



FAMILY GUIDE TO

Transition Planning

PREPARING STUDENTS
WITH IEPs FOR LIFE
AFTER HIGH SCHOOL

Welcome

While all transitions can be challenging, the transition from high school to life after high school can be particularly overwhelming, especially for students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). To ensure that students with IEPs are prepared for life after high school, high quality transition planning is critical.

This Family Guide to Transition Planning focuses only on transition planning. It complements other New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) special education resources located on the NYCDOE website at **www.schools.nyc.gov/specialeducation**.

One of the ways that the NYCDOE is working to ensure effective transition planning for students with disabilities and their families as they move from pre K to 12th grade and on to college, career, or other options, has been to establish the Transition and College Access Centers (TCACs). These centers are devoted to ensuring that students with disabilities are prepared for life experiences after high school. In addition to providing college readiness resources and supports, they facilitate a range of work based learning opportunities for students with IEPs, and are designed to support all stakeholders in the critical work of meaningful transition planning for students with IEPs as they prepare to leave high school as productive and contributing members of society. There is additional information about the TCACs in the *Resources* section of this Guide.

As a parent, your involvement in transition planning is critical to your child's success. We will continue to partner with you as we work together to provide your child with essential transition planning experiences leading to a well rounded education and success beyond their high school years.



Table of Contents

Transition Planning

- page 2 What is Transition Planning?
- page 2 Self-Advocacy and Self-Determination
- page 3 The Value of Student Voice at the IEP Meeting

Overview of Requirements for Transition Services

- page 4 What are transition and vocational assessments?

Transition and the Individualized Education Program (IEP)

- page 6 Measurable Postsecondary Goals
- page 6 Annual Goals
- page 7 Sample Goals
- page 8 Coordinated Set of Transition Activities
- page 10 Transition Planning Roles

Transition Planning Checklist

- page 13 Preparing for Life After High School
- page 13 Transition Planning Checklist
- page 14 Prior to Age 12
- page 14 Age 12–14
- page 15 Ages 14–17
- page 16 Ages 17–21

Graduation Options and Credentials

- page 17 Graduation Options and Credentials

Priority Considerations Depending on Postsecondary Goals

- page 20 Planning to Attend College
- page 21 Planning to Attend Trade School or Enter the Workforce
- page 22 Planning to Attend a Day Program

Resources

- page 24 Transition & College Access Centers (TCACs)
- page 25 District 75 Office of Transition Services & Postsecondary Planning Initiatives
- page 25 Transition Service Agencies and Adult Service Systems—Which services should I access for my child?

Appendix

- page 27 Sample Level I Vocational Assessments

Transition Planning

What is Transition Planning?

Transition planning is the process used to make sure that students with IEPs are prepared for life after high school. Its purpose is to give a basic structure for preparing your child to live, work and play in the community, as fully and independently as possible. During this process, you, your child, school staff, family members, and/or community organizations share information, agree on goals, and create a plan for your child's life after high school. Based on your child's strengths, preferences, and interests, activities and services are identified to help your child reach their goals. These are called the **Coordinated Set of Transition Activities**. The formal process of transition planning begins in the year in which your child turns 12 (or earlier if appropriate), when the first vocational assessment is given. You can learn more about vocational assessments in the section, *What are transition and vocational assessments?*

The formal process of transition planning begins in the year in which your child turns 12 (or earlier if appropriate).

Self-Advocacy and Self-Determination

The transition planning process is driven by the goals, desires, and abilities of your child. For your child to participate fully in the transition planning process, developing self-advocacy and self-determination skills is important.

Self-advocacy is learning how to speak up for yourself to get your needs met. This skill begins in the early years when students develop a sense of who they are (self-awareness) and learn to ask for help. Self-advocating can make all the difference in a young adult's ability to have a successful postsecondary experience. For example, your child may need to discuss their disability in a college student services office, request accommodations for college classes or at work, or ask for information or assistance when using public transportation.

Self-determination is the process by which a person controls his or her own life. This means that students learn to make choices and decisions about their goals and how they will meet them. Helping your child to make decisions and giving them choices will help them to feel empowered. When they are older, they will be better equipped to make life decisions and to understand that their voice matters.

The Value of Student Voice at the IEP Meeting

Student involvement in the IEP meeting has a number of benefits that support your child's journey toward self-advocacy and self-determination. Your child's participation and voice in the IEP meeting help them to understand their disability, their strengths, and the academic and social/emotional areas that they will continue to develop. The IEP meeting is an opportunity for students to discuss their goals and learn about the unique accommodations or modifications that are available to support them in achieving their goals. As your child gets older, they will be invited to the IEP meeting (see the next section). It is helpful to encourage them to take an active role.

As a parent, there may be times during the IEP meeting when you want to discuss matters without your child being present. You can advise the IEP team that you would like your child to have limited participation.

Student involvement in the IEP meeting has a number of benefits.



Overview of Requirements for Transition Services

Federal and state laws and regulations protect the rights of children with disabilities and their families to make sure that all students with disabilities have access to a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). These laws and regulations provide some standards that are relevant to transition planning for students with disabilities. Here are some things guaranteed under federal and/or state law and regulation:

- A vocational assessment must be completed for students with disabilities during the calendar year in which the student turns 12 years of age. To learn more about vocational assessments, see the *What are transition and vocational assessments?* section below.
- Starting when your child is 14 years old, the IEP team will begin considering your child's goals for life after high school. These are called **measurable postsecondary goals**. These goals focus on education, employment and independent living skills (when needed). At this same time, the IEP team will begin determining a **coordinated set of transition activities** that will support your child in meeting those postsecondary goals. To learn more, read the section *Transition and the Individualized Education Program (IEP)*.
- When there is an agency that is likely to be responsible for providing or funding out-of-school or postsecondary services, the IEP team will ask for your consent to invite a representative from that agency to any IEP meetings where transition will be discussed. You can learn more about some agencies in the *Resources* section listed under *Transition Service Agencies and Adult Service Systems*.
- Your child must be invited to the IEP meeting to discuss Transition Services. As an essential member of the IEP team, they will be able to discuss their strengths, preferences and interests. If they are unable to attend the meeting, the IEP team must ensure that their preferences and interests are considered and reflected in the IEP.

What are transition and vocational assessments?

Transition and vocational assessments

help your child think about what they want to do after high school and how to get there. They are used to collect information about your child's abilities, preferences, behaviors, and interests in order to identify future education, living, personal, community, and career goals. In addition, they help the IEP team to create a high quality IEP and transition plan for your child.

Transition assessments target your child's job interests, preferences and skills. They provide key information that will help to determine your child's goals for life after high school.

Vocational assessments are one type of transition assessment. They help you, your child, and the school make important decisions about planning for your child's future based on your child's strengths, interests, and desires. They also help teachers to understand how your child currently functions in relation to future career opportunities. They focus on identifying your child's level of ability, skills, and supports needed.

All of these assessments are designed to support the idea of “self-determination.” Self-determination means that your child will have a say in what their path will be, particularly in regard to education and training, employment, and independent living.

Vocational assessments may be formal or informal.

Informal assessments may include interviews, questionnaires, observations, interest inventories, preference assessments and transition planning inventories. The informal assessment used is based on your child’s age and abilities.

Formal assessments include aptitude tests, achievement tests, and standardized tests. The assessment results include a comparison to other students your child’s age. Formal assessments are sometimes used when the informal assessments do not yield enough information for schools to create a high quality transition plan for your child.

Beginning in the calendar year your child turns 12 years of age, you, your child, and other members of the planning team will begin the transition assessment process by conducting vocational assessments. If your child is older than age 12 when they receive their first IEP, the vocational assessment will be completed at that time.

Level I Vocational Assessment

The Level I Vocational Assessment is an informal assessment that includes three parts—a student part, a parent part, and a teacher part. A review of school records is also part of this assessment. The assessment collects information about your child’s interests, preferences, and goals for life after graduation including future employment, education, or training. The Level I Vocational Assessment is updated as needed before each IEP meeting.

As the parent, your contributions are important to the transition

assessment process. Make sure you are providing input into the Level I Vocational Assessment and at any IEP meetings in which these assessments are discussed.

Samples of Level I Vocational Assessments are included in the *Appendix*. For more information, including more samples of vocational assessments, visit the New York State Education Department site at www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/transition/level1careerassess.

Level II Vocational Assessment

If the IEP team decides that additional information is needed, a Level II Vocational Assessment may be recommended. A Level II Vocational Assessment can help to determine the level of a student’s vocational skills, strengths and interests. This is a formal assessment using a normed/standardized instrument that tests for skills and abilities. It may include an interest inventory and detailed information about perception, motor, spatial, verbal, and/or numerical comprehension, attention and/or learning styles gained from a formal assessment.

Level III Vocational Assessment

A situational vocational assessment, sometimes called a Level III Vocational Assessment or Functional Vocational Assessment, may be completed when a student is participating in a real or simulated work-based learning experience or has a job. Work-based learning experiences include paid and unpaid internships, community service and volunteer work, and paid employment. In a situational vocational assessment, the student is observed completing work related tasks. Afterwards, the student is given feedback to help them build their skills to ensure a successful work experience now and in the future. The Level III Vocational Assessment can provide helpful information to support a student’s success in the workplace.

Transition and the Individualized Education Program (IEP)

The following explains the sections of the IEP that are most relevant to transition planning. However, information learned from vocational assessments will be considered throughout the IEP. For detailed information about IEPs and the special education process, review the Family Guide to Special Education Services for School-Age Children at www.schools.nyc.gov/specialeducation.

Graduation options are discussed and planned for at IEP meetings. It is important to remember that promotion criteria, the courses a student takes, and whether a student participates in alternate or standard assessments all impact the graduation options that are available to a student. These factors must be considered at each IEP meeting to ensure that the student is on track to meet their postsecondary goals. For the most up-to-date information on graduation options and requirements visit <https://www.schools.nyc.gov/school-life/rules-for-students/graduation-requirements>.

Measurable Postsecondary Goals

Your child's IEP will begin to include measurable postsecondary goals starting when your child is 14 years old (or at a younger age, if appropriate). Measurable postsecondary goals state what your child wants to do or achieve after high school. Your child's measurable postsecondary goals are shaped in part by information collected from transition and vocational assessments. During the

IEP meeting, the IEP team, which includes you and your child (when transition will be discussed), will review these assessments and your child's postsecondary goals. It is important to understand that your child's goals for after high school may change many times as their interests develop. For this reason, postsecondary goals are reviewed and updated every year, along with the rest of the IEP. Measurable postsecondary goals can be in the areas of:

- Education/Training
- Employment
- Independent Living (if needed)

Annual Goals

Annual goals describe what your child is expected to achieve in one year. The goals are aligned with the academic, social, and physical skills that your child needs in order to achieve his or her goals for life after high school. Both measurable postsecondary goals and annual goals are developed based on your child's individual and unique qualities and needs and are connected to your child's interests and desires for life after high school.

**Graduation options
are discussed
and planned for at
IEP meetings.**

Sample Goals

While annual goals focus on what your child will achieve in one school year, measurable postsecondary goals focus on what your child will do after high school. Every child is different, and so are his/her plans for life after high school. Below are samples of three unique post-school plans with supporting annual and measurable postsecondary goals.

Example 1: If Student A wants to drive commercial trucks after high school, they will have to learn the skills needed to pass the commercial driver's license test. Student A's annual goal will support their postsecondary goal of becoming a commercial driver.

Measurable Postsecondary Goal: After graduating from high school, Student A will obtain a full-time job as a long distance truck driver.

Annual Goal: Student A will determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a non-fiction text with 75% accuracy in 3 out of 4 trials, as measured by verbal explanation.

Example 2: If Student B wants to attend a 4-year college and study Marine Biology after high school, Student B will take courses that prepare him or her to work in the field of Marine Biology, which requires an advanced understanding of math and science. Student B's annual goal will support their postsecondary goal of attending a 4-year college and studying Marine Biology.

Measurable Postsecondary Goal: After graduating from high school, Student B will attend a 4-year college and study Marine Biology.

Annual Goal: Student B will solve rational and radical equations with one variable, identify solutions that do not satisfy the original equation and explain their answer with 80% accuracy in 3 out of 4 trials.

Example 3: If Student C wants to live and work independently after high school, he or she will need to establish routines that will guide the habits and practices required for independent living.

Measurable Postsecondary Goal: Upon completion of high school, Student C will independently prepare for work each day, including dressing, making lunch, and accessing public transportation.

Annual Goal: In one year, Student C will be able to utilize a daily schedule by placing the picture symbol on the schedule in the correct order, with a maximum of one prompt per trial.

Coordinated Set of Transition Activities

The **Coordinated Set of Transition Activities** are the activities and services that will help your child gain the skills needed to meet their goals. Your child's IEP team will begin considering a coordinated set of transition activities starting at age 14 (or at a younger age, if appropriate). These activities and services are based on your child's individual needs, strengths, preferences, and

interests. For each activity, the person responsible for the activities or services, usually the school or another agency, is identified.

The coordinated set of transition activities are divided into six categories. The six categories are explained below with examples of activities and services for each category. Transition activities and services are unique to every student, so the examples below are a small fraction of what activities and/or services can be included in your child's IEP.

Instruction

Instruction includes courses, skill training, and/or further educational experiences your child may need in order to achieve post-school plans.

Examples:

- Attend study skills classes to learn how to maintain a timeline for assignments and to practice using organizational strategies
- Meet regularly with high school guidance counselor to complete necessary paperwork for college admissions
- Participate in Regents preparation courses in English, math, science and history
- Collect information about academic requirements for community college career programs
- Enroll in an independent living course to continue practicing self-care skills
- Continue travel training to learn transportation routes from work and school

Related Services

Related services are services such as counseling, occupational therapy, physical therapy and/or speech and language therapy that your child may need to work toward their postsecondary goals.

Examples:

- Speech services to improve expressive communication and generalize communication skills to a variety of settings
- Mobility training and orientation to be able to walk from school to home and volunteer site
- Physical therapy to assist student in increasing sitting endurance and trunk control

Community Experiences

Community-based experiences are experiences or community resources (e.g., after school jobs, community recreational activities, use of community-based organizations) your child may need to prepare him or her to participate in community life.

Examples:

- Volunteer at a hospital or other volunteer site
- Obtain and complete an application for a free library card
- Obtain a driver's license or non-driver's ID card
- Open a bank account
- Learn about and visit community resources such as the library, post office, and local recreational resources and programs
- Demonstrate understanding of how to find and secure housing after graduating high school

Employment and Other Post-School Adult Living Objectives

These include services or activities related to career exploration, skill training, employment, or work-based learning your child might need to achieve post-school plans.

Examples:

- Research jobs in preferred field and requirements for each
- Practice completing job applications and interviewing skills
- Draft a sample resume and cover letter
- Apply for and receive working papers
- Learn more about the career center in your neighborhood and what services they offer
- Obtain information and visit vocational programs of your choice
- Participate in a work-based learning experience
- Determine eligibility for Adult Career and Continuing Education Services Vocational Rehabilitation (ACCES-VR)
- Determine eligibility for services through the Office of People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) or the Office of Mental Health (OMH)
- Determine eligibility for NYC transportation services such as Access-A-Ride

Acquisition of Daily Living Skills (if applicable)

Services or activities that will assist your child with strengthening daily living skills. Daily living skills can include dressing, hygiene, self-care skills, preparing meals, maintaining a residence, and paying bills.

Examples:

- Tour various adult housing options/supported housing
- Manage daily time schedule
- Prepare a sample monthly budget for living expenses
- Purchase food and prepare a meal
- Determine a community agency that provides daily living skills training to adults

Functional Vocational Assessment (if applicable)

Any Level III Vocational Assessments your child may need in order to determine your child's strengths, abilities, and needs in an actual or simulated work setting.

Examples:

- Participate in a Level III Vocational Assessment at current internship
- Assess student performance during work-related tasks

Transition Planning Roles

The following explains each IEP team member's role in the IEP planning process as it relates to transition planning. In addition, all NYC Middle Schools and High Schools are required to identify a Transition Team Leader to help provide leadership and direction to the team in order to ensure that students' transition needs are met and that they are on the path to postsecondary success.

Student's Role:

- Learn about the transition planning process
- Complete their part of vocational assessments
- Explore interests and possible vocational or career options
- Develop self-advocacy skills (for example, they should learn to express their interests, preferences, and goals)
- Reflect on strengths and needs to determine the most appropriate graduation option
- Identify appropriate courses with career and/or school counselor
- Learn about their disability and how to get supports after high school, if appropriate
- Actively participate in IEP meetings
- Ask questions about graduation requirements, diploma options, and anything else



Parent's Role:

- Learn about the transition planning process
- Share your observations, thoughts, and concerns about your child's strengths, needs, and preferences with the school and IEP team
- Complete the parent portion of the vocational assessment
- Help your child explore their current interests and future goals
- Advocate for your child and assist them in developing self-advocacy skills
- Become knowledgeable about graduation requirements, diploma pathways, post-school options, and resources (See *Graduation Options and Credentials* for more information)
- Determine the assistance your child will need to become as independent as possible

- Identify the people, community agencies, and other resources that can help your child reach their goals
- If a participating agency is identified, consider providing your consent to invite an agency representative to the IEP meeting (Review the *Resources* section *Transition Service Agencies and Adult Service Systems*)
- Actively participate in your child's IEP meetings
- Keep records of the transition-related services and activities
- Ask questions

Teacher's / Case Manager's Role:

- Help your child explore goals for life after high school
- Give different transition assessments to learn about your child's strengths, needs, interests, and preferences related to education, employment, and independent living

- Work with your child to develop measurable postsecondary goals
- Engage your child in a coordinated set of transition activities aligned to their goals
- Become familiar with outside agencies and their programs and connect families with relevant agencies, when appropriate
- Coordinate IEP meetings including all stakeholders
- Engage you in the process, including getting consent when needed (for example, to invite a participating agency)
- Provide explicit instruction on self-determination and self-advocacy skills
- Provide guidance on the rights of individuals with disabilities
- Encourage your child to communicate with school staff about progress toward IEP goals

School Counselor's Role:

- Assess your child's career interests and skills for desired career path
- Develop a plan for your child's time in high school
- Develop / update your child's annual transition plan, along with your child and other IEP team members
- Lead conversations about your child's strengths, interests, needs, and preferences
- Discuss graduation requirements, diploma pathways, post-school options, and resources with you and your child
- Provide advice on the courses that will help your child reach their goals

Transition Service Agency Representative's Role:

A **Transition Service Agency** (also known as a "participating agency") is an agency that is likely to provide or pay for services after your child leaves high school. If any agency is likely to be responsible for providing or paying for services, your child's school should help you identify that agency and will request your consent to invite a representative from that agency to your child's IEP meeting. For more information about participating agencies, see the *Resources* section at *Transition Service Agencies and Adult Service Systems*.

- Attend IEP meetings, when invited
- If the participating agency does not attend the IEP meeting when invited, the participating agency representative should be involved in planning transition services
- Actively participate with other IEP team members to make sure there is a shared understanding of plans and services
- Provide information on resources and supports available to help your child reach their goals
- Provide necessary services and supports to help your child reach their goals
- Explain services that can be provided after your child leaves high school

Transition Planning Checklist

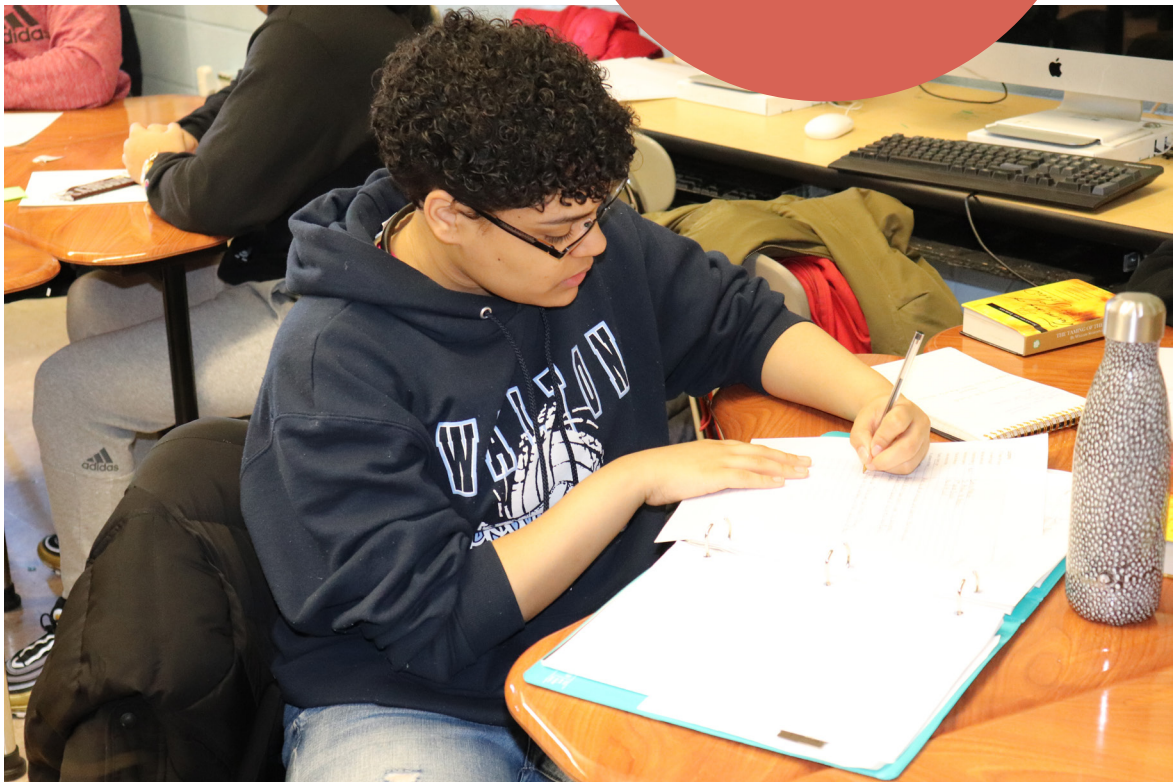
Preparing for Life After High School

It is never too early to start helping your child prepare for a successful future. Transition planning is the process used to make sure that students with IEPs are prepared for life after high school. The NYC Department of Education is committed to preparing all students to exit high school prepared for careers, college, vocational training, and/or independent living. Transition planning helps your child make choices, develop goals, and establish a plan to achieve them. This is the key to making school relevant to your child's future as an adult. This checklist can be used to support your child throughout different stages of the transition planning process.

Transition Planning Checklist

This checklist will assist both you and your child in preparing for your child's life after high school. Your child's skills, strengths, needs, and interests will determine which items on this checklist are relevant. Not all items may be relevant to your child.

It is never too early to start helping your child prepare for a successful future.



Prior to Age 12

- ☐ Introduce and expose your child to a range of jobs, activities and hobbies. This will help your child determine his or her interests.
- ☐ Encourage choice making. This will foster independence and help your child develop decision-making skills.
- ☐ Encourage your child to ask for help appropriately when needed. Engage in role play with your child to help them strengthen their ability to ask for help in different situations. This will help your child learn to speak up for themselves to get their needs met.
- ☐ Help your child learn to work and play cooperatively with others.

Age 12–14

- ☐ Introduce and discuss transition planning with your child. Speak with your child about their IEP and their IEP meetings, so they can begin to become more involved when appropriate.
- ☐ Talk with your child about their interests, desires, and goals. Provide them with opportunities to explore their interests. For example, if your child is interested in a particular field, encourage him or her to learn more about that field.
- ☐ During the year in which your child turns 12, he or she will complete the student part, and you will complete the parent part, of the first vocational assessment. Information from this assessment will be used to help create a transition plan for your child.
- ☐ Provide opportunities for increased independence and responsibility at home. Talk with your child and your child's teachers about opportunities for increased responsibility at school.
- ☐ Provide your child with opportunities to explore a wide variety of community and leisure activities.
- ☐ Gather important documents such as your child's birth certificate, social security card, photo ID, medical information, and IEP for his or her Transition Portfolio.
- ☐ Discuss high school choice with your child, the guidance counselor, and other staff at your child's school. Attend high school fairs and explore high schools that may be a good fit for your child. Determine if Career and Technical Education (CTE) Schools and/or Specialized High Schools are a good fit your child. Some schools have special entrance requirements, which you can learn about at <https://www.schools.nyc.gov/enrollment/enroll-grade-by-grade/specialized-high-schools>. If your child successfully completes a state-approved CTE program of study, they can receive a CTE-endorsed regent's diploma.

Ages 14–17

- ☐ Encourage your child to continue to explore community and leisure activities of interest. For example, encourage your child to participate in community service activities or join a sports team. Understand that their interests and goals will likely change over time.
- ☐ Talk with your child about their role in the IEP meeting and encourage their participation. Beginning at age 14, your child will be invited to their IEP meeting.
- ☐ Work with your child and the IEP team to create transition goals and identify activities and services that will help your child reach their goals.
- ☐ Work with your child and the IEP team to develop your child's transition plan. This plan should detail your child's goals for life after high school and how they will reach them.
- ☐ Encourage your child to take advantage of work-based learning experiences. Speak to the transition team leader at your child's school regarding available opportunities.
- ☐ Encourage your child to consider employment and volunteer experiences. For example, the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) offers summer work experiences to students between the ages of 14 and 21.
- ☐ Learn about the different graduation options and credentials such as the Career Development and Occupational Studies (CDOS) commencement credential. See the *Graduation Options and Credentials* section for more information.
- ☐ Discuss with your child and school staff which graduation pathway is most appropriate for your child.
- ☐ Meet regularly with your child and his or her career and/or school counselor to identify appropriate courses and/or Regents exams to ensure that your child is on track to graduate with the expected diploma or credential.
- ☐ Explore and connect with external agencies such as OPWDD and ACCES-VR when appropriate. See *Transition Service Agencies and Adult Service Systems* in the Resources section for more information.
- ☐ If your child will be taking the PSAT, SAT, or Advanced Placement (AP) exams, determine who your child's Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) Coordinator is. Provide consent for requesting College Board accommodations. We encourage you to make this request as early as 9th grade. Once these accommodations are approved by the College Board they remain in effect while your child is in high school.
- ☐ Explore and apply for college, vocational and independent living options as appropriate for your child.
- ☐ Determine if your child requires Travel Training to learn how to travel independently using public transportation. Contact the Office of Travel Training if you're interested. See <https://schools.nyc.gov/special-education/school-settings/district-75/district-75-programs> for information.



Ages 17–21

- ☐ Review previous section, *Ages 14–17*, to ensure that relevant items are complete or underway.
- ☐ Meet with your child’s guidance counselor to ensure that they are on track toward the graduation diploma and/or credential agreed upon, and for assistance with college applications as appropriate.
- ☐ Connect with any agencies or organizations that will provide services, training, or education following your child’s graduation or aging out of high school. See *Transition Service Agencies and Adult Service Systems* in the *Resources* section for more information.
- ☐ Review your child’s Student Exit Summary. This will be provided to you during your child’s last year in school. The purpose of the Exit Summary is to provide a written report with important information about your child’s skills and areas where they need support as well as recommendations to support a successful transition to adult living, learning and working.
- ☐ Before your child graduates from high school, you will receive a written notice that identifies the diploma or credential your child is receiving and informs you that your child is no longer eligible to receive a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) after graduation. However, if your child exits high school with either the Career Development and Occupational Studies (CDOS) Commencement Credential or the Skills and Achievement Commencement Credential (SACC) as their sole exiting credential, you will receive written notice stating that they are eligible to attend school through the school year in which they turn 21. See the following section on *Graduation Options and Credentials* for explanation of these credentials.

Graduation Options and Credentials

Three high school diplomas are offered in New York State: the Advanced Regents, the Regents, and the local diploma. Students with IEPs are encouraged to pursue the most rigorous diploma option possible. All diplomas require students to earn 44 credits in specific subject areas and pass coursework in English language arts (ELA), math, social studies, and science. In some circumstances, students with IEPs may be eligible to earn a local diploma through safety net options, which includes allowing them to graduate with lower exam scores. Safety Net eligible students may graduate with scores as low as 45 on certain exams, as long as those scores are compensated for by a score of 65 or above on another exam. For more information about this option students should ask their school about the compensatory score option.

Other safety net options resulting in a local diploma include qualifying for the safety net appeal (two scores of 52–54 on Regents exams) and qualifying for a superintendent’s determination of graduation. The superintendent’s determination option allows students with IEPs to graduate with a local diploma following a superintendent’s review to determine academic proficiency in the content areas of the Regents exams the student was unable to pass. It is only for students who are otherwise unable to graduate via the existing Safety Net exam flexibilities.

For the most up to date information on graduation options and requirements visit <https://www.schools.nyc.gov/school-life/rules-for-students/graduation-requirements>.



Diploma Requirements

To earn a diploma, students must earn 44 credits.

8 English credits	8 Social Studies credits	4 in Global History 2 in U.S. History, 1 in Government and 1 in Economics
6 Mathematics credits (at least 2 credits in Advanced Math)	6 Science credits (minimum of 2 Life Science and 2 Physical Science)	2 Language other than English credits (6 credits for the Advanced Regents diploma)
2 Arts credits	4 Physical Education credits	1 Health credit
7 Elective credits (3 credits for the Advanced Regents diploma)		

A student with a disability may be exempt from meeting the languages other than English requirement if their IEP indicates that the requirement is not appropriate due to their disability.

The **Career Development and Occupational Studies Commencement Credential (CDOS)** is designed to recognize a student's mastery of the career-readiness skills defined by the New York State CDOS learning standards. It is available to students with and without IEPs. It is crucial that these career development experiences supplement, and not replace, a rich academic program with opportunities to earn a high school diploma. Schools should offer students CDOS-aligned work-based learning and

CTE experiences alongside the academic coursework required for a diploma.

We recommend that eligible students receive the CDOS commencement credential as an endorsement—in other words, in addition to—a high school diploma. The CDOS credential can also be used as the “+1” option if a student has passed 4 Regents exams, completing the testing requirements for that student. In other words, if your child has passed at least one ELA, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies Regents exam, then the successful completion of CDOS may

be used as the additional exam needed towards any diploma type.

Students who are unable to earn a high school diploma may earn the CDOS credential as a non-diploma option. CDOS as a standalone credential **is not** equivalent to a high school diploma. As a standalone credential earned in place of a high school diploma, the CDOS does not guarantee employment where a diploma is required and does not qualify students to enter the military or enter many postsecondary institutions. If your child exits high school with the CDOS Commencement Credential as their sole exiting credential, you will receive written notice stating that they are eligible to attend school through the school year in which they turn 21.

If your child is participating in activities in order to attain the CDOS credential, an employability profile will be completed. The work skills employability profile is used to show work-related skills and technical knowledge that your child has learned during their work-based learning experiences. The employability profile measures your child's performance in such areas as attendance, workplace appearance, quality of work, and cooperation with others and must be completed by someone who is personally knowledgeable about your child's skills.

The **Skills and Achievement Commencement Credential (SACC)**

is only available to students who participate in the New York State Alternate Assessment (NYSAA). The SACC is a non-diploma credential, and is not issued to students who are able to pursue the local and Regents-endorsed diploma options.

IEP teams determine the eligibility of students with disabilities to participate in either standard or alternate assessments. This determination is made on an individual basis. Students who are eligible for alternate assessments are those with "severe cognitive disabilities combined with behavioral and/or physical limitations and who require highly specialized education and/or social, psychological, and medical services in order to maximize their full potential for useful and meaningful participation in society and for self-fulfillment."

If your child participates in alternate assessments instead of Regents exams, they will not be eligible for a high school diploma. They will be eligible for the SACC, which requires at least 12 years of education (excluding kindergarten).

As with the CDOS credential, the SACC **is not** equivalent to a high school diploma. The SACC does not guarantee employment where a diploma is required and does not qualify students to enter the military or enter many postsecondary institutions. If your child exits high school with the SACC as their sole exiting credential, you will receive written notice stating that they are eligible to attend school through the school year in which they turn 21.

For additional information about graduation and diploma options, see Students with Disabilities: After High School and New York City Department of Education Graduation Requirements at <https://www.schools.nyc.gov/school-life/rules-for-students/graduation-requirements>.

Priority Considerations Depending on Postsecondary Goals

Planning to Attend College

If your child is planning to attend college, there are a number of critical steps to take to become college-ready.

Students are encouraged to:

- Take interesting and challenging courses in preparation for college, including Advanced Placement courses when appropriate.
- Meet with school counselors and transition team leaders and attend Transition & College Access Center student/parent workshops. Discuss goals, such as vocational and education goals, programs of study, and college requirements, including the admissions process and any standardized tests required for admission.
- Meet regularly with their school counselor to ensure that their course of study matches their goal of attending college and that they are on track to receive the highest diploma possible.
- Research various college options.
- Explore travel training and independent travel needs if applicable.
- Be an active participant during IEP meetings. Become comfortable and knowledgeable about their disability and how it affects their learning, and advocate for what they need in order to learn best.

Parents are encouraged to:

- Make sure that you know who the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) Coordinator is in your child's school and reach out to them regarding any testing accommodations that your child may require on the PSAT, SAT, or AP exams.
- Be an active participant during IEP meetings; become comfortable and knowledgeable about your child's disability and metacognition (learning about their own learning) to support self-advocacy.
- Research colleges including the supports available for students with disabilities.
- Research the college application process and financial aid process.
- Ensure that your child is completing required credits and passing required Regents exams to earn the highest diploma possible.
- Explore travel training and independent travel needs if applicable.
- Prepare your child to discuss their disability in a college student services office and request accommodations for college classes, since your child's IEP will not apply in college.

Planning to Attend Trade School or Enter the Workforce

If your child is planning to attend trade school or enter the workforce right after high school, there are a number of critical steps to take to become career/vocation ready.

Students are encouraged to:

- Consider attending a Career and Technical Education (CTE) school or program or enroll in challenging courses aligned to career goals. If your child attends a CTE school and/or program, they will take a minimum of 7 credits in technical courses.
- Get involved in work-based learning experiences or internships that provide exposure to their intended line of work. Some common examples include career exploration activities, job-shadowing, service learning, school-based enterprise, the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP), and the Transition Opportunity Program (TOP).
- Connect with organizations and businesses that will improve their knowledge of occupational practices.
- Be an active participant during IEP meetings; become comfortable and knowledgeable about their disability and metacognition (learning about their own learning) to advocate for what they need in order to learn best.
- If appropriate, include Adult Career and Continuing Education Services – Vocational Rehabilitation (ACCES-VR) and/or other community agencies in their IEP meeting prior to leaving high school. Discuss with your child's school or IEP team whether an agency, such as ACCES-VR, might be responsible

for providing or funding postsecondary services. If so, the school or IEP team will request your consent to invite that agency to your child's IEP meeting to discuss postsecondary planning. You should review the chart in the *Resources* section entitled *Transition Service Agencies and Adult Service Systems* for more information regarding participating agencies.

- Explore travel training and/or independent travel needs as appropriate.

Parents are encouraged to:

- Research and then help your child explore CTE and other high school options aligned to your child's career goals.
- Reach out to ACCES-VR and/or other community agencies to learn about services that may be available when your child completes high school and enters the work force or a trade school.
- Help your child explore different types of careers and their requirements.
- Learn about different kinds of work based learning opportunities that may be available to your child.
- Explore travel training and/or independent travel needs as appropriate.

Planning to Attend a Day Program

Day habilitation programs can help young adults gain self-help, socialization, and adaptive skills, including communication, travel, and skills in other areas of adult life. They can also provide some education to help with learning greater independence, community inclusion, relationship building, and self-advocacy. Additionally, people who receive day habilitation services often contribute to their communities through volunteer work and/or prevocational services. Prevocational services are services that address your child's interests and support the development of employment readiness skills. They assist people who are interested in joining "the world of work" but who are not yet ready to do so.

If your child is likely to attend a day program after high school, it is important for you to consider the following.

Students are encouraged to:

- Visit programs with a staff or family member and express preferences regarding programs, for example, which program makes you feel most comfortable and which program you most want to attend.
- Participate in travel training and/or independent travel if appropriate.
- Apply for a non-driver's identification card (with assistance as needed).
- Continue to participate in volunteer and/or work-based learning experiences that will help to inform postsecondary activities.
- Meet with representatives from OPWDD or community agencies as appropriate and express interests and preferences.
- Attend IEP meetings to learn about postsecondary options and express your interests and preferences.

Parents are encouraged to:

- Research your options and visit programs when possible.
- If your child may meet eligibility requirements for services through the New York State Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD), you may register with them at any age. If you have not yet done so, this must be done when your child is between 18 and 21 years of age for them to receive services directly after high school. OPWDD is using Care Coordination Organizations (CCOs) to provide Health Home Services to oversee the development of a Life Plan for each individual. The Life Plan will include an integrated approach to providing services including healthcare, wellness, and community and social supports.
- If appropriate, include ACCES-VR, OPWDD, and/or other community agencies in your child's IEP meeting prior to your child leaving high school.

- Participate in a “Front Door” information session, which can be found on the Front Door page of the OPWDD website. This establishes eligibility for adult services.
- Discuss with your child’s school or IEP team whether an agency—such as ACCES-VR, OPWDD, Office of Mental Health (OMH), Commission for the Blind, or other agency—may be responsible for providing or funding postsecondary services. If so, the school or IEP team will request your consent to invite that agency to your child’s IEP meeting to discuss postsecondary planning. Review the chart in the Resources section entitled *Transition Service Agencies and Adult Service Systems* for more information regarding participating agencies.
- If appropriate, apply for Supplemental Security Income and/or guardianship (just prior to your child turning 18). Guardianship gives you the right to make personal, financial, and medical decisions for your child when they are over 18. For more information about guardianship, visit the NY Courts webpage at <https://www.nycourts.gov/courthelp/Guardianship/17A.shtml>.
- Help your child apply for a New York State non-driver’s license, register for the draft, and register to vote as appropriate.
- Explore travel training and/or independent travel needs as appropriate.
- It is recommended that you keep all of the important documents and information about your child in one

place and that you write a **Letter of Intent** that you can update each year. This letter is your opportunity to provide future guardians and trustees with a guide to understanding your child. This is not a formal legal document. It includes a summary of useful information about your child, and what you intend their living situation and participation in the community to be.



Resources

Transition & College Access Centers (TCACs)

The Transition and College Access Centers (TCACs) support students with IEPs and their families through the transition from school to adult life. Whether students are preparing to attend college, enter the workforce, or live independently for the first time, TCACs exist to help students with IEPs achieve their goals, and support families and school staff in planning for their students' life after high school.

TCACs serve as student-centered resource hubs that offer trainings, workshops, and opportunities that provide the tools needed to plan for adult life. Some examples of workshop topics include Career Planning Tools, College Considerations, Work and Organizational Habits, Resume Writing, and Self-advocacy and Communication Skills. To learn more about Transition and College Access Centers visit the centers, contact the centers directly, or visit www.schools.nyc.gov/specialeducation.

Locations

Brooklyn Transition & College Access Center

Boys & Girls High School
1700 Fulton Street, Room G170
Brooklyn, NY 11213
718-804-6790
bklyntcac@schools.nyc.gov

Bronx Transition & College Access Center

DeWitt Clinton High School
100 W Mosholu Parkway S., Room 150
Bronx, NY 10468
718-581-2250
bxtcac@schools.nyc.gov

Manhattan Transition & College Access Center

269 West 35th Street, Room 702
New York, NY 10024
212-609-8491
mntcac@schools.nyc.gov

Queens Transition & College Access Center

90-27 Sutphin Boulevard, Room 152
Queens, NY 11435
718-557-2600
qnstcac@schools.nyc.gov

Staten Island Transition & College Access Center

The Michael J. Petrides
Educational Complex
715 Ocean Terrace, Building A, Room 204
Staten Island, NY 10301
718-420-5723
sitcac@schools.nyc.gov

TCACs exist to help students with IEPs achieve their goals.

District 75 Office of Transition Services & Postsecondary Planning Initiatives

The District 75 Office of Transition Services and Postsecondary Planning Initiatives coordinates transition planning activities within District 75, in conjunction with school-based transition personnel. District 75 schools, students and families are provided with direct support to facilitate positive in school and post-school outcomes for living, learning, and earning.

Contact

District 75 Office of Transition Services and Postsecondary Initiatives

400 First Ave., Room 440

New York, NY 10010

212-802-1568

D75ots@NYCDOE.onmicrosoft.com

Transition Service Agencies and Adult Service Systems—Which services should I access for my child?

As students prepare for life beyond high school, it is important that they research and become familiar with the entry/eligibility requirements for relevant post-school service providers. This will ensure that all required documentation is gathered in a timely manner and will help to facilitate a seamless transition to adult services. The following New York State offices provide funding for post high school options for students with disabilities.

Adult Career and Continuing Education Services—Vocational Rehabilitation (ACCES-VR)

ACCES-VR may be appropriate for students with physical, developmental, or emotional disabilities whose disability may prevent them from working or make work more challenging, and students capable of working with additional training or education.

<http://www.acces.nysed.gov/vr>

There is an ACCES-VR office in each borough as follows:

Bronx

1215 Zerega Avenue

Bronx, NY 10462

718-931-3500

Brooklyn

55 Hanson Place

Brooklyn, NY 11217

718-722-6700

Manhattan

116 West 32nd Street

New York, NY 10001

212-630-2300

Harlem Satellite Office

163 West 125th Street, Room 713

New York, NY 10027

212-861-4420

Queens

11-15 47th Avenue

Long Island City, NY 11101

347-510-3100

Staten Island Satellite Office

2071 Clove Road, Suite 302

Staten Island, NY 10304

718-816-4800

Office of People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD)

OPWDD may be appropriate for students with developmental disabilities that occur before age 22, including intellectual disabilities, autism, cerebral palsy, seizure disorders and other neurological impairments, IQ score lower than 70 and deficits in adaptive behavior skills.

www.opwdd.ny.gov

Local contacts are listed on the website.
New York City is Regional Office 4.

Brooklyn

888 Fountain Ave.
Bldg. 1, 2nd Floor
Brooklyn, NY 11239
718-642-8657 or 718-642-8783

Bronx

2400 Halsey St.
Bronx, NY 10461
718-430-0369 or 646-766-3362

Manhattan

25 Beaver St., 4th Floor
New York, NY 10004
646-766-3324

Queens

PO Box 280507
Queens Village, NY 11428-0507
718-217-5537 or 718-217-5396

Staten Island

1150 Forest Hill Rd.
Bldg. 12, Suite A
Staten Island, NY 10314-6316
718-982-1944 or 718-982-1903

Office of Mental Health (OMH)

OMH may be appropriate for students with Axis 1 diagnosis (severe mental illness, i.e., major depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia).

<https://www.omh.ny.gov/>

Commission for the Blind (CB)

CB may be appropriate for students who are legally blind or visually impaired

<https://ocfs.ny.gov/main/cb/>



Appendix

Vocational Assessments are individualized to fit the needs of your child. For example, it is possible for the assessment to be an interview, a survey, or a series of pictures. It is not one size fits all. The samples below are to help you get an idea of what type of information is collected on the Level I Vocational Assessment. It is one of many possible examples.

Sample Level I Vocational Assessments

Student Level I Vocational Assessment

Date: _____ Student Name: _____

DOB: _____ ID#: _____

1. What classes do you like best in school?
2. What classes do you like the least?
3. Are you involved in activities (clubs, sports, band, etc.) in school?
4. What do you do with your spare time? Do you have any hobbies?
5. Do you like to work by yourself, or with a group?
6. What kind of job do you think you would like to do when you graduate?
7. What do you have to do to prepare for this kind of work?
8. What are the things that you do best?
9. What things are hard for you to do?
10. Do you have any jobs at home? If yes, please describe.

Parent/Guardian Level I Vocational Assessment

Here are some questions for you to discuss and think about with your child to prepare for transition planning. Please respond to the following items to help us in developing a transition plan that will be shared with you and your child at the IEP meeting. A copy will be made for your records and another copy will be kept in your child's transition portfolio.

Student's Name: _____ DOB: _____ ID#: _____

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Name: _____

1. If your child has talked about working, what types of jobs have they shown interest in doing when they are grown up?
2. What kinds of things does your child like to do in their free time?
3. What does your child like to talk about when they are home?
4. Does your child have friends that they participate with on a daily or weekly basis? YES or NO. If "YES," what types of activities does your child and their friends usually do?
5. What does your child do to help out at home with the daily or weekly tasks?
6. What kinds of activities does your child participate in outside of the home for entertainment?
7. What would you like for the school to know about your child?
8. What are your future work expectations for your child after they graduate from high school?
9. What are your future expectations for your child on where they will live after graduation? (For example: our home, on their own, residential program, with friends, etc.)
10. What are your concerns about what the school needs to do for your child?
11. Which of these independent living skills do you think your child needs instruction in? Check all that apply.

☐ Buying and caring for clothing	☐ Knowing what is in the community
☐ Meal preparation and nutrition	☐ Money management skills
☐ Hygiene and grooming	☐ How to be safe in the community
☐ Using public transportation	☐ Health and First Aid training
☐ Getting their driver's license	☐ Other areas of concern
☐ How to buy things wisely	

Teacher Level I Vocational Assessment

Date: _____ Student Name: _____

DOB: _____ NYC ID#: _____

1. Describe the student's awareness of the world of work.
2. What are some of the student's strengths and interests?
3. Has the student indicated any plans for postsecondary education or employment?
4. Describe the student's ability to apply knowledge and skills they have learned in other settings.
5. What are the student's projected postsecondary expectations?
6. What are the parent's/guardian's expectations for the student after high school?
7. What are the areas and skills the student needs to develop to achieve his/her desired postsecondary outcomes?
8. Describe activities that motivate the student.
9. Additional Comments:



For additional information, dial 718 935 2007
or visit www.schools.nyc.gov/specialeducation

FAMILY GUIDE TO
Transition
Planning
PREPARING STUDENTS
WITH IEPs FOR LIFE
AFTER HIGH SCHOOL