

High School and Beyond: What Parents and Educators Need to Know about TRANSITION

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Have you wondered about life after high school for a youth with a disability? Transition laws provide a way to use the IEP to “work a plan” for moving into adult roles in life.

What is the transition process? It is the assessment, planning, activities and agency linkages provided to or on behalf of child with a disability that facilitate movement from public education to meaningful adult roles. Transition services may be Special Education or Related Services.

Texas transition requirements: early planning (during 13th year) and annually thereafter to begin the formal discussions of the following transition considerations (as appropriate for each child) through the ARD/IEP:

- ‡ Student and parents’ involvement in transition
- ‡ Any post-secondary educational options
- ‡ Functional vocational evaluation
- ‡ Employment goals and objectives
- ‡ The availability of instructional options for young adults 18 and older
- ‡ Independent living goals and objectives
- ‡ Circumstances for referral to a government agency

Federal transition requirements: (developed in the IEP during the 15th year and annually thereafter) a coordinated set of activities, focused on improving both the academic and functional achievement of the child with a disability to facilitate movement from school to post-school activities such as:

- ‡ Post-secondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living or community participation.

Key transition understanding:

- ‡ Student’s needs, taking into account preferences, interests and strengths, guide IEP transition decisions.
- ‡ Services may be instructional, related services, activities that develop employment or community experiences, and, if needed, daily living skills or a functional vocational evaluation.
- ‡ Parents and students may, and should, have transition roles and responsibilities along with school personnel and community agencies, if appropriate.
- ‡ School services (IEP-based) are entitlements (if the child needs the service the school or district must provide what is needed).
- ‡ Community agency services are eligibility-based. Eligibility criteria for programs and services, therefore, may change at any time. Waiting (or interest) lists for services may be many years long. **Get on waiting lists early!**
- ‡ Information is power. Find out all you can about Transition!