

# Transition IEP Checklist

**Plan early, ask questions, be flexible and stay informed and involved in the process.**

This resource was written to provide more detail on the transition section of the IEP Checklist.



## An Introduction to Transition

- Transition refers to the process of moving from high school to the adult world. Beginning at age 16, all students who have IEPs are required to have transition goals developed each year during their IEP meeting.
- There are two required types of transition goals: employment and post-secondary education/training. The third goal area is independent living, which is recommended.
- These goals are developed using transition assessments, which are tools that help students identify their strengths, interests, skills, and/or knowledge needed to reach their goals for life after high school.



**Transition isn't just one meeting, it's an ongoing process once your child reaches the right age.**



**BEFORE  
THE  
TRANSITION  
IEP MEETING**

## Before the Transition IEP Meeting

### What Parents Need to Know

- Required IEP team members include a parent or guardian, special education teacher, regular education teacher, administrative representative (also known as the LEA). If an evaluation has taken place, someone such as a school psychologist who can interpret the results is also required.

- The student is required to be invited at age 16 and older and encouraged but not required to attend.
- Others who may be invited to the meeting, especially if they provide services to the child, may include a school transition coordinator, vocational rehabilitation, counselor, or someone from an adult day services program. The school or parent may invite outside agencies. For outside agencies to participate, parents must agree in writing.
- Just as with previous IEP meetings, you have the right to ask for a draft of the transition IEP before the meeting.

**Parents:** It might be useful to ask yourself some of these questions:

- What activities does my child enjoy?
- What is your child good at?
- What types of chores does your child do around the house?
- Where do you see your child living as an adult? Who are they living with?
- How will your child travel to where they need to go?
- Will your child need a guardian?
- Where will your child get the money on which to live?

*Thinking about what life will be like for your child after high school can be exciting and challenging at the same time. Your child's transition IEP needs to have things in it that will help your family plan for success.*

# Before the Transition IEP Meeting

## What Students Need to Know

- Every year when you are 16 or older, teachers at your school will ask you questions about what you may want to do for a job or career, if you want to continue to go school after high school and what you might want to study, and ways you'd like to become more independent.
- Sometimes you will be asked to fill out questions on a form about what you'd like to do after high school. Other times it will be more like a discussion between you and your teachers.
- Be honest when you answer your teacher's questions. Your goals after high school need to be based on your strengths, needs, interests, and preferences.
- When you turn 18 you are required to be invited to your IEP meeting. It is up to you if you want to attend. If you are unsure whether to go, you may want to talk to a parent or someone you trust about why you feel that way.
- You can participate in your IEP meeting in many ways. You can attend in person, record videos of how you feel, draw pictures of what you like, write down lists of things that are important to you.

**There are no right or wrong answers and you are allowed to change your mind!**

**Remember:** The best way for others on your IEP team to know what your goals are is for YOU to share them. There is no wrong way to be a part of your own IEP meeting.

### **BEST PRACTICE:**

**Youth, parents, and educators should develop a draft of your transition goals for the transition IEP meeting.**



# DURING THE TRANSITION IEP MEETING

## During the Transition IEP Meeting

### Tips for Parents

- Bring your ideas and any goals you'd like to suggest to the IEP meeting. Also, bring any important outside documentation such as neuropsychological evaluations, vocational assessments, or therapist's recommendations.
- If new team members are present, make sure they introduce themselves and clarify their role(s) in the meeting.
- Ask the school to share or project the IEP if necessary, so everyone sees any changes being made as they happen.
- If you have any questions about the assessments or the contents of the IEP, make sure to ask.
- If there are any differences between what the school is suggesting for postsecondary goals, course of study, or transition services and what you'd prefer for your child, say something. This will allow you to discuss the reasons.

**Independent living goals are optional, but if you feel strongly your child needs one, use an independent living skills checklist to ensure the IEP team's decision is based on data.**

- Be your child's best advocate, but don't speak for him or her. If your child chooses not to attend the meeting, keep in mind that the transition IEP should still be based on his or her strengths, interests, needs, and preferences. Share those as much as possible.
- Make sure to consider goals for developing your child's self-advocacy skills. This is an important part of the transition process.
- If your child does participate in the IEP meeting and reveals a different vision of the future than you have, embrace it. It's OK to have concerns, but your child needs your support.



**Student rights are transferred to the student at age 18 (the age of majority). To continue to participate in your child's IEP and have decision-making rights, permission must be given by the student.**

## **During the Transition IEP Meeting**

### **Tips for Students**

- **You are the most important member of the IEP team. This is your IEP ... your life ... your future.**
- Challenge yourself. If you feel confident and feel ready, take the lead!
- Participate in the meeting in whatever way is comfortable for you, even if only for a few minutes. The adults in the room need to hear from you!

- Challenge your team to be creative and find ways to include you in the meeting. Your participation could be through videos, letters you write, drawings and more!
- Come prepared to share what you like about school, what you are good at, what accommodations work for you, what you need help with etc.
- Share your future goals and plans. Share them with someone before the meeting if speaking at the meeting is not something you want to do.
- Don't be afraid to ask questions if things are moving too fast or if you don't understand something.
- The members of your IEP team care about your well-being and your future, be sure to thank them for their support.





# AFTER THE TRANSITION IEP MEETING

## After the Transition IEP Meeting

### Tips for Parents

Congratulations, you have completed an important step in your child's transition planning. Now, the hard work begins.

- Transition isn't just an exercise at the annual IEP meeting. Stay engaged in it throughout the high school years, especially as it gets closer to graduation.
- Keep in mind that your child's transition IEP is a legal document and is a work in progress.
- Expect that at least some of your child's postsecondary goals will change based on his or her interests. This is often a good thing.
- Seek support from new sources when appropriate. Encourage your child to try different courses, develop new vocational skills, and even attempt new extracurricular activities.
- Don't be discouraged if you don't succeed right away.
- Trial and error are encouraged. This is how everyone involved in the transition planning process will learn more about how to support your child.



- If your student applies to a college and/or for services from state agencies such as vocational rehabilitation, a Summary of Performance (SoP) may be necessary.
- The SoP documents a child's academic achievement and functional performance, including recommendations on how to assist the child in meeting the child's postsecondary goals.
- The parent/guardian and the student will receive a copy of the SoP during the final year of a student's high school education.
- The IEP team needs to be working on a Summary of Performance (SoP) at each IEP meeting throughout high school. Prior to graduation, the SoP should only need a brief update.
- Be sure your child understands the information and keeps a copy of the SoP.
- Ensure ALL your child's teachers and support staff are aware that a transition IEP has been completed for the next 12 months.

#### **SoP should include:**

- **Information about the student**
- **A summary of academic achievement and functional performance**
- **Recommendations about how to assist the student in meeting post-secondary goals**
- **Student perspective**



**Keep your child motivated to do the things they are responsible for in the IEP by reminding them what those are, supporting their success, and encouraging them through struggles.**

## After the Transition IEP Meeting

### Tips for Students

- Be aware of what your Transition Plan says and which parts you are responsible for.
- Speak up to your teachers and family if you need help doing some of these things.
- When your goals after high school change, tell your family, teachers, and any other trusted adult who is supporting you. Don't be shy- it is your future and you are allowed to change your mind!
- Practice making your own choices daily.
- Work on skills that will help you get a job, such as being on time, getting along with others, and meeting deadlines.
- Take classes, participate in activities and groups, and look for volunteer experiences based on your interests that will help you meet people who can help you reach your goals.
- Practice independent living skills like cleaning, cooking, and other household chores.

- Health care is an important part of your future too. You could practice making your medical appointments and arranging transportation.
- Research educational options that match your interests and practice filling out applications.
- Research jobs matching your skills and interests. Practice filling out applications as you prepare to apply.
- Research possible job accommodations so you know what help you might need on the job. Practice telling others about your disability so that you will know when and how to advocate for accommodations on the job and/or in school. This is called disclosing your disability.



**The more ideas you contribute and the more experiences you try during transition planning, the more motivated you will be to take charge of your future.**



# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

## **Additional transition resources:**

- **Think College (national)**
- **Building Self Advocacy**
- **Student Rubric for IEP Participation**
- **When Your Child Turns 18**
- **GPAEA Independent Living Skills Checklist**
- **National Parent Center on Transition and Employment**
- **IRIS Center IEP Transition Services Worksheet**
- **The Arc's Self-Determination Scale**
- **Transition Assessment Tools**
- **Transition Goals in the IEP**

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