

Guidelines for Aligning High School & Beyond Plans (HSBP) and IEP Transition Plans



disabilities, are equipped with skills and knowledge to engage in the 21st Century workforce. In doing so, these agencies recognize the importance of collaborative partnerships in writing this guide to help educators, in collaboration with families, assist students with disabilities in developing and pursuing their goals for adult life.

We hope this guide will also help students with disabilities and their families to better understand how the OSPI, districts, agencies, and other organizations collaborate to facilitate improved outcomes for students with disabilities. If you have questions or suggestions about this HSBP and IEP transition planning resource guide, please submit them to speced@k12.wa.us.

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Introduction

The world has changed tremendously for students with disabilities over the past several decades. Laws are now in place to make college and careers more accessible, and the public's understanding of disabilities has evolved. Yet, many students with disabilities still experience a difficult transition to postsecondary options. While most students struggle to adjust to college and career environments, this transition is often more difficult for students with disabilities, as they must navigate this transition and new environment without many of the supports made available to them during their P-12 public school educational experience.

Employment is critically important to one's sense of identity and perceived success in society. Most people enter the workforce at some point in their lives, as employment creates opportunities for both economic and social mobility.¹ Access to employment is a particularly important issue for individuals with disabilities who have historically experienced significant barriers to employment and high rates of underemployment.² It is also at the heart of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), whose purpose is, "to ensure that all children with disabilities have available to them a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and **prepare them for further education, employment, and independent living.**"³

The Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that individuals with disabilities are among the least represented demographic groups in the labor force.⁴ The participation rate for people with a disability was 17.8 percent compared to 63.6 percent for people without a disability. Furthermore, young adults with disabilities ages 16 to 19 are an exceptionally disadvantaged group when it comes to employment outcomes, experiencing an unemployment rate of 42 percent, nearly double that of 26 percent experienced by their same age peers without a disability. Therefore, persistent disparities in employment outcomes for young adults with disabilities have reinforced the need for special educators to better understand and address barriers that prevent successful transitions for adolescents with disabilities.

Data from US Department of Education indicates that the vast majority of students (approximately 90 percent) who receive special education services under the Individuals with

¹ Borjas, G. (2010). Labor economics (5th ed.). Maidenhead, UK: McGraw-Hill.

² Sharf, R. (2010). Applying career development theory to counseling (5th ed.). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole Cengage Learning.

³ [20 U.S.C.§1400\(d\)\(1\)\(A\)](#).

⁴ U.S. Department of Labor (2013). [Persons with disability: Labor force characteristics](#).

Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) have identified disabilities that are not cognitive disabilities.⁵ This indicates that these students have average or above average intelligence (IQs), and their disability affects their educational experience in other ways. For example, their disabilities may be speech and language impairments, vision and hearing issues, autism, behavior and emotional disabilities, learning disabilities, or other health impairments. When these students are provided with the appropriate instruction and support, up to 90 percent can meet the same academic standards as their non-disabled peers, graduating on-time with their four-year cohort group, and fully prepared to tackle college or a career.⁶ Yet, just 64.6 percent of students with disabilities in the U.S. graduated on time in 2015, well below the 83 percent four-year rate for students overall. In Washington State, the 2017 four-year graduation rate for students with disabilities was 59.4 percent compared to 79.3 percent for all students⁷.

This poses the question, *Why are expectations repeatedly lowered for this population based on having been identified as having a disability and/or eligible for special education services?* One of the main purposes for the establishment of IDEA was to provide access and supports to students with disabilities to be successful in school and prepared for further education, employment, and independent living. Expectations play a critical role with regard to not only school achievement but also success in employment and postsecondary educational settings. Furthermore, low expectations are often cited as significant barriers to academic and career achievement for students with disabilities.⁸ For example, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) found that attitudinal barriers of faculty and support service providers in postsecondary educational settings have been shown to inhibit the performance of students with disabilities.⁹ In contrast, setting high expectations for students with disabilities promotes successful postsecondary transition. Research has also demonstrated that students with disabilities do better when they are held to high expectations and have access to the general education curriculum.¹⁰

High expectations inform effective transition planning that leads to positive post-school results. To set high expectations and foster successful post-school outcomes for students with disabilities, all individuals concerned with their education should:

- Establish a school-wide culture of high expectations;
- Provide students with disabilities access to rigorous coursework;

⁵ National Center for Education Statistics. (May 2017). [The condition of education: children and youth with disabilities](#). ED: Institute of Educational Services.

⁶ Hechinger Report. [Willing, able and forgotten: How high schools fail special ed students \(2017\)](#). A series of nine reports published between November 2, 2017 and December 16, 2017.

⁷ OSPI (2018). [Report to the Legislature: Graduation and Dropout Statistics](#).

⁸ 2018 [DO-IT. Creating an inclusive career development program](#). University of Washington (UW), Seattle, WA.

⁹ United States Government Accountability Office. (2009). [Higher education and disability: Education needs a coordinated approach to improve its assistance to schools in supporting students](#). Washington, D.C.: US Government Accountability Office.

¹⁰ [Section 601\(c\)\(14\) of the IDEA](#).

- Revised as necessary for changing interests, goals, and needs, and to identify the available interventions and academic support, and/or courses.
- Effective 2020-2021 school year, each district must ensure that an electronic HSBP platform is available to all students who are obligated to have an HSBP

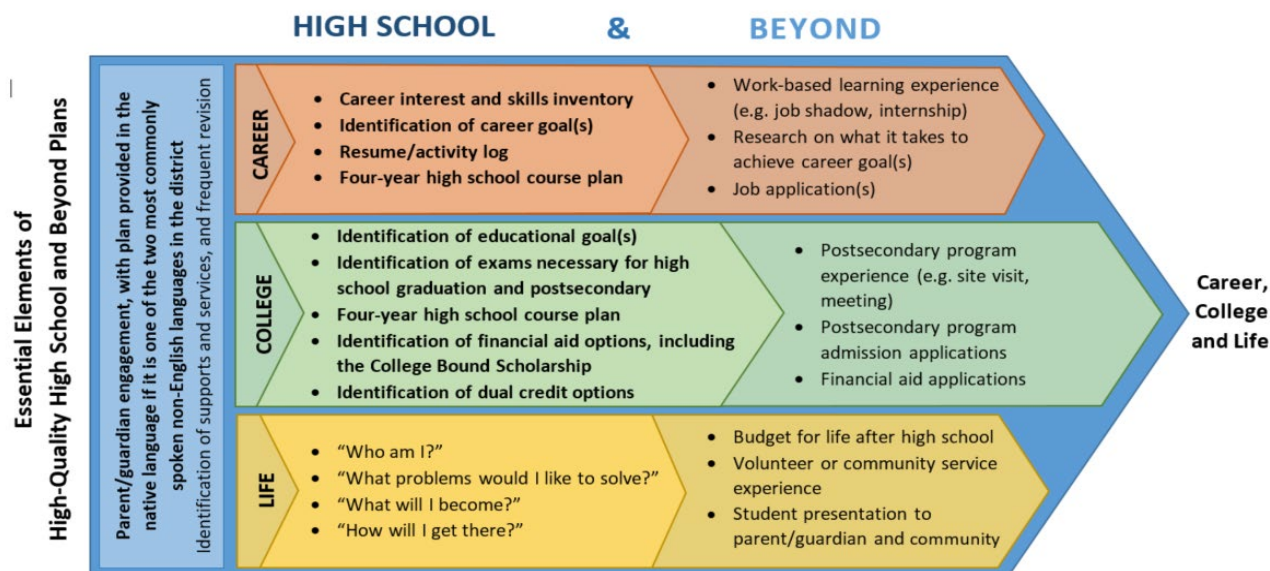
Components

- Identification of career goals, aided by a skills and career interest inventory assessment
- Identification of educational goals for graduation and beyond
- Four-year plan for course-taking plan that fulfills state and local graduation requirements and aligns with the student's career and educational goals with and individualized Personal Pathways¹⁴ which must include information about
 - **Dual credit programs** (AP, IB, Cambridge, Running Start, College in the High School, CTE Dual Credit [Tech Prep])
 - **College Bound Scholarship Program**
- Resume or activity by the end of the 12th grade that provides a written compilation any activities/athletics, leadership opportunities, work experience, or community service that can be used for writing personal statements, application essays, or scholarship applications
- List of any certificates of course completion for Career and Technical Education equivalency courses completed by a student.
- For students who have not met standard on state assessment, interventions and academic support, courses, or both, that enable students to meet the high school graduation requirements, must be a part of this plan

In addition to the minimum HSBP requirements, the State Board of Education has identified elements for a high-quality high-school and beyond plan that exceeds the minimum requirements. Figure A depicts both required elements and high-quality elements. The required career, college, and life elements are in the left column (e.g., career interest and skills inventory) and the high-quality elements (e.g., work-based learning experience) are listed in the right column.

¹⁴ WAC 180-51-068 defines "Personalized Pathway" as a locally determine body of coursework identified in a student's High School and Beyond Plan that is deemed necessary to attain the postsecondary career or educational goals chosen by the student. "Personalized Pathway Requirement" is up to three course credits chosen by a student that are included in a student's Personalized Pathway and prepare the student to meet specific postsecondary career or educational goals. Personalized Pathway Requirement credits may replace two world language credits, and/or one of two arts credits. The Personalized Pathway is not a specific pathway of courses outlined in a document but is individual to each student. The Personalized Pathway Requirement should not be confused with career pathways or the 16 career clusters, but students need to use these pathways to make their educational plans to graduate and their postsecondary plans after for high school.

Figure A. Essential Elements of High-Quality HSBP



Source: The Washington State Board of Education, [High School and Beyond Plan](#)

IEP Transition Planning Requirements

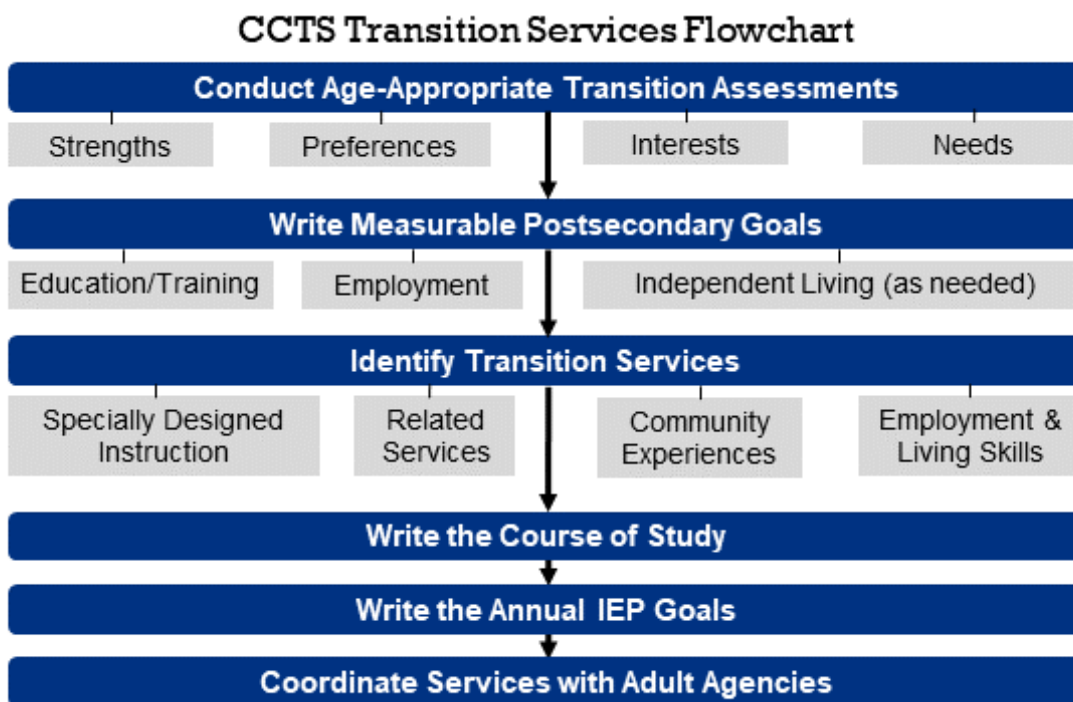
For students eligible for special education and related services, federal¹⁵ and state¹⁶ regulations require that an IEP be developed that specifies how education, related services, and supports will be delivered by the school district to address the unique educational needs of a student with a disability. The IEP is a written document that outlines the student’s present levels of academic and functional performance; annual measurable goals, including how and when progress will be measured; accommodations, and supplemental aids and services; and details the special education and related services the student will receive.

Beginning not later than the first IEP to be in effect when the student turns sixteen, or younger if determined appropriate by the IEP team, the IEP must include a transition plan that includes measurable postsecondary goals based upon age-appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment, and where appropriate, independent living skills. It also identifies the transition services, including courses of study, needed to assist the student in reaching those postsecondary goals. IEPs with transition planning components should be designed to help a student make a successful transition from school to postsecondary life. Figure B depicts the process for incorporating transition planning components into an IEP. Please note that age-appropriate transition assessments occur prior to development of the IEP. For information on each step outlined in the flowchart, see the [online interactive version](#).

¹⁵ [Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. Sec. 1400 et seq.](#)

¹⁶ RCW [28A.155 Special Education](#) and WAC [392-172A Rules for the Provision of Special Education](#)

Figure B. Transition Services Flowchart



Source: Johnson, C. (2012). *Transition Services Flow Chart*.

Both HSBPs and IEPs should have a goal of making decisions, such as course choices and assessment options, centered on what is best for the individual student, based on the student’s education, employment, and independent living skill goals for postsecondary success. IEP teams should make decisions annually to develop or refine plans that address individual student needs.

If a student has an IEP, the HSBP must be developed in alignment with their IEP and be completed by the same adults completing HSBPs for students not receiving special education services and their HSBP must be updated in alignment with their school to post school transition plan. If it is decided the student should stay in school an extended time, the extra time should be meaningful and allow the student to continue to develop both additional academic and transition knowledge and skills. District and IEP teams should both work to ensure services are based on individual student needs.

Districts should collect and assess data on student outcomes such as acceptance and retention in postsecondary educational institutions or employment to help identify strengths and areas for improvement in providing quality services to students.

Aligning the IEP to Support the HSBP

The following tables are intended to assist teams in developing and aligning the HSBP and IEP transition plans for each student and to help ensure that the content and goals of the IEP support those of the HSBP. Before transition planning is required in the IEP, students will have

spent two to three years engaged with developing their HSBP to identify and revise postsecondary career and education/training goals. This work will be done based on career interest surveys, defining an associated course of study (course plan) that aligns with career and education/training goals and leads to on-time graduation, and assessing progress toward identified goals.

Table 1 provides a concise summary of the alignment of the required elements of the HSBP and the required components of an IEP that includes transition services. In addition, the table includes high-quality HSBP elements, which are recommended but not required. Districts can also add in any district specific information or requirements associated with each of the elements in the “Additional District Requirement(s)” column.

Table 1. HSBP and IEP Alignment

Elements	HSBP	High-Quality HSBP	IEP Transition Components
Grade or age plan(s) will begin	7th or 8th grade	7th grade	Year student turns 16, or younger as determined by the IEP team
Age-Appropriate Transition assessments			✓
Interest Inventory	✓		✓
Career Goals	✓		✓ (employment goal)
Educational goals	✓		✓
Independent living goals			✓ (independent living goal, if appropriate)
Personalized Pathway	✓ (class of 2019+)		
State assessment documentation	✓		✓
Interventions and academic support, if not met standard on state assessment	✓		✓
Identification of assessments necessary to achieve goals (e.g., SAT, ACT, ASVAB, COMPASS)	✓		✓
Transcript and progress review (annually)	✓		✓ (course of study)
Work-based learning experience		✓	strongly encouraged
Volunteer experience		✓	strongly encouraged

Elements	HSBP	High-Quality HSBP	IEP Transition Components
Coordinate services with adult agencies [e.g., Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA), WorkSource, etc.]			✓
Independent living skills (e.g., develop budget after high school)		✓	As determined by student's IEP team
Parent/Guardian involvement and agreement	✓		✓
Activity Log or Resume	✓		
Summary of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance			✓

There is significant overlap between HSBPs and IEP transition plans, as well as areas of difference. Table 2 provides a detailed comparison of the components of each plan. Please note that the list of components for IEPs with transition planning/services does not represent all IEP requirements contained in WAC 392-172A.

Table 2. Comparison of HSBP and IEP Components

HSBP (Required elements for all students)	Additional Elements for High-Quality HSBP (Recommended)	IEPs with Transition Planning
Purpose: A plan outlining how the student will meet high school graduation requirements and what the student will do following high school. The HSBP starts in middle school and is revised annually. It should include classes needed to support a pathway to post-secondary education, such as a two-year or four-year college, technical college, apprenticeship program, certificate program, the workforce or military training. (ESHB 2224) RCW 28A.230.090		Purpose: A coordinated set of activities designed within a results-oriented process focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of the student to facilitate a smooth transition from P-12 education to post-secondary activities, including post-secondary education, vocational education, integrated employment, supported employment, continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation (WAC 392-172A-01190)
Developed in the 7th or 8th Grade, as determined by the school district.		Developed the year student turns 16, or younger if determined appropriate by the IEP team
Career interest inventory initiated for each student by 7th or 8th Grade as determined by the school district		Age-appropriate transition assessments administered to identify student needs, strengths, preferences, and interests
8th graders not yet earning at least Level 3 on the mathematics and/or ELA state assessments must have a Student Learning Plan before entering 9th grade		

HSBP (Required elements for all students)	Additional Elements for High-Quality HSBP (Recommended)	IEPs with Transition Planning
8th graders not yet earning at least Level 3 on the mathematics state assessment must take math in 9th and 10th grades		
Informed by a skills and career interest inventory assessment identify a career goal	Identify personal goals	Based on age-appropriate transition assessments, the IEP team identifies post-secondary goals related to education/training, employment, and, if appropriate, independent living.
Identifies educational goals. Must also inform about dual credit programs and opportunities as well as the College Bound Scholarship .	Complete career-related documents	Based on individual needs, strengths, preferences, and interests, identify transition services (e.g., community experiences), development of employment and other post-secondary adult living objectives, and, if appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and a functional vocational evaluation.
Four-year course-taking plan that fulfills state and local graduation requirements and aligns with the student’s career and educational goals and individualized Personalized Pathway Requirement for students in Class of 2019 and beyond	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in postsecondary program experience (e.g., site visit, virtual tour, meet with representative). • Develop practical skills for life after high school. • Participate in volunteer service/community service. 	Outline/description of the course of study to assist student in reaching postsecondary goals. Annual academic and functional IEP goals, to meet needs that result from the disability to enable the student to be involved and make progress in the general education curriculum.
For students who have not met standard on a state assessment by the end of 11th grade, Interventions, academic supports, and courses that enable student to meet the high school graduation requirements		
Update HSBP to reflect state assessment results	Exams required to meet graduation, post-secondary program admissions, and post-secondary program placement requirements	IEP team determines type of assessment and administrative modifications and accommodations necessary for (a) statewide assessment accountability

HSBP (Required elements for all students)	Additional Elements for High-Quality HSBP (Recommended)	IEPs with Transition Planning
Review grades/transcript and student progress, to support and address identified goals or changing student interests or needs.		Reviewed not less than annually to consider lack of expected progress toward annual IEP goals or in general education curriculum; results of any reevaluations; information provided to/by parents; student's anticipated needs; or other matters.
Resume or Activity Log by end of 12th grade that provides a written compilation of student's education, any work experience, and any community service and how the school district has recognized the community service and any CTE Certificates or other awards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in volunteer/community service. • Participation in work-based learning opportunity (e.g., job shadow, internship) to develop self-advocacy and other employment skills 	District provides Summary of Performance for student graduating or exceeding age eligibility, including summary of academic achievement/functional performance, to help establish eligibility for post-secondary accommodations/supports & make recommendations to assist student in post-secondary transition to higher education, training, and/or employment
Encourage and involve parents and guardians in the process of developing and updating the student's HSBP. State law requires that the plan must be provided in the parents' or guardians' native language if it is one of the two most commonly spoken non-English languages in the district.		<p>IEP participants must include parents or guardians. The student must be invited when the purpose of the IEP meeting considers postsecondary goals or transition services. If the student does not attend, the district must take steps to ensure the student's preferences and interests are considered.</p> <p>Parent participation requires the school district take any action necessary to ensure the parent understands the IEP meeting proceedings, including arranging for an interpreter for parents with deafness or whose native language is other than English.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete post-secondary program/college applications. • Participation in volunteer/ community service. • Participate in work-based learning opportunity to develop self-advocacy and other employment skills. 	Coordinate services with adult agencies to extent appropriate or required, invite to the IEP meeting representatives of any agencies likely to provide or pay for transition services, with parent or adult student written consent. IEP team must reconvene if a participating agency is unable to provide transition services described in the IEP.

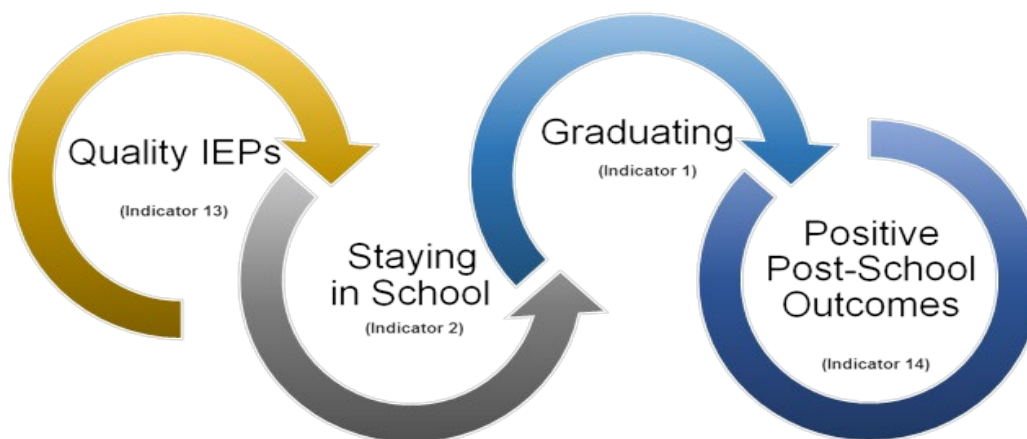
This foundational information should be used to inform a student’s IEP once it includes transition services and should be (1) included in the student’s present levels of performance (or in another appropriate section of the IEP) and (2) taken into consideration when developing the student’s IEP goals and necessary special education and related services. For example, the IEP team may:

- base the student’s measurable postsecondary employment, education/training, and/or independent living goals on those in the student’s HSBP;
- incorporate results of the student’s career interest survey(s) and other relevant evaluation information into the age-appropriate transition assessment section of the IEP pieces of information/data; and/or
- attach the student’s HSBP course plan or incorporate the information into the course of study in the IEP.

Effective Research-based Transition Practices

Over the past three decades, research on transition practices continues to demonstrate that post-school outcomes of students with disabilities improve when educators, families, students, community members, agencies and organizations work together to implement a broad array of transition planning practices. Four measures are considered critical for achieving and improving post-school outcomes: quality IEPs, dropout rates, graduation rates, and post-school outcomes (e.g., higher education, competitive employment, or engagement in other education/training or employment). Figure C shows the interrelationship between these four factors.

Figure C. Critical Interrelationship for Achieving Post-school Outcomes



Source: Center for Change in Transition Services (2017). [Writing effective transition plans](#), page 5. Graphic modified by CCTS from Kohler, Gothberg, and Hill. (2009). NSTTAC Evaluation Toolkit. National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center (NSTTAC): Western Michigan University.

Such quality transition planning is the foundation of successful educational programs for students who receive special education services. This includes identifying strategies for keeping students engaged with school, though the implementation and integration of meaningful

