

Clearing the way to employment: How transition and special education staff are facilitating career development opportunities for students with disabilities.

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Introductions



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Today, we will review 7 strategies that transition specialists and special educators have used to promote career development

- Establishing regular communication between students, parents, CRPs and school staff.
- Forming a community-based employment team.
- Conferencing on transition assessments and transition planning forms that will inform student Individual Education Plans (IEPs).
- Using employment information forms to effectively plan for student employment experiences.
- Planning solutions for transportation and job coaching support
- Offering joint professional development to school staff related to job and career development

But first, a short introduction to IEP teams' career development obligations.....

**INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT 2004:
EXPECTATIONS THAT ALIGN WITH COLLEGE CAREER
READINESS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Transition Requirements in the Individual Education Program

Beginning not later than the 1st IEP to be in effect when the child turns 16*, or younger if determined appropriate by the IEP Team, and updated annually, thereafter, the IEP must include:

- Appropriate measurable postsecondary goals based upon age appropriate transition assessments related to education, training, employment, and, where appropriate, independent living skills, and
- The transition services (including courses of study) needed to assist the child in reaching those goals

* *Aged 14 in MA*

[IDEA § 300.320(b)]

IDEA/Transition

Transition services must include:

- Coordinated set of activities
- Results-oriented process that facilitates movement from school to post-school activities
- Services must take into account student's preferences, strengths, and interests
- Age-appropriate instruction, community experiences, and services



National Transition Assistance Center on Transition Indicator 13 Checklist

1. Measurable Postsecondary Goals
2. Updated annually
3. Based upon transition assessments
4. Transition Services
5. Course of Study
6. Annual IEP goals aligned with transition service needs
7. Student invite
8. Agency invite with consent



NTACT

National Technical Assistance Center on Transition

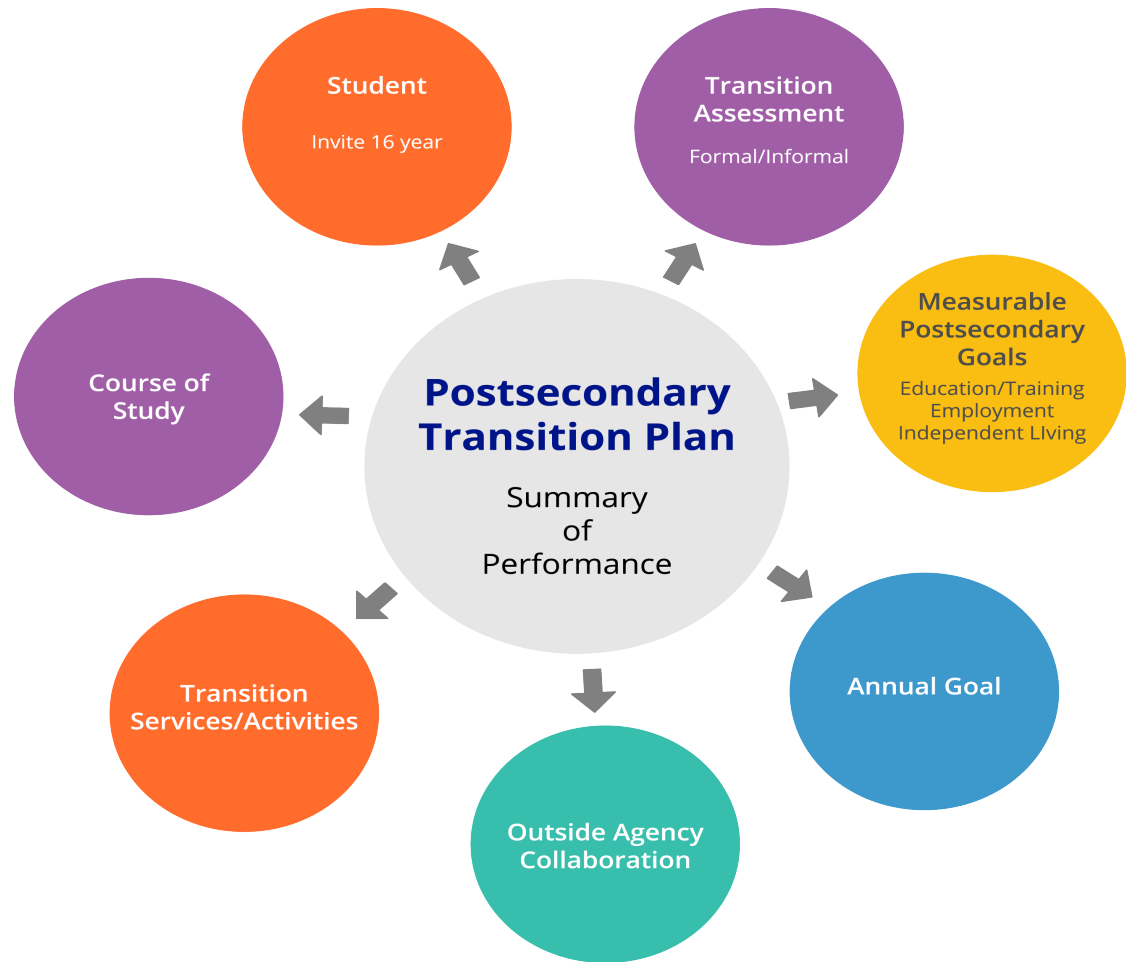


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This is the ideal.....

But every school district is at different levels of implementation.



What Does This Look Like for MA?

Transition Planning Form (TPF)

- Mandated for IEP teams to complete
- Used to plan for transition services while student is still in high school



#1: Measurable Postsecondary Goals/Vision

Appropriate measurable postsecondary goal(s) in the areas of (a) education or training, (b) employment and, where appropriate, (c) independent living skills

- Every student should have postsecondary goals that address (a) education or training and (b) employment



#2: Updated Annually

Postsecondary goal(s) updated annually

- Goals need to be reviewed annually
- Ensures that they are still what the student wants
- Changes/edits can be made

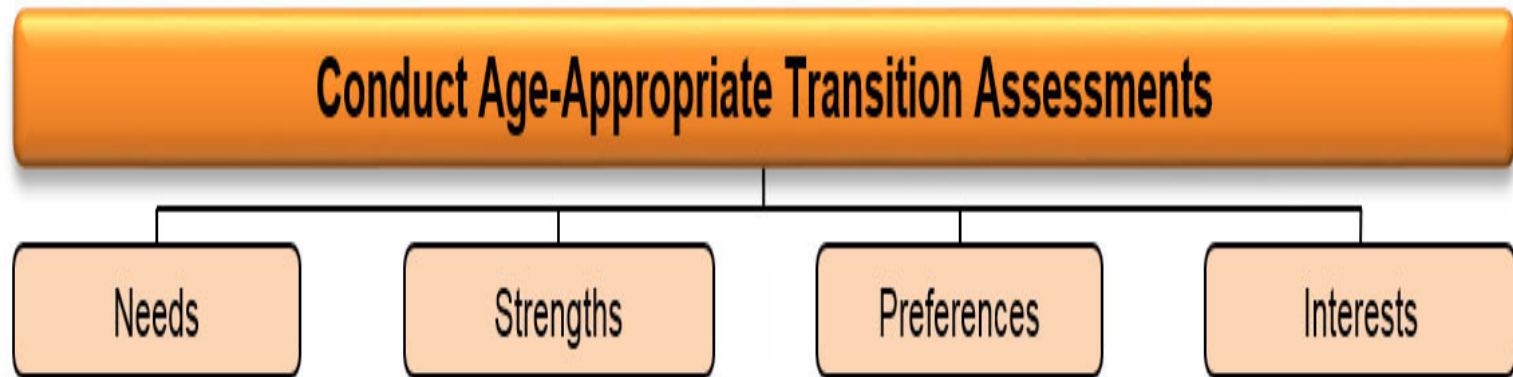


UPDATE

#3: Transition Assessments

Postsecondary goal(s) based on age appropriate transition assessments:

- Used to develop postsecondary goals
- Used to identify strengths or needed skills
- Can be formal or informal



#4: Transition Services

Transition services in the IEP that will reasonably enable to the student to meet their postsecondary goal(s)

Areas to be addressed:

- instruction
- related service,
- community experience,
- employment,
- post-school adult living, daily living skills (if appropriate)
- functional vocational evaluation (if appropriate)

Transition services: Coordinated, results-oriented, accounts for student preferences, age-appropriate

Student vision	Education	Employment/ training	Independent living
Carmen: college, print shop, travel	Intro to Graphic Art; writing courses	Working in a print shop 2 days a week	Learning to use public transportation
Transition specialist	X	X	X
CRP		X	X
Assistive technology	X	X	X
School-based Career-Voc specialist		X	

Seven strategies

1. Establish regular communication between students, parents, CRPs and school staff.

- Special ed teachers are often tied to their classrooms so consider arranging time during their prep period or before/after school.
- CRPs and Schools need to know what the other is doing: consider a shared Google Doc for ongoing communication, or regularly scheduled emails/phone calls/ web conference.
- Introduce yourself to school staff. Works at cross-purposes if transition staff is unaware of your efforts.
- Plan regularly scheduled, in-person meetings with school staff. Consider alternating meeting locations if possible.
- Solicit school personnel feedback on progress.



2. Form a community-based employment team.

- Consider forming a team together that includes:
 - Teacher and/or transition specialist
 - CRP provider
 - Job coaches if possible
 - Parent(s)



2. Form a community-based employment team.

Plan regularly scheduled meetings to review each student's career development status:

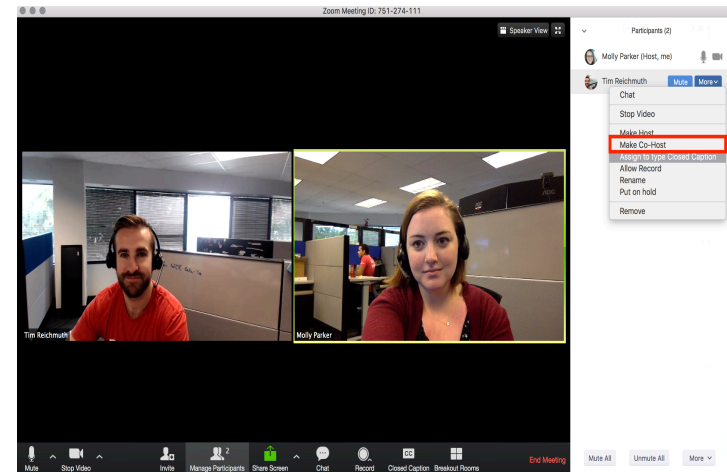
- job readiness tasks,
- job search,
- job coach supports,
- fading plan,
- transportation,
- IEP-related goal status



3. Confer on transition assessments and transition planning forms that will inform student Individual Education Plans (IEPs).

Potential assessment areas for collaboration:

- Travel and mobility skills
- Safety and community awareness
- Job skill assessment
- Job endurance; independence
- Online application skills
- Using social media
- Communication
- Problem-solving
- Following directions
- Using technology and accommodations



Examples of assessments used by transition staff

- **Student-Coach Agreement** (Helps students learn to direct their supports)
- **Naviance** (Career Development assessments)
- **O*NET** –Career Values Inventory; SDS (Self-directed search), etc- many free tools)
- **Kuder Navigator Career Assessment** (Offers a variety of career assessments)
- **Landmark’s Guide to Assessing College Readiness** (Used to assess academic and executive function skills)
- **Work-Based Learning Plan** (Identifies soft skills needed for successful work experiences)
- **Transition Planning Inventory, 2nd Ed.** (Variety of informal assessments for multiple domain areas)
- **Person-Centered Planning** (Futures planning tool that relies on student’s strengths and interests rather than perceived capabilities)
- **Informal tools** that represent college likes/dislikes/experiences, such as class observations, journals, checklists, photos of locations
- **CITE Learning Style Inventory** (Assessment tool to document learning styles)
- **ARC’s Self Determination Scale** (Comprehensive self-determination assessment tool)
- **Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scales** (Measurement of adaptive behaviors, coping with environmental changes, to learn everyday skills and to demonstrate independence)



Examples of transition assessments for students involved in work-based transition services

Carmen (college, print shop job)	Brandon (dietary aide, driving, apt)	Dae (college, apt, museum job)
Task analysis results: Traveling to college using bus and college shuttle	Work-based learning plan assessments: food safety skills, employment soft skills	Text communications with transition specialist: travel to college, internship, home
Checklist documenting accommodations used to complete reading assignments	Informal interviews with student and family: supporting Brandon in his own apt	Observation notes of student using accommodations to communicate with instructors, classmates, coach and peers
Grades and assignments from Intro to Graphic Arts class	ServSafe: results from food safety training and test	Grades and assignments from history course
Results of social skills survey administered over 5 days at college	Driving permit, driving lessons, and travel training documentation to use local bus	Task analysis results: Completing work at museum gift store

4. Collaborate to ensure the IEP process includes effective employment related goals and activities

- Advise students on job readiness skills (e.g., interview skills, update resume, dress for success).
- Contribute to feedback on student resume/ portfolio - digital or picture resume.
- Ask to attend relevant IEP meetings
- Collaborate to provide IEP teams with drafts of career development related goals and objectives
- Providing a job progress report/ summary, and include student voice

Postsecondary Goals: Employment and Career

1. **Employment:** Within six months of graduating from high school Freddy will be employed at least 20 hours per week in a sporting goods store with the support of a job coach and assistive technology.
2. **Career:** Within five years of graduating from high school Freddy will meet his career goal of working on a commercial fishing boat.

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project10 transition education network

5. Use employment information forms to effectively plan for student employment experiences.

Employment information form (WPS). Be clear about expectations from student, family and transition team.

Form includes, for example, information for:

- Documentation needed for work
- School status
- Work strengths and limitations

See form for more information

5. Use form to collaborate on job readiness activities.

Considerations when completing employment form:

- Know who youth is, what their interests are, and what past experiences are. Teachers and transition specialists may very well have much of this information
- Ask students what they would not want to do- sometimes staff make assumptions
- Also consider:
 - Skills and abilities
 - Challenges
 - Learning style
 - Accommodation needs
 - Geographic restrictions
 - Day and time restrictions/preferences for work day
- Be aware of parent concerns/ travel schedules



Lessons learned from job development collaboration

*Be sure teacher, parent, student and provider are in agreement about job search. Don't bring student to interview for job that really isn't going to be possible. Consider all implications, aim for positive outcomes.

*Collaborate with school team to help students prepare all necessary documentation. Recommend students have cheat sheets (e.g., SS#).

6. Plan solutions for transportation and job coaching support.

- Most teachers are restricted from transporting students to jobs in their own cars
- Teacher contracts guided by union can restrict their time
- Agencies expected to provide coaching but on a case-by-case basis there may some support from school personnel
- Contracting for small vans or busses is expensive
- Be aware that agencies might need to provide initial transportation or travel training



Consider cost-effective transportation solutions

- Applying for paratransit
- Training for using busses
- Safe bicycle riding
- Learner's permit (in collaboration with IL Center)
- Driving lessons (e.g., Westfield's Responsible Driving Program)
- Shared ride services
- Parent support- focus on long-term transportation solutions



7. Offer joint professional development to school staff related to job and career development.

Sample topics

- Orientation to Pre-ETS/Employment First/community-based employment
 - Orientation to CRPs
 - Soft skills
 - Employability skills
 - Job accommodations
 - Work and benefits planning
 - Fair labor rules
- Engage in school-based career fairs and business-sponsored job fairs.
 - Collaborate with local youth employment board, MassHire



Suggested tools and resources

MA Work-based Learning Plan: <http://skillspages.com/masswbl/>

411 on Disability Disclosure: <https://bit.ly/2JknuQ5>

MA Transition Planning Form: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/28MR/28m9.pdf>

Soft Skills to Pay the Bills: <https://youth.gov/feature-article/soft-skills-pay-bills>

Think College Transition Customized Employment Series:

<https://thinkcollege.net/resource/employment-assessment/customized-employment-discovery>

MA DESE Career Development Education Guide and Glossary:

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/connect/cde/>



Web resources

Employment First MA: <https://employmentfirstma.org/>

National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability/ Youth: <http://www.ncwd-youth.info/>

O*NET: <https://www.onetonline.org/>

Think Work: <https://www.thinkwork.org/>

Transcen, Inc: Career and Workforce Development:
<https://www.transcen.org/>

Your Next Star: <http://yournextstar.com/faq/information-for-employers/>

POLL

THANK YOU

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