

Transition Planning

Transition planning is not only the right thing to do, it is a Federal mandate. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 2004) **mandates specific documentation of transition planning and services in the Individual Education Program (IEP)** for students with disabilities ages 16 and older. (The mandated age for transition planning and services is younger than 16 in many states.) The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) collects data from every state education agency regarding compliance with these mandates annually through the States' Annual Performance Report for Part B – specifically Indicator 13 in Transition services.



Quality Transition planning can be achieved by following a **three-step process**. The National Technical Assistance Center on Transition defines each of these steps as follows-

Step 1 Assessment: A process of collecting data from informal or formal assessments of students' strengths, needs, preferences and Interests over time from multiple stakeholders regarding (a) academic skills, (b) career interests and aptitudes, (c) self-determination skills and opportunities, and (d) independent living skills. These data can be collected in a portfolio format and follow a student throughout his/her career-facilitating multiple transitions.

Step 2- Post Secondary Goals: These goals focus on Training, Education, Employment and Independent Living. These measurable goals are based on the transition assessment data and knowledge of postsecondary options and the input of the entire educational planning team. This includes the student.

Step 3- Instruction and Services: Identification of Transition Services or Activities (including courses of study) that will prepare the student for their identified postsecondary goals. Identification of annual instructional goals {IEP Goals} that will

support the transition services or completion of the courses of study to prepare the student to achieve their identified postsecondary goals. Involvement of additional agencies or stakeholders who can assist in facilitating the successful transition from high school to postsecondary environments. Again, students are central to the decisions made regarding needed services of activities, including course completion or career development activities in school or out of school that will facilitate achievement of their postsecondary goals. A good friend of mine once stated to her student, “nothing about you without you”.

The student is the main player in each phase of the process. The IEP team and others contribute to the transition assessment process. This may include family, general and special education professional familiar with the student, related service providers (e.g., behavioral interventionist, occupational therapist, physical therapist, speech-language pathologist), other school personnel (school counselor), community service providers (e.g., employment specialist, vocational rehabilitation counselor), representatives of

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postsecondary environments (e.g., disability services coordinator, vocational rehabilitation counselor), or any other individual significant to transition from the school to post-school environment. All of these individuals may not always be involved in the IEP meeting, but might be included in the process of collecting information in preparation for the IEP meeting to discuss transition. Additionally, while most States do not require that transition be

discussed in the IEP meeting until ages 14, 15, or 16 (the federal mandate is age 16), it is permissible for this to be discussed at any age.

Resources-

[Transition Coalition at the University of Kansas](#)

[Nebraska Transition Resources](#) from the Nebraska Department of Education

[Secondary Transition Resources](#) from the Department of Education in Colorado

[Autism Speaks Transition Tool Kit](#) where you can find resources for your state and download an general transition guide.