



Secondary Transition

Overview

Transition Planning:

A transition plan is a key component in an IEP (Individualized Education Plan) beginning when the student turns 14 years of age. The Transition Plan provides a framework to guide the entire IEP team and the student to envision what the future will look like after the high school years. Education, employment and independent living are all significant areas that should be addressed in the Transition Plan. The school guidance counselor and/or transition coordinator will help facilitate this process during the IEP meetings. The Transition Plan affords the student and family the opportunity to think about what the young person will do after graduation, what skills need to be mastered, what courses he or she should take during high school and what applications for adult services need to be filed. For more information, see: [Secondary Transition](#), [Planning for the Future Checklist](#), [Transition Discoveries Guide](#)

Planning for Graduation and Post-Secondary Life

The IEP transition plan focuses on three domains for students to be successful after school: Education, Employment, Independent Living. Not all students are ready to graduate at the end of 12th grade. For students who have not mastered their IEP goals, they can continue to receive special education services (until age 21). They may still walk with their graduating class in 12th grade, and as long as the district does not issue the diploma, they are still eligible for special education services through the school year in which the student turns 21. Programming for 18-21 year-olds must be individualized and should address any skills necessary for their academic, employment, and independent living goals. This can include, but is not limited to, career interest surveys, community-based instruction, the development of self-advocacy skills, travel training.

Education Domain

For students between ages 18-21, Transition Planning can include these goals to address:

- educational/academic needs, while offering instruction and real-world application of functional academics (reading a menu or bus schedule; math skills for budgeting and making purchases)
- independent living skills (cooking, cleaning)

- employment (job exploration, resumes, soft skills)

Several Programs in the Pittsburgh region specially designed Transition Planning

- CITY Connections (a program of Pittsburgh Public Schools that does accept students from surrounding districts on a tuition basis, as space allows) has four apartment-based sites throughout the city, as well as two sites based at the Community College of Allegheny County Allegheny campus.
 - For more information, call 412.529.3132 or click on the [CITY Connections Brochure](#).
- St. Anthony's School Programs [Post-Secondary](#) is based at Duquesne University, with vocational training sites at various sites on and off campus.
 - Call 844.782.5437 for more information.
- Saint Vincent College's [Bearcat BEST Program](#): The program goals include developing students' capabilities in four domains: academics, vocational training, activities of daily living and social skills.
 - Email bearcatbest@stvincent.edu or call 724.805.2765 for more information.
- Slippery Rock University's Transition Achievement Program (TAP)
For more information, call 724.738.2821.
- Allegheny Intermediate Unit's Center-Based schools offer programming for students from ages 18-21
 - Pathfinder School's [PRIDE Program](#) focuses on skills ranging from social skills and activities of daily living, to skills for employment. Contact number is 412.833.2777.
 - Sunrise School also offers the PRIDE program. Contact number is 724.325.1132.
 - Mon Valley School has a wide range of vocational programs. Contact number is 412.469.2551.

Transitioning to College

For students who are interested in college after they accept their high school diploma, colleges can provide accommodations, however, college students do not have IEPs. Information can be obtained from the college's office of Disability Services. Students are required to disclose a disability in order to receive accommodations based on their disability.

Disability Services offices work with students to provide accommodations, extended time on tests and assistive technology. They can also administer placement tests, which will tell the student what prerequisites they need. Community colleges often offer developmental classes for students who have learning disabilities. For more information, click on [Post-Secondary Education Expectations](#).

[The PA Office of Vocational Rehabilitation \(OVR\)](#) offers services such as the College Bound Program for high school students with disabilities. Contact your high school's OVR counselor, or RA-LI-OVRPETS@pa.gov.

The Promoting Academic Success (PAS) class at Community College of Allegheny County (CCAC) campuses is another OVR program. This is an eight-week course where students learn

how to be successful in college. Students can take this course before accepting their high school diploma, so they know better what to expect in college. Talk to your OVR counselor, as well as your high school Transition Coordinator to ask about community college programs in your area.

Many colleges are creating inclusive post-secondary programs so that students with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) can attend college while still receiving the support necessary for success. Colleges can provide some accommodations and supports, but the student must seek out the supports, and follow through (colleges by law cannot contact parents, and will only speak to parents if the student signs a release).

The college's office of Disability Services can help the student navigate the system, and the student's faculty adviser can also be very helpful. Many colleges have learning centers which offer tutoring.

Examples of these programs include Duquesne University's Compass Program and Slippery Rock University's Rock Life. Visit [Think College](#); [Post-Secondary Education for All](#).

The Center on Secondary Education for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (CSESA) has information available at [Families and Students](#).

Employment Domain

The transition plan should include supports provided by the school district, opportunities for career exploration, practicing skills for employment, both in the school, as well as in community-based settings. Job coaches can support students' experiences.

The [Office of Vocational Rehabilitation \(OVR\)](#) can assist students with disabilities in finding employment and looking into post-secondary educational programs. You can talk to the school transition coordinator about contacting the school's OVR counselor so that your family member can open a case with OVR and learn about the available Pre-Employment Transition Services (PETS), which are programs to develop skills for success in the workplace.

There is also post-high school employment programs like [Project Search](#).

Community College of Allegheny County offers non-credit certificate programs related to a variety of careers at [Vocational Education Training for People Who Need Learning Support](#).

Independent Living Domain

This part of the transition plan should include goals to address organization, maintaining a bank account/budgeting, time management, social skills, cooking, and other independent living skills.

Self-advocacy is an extremely important skill that helps a young person lead a more self-determined life. Whether in college or in other types of programs, people with intellectual disabilities need to be able to communicate their needs. For more information on self-determination and independence visit [Transition Discoveries - 2. Youth Development](#).

As part of the Transition Discoveries initiative, visit [Transition Quality Empowerment Project](#).

Achieva's [Empowered Voices Leadership Group](#) is comprised of self-advocates from around the Pittsburgh area. Driven by the voices and interests of the members, each meeting will be an opportunity to learn new things, have fun, and meet new people.

For more information on self-advocacy, visit The Arc of the United States and its [Self-Advocacy Position Statement](#).

PA Department of Human Services: The IEP team will discuss what adult services the student may need to be successful and what services the student will be eligible for. The IEP should clearly state who, how and when referrals for adult services will be made. For more information about adult services visit [My ODP](#).

Resources that are available for Information on Transition Planning are available at the Pennsylvania Department of Education's Transition Conference held each July at Penn State University. Scholarships are available for families. For more information, visit [Pennsylvania Community on Transition](#).

Secondary Transition

Click here for more information on [Secondary Transition](#).

Adult Services: The Individual Education Plan (IEP) team should ensure the student is connected with agencies for the following services:

Waiver Funding Resources

[My ODP](#)

[Home and Community-Based Waivers Fact Sheet](#)

[Individual Support Plan \(ISP\) Fact Sheet](#)

[Prioritization of Urgency Need for Services \(PUNS\) Fact Sheet](#)

[Social Security Administration \(SSA\) Disability](#)

[Financial planning, ABLE Accounts, Guardianship/Power of Attorney](#)

Achieva Family Trust helps families to plan for the future of their family member. To learn about webinars and other services, and to sign up for the Family Trust Newsletter, contact Achieva Family Trust at 412.995.5000 x565 or 1.888.272.7229 or visit the website at [Achieva Family Trust](#).

Achieva disability advocates provide information, technical assistance and individual advocacy on issues that impact children and adults with intellectual disabilities and autism and their families. We also work with state and federal legislators and policy makers to ensure that the human, civil and legal rights of people with disabilities are protected and that they are afforded services to assist them to be included in their communities. We will provide guidance, information and technical assistance to the best of our ability. Achieva advocates are available to answer questions specific to your situation. Please contact us at 412.995.5000 x486, 888.272.7229 x 486 (Toll-Free) or log onto www.achieva.info/contact-advocacy.