

The ITP and You

A Guide for Students with Disabilities Age 14 and Above and
Their Families with Information about the Individual Transition
Plan (ITP)

Revised
July 2008



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Commodity Code: 966 502 6460

Dear Students and Families:

The purpose of this booklet is to provide students with disabilities (beginning at age 14 or younger if appropriate) information regarding transition services. The guide serves as a tool for students taking part in the development of the Individual Transition Plan (ITP) portion of their Individualized Education Program (IEP). As members of the IEP team, students will assist in making important decisions when planning for post-secondary goals in education and/or training, employment and, if appropriate, daily living. We hope this resource helps when planning for life after high school.

We encourage you to read this guide and The IEP and You guide before the IEP meeting. It is also important to review A Parent's Guide to Special Education Services (including Procedural Rights and Safeguards), which you received with the IEP notification form.

If you have any questions about the IEP, special education, or the information contained in this booklet, please call the transition teacher or site administrator at your school.

Division of Special Education
District Office of Transition Services

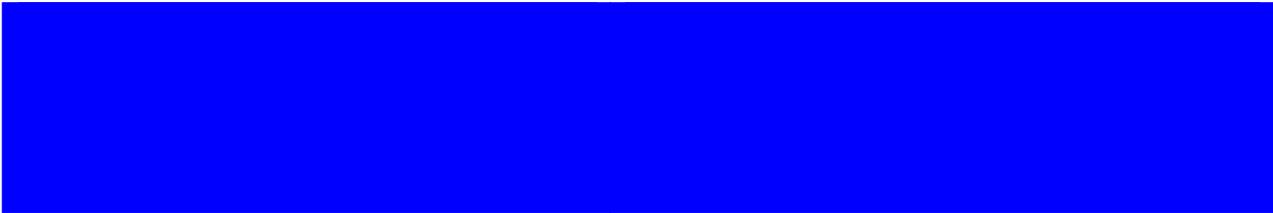
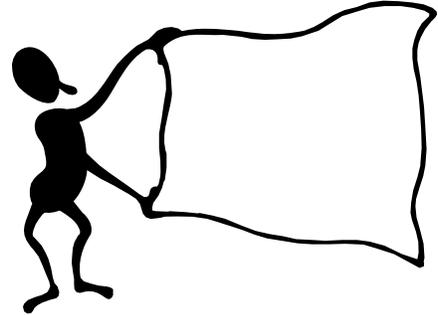
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INTRODUCTION

What are transition services?

Transition services are a coordinated set of activities to help students with disabilities and their families prepare for life after high school. Life after high school may include job training, college, employment, independent living, or assistance from public agencies. Transition activities, which indicate student strengths, abilities, needs, preferences and interests, result from age appropriate assessments. The results of these assessments help IEP teams develop appropriate post-secondary goals in the areas of education and/or training, employment and, if appropriate, independent living skills.



What is transition planning?

As a student gets older, the student and his/her family start to plan the future. Students and families consider many questions. What will a student do after high school? Will a student go to college or vocational school? Will a student work in supported employment or get a competitive job? Will a student live independently or continue to live at home? Will we need help from other agencies to carry out these plans? By the time the student is 14 years old, the IEP must include activities to help the student move from high school to life as an adult in the community. This process is transition planning.

What are the stages of transition planning?

Prior to a student's 14th birthday, the student's areas of strength, ability, need, preference, and interests are identified. These are then documented at the IEP/ITP meeting along with a statement of transition services. Services may be documented in the form of transition activities in the areas of education and/or training, employment and, if appropriate, independent living skills. Transition activities at this stage may involve instruction around career awareness. This includes knowledge of personal strengths, learning styles, and various occupations.

At the age of 15, an age-appropriate assessment is administered to update areas of student strength, preference, and interest. Post-secondary goals are determined based on the student's desires after completing high school. Transition activities supporting student post-secondary goals are then documented. Transition activities at this stage may involve opportunities for career exploration and preparation. This may include instruction and/or participation through small learning communities, Career and Technology education, work experience, daily living skill development, transition trips, and vocational training programs. The IEP document may also include connections to community agencies, if appropriate.

Before a student's 18th birthday, families are informed about "age of majority". When turning 18, the right to make educational decisions transfers to the student. However, there are legal alternatives to this rule. Parents and students must be informed about the transfer of rights by the IEP team. This act of communication is then documented on the IEP beginning at least one year before the student's 18th birthday.

TIP: Parents and students should get a head start in understanding "age of majority" rights and responsibilities.

What is an Individual Transition Plan?

Transition planning is written in the IEP in a section referred to as the Individual Transition Plan (ITP). This section of the IEP is reviewed and revised at least once a year as part of the IEP meeting. Transition plans can begin earlier than age 14 if the IEP team thinks it is appropriate.

An ITP is intended to help the student plan for post-school living that may include any of the following:

- Post-secondary education (2 or 4 year college or business school)
- Vocational training (for example, training in computers or auto mechanics)
- Supported or competitive employment
- Continuing or adult education
- Adult services (for example, activity day program, group home)
- Independent living
- Community participation



Who participates at the IEP meeting?

Students and families are key members of the IEP team. When an ITP is going to be developed at an IEP meeting, the student must be invited to the meeting. This is done by including the student's name on the "Notification to Participate in an Individualized Education Program (IEP) Meeting" form. With parent permission, representatives of public agencies may also be invited to the meeting.

TIP: Students and parents are key members of the IEP team.

How important is student participation?

Student involvement is the most important part of transition planning. The student must be notified of the IEP meeting in writing. The student may take part in the following ways:

- Take an active role in the IEP meeting by asking questions or leading the IEP meeting
- Set goals and participate in transition activities to reach goals
- Find out about local resources and services
- Get additional work experience
- Listen and respond to team members present at the meeting
- Provide information regarding personal strengths, abilities, needs, preferences, and interests

TIP: Students should develop decision-making and communication skills in order to express their plans for the future during the IEP meeting.



How important is parent participation?

Parent participation is a key component to successful transition planning. Parents must be notified of the IEP meeting in writing.

Parents take part in the following ways:

- Take an active role in the IEP meeting by asking questions
- Ask questions about transition assessment results
- Help your child with transition activities
- Contact the transition staff at your child's school

TIP: Parents should be active members of the transition team. Parents can take an active role in helping their student with their transition activities. Transition activities may include participation from families, schools, the community, and outside agencies. To get the most out of the IEP meeting, it is best to prepare in advance.

What are the components of an ITP?

The results of transition planning are documented in the ITP. The specific items documented are:

- Local agency involvement, if any
- Transition assessments conducted
- The student's career pathway and his/her interests and preferences
- Related services, if any
- Post-secondary goals related to education, training, employment and, if appropriate, independent living skills
- Transition services activities to help the student achieve the post-secondary goals in education and/or training, employment and, if appropriate, independent living skills
- People responsible for helping the student complete the transition activities

TIP: Transition services should be aligned with the student's strengths, abilities, needs, preferences, and interests.

What is a transition assessment?

In order to write an ITP that addresses a student's individual needs, the school will conduct age-appropriate transition assessments. The purpose of a transition assessment is to determine student transition needs based on interests and preferences. The special educator gives most transition assessments in conjunction with the transition teacher assigned to the school. Assessment tools may include work inventories, interviews, questionnaires, and observations within the school, work, and/or community setting. Age-appropriate transition assessments assist IEP team members with information in the following areas: post-secondary education, training, employment, social skills, community participation, and independent living skills. The results of the assessment are then used to develop meaningful post-secondary goals and transition activities for the student.

TIP: The assessment process may include a series of interviews, observations, and tests. The results help the IEP team make informed decisions for the student's future.

What are post-secondary goals?

Post-secondary goals are goals that a student hopes to achieve after leaving high school such as going to college, attending a vocational training program, getting a job, living independently or participating in community activities. The IEP team must include post-secondary goals in the student's ITP in the areas of education and/or training, employment and, if appropriate, independent living skills. The school provides transition services to help the student achieve the post-secondary goals.

What are transition activities?

Transition activities are a set of activities designed to help the student meet the post-secondary goals written in the ITP. Transition activities may include classroom instruction, community experiences, job preparation, daily living skills and related services such as occupational or physical therapy. People responsible for helping the student complete these activities may include teachers, parents, family, the student, and other appropriate school staff. Sometimes community agencies are involved in providing transition activities.

How is the community linked to the ITP?

Several local agencies that help students with disabilities and their families receive transition services include:

- Institutions of higher learning
- Adult education agencies
- Department of Rehabilitation
- Regional Centers
- Social service agencies
- Health and mental health agencies
- Culturally appropriate community-based organizations
- Community job fairs

TIP: Parents and students can contact school-site transition staff to help identify local agencies available to support transition planning and activities.

How long do students receive transition services?

Transition services are provided until the student:

- Receives a diploma, or
- Receives a Certificate of Completion and voluntarily leaves the District, or
- Reaches the age of 22

What are the graduation requirements for a diploma?

District graduation requirements are periodically changed. They should be discussed at every IEP meeting by reviewing the student's Individual Graduation Plan. If the student needs accommodations and/or modifications to succeed in general education curriculum they must be documented in the IEP. These accommodations and/or modifications must be permitted during instruction and when the student takes State or District tests including those required for graduation.

To receive a diploma the student must:

- Pass the required classes
- Earn the required credits
- Pass the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE) or meet any other State determined alternate requirements.

What happens if the student does not meet graduation requirements for a diploma?

If the student does not earn a diploma, he/she may earn a Certificate of Completion.

A Certificate of Completion may be given to students who access standards within the General or Alternate Curriculum. Students receiving a Certificate of Completion must complete one of the following:

- Complete the prescribed course of study stated in the IEP, or
- Satisfactorily meet the IEP goals and objectives during high school as determined by the IEP team, or
- Satisfactorily attend high school, participate in the instruction prescribed by the IEP and meet the objectives of the statement of transition services.

Students receiving the Certificate of Completion may take part in graduation and graduation activities.

What is a Summary of Performance?

Before a student leaves high school, the teacher prepares a document separate from the IEP called the Summary of Performance. This document is a summary of academic achievement and functional performance and includes recommendations for supports required to assist the student in work toward their post-secondary goals. The Summary of Performance will help the student get reasonable accommodations and supports when transitioning to post-secondary settings for education, training, employment or the acquisition of independent living skills.

What resources are available if I still have questions?

Below is a brief list of resources for more information:

- The Principal, special education and transition staff at school
- A Parent's Guide to Special Education Services (Including Procedural Rights and Safeguards)
- The IEP and You Booklet
- Support Unit Administrator (name and phone number are available from the school administrator)
- Complaint Response Unit/Parent Resource Network CRU/PRN at 1-(800) 933-8133 or website: http://sped.lausd.net/sep2s/pg3_cruprn.htm
- Community Advisory Committee (CAC) at (213) 241-6701
- Special Education Multicultural Advisory Committee (SEMAC) at (213) 241-6701
- California Department of Education (CDE) website: <http://www.cde.ca.gov>
- U.S. Department of Education website: <http://idea.ed.gov/>
- Los Angeles Unified School District's special education website: <http://sped.lausd.net>
- District Office of Transition Services website: http://www.lausd.net/lausd/offices/spec_ed/_dots/

TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Complaint Response Unit/Parent Resource Network (CRU/PRN)	(800) 933-8133
Community Advisory Committee (CAC)	(213) 241-6701
Special Education Multicultural Advisory Committee (SEMAC)	(213) 241-6701
California Department of Education (CDE)	(916) 445-4613