessments.

Beginning when a student with an IEP is 12 years old, students must receive an assessment that includes a review of school records and teacher assessments, and parent and student interviews to determine vocational skills, aptitudes, and interests.

The vocational assessment **must** first be completed for all students with disabilities at age 12 or older (or who will turn 12 by the end of the calendar year in which the assessment is completed). For example, if a student's IEP meeting takes place in January and the student will be turning 12 in March of the same year, the vocational assessment should be administered prior to the January IEP meeting and included in the transition planning conversation. If a student older than 12 years of age is being initially evaluated for eligibility for special education services, the vocational assessment should be conducted during the initial evaluation.

Age-appropriate vocational assessments are used to collect data on a student's needs, preferences, and interests as they relate to training, education, employment, and, where appropriate, independent living skills. Vocational assessments can take many forms – they may be “pencil and paper”, computer-generated, student and family interviews, community or work-based assessments (situational), or curriculum-based assessments.

Vocational assessments may be informal or formal.

Students should be active members in conversations regarding vocational assessments. This will contribute to the goal of them developing the skills required for “self-determination”, meaning that the student will have a say in what their path will be, particularly regarding education and training, employment, and independent living skills.

The National Technical Assistance Center on Transition (NTACT) [Transition Assessment Toolkit](#) provides an overview of the transition assessment process and guides schools in how to select and use age-appropriate assessments to support transition planning.

## Informal Assessments

Informal assessments may include interviews, questionnaires, observations, interest inventories, preference assessments, environmental or situational analysis, and transition planning inventories. They are not normed and do not compare the student to peer groups. Informal vocational assessments include:

- Parent interview
- Student interview

- Teacher questionnaire/educational staff report that includes a review of the student's records.

All components of the vocational assessment must be completed in advance of the student's IEP meeting and will be discussed in the student's IEP meeting to ensure that student and parent voice are at the forefront of the transition planning process. All voices must be heard in the discussion of postsecondary planning.

The method and materials used for the vocational assessment are determined based on a student's age and developmental ability. Example vocational assessment materials – including student interview, parent interview, and teacher questionnaire (also referred to as an “educational staff report”) – are available at:

- [Career Assessment for Students with Disabilities: A Manual](#)
- [The Quick Book of Transition Assessments](#)

**All three completed components** (parent interview, student interview, and teacher/educational staff report) of the informal vocational assessment must be uploaded to SESIS in the “Documents Related to Assessment” section and clearly labeled. These vocational assessments must be reviewed and updated **each year prior to the IEP meeting**, as students' postsecondary goals will continue to evolve as they learn and grow each year and as their interests change. The current teacher or case manager should review the vocational assessments each year with the student and parent. If changes are needed, a new vocational assessment should be completed, or updates should be made to the existing one. If updates are made or a new vocational assessment is completed, the assessments must also be uploaded to SESIS.

## Student Interview

The student interview reflects the student's perception of their postsecondary ambitions.

The student interview is typically conducted through a directed conversation between the student and the student's teacher but may also be conducted by a related service provider, school social worker, transition counselor, or guidance counselor. During this conversation, the interview form should be completed. If the form is completed by the student without such a conversation with an educational professional, there must be a follow-up conversation to discuss the student's responses in the form.

The student interview must be conducted with the appropriate accommodations, services, and supports necessary for the student's skills, interests, strengths, and abilities to be accurately assessed. According to NYSED, “The actual interview can be conducted in whatever fashion best fits the student's abilities to communicate i.e., several sessions, skipping sensitive questions, augmentative mode of communication, primary non-English language.”<sup>2</sup> In other words, it is important that the student has multiple means of expressing themselves. Everything possible must be done to help the student understand that their voice matters. In the extremely rare instance when it is not possible to conduct the interview with the student due to the impact of the student's disability, the educational professional who is conducting the vocational assessment uses their knowledge of the student's preferences, interests, and abilities to provide information.

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<sup>2</sup> Level 1 Career Assessment for Students with Disabilities: A Manual. Available at: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/transition/level1careerassess>.



The team should select the student interview form that is most appropriate for the student's age and/or skills.

## Parent Interview

The parent interview gives parents the opportunity to have direct input and be a meaningful participant in the transition process. **The parent portion of the vocational assessment should be collected from the parent before the IEP meeting.** The parent interview is often completed during the fall parent teacher conference but can take place at any mutually agreed upon time.

As with the student interview, the parent interview should be conducted in whatever fashion best meets the communication needs of the parent. It is more productive to have a conversation (in person, by phone, or virtually), instead of sending the interview questions home. Consider asking the parent(s) to participate in a virtual or in-person meeting to discuss and complete the form. It is important that families understand what is being asked in the vocational assessment, and that their viewpoint and information that they have about their child is vital to the planning process. If the parent is sent the interview form to complete, they must be instructed to return the form in advance of the IEP meeting. In addition to the example assessment materials in the links above, a sample [Parent Interview form](#) is included in the Appendix.

If the parent does not participate in the interview or return the form prior to the IEP meeting, the DOE members of the IEP team should attempt to secure the parent's input at the IEP meeting regarding the student's needs and goals in the areas of training, education, employment, and, when appropriate, independent living skills.

## Teacher/Educational Staff Report

The educational staff report is usually completed by a teacher after reviewing the student's records. The staff chosen to complete the report should have direct knowledge of and regular contact with the student. Two educational staff members should complete a staff report when possible and appropriate. In addition to the teacher(s), educational staff can include coaches, related service providers, and school counselors. An example of an educational staff report may be found [here](#). The Teacher/Educational Staff Reports are completed before the student's IEP meeting.

## Formal Assessments

Formal assessments include aptitude tests, achievement tests, and standardized tests. They are normed and have a standardized norming process, reliability, validity, and recommended uses. They include a comparison of students in similar peer groups. Formal assessments can help to determine future success in postsecondary environments using a normed/standardized instrument and can help with developing post-school employment and other post-school adult living objectives. They have the following properties:

- Specialized vocational assessment instruments that test for skills and abilities
- 3–5 hours (minimum) of hands-on assessment activities
- Must be administered by a trained educational professional

The assessment may collect data regarding perception (visual/auditory/tactile), motor (dexterity, speed, tool use, strength, coordination), spatial discrimination, reading, writing, speaking, numerical (measurement, money skills), comprehension (task learning, problem solving), attention (staying on task), and learning styles.

Examples of formal vocational assessments include:

## Transition Planning Overview Letter

- Career Scope: This identifies career recommendations that align with the participant's interests and aptitudes. NYCDOE public schools can receive [Career Scope](mailto:nyctcacs@schools.nyc.gov) licenses by contacting [nyctcacs@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:nyctcacs@schools.nyc.gov)
- [Brigance Life Skills Inventory](#)
- [O\\*Net Ability Profiler](#)

The results of the formal assessment must be uploaded to SESIS in the "Documents Related to Assessment" section and clearly labeled. The results should be discussed in the student's IEP meeting.

### Situational Vocational Assessment

When a student is participating in a work-based learning experience (e.g., paid or unpaid internship, volunteer work) or has paid employment, a situational vocational assessment may be completed.

The situational vocational assessment is a comprehensive assessment that is conducted over a period of time (i.e., longer than a single observation) that utilizes work (real or simulated) as the basis for assessment. The goal of this assessment is to assess social and functional skills in the work environment. This assessment is an ongoing assessment – throughout the assessment process, the teacher can provide frequent feedback to assist the student in building their skills and having a successful work experience.

The situational vocational assessment does not need to be conducted for every student with an IEP; however, it should be conducted when information is needed regarding the student's ability to complete work-related tasks or to help make career readiness programming decisions.

This assessment is typically conducted by educational professionals who have direct knowledge of the student's real or simulated work. This is a team process. Team members may include a counselor, special education teacher, career and technical education (CTE) teacher, school psychologist, and/or school social worker.

Examples of situational assessments include:

- [Community Based Assessment Questionnaire](#)
- [Career Portfolio](#)
- [Vocational Behavior](#)

After completing the situational vocational assessment, the report must be uploaded to SESIS in the "Documents Related to Assessment" section and clearly labeled. The results should be discussed in the student's IEP meeting.

### Transition and the IEP

At every IEP meeting – regardless of the student's age or grade level – the IEP team must discuss graduation options and requirements, testing accommodations, and promotion criteria so that all students can be set up for success and attainment of the most rigorous graduation option possible and appropriate for each individual student.

At least 30 days before the IEP meeting to develop a 14-year-old's IEP, the school or CSE must send the family the [Transition Planning Overview Letter](#) in the Appendix. This letter explains the stages of the transition process and the importance of the participation of the family and student in this process.

For transition-aged youth (beginning when students are 14 years old or at a younger age, if determined appropriate), the IEP must include:

- Appropriate measurable postsecondary goals based on age-appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment, and, where appropriate, independent living skills;
- A statement of the student's transition needs, focusing on the student's courses of study as they relate to transition from school to post-school activities; and
- The activities, services and supports (called the "coordinated set of transition activities") needed to assist the student in reaching their postsecondary goals.

Note that all sections of the IEP as a whole (not only the specific sections listed above and discussed in greater detail below) must be aligned and must consider the student's transition needs. For example, the strengths, preferences, and interest section of the Present Levels of Performance (PLOP) should include:

- Information from the vocational assessments
- How the student's strengths, abilities, and interests align to the postsecondary goals (e.g., what skills does the student currently have to be successful in their chosen career and what skills does the student need to build to be successful in their chosen career).
- The PLOP information should then inform the development of annual goals and post-secondary goals, as well as the activities and services needed to reach those goals. Transition planning should be infused throughout the IEP.

The NACT guide, [From Assessment to Practice: A Model for Teachers](#), provides a useful tool to use transition assessments to inform and align across the entire IEP.

## Measurable Postsecondary Goals

Measurable postsecondary goals state what the student will do or achieve after they complete high school. The IEP team must update the measurable postsecondary goals at least annually, informed by the results of vocational assessments and other information noted in the PLOP, as appropriate.

Measurable Postsecondary goals are in the areas of:

- **Education/Training** (e.g., 2- or 4-year college, career and technical education and training, continuing and adult education)
- **Employment** (e.g., integrated competitive employment)
- **Independent living skills** (when appropriate) (e.g., adult services, independent living, or community participation)

Measurable postsecondary goals identify the student's long-term goals for living, working and learning as an adult. The projected postsecondary goals in the student's IEP establish a direction for the school, student, student's family, and any participating agencies to work towards.

The student and parent(s) must be involved in creating these postsecondary goals. A student's measurable postsecondary goals should be based on information obtained using a variety of formal and/or informal methods that may vary from student to student, including but not limited to:

- Vocational assessments completed by the student, parent, and teacher
- Assessment of postsecondary skills (such as a more formal transition assessment)
- Other interviews with the student and/or parent
- Discussions with the student and parent at the IEP meeting

- Teacher observations

A student's postsecondary goals must align with all transition planning in the student's IEP:

- They must guide the planning of the high school curriculum and courses of study that the student will follow (**the Transition Needs**).
- They must align with the **Measurable Annual Goals** that the student is working towards over the course of the year.
- The postsecondary goals must drive the transition services and activities – the **Coordinated Set of Transition Activities** – that are recommended on the IEP.
- The postsecondary goals should be considered when the team determines whether (and, if so, which) transition service agency may be appropriate for a student.

Postsecondary goals should be “generally understood to refer to those goals that a child hopes to achieve after leaving secondary school (i.e., high school)” rather than “the process of pursuing or moving toward a desired outcome.”<sup>3</sup>

Postsecondary goals must be phrased as “the student will”, not “the student hopes” or “the student wants to”. “The student will” is measurable; the other options convey that the student desires to do something but is not a measurable goal. Examples include:

- “Upon completion of high school, student will enroll in a community college to pursue an associate degree in graphic art”
- “Upon completion of high school, student will attain an apprenticeship in the field of building construction”.

## Sample Goals

Below are samples of three unique post-school plans with supporting annual and measurable postsecondary goals.

**Example 1:** If Student A wants to drive commercial trucks after high school, they will have to learn the skills needed to pass the commercial driver's license test. Student A's annual goal will support their postsecondary goal of becoming a commercial driver.

*Measurable Postsecondary Goal:* After graduating from high school, Student A will obtain a full-time job as a long distance truck driver.

*Annual Goal:* Student A will determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a non-fiction text with 75% accuracy in 3 out of 4 trials, as measured by verbal explanation.

**Example 2:** If Student B wants to attend a 4-year college and study Marine Biology after high school, Student B will take courses that prepare him or her to work in the field of Marine Biology, which requires an advanced understanding of math and science. Student B's annual goal will support their postsecondary goal of attending a 4-year college and studying Marine Biology.

*Measurable Postsecondary Goal:* After graduating from high school, Student B will attend a 4-year college and study Marine Biology.

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<sup>3</sup> National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center, Post-secondary Goals. Available at: <http://www.nsttac.org/content/post-secondary-goals/>.

*Annual Goal:* Student B will solve rational and radical equations with one variable, identify solutions that do not satisfy the original equation and explain their answer with 80% accuracy in 3 out of 4 trials.

**Example 3:** If Student C wants to live and work independently after high school, he or she will need to establish routines that will guide the habits and practices required for independent living.

*Measurable Postsecondary Goal:* Upon completion of high school, Student C will independently prepare for work each day, including dressing, making lunch, and accessing public transportation.

*Annual Goal:* In one year, Student C will be able to utilize a daily schedule by placing the picture symbol on the schedule in the correct order, with a maximum of one prompt per trial.

## Transition Needs and Courses of Study

The IEP of a transition-aged student must include a statement of the student's transition needs that focuses on the student's courses of study as they relate to post-school activities.

These transition needs must take into account the student's strengths, preferences, and interests. These needs must be outlined in the Transition Needs section of the IEP and should be aligned to the other sections of the Present Levels of Performance if related to academic, social, and/or physical needs.

The Transition Needs section of the IEP must identify the high school curriculum that will prepare the student to meet their postsecondary goals. This is called the "course of study." Examples include:

- Advanced placement courses
- Vocational education program
- Regents coursework
- A sequence of courses in a career and technical education field related to the student's postsecondary goals.

The student's multi-year course of study must be described and must match the student transcript. This should include courses, credits, and Regents exams the student has taken, is currently taking, or needs to take to graduate with a local, Regents, or advanced Regents diploma (or other credential) that the student is working towards. This section should also identify the electives, courses, and/or clubs that will be directly linked to the student's career goals.

The IEP team should also consider other transition needs related to the skills aligned to the [CDOS learning standards](#) or academic and personal behaviors. CDOS accumulated hours should be noted here, including what the student needs to complete the requirements for the CDOS credential. If the student is participating in alternate assessments and is working toward the Skills and Achievement Commencement Credential this should also be noted here.

Examples of other transition needs include:

- Adult assistance to travel in the community
- Instruction in functional reading and mathematics
- Development of self-advocacy skills
- Learning to independently use public transportation
- Development of independent living skills
- Completing necessary coursework for graduation with a Regents diploma
- Courses in career and technical education

## Measurable Annual Goals

Annual goals describe what the student is expected to achieve in one year. When drafting annual goals for a transition-aged student, the IEP team must consider what skills the student must acquire to achieve their postsecondary goals. The annual goals should be aligned to the student needs stated in the Present Levels of Performance to ensure the student is prepared to meet their postsecondary goals after leaving high school.

For example, if a student wishes to drive a commercial truck after graduating, they must learn the academic skills needed to pass the commercial driver license test. An example of an annual goal to address this is: “Student will determine the meaning of words and phrases in a nonfiction text with 75% accuracy in 3 out of 4 consecutive trials as measured by teacher-made assessments”.

## Coordinated Set of Transition Activities

The coordinated set of transition activities are the activities and services that the school or participating transition agency provides to help students gain the skills they will need to meet their postsecondary goals. These activities and services must be aligned and directly connected to the Present Levels of Performance, including the student’s needs, strengths, preferences and interests, Measurable Postsecondary Goals, and vocational assessments.

There are six categories of transition activities:

- Instruction
- Related Services
- Community Experiences
- Development of Employment and Other Post-school Adult Living objectives
- Acquisition of daily living skills (if appropriate)
- Functional Vocational Assessment (if appropriate)

## Instruction

The IEP must specify instruction the student needs to prepare for post-school life. This can include specifying the course of study needed to reach postsecondary goals, such as the Regents or CTE courses that they will need. This may also be indicated as instruction in particular skill, such as instruction in:

- Problem-solving
- Using public transportation
- Using a particular assistive technology device
- Developing self-advocacy skills
- Learning about the process for renting an apartment and arranging utilities

This section can also include activities in which the student will engage to help them to prepare for college and other post-high school educational experiences, such as:

- Learning about services offered through college student support offices
- Exploring admissions requirements for a vocational program
- Enrolling in an SAT prep course

## Examples:

- Student will complete applications for three community colleges that offer health science certifications
- Student will receive instruction in developing an agenda system to improve time management skills and assignment completion
- Student will attend study skills classes to learn how to maintain a timeline for assignments and to practice using organizational strategies
- Student will meet regularly with high school guidance counselor to complete necessary paperwork for college admissions
- Student will participate in Regents preparation courses in English, math, science and history
- Student will collect information about academic requirements for community college career programs
- Student will enroll in an independent living course to continue practicing self-care skills
- Student will continue travel training to learn transportation routes from work and school

### Related Services

The IEP must identify any related services needed for the student to meet their postsecondary goals. This includes any related services the student is currently receiving such as speech or occupational therapy, counseling, or orientation and mobility services. The IEP must state how these services will support the student in making a smooth transition to adulthood. (Note: These services must **also** be documented under in the "Special Education Program/Services" section of the IEP.)

If the student is not receiving related services, a null statement must be entered, such as "The student does not receive any related services at this time".

### Examples:

- Student continues to receive counseling services to learn pro-social coping strategies and anger management skills
- Student will research mental health agencies in her community to develop a plan for continued counseling support after high school
- Student attends speech sessions to improve expressive communication and generalize communication skills to a variety of settings

## Travel Training

One way of bolstering student independence is through travel training. The NYCDOE Office of Travel Training provides specially designed instruction for students aged 14 years and above who are considered eligible. Students are considered good candidates for the travel training program if they:

- demonstrate a way to communicate
- provide personal information (verbal or non- verbal)
- request assistance when needed
- can follow multi-step directions
- demonstrate problem solving ability
- interact appropriately with strangers
- follow rules and procedures independently
- demonstrate knowledge of their environment
- can recognize letters, words, numbers, shapes, and colors

For additional information regarding the travel training program, contact [D75traveltraining@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:D75traveltraining@schools.nyc.gov)  
Phone #: 212-673-1242.

Travel training **may not** be recommended on the student's IEP without first contacting the Travel Training Program.

- Student will practice verbal communication skills through activities that require her to role-play interview skills, develop her personal statement for college, and write emails to perspective employers and internship opportunities
- Student will receive mobility training and orientation to be able to walk from school to home and volunteer site
- Student will receive physical therapy to assist student in increasing sitting endurance and trunk control

### **Community Experiences**

The IEP must specify the activities and strategies that generally take place outside of the school to prepare the student to participate in community life and access community resources and/or participate in community activities, to meet their postsecondary goals. This may include exploring or participating in:

- After-school jobs
- Public or government services, such as the public library, community centers, recreational centers, transportation
- Community, social, or recreational events
- Volunteer programs

#### *Examples:*

- Student will identify bus routes from school to their afterschool job and present their findings to the guidance counselor
- Student will secure a volunteer position in their field of interest, health care, by visiting 2 local hospitals and applying for volunteer positions
- Student will visit their local public library, secure a library card, and learn about library resources and activities
- Student will obtain driver's license or non-driver's ID card
- Student will open a bank account
- Student will learn about and visit community resources, such as the library, post office, and location recreational resources and programs
- Student will demonstrate understanding of how to find and secure housing after graduating high school

### **Employment Other Post-School Adult Living Objectives**

The IEP must specify what activities or services the student needs to prepare for employment or other post-school adult living objectives. These include services or activities related to career exploration, skill training, employment, or work-based learning, such as:

- Participation in work-based learning experiences including the Training Opportunity Program (TOP) and Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP)
- Exploring career options
- Developing job-seeking and keeping skills, such as writing a resume, completing a job application, interviewing, and developing strong work habits
- Maintaining a daily planner
- Researching college or other postsecondary programs and their entrance requirements
- Completing financial aid documents

#### *Examples:*

- Student will complete a career interest inventory and research the identified careers



- Student will use *careerzone* to explore the opportunities in their field of interest and the skills and requirements needed for these particular jobs
- Student will draft a resume and cover letter
- Student will practice self-disclosure and self-advocacy skills by developing a presentation on their disability
- Student will research jobs in preferred field and requirements for each
- Student will practice completing job applications and interviewing skills
- Student will apply for an receive working papers
- Student will learn more about the career center in their neighborhood and what services they offer
- Student will participate in work-based learning experience
- Student will determine their eligibility for Adult Career and Continuing Education Services Vocational Rehabilitation (ACCES-VR)
- Student will determine eligibility for services through the Office of People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) or the Office of Mental Health (OMH)
- Student will determine eligibility for NYC transportation services such as Access-A-Ride

### ***Acquisition of Daily Living Skills (if appropriate)***

Daily living skills are those activities that adults do every day, such as dressing, hygiene, self-care, self-medication, preparing meals, maintaining a residence, paying bills, and working with a budget. If appropriate to the student's needs (as indicated in the Present Levels of Performance), the IEP will specify the services or activities that will assist the student to develop and strengthen these types of skills. The IEP team must consider whether these skills are applicable to the student, regardless of the type of diploma or exit credential they are working toward.

#### *Examples:*

- Student will participate in training to learn to shop for and prepare simple meals
- Student will open a bank account
- Student will participate in training to learn when to seek medical assistance, and how to apply basic first aid when needed
- Student will strengthen time management skills by learning to use an online calendar to track appointments and due dates
- Student will tour adult housing options/supported housing
- Student will prepare a sample monthly budget for living expenses
- Student will determine a community agency that provides daily living skills training to adults

If daily living skills are not applicable to the student at this time, a null statement must be entered, such as "The student does not require daily living skills at this time".

### ***Functional Vocational Assessment***

A functional vocational assessment is a skills-based assessment conducted in an actual or simulated work setting or in real work sample experiences, which provides information on a student's strengths, abilities and needs as they relate to work. A functional vocational assessment is an assessment process that provides information about job or career interests, aptitudes, and skills. This may include a situational vocational assessment – refer to the [Situational Vocational Assessment](#) section for more information. If a student may require this type of assessment, the IEP team should specify that in this section.

#### *Examples:*

- Student will participate in a situational vocational assessment at current internship

- Student performance will be assessed during work-related tasks

If the student does not require this type of assessment, a null statement must be entered, such as “The student does not require a functional vocational assessment at this time”.

### ***School District/Agency Responsible***

For each activity in the Coordinated Set of Transition Activities section of the IEP, identify the title of the person(s) responsible for the activities or services (e.g., special education teacher). The people responsible will usually be someone in the student’s school or, when possible, a participating agency. The school district/agency responsible for the coordinated set of transition activities is not the parent or the student. When identifying the school district or agency, the title of staff members or agency representatives are identified, not the name of the person. For example “Guidance Counselor”, not “Susan James”.

A **participating agency** (also known as a “Transition Services Agency”) is a state or local agency, other than the school, which is financially or legally responsible for providing transition services to the student. When a participating agency, is identified as providing transition services, the IEP must include the service and the implementation date of the service if it is different from the implementation date of the IEP.

Even if a participating agency is identified, the school retains responsibility for monitoring the transition process. At a minimum, a school-based staff member must be identified to be responsible for maintaining ongoing communication with the designated agency representative to ensure continuity of implementation of the coordinated set of transition activities.

If a participating agency does not provide the transition services in the student’s IEP, an IEP meeting must be held to identify alternative strategies to meet the transition objectives, and if necessary, revise the student’s IEP.

See the section below on [Transition Services Agency](#) for more information on when and how to invite a representative from a participating agency to an IEP meeting. [A list of agencies providing transition services](#) is available in the Appendix. The following additional materials are available in the Appendix:

- Sample parent letter informing them regarding participating agencies
- Sample letter requesting parental consent to invite a participating agency representative to an IEP meeting
- Sample letter requesting student consent (if age 18 or older) to invite a participating agency representative to an IEP meeting
- Sample participating agency invitation letter

For more information about developing IEPs, see New York State’s [Guide to Quality Individualized Education Program Development and Implementation](#).

## **Roles and Responsibilities in the IEP Team and Transition Planning Team**

Every high school in New York City has an identified [Transition Planning Team](#) (TPT). The TPT typically includes an administrator, a counselor, staff from the IEP team, and general and special education teachers. The principal should designate one member of the team as the Transition Team Leader (TTL). The TTL ensures the high quality of each student’s transition plan and work with all other school personnel to initiate, implement, and monitor transition services within the school.

As discussed above, all students with IEPs age 14 or older (or younger when appropriate) should have the postsecondary transition sections of the IEP discussed and completed at each IEP meeting. The roles below are also relevant to ensuring postsecondary transition planning is happening for such students at the elementary and middle school levels by the members of the IEP team.

All IEP team members must collaborate and work in a cohesive, productive way to ensure alignment across the IEP. This is especially true as we make life decisions about what a student must do to prepare for attainment of their postsecondary goals.

## Teacher

All of the student's teachers can have a role in transition planning. Teachers should focus on teaching skills that will help students successfully navigate life after high school. These skills include self-advocacy, self-determination, working cooperatively with others, and demonstrating work ethic. Teachers actively engage with and help the student and their family understand their roles in the IEP process.

Teachers can also:

- Help the student explore goals for life after high school.
- Infuse information regarding careers and the education/training needed to pursue them into the curriculum.
- Administer a variety of appropriate transition assessments to learn about the student's strengths, needs, interests and preferences related to education, employment, and independent living. Assist the student in completing assessments as appropriate. These may include the [vocational assessments](#) discussed earlier in this guide.
- Engage all stakeholders required for considering postsecondary transition planning in an IEP meeting.
- Become familiar with outside agencies and their programs, and connect families with relevant agencies when appropriate.
- Provide explicit instruction on self-determination and self-advocacy skills. For ideas on how to teach these skills, see [Center for Parent Information and Resources](#) and/or the National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center's [Teaching Self-Determination Skills to Students with Disabilities](#).

Teach the student to communicate with school staff about progress toward IEP goals, and to self-monitor progress.

## School Counselor

School counselors must ensure that a student's course of study aligns with their postsecondary goals. School counselors meet with students and their families to engage them in the process and to make sure that there is a shared understanding of the student's goals and how to reach them. They also help students and families to complete their sections of vocational assessments and provide college and career related counseling.

Counselors can:

- Assess student's career interests and skills for desired career path
- Develop a plan for student's time in high school
- Assist in the development and updating of student's annual transition plan, along with the student and other IEP team members

- Lead conversations about student’s strengths, interests, needs and preferences
- Discuss graduation requirements, diploma pathways, post-school options and resources
- Provide advice on the courses and sequence of courses that will help the students reach their postsecondary goals
- Monitor credit accumulation, progress toward diploma and/or credential goals
- Conduct outreach to community organizations and participating agencies/transition service agencies as appropriate.

## Related Service Provider

Providers of occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech therapy, counseling, hearing services, vision services and others may be critical contributors during the transition process. Depending on the student’s needs, related service providers may serve as members of the IEP team or may provide input into the IEP process. See the [SOPM](#) at Members Who May Be Required at an IEP Meeting: Related Service Providers at pages 47-48 for more information about a related service provider’s role in the IEP meeting.

Related service providers’ roles in transition planning may include:

- Assessing the student in the appropriate setting (e.g., school, work, or in the community) to determine their present level of performance and transition needs. This could be in the context of interviewing the student for the student component of a vocational assessment, completing the [educational staff report](#), or conducting a [vocational assessment](#) or [situational vocational assessment](#), for example.
- Collaborating with other members of the TPT and/or IEP team in setting the student’s [postsecondary goals](#).
- Participating in the IEP meeting to create the [coordinated set of transition activities](#), in particular those relating to related services.

As determined by the IEP team, related service providers may also provide services or input to:

- adapt the environment and task to meet the needs of the student (e.g., in the workplace)
- help the student gain necessary skills to reach identified postsecondary goals
- acquire assistive technology or adaptive devices as needed

## Student

The student is the single most important person in transition planning and must be an active participant. Beginning when the student is 14 years old, or any time postsecondary transition will be discussed at an IEP meeting, the student must be invited to their IEP meeting.

The student is encouraged to actively participate in the IEP meeting by sharing their strengths, interests, preferences, and needs. [Sample student invitations can be found in the Appendix](#). **The student invitation must be uploaded into SESIS as a “Document Related to IEP” with the title “Student IEP Meeting Invitation”.** If the student does not attend the IEP meeting, the school must still ensure that the student's preferences and interests are considered, and that the student’s voice is represented.

Prior to the IEP meeting, it is important that the student understands their role and completes their part of the vocational assessment. A vocational assessment must first be completed for all students with disabilities at age 12 or older (or who will turn 12 by the end of the calendar year in which the evaluation is completed). It must be updated annually before the student’s annual IEP meeting. See

the section on [Vocational Assessments](#) above for more information on the student's role in this process.

Other elements of the student's role include:

- Learning about the transition planning process
- Completing their part of vocational assessments
- Exploring interests and possible vocational or career options
- Developing self-advocacy skills (e.g., learning to express their interests, preferences, and goals)
- Reflecting on strengths and needs to determine the most appropriate graduation option
- Identifying appropriate courses with career and/or school counselor
- Learning about their disability and how to get supports after high school, if appropriate
- Actively participating in IEP meetings
- Asking questions about graduation requirements, diploma options, and anything else
- If the student is 18 years or older and a participating agency is identified, providing their consent to invite the agency representative to the IEP meeting

## Parent

Parents have a critical role to play in their children's transition planning. Two of the key moments at which parents can play this role are:

- Through completing their component of the vocational assessment. See the section above on [vocational assessments](#).
- Preparing for and participating in the IEP meeting. Schools can help families to understand their role and teach them to support their children's future success by encouraging active participation in IEP meetings, sharing of observations, thoughts, and concerns about their child's strengths, needs and preferences, and completing the parent portion of the vocational assessment.

The parent must be invited to participate in every IEP meeting. Efforts must be made to ensure that they are present and participate fully as active members of the IEP team. See the [Special Education Standard Operating Procedures Manual \(SOPM\)](#) at page 41 (The Parent) for more information on ensuring the parent's presence at the IEP meeting and encouraging the parent to be prepared for that meeting.

With respect to transition-related issues, the DOE IEP team members should ensure that the parent is encouraged to fully share any input they may have into their child's postsecondary goals and the activities and services needed to pursue those goals. If the parent's portion of the vocational assessment was not completed in advance of the IEP meeting, it must be discussed with the parent at the IEP meeting if they are participating.

Other elements of the parent's role in planning for the student's post-secondary transition include:

- Learning about the transition planning process
- Sharing observations, thoughts, and concerns about the student's strengths, needs, and preferences with the school and IEP team
- Completing the parent's portion of the vocational assessment
- Helping the student explore their current interests and future goals
- Advocating for the student and assisting them in developing self-advocacy skills

- Becoming knowledgeable about graduation requirements, diploma pathways, post-school options, and resources
- Determining if assistance will be needed for their child to become as independent as possible
- Identifying the people, community agencies, and other resources that can help their child reach their goals
- If a participating agency is identified, providing their consent to invite the agency representative to the IEP meeting

## Transition Services Agency (also known as “Participating Agency Representative”)

A participating agency is a state or local agency, other than the school, that is financially and legally responsible for providing transition services to the student. To the extent appropriate and with parental consent (or the consent of a student who is 18 years of age or older), the IEP team must invite a representative of any participating agency likely to be responsible for providing or paying for transition services to any IEP meeting in which transition will be discussed. If an invited agency’s representative is unable to attend, the district must take other steps to involve the agency in the planning of transition services. In the [SOPM](#) (pages 48-49), this is referred to as a “Transition Service Agency Representative”.

A participating agency is an agency that is likely to provide or pay for services after a student leaves high school. Participating agencies can:

- Attend IEP meetings, when invited
- Actively participate with other IEP team members to align plans and services
- Provide information on resources and supports available to help the student reach their goals
- Provide necessary services, activities, and supports to help the student achieve their goals

In advance of the IEP meeting, a DOE staff member of the IEP team should discuss with the parent (or the student if they are age 18 or above) whether there are any appropriate agencies that may provide or fund transition services. These agencies may include:

- Adult Career and Continuing Education Services – Vocational Rehabilitation (ACCES-VR)
- Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD)
- New York State Commission for the Blind (NYSCB)
- Office of Mental Health (OMH)

More details regarding this [list of agencies](#) can be found in the Appendix. The Transition Team Leader or a member of the IEP team should be prepared to provide the parent (or student if age 18 or above) with information and resources and help connect them with an agency. The [Transition and College Access Center \(TCAC\)](#) in each borough can also provide information and resources regarding agencies as needed to students, parents, schools, or CSEs.

Eligibility criteria differ for each agency, usually depending on degree or type of disability, age, and documentation required.

If an appropriate agency is identified, the school must seek written parental consent (or consent of the student if age 18 or older) to invite the representative of the agency to the IEP meeting. A [consent form can be found in the Appendix](#). If the parent (or student) fails to return the consent form, one outreach attempt (telephonic, written, or email) must be made and documented in the SESIS Events Log. The response to the consent outreach must be recorded in the Event Log. The signed

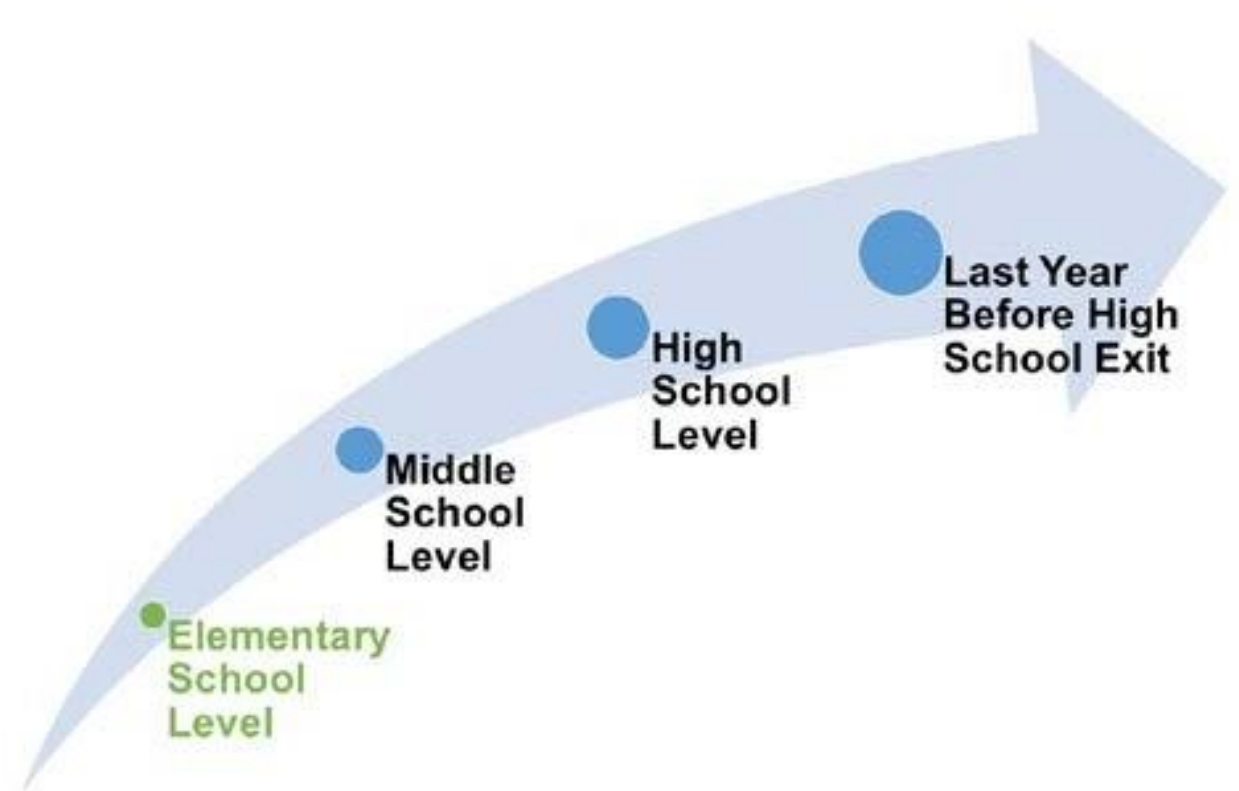
consent must be uploaded into SESIS as a “Document Related to IEP” with the Label/Comment “Consent to Invite Transition Agency Representative”.

If the parent (or student if age 18 or above) declines consent for the agency to be invited, that must be recorded in the SESIS Event Log. Prior to the next annual review IEP meeting, the school or CSE *must* discuss with the parent (or the student if age 18 or above) whether they will consent to inviting the agency, if an appropriate agency is identified. This must also be recorded in the SESIS Event Log.

If the parent (or the student if age 18 or above) has provided consent for the participating agency to be invited, the school/CSE must send an invitation to the agency. A [sample invitation to the participating agency is in the Appendix](#). **The participating agency invitation must be uploaded into SESIS as a “Document Related to IEP” with the title “Participating Agency IEP Meeting Invitation”.** Any communications with the participating agency should be documented in the SESIS Events Log. The participating agency should be included as a member of the meeting on the Notice of IEP meeting.

If an agency invited to participate at an IEP meeting does not do so, the IEP team should take additional steps to involve the agency in the planning of any transition services, such as seeking information in writing.

Refer to this SESIS Guide on [Transition Agency IEP Meeting Invitation Process in SESIS](#) for guidance on documenting the process of inviting a participating agency to the IEP meeting. For more information about participating agencies, see [NYC and NYS Agencies Providing Transition Services](#).



## Section II: Transition Timeline

### Overview of Transition Timeline

Using student-centered planning techniques, the transition process focuses on the student's interests and abilities in developing a plan for their future. Early planning is essential for students to be prepared once they leave school, increasing the chance of a positive result by:

- Providing students more time to explore options and alternatives with representatives from schools and agencies (including [Transition Services Agencies / Participating Agencies](#))
- Helping to ensure that students receive appropriate services when they graduate
- Helping to obtain support from agencies other than the NYC Department of Education, as appropriate
- Identifying skills to be developed that will lead to greater independence and participation in the community
- Helping to focus on the student's individual needs
- Formulating a realistic transition plan

The following sections explain the important milestones and requirements concerning transition according to grade band.

### Elementary School

Elementary school teachers should introduce the [Career Development and Occupational Studies \(CDOS\) Learning Standards](#) to all students. The CDOS Learning Standards were established by the NYSED to span all disciplines and be integrated in all instructional areas. They supplement the NYS Learning Standards by addressing the skills students will need for postsecondary readiness, specifically in career and occupational studies. The standards address the areas of career



development, applied learning and foundation skills that position a student for success in the workplace.

Teachers are encouraged to use the example tasks from the CDOS Elementary Standards and Performance Indicators to guide implementation of the curriculum. The [CDOS Resource Guide with Core Curriculum](#) is a companion document to the [CDOS](#) core content for each learning standard and career/major. The document includes teacher-developed classroom activities, grouped by grade level.

Teaching and promotion of **academic and personal behaviors** begin in elementary school. “Academic and personal behaviors” are a set of learning habits and skills that support academic readiness. They include non-cognitive, socio-emotional indicators that support resiliency and persistence in college and career. Academic and personal behaviors include:

- Persistence
- Engagement
- Strong work habits
- Organizational skills
- Communication and collaboration skills
- Self-regulation

Elementary students learn valuable physical, social, emotional, and cognitive skills that they will continue to develop during their middle and high school years.

It is important for elementary students to begin the process of **personal development in self-advocacy and self-determination**. When students learn about personal growth and development, they become more self-aware and self-reflective and can better advocate for themselves. Self-determination is defined as a “combination of skills, knowledge and beliefs that enable a person to engage in goal-directed, self-regulated, autonomous behavior”.<sup>4</sup> The elements of self-determination include choice-making, goal setting, problem-solving, decision-making, self-regulation, leadership, self-advocacy, perceptions of efficacy and control, self-awareness, and self-knowledge. Self-determined adults are more likely to be employed, earn more, achieve independent living, and gain financial independence than adults who were not self-determined.

**Self-determination skills**, including self-advocacy, can be fostered in elementary school through activities that offer students choice and by explicating teaching students how to ask for help when needed. Career awareness activities including learning about their community stores and services will also lay the foundation for future career exploration and preparation.

## Middle School

During middle school, students will be starting to think through what they might want in their adult lives after school, and their preferences and ideas may be influenced by their peers. In middle school, the skills needed for self-determination and self-advocacy, for which a basis is formed in elementary school will continue to be strengthened. Students may have more choices to make and will continue their journey of self-discovery.

Middle schools must start the process of helping students to begin making plans for their postsecondary lives. Middle schools should refer to the previous sections regarding vocational

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<sup>4</sup> Field, S., Martin, J., Miller, R., Ward, M., & Wehmeyer, M., “Self-determination for persons with disabilities: A position statement of the division on career development and transition,” *Career Development for Exceptional Individuals*, 21(2), 113-128.

assessments for any students aged 12 and over. Thoughtfully conducting [vocational assessments](#) and discussing students' postsecondary goals will help students prepare for high school and have a positive middle school experience. Middle schools must also implement any requirements for [transition planning in IEP meetings](#) for any middle school students aged 14 and over.

As students advance through middle school, the skills of **responsibility and independence** become increasingly important. Some students with disabilities struggle more with the demanding characteristics of being what is considered “responsible”, particularly students who have challenges with executive functioning skills. They also may have challenges learning to be more independent. School leaders, teachers, and other educational staff can adopt a unified mindset to promote responsibility and independence by incorporating those skills into advisory courses and related service provider sessions. Student behavioral contracts are one possible method of initiating conversations to promote a clear understanding of the expectations of student responsibility.

Students should be provided with multiple opportunities to explore a wide variety of community and leisure activities while in middle school. These opportunities can be explored via school-community relationships, guest speakers, after school programs, clubs, community volunteer programs, and youth organizations. Many students will find participation in these extracurricular activities to be confidence boosting, and they can provide ideas about new career opportunities.

## High School

The goal of high school is to complete the process of preparing students for a postsecondary life and pathways where they can be as independent and fulfilled as possible.

Many students transitioning from middle school to high school share concerns of increased academic workload, social stressors, and once again acclimating to a new environment. For many students and families, this pivotal period also marks the beginning of conversations focused on postsecondary options. Students with disabilities should begin regular conversations with staff at their school about self-advocacy and how strengths and interests connect to post-school options. Support students in navigating high school by identifying experiences available to them, finding causes of importance, and engaging in extracurricular activities. See the [Navigating High School Educator Snapshot](#) for translated workbooks on navigating high school for ELLs and others.

During the high school years, more formalized transition planning and services begin. Refer to the previous sections on [vocational assessments](#) and [transition in the IEP](#) to ensure that these key requirements are conducted. It is critical to afford every student the opportunity to formulate appropriately rigorous goals and then provide the supports and services needed to reach those goals. At each IEP meeting (and at other times), high schools must make sure families and students understand credit accumulation, course work, and the exams required for a high school diploma. It is important to revisit this often to ensure the student is on track to achieve their highest diploma objective.

For students who participate in alternate assessments, it is critical to make sure that families and students understand that the student will not receive a high school diploma. The [New York State Alternate Assessment](#) (NYSAA) is only administered to students who meet [the eligibility criteria](#).

Work-based learning experiences support students with all of the stages of career development in preparation for adult life. See the next section for additional information on work based learning and multiple pathways for diploma and credential options.

## Critical Components of Transition Planning During High School

As students progress toward exiting high school, schools must ensure that the critical components of postsecondary planning are taking place. The critical components include:

- Preparing for graduation by pursuing the most rigorous diploma and/or credential options
- Creating and maintaining a transition portfolio
- Creating an exit summary prior to the student's exit from high school
- Creating a career plan and an employability profile
- Having ongoing, meaningful conversations with the student about their hopes and plans for life after high school

This section provides information about diploma and credential options, required actions and documents, and resources for ensuring that all components of transition planning are in place.

### Diploma and Credential Options

We must prepare all students, including students with IEPs, for the most rigorous diploma option possible. For additional resources regarding graduation and diploma options, see:

- [SOPM](#) (page 122)
- [High School Academic Policy Guide](#)
- Academic Policy [Guide on Graduation Requirements](#)

#### *Diploma Options*

There are three types of diplomas in New York State: a local diploma, a Regents diploma, and an Advanced Regents diploma. All students who participate in standard assessments can pursue a Regents or Advanced Regents diploma; however, only students who meet specific criteria are eligible to graduate with a local diploma, which allows students to graduate with lower exam scores. The type of diploma earned depends on the course credits and scores on specific Regents exams. An Advanced Regents diploma lets students demonstrate additional skills in math, science, and languages other than English. If you are working with a student who may not be earning the credits they need to graduate, confer with your school's guidance counselor immediately. [New York City graduation requirements](#) are explained on the NYCDOE website.

All diplomas require students to earn 44 credits in specific subject areas and pass course work in English language arts (ELA), math, social studies, and science. Students with IEPs or who are otherwise eligible for the "Safety Net" may be eligible to earn a local diploma, which has different requirements for Regents exams.

#### *Commencement Credential Options*

Students may pursue a non-diploma commencement credential in addition to their diploma or, if they are unable to meet all diploma requirements, in lieu of a diploma.

#### *Career Development and Occupational Studies (CDOS) Commencement Credential*

The [Career Development and Occupational Studies Commencement Credential](#) is designed to recognize student mastery of the career-readiness skills defined in the [New York State Career Development and Occupational Studies Learning Standards \(CDOS\)](#). It is crucial that these career development experiences supplement, and not replace, a rich academic program with opportunities to earn a high school diploma. **The CDOS as a stand-alone credential is not equivalent to a high school diploma.** As a standalone credential earned in place of a high school diploma, the CDOS credential does not guarantee employment where a diploma is required and does not qualify

students to enter the military or enter many postsecondary institutions. Schools should offer students CDOS-aligned work-based learning and CTE experiences alongside the academic coursework required for a diploma. For details regarding attaining the CDOS credential see [New York State Graduation Pathway Options](#).

The NYCDOE recommends that all eligible students receive the CDOS Commencement Credential as an endorsement to a high school diploma. Upon completion of the CDOS requirements, students are eligible for the 4+1 graduation option, meaning that if they have passed at least one ELA, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies Regents exam, the successful completion of CDOS may be used as the additional exam needed towards any diploma type.

To meet CDOS requirements, students must receive instruction that supports the achievement of the CDOS learning standards through access to career and technical education (CTE) coursework and have opportunities to engage in school supervised work-based learning experiences, in school and/or in the community. In addition, students must participate in career planning and preparation and have an employability profile demonstrating readiness for entry-level employment. There are two options available for students to earn the CDOS credential.

### *CDOS Option 1*

Option 1 requires that the student has:

- Developed a **Career Plan** that includes documentation of the student's self-identified career interests; career-related strengths and needs; career goals; and career and technical coursework and work-based learning experiences that the student plans to engage in to achieve those goals.
- Demonstrated achievement of the commencement level CDOS learning standards in the areas of career exploration and development; integrated learning; and universal foundation skills.
- Successfully completed at least 216 hours of **CTE coursework and/or work-based learning** experiences, of which at least 54 hours must be in work-based learning experiences.
- At least one completed **employability profile** that documents the student's employability skills and experiences; attainment of each of the commencement level CDOS learning standards; and, as appropriate, attainment of technical knowledge and work-related skills, work experiences, performance on industry-based assessments and other work-related and academic achievements.

### **Career Plans**

One requirement of the NYS CDOS Commencement Credential is to create a career plan. The activities that the student includes in the Career Plan are not limited to those career-related activities that will be provided by the school and may include other activities that the student involves themselves in outside of school (e.g., volunteer work or summer employment).

Schools must assist the student, as appropriate, to develop their Career Plan. A student's preferences and interests, as identified in the Career Plan, must be reviewed by the student at least once annually and must be considered by the IEP team when developing the student's IEP. A copy of the student's Career Plan that was in effect during the school year in which the student exits high school must be maintained in the student's permanent record and transition portfolio.

### **Work-Based Learning**

Work-based learning experiences may include:

- Job shadowing
- Community service, volunteering, or service learning
- School-based enterprise(s)
- Community-based work programs (for students with disabilities only)
- State-approved registered programs, such as:
  - Career Exploration Internship Program (CEIP)
  - General Education Work Experience Program (GEWEP)
  - Work Experience and Career Exploration Program (WECEP)
  - Career and Technical Education Cooperative Work Experience Program (CO-OP).

For additional information on work-based learning see the [New York State Education's Work-Based Learning \(WBL\) Programs website](#).

In New York City, students with IEPs may participate in two particular work-based learning opportunities offered by the Division of Specialized Instruction and Student Support (DSISS). The Training Opportunities Program (TOP) and the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) both provide the opportunity for students to receive a financial incentive while participating in a work-based learning experience. For more information about TOP and SYEP contact your [Transition and College Access Center](#).

### Employability Profile

For students working towards obtaining the CDOS Commencement Credential, at least one work skills employability profile must be completed **within one year prior to the student's exit** from high school. The employability profile documents the student's employability skills and experiences, attainment of each of the commencement level CDOS learning standards, and attainment of technical knowledge and work-related skills, work experiences, performance on industry-based assessments and other work-related and academic achievements as appropriate.

A copy of the Employability Profile should accompany the Student Exit Summary in the student's profile in SESIS. Students are advised to bring their employability profile to potential employers as evidence of their work skills, knowledge, and talents.

For additional information about the Employability Profile and to view the State's form, please click [here](#). You can also learn more about employability profiles in the [NYS CDOS Commencement Credential Questions and Answers](#).

### CDOS Option 2

The second option for attaining the CDOS, available in lieu of a student meeting the requirements of Option 1, occurs when a student has met the requirements for one of the nationally recognized rigorous work readiness credentials, including but not limited to:

- National Work Readiness Credential (<http://www.workreadiness.com>)
- SkillsUSA Work Force Ready Employability Assessment (<http://www.workforcereadysystem.org>)
- National Career Readiness Certificate WorkKeys (<http://www.act.org/certificate>)
- Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems Workforce Skills Certification System (<https://www.casas.org>)

### Skills and Achievement Commencement Credential (SAC Credential)

The [Skills and Achievement Commencement Credential \(SAC Credential\)](#) is issued to students who participate in the [New York State Alternate Assessment](#) (NYSAA). Students who are eligible for

alternate assessments are those with “limited cognitive abilities combined with behavioral and/or physical limitations and who require highly specialized education, social, psychological and medical services in order to maximize their full potential for useful and meaningful participation in society and for self-fulfillment”.<sup>5</sup> If a student participates in alternate assessments instead of Regents exams, they will not be eligible for a high school diploma. It is critical that parents understand this. This letter must be provided and explained to the parent during any IEP meeting in which the SAC Credential is discussed.

## Transition Portfolio

To ensure that all student documents and information are kept in a secure and organized location, it is strongly recommended that all students with IEPs have transition portfolios. These portfolios should be individualized for each student, and should collect information regarding each student’s needs, interests, and postsecondary goals. With support from their Transition Team Leaders (TTLs), IEP team case managers, and the school’s Transition Planning Team (TPT), students can customize their transition portfolio to meet their needs.

A transition portfolio guides a student’s transition planning by using prompts and questions, organizing necessary materials, and highlighting key aspects of their life as they relate to their postsecondary goals.

There is no prescribed format for a transition portfolio. Common formats include:

- A traditional binder divided into separate sections containing written forms, graphic organizers, and templates that are of postsecondary relevance.
- Electronic portfolios that organize and produce information so that the student can type, save, upload, and email their documentation onto an online platform.

When deciding on a format for the student transition portfolio, the team should consider who will be receiving this information, how the information will be used, and how the student will be interacting with the materials presented.

For students, developing transition portfolios encourages self-reflection and self-advocacy by helping to prepare them to meet their postsecondary goals. The portfolio permanency allows it to be fluid and mobile, ultimately becoming a student’s property upon their exit from high school.

The student transition portfolio should be a repository where students can organize and store documents and information. The list below includes examples of documents and information that students and transition planning teams should consider adding into each student’s transition portfolio. This list is not exhaustive.

---

<sup>5</sup> 8 N.Y.C.R.R. § 100.1(t)(2)(iv).

Suggested Student Transition Portfolio Documents and Records	
Birth certificate	Letters of recommendation
Social security card	IEP
State identification card/photo identification card (school ID, NYC ID, Driver's License)	Entrance essays (for post-secondary institutions, internships, scholarships, etc.)
Student transcript and academic information	Updated resume and references
Selective service registration (if applicable)	Cover letter
Medical information	Awards and/or certificates
Adaptive equipment	Transition/Vocational assessments
Work-based learning experience logs	Sample of student work
Add Referrals to Programs and/or services	Exit Summary

Transition portfolios should encourage an ongoing transition planning process and include evidence of career and postsecondary options exploration. Here are a few tips for implementing transition portfolios:

- Create a process
- Schedule portfolio activities into student's day (e.g., homeroom, related service sessions, advisory/work readiness classes, mentor work)
- Develop a list of possible postsecondary pathways and programs for application
- Use checklists to track portfolio progress and stick to the timeline
- Set benchmarks for individual students
- Indicate what will be accomplished by end of year 1, 2 and 3 of high school
- Encourage the student's input, empowering them to be the decision maker on as many aspects of the portfolio as possible

## Exit Summary

When a student with an IEP will no longer be eligible for special education — including because they will (a) graduate with a local or Regents endorsed diploma or (b) no longer be age-eligible — the school or CSE must complete an “Exit Summary.” The Exit Summary summarizes the student's academic achievement and functional performance and includes recommendations on how to assist the student in meeting their postsecondary goals. NYSED states that the purpose of the Exit Summary is “to provide the student with a written report that provides essential information to consider as the student transitions from secondary school.”<sup>6</sup>

The Exit Summary must be provided to the student prior to the end of the school year in which the student will graduate with a local or Regents endorsed diploma or “age out”. The Exit Summary may be developed during the student's last IEP meeting before exiting. The Exit Summary should be prepared through a team process that includes the student, family, and members of the school or

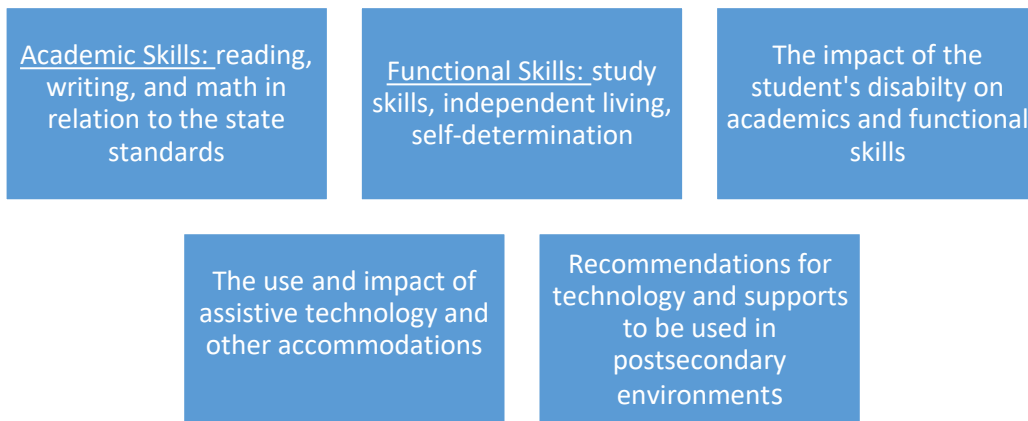
<sup>6</sup> New York State Education Department, Student Exit Summary. Available at: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/idea/studentexit.htm>.

CSE (or Transition Planning Team) who know the student well. The DOE professional(s) involved in developing the Exit Summary must be or become familiar with the student’s functional and academic levels, needs, accommodations, and post-school goals. If appropriate, and with the parent’s consent, adult agency personnel should be included in discussions regarding the Exit Summary.

The Exit Summary contains two parts: (1) a summary of academic achievement, functional performance, and learning characteristics, and (2) postsecondary goals and recommendations for support. When developing the Exit Summary, the team should consider all relevant information regarding the student, including but not limited to any transition or vocational assessments, their interests, needs and skills, postsecondary goals, and their IEP as a whole.

The Exit Summary compiles the necessary documentation regarding the student’s disability that can be used to assist the student in establishing eligibility for reasonable accommodations and support in postsecondary settings, the workplace, and the community. The information about the student’s current level of functioning, which is supported by information garnered from transition assessments, is intended to help the student establish eligibility for accommodations in postsecondary settings, the workplace, and the community or to access adult services as appropriate. The Exit Summary should also help the student better understand the impact of their disability and articulate their strengths and needs as well as supports that will be helpful in post-school life.

The Exit Summary should include information about the student in the following areas:



Additional information regarding the Exit Summary and a NYS sample Exit Summary can be accessed via the state website [here](#). For students who participate in New York State Alternate Assessment (NYSAA), please find the sample Exit Summary [here](#). For additional guidance regarding creating Student Exit Summaries, please see the New York State Education Department’s guidance materials, [Student Exit Summary as Required by IDEA 2004](#), including the [Student Exit Summary Guidance](#) and the [Student Exit Summary Form](#).

A Student Exit Summary form is also available in SESIS. Once completed, the Exit Summary must be provided to the student and uploaded to SESIS as a “Document Related to IEP” and clearly labeled as “Student Exit Summary.”

## Considerations for Life after High School

Postsecondary planning for students with disabilities should include the range of available pathways. Supports should be targeted to facilitate a match with the student's sense of purpose and meaning as they transition to postsecondary education, work or workforce training, and/or independent living.



It is important to note that as adults, individuals with disabilities are afforded protections under the [American with Disabilities Act \(ADA\)](#) and [Rehabilitation Act](#), not IDEA.

## College Exploration

If a student with an IEP is planning to attend college, there are a number of [critical steps](#) to help them to become college-ready:

- Unpack postsecondary options for and with students, allowing them to explore possibilities, interests, and personality traits.
- Make sure students are taking courses that will help them prepare for college and that they are accumulating credits as such. Conduct frequent transcript reviews to ensure they remain on track. See the [STARS postsecondary tracker](#) to assist with this and to monitor student progress through key milestones. *These must also be discussed in IEP meetings and memorialized in the Transition Needs section. For more information on this requirement, refer to the [Transition Needs and Course of Study](#) section of this Guide.*
- Meet with other school staff such as school counselors and transition team leaders and attend [Transition & College Access Center](#) workshops to discuss goals, such as vocational and education goals, programs of study, college requirements, including the admissions process and any standardized tests required for admission.
- Every high school is required to identify a Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) coordinator. Ensure that your school's SSD coordinator is communicating with families about requesting SAT accommodations. Explain ACT and SAT options to families.
- During IEP meetings, become comfortable and knowledgeable about your student's disability and metacognition so that you can support their self-advocacy.
- Help families and students to research colleges, including the supports available for students with disabilities; encourage and assist students to develop a list of schools to apply to, based on academic, environmental preference, safety, and belonging.
- Assist the student and their family with collecting documentation of their disability in order to ensure they receive whatever services and/or accommodations they may be entitled to. Each college/university is different and may require different documentation. The student will generally need documentation of the following:
  - o Diagnosis of current disability
  - o Date of diagnosis
  - o How diagnosis was reached
  - o Professional making determination
  - o How disability impacts major life activity
  - o How disability affects current academic performance
- Help the student and family understand the changes to their disability-related rights in college. These are governed by Section 504 and the ADA. Most saliently, students are responsible for self-identification. This means that students interested in receiving reasonable accommodations must refer themselves for supports and provide documentation to obtain disability services. The school's office of disability services will determine eligibility and accommodation(s) and provide a letter to the student. Students must self-advocate and request accommodations from each professor at the beginning of each semester. The school will interface direction with the student (18+ years old), not the parent. Guidance about this process should be included in the student's [Exit Summary](#).
- Utilize the [College Search Educator's Snapshot](#) and [translated family resources](#).
- Help families and students to research the specific college application and financial aid processes most relevant to them.

If a student wishes to attend college after high school they may need to take college entrance exams, although many colleges are providing more flexibility and waiving some exams at this time. Check with the colleges to confirm application requirements. If students require testing accommodations for college entrance exams, they must be registered with [College Board](#) prior to taking the exams. This is extremely important as the process for accommodations for these exams is not the same as testing accommodations for New York State or local assessments. A [request form](#) must be submitted in order for a student to receive testing accommodations on the PSAT or SAT exams. The Transition Team Leader (TTL), Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) Coordinator, and special education teacher should work together to ensure that the student and family understand the proper procedure to apply for accommodations and to ensure the accommodations will be implemented.

The [College and Career Planning Team](#) in the Office of Postsecondary Readiness works to:

- improve access to high quality postsecondary planning experiences during the school day to support students' postsecondary access and success;
- ensure all students are well-equipped to transition into higher education and workforce landscape, graduating high school with a strong match plan for the future; and
- offer coaching, professional learning and on-demand resources to schools to support student access to key postsecondary planning milestones over the course of their school experience.

The College and Career Planning Team also supports events throughout the school year to raise awareness and engage schools, families, and students in the college and career planning process. Check their [InfoHub page](#) for additional information.

College experiences are also available for non-matriculated students. It is important to learn about all of the options available. [Think College](#) provides information regarding college options for young adults with intellectual disabilities.

## **Supporting Multilingual Learners/English Language Learners in preparing for college and career**

The Postsecondary Readiness Team at the Division of Multilingual Learners (DML) is committed to ensuring our Multilingual Learners/English Language Learners are able to [explore, prepare, and apply](#) to the postsecondary pathway of their choosing. The team supports schools in prioritizing social-emotional learning, engaging in culturally responsive postsecondary planning, ensuring language accessibility for students and families, and building intentional community to ensure multilingual learners and immigrant youth are ready for life in a global society. For targeted supports, professional learning opportunities, and postsecondary resources, visit [the Division of Multilingual Learners SharePoint page](#).

## Trade school and/or entering the work force

To help prepare students to enter a trade school or the work force, schools should:

- Help students and families to explore a [Career and Technical Education \(CTE\) school or program](#) and/or enroll in challenging courses aligned to career ambitions. If students attend a CTE school and/or program they will take a minimum of 7 credits in technical courses.
- Help students get involved in work-based learning experiences or internships that provide exposure to their intended line of work. Some common examples include career exploration activities, job-shadowing, service learning, school-based enterprise, Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP), and Transition Opportunity Program (TOP). *Remember: These activities should be discussed in IEP meetings and memorialized on IEPs!*
- Connect students with organizations and businesses that improve their knowledge of occupational practices.
- Encourage students to be active participants in their IEP meetings and become comfortable and knowledgeable about their disabilities and metacognition (learning about their own learning) to advocate for what they need to learn best.
- If appropriate, include [Adult Career and Continuing Education Services – Vocational Rehabilitation](#) (ACCES-VR) and/or other community agencies in the student’s IEP meeting prior to leaving high school. See [Transition Services Agency](#) for more information on inviting an agency representative to an IEP meeting.

## Day Program

Day Habilitation services can help young adults to gain self-help, socialization, and adaptive skills (including regarding communication, travel, and other areas of adult life). They can also provide some education to help with learning to be more independent, community inclusion, relationship building, and self-advocacy. People who receive day habilitation services often contribute to their communities through volunteer work and/or prevocational services. Prevocational services are services that address your child’s interests and support the development of employment readiness skills. Day Habilitation Programs assist people who are interested in joining "the world of work" but who are not yet ready to do so.

If a student may meet eligibility requirements for services through the New York State [Office for People with Developmental Disabilities](#) (OPWDD), they may register with them at any age. OPWDD uses Care Coordination Organizations (CCOs) to provide Health Home Services to oversee the development of a Life Plan for each individual. The Life Plan will include an integrated approach to providing services including healthcare, wellness, and community and social supports. Visit [OPWDD’s website](#) for more information on eligibility requirements.

Explain to parents/guardians that they must participate in a “Front Door” information session, which can be found on the [Front Door page of the OPWDD website](#). This establishes eligibility for adult services.

- If appropriate, include ACCES-VR, OPWDD, and/or other participating agencies in a student’s IEP meetings prior to them leaving high school. See [Transition Services Agency](#) for more information on inviting an agency representative to an IEP meeting.
- Encourage families to keep important documents and information about their child in one place and to write a Letter of Intent that they can update each year. This letter is their opportunity to provide future guardians and trustees with a guide to understanding their child and any specific needs, concerns, interests, etc. that would be important for a caretaker to know.

## Appendix A – Sample Student Invitation Letters

### Sample Student Invitation Letter to IEP Meeting

*Place on school letterhead. Upload the completed invitation to SESIS and enter an event in Events Log when provided to student.*

Date:

YOU'RE INVITED!!!

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

Your presence has been kindly requested for your IEP meeting on \_\_\_\_\_  
at \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_.

This meeting is ALL ABOUT YOU. Be prepared to ask questions and voice your own opinion about your education. Some things to think about before the meeting are:

- Are you happy in your current class? Why or why not?
- Are you experiencing any difficulties at school? (Classwork/homework, friends, classmates, tests, projects, etc.)
- Are you having any difficulties at home?
- Have there been any big changes in your life recently?
- Do you need any extra help in your classes?
- How are your grades?
- How is your vision/hearing?
- Would you change anything about your current program?
- What do you want to do after school?
- Things I wish my teachers knew about me...

See you there!

## Sample Student Invitation Letter to IEP Meeting

Place on school letterhead. Upload the completed invitation to SESIS and enter an event in Events Log when provided to student.

Date:

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

You are invited to come to a meeting to develop your Individualized Education Program (IEP). Your IEP meeting is scheduled for:

DAY: \_\_\_\_\_ TIME: \_\_\_\_\_ PLACE: \_\_\_\_\_

At your IEP meeting, we will discuss your goals for after high school and will discuss the services that you will need to support your successful movement from school to meet these goals. These services are called "Transition Services". At this meeting you will have a chance to:

- Share your strengths, preferences, needs, interests, likes and dislikes
- Discuss where you would like to work, live, and continue your education after high school
- Discuss anything else you would like about your education and/or life

Then, together, all members of your IEP team will:

- Discuss your strengths and areas for growth
- Develop a plan for the coming year
- Outline IEP team members' roles and responsibilities to help you prepare for adult life

This meeting is about planning your future. You are the key person in this planning, so it is very important that you attend.

Your parents have been invited to this meeting. We have also invited the following people to this meeting:

Name	Role

If you would like to invite anyone else to the meeting, please let us know. If you have any questions about this letter or the meeting, please talk to your teacher or counselor.

Sincerely,

---

*Sign and return to your teacher:*

I will be attending.

Student's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

I will not be attending.

Student's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## Sample Student Invitation Letter to IEP Meeting

Place on school letterhead. Upload the completed invitation to SESIS and enter event in Events Log when provided to student.

Date:

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

You are invited to participate in your next IEP and transition planning meeting scheduled for:

DAY: \_\_\_\_\_ TIME: \_\_\_\_\_ PLACE: \_\_\_\_\_

At this meeting, we would like to talk with you about:

- How you are doing in school;
- What you would like to do when you complete school; and
- The activities in your IEP that will help you prepare for the future.

Before the meeting, please think about what you want to do after you leave school, what you can do now to achieve those goals, what skills you still need to learn, and what kind of help you will need to accomplish your goals. Please come to the IEP meeting ready to share the following information:

- What kind of job do you want to have?
- Where will you live? (On your own or with others?)
- What will you do with your free time after you leave high school?
- How much money can you earn? How will you pay your bills?
- How will you get around – by car, subway, bus, special transportation?

At the IEP and transition planning meeting, we also give you information to help you make choices.

The following people have been invited to come to the meeting to help develop your program:

Name	Role

If you would like to invite anyone else to the meeting, please let us know.

We will work with you to help you explore and decide what you want to do in the future and to help you prepare for it. I look forward to seeing you at the meeting and assisting you in planning a good program for your future success.

Sincerely,

## Appendix B – Parent Interview Form

*Place on school letterhead*

Here are some questions for you to discuss and think about with your child to prepare for transition planning. Please respond to the following items and return this survey to the school to help us in developing a transition plan that will be shared with you and your child at the IEP meeting. We will give you a copy and a copy will be kept in your child's transition portfolio.

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent(s): \_\_\_\_\_

1. If your child has talked about working, what types of jobs have they shown interest in doing when they grow up?

2. What kinds of things does your child like to do in their free time?

3. What does your child like to talk about when they are home?

4. Does your child have friends that they participate with on a daily or weekly basis? YES

NO

If "YES," what types of activities does your child and their friends usually do?

5. What does your child do to help at home with daily or weekly tasks?

6. What kinds of activities does your child participate in outside of the home for entertainment?

7. What would you like the school to know about your child?

8. What are your future work expectations for your child after they graduate from high school?

9. Where do you expect your child will live after graduation? (For example: our home, on their own, group home, with friends, etc.)

10. Which of these independent living skills do you think your child needs instruction in? Check all that apply.

Buying and caring for clothing

Meal preparation and nutrition



- Hygiene and grooming
- Using public transportation
- How to be a good parent
- Getting their driver's license
- How to buy things wisely

- Knowing what is in the community
- Money management skills
- How to be safe in the community
- Sex education knowledge
- Health and first aid training

Other areas of concern:

Thank you for your responses.

Please be sure to return this survey to the school as soon as you have completed it.

## Appendix C – Sample Transition Service Agency Letters

### Sample Letter Advising Parents to Contact Agencies for Services

*Transfer to school letterhead*

Date:

Dear Parent or Guardian of \_\_\_\_\_:

Student's DOB: \_\_\_\_\_ NYC Student ID: \_\_\_\_\_

As your student prepares for life after high school, it may be appropriate for transition services agency to be involved in planning and supporting your child through this transition. A representative from the transition services agency can be invited to participate in your child's transition planning IEP meeting to support their success after high school.

If a transition services agency is already involved in supporting your child, please let us know as soon as possible of the following:

Agency name: \_\_\_\_\_

Agency representative's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Agency address: \_\_\_\_\_

Agency phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

To learn more about transition services agencies, please visit page 25 of our Family Guide to Transition Planning (<https://www.schools.nyc.gov/docs/default-source/default-document-library/family-guide-to-transition-planning>). You can reach out to your borough Transition and College Access Center (TCAC) or the District 75 Transition Office at:

- Bronx TCAC: [BxTCAC@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:BxTCAC@schools.nyc.gov)
- Brooklyn TCAC: [BklynTCAC@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:BklynTCAC@schools.nyc.gov)
- Manhattan TCAC: [MnTCAC@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:MnTCAC@schools.nyc.gov)
- Queens TCAC: [QnsTCAC@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:QnsTCAC@schools.nyc.gov)
- Staten Island TCAC: [SITCAC@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:SITCAC@schools.nyc.gov)
- District 75: [D75Transition@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:D75Transition@schools.nyc.gov)

If you would like to learn more or discuss whether any transition services agencies may be appropriate to support your child, please reach out to \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_.

Sincerely,

## Sample Letter Requesting Parental Consent to Invite Transition Services Agency Representative to IEP Meeting

*For students who are under 18 years old*

*Transfer to school letterhead*

Date:

Dear Parent or Guardian of \_\_\_\_\_:

Student's DOB: \_\_\_\_\_ NYC Student ID: \_\_\_\_\_

A transition planning IEP meeting for your student will be arranged by \_\_\_\_\_ (due date).

We would like to invite an outside transition services agency representative to participate in this IEP meeting. Participation of an agency representative at the meeting will assist us with discussing and planning for services and resources that will facilitate successful transition planning for your student's life after high school.

Your written consent is required for us to contact and invite an outside agency representative to participate in your child's IEP meeting. Please indicate below if you consent to us contacting an outside agency regarding your child and inviting an outside agency representative to their IEP meeting.

Please note that if you provide your consent, that consent is ongoing until your child is no longer eligible for special education services from the DOE or until you revoke your consent. You may revoke your consent at any time.

Sincerely,

- .....
- I consent to NYCDOE contacting the following agency and inviting a representative from that agency to my child's IEP meeting(s):

Agency name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

- I do not consent to NYCDOE contacting a transition services agency.

## Sample Letter Requesting Student’s Consent to Invite Agency Representative to IEP Meeting

*For students age 18 and above*

*Transfer to school letterhead*

Date:

Dear Student:

Student’s Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Student’s DOB: \_\_\_\_\_ NYC Student ID: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

A transition planning IEP meeting will be held by \_\_\_\_\_ (due date).

We would like to invite an outside transition services agency representative to participate in this IEP meeting. Participation of an agency representative at the meeting will assist us with discussing and planning for services and resources that will facilitate successful transition planning for your life after high school.

Your written consent is required for us to contact and invite an outside agency representative to participate in your IEP meeting. Please indicate below if you consent to us contacting an outside agency and inviting an outside agency representative to your IEP meeting.

Please note that if you provide your consent, that consent is ongoing until you are no longer eligible for special education services from the DOE or until you revoke your consent. You may revoke your consent at any time.

Sincerely,

- .....
- I consent to NYCDOE contacting the following agency and inviting a representative from that agency to my IEP meeting(s):

Agency name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student’s Signature (*only if age 18 or above*): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

- I do not consent to NYCDOE contacting a transition services agency.

## Sample Letter to Invite Agency Personnel to Transition IEP Meeting

*Transfer to school letterhead*

Date:

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

An IEP meeting is scheduled for \_\_\_\_\_ (Student's Name) at:

Date/time:

Location (or dial-in information):

The NYCDOE is required to invite a representative of a participating agency that is likely to be responsible for providing or paying for transition services to an IEP meeting, to the extent appropriate. Therefore, the participation of a representative of your agency is requested at this IEP meeting. It would be helpful if your agency could bring the following information to the IEP meeting, or otherwise make it available to the IEP team:

- Information packet/eligibility criteria
- Scope of your agency's services
- Application for services
- Progress report (*if student receives services from your agency*)
- Other relevant information

Please let us know if a representative is (or is not) available to attend this IEP meeting using the contact information below. If a representative is not available, please also let us know how best to contact your agency to discuss the planning of any transition services, if appropriate.

If you have any questions, please contact:

Contact person: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

We look forward to your participation at this meeting.

Sincerely,

## Appendix D – Transition Planning Overview Letter for Family

When students with IEPs are 14 years old, school/CSE must send this letter to their families at least one month before the IEP meeting.

Put on school letterhead.

Dear Students and Families,

To ensure that students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) are prepared for success in life after high school, planning for that transition is critical. Your involvement in this transition planning process is essential. Please see the summary below of the steps of this transition planning process.

Step	Description
<p><b>Transition and/or vocational assessments</b> will be conducted, starting at age 12.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transition and/or vocational assessments help your child think about what they want to do after high school.</li> <li>• Starting when students are 12 years old, age-appropriate transition assessments will be conducted, which will include a student component, a parent component, and a teacher/educational staff component.</li> <li>• The assessment will be updated annually and will be discussed at IEP meetings.</li> <li>• Parents' and students' contributions to this assessment process are very important – this assessment forms the basis for transition planning in the IEP, which will start when students are 14 years old.</li> </ul>
<p>Students will be <b>invited to their IEP meetings</b>, starting at age 14.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students will be invited to their IEP meetings starting when they are 14 years old or any time post-secondary transition (preparing for life after high school) will be discussed at the IEP meeting.</li> <li>• By participating in these IEP meetings, a student will form a better understanding of their disability, their strengths, and the academic and social-emotional areas that they would like to develop. This will also help them engage in self-advocacy and self-determination.</li> <li>• If a student does not attend the IEP meeting, the team will make every effort to ensure that the student's voice is heard in their post-secondary transition planning.</li> </ul>
<p>The IEP will describe the student's <b>Measurable Postsecondary Goals</b>.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Starting at age 14, a student's IEP will begin to include measurable postsecondary goals. Measurable postsecondary goals state what a student wants to do or achieve after high school.</li> <li>• Measurable postsecondary goals are shaped by information collected from transition and vocational assessments and may change multiple times throughout high school.</li> <li>• Measurable post-secondary goals can be in the areas of:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Education/Training</li> <li>o Employment</li> <li>o Independent Living</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Goals will be written in actionable language. For example: "After high school graduation, the student <b>will...</b>"</li> </ul>

Step	Description
<p>The IEP will list a <b>Coordinated Set of Transition Activities</b>, along with who is responsible for ensuring those activities and services take place.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <b>Coordinated Set of Transition Activities</b> are the activities and services that will help a student gain the skills needed to meet their goals. They are based on the student’s individual needs, strengths, preferences, and interests.</li> <li>• There are six categories of transition activities, including: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Instruction</b> (educational experiences needed to achieve post-school goals)</li> <li>2. <b>Related Services</b> (services such as counseling, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and/or speech and language therapy that may be needed to work towards postsecondary goals)</li> <li>3. <b>Community Experiences</b> (after-school jobs, community recreational experiences, etc., that may be needed to prepare the student to participate in community life)</li> <li>4. <b>Employment and Other Post-School Adult Living Objectives</b> (services or activities relating to career exploration, skill training, employment, or work-based learning)</li> <li>5. <b>Acquisition of Daily Living Skills</b> (if applicable) (services that would help the student strengthen their daily living skills)</li> <li>6. <b>Functional Vocational Assessment</b> (if applicable) (assessment of the student’s strengths, abilities, and needs in actual or simulated work environment)</li> </ol> </li> <li>• For each activity, the person responsible will be identified.</li> </ul>
<p>A <b>Transition Service Agency</b> (also known as a <b>participating agency</b>) may be identified and invited to the student’s IEP meeting.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Transition Service Agency (also known as a “participating agency”) is an agency that is likely to provide or pay for services after your child leaves high school.</li> <li>• If any agency is likely to be responsible for providing or paying for services, your child’s school should <b>help you identify that agency</b> and will <b>request your consent to invite a representative</b> from that agency to your child’s IEP meeting.</li> <li>• Information about the following transition service agencies is available in the Family Guide to Transition Planning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Adult Career and Continuing Education Services - Vocational Rehabilitation (ACCES-VR) – <a href="http://www.acces.nysed.gov/vr">www.acces.nysed.gov/vr</a></li> <li>○ Office of People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) – <a href="http://www.opwdd.ny.gov">www.opwdd.ny.gov</a></li> <li>○ Office of Mental Health (OMH) – <a href="http://www.omh.ny.gov">www.omh.ny.gov</a></li> <li>○ Commission for the Blind (NYSCB) – <a href="https://ocfs.ny.gov/main/cb/">https://ocfs.ny.gov/main/cb/</a></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>Before leaving high school with a diploma or after aging out (21+), the student will be given an <b>Exit Summary</b>.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An Exit Summary will be provided during the student’s last year of high school.</li> <li>• The purpose of the Exit Summary is to provide a written report with important information about the student’s skills and areas in which they will need support, as well as recommendations to support a successful transition to life after high school.</li> </ul>

Note that after a student with an IEP graduates with a diploma or ages out of school, they will no longer be entitled to special education services. If a student exits high school with either the Career Development and Occupational Studies (CDOS) Commencement Credential or the Skills and Achievement Commencement Credential (SACC) as their sole exiting credential, the student continues to be eligible to attend school through the end of the school year in which they turn 21.

After leaving school, individuals with disabilities may be eligible for other services. The student's IEP team and/or transition planning team can help provide you with additional information about what may be available after leaving high school.

We strongly encourage your full participation in the vocational/transition assessment process and in all transition-planning IEP meetings to create the best chance at success in college, career, and independent living after high school.

For more information regarding transition planning, please visit our Family Guide to Transition Planning: Preparing Students with IEPs for Life After High School, available under "Family Guide to Transition Planning", here: <https://www.schools.nyc.gov/learning/special-education/help/contacts-and-resources>.

You can also reach out to your borough Transition and College Access Center (TCAC) or the District 75 Transition Office to find more information about post-secondary transition planning. TCACs offer trainings, workshops, and opportunities that provide the tools needed to plan for adult life. Contact the center in your borough for more help:

- Bronx TCAC: [BxTCAC@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:BxTCAC@schools.nyc.gov)
- Brooklyn TCAC: [BklynTCAC@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:BklynTCAC@schools.nyc.gov)
- Manhattan TCAC: [MnTCAC@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:MnTCAC@schools.nyc.gov)
- Queens TCAC: [QnsTCAC@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:QnsTCAC@schools.nyc.gov)
- Staten Island TCAC: [SITCAC@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:SITCAC@schools.nyc.gov)
- District 75: [D75Transition@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:D75Transition@schools.nyc.gov)



## Appendix E – NYC and NYS Agencies Providing Transition Services

Below is a list of agencies that may be appropriate for students when transition is being discussed and decisions are being made about transition services. These are critical points of entry and can be helpful in making additional connections for the student.

### Adult Career and Continuing Education Services-Vocational Rehabilitation (ACCES-VR)

- ACCES-VR is part of the New York State Education Department. ACCES-VR works with students, families and school districts to coordinate appropriate services for students with disabilities who are leaving secondary education and entering adult vocational rehabilitation, work opportunities, and/or related services. ACCES-VR counselors are active participants in the transition planning process, helping to ensure that there is no gap between the student's education and the vocational rehabilitation system, and providing transition services that involve preparing for the student's future employment.
- The best time to refer a student to ACCES-VR is when the student is in 11<sup>th</sup> grade (or two years prior to exiting school).
- Having an IEP alone does not guarantee eligibility. The eligibility requirements include:
  - that the student has a disability
  - the disability creates a barrier to employment
  - the student can benefit from rehabilitation services
  - vocational rehabilitation services are required to achieve employment
- Vocational services can include:
  - Pre-employment and transition services (Pre-ETS)
  - Work Readiness
  - Job Shadowing
  - Work Experience Development
  - Work Tryout
  - Internship
  - Vocational Training
  - College Level Training
  - Resume Development
  - Interviewing Techniques
  - Job Seeking Skills
  - Hiring Incentives
  - Supported Employment
  - Work Experience Development
  - Job Shadowing
  - Work Tryout
  - Internships/Volunteer Work
  - Job Coaching
  - Summer Jobs
- ACCES-VR administers base funding for 41 **Independent Living Centers (ILCs)** throughout the state.
  - ILCs are service and advocacy centers that do not run residential programs or operate places where people live. The philosophy of independent living is to maximize opportunities for choices and growth through peer driven supports and self-help.
  - The services provided by ILCs vary, so be sure to reach out to the local office for more details. The following are examples of services that are provided:
    - Peer Counseling: peer to peer counseling to share ideas and experiences about living with a disability, in order to gain greater awareness and control over one's own life.

- Independent Living Skills Training teaches everyday life skills, including budgeting, meal preparation, arranging transportation, or personal assistance services, job seeking, and self-advocacy.
- Information and Referral Services provide individuals with resources and options for living, learning, and working independently.
- Individual and Systems Advocacy addresses access to equal opportunities in exercising social, economic, educational, and legal rights.
- Assisting with transition to community living, postsecondary education, work or other transitions resulting in greater community inclusion.
- Other services that are often provided include: housing assistance; acquiring and maintaining appropriate benefits and entitlements; architectural and communication barrier consultation; personal counseling that is non-clinical and short term in nature to address individual goals; securing, learning how to use, repair, and maintain equipment; assistance in registering to vote; in-service training, workshops/seminars on disability issues, disability laws and Independent Living philosophy; disability awareness training; developing Plans to Achieve Self Support (PASS) for recipients of public assistance – SSI/SSDI; and specialized training and services specific to certain communities.

## **New York State Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD)**

- OPWDD is responsible for coordinating services for New Yorkers with developmental disabilities, including intellectual disabilities, cerebral palsy, autism spectrum disorders, and other neurological impairments.
- OPWDD can help provide assistance related to employment, community or day habilitation services, and/or housing, among other things, to enable people with disabilities to be as independent as possible.
- Students may register with them at any age. For students to receive services right after high school, they must register with them between 18 and 21 years of age.
- OPWDD is making a shift beginning in 2018 to using Care Coordination Organizations (CCOs) to provide Health Home Services to oversee the development of a Life Plan for each individual. The Life Plan will include an integrated approach to providing services including healthcare, wellness, and community and social supports.
- OPWDD provides services directly as well as through a network of nonprofit service-providing agencies.
- Parents should participate in a “Front Door” information session to establish eligibility for adult services. Through this process, eligibility will be determined, the individual/family will select a care coordination organization, which will work with the individual and/or family to create a life plan, assist with navigating the services available to them within OPWDD, and coordinate services across systems. A current student can opt for care coordination without services.
- OPWDD Services
  - Care Coordinator/Manager
  - Parent Advocacy Training-Self-Determination
  - Family Supports and Services (respite, training, moral support, recreational activities)
  - Environmental Modifications
  - Healthcare management

- Benefits advisement
- Community Support Services (independent living skills – home or community)
- Day Programs (self-help, socialization)
- Residential Support (living supports)
- Employment and pre-employment supports
- More information can be found on the [Front Door page of the OPWDD website](#)

## **The New York State Commission for the Blind (NYSCB)**

- NYSCB aims to enhance employability, to maximize independence and assist in the development of capacities and strengths of people who are legally blind.
- NYSCB provides pre-employment transition services to students ages 14 to 21, transition services to youth and vocational rehabilitation services for all students who are legally blind, including those with additional disabilities.
- Potential Services that can be provided by NYSCB include:
  - Rehabilitation teaching - outside of school hours, for application in the home
  - Orientation and mobility - outside of school hours, for application in the home
  - Low vision exams and devices related to vocational goal
  - Adaptive equipment for home use
  - Social casework services
  - Summer youth employment and/or work experiences
  - Pre-Employment Transition Services
- For additional information on NYSCB transition services, visit [this website](#).

## **New York State Office of Mental Health (OMH)**

- New York State has a large, multi-faceted mental health system that serves more than 700,000 individuals each year. The Office of Mental Health (OMH) operates psychiatric centers across the State, and also regulates, certifies and oversees more than 4,500 programs, which are operated by local governments and nonprofit agencies.
- Programs include various inpatient and outpatient programs, emergency, community support, residential and family care programs.
- OMH eligibility requirements:
  - o **Children** (up to 18 years of age) – demonstrate deficits in adaption to school, family or other residential settings
  - o **Adults** (over 18 years of age) – demonstrate deficits, related to a mental health diagnosis, in self-care, activities of daily living, interpersonal relations, adaption to change or task performance in work or work-like settings
- OMH Referral Process:
  - o Individual and/or family applies to local **County Department of Mental Health**.
  - o A **Single Point of Access (SPOA)** coordinator will guide the individual and/or family through the next steps.
  - o Applications most often made through school mental health personnel/teams that may be comprised of school psychologists, social workers, nurses, school counselors and building administrators.

## Appendix F – Transition and College Access Centers

In New York City, Transition and College Access Centers (TCACs) are places within the community where staff, students, and families can access professional development opportunities on transition planning, college access, and work-based learning.

### Brooklyn

Boys and Girls High School  
1700 Fulton Avenue  
Brooklyn, NY  
[BKLYNTCAC@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:BKLYNTCAC@schools.nyc.gov)  
[Register for a Workshop](#)

### The Bronx

DeWitt Clinton High School  
Mosholu Parkway  
Bronx, New York  
[BXTCAC@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:BXTCAC@schools.nyc.gov)  
[Register for a Workshop](#)

### Manhattan

269 West 35<sup>th</sup> Street, Room 702  
New York, NY 10024  
[MNTCAC@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:MNTCAC@schools.nyc.gov)  
[Register for a Workshop](#)

### Staten Island

Michael J. Petrides Educational Complex  
715 Ocean Terrace, Room 204 Bldg. A  
Staten Island, NY  
[SITCAC@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:SITCAC@schools.nyc.gov)  
[Register for a Workshop](#)

### Queens

90-27 Sutphin Boulevard, Room 152  
Queens, NY 11435  
[QNSTCAC@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:QNSTCAC@schools.nyc.gov)  
[Register for a Workshop](#)