

Introduction to Transition Services

Acts 2008

CHAPTER 285:

AN ACT RELATIVE TO AGE REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTAIN STUDENTS

(see Senate, No. 286)

Approved by the Governor - August 6, 2008

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same as follows: Section 2 of chapter 71B of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2006 Official Edition, is hereby amended by adding the following paragraph:

Beginning age 14 or sooner if determined appropriate by an individualized education program team, school age children with disabilities shall be entitled to transition services and measurable postsecondary goals, as provided under the federal Individual Disabilities with Education Act, 20 USC sec. 1400, et sec.

What are transition services? 20 U.S.C. 1401 (34)

With the term “transition services” means a coordinated set of activities for a child with a disability that:

- (A) is designed to be within a results oriented process, that is focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of the child with a disability to facilitate the child's movement from school to post-school activities, including post-secondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation;
- (B) is based on the individual child's needs, taking into account the child's strengths, preferences, and interests; and
- (C) includes instruction, related services, community experiences, the development of employment and other post school adult living objectives, and, when appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation.

34 C.F.R. 300.43

(a) transition services means a coordinated set of activities for a child with a disability that--

(1) is designed to be within a results oriented process, that is focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of the child with a disability to facilitate the child's movement from school to post school activities, including postsecondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation;

(2) is based on individual child's needs, taking into account the child's strengths, preferences, and interests; and includes:

- (i) instruction;
- (ii) related services;
- (iii) community experiences;
- (iv) the development of employment and other post school adult living objectives; and
- (v) if appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and provision of a functional vocational evaluation.

(b) transition services for children with disabilities may be special education, is provided as specially designed instruction, or related services, if required to assist the child with a disability to benefit from special education.

Transition Planning

For students age 14 and up, each school district is required to address the need for transition services in the transition planning form (TPF). The TPF reflects the ongoing development for students, is maintained with the IEP, and is revisited annually. Included in the TPF is the student's postsecondary vision statement, which is a more focused version of the IEP vision statement. The TPF vision statement helps guide future planning and should describe the student's hopes and goals this postsecondary education\training, employment and adult living.

At the annual TPF review:

Parents and students have the right to ask for services that will build work skills and help the student to explore career options.

Transition services and activities to incorporate into the plan might include:

Career interest inventories—which are to help the student identify work interests and preferences. The results of these assessments can help to create specific employment goals.

Job shadowing-- the student follows an employee during a typical day on the job.

Mentoring-- the student is matched to an adult mentor who serves as an advisor and offers guidance.

Apprenticeship-- and adult professionals teaches the student a specific trade.

Workplace visits and tours-- the student observes different work settings.

Career fairs in career days-- local community members visit a school to share career experiences with an interested group of students.

Mock interviews and job clubs with fellow students.

After-school and summer job placements arranged and supported by school staff.

Internships-- paid or unpaid work experience the students.

Community college enrollment as a high school student-- can ease the transition to postsecondary education and can help the student become part of a new community.

(Source; school days to pay days) http://www.communityinclusion.org/pdf/DDS_booklet_F.pdf

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Getting Started

Begin with a Vision Statement:

Talk to your child and use your own knowledge about your child, his/her strengths and interests to help you create a vision for your child's future beyond high-school.

What type of work is your child interested in doing?

What is their area of interest? Is it realistic?

Look at all of these issues with your child to help shape their vision and to identify the types of skills they will need to acquire to make this vision a reality.

What are your child's needs?

Does your child continue to have needs in foundational academics?

Increasing your child's reading and writing skills by a couple of grade levels can increase their future life opportunities.

Does your child have needs in the area of independent living skills?

- Does the team need to focus on helping your child to acquire the skills necessary for living independently (personal hygiene, laundry, grocery shopping, banking, bill paying, cooking etc)

How does your child function socially?

- Does your child have the communication skills necessary to participate in the workplace and to function in the community?
 - If not, what skills does your child need to acquire to prepare them for those future opportunities?

What are your child skills in the community?

- How much support do you give your child out in the community?
- Does your child have the skills necessary to utilize public transportation?
- Does he/she require travel training?
 - Your child can learn to go on the internet to the MBTA's website, map out a route for their trip and then practice the steps to successfully use public transportation.
 - Or do they need to learn how to utilize the "MBTA ride" to call for a ride at a time and location for pick up and drop off?
- Does your child understand community safety issues?
 - Can he/she read signs in public buildings/stores, on the streets?
- Does your child know who to contact in the event of an emergency?
 - Call 911, doctor's office?
- Can your child use a cell phone?
- Can your child understand the steps to complete a basic money transactions?
 - i.e.; getting change at the store for items purchased, whether buying items or paying for a meal?
- Can your child use a bank card?

These are just some of the examples of skills you need to look at to determine what your child needs. To begin addressing your own child's transition needs:

- You need to look at what skills your own child has and what skills your own child needs?
 - What services does your child need to help them acquire the skills they need?
 - Whether they want to go on to college, get a job, live on their own or all three.

Remember:

- Special Education Services are not limited to academics.
 - The purpose of special education services is to prepare your child for further learning, future employment, and independent living.
- Your child is entitled to a free and appropriate public education and these services can continue until the age of 22
 - Unless your child graduates and accepts a diploma (services will end at that time).
- Your child's individual needs will define what transition services that need to move forward with their goals for the future.
- Adult services are limited and they are a benefit not a right, they are based on resources that have been impacted by budget cuts and the economy.

Appropriate and effective transition services can and do make a difference.

Here is a Technical Advisory for the DESE on Transition Services. Click on the Link.

Family & Community »Special Communities

Special Education

Technical Assistance Advisory SPED 2013-1:

Postsecondary Goals and Annual IEP Goals in the Transition Planning Process

To:

Middle and High School Principals, Administrators of Special Education, General and Special Educators, and Other Interested Parties

From:

Marcia Mitnacht, State Director of Special Education

Date:

September 14, 2012

http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/advisories/13_1ta.html